

AGENDA: 6:00 pm

1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement
2. O Canada
3. Meeting Roll Call
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
6. [Confirmation of the Minutes: April 13, 2026](#)

Reports from Trustee Special Committees:

7. [Finance & Facilities – April 14, 2026](#)

Reports from Legislative Committees:

8. [Special Education Advisory Committee – March 25, 2026](#)

9. Appointment to Ontario Public School Boards' Association – Member Board Delegate and Alternate Delegate.

10. Resolution Into Committee of the Whole (Private Session) as per the Education Act, Section 207 (2)

- a) the security of the property of the board;
- b) the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian;
- c) the acquisition or disposal of a school site;
- d) decisions in respect of negotiations with employees of the board; or
- e) litigation affecting the board. *R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, s. 207 (2); 2021, c. 4, Sched. 11, s. 7 (1).*

Meeting Resumes in Public Session

11. Report from Committee of the Whole (Private) – April 27, 2026

12. Oral Reports from:

- A. Student Trustees' and Shakowennakarátats
- B. Director's Report
- C. Chair's Report

13. Adjournment

Trustees: Kathy Archer*, Becky Buck, Sabreina Dahab, Dawn Danko, Amanda Fehrman, Maria Felix Miller*, Graeme Noble, Paul Tut, Todd White, Elizabeth Wong^(R), Abby Zaitley. Student Trustees Sanad Bizanti, Evelyn Watson, and Shakowennakara:tats Daunte Hillen

*electronic participation, ^(R) regrets

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Tut called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

RESOLUTION #26-46: Trustees Fehrman/Buck moved that Trustee Wong be approved as absent for the April 13, 2026, Board Meeting.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

2. Approval of the Agenda

RESOLUTION #26-47: Trustees Zaitley/Dahab moved that the agenda be approved as amended.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

3. Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLUTION #26-48: Trustees Buck/Fehrman moved that the Minutes from March 30, 2026, be confirmed.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

4. DELEGATION(S): Artificial Intelligence Policy

The Chair welcomed the delegates to the meeting and thanked them for bringing forward their perspectives as briefly outlined below – the meeting [recording](#) can be reviewed to listen to the delegates remarks.

- A. Katie Schuessler – Spoke about the role AI will play in the lives of her children. She shared concerns about cognitive development, inherent bias, its use for companionship, safety in privacy and data, and asked that HWDSB pause the rollout of these tools until student safety and well-being could be properly assessed.
- B. Chad Chabot – Spoke about the impact AI will have on our students. He shared his experiences with AI as a software professional and asked the Board to consider taking a more measured approach to AI usage within the classroom specifically around privacy and data, the impact on students and their ability to learn and be creative, and the impact AI tools could have for teaching staff and support staff.
- C. Dr. Chantal Mancini – Spoke about her experiences on the use of AI that she and her colleagues are confronted with in classrooms daily. She noted that AI is not just a tool, it is fundamentally reshaping the way humans relate to one another by its integration into the workplace, cultural production, social life, and education. She suggested that the Board consider a comprehensive AI

Policy, one based on in-depth discussions with families, educators, employee groups and community partners.

- D. Evan Ubene – Spoke about why the Board should consider developing an AI policy. He noted that AI in the classrooms can negatively affect students by reducing critical thinking, creativity, and cognitive engagement. He also raised concerns that widespread AI use supports an environmentally harmful industry, increasing energy and water consumption, which conflicts with education systems’ sustainability goals.

5. Correspondence: Special Education Advisory Committee re: Budget for 2026-2027

RESOLUTION #26-49: Trustees Danko/Buck moved that the correspondence from the Special Education Advisory Committee re: Budget for 2026-2027 be received and referred to the Finance & Facilities Committee for their review during budget discussions.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

6. Program Committee

RESOLUTION #26-50: Trustees Fehrman/Buck moved that the Program Committee report from March 26, 2026, be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

7. Finance & Facilities Committee

RESOLUTION #26-51: Trustees Buck/Fehrman moved that the Finance & Facilities Committee report from March 31, 2026, be approved including the allocation of Proceeds of Disposition funds for Phases 1, 2, and 3, as outlined below.

Immediate Use of Proceeds – Phase 1

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Immediate Use (submissions to the Ministry within the next 6 months) | \$34,500,000 |
| Accessibility Projects | \$4,500,000 |
| HVAC / Cooling Projects | \$10,000,000 |
| Offset to Maintenance Operating Costs (one-time) | \$8,000,000 |
| Previous Board commitments to support Program and equity of access | \$10,000,000 |
| Renewal and Accessibility Contingency Value | \$2,000,000 |
| Subtotal | \$34,500,000 |

Short-term Use of Proceeds – Phase 2

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Short-term Use (submissions to the Ministry within the next 24-48 months) | \$25,000,000 |
| Accessibility Projects | \$3,000,000 |
| HVAC / Cooling Projects | \$10,000,000 |
| Previous Board commitments to support Program and equity of access | \$10,000,000 |
| Renewal and Accessibility Contingency Value | \$2,000,000 |
| Subtotal | \$25,000,000 |

Long-term Use of Proceeds – Phase 3

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Long-term Use (submissions to the Ministry within the next 48+ months) | \$17,836,701 |
| Accessibility Projects | \$3,000,000 |
| HVAC / Cooling Projects | \$10,000,000 |
| Previous Board commitments to support Program and equity of access | \$3,000,000 |
| Renewal and Accessibility Contingency Value | \$1,836,701 |
| Subtotal | \$17,836,701 |

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

8. Student Trustees and Shakowennakara:tats 2026-2027

RESOLUTION #26-52: Trustees Noble/Dahab moved that Cristian Farrugia, Westmount Secondary (Student Trustee), Caitlyn Gong, Ancaster High (Student Trustee), and Charlise Hillen, Sherwood (Shakowennakara:tats) be confirmed to stand as Student Trustees and Shakowennakara:tats with HWDSB for the term of office from August 1, 2026, to July 31, 2027.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

9. Written Notice of Motion: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy (Trustee Zaitley)

Whereas the rapid advancement and integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in educational settings present both significant opportunities and risks;

Whereas the current HWDSB policies, including the Modern Learning Policy, no longer fully address the unique implications, challenges, and risks associated with AI;

Whereas AI technologies carry environmental impacts, including high energy consumption and resource use, which must align with the Board's sustainability commitments in our Multi-Year Strategic Plan;

Whereas transparency with families and caregivers is essential in maintaining trust regarding how AI tools are used in classrooms;

Whereas the use of AI must uphold the dignity and well-being of all students, ensuring that technology supports rather than replaces human relationships;

Whereas AI systems present risks related to data security and how student data is collected, processed, and protected;

Whereas teaching critical thinking strategies is critical as AI technology has the potential to hallucinate (give incorrect information);

Whereas AI technologies have the potential to perpetuate or amplify systemic biases, raising concerns related to human rights and equity;

Whereas cost uncertainty regarding AI tools/platforms poses a fiscal uncertainty for the future of AI use.

RESOLUTION #26-53: Trustees Zaitley/Dahab moved that HWDSB start the policy development process to investigate the feasibility of developing an AI Policy.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

The Board moved into private session for the discussion of items related to Section 207 (2) of the Education Act.

Trustee Miller and Student Trustee Watson left for the remainder of the meeting.

10. Report from Committee of the Whole (Private) – April 13, 2026

RESOLUTION #26-54: Trustees Noble/Zaitley moved that the Committee of the Whole report from April 13, 2026, be approved including:

- That the Finance & Facilities Committee report from March 31, 2026, be approved including:
 - Setting Full Day Child Care Program licence rates for 2026–2027 at \$9.86 per square foot, aligned with Ministry of Education benchmark funding and year-round occupancy, from 260 to 365 days.
 - Applying a flat daily space rate for Before and After School Programs for 2026–2027 of \$5 per standard classroom and \$8 per kindergarten classroom.

CARRIED

11. City/School Board Liaison Committee

Trustee White provided the following update:

- Discussion from last Thursday's meeting focused on the former tennis courts at the Dundas Valley property, including community ideas and City's interest in redevelopment.
- Agenda items were deferred to the next meeting: a stormwater report and a report on Brightside Park (north of Bernie Custis), due to city staff requiring additional time to complete reports

12. Hamilton-Wentworth Council of Home & School Association

Trustee Noble provided the following update:

- March 2nd meeting included members and Associate Director Matt Gerard, featuring a presentation on budget priorities and consultation, with discussion on funding allocation, current funding examples, and accessible visual budget materials.
- The Hamilton-Wentworth Chapter proposed an invitation to Superintendent Gerry Smith to a future meeting to provide updates on the Safe, Compassionate, and Equitable Schools portfolio.

13. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Trustee Buck provided the following update:

- MPPs returned to Queen's Park following a constituency week and will sit for two weeks
- Bill C-15, including the National School Food Program Act, received Royal Assent and aims to provide nutritious school meals to an additional 400,000 children annually and help reduce costs for parents
- Registration is open for the 2026 OPSBA Annual Meeting in Ottawa June 4-6, 2026 – the theme is *Governing for the Public Good in an Era of Uncertainty*
- The government introduced Bill 101, Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026; OPSBA delegates and Chairs are scheduled to meet online to discuss Bill

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Reference: [Agenda Package](#) and [Recording, Recording 2](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: April 27 2026

From: Finance and Facilities Committee

Date of Meeting: April 14, 2026

The committee held a hybrid meeting on April 14, 2026, at 6:00pm with Trustee Paul Tut presiding.

Members present: Trustees Becky Buck*, Amanda Fehrman, Maria Felix Miller ^(R), Paul Tut and Abby Zaitley. Also in attendance: Trustees Sabreina Dahab* and Todd White*.

*Electronic participation, ^(R) Regrets

ACTION ITEM(S):

A. 2026-2027 Non-School Based Staffing Report

Staff presented the 2026-2027 full-time equivalent (FTE) non-school based staffing positions. Staffing levels are changing due to changes in enrolment, budget adjustments and/or programming needs. Due to the uncertainty of the Responsive Education Program (REP) funds, positions supported by these allocations have been removed from the preliminary budget. Once released, staff will analyze the impact that the 2026-2027 Core Education funding announcement will have on staffing levels.

Therefore, staff are recommending non-school-based staffing of 671.48 FTE for the 2026-2027 school year. This recommendation will adjust staffing to the anticipated funding from the Ministry, comply with our collective agreements, and most importantly, allocate limited resources to the areas of greatest student need.

On the motion of Amanda Fehrman, the Finance and Facilities Committee recommends **that the preliminary allocation of the following full-time equivalent non-school based staffing positions for the 2026-2027 school year be approved:**

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Elementary Teachers | 166.00 |
| Secondary Teachers | 46.68 |
| Professional & ParaProfessional | 191.80 |
| Library & Guidance | 19.50 |
| Coordinators & Consultants | 49.50 |
| Board Administration | 123.50 |
| Facilities | 67.50 |
| Transportation | 7.00 |

These staffing levels represent a reduction of 44.08 FTE non-school based staff from the 2025-26 revised estimates staffing levels.

CARRIED

B. 2026-2027 Accommodation Strategy Schedule

Staff presented the Accommodation Strategy Schedule. On an annual basis, staff conduct a comprehensive review of short and long-term enrolment projections, school renewal needs and property and facility data by planning areas across the Board to identify immediate, short-term, or medium-term accommodation strategies. There are no planned boundary reviews or pupil accommodation reviews for 2026-2027 school year.

On the motion of Abby Zaitley, the Finance and Facilities Committee recommends **that the 2026-2027 Accommodation Strategy Schedule be approved (with no planned boundary reviews or pupil accommodations).**

CARRIED

MONITORING ITEM(S):

C. 2026-2027 Budget Status Update – Consultation Feedback Report

Staff provided an update on the budget consultation survey for the 2026-2027 school year. Approximately 500 people accessed information on the Engage platform while the survey garnered over 1,000 responses. Key takeaways were strong support for investment in direct, in-class supports, safe, clean, well-ventilated and well-maintained classrooms and learning environments, strong support for physical resources in classrooms, support for the strategic use of technology in classrooms and respondents expressed desire for summary level updates about the budget be sent through either school messenger or email.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Tut, Chair of the Committee

Resource: [Agenda Package](#) and [Recording](#)

Committee Report

Presented to: Board

Meeting Date: Monday, April 27, 2026

From: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2026

The Committee held a meeting in room 181B, Education Centre on Wednesday, March 25th, beginning at 5:33 pm, ending at 7:42 pm, with Chair Judy Colantino presiding.

Present

Danielle Dion-Broadley, FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group, Dawn Danko, Trustee Ward 7, Judy Colantino, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton, SEAC Chair, Lindsay Bray, McMaster Children's Hospital Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Portfolio, SEAC Vice Chair, Melanie Roberts, Association for Bright Children of Ontario, Nancy Silva Khan, Autism Ontario (Central West Chapter), Samantha Sweet, Centre for Diverse Learners, Sarah Pennington, Community Living Hamilton, Susi Owen, CNIB Hamilton and Niagara, Vanessa Doslea, Lynwood Charlton Centre.

MONITORING ITEMS

A. Safe and Responsible Use of AI at HWDSB

Michelle Lemaire, Superintendent of Program, Equity & Innovation

- An overview of the AI Framework for staff and students was provided to guide future use
- The framework is adapted from the Educational Computing Network of Ontario (ECNO), which supports forward-thinking learning in education
- The framework is grounded in the Board's commitment to human rights, equity, Indigenous educational wellness, as well as its values, multi-year strategic plan directives and goals, and legislative requirements related to privacy
- In addition to staff use of AI tools, students in secondary schools, aged 13 and over will have access to Copilot 13+, with embedded restrictions and specific security features
- AI access and instructional focus will be aligned with grade divisions: K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12
- Classroom norms and guidelines will be followed to support responsible and appropriate learning

B. Future Preparedness for Students with Special Education Needs

John Manzin, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity: Transition Navigation

- An overview of future preparedness programs for students with special education needs were presented:
 - Transitional Work Experience Program (TWEP)*
 - Structured program that provides students with meaningful, on-the-job training and practical work experience
 - The program serves students aged 16-21 who have been identified as having special education needs
 - Intensive Transitional Work Experience Program (ITWEP)*
 - A specialized program that provides students with intensive on-the-job training and meaningful work experience through partnership with HWDSB
 - The program is designed for students aged 18 to 21 who require more intensive transition support
 - Project SEARCH*
 - A school to work transition program for students with intellectual or communication disabilities, who are at least 18 years of age or older
 - The program provides participants with meaningful workplace training and employment preparation
 - Graduates of the program have been hired by a variety of local employers, including City of Hamilton, Lococco's, Denningers and Sobey's
 - Community Transition Network Event: Pathways to Transition*
 - This event will take place on April 30 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at Nora Frances Henderson Secondary School
 - This session is intended for parents/guardians and students aged 14-21 with special education needs who are planning for life after high school
 - Attendees will have the opportunity to connect with a range of community organizations and access information, resources, and support related to post-secondary pathways and transitions

C. MEMBERS' UPDATE

Trustee Update - Dawn Danko, Trustee, Ward 7

- At the beginning of March, Trustees approved Guiding Principles for the Program Strategy Review
- Trustees also approved the Binbrook II boundary review recommendations

- Trustees approved a motion that directs staff to work with the City of Hamilton and community partners to identify opportunities for active transportation which addresses school area traffic concerns for Ward 4 schools
- In response to ongoing suggestions about potential changes to public education governance, Trustees also approved a motion to write a letter to the Ministry of Education to request province-wide consultation and research on the best governance model before changes are made
- A letter will also be sent to the Ombudsman's office to review the potential impacts of removing English Public School Board Trustees with respect to fairness, openness, transparency and accountability

Association Update- Lindsay Bray, McMaster Children's Hospital Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Portfolio, SEAC Vice Chair

- On Saturday, May 2, the Ron Joyce Children's Health Centre (RJCHC) will host its 3rd Annual All Abilities Fashion Show, sponsored by the clothing label *Living Life to the Maks*. The event celebrates survivors, resilience, faith, and love in the lives of young warriors
 - RJCHC is seeking 20 individuals currently receiving services who are interested in participating in the fashion show to showcase and celebrate their accomplishments
 - The event will take place from 1:00–5:00 p.m. at the Ron Joyce Children's Health Centre and will feature the Ron Joyce Resonance Choir, Ron Joyce Hammerheads Cheer Team, a silent auction, and vendors

Superintendent Update - Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent of Special Education, Inclusion & Equity

- World Autism Awareness Day will be celebrated on April 25 at the Education Centre with a *Family Carnival* from 10:00-2:00 pm – activities include face painting, a sensory room, balloon twister, live performances, crafts and games. This free drop in event is open to families, no registration is required, and it will take place rain or shine. Community organizations will be onsite to provide information and resources, including Woodview, Autism Ontario, Autism Program McMaster Children's Hospital
- Psychological Services staff will present the Building Responsive Approaches for Instructional Needs (BRAIN) Document at the Ontario Council of Administrators of Special Education (OCASE) Symposium on May 14 in Mississauga
- Professional learning sessions for Principals, Vice Principals and Managers scheduled for April, May and June will focus on supporting neurodivergent learners
- System Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meetings have begun for students being considered for potential placement in special education classes
- A presentation was delivered at the Ontario Public Supervisory Officers Association (OPSOA) in collaboration with Michelle Lemaire, Superintendent of Program, Equity & Innovation, and Estella Jones, Superintendent of Equity & Quality Instruction Math, highlighting the Board's work in integrating program, mathematics, and special education
- Todd Graves, retired principal, will serve as a temporary principal effective April 1, until end of June following the retirement of John Manzin

Respectfully submitted by,
Judy Colantino, SEAC Chair