

March 24, 2021

Delivered via electronic mail to: cpamill@hwdsb.on.ca

*At a special Board Meeting held Thursday, March 4, 2021, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board determined that Trustee Carole Paikin-Miller breached multiple sections of the Trustee Code of Conduct. As one of the sanctions, the Board of Trustees agreed to issue a formal letter of Censure of the trustee, as an official reprimand for Trustee Paikin-Miller, for engaging in discreditable conduct, by making inappropriate comments and demonstrating a poor attitude that did not uphold the Integrity and Dignity of the Office of Trustee.*

Dear Trustee Paikin-Miller,

**This is a formal letter of censure regarding several breaches of the HWDSB Code of Conduct. This Board condemns your statements and actions as outlined below.**

According to the findings of the Board of Trustees, based on the results of the investigation carried out by the external investigator, Arlene Huggins, you have breached the following sections of the Trustee Code of Conduct:

- Maintaining the integrity and dignity of office, Clause 2: *Trustees, as elected officials of the Board, must uphold the dignity of the office and conduct themselves in a professional manner, especially when attending Board events, or while on Board property and shall at all times act with decorum and be respectful of other Trustees, staff, students and the public.*
- Civil Behaviour, Clause 7: *No Trustee shall engage in conduct during meetings of the Board or committees of the Board, and at all other times that would discredit or compromise the integrity of the Board.*
- Upholding decisions, Clause 16: *Trustees shall comply with the Board's policies, procedures, bylaws, and the Board's procedural bylaws – specifically in complying with Board.*

Trustees, as duly elected representatives of their communities, are held to a higher standard of behaviour. Trustees are expected to model the exemplary behaviour that we want to see in our students. Trustee Paikin-Miller, you have failed in this regard by not acting respectfully and professionally during an Advisory Committee meeting and in a public board meeting; nor did you uphold the Board's Equity and Inclusion Policy, compromising public confidence in the integrity of the Board.

Further, the investigator's report describes your violations as displaying "a problematic attitude towards equity issues in Board and committee meetings", and "disregard for ... efforts to raise and address equity issues". We note that raising questions and concerns is a critical task for Trustees; however, the way in which questions and concerns are raised, must always be professional and respectful. The report also finds that it is probable that you had "made anti-Muslim remarks in to other Trustees". These findings are deeply disappointing and not in keeping with the values and high standards we expect from Trustees or the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board as a whole.

# HWDSB

**Dawn Danko**  
Chair of the Board  
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558  
Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

The Board of Trustees have established a commitment to learning, equity, engagement and innovation. One of our key priorities to guide our system is Positive Culture and Well-Being. The Board also shares our commitment to the principles of equity in the Equity and Inclusion Policy. Trustee Paikin-Miller, you have acted in a manner that is inconsistent with these commitments and priorities.

The Board of Trustees takes violations of its Code of Conduct seriously and will act judiciously and with resolve to protect the integrity of this important elected office. We request that you acknowledge the impact of your actions through a public apology, take appropriate measures to restore relationships and correct offending behaviours. Our students, staff and community deserve no less.

Sincerely,



Dawn Danko, Chair  
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board