

# The



Art Centred and Enrichment  
Based Learning Program

# Handbook

*Last updated November 2017*

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## Introduction

### **Welcome to Scholastics, Arts and Global Education (SAGE)!**

This Specialized Learning Program offers families in Hamilton-Wentworth another choice in public education—a choice built around family participation and community building. Working in cooperation, teachers and families use innovative teaching methods to deliver the Ontario Curriculum in an interactive, child-centred manner with an emphasis on scholastics, arts, and global education. Specialized Learning Programs like SAGE have long been at the forefront of education. SAGE is operated under the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), and is thus subject to HWDSB policies. That is, hours, funding, attendance, teacher/student ratios, etc., will be consistent with other HWDSB programs. At the same time, SAGE explores innovative, cooperative learning modes within the umbrella of the public system. Ultimately, SAGE is an excellent example of how public education can creatively meet the needs and reflect the values of a diverse body of citizens.

### General Information

Strathcona School houses two programs: the Main Program, for students who live in the Strathcona Catchment Area and The SAGE Program, for students from all areas inside and outside the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), including Strathcona's Catchment Area.

## School Information

The SAGE program is located at Strathcona School.

**Address:** 10 Lamoreaux St., Hamilton ON, L8P 1V1

**Telephone:** (905) 527-2470

**School Email:** [strathcona@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:strathcona@hwdsb.on.ca)

**Principal:** Curtis Tye

**Administrative Assistant:** Wendy Haartman

**Strathcona School Website:** <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/strathcona/>

## About SAGE

SAGE started as a proposal to launch an alternative program in Hamilton, initiated in 2001 by a group of dedicated parents familiar with existing alternative programs elsewhere in Ontario. After studying the philosophies and methods of successful programs in London, Ottawa, and Toronto, the volunteer committee approached interested families in Hamilton-Wentworth to find out what they wanted from their schools.

In May 2002, the HWDSB approved the proposal for a one-year pilot program to run through the 2002/2003 school year. The proposal was brought to life at Strathcona School, which was chosen for its location and the willingness of its administration and School Council to commit to the success of the program. Strathcona School is adjacent to Victoria Park – a green space with a large play structure, swimming facilities, tennis courts, and baseball diamond, as well as nearby Dundurn Park, the RBG South Shore Trails, the Aviary, the Art Gallery of Hamilton, and Hamilton Place. At the end of the 2003 school year, the pilot was approved with a limit of one hundred students between Junior Kindergarten and Grade 5. Nearly one hundred students registered by the end of the summer. In 2003, the Board approved SAGE as a permanent Specialized Learning Program, extending to grade 6 for the following school year.

3.0

## **SAGE Vision**

To spark in each child a passion for learning, a creative spirit and a commitment to community and the environment, in a child centred classroom that is enriched by the arts, enhanced by innovative teaching, supported by strong home and school collaboration, and rooted in appreciation for the differences around us.

3.1

### **Arts: Exploring Creativity in the Learning Process**

Through enhanced curriculum that includes instruction from professional artists, crossgraded art activities, and an overall strategy to incorporate and integrate experiences in the arts into lesson planning, SAGE endeavours to foster, support and celebrate the creativity, imagination and self expression of each child in the program. Emphasis is placed on direct experiential learning in a broad spectrum of artistic mediums, including music, drama, visual arts, and dance. In addition to teaching specific skill sets, the Arts component of SAGE strives to engender an appreciation for all forms of artistic expression, and encourages exploration as a vital part of the learning process.

3.2

### **Global Education: Fostering an Appreciation of the World Around Us**

In tandem with an enriched Arts education, the SAGE program offers enhanced curriculum that emphasizes ecology, sustainability, and stewardship on the one hand, and cultural diversity, social justice, and peace studies on the other. Students explore these topics both through dedicated lesson planning as well as numerous events organized around such topics as Festival of Lights celebrations, International Women's Day, Indigenous studies, habitat

exploration, and Earth Day celebrations, among many others. As well as fostering an appreciation for ecological issues and engendering a sense of social responsibility, the program strives to create opportunities that inspire children to be active citizens in their community.

3.3

## **Innovative Teaching: How We Teach Is As Important As What We Teach**

While enhanced curriculum forms the backbone of the SAGE program, teaching brings it to life! Emphasis is on integrated, experiential learning that encourages a child's sense of ownership and accomplishment. Teachers blend structured lessons and age appropriate technology with learning centers and student initiated inquiry to provide a rich learning environment, one that stresses collaboration over competition. Importantly, lesson planning is tailored to incorporate parent skills and participation, helping to build a community-centered school environment that has been shown to have a direct impact on academic success.

3.4

## **Parent\*-Teacher Partnerships: Working Together to Improve the Learning Experience**

Parent involvement forms a vital part of the SAGE program. Through voluntary Enhancement Meetings between teacher and parents, teachers are able to shape curriculum delivery around parent skills and knowledge bases, providing opportunities for parents to be directly involved in the learning process. Becoming a Class Rep, a liaison position that helps to facilitate parent-teacher interactions as well as aiding in communication flow, provides another avenue to engage in the program. Moreover, parents are instrumental in program oversight and management: there are many opportunities



to help shape the program by becoming involved in the Steering Committee or one of its numerous subcommittees.

3.5

## **Building Community: Integrating School, Home and Neighbourhood**

The final element of the SAGE paradigm is Community Building, stemming from a recognition that child development does not take place in isolation but rather through the connections that are woven amongst families, teachers and administration. Each month, time is set aside so that students from all grades, together with teachers and families, can gather to explore and learn, both about Arts and Global Education themes, but also about fellowship and sharing. These gatherings can catalyze new friendships, provide mentoring and leadership opportunities amongst the students, and help to foster a sense of belonging and confidence. Moreover, outside of school hours, SAGE families build community through extracurricular activities, ranging from pot-lucks and camping to galas and feasts. After all, learning and development do not end when the final bell rings.

*\*Parent, Guardian, Caregiver.*

4.0

## Volunteering

Parental involvement in a child's education has been linked to their success at school. Positive parental involvement is encouraged, required, and celebrated at SAGE, and is one of the defining characteristics of the program.

4.1

### Time Commitment

Family members bring a wealth of experience and expertise with them. Volunteering supports our teachers and enhances programming. Families are encouraged to volunteer a minimum of 5–10 hours each month. This can be in class, on committees, during school trips, etc..

Naturally, unpredictable events and busy schedules may limit a family's ability to meet this commitment. If your family needs more flexibility, simply approach the Volunteer Coordinator to discuss how you can continue to support the SAGE program.

4.2

### Volunteer Opportunities

Your volunteer commitment can take a number of equally valuable forms, and can take place during or outside school hours as outlined below. Some of the opportunities to volunteer include:

- Classroom Representative
- Field trip supervision
- Helping in the classroom
- Committee work
- Attending Sage meetings

## Volunteer Requirements

Individuals wanting to volunteer need to provide the school a current (within 6 months of issue) [Vulnerable Sectors Police check](#) every three years

- All new volunteers must submit a completed [Volunteer Information Sheet](#) and participate in a brief interview/orientation to learn about school procedures.
- All volunteers must sign an [Offense Declaration](#) in years that a new Vulnerable Sector screen is not required.
- All volunteers must sign a [Volunteer Agreement](#) each year.
- The [Volunteer Policy](#) can be found on the HWDSB Web site.

## Conflict Resolution

Conflict is an unfortunate aspect of human interaction and communication with others, but it does not need to be destructive or divisive. Rather than avoiding conflict it is far more productive to recognize conflict when it arises and work positively to resolve it. Should conflict arise, whether between you and a teacher or another parent, it is understood by all parties that it is never to occur in the presence of children, e.g., on the playground or in the classroom. Interactions should be respectful and should take place at a mutually agreeable time.

The HWDSB has created a conflict resolution protocol that should be followed when communicating with faculty and administration. If a conflict arises, please review the [Respectful Working and Learning Environments: Conflict Prevention and Resolution Procedure](#) document for more information.

# Steering Committee

## Overview

The mandate of the Steering Committee is to provide the volunteer administration needed to ensure the effective operation of the SAGE Program, work towards the implementation of the SAGE Vision, and facilitate families' involvement in all aspects of the Program.

The Steering Committee's tasks include:

- Maintain a calendar of community meetings (enhancement, parent education, SAGE community forums, socials) and specific events;
- Provide program communications and family contact mechanisms;
- Facilitate the start up of committees and working groups and monitor the work of these groups;
- Coordinate SAGE gatherings and school-wide assemblies;
- Liaison with the Main program at Strathcona, Strathcona Home and School Association (SHASA), SAGE Quest, the HWDSB, and the larger community;
- Oversee SAGE's contribution to school-wide events;
- Track SAGE finances and report on finances twice annually;
- Update the SAGE Handbook for families.

The SAGE Steering Committee, in partnership with the staff, is committed to implementing the SAGE Vision, taking into account the resources of our community. In an effort to realize these goals and the overall vision, a visioning roadmap is generated by the incumbent and outgoing steering committee members in July of each year to set a mandate for the upcoming school year, ensuring that the SAGE Vision is an integral component of the Steering Committee directive. This roadmap should outline priorities and potential action

items for the Steering Committee and the SAGE community-at-large. The document should be distributed to families and staff for the start of the school year. The visioning roadmap should be reviewed in December to ensure objectives are being met.

6.2

## Positions

Steering Committee positions have a 2-year term of office which shall run from the Annual General Meeting to the end of June the following year. If any of the elected positions are not filled through Steering Committee elections, they can be filled by the Steering Committee during the school year.

The principal and teachers are invited to attend the Steering Committee and are participatory partners in consensus decision-making. Staff select a Teacher Rep, who is also a voting member.

See Appendix A for a hierarchical map of positions.

6.2.1

### Program Co-Chairs

The co-chairs assume a leadership role in collaboration with the school Principal. They are responsible for overseeing the growth and sustainability of the program.

Eligible applicants for the co-chair position must have held a position on the steering committee for at least one year. The two co-chair positions are two year terms staggered by one year to promote continuity.

The co-chairs are responsible for overseeing and maintaining the Annual Roadmap which:

- Integrates the visioning within steering committee roles – in collaboration with the Principal, Teacher Rep, and all steering committee members;

- Communicates timing expectations for steering committee members, coordinating actions laid out in the roadmap and monthly agenda in order to ensure that the SAGE vision is followed and decisions are made between meetings;
- Outlines community orientation, school improvement, arts and global education events, community building/social/fundraising initiatives, and promotion events for SAGE to attract new families.

Additionally, the co-chairs are responsible for:

- Chairing meetings, preparing agendas (including requesting agenda items from the community at least a week in advance of SC meetings), and keeping track of action items for SC meetings and the Annual General Meeting;
- Consulting with the Principal and the Teacher Rep to revise the monthly agenda, coordinated with the SAGE annual roadmap;
- Ensuring transparency by sharing the monthly agenda and steering committee minutes with the community;
- Incorporating the lens of the Vision Statement at meetings, examining how each component is represented within the program on a monthly basis;
- Acting as a role model for others on the steering committee and the SAGE community-at-large;
- Supporting program legacy, growth, and sustainability by ensuring information updates occur, in consultation with the other steering committee members;
- Communicating vacancies on the Steering Committee to the SAGE community in a timely fashion;
- Updating Steering Committee roles annually to correspond with the visioning process in time for AGM elections;
- Consulting with the school Staff Rep as needed to cultivate awareness of

history and SAGE visioning;

- Attending subcommittee meetings whenever possible;
- Representing the interests of the SAGE community through established communication protocols by liaising with the Principal, Superintendent, and Trustees as needed.

#### 6.2.2

### Secretary

- Records and distributes Steering Committee meeting minutes to members within two weeks of the meeting;
- Makes approved minutes publicly available one week prior to the monthly steering committee meeting;
- Ensures that approved minutes are added to the SAGE archives;
- Forwards updates through agenda reports from Steering Committee members and subcommittee chairs;
- Forwards AGM minutes to the SAGE community;
- Regularly attends meetings and ensures a replacement is available in their absence to record minutes;
- Facilitates all in-person and email voting; ensures all members cast their ballot, and records and tallies votes;
- Records and audits attendance at meetings.

#### 6.2.3

### Communications Coordinator

Leads a subcommittee to produce the SAGE Monthly Newsletter (SAGE Leaf);

- Liaise with steering committee, subcommittee chairs, class reps, principal and staff liaison to compose the Steering Committee Newsletter, the "SAGE Leaf";
- Ensures the publication frames current steering committee decision-making in terms of the program's legacy, vision and annual road map;
- Facilitate deadlines for newsletter contributions and production schedule;



- Maintains a monthly calendar of events for all grades;
- Ensures that communication of SAGE information to families is effective and efficient;
- Updates contact information for registered families to facilitate communication by maintaining "SAGE Hamilton" and class e-groups;
- Builds and maintains a registered family list, obtaining new contact list in June from the Administrative Assistant;
- Creates/updates a family contact list to be distributed to SAGE families by the end of September each year.

6.2.4

### Archivist

- Coordinates SAGE Web site links and content with school administration;
- Organizes and maintains an archive of electronic and print documentation to support celebration and promotion of the program;
- Organizes and maintains an archive of print documentation and physical items as well as a "sign out" for those items;
- Organizes and maintains an online archival resource which is open and accessible to the community
- The document store is wiki-style, with previous versions of each document saved on revision

6.2.5

### Volunteer Coordinator

- Facilitates and oversees volunteer participation;
- Collects parent interests/skills and forwards to teachers and activity coordinators;
- Updates family information materials distributed to parents in consultation with steering committee;
- Follows up with families when volunteer commitments are not met to assess interests and availability;
- Consults with principal if families cannot find suitable volunteer

- commitment in the program;
- Liaise with Class Reps regarding volunteer opportunities;
- Assists with orientation regarding purposeful volunteer engagement;

6.2.6

### **Social Coordinator**

- Plans monthly social gatherings for students and/or parents;
- Facilitates subcommittees for events as necessary;
- Publicizes events, posters, SAGE Leaf, etc., as approved by the Principal;
- Implements a Welcome Picnic (September) and Teacher Appreciation Potluck (December).

6.2.7

### **Promotion and Recruitment Coordinator**

- Develops promotional materials incorporating a variety of strategies with an inclusive approach to attract new families to SAGE;
- Consults with Archivist and community members to coordinate photo documentation of program events to develop marketing and promotional materials;
- Works with Outreach Coordinator in the communication of vision in relation to events such as the February Information Night, Winter Open House, and June Kindergarten Information Event;
- Develops annual strategy for recruitment of new students with school administration;
- Aids Social Coordinator in creation of posters, etc., for events.

6.2.8

### **Treasurer**

- Collects a “wish list” of expenditures, ensuring they support the SAGE vision at each grade level of the SAGE program, before the September steering meeting;
- Helps facilitate spending decisions, which are voted on by the Steering

Committee, by referring to the budget, current bank balance and anticipated expenditures, etc.

- Consults/reviews with Steering Committee to create budget spending categories to help guide spending decisions throughout the year;
- Forwards the approved expenditures to the school Administrative Assistant or secretary.
- Provides account balance and spending updates at each meeting by obtaining the ledger from the school administration office before each meeting and comparing it with Steering Committee approved income and expenses;
- Communicates with Outreach Coordinator to ensure policies and procedures are completed in a correct and timely manner;
- Publishes financial summary in newsletter twice per year in January and June including fundraising results and where money was spent.

6.2.9

### **Outreach Coordinator**

- Consults with Steering Committee regarding fundraising needs;
- Identifies fundraising needs and plans fundraising strategies based upon wish list for the SAGE Program supporting the Vision Statement;
- Prepares fundraising plan for approval at the September steering meeting and presentation at School Council in October;
- Organizes activities for Strathcona's Winter Open House and Sage Information Night (February);
- Builds on existing initiatives where possible to maintain member energy, keeping in mind the SAGE Vision

6.2.10

### **Program Consultant / Member-at-Large**

- Provides historical context for the program;
- Cultivates knowledge of SAGE history and visioning;
- Supports co-chairs to ensure roles are clearly promoted in a timely fashion

- and follows up with Volunteer Coordinator as needed if roles are not filled;
- Offers historical perspective of the Board-approved model for the program, attempts to ensure decisions made are true to this model as well as ensures updated Vision is acted upon;
- Updates Vision-related information on SAGE Web site in consultation with Co-Chairs;
- Substitutes, as needed for co-chairs in meetings they cannot attend;
- Supports co-chairs and all Steering Committee members as they transition into their roles;
- Must have served on the Steering Committee prior to this role.

6.2.11

### Teacher Rep

- Acts as a liaison between the Steering Committee and the teaching staff;
- Brings ideas, suggestions, and information from the staff to Steering Committee for discussion and approval;
- Attends all Steering Committee meetings and delivers a report created from staff input and upcoming school events;
- Provides support for subcommittees (e.g. Art Enhancement and Global Enhancement);
- Articulates how staff are working towards achieving the SAGE Vision within the classroom;
- Supports chairs in developing liaison with the superintendent responsible for Specialized Learning Programs.

## Notes:

- All members of the Steering Committee are voting members.
- Co-Chairs and the Program Consultant/Member-at-Large are required to have previously served on steering committee.
- Subcommittees report to the Steering Committee but are not a direct part of the SAGE Steering Committee structure.
- The Principal is a non voting member, but is invited to attend meetings.
- A Teacher Rep is required to be part of the Steering Committee structure.
- Quorum is one-half of the membership rounded to the next higher whole number. Example: a quorum of a thirteen voting members is seven.
- Committee structure is reviewed/evaluated annually following visioning processes or as a result of discussion that identifies needs from the SAGE community and updated if needed in advance of the Annual General Meeting by the co-chairs.
- Elections for new Steering Committee members will happen at the AGM, with role outlines clearly identified prior to elections.

## Steering Committee Contacts

**Co-chairs:** Ryan Price & Janelle Windhorst | [sage-cochairs@googlegroups.com](mailto:sage-cochairs@googlegroups.com)

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Jo Willan | [huckn.odd@gmail.com](mailto:huckn.odd@gmail.com)

**Promotions and Recruitment Coordinator:** vacant

**Outreach Coordinator:** vacant

**Secretary:** Megan Hull | [gemkathleen@hotmail.com](mailto:gemkathleen@hotmail.com)

**Communications Coordinator:** Allison Jack | [allisonjack11@yahoo.ca](mailto:allisonjack11@yahoo.ca)

**Treasurer:** Andrew Leyzack | [andrew.leyzack@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:andrew.leyzack@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

**Archivist:** Shannon Mitchell | [Sjmplath@yahoo.ca](mailto:Sjmplath@yahoo.ca)

**Social Coordinator:** Ashley Hoath-Murray | [a.hoathm@gmail.com](mailto:a.hoathm@gmail.com)

**Program Consultant/Member-at-Large:** Vin Ruprai | [vin.ruprai@gmail.com](mailto:vin.ruprai@gmail.com)

6.5

## **Authority & Accountability**

The Steering Committee is a subcommittee of the Strathcona School Council and has the authority to vet recommendations made by SAGE subcommittees and working groups and approve, amend, or reject those recommendations and to otherwise make decisions to fulfill the Steering Committee's purpose. The Steering Committee's authority is restricted by the parameters established by the Ministry of Education, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and Strathcona School. Decisions made by the Steering Committee must abide by the Strathcona School Council constitution. Any decisions bearing the SAGE name must ultimately be approved by school administration.

The Steering Committee is accountable to SAGE families who elect its members. It has the responsibility to work collaboratively with administration and teachers in consensus decision-making.

6.6

## **Communications & Reporting**

The Steering Committee will meet on the third Thursday of each month, and make the minutes of those meetings available to the SAGE community in a timely fashion. Committee and working group reports will be attached to Steering Committee minutes. In addition, the Steering Committee will endeavour to hold monthly community activities. The Steering Committee shall hold annually a General Meeting which includes Steering Committee elections, and a Roadmapping exercise.

6.7

## **SAGE Steering Committee Working Agreement**

To create and sustain an environment characterized by positive working relationships and high levels of collaboration, we will adhere to the HWDSB policies for a positive workplace and follow conflict resolution guidelines should conflict arise.

## Process for Generating Recommendations

Members of the SAGE community wishing to raise issues and present programming ideas should approach the appropriate steering committee member or subcommittee chair (e.g. Outreach, Global Enhancement, etc.). Please note: suggestions for classroom enhancement should be shared in the manner requested by individual teachers.

Committees and working groups shall formulate recommendations to the Steering Committee in their areas of responsibility, fully considering input provided by committee members, teachers and the administrator as well as ideas coming from community meetings and other sources. Teachers and the administrator will be consulted as necessary. Committees should make every effort to ensure that the SAGE Vision and HWDSB policies are considered when developing recommendations.

The development of recommendations through this committee structure ensures the broadest possible grassroots participation in the SAGE Program and a transparent decision-making process.

The Steering Committee will review recommendations brought forward by committees.

Matters outside the authority of the Steering Committee (please see Appendix A), shall be addressed by the administration.

## Steering Committee Proposal Guidelines

SAGE parents, guardians, and caregivers can make suggestions to the Steering Committee. To ensure the necessary information is prepared in a timely manner, all proposals must follow the guidelines below.



What to include:

- A one paragraph proposal
- Indicate the type of event: parent information, film screening, workshop, fundraiser, etc.
- List the name of the individual(s) or committee(s) involved in proposal
- List of resources required, e.g., funding amount
- Timeline of proposal or date of event

An item must be sent to the co-chairs one week prior to a meeting to be placed on the agenda in order that everyone have the opportunity to review in advance.

Once tabled, a proposal item “belongs to everyone present” and is part of a collective discussion to achieve consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, a proposal item may require more consideration and an agreed upon follow up will assist with next steps.

6.10

## Decision-Making

SAGE operates on a consensus-building model. The Steering Committee, sub-committees, and working groups follow an abridged consensus decision-making process. Consensus is an inclusive process by which group members work together to arrive at a mutually agreeable decision. Every group member has the opportunity to provide input and has influence over any of the decisions that are made. The aim is not to find out what the majority thinks is the best option but to incorporate what everyone thinks is the best option. In this way, the consensus model values the expression of diverse perspectives from all members of the group.

6.10.1

## Voting

- Failure to attend 2 consecutive meetings or 3 missed email votes will result in loss of voting privileges.
- Each member of the steering committee is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee.
- Each member of the steering committee is entitled to one written proxy vote in votes taken by the committee.
- Voting may only take place if quorum is achieved.

6.10.2

## Email voting

Not all agenda items can be adequately covered during committee meetings and may require a decision before the next scheduled meeting because of urgent timelines. An email vote is a pragmatic solution in these circumstances.

An email vote should specify a single motion to put to a vote.

Once the initial email has been sent out, voting members have 72 hours for discussion of the motion. After 72 hours has passed, the originator of the motion may request for it to be seconded.

After the request to second the motion has been made, an additional 72 hour period is applied for voting. All voting members must reply-all with a yay, nay, or abstention. No further debate is to occur during the vote.

6.11

## SAGE Subcommittees and Working Groups

From time to time, it may be necessary to explore an idea or topic in-depth, requiring more time than the Steering Committee can commit to at meetings. In such situations, a subcommittee or working group may be recommended by committee members. Working groups and Subcommittees allow all inter-

ested SAGE parents and staff to have their points of view heard and are an essential part of ongoing SAGE development. It is the Steering Committee's hope that effective communication will allow for more of the ideas the community generates to see their way to reality in a shorter time.

Initiatives of significant community interest and support explored at the yearly school-wide visioning exercise or at forums or parent education events may stimulate the formation of a working group.

Parents with an idea they wish to further explore in a working group may approach a Steering Committee member of appropriate portfolio as listed in the Handbook. That member will review the idea with the Steering Committee then report back to the parents, and if the idea is endorsed, act as or designate the group's liaison. The entire SAGE community should be made aware of a working group or subcommittee's formation when endorsed by the Steering Committee. Working groups and subcommittees should ensure they consult with school administrator and teachers.

The decision whether to create a working group or subcommittee falls on the Steering Committee. Working groups are ideal for one-time decisions, whereas subcommittees are best suited for continual decision making (e.g., Art Enhancement and Global Enhancement subcommittees).

At the first meeting of the working group or subcommittee a communication chair should be chosen who may direct questions to the Steering Committee, and is responsible for keeping the subcommittee up to date with the group's meetings and progress. The working group or subcommittee chair will report to the Steering Committee when the working group wishes to make recommendations.

To allow the Steering Committee to address as many initiatives as possible, working group reports are respectfully requested to have the following format:

- Single page summary forming the front page of the report
- Background information that led to workgroup formation
- Evidence supporting the initiative
- Initiative support for the SAGE Vision
- Recommendations for steering committee consideration
- Suggestions for practical implementation

Reports should be emailed to the co-chairs for forwarding to other Steering Committee members by the first Thursday of the month to ensure it is included in that month's agenda. This will enable informed discussion of the report at the earliest Steering Committee meeting, as time and priorities allow.

## Charitable Donations

Charitable donations can apply to anything that enhances students' education; therefore, they can apply to trips, materials, etc., but not to salaries, repairs, etc.

Donations can be made in the following way:

- Make cheques payable to the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Foundation;
- Write "Strathcona SAGE Program" on the Memo line;
- Give cheques to the Principal, who will forward them to the HWDSB.

If you want your donation to fund a particular class or item, please advise the Principal on submitting the cheque.

A charitable receipt can also be made available for new supplies donated to the program that are valued over twenty-five dollars (\$25). Used supplies with an agreed upon value of one hundred dollars (\$100) or more are also eligible for a charitable receipt (a third party expert valuation is needed).

## 8.0 Communications

Communications within SAGE are essential to its success. We hope to provide everyone with clear and complete information in a timely manner, which families can use to get the most out of the program. Our communications plans include:

- Email groups for each grade as well as a general email group for all SAGE families. These groups are facilitated via Google Groups for general use, announcements and discussions. This group is restricted to members of the SAGE community
- A newsletter (The SAGE Leaf) to announce upcoming events, class programs and requests for help
- A [Web site](#) to provide information and resources to families and teachers, as well as to provide information about SAGE to the public
- Communication between teachers and volunteers, either directly, via the Class Representative or through Enhancement Meetings
- Various social media outlets including a [Friends of SAGE Facebook group](#) and Twitter ([@SAGEhamont](#))

## Glossary

There is a lot of terminology specific to SAGE that is often discussed with the assumption that the terms are understood by all. This is obviously not the case for everyone, especially those new to SAGE, so some of the more significant terminology has been included here.

### AGM (Annual General Meeting)

The Annual General Meeting occurs in May of each year and the attendance of all SAGE families is requested.

The meeting provides a summary of the events and goings-on of the current school year as well as providing a roadmap for the upcoming year.

Elections for open positions on the Steering Committee are also held at this meeting to ensure a smooth transition between incoming and outgoing members.

### Art Enhancement

Art Enhancement is a subcommittee (AEC) whose mandate is to ensure that art is a core component of the SAGE curriculum. Specifically, the AEC works on creating cross-graded (all grades) art activities throughout the year to supplement the curriculum in the classroom. The AEC is also tasked with hosting the annual Art Gala and helping to organize trips to the Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH).

## Art Gala

SAGE students visit the Art Gallery of Hamilton several times each year and participate in multiple creative endeavours during their visits. The culmination of their efforts are presented at the annual Art Gala in June. Specific time and place are determined by the Art Enhancement committee and promoted to the SAGE community.

## Enhancement

Enhancement is short for Enhancement meeting. Enhancement Meetings occur twice a year, typically in October and January, according to individual teachers' needs and schedules. They provide opportunities for the teacher and families to discuss the curriculum and brainstorm how it can best be delivered and enhanced by using volunteer knowledge and expertise, skills and resources. Families have a chance to share ideas and discover ways to participate.

## Gatherings

Time is set aside each week for students from all grades, together with teachers and families, to meet and learn, both about Arts and Global Education, but also about fellowship and sharing. The underlying goal of the Gatherings is to support community and friendship, while providing mentoring and leadership opportunities amongst the students. Families are always welcome and invited to attend Gatherings.

## Global Enhancement

Global Enhancement is a subcommittee (GEC) focused on culturally-specific and environmental topics & issues. Their mandate is to help teachers find



ways of incorporating field trips, activities, and other materials for use in the classroom that relate to global enhancement. The GEC is focused on inspiring children to do “good works” in the world and share the results with their classmates.

## STEAM Lab

The Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math Lab is a parent-run space to provide curriculum enhancements for teachers in SAGE and Main. It is an ideal opportunity for parents and caregivers to share their personal interests and skills with students in small activities and labs as part of a weekly scheduled program.

## Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is mandated to provide the volunteer administration needed to ensure the effective operation of the SAGE Program, working towards the implementation of the SAGE Vision, and facilitate families’ involvement in all aspects of the Program. The Steering Committee is comprised of twelve elected members and meets on the third Thursday of each month. Meetings are open and everyone is welcome.

## Vision

When SAGE was originally formed, a vision of what the program should be was created. This vision has shifted and morphed over time, but the core tenets still ring true: To spark in each child a passion for learning, a creative spirit and a commitment to community and the environment, in a child-centred classroom that is enriched by the arts, enhanced by innovative teaching, supported by strong home and school collaboration, and rooted in appreciation

for the differences around us. The Steering Committee, school staff and administration all work to ensure that the SAGE vision underlays all aspects of the curriculum.

# Appendix A

## SAGE Steering Committee hierarchy

