



Dawn Danko
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Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
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March 13, 2023

Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
315 Front Street, 14th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 0B8

Re: Continue Learning Recovery Funding

Dear Minister Lecce,

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Trustees are engaged in the budget development process for the 2023-24 school year and are considering the potential changes in funding that may have significant impacts on school board operations and HWDSB students.

Trustees acknowledge the critical importance of COVID-19 funding provided by the Ministry of Education over the past few years, including the *COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund* for the current school year. We respectfully request that the funding be extended for the 2023-24 school year.

In 2022-23, the Ministry of Education funded HWDSB with a one-time allocation of \$7.1 million to be used for temporary additional staffing supports. The majority of these funds are directly connected to additional staff positions that support student learning and well-being. The teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants, and other education workers tied to this funding are responding to learning loss and are actively working to help students regain important academic, emotional, and social skills.

As you know, the pandemic is not over, and the impacts of the pandemic will be felt for some time. The changes in student learning and well-being have developed over multiple years of disruptions during the pandemic and learning recovery efforts need to continue. The additional staff members who were made possible by the *COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund* are making a difference, but we need more time to truly support students through their recovery.

In anticipation of the Grants for Student Needs (GSNs) announcement, we urge the Minister of Education to extend the *COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund* for school boards for the 2023-24 school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Danko".

Dawn Danko
Chair of the Board