

AGENDA: 6:30 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: March 24, 2025

Reports from Trustee Special Committees:

7. Audit – March 18, 2025
8. Program – March 20, 2025
9. Finance & Facilities – March 27, 2025

Reports from Legislated Committees:

10. Special Education Advisory Committee – March 26, 2025

Reports from Community Advisory Committees:

11. Faith Community Advisory Committee - March 18, 2025
12. Report from Committee of the Whole (Private) – April 7, 2025
13. Oral Reports from Liaison Committees:
 - A. City/School Board Liaison Committee
 - B. Hamilton-Wentworth Council of Home & School Associations
 - C. Hamilton Foundation for Student Success
 - D. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

14. Adjournment

Trustees: Kathy Archer*, Becky Buck, Sabreina Dahab*, Dawn Danko, Amanda Fehrman, Maria Felix Miller, Graeme Noble, Paul Tut, Todd White, Elizabeth Wong, Abby Zaitley. Student Trustees Oluwafikunayomi (Fikun) Alabi, Victoria Li, and Shakowennakara:tats Daunte Hillen.

*electronic participation, ^(R) regrets

1. Call to Order

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Trustees Wong/Fehrman moved that the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

3. Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLUTION #25-20: Trustees Buck/Danko moved that the Minutes from February 24, 2025, be confirmed.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

4. Program Committee

RESOLUTION #25-21: Trustees Fehrman/Buck moved that the Program Committee report from February 19, 2025, be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

5. Policy Committee

RESOLUTION #25-22: Trustees Dahab/Danko moved that the Policy Committee report from March 6, 2025, be approved, including the Medical Health Supports Policy.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

6. Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

RESOLUTION #25-23: Trustees Danko/Tut moved that the Special Education Advisory Committee report from February 26, 2025, be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

7. Student Trustees 2025-2026 (Election Results)

RESOLUTION #25-24: Trustees White/Fehrman moved that the following students be approved as Student Trustees with HWDSB for the term of office from August 1, 2025, to July 31, 2026.

- Sanad Bizanti, Ancaster High Secondary School (Student Trustee)
- Evelyn Watson, Orchard Park Secondary School (Student Trustee)

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

8. Hamilton Foundation of Student Success

Trustee Fehrman provided an update noting that Prom Project takes place on April 5, 2025, at Sir Winston Churchill. Donations will be accepted until March 28, 2025. Please visit www.promprojecthamilton.ca for more information.

9. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Trustee Buck provided the following update:

- Paul Calandra is the new Minister of Education.
- The Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium is being held May 1 and 2, 2025.
- The Healthy Democracy Student Leadership Award: A \$1,000 grant will be awarded to one graduating English public school student in each of OPSBA's five regions.
- CSBA Congress and National Trustee Gathering on Indigenous Education is being held July 2 to 5, 2025, in Winnipeg.
- OPSBA Central West Regional Meeting: Takes place April 5, 2025, and is being hosted by HWDSB at the Education Centre.
- OPSBA Annual General Meeting: Takes place June 12 to 14, 2025, in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

10. Student Trustees' and Shakowennakara:tats report

Shakowennakara: tats Hillen provided a verbal update:

- Participated in various events recently which highlighted the power of our community, our student voice and equity focus, and education. These experiences have reinforced the importance of fostering inclusive spaces where students feel heard, valued and supported.
- Attended a Grade 8 to 9 progression professional development session where there was discussion about what a holistic approach to education means to students and how it can be implemented in secondary schools. The conversation focused on the importance of recognising students as whole individuals - not just academically, but also socially, emotionally and culturally.
- Attended the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre Parks International Day for the elimination of racism event on March 21, 2025. Speakers at the event reminded participants that anti racism work requires continuous effort, accountability and collaboration. The event reinforced the need to not only acknowledge systemic injustices but to actively work towards solutions that promote equity and inclusion in all spaces, including schools.
- March 22, 2025, marked World Water Day, and thanks were given to the many indigenous water keepers, water walkers, and water protectors who continue to advocate for clean, safe and accessible water.

Student Trustees Alabi and Li provided a verbal update:

- Attended the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards ceremony, which celebrated the incredible achievements of women across Hamilton.
- A special thank you to the hair stylists and barbers who generously offered free haircuts and styles to those in need at the Excel in Style event on March 15, 2025.
- Currently working with a student from the Niagara District School Board to compile and release a formal document outlining scholarships available to Canadian and non-Canadian students.
- Currently working with Secondary Student Senators to finalize the Trailblazer Summit taking place April 7, 2025.

Director Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini presented the [Director's Report](#) and highlighted the following:

- HWDSB in Action: Westdale's Skill Competition, and visits to Hill Park Learning Centre and Ancaster High School.
- HWDSB in the Community: Excel in Style at Bernie Custis, YWCA Women of Distinction.
- Community Leadership – King Charles III Coronation Medal: Congratulations to Trustee Archer on receiving this award for her work in the community. HWDSB is incredibly proud to celebrate this accomplishment with Trustee Archer, as we have witnessed some of the work that she has done for the community, including, as an example, ensuring students have backpacks and school supplies to return to school each school year start-up.
- ELLevate – A HWDSB Pilot Program:
 - Future readiness for every student
 - Improved literacy and numeracy for every student
 - Every student reaches their potential and builds their own future

11. Chair's Report

Chair Miller acknowledged and thanked the efforts of all our school-based staff for getting our students back into routines, back into the classroom for the remainder of the academic year with full energy following March break. Chair Miller also noted that a new Minister of Education has been appointed, Minister Paul Calandra, and encourages trustees to continue to build relationships with representatives of all levels of government in support of their communities.

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

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

7-1
COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: April 7, 2025

From: Audit Committee

Date of Meeting: Mar 18, 2025

The committee held a hybrid meeting from 6:07pm to 6:20pm on March 18, 2025, with Trustee Dawn Danko presiding.

Members: Trustees Dawn Danko, Paul Tut* and Todd White*. External Members: David Marks*, Caterina DeLuca* and Angela Zehr*. Also in attendance: Trustee Abby Zaitley*.

*Electronic participation, ^(R)Regrets

MONITORING ITEMS:

A. Update on School Board Sector Issues

Staff shared with the committee that the Provincial Government is scheduled to reconvene April 14th, 2025. As a result, the core education funding has not been shared and staff will provide an update at the June Audit Committee Meeting.

B. Update on Non-Board (External) Member Recruitment

Staff shared that recruiting efforts continue for a Non-Board (External) Member.

Respectfully submitted,
Dawn Danko, Chair of the Committee

Reference: [Committee Package](#) and [Recording](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: April 7, 2025

From: Program Committee

Date of Meeting: March 20, 2025

The committee held a hybrid meeting on March 20, 2025, at 6:00 pm with Trustee Amanda Fehrman presiding.

Members: Trustees Kathy Archer*, Becky Buck*, Sabreina Dahab, Amanda Fehrman and Elizabeth Wong*.

Also in attendance: Trustees Todd White* and Abby Zaitley.

* electronic participation, ^(R)regrets

MONITORING ITEM(S):

A. Human Rights and Equity Action Plan

Staff provided an update on the Human Rights and Equity Plan noting the six key priorities and commitments identified below:

Indigenous Educational Wellness

- Focusing on the importance of aligning and integrating the [Indigenous Education Circle Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025](#) and [Human Rights and Equity Action Plan 2023-2028](#), staff is working on implementing the [Indigenous Education Policy](#) including understanding the system's responsibilities as treaty partners.

Inclusive Classroom Pedagogies and Learning Environments

- Staff have implemented a cross-departmental focus on creating the conditions for learning, embedding identity-affirming classroom-based teaching and learning strategies and responding to student needs. This cross-departmental collaboration includes the Indigenous Education, Social Work, Equity, Human Rights, Special Education and Program Departments.

Dismantling Anti-Black Racism

- Staff have been working to build school leaders and staff capacity and knowledge to identify, interrupt and address anti-Black racism in both learning and working environments.
- Educators continue to be engaged in learning about through the Critically Conscious Practitioner Inquiry (CCPI) process - a process whereby educational practitioners lead their own inquiry within the context of building their critical consciousness and supporting the building of critical consciousness for their students

Anti-racist and anti-oppression learning and work environments

- The focus has been on implementing the plan to action the Board motion by creating awareness and understanding of different kinds of discrimination and hate, focusing on a) Islamophobia, Anti-Muslim Hate and Anti-Palestinian Racism, and b) Antisemitism. All school-based and service staff participated in these professional development opportunities.

A culture of addressing human rights barriers, discrimination, and harassment.

- The Human Rights Office (HRO) has developed the Human Rights and Hate-Based Incidents Response Tracking Tool to document incidents that occur in schools and how schools are responding to these incidents.
- The Human Rights Office works in collaboration with other departments to build the capacity of staff in understanding our roles and responsibilities under the Human Rights Policy and the Ontario Human Rights Code. E.g. This year, the HRO collaborated with Special Education, Equity and Inclusion department to develop a three-part learning series for principals and vice-principals on the Duty to Accommodate, including building leaders' capacity on understanding on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), understanding ableism, developing and implementing Individual Education Plans as well as the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process

Employment equity, diversity, and inclusion

- The We All Count: Staff Voice Survey was created to provide HWDSB with insight from our staff and act as a checkpoint to find the supports and programs they need to enhance staff well-being. Staff are gathering both demographic and workplace climate data to gain a deeper understanding of our staff's experiences. Overall, 54% of staff participated.

B. Multi-Year Strategic Plan Progress Report

Staff presented the first progress report on the implementation of three specific goals within the 2024-2025 Board Improvement Plan (BIP). This report focused on the progress that we have made in relation to the following three goals of the [Board Improvement Plan, 2024-2025](#):

- Improved literacy achievement for every student
- Improved math achievement for every student
- Improved preparedness for the future for every student

Staff shared a detailed report highlighting multiple examples of improvement throughout HWDSB including:

- Staff have fully implemented K-2 Acadience Reading Screener and assessed every FDK Year 2 – Grade 2 student in HWDSB,
- Implemented a secondary reading program (Wilson Reading). Of 93 students who participated in the program semester one, 68% or 64 of 93 students achieved 4 of 4 credits,
- Developed a professional learning community (PLC) for educators who are actively participating in year two of a four-year NBE3 Pilot Project, a careful and intentional rollout of the grade 11 English course, Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices.
- Increase in the percentage of students requesting to take Grade 12 Math, Grade 11 and Grade 12 Science courses next school year compared to this year,
- Over 110 students earned credits through Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) and are now on track to graduate,
- Increase in the number of students who successfully completed the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) first semester,
- Over 1,600 teachers have participated in math professional development since September! In addition, 61 elementary teachers have completed Additional Qualification (AQ) in Mathematics (Part 1 or 2),
- Over 400 students participated in the Math Academy, which is an after-school small group learning opportunity leading to closing gaps in student understanding,
- Increase in teachers reporting an increased understanding of the mathematics curriculum, increased confidence in delivering the mathematics program, and increased understanding of High Impact Instruction Practices (HIIP),
- Increase in students reporting a greater understanding of key mathematical concepts specifically in the areas of adding and subtracting in Grade 3 and multiplying and dividing in Grade 6.

The second monitoring report related to our goals of engagement and well-being will be shared at the Program Committee meeting in May. In the fall, staff will provide a detailed overview reflecting on all 5 goals or various performance indicators, where there is growth and where there is improvement at the Program Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Fehrman, Chair of the Committee

Reference: [Committee Package](#), [Recording](#), [Presentation](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: April 7, 2025

From: Finance and Facilities Committee

Date of Meeting: March 27, 2025

The committee held a hybrid meeting on March 27, 2025, at 6:00 pm with Trustee Paul Tut presiding.

Members: Trustees Dawn Danko ^(R), Amanda Fehrman ^(R), Kathy Archer*, Maria Felix Miller*, Paul Tut. Also in attendance was Trustee Abby Zaitley*.

*Electronic participation, ^(R) Regrets

ACTION ITEMS**A. 2025-2026 School-based Staffing Projections Report**

Staff presented the 2025-2026 preliminary full-time equivalent school-based staffing positions. This preliminary staffing report represents the base level of staffing upon which the budget is built. Staff noted for the committee one minor change to the secondary staffing of 944.49 to 938.49 based on enrolment projections. It was also noted that secondary teachers, Early Childhood Educators, Educational Assistants have decreased from the 2024-2025 school year staffing levels and that Principal/Vice-Principal, Office Administrator and Caretaking staffing levels remain the same as they are in the 2024/2025 school year. In April 2025, staff anticipate the Ministry of Education (Ministry) will release the 2025-2026 Core Education Funding which provides funding details for the HWDSB. The staffing levels presented in the report are compliant with collective agreements and enable.

On the motion of Kathy Archer, the Finance and Facilities Committee RECOMMENDS: **That the Finance and Facilities Committee approve the preliminary allocation of the following full-time equivalent positions for the purpose of 2025-26 school-based staffing:**

Elementary Teachers	2,147.00
Secondary Teachers	938.49
Early Childhood Educators	261.00
Educational Assistants	748.50
Principals/Vice Principals	163.00
School Office Administration	207.50
School Custodial	357.00

CARRIED.

B. Key Parameters and Assumptions to Guide the Development of the 2025-2026 Budget

Staff noted that the parameters, guidelines and key components will continue as determined and that although the projected enrolment has changed slightly since the last report, no additional parameters need to be added.

On the motion of Kathy Archer, the Finance and Facilities Committee RECOMMENDS: **That the Finance and Facilities Committee approve the Key Parameters and Assumptions to Guide the Development of the 2025-2026 Budget including:**

Enrolment Projection

	2024-25 Revised Budget ADE	2025-26 Preliminary Projected Budget ADE	Increase (Decrease) ADE	Increase (Decrease) %
Elementary	37,789.50	37,941.00	151.50	0.40%
Secondary	14,477.75	14,607.00	129.25	0.89%
Total	52,267.25	52,548.00	280.75	0.54%

Revenues

- Core Education Funding will be calculated to reflect central collective agreement changes with no other projected change in the total grant base: subject to Ministry confirmation.

Expenditure

- Salaries, benefits and staffing to reflect provincial legislation, and collective agreements in place.
- To provide for stability in the system and minimize in-year budget adjustments a contingency of \$1,000,000 will be set aside for unforeseen events that may arise.

Allocation Parameters

- Ensure the allocation of resources supports the HWDSB's Mission, Values, Strategic Directions and operational plans.
- The Ministry's revenue allocation framework will provide a useful reference for the allocation of Board resources on all major expenditure categories.
- Compliance with balanced budget requirements and the Ministry's renewed enveloping framework, ensuring care is exercised that funding associated with specific Ministry initiatives is allocated for the purpose designated.
- Where staff reductions are necessary, statutory positions are to be given priority for inclusion in the budget. Statutory positions to be calculated as the number required for Ministry class size requirements or collective agreement compliance.
- Where enhancements to the budget is possible, funding will be allocated to initiatives included in the Board's Priorities.

CARRIED.**MONITORING ITEMS****C. Interim Financial Status Report – February 28, 2025**

The interim financial status report was presented by staff on information available and assumptions made as of February 28, 2025. Budget to actual trends were reviewed in order to forecast the Board's August 31, 2025, year-end financial position. The forecast for spending as of August 31, 2025, based on expenditures and revenue as of February 28, 2025, is balanced and no surplus or deficit is projected. As new information is received or as assumptions change, the subsequent Interim Financial Reports will be updated accordingly.

D. Capital Projects Update

Staff presented the quarterly updated summary of all the capital projects in various phases. Staff continue to deliver several capital projects, which include school renewal works and new school construction projects. It was noted that some factors impact the progress of capital projects, including unforeseen site conditions, delays with Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning equipment (and other materials) and asbestos abatement.

E. 2025-2026 Budget Development

Staff shared that the Core Education funding has not been released to date but is anticipated to arrive mid-April. The budget process is underway, and staff are meeting the established timelines.

Respectfully submitted,
Trustee Paul Tut, Chair of the Meeting

Reference: [Committee Package](#) and [Recording](#)

Committee Report

Presented to: Board

Meeting Date: Monday, April 7, 2025

From: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025

The Committee held a meeting in room 308, Education Centre on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, beginning at 5:32 pm, ending at 7:41 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, Julie Armstrong, Centre for Diverse Learners, Lindsay Bray, McMaster Children's Hospital Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Portfolio, SEAC Vice Chair, Lynn Vanderbrug, Lynwood Charlton Centre, Melanie Roberts, Association for Bright Children of Ontario, Nancy Silva Khan, Autism Ontario (Central West Chapter), Sarah Pennington, Community Living Hamilton, Susi Owen, CNIB Hamilton and Niagara.

Regrets

Maria Felix Miller, HWDSB Chair, Trustee Ward 3

Guests

Abby Zaitley, HWDSB Trustee, Ward 4, Chris Tondreau, Interim HWETL Vice President (virtual)

MONITORING ITEMS:

A. Physical Accessibility

Dave Anderson, Senior Manager, Facility Services, Amie Myszkowski, Manager, Capital Projects provided an overview of the quarterly capital updates, referencing new builds and upgrades to current schools. Staff noted that the challenge is delivering what is needed due to funding constraints, and timelines for approvals by the City and the Ministry, however, despite the challenges, improvements have been made in terms of accessibility. The committee will receive annual updates going forward.

B. Barrier Free Physical Learning Environments Policy

Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity, Kimberly Chute, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity received feedback from the committee regarding the policy.

C. Member's Update

Dawn Danko, Trustee Ward 7

- Program Committee received an update on the elementary and secondary program strategy review. A consultant has been hired to conduct the review with outcomes expected Nov. 25th
- An update to the Medical Health Supports Policy was approved to align with PPM 161. The committee has also provided feedback on the Property Disposition and Educational Excursion Policies
- The Board of Trustees confirmed the following students as the newly elected Student Trustees for the 2025-2026 year – Sanad Bizanti, Ancaster High, Evelyn Watson, Orchard Park
- Daunte Hillen has been raised up by CC Rose and will continue as the Shakowennakará:tats for the 25/26 school year
- Prom Project will be held on Saturday April 5th from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at Sir Winston Churchill. The pop-up event provides students from across Hamilton with the opportunity to pick out formal wear for proms, graduations, banquets, and other special events, free of charge

Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity

- Autism Carnival to take place Saturday, April 26th 10:30-2:30 at the Education Centre
- Principal/Vice Principal learning continues – March session focused on supporting the IPRC process
- Continuing to hold monthly sessions for elementary and secondary Learning Resource Teachers and Special Class Teachers – great feedback from staff on their learning – will continue into next year
- In process of staffing and budget meetings – increased special classes for next year pending approval from Finance & Facilities Committee and Board of Trustees
- Parent Involvement Committee is holding a parent celebration on Saturday, May 31st 9:00 am – 2:00 pm at Sherwood Secondary School
- In the process of planning the Access Athletics events – Elementary, June 4th – Secondary, June 5th at Nora Henderson Secondary

Respectfully submitted by
Judy Colantino, SEAC Chair

11-1
Committee Report

Presented to: Board

Meeting date: April 7, 2025

From: Faith Community Advisory
Committee

Meeting date: March 18, 2025

The committee held a meeting on March 18, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

Members: Geoffrey Cameron, Charles Chiarelli, Pooja Mathuria, Rabbi Miriam Wajnberg, Sukhi Dhillon, Nick Sahami, Mahendra Deonarian and Lauraline Gardner.

Regrets: Meaghan Dummer, Ala Mohamed, Mishel Tahir and Trustee Becky Buck.

MONITORING ITEMS:

A. Election of Chair/Co-Chairs

Nick Sahami and Charles Chiarelli offered to Co-Chair the Committee.

B. Religious and Creed Observances and Days of Significance

Superintendent Smith provided a copy of the 2024-2025 Religious and Creed Observances and Days of Significance list which is currently available on the HWDSB website to all Committee members as a reference point as the Committee begins the process of establishing the dates for the 2025-2026 school year. Each member was asked to review the dates pertaining to their Religion or Creed and were advised that draft dates for 2025-2026 will be shared with the Committee for their review and input in the coming weeks with a focus on having a comprehensive list established for May and a final draft completed for June.

C. Religious Accommodation Procedure and Parent Guide

Superintendent Smith facilitated a conversation about Religious Accommodation and Committee Members were provided a copy of the Parent Guide: Religious and Creed-based Accommodations along with Parent and Student Information Cards. Member feedback was requested regarding their content to support an update to these documents that is expected to be effective next school year. Superintendent Smith advised that a Microsoft Form will be shared with the Committee as a mechanism for sharing their feedback.

D. Updates: Grade 6 Holocaust Education and Prayer Locations in schools

Superintendent Smith provided background regarding the Ministry mandated Grade 6 Holocaust Education and an update to the Committee regarding the Grade 6 Teacher Learning that has occurred in conjunction with Jewish Community partners. Superintendent Smith confirmed that prayer locations are available in all schools recognizing the significance of prayer in religious practice.

E. Advisory Discussion

Superintendent Smith facilitated a conversation regarding Gender Equity and Gender Expression Procedures. Committee Members posed questions which promoted further discussion and Superintendent Smith took questions away for follow-up and further discussion.

Respectfully submitted by
Charles Chiarelli and Nick Sahami
Co-Chairs