

**AGENDA: 6:00 pm**

**REVISED**

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: February 23, 2026](#)

Unfinished Business from Board Meeting held February 23, 2026

- 13A. [Written Notice of Motion: Enhancing School-Area Traffic Safety for Students in Ward 4 \(Trustee Zaitley\)](#)

**New Business – Board Meeting March 9, 2026**

Delegations:

- A. Alex Johnstone re: Guiding Principles - Program Strategy Review, Guiding Principle: Equity of Access
- B. Carolyn Proulx-Wootton re: Guiding Principles - Program Strategy Review, Guiding Principle: Equity of Access
- C. Dr. Jessica Braimoh re: Guiding Principles - Program Strategy Review

7. [Correspondence: Avon Maitland DSB re: Potential Changes to English Public School Board Governance](#)

Reports from Trustee Special Committees:

8. [Program – February 19, 2026](#)
9. [Finance & Facilities – February 24, 2026](#)

Reports from Legislative Committees:

10. [Parent Involvement Committee – February 10, 2026](#)

11. 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***

12. Report from Committee of the Whole (Private) – March 9, 2026

13. Written Notices of Motion

B. Letters to the Premier, Minister of Education & Ombudsman (Trustee Buck)

14. Oral Reports from Liaison Committees:

A. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

15. Oral Reports from:

A. Student Trustees' and Shakowennakarátats

B. Director's Report

C. Chair's Report

16. Adjournment

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

\*electronic participation, <sup>(R)</sup> regrets

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### 1. Call to Order

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 6:18 p.m.

**RESOLUTION #26-13:** Trustees Fehrman/Danko moved that Trustees Buck, Tut and Wong be approved as absent for the February 23, 2026, Board Meeting.

**CARRIED**

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

### 2. Approval of the Agenda

**RESOLUTION #26-14:** Trustees Zaitley/Dahab moved that the agenda be approved.

**CARRIED**

Student Trustee Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

### 3. DELEGATION(S): related to Student Transportation to School and Road Safety

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. Daniel Chong – from the Daily School Routes, a non-profit organization shared of the growing number of children walking to school each day and the risks that come with it. How can we support the formation of walking groups at an elementary school community or how do we get more students taking the bus who are eligible.
- B. Jordan Fudge – a parent of two children at Queen Mary Elemenary School shared her very personal experiences of kids walking to school every day and safety concerns due to traffic and is hopeful solutions can happen from the Daily School Routes.
- C. Meaghan Palynchuk – a parent of a student at Queen Mary Elementary school, also shared her very personal experiences of walking to school and the unfortunate and sometimes dangers of doing so and is here today advocating for change.

### 4. Confirmation of the Minutes

**RESOLUTION #26-15:** Trustees Fehrman/Zaitley moved that the Minutes from February 2, 2026, be confirmed.

**CARRIED**

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

## 5. Policy Committee

**RESOLUTION #26-16:** Trustees Dahab/White moved that the Policy Committee report from February 5, 2026, be approved, including the Use of School Board Resources During Elections Policy (amended) and the Student Behaviour and Bias-Free Progressive Discipline Policy.

**CARRIED**

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

## 6. Special Education Advisory Committee

**RESOLUTION #26-17:** Trustees Danko/Zaitley moved that the Special Education Advisory Committee report from January 28, 2026, be received.

**CARRIED**

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

## 7. Faith Community Advisory Committee

**RESOLUTION #26-18:** Trustees Dahab/Zaitley moved that the Faith Community Advisory Committee report from February 3, 2026, be received.

**CARRIED**

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

## 8. School Year Calendar 2026-2027 Elementary & Secondary

The Draft School Year Calendar 2026-2027 was approved in November for public consultation. There were over 1800 responses with 83% being parents, caregivers and guardians. Overall, there was support for the proposed draft calendars, with most respondents indicating their support for the Professional Activity Days as outlined. The 2026-2027 School Year Calendars (Elementary and Secondary) have been prepared in consultation with the School Year Calendar Advisory Committee and endorsed by Executive Council. The Calendars comply with Ontario *Regulation 304*, School Year Calendars and Professional Activity Days.

**RESOLUTION #26-19:** Trustees Fehrman/Dahab moved that the Draft 2026-2027 School Year Calendars be approved for submission to the Ministry of Education.

**CARRIED**

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

## 9. Resolution into Committee of the Whole (Private Session)

**RESOLUTION #26-20:** Trustees Fehrman/White moved that the Board move to Committee of the Whole (Private Session) be approved for:

- 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).

**CARRIED**

Due to a power outage at 9:30 pm the meeting adjourned.

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

## **Notice of Motion: Enhancing School-Area Traffic Safety for Students in Ward 4**

### **Trustee Zaitley**

**Whereas** student safety around schools in Hamilton's lower east city has become an increasing concern due to higher traffic volumes, narrow streets, and limited drop-off and pick-up space. In one survey, 78% of Ontario parents reported witnessing unsafe driving behaviours in school zones, and only 37% consider the roads around their child's school to be safe (CAA South Central Ontario, 2022).

**Whereas** families and school communities in Ward 4 have raised concerns regarding incidents involving vehicles and students, underscoring the need for proactive, collaborative approaches to school-area safety

**Whereas** the City of Hamilton and community partners such as the Daily School Route have experience and expertise in school-area traffic safety and active transportation initiatives (walking, biking, using a wheelchair, etc).

**Be it resolved** that the Board initiate exploratory discussions with the Ward 4 City Councillor's office and the Daily School Routes Program Manager to identify opportunities for collaboration related to active transportation, and school-area traffic concerns for Ward 4 schools, with a view to the 2026/2027 school year using the existing ward 12 initiative as a framework.

**Be it further resolved** that staff report back to the Board by spring

March 2, 2026

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier's Office  
Room 281, Main Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5

And

The Honourable Paul Calandra  
Minister of Education, Ministry of Education  
315 Front Street West, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 0B8

Re: Request for Provincial Consultation and Transparency Regarding Potential Changes to English Public School Board Governance

Dear Premier Doug Ford and Minister Paul Calandra,

On behalf of the Trustees of the Avon Maitland District School Board, I am writing to respectfully request that the Government of Ontario undertake a comprehensive, province-wide consultation process before moving forward with any changes to the governance structure of English public school boards.

Recent public statements indicating that the Ministry is considering eliminating the role of democratically elected English public school trustees have generated significant concern among school boards, families, and communities across the province. Trustees serve as an essential democratic link between local communities and the public education system. Any proposal to fundamentally alter or remove this role would represent a major shift in the governance of education in Ontario and warrants careful study, thoughtful analysis, and open dialogue.

Given the magnitude of this potential change, we respectfully ask the government to clearly demonstrate how it has arrived at its current thinking. Specifically, we request that the Ministry make public the research, evidence, data analysis, policy reviews, stakeholder input, and performance evaluations that have informed its consideration of altering or eliminating the role of elected trustees. Transparency regarding the rationale, objectives, and anticipated outcomes of this proposal is essential to maintaining public trust and ensuring informed dialogue.

The Trustees of the Avon Maitland District School Board believe that decisions of this significance must be supported by transparent research and meaningful engagement with stakeholders. We respectfully request that the government initiate a formal consultation process that includes school boards, parents, educators, students, First Nations representatives, and the broader public. Such a process would help ensure that any future governance model is grounded in evidence and reflects the needs and priorities of Ontario's diverse communities.

As a board serving a large and predominantly rural geographic area, we also wish to emphasize the critical importance of the democratically elected trustee role in ensuring that rural perspectives are represented in education decision-making. Trustees provide an essential local voice for communities whose priorities and challenges may differ significantly from those experienced in larger urban centres. Issues such as student transportation, long travel distances, rural school viability, access to programming, and community connectivity are often best understood by locally elected representatives who live and work in those communities. Preserving avenues for rural representation helps ensure that provincial education policies reflect the realities of students and families across all regions of Ontario.

We are also concerned that removing English public school trustees could have unintended consequences for representation and accountability within the system. In many boards, legislated First Nations representation and student trustees play an important role in ensuring diverse voices are heard in decision-making. The loss of elected trustees could impact these mechanisms that currently provide important perspectives at the governance table.

We are aware that the Waterloo District School Board has written to the Ombudsman's Office to request an investigation into the fairness, transparency, and accountability of the process used to implement changes to the school board governance model, and we are in full support of this request.

The Trustees of the Avon Maitland District School Board remain committed to working collaboratively with the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Government of Ontario to support a strong, transparent, and responsive public education system. We believe that transparency, evidence-based decision-making, and meaningful consultation will best serve students, families, and communities across the province.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in any consultation process or discussion regarding the future governance of Ontario's public education system.

Sincerely,



Michael Bannerman  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
Avon Maitland District School Board

cc: AMDSB Trustees  
MPP Lisa Thompson  
MPP Matthew Rae  
Local Municipalities  
Local Media Outlets  
Ontario Public School Boards' Association and Member Boards  
AMDSB Parent Involvement Committee  
AMDSB Special Education Advisory Committee  
AMDSB Parent Councils Chairs

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: March 9, 2026

From: Program Committee

Date of Meeting: February 19, 2026

The committee held a hybrid meeting on February 19, 2026, at 6:19 pm with Trustee Fehrman presiding.

Members: Trustees Kathy Archer\*, Becky Buck\*, Sabreina Dahab, Amanda Fehrman, and Abby Zaitley.

\* electronic participation, <sup>(R)</sup> regrets

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**ACTION ITEM(S):**

**A. Guiding Principles – Program Strategy Review**

Staff presented the draft Guiding Principles developed in response to the Program Strategy Review, outlining seven principles designed to guide future program decisions across HWDSB. They emphasized that the principles are grounded in the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and shaped by Trustee feedback from the December meeting. The intent of the Guiding Principles is to serve as the basis for evaluating the third-party recommendations and developing an implementation plan to be presented in May to the Program Committee.

The draft Guiding Principles presented:

- 1. Student Achievement and Well-Being
- 2. Continuous Improvement and Alignment to Student Outcomes
- 3. Evidence-Informed Decision Making
- 4. Equity of Access
- 5. Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability
- 6. Inclusive Community Engagement and Lived Experience
- 7. Phased and Communicated Implementation

During discussions, the Committee requested that staff make minor revisions to the Guiding Principles to clarify language, ensure creativity, and emphasize long-term feasibility.

On the motion of Trustee Dahab, the Program Committee **recommends that the Draft Guiding Principles to respond to the review of the Elementary Program Strategy, Secondary Programs Strategy and the French Immersion Location Strategy and Application Process be approved as amended (as attached).**

**CONSENT.**

**MONITORING ITEM(S):**

**B. Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, 2024-2027 (update)**

Staff provided an update on the implementation of the Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan (2024–2027), emphasizing its system-wide integration across instructional practice, school culture, and operational procedures. The presentation highlighted ongoing work to embed safety, well-being, belonging, and identity-affirming practices through coordinated efforts with Program, Equity & Human Rights, Specialized Services, and school administrators. Staff described current initiatives such as the reimagined wellness resources, trauma-informed approaches, strengthened incident-response practices, consistent reporting expectations, and the inaugural Secure Schools Awareness Month.

Looking ahead, staff emphasized continued monitoring using multiple data sources—including school climate surveys, student questionnaires, and the upcoming parent/caregiver survey—to evaluate impact and guide next steps. The action plan’s future work will include deepening cross-department collaboration, refining procedures based on feedback, and supporting schools with responsive strategies that reflect diverse community needs.

On the motion of Trustee Dahab, the Program Committee received the Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, 2024-2027.

### C. Suspension & Expulsion Data, 2024-2025

Staff presented the annual update on suspension and expulsion data, highlighting overall suspension rates, grade-level trends, and areas requiring focused attention. Overall, staff reported that overall suspension rates remain stable; however, identified an increase in suspensions among students with exceptionalities.

Staff remain focused on prevention, belonging, and early intervention as outlined in the Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, and approval of the Student Behaviour and Bias-Free Progressive Discipline Policy, which will provide the framework for the development of the forthcoming procedure.

The committee requested follow-up from staff regarding historical suspension data for students with exceptionalities. Staff further committed to an ongoing review of individual suspension files involving students with exceptionalities to identify common patterns and inform further principal and vice-principal learning.

On the motion of Trustee Dahab, the Program Committee received the 2024-2025 Suspension and Expulsion report.

### D. DELEGATIONS

The Chair welcomed the delegates to the meeting and thanked them for bringing their voices forward to Trustees. Delegates shared their perspectives as briefly outlined below – the [meeting recording](#) can be reviewed to listen to the delegates remarks. The Chair also noted for the committee that two (2) written delegations were received: SAGE Quest and Elementary & Secondary Program Strategy & French Immersion Location Strategy and Application Process.

- Carolyn Proulx-Wootton & Sharon Harker, parents to students in the Sage Quest program shared their thoughts, noting the program is where young people learn not just curriculum but citizenship, leadership and civic engagements. Sage Quest is a place where students who feel different creatively, socially and emotionally, find their longing.
- Michelle Poirier, a parent in Ward 3, highlighted her experiences regarding the proposed guiding principles and findings in the Malatest report that recommend students engage in dynamic and inclusive learning environments. She noted that the Sage Quest programs help develop social awareness and engage future citizens.
- Sarah Milmine, a parent and a Director of Children's Clinical Programs at Now What? Support Services highlighted that the Sage Quest program is where supports for students are implemented in real time and where they find a sense of belonging every day. The program is not separate from inclusion; it's a living example of what inclusion can look like when the right structures exist.
- Lisa Wong, a parent of a child in French Immersion, brought forth her concerns of the impact of the decision to change the starting point for FI and possibly excluding the teaching of various subjects. She believes language acquisition begins early; learning to read and write in grade 1 when it's developmentally appropriate.
- Laura Mulder, a parent of two elementary-age children enrolled in French Immersion, highlighted her experiences of how easily children are bilingual and trilingual, switching naturally from languages. She recommends that the Board should maintain the current entry point of Grade 1 or consider entry as early as SK to be in line with other boards in the province.
- Brian Pohlman, a parent of a student in Grade 1 French Immersion, shared that the Malatest study lacked sufficient, representative data, with most responses coming from only two areas and that the focus group revealed greater social issues beyond the scope of the survey. He noted that the FI data presented is based on perception, not reality.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amanda Fehrman, Chair of the Committee

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

## **Responding to the Recommendations from the Program Strategy Review of the Elementary Program Strategy, Secondary Program Strategy & Elementary French Immersion Location Strategy and Application Process**

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### **Principles for 2040: Designing Today for Tomorrow's Students**

The Draft Guiding Principles listed below are intended to provide a consistent future-forward framework for responding to the recommendations from the 2025 Program Strategy Review of the Elementary Program Strategy, Secondary Program Strategy and Elementary French Immersion Location Strategy and Application Process.

These principles support HWDSB's five pillars of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and goals of the Board Improvement Plan, ensuring a coherent and comprehensive approach to program review, development, implementation and decision-making. As we look ahead, we will be creative in our thinking and our approaches to ensure we look at all possibilities for our students who will enter Kindergarten this upcoming school year and will graduate in 2040. Joy, Trust, Compassion, and Dignity continue to be HWDSB's core Values that underpin each Guiding Principle, guiding the process of program development and review for the graduating class of 2040.

#### **1. Student Achievement and Well-Being**

Students will engage in dynamic, inclusive learning that fosters achievement, well-being, and joy in learning. All programs will support diverse pathways and enhance the overall student experience.

#### **2. Continuous Improvement and Alignment with Student Outcomes**

Program offerings will directly support the [HWDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) and [Board Improvement Plan](#) priorities in literacy, numeracy, and future preparedness<sup>1</sup>. Programs will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect student voice, post-secondary options, and local workforce and community needs.

Future preparedness is defined as preparing every student with the skills, knowledge and experiences needed to thrive in a complex, and changing world. Future preparedness ensure we collaborate with students and families to ensure students have what they need to build their individual pathway.

#### **3. Evidence-Informed Decision Making**

Program creation, expansion and closure decisions will be guided by evidence. We will use qualitative and quantitative data to monitor outcomes, inform improvements, and ensure resources are distributed equitably to meet the diverse needs of HWDSB students.

Ethical Indigenous education research will be conducted in partnership with local Indigenous communities, ensuring reciprocity, accountability, and full respect for Indigenous data sovereignty (OCAP).

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<sup>1</sup> Future preparedness is defined as preparing every student with the skills, knowledge and experiences needed to thrive in a complex, and changing world in collaboration with students and families to ensure students have what they need to build their individual pathway.

#### **4. Equity of Access**

Programs will be designed, reviewed and distributed to reduce barriers and inequities in access and participation. Geographic and demographic considerations will ensure all students have equitable access.

#### **5. Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability**

All program decisions will be evaluated for long-term viability, fiscal sustainability, responsible and equitable use of resources. Programs with high costs or low enrolment will be reviewed regularly. New initiatives will be piloted with clear cost-benefit analysis.

#### **6. Inclusive Community Engagement and Lived Experience**

Program decisions will promote inclusive, safe, and supportive learning environments where every student experiences belonging and meaningful opportunities.

Transparent engagement processes will ensure student, parent, staff, and community voices are sought to inform program creation, expansion, and closure.

#### **7. Phased and Communicated Implementation**

Implementation will prioritize listening to voices that have not historically been centered and addressing barriers to engagement. Clear, accessible communication will keep families and staff informed about programs, processes, and changes.

Implementation plans will be phased, strategic, and responsive, prioritizing urgent equity and sustainability and viability needs while minimizing disruption to student learning.

## COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: March 9, 2026

From: Finance and Facilities Committee

Date of Meeting: February 24, 2026

The committee held a hybrid meeting on February 24, 2026, at 7:00pm with Trustee Amanda Fehrman presiding.

Members present: Trustees Becky Buck\* , Amanda Fehrman, Maria Felix Miller<sup>(R)</sup>, Paul Tut <sup>(R)</sup> and Abby Zaitley. Also in attendance: Trustee Kathy Archer and Todd White.

\*Electronic participation, <sup>(R)</sup> Regrets

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### ACTION ITEM(S):

#### A. Binbrook II Boundary Review Final Report

The purpose of the Boundary Review was to establish the attendance boundary for the new Binbrook Elementary School and to honour the Board's commitment to revisit and address the changes resulting from the 2019–2020 Temporary Accommodation Strategy.

Through detailed analysis of enrolment projections, facility capacities, and community feedback, the review identified strategies that balance accommodation needs while minimizing disruption for families. The recommended action reflects the consensus of the Advisory Panel and incorporates key considerations raised during public consultation, including maintaining program viability, limiting student moves, and ensuring equitable access to schools. The Committee provided feedback regarding the [Final Report](#), which has been included and posted online.

On the motion of Trustee Abby Zaitley, the Finance and Facilities Committee **RECOMMENDS that the following recommendations for the Binbrook II Boundary Review be approved:**

- A. That the geographic area described below becomes the boundary for the new Binbrook Elementary School (ES) and is removed from the Bellmoore ES and Shannen Koostachin current attendance boundaries:**

**Commencing at the northwest intersection of Binbrook Road and Trinity Church Road, running south on Trinity Church Road to include residents on the east side and ending at Lake Niapenco, picking up again on the other side of Lake Niapenco to include both sides of Trinity Church Rd to Haldibrook Road, then east within the City of Hamilton municipal boundary on Haldibrook Road to include residents on the north side of Haldibrook Road until it ends, then a direct line to Short Road including residents on the north side until it ends, then a direct line to Irvine Road to include residents on the north side of Irvine Road up to Westbrook Road, then north on Westbrook Road to include residents on the west side of Westbrook Road up to Binbrook Road, then heading west on Binbrook Road to include residents on the south side up to Trinity Church Road.**

*Refer to Map – Appendix A*

- B. That the boundary change is effective upon the opening of the new Binbrook ES. At that time, all new JK to 8 students located within the new boundary will attend the new Binbrook ES.**
- C. That existing Bellmoore ES students living in the new Binbrook ES boundary have an option to remain at Bellmoore ES until graduation with no transportation provided. New elementary siblings of these students, not attending Bellmoore ES at the time of the new school opening, will be required to attend the new Binbrook ES.**
- D. That Shannen Koostachin ES students living in the new Binbrook ES boundary entering Grade 7&8, at the time of opening of the new Binbrook ES, will be given the option to remain at Shannen Koostachin ES with no transportation provided. Younger existing or new sibling registrations of these students will be required to attend the new Binbrook ES.**
- E. In accordance with the Ontario Education Act and all applicable Ministry of Education directives, should the Boundary Review transition planning process determine that viable grade programs cannot be established at the new Binbrook ES upon opening, these students will attend the new school. For the purposes of this recommendation, a viable program is defined as the ability to deliver the curriculum and required instructional**

components as intended by the Ministry of Education, including program organization, assessment, and reporting practices, and supports for student learning and transitions.

- F. All student transportation will be provided in accordance with Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's [Transportation Policy No. 3.10](#).
- G. That a Transition Committee for each of the affected schools currently operating is struck by the Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement upon approval of the boundary change.

**CARRIED**

**MONITORING ITEM(S):**

**B. 2026-2027 Budget Update**

On February 2, 2026, the Board of Trustees approved the Key Parameters and Assumptions to guide the development of the 2026-2027 budget. As part of development of the Classroom Staffing Fund budget, staff are working through school staffing. Enrolment projections are calculated based on historic enrolment trends and student retention rates on a school-by-school basis.

Elementary enrolment projections have been finalized in consultation with the planning department, Superintendents of Equity and Student Achievement (SESA) as well as the Principals of each school. Current enrolment for 2026-27 is projected to be 37,539 ADE in comparison to 2025-26 Revised Budget of 37,699.50 AED.

Secondary enrolment projections are being reviewed by the planning department and may be adjusted after review and validation by the school Principals in consultation with the SESA. The current projection is 14,019.30 ADE in comparison to 2025-26 Revised Budget of 14,244.32. Final secondary enrolment projections are set to be finalized by mid-March.

The budget consultation survey will be released during the week of February 23rd, 2026, and is closing on March 20th, 2026, results from the survey will be presented to the Board by end of April 2026.

**C. Proceeds of Disposition Update**

On September 23, 2025, Trustees were provided with an updated report on the projected costs of the gymnasium expansions. Staff indicated that a Minister's exemption for the use of Proceeds of Disposition (POD) was the only available funding source.

On December 16, 2025, Trustees were provided with an update on Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) in schools. Staff indicated that POD was the only viable funding source until the Ministry provides an alternative.

Proceeds of Disposition is a finite funding source and only increases when the Board is successful in selling property that is not required for the purposes of the Board (surplus). Staff will bring back a recommendation to the March 31, 2026, Finance and Facilities Committee meeting based on feedback received from Trustees.

**D. Recruitment and Staffing Update**

The Recruitment and Staffing team leads efforts to attract, hire, and place qualified professionals across all roles, ensuring the organization is equipped with the talent needed to deliver on HWDSB's mission.

As of January 31, 2026, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board employs a total of 8,917 employees, including 5,941 permanent employees and 2,976 occasional or casual staff. Recruitment and staffing efforts have resulted in overall fill rates of 82%. The fill rates for Teachers are 89%, 74% for education workers, and 59% for Educational Assistant positions.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amanda Fehrman, Interim Chair of the Meeting



## Committee Report

Presented to: Board

Meeting date: March 9, 2026

From: Parent Involvement Committee

Meeting date: February 10, 2026

The committee held a PIC meeting on February 10, 2026, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:31 p.m. with Amanda Lloyd presiding.

**Members Present:** Adriana Baker, Mani Bhandari, Kailey Crowther, Mohamed Khamis, Heather Lambert-Hillen, Amanda Levesque, Amanda Lloyd, Tim Louks, Amanda Neale-Robinson, Vanessa Ozer, Mike Palma, Michele Quinn, Leora Sas Van Der Linden, Danielle Schwalm, Meagan Shanahan, Emma Simpson, Cindy Stranak, Leigh Ann Sutherland, Lisa Veloce, and Terry-Ann Virtue. Trustees Kathy Archer, Amanda Fehrman and Abby Zaitley.

**Regrets:** Matthew Adams, Kristina Collier, Kruti Desai, Andrea Hamilton-Coulson, Cheryl Hue, Sue-Anne MacQuarrie, Heidi Oglesby, Meghana Oza, Christine Sandor, and Damian Kalu Ude.

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### MONITORING ITEMS:

#### A. Presentations

##### Overview of Budget Priorities to Guide the Development of the 2026-2027 Budget Consultation

Associate Director Gerard and team provide an overview of the 2026-2027 Budget. They outlined the full budget development process—from January to June—including committee consultations, key financial objectives, and current enrolment trends. The presentation also highlighted the structure of the education funding model, ongoing funding pressures, and clarified which areas of the budget interested parties can and cannot influence through the consultation survey.

##### Overview of Human Rights and Human Rights in HWDSB

Human Rights and Equity Advisor Otite and Human Rights Early Resolution Supervisor Bile presented an overview of Human Rights and Human Rights in HWDSB. They provided an overview of the HWDSB Human Rights Office, explaining its role in supporting the school community, its policies and procedures, and how discrimination concerns are reported and resolved. They also outlined the responsibilities of rights holders and duty bearers, reviewed protected grounds, and described the pathways and supports available to students and families experiencing discrimination, including system navigation services.

##### Overview of Safe School Action Plan

Superintendent of Safe, Compassionate and Equitable Schools, Smith, provided an overview of the 2024–2027 Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan. Superintendent Smith guided PIC members through activities exploring experiences with lockdowns, understanding teasing versus aggression and bullying, and envisioning what safe and caring classrooms look, sound, and feel like across diverse perspectives.

#### B. Business Arising from the Minutes

The Chair informed the committee of the formation of a subcommittee to conduct the PIC bylaw review.

**C. Trustees Report**

Trustee Fehrman shared the following with PIC:

- 2026-2027 Budget and the Waterdown Boundary Review: The implementation for September 2027 was approved by the Trustees on February 2, 2026.
- The Public Education Symposium: It was attended by seven Trustees, along with the Indigenous Student in Toronto in January.
- Student Trustees Election: It opens on February 17 for students in Grades 7–12. Students have the opportunity to vote for next school year's Student Trustee.
- Registration for Prom Project 2026 is open until March 25, with the event on March 28, and donations of new or gently used clothing, shoes, and accessories are welcome.

**D. Representative Committee Report**

Hamilton-Wentworth Council of Home & School Associations:

Heather Lambert-Hillen shared the following with PIC:

- Next meeting: April 9, 2026.
- Associate Director Gerard invited participation in the budget consultation.
- The Association is supporting schools with school council templates and clarifying the role of Home and School Associations.
- A longtime Home and School member and nutrition program volunteer passed away after 15 years of service; a small observance was held, and the Association will continue supporting the school community.
- The Ministry of Education announced the Menstrual Equity Initiative with Shoppers Drug Mart, providing free menstrual products to all schools to reduce period poverty and stigma.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amanda Lloyd, Chair

**Notice of Motion: Letters to the Premier, Minister of Education & Ombudsman**

**Moved by: Becky Buck**

**WHEREAS** the Minister of Education has stated that he is considering eliminating the role of democratically elected English Public School Board Trustees and has stated that French and Catholic Trustees may not be removed;

**WHEREAS** the removal of English Public School Boards of Trustees would result in the loss of legislated First Nation representation where it currently exists;

**WHEREAS** the removal of English Public School Boards of Trustees would also result in the loss of Student Trustees in those boards, which is the sole legislated role giving voice to Ontario students in English Public Schools;

**WHEREAS** there has been no formal public consultation on the proposal to remove the role of English Public School Board Trustees and polls have shown support for the role of Trustees and are skeptical that the proposed governance changes will improve public education;

**WHEREAS** the removal of democratically elected Trustees at supervised Boards has resulted in less open, public meetings which can result in less accountability;

**WHEREAS** the role of the Ontario Ombudsman is to examine the transparency, fairness and accountability of policies and government.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

That the Chair of the Board be directed to write a letter to the Minister of Education and Premier requesting that a formal provincial-wide consultation process be developed and implemented before making any governance changes or decisions that would result in the elimination of English Public School Board Trustees; and

Request that the government conduct research to support an evidence-based decision regarding the best governance model to support the public education system, while also promoting open dialogue and two-way conversations; and

That the Chair of the Board be directed to write a letter to the Ontario Ombudsman in support of recent letters from English public district school boards asking the Ombudsman's office to review the potential impacts of removing English Public School Board Trustees with respect to fairness, openness, transparency and accountability; and

That a copy of the letters be sent to the Premier and Minister of Education, and all MPPs, MPs, and OPSBA Member Boards.