

Presentations – Board Meeting – January 25, 2021.

Reports from Staff:

11. Monitoring Report – Safe Schools: Mapping out Community Supports

12. School Re-Opening COVID-19 Update #8

13. HWDSB Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention & Intervention Review Panel Report

Mapping Out Community Supports

January 25, 2021

curiosity

creativity

possibility

- **RESOLUTION #20-68:** Trustee Miller, seconded by Trustee Tut, moved: Recommends a full termination of the Police Liaison Program effective immediately. Amendment
- **RESOLUTION #20-69:** Trustee Danko, seconded by Trustee Bingham, moved: That staff review and gather input on the Police Liaison Program as well as alternative supports and programs AND that staff identify gaps with respect to students, staff and community and to identify next steps for developing a replacement program and report back to trustees.

Police Involvement in HWDSB Schools

- **Police Liaison Program is terminated**
- **Involvement limited to safe and secure schools as outlined in the Police/School Board Protocol and as mandated by legislation**

Ministry of Education and the Ministry of
Community Safety and
Correctional Services

HWDSB Occurrences Requiring Police Response

At a minimum, the police **must** be notified of the following types of incidents:

- all deaths
- physical assault causing bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner;
- sexual assault;
- robbery;
- criminal harassment;
- relationship-based violence;
- possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm;
- using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person;
- trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs;
- possessing an illegal drug;
- hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences;
- gang-related occurrences;
- extortion;
- non-consensual sharing of intimate images and
- bomb threats.

HWDSB Other Examples Requiring Police Response ⁵

- Lockdowns
- Bomb Threats
- Youth Criminal Justice Act
- Imminent risk of student harm to self or others

October/November, 2020	Review – Literature Review on School Resource Officer/ Police Liaison Officer Programs Review – Summary of Correspondence Related to the Police Liaison Program in Schools
November, 2020	Safe Schools HUB with material for Principals <u>released</u> (including Community Resource Guide)
November, 2020	Secure Schools process updated to include notification to students and families if police will be present to support a secure schools drill
November, 2020	Police Involvement in Schools Tracking Tool released
November, 2020	Identifying classroom presentations/activities that new partners are being sought for
December, 2020	Parent Communication Tool on police in schools developed
December, 2020/January 2021	Working Group created
January/February, 2021	Review and alignment to the recommendations within the Safe Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel Report
January/February, 2021	Consultation on how to address gaps – targeted groups and <u>ThoughtExchange</u>
March, 2021	Final Report to Board
April, 2021	Budget related requests – note the pre-existing Police Liaison Program did not receive any funding from HWDSB

- Previous Monitoring Report October 26, 2020
- Final Report – March, 2021
- Budget Requests – April, 2021
- Program terminated
- Identifying classroom presentations/activities for which new partners are needed

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- Literature Review
- Information shared by students, families and community related to the pre-existing program

- Literature Review from 2008 - 2020
- Limited Canadian publications
- Role not clear
- Limited training
- Not monitored with clear outcomes
- Students perceptions mixed with Black, Indigenous, racialized and students with special education needs feeling targeted
- Police should be limited to serious criminal behaviours, crises and emergency planning

Concerns

- Harassment, over-monitoring, sense of threat, fear of violence, anxiety, discomfort by Indigenous, Black and racialized students
- Racial profiling, verbal abuse, physical harm
- Entry to justice system, lack of monitoring and training

Action

- Eliminate program and protect students – [June 22, 2020](#)
- Student voice and engagement – [Equity Action Plan](#)
- Curriculum content and material – [Equity Action Plan](#)
- Staff training - [Equity Action Plan](#)
- Student Learning – [Equity Action Plan](#)
- Hire More Diverse Staff – [Equity Action Plan](#) and the [Employment Equity Action Plan](#)

- November, 2020 – **Safe Schools Learning HUB** released to principals and vice-principals
- One-stop shop – Safe, Secure and Inclusive Schools
- Training and resources related to police involvement in schools (i.e. safe and secure schools as outlined in Police/School Board Protocol and as mandated by legislation)

- November, 2020 – **Secure Schools Process Updated**
- Lockdown, Hold and Secure, Shelter in Place
- Bomb Threat
- Police involvement in drills and secure schools incidents continues
- Advance communication to students, families and others who are in the school (e.g. child care) – date, time and presence of uniformed officers
- Letters home, announcements, posting on school website a minimum of 2 days before the drill

- November, 2020 – **Police Involvement in Schools Tracking Tool Released**
- When and why schools contact police
- When and why police contact schools

School Requests of Police		Police Requests of Schools		Community Request of Police	
Disposal drugs/weapons	1	Investigations	4	Parent Complaint	5
Possessing a weapon	3	Custody/guardian issue	2	Secure Schools	1
Non-consensual sharing of intimate images	2	Secure Schools	1	Missing Child	1
Vandalism	1				
Serious threat of violence	3				
Imminent risk of harm	3				
Secure Schools	2				

- December, 2020 – Parent Communication Tool Developed

HWDSB

What to do if you want to contact police to intervene in a situation

In June 2020, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) discontinued the School Police Liaison Officer Program. Police continue to support schools with any concerns related to school safety and emergency planning (e.g. Lockdown drills).

When does the school or principal contact police?

Principals must contact police immediately if an individual is a threat to harm themselves, or others. Principals will also contact police to support the planning and execution of Secure Schools drills. Police will also respond to Secure Schools emergencies (e.g. Lockdown, Hold and Secure, Shelter in Place).

Principals must contact police regarding: deaths; physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention; sexual assault; robbery; criminal harassment; relationship-based violence; possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm; using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person; trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs; possessing an illegal drug; hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences; gang-related occurrences; extortion; arson; non-consensual sharing of intimate images; and bomb threats.

HWDSB

How to contact Hamilton Police Services:

- **Call 911 for medical, fire and police emergencies*, including crimes in progress.**
*An emergency is any situation where people's safety or property is immediately at risk. It is important that you only call 911 in emergency situations as using 911 for non-emergency situations limits access to those in need of an emergency response.
- **Call 905-546-4925 for reporting incidents that are non-urgent or not life-threatening.**
This number can also be used to make general inquiries with regards to police support and resources (e.g. noise complaints, reporting thefts, etc.)
- **Online reporting (hamiltonpolice.on.ca/report-crime/online-reporting).**
Allows individuals to submit reports about damaged or lost property, damage or theft from a vehicle or theft if they DO NOT have any suspect information. If there is suspect information, call 905-546-4925. Online reporting of hate/bias motivated incidents and sexual assault allows for suspect information to be included in an online report.

- November, 2020 – **Identification of presentations/activities requiring a new partner**

Presentations

- bullying/cyber-bulling
- peer relationships/interactions
- sexting

Resources

- restorative practices and support
- direct assistance with student behavior/long term implications
- direct principal support/legal advice

- December/January, 2021– Working Group Established
- Membership from HWDSB Human Rights and Equity Advisory and First Nation, Métis and Inuit Advisory
- Supported by staff including the HWDSB Safe Schools Ad Hoc Committee

The Working Group will:

- Review information that has been gathered
- Validate program and support gaps based upon information gathered to date
- Develop and implement the plan to consult with community (specific student groups, specific partners and open-feedback) on:
 - how to provide programming/support in a way that is safe, supportive, inclusive to all students, especially considering the needs of Indigenous, Black, racialized, students receiving special education supports and students who identify as Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+
 - the criteria to consider in selecting partners/groups/organizations to support classroom activities/presentations

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There will be targeted consultation with the following groups (individually):

- Student Voice Structures (i.e. CC: ROSE, Student Senate, etc.)
- Community Partner Organizations based on expertise in supporting Indigenous, Black, racialized, students receiving special education supports and students who identify as Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+
- Board Advisory Committees: Faith Community Advisory Committee, Rural Schools Community Advisory Committee, French as a Second Language Advisory Committee
- Legislated Committees: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)

Broader community input will be gathered through ThoughtExchange

- How to provide programming/support in a way that is safe, supportive, inclusive to all students, especially considering the needs of Indigenous, Black, racialized, students receiving special education supports and students who identify as Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+
- The criteria to consider in selecting partners/groups/organizations to support classroom activities/presentations

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Questions

curiosity

creativity

possibility

School Re-Opening (COVID-19 Pandemic) UPDATE #8

January 25, 2021

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possibility

HWDSB

Updates on the following:

- Feedback and Response
- Director's Update (from Ministry and CODE)
- Next Steps

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Another *ThoughtExchange* survey was conducted with families in December, 2020 prior to the break. The following themes emerged for Elementary and Secondary Schools:

Elementary Schools

Remote Learning Program

- Parents state that students are learning new digital and communication skills and enjoy working in breakout rooms but want more opportunities to talk and interact online.
- Parents continue to ask for fewer applications and videos due to devices/applications malfunctioning and slow internet speeds.
- The issue of attendance was raised by several parents who ask that attendance be taken later in the class because they have experienced their students being marked absent because they couldn't connect in time at the beginning of the class.
- Overall, families expressed gratitude for teachers for being patient, supportive and helpful as well as for being creative and engaging.

Elementary Schools (cont'd)

In-Person Learning Experience

- Parents reported that students' mental health, routines and learning experience were positive.
- Students expressed being happy to see their teachers and peers in person.
- Most children have understood and followed safety protocols.
- Teacher changes have been difficult and parents worry about further disruptions during the next transition.

- Overall, there is much gratitude from families for how helpful, creative and positive teachers have been.
- Communication has improved a lot since the spring and they appreciate being kept up to date on safety protocols and changes.

Elementary Schools (cont'd)

Elementary School Transitions

The elementary transition process is continuing as planned, based on the assumption of a return to in-person learning on February 11, 2021. If the Ministry extends full remote learning, the timelines will be adjusted accordingly.

- Based on the feedback received the focus of this upcoming transition will be to meet parental requests with as minimal disruption as possible.
- The transition will be staggered:
 - Students will be able to transition directly to the Remote Learning Program when schools re-open so they do not have to return to in-person learning.
 - Students transitioning from the Remote Learning Program to in-person (space permitted) will occur during the week of February 22.
 - If demand is greater than space for in-person requests or remote program classes size become too great, additional staff might be added which would require some student movement.
- At this time, there will be a third transition process offered in the Spring.

Secondary Schools

Rotational Model

- Secondary School students expressed concerns about their grades, their current progress and what impact this might have on their post-secondary experience.
- While some students have indicated that a lack of personal interaction leaves them feeling isolated others expressed relief in learning remotely noting in particular that this has meant no longer being bullied.
- Students stated wanting more physical activity and fun school spirit-type activities.
- Some students indicated that doing 4 courses was challenging and that some subjects don't lend themselves as well to remote learning e.g. chemistry, physics, math and art.
- Students expressed frustration with the level of access to their teachers and the turnaround time for assessments to be returned.
- Parents asked to be informed more regularly rather than waiting for a reporting period to find out that a student fell behind/was struggling.
- Overall, gratitude was expressed teachers' abilities to adjust to all of the changes.

Secondary Schools (cont'd)

Semester Two

Based on the feedback received the following adjustments will be implemented:

- Until in-person learning resumes (February 11) semester two will begin with regular class schedules of 75 minute periods on a daily basis.
- While the rotational model will continue be used in semester two when in-person learning resumes contact with students will now occur daily, whether they are attending in-person with their cohort or learning from home.
- Professional learning and supports to improve the experience during the remote learning classes in the afternoon.
- Support and sharing of practices to create more opportunities for virtual clubs/extra-curricular experiences.

- Workplace lunchrooms and breakrooms
- Enhance Daily Screening Requirements for staff, secondary students and visitors and masks requirement for outdoors
- Mental Health resources and support
- Emergency Childcare for essential workers
- Internet connectivity and access to devices (25K)
- Vaccination Plan for education sector in phase 2
- In-person teaching for students with pervasive special education needs until Feb. 10th as remote learning does not meet their needs (self-contained 330, in-person program 100)
- Remote Learning option for Sept. 2021 (parent choice)
- Ministry of Education timely communication to School Boards

Board planning for 2021-22 school year

- Funding announcements
- Summer Programming options
- Modes of learning
- Honouring Collective Agreements and Terms & Conditions

- Positive Culture & Well-being Report – Program Committee (Feb. 2021)
 - Positive case updates, social work referrals, student attendance rates
- Total Attendance Support Report– Human Resource Committee (quarterly updates)
 - Staff attendance and absence rates impacted by COVID-19
- Student Achievement Report – Program Committee (March 2021)
 - Student progress on early reading and graduation progress
- 21 CL Report – Program Committee (Feb. 2021)
 - Remote Learning and Devices
- Budget Report – F&F Committee (on-going)
 - Deficit budget and COVID-19 related costs



Let's talk
about **bullying!**

HWDSB Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention & Intervention Review Panel Final Report Recommendations

*HWDSB Board of Trustees
January 25, 2021*



Response to a Tragic Loss

The tragic and senseless death of Devan Bracci-Selvey propelled this deeper look into the broader concern of bullying in the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB).

We dedicate this report and its recommendations to the memory of Devan, to his family and to everyone who suffers as a result of bullying.

Presentation Overview

- What we learned
 - Community consultation findings
 - Survey findings
 - Best practices from research literature
- Recommendations
- Immediate actions
- Call to Action
- Questions

What we learned

**Key findings from community consultation,
survey & literature review**

Quote from Community Consultation

I am bullied a lot. When I try to tell the principal and/or teachers, it is brushed off. I had horrible things said to me by a homophobic teacher, and students hurl slurs at me.

– Student

Bullying is a significant problem in HWDSB schools

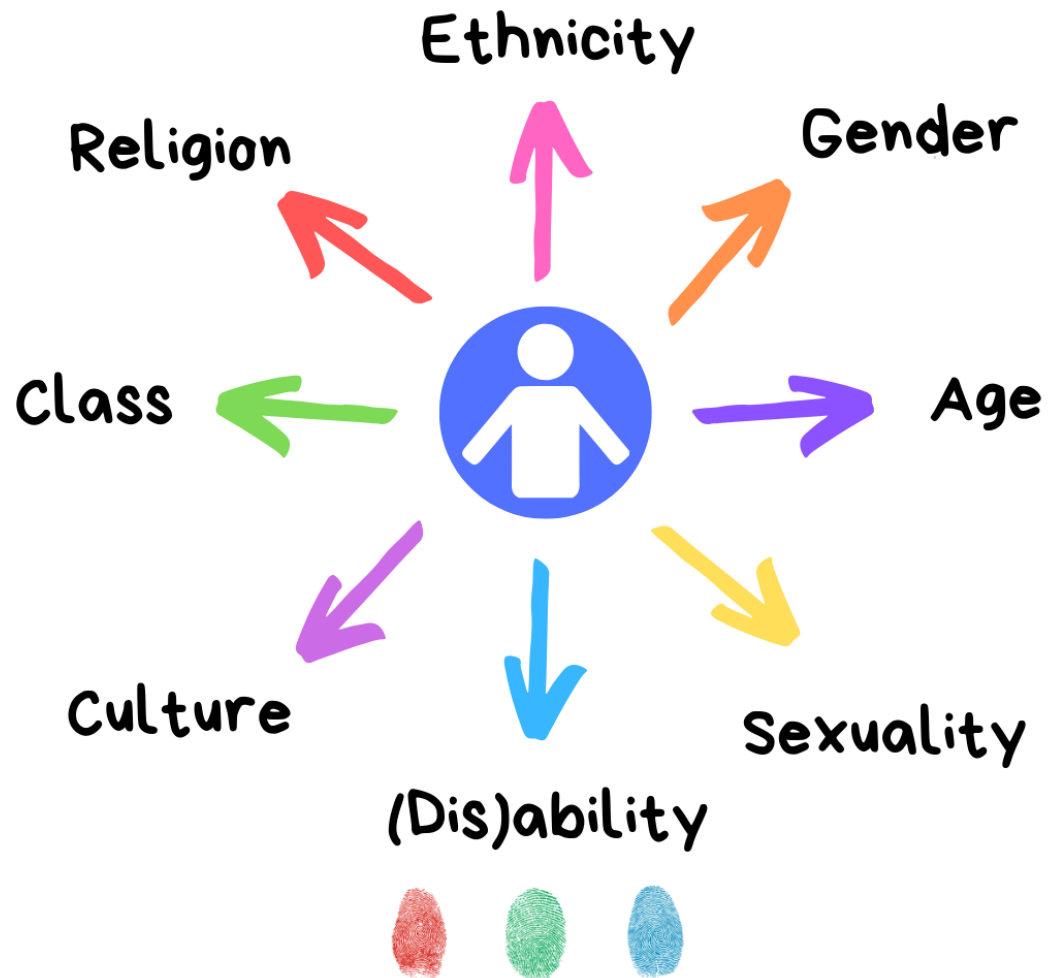
- 60% of HWDSB students were bullied at any rate & 20% bullied frequently (pre-COVID)
- Students who identify as gender diverse &/or Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ were particularly vulnerable
- Many children and youth experience bullying because of their race, ethnicity, newcomer status, sexuality, gender identity, (dis)ability, religion or Indigenous identity
- Bullying causes significant harm

Quote from Community Consultation

My child came home crying and angry because someone had called him the 'N word' and nothing had been done. I wasn't called or contacted. They want parents to be partners but we're not treated that way...Less than 3 per cent of the kids in the public board look like me but we are suspended more than any other group. If we fight back, we're the bullies. Our kids aren't encouraged to succeed and my child is pushed to fail.

– Parent

Intersectionality



What we learned about bullying in schools

- Areas of low supervision are problematic
- Inconsistent application of existing bullying policies & procedures particularly *'lack of action'* & *'poor follow through'*
- Lack of role clarity, transparency & accountability
- Staff want practical, targeted training & knowledge
- Curriculum expectations, leadership skills set, competing priorities & inability to effectively utilize community-based expertise & resources were identified as barriers
- Mental health supports are critical

Quote from Community Consultation

Ignoring or putting off the situation (which teachers usually do) doesn't reduce bullying and instead it makes the situation worse.

– Student

It's not just (about) helping the bullied student, but also the bullies because often those are the ones who need help.

– Student

Bullying is a systemic issue

- Instances of a “culture of fear” that prevents people from reporting or taking action
- HWDSB is missing clear & prominently stated commitment to bullying prevention & core organizational values
- Community partners have valuable expertise & assets in areas of shared interest
- Effective positive school climate work requires dedicated people, time & resources

Quote from Community Consultation

Move from protecting 'the brand' to protecting 'the student'

– Parent

Literature review findings

What works to prevent & address bullying?

- Employing different approaches for low-, moderate- and high-risk situations (i.e., multi-tiered system)
- School-wide approaches that address the social environment, culture, & climate
- Clear bullying prevention & intervention policies
- Routine data collection & monitoring
- Engaging families
- Evidence-informed programming (for example, KiVa, *WITS*, *Fourth R* and *Roots of Empathy*).

¹³⁻¹⁵Literature review findings

What does not work to prevent & address bullying?

- Zero tolerance and conflict resolution programs
- Encouraging youth to fight back
- Programs that are led exclusively by youth without supporting adults
- One-day awareness-raising events

Quote from Community Consultation

In my opinion, staff needs to do a better job in creating a safer, accepting and supporting environment for their own students.

- Anonymous

What we are recommending

Review Panel Recommendations

Guiding Principles

- Healthy relationships, healthy development
- Equity & excellence
- Values driven culture
- Engagement & collaboration
- Data-driven, evidence-informed
- Systems focus
- Consistency, transparency & on-going communication
- Sustained implementation & continuous quality improvement

Review Panel Recommendations

Student level

Recommendation #1: Increase student ownership and seek out and listen to student voices

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver level

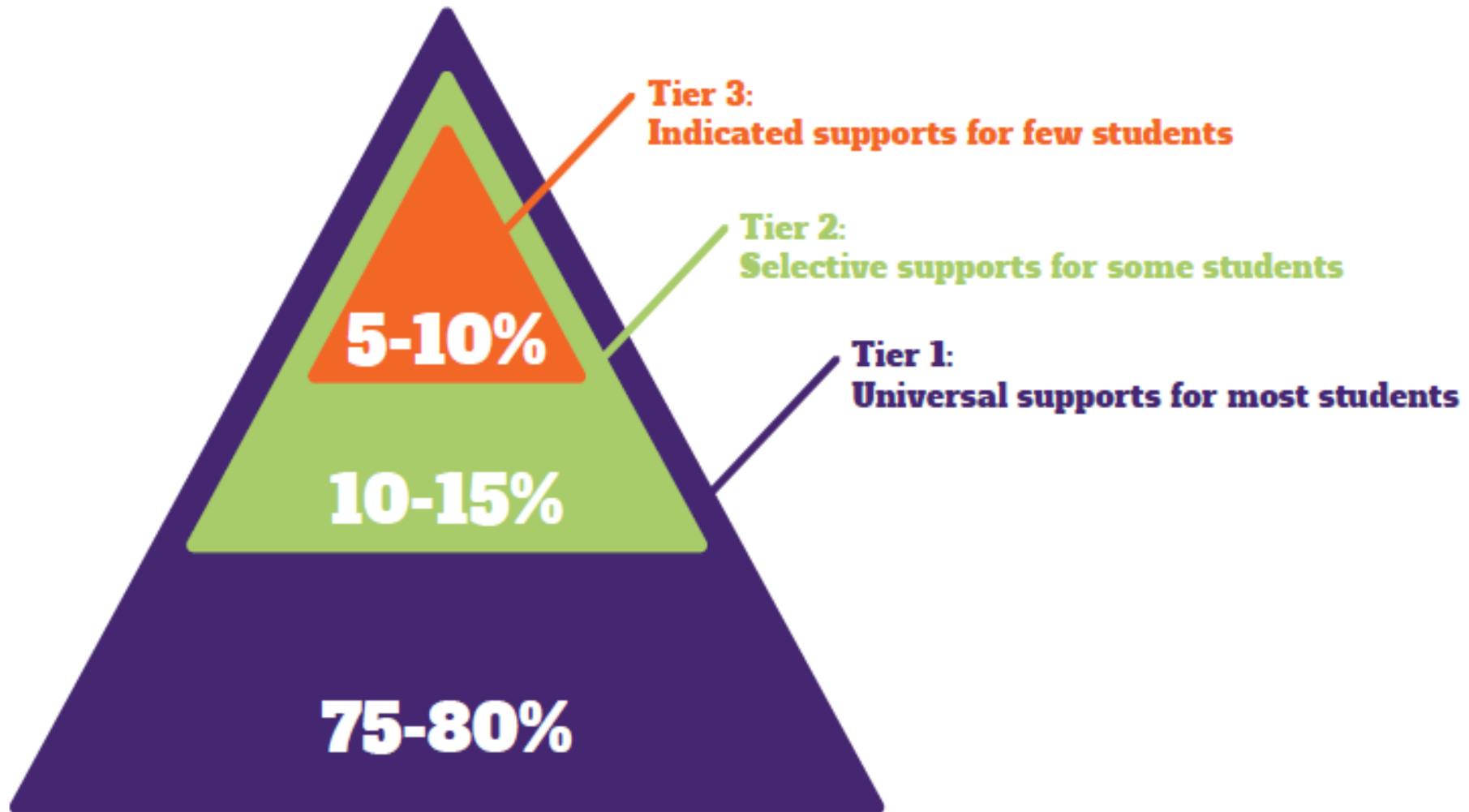
Recommendation #2: Involve parents, guardians and caregivers in bullying prevention and response in meaningful ways

Review Panel Recommendations (cont'd)

School level

- **Recommendation #3:** Develop multi-tiered supports & programming
- **Recommendation #4:** Support schools to establish their own plans including specific training
- **Recommendation #5:** Examine special education practices
- **Recommendation #6:** Review policies & procedures from equity, anti-racism & anti-oppression perspectives
- **Recommendation #7:** Ensure policies & procedures are followed consistently

Multi-tiered system of supports & programming



Review Panel Recommendations (cont'd)

HWDSB organization (system-level)

Recommendation #8: Set the foundation for a culture of caring

Recommendation #9: Strengthen the leadership skills needed for culture change

Review Panel Recommendations (cont'd)

Community level

Recommendation #10: Work with a wide range of community partners

Ontario government level

Recommendation #11: Ask the Ministry of Education for support

Recommendation #8: Set the foundation for a culture of caring

Recommended action steps

1. Commitment statement specific to bullying prevention & intervention
2. Core organizational values & operational principles
3. Oversight & accountability structures at the school, system/HWDSB, governance and community levels
4. Consistent, standardized bullying outcome measures
5. Transparent & timely monitoring system for reporting to the Board of Trustees and the broader community

*ALL of the above should be developed together with students, parents, guardians, caregivers, educators, other HWDSB staff, union representatives, community groups, community service providers, etc.

Recommendation #9: Strengthen leadership skills needed for culture change

Recommended action steps

1. Establish culture of caring & accountability
2. Incorporate desired competencies into leadership & performance development opportunities
3. Reinforce organizational values & culture shift described under Recommendation #8 at every opportunity
4. Continuously address gap in staff diversity & inequity of professional outcomes at senior leadership level
5. Establish & monitor performance outcomes for leadership strategy
6. Consider external facilitator for transformation process
7. Recognize & celebrate great relational leadership work

Recommendation #11

Ask the Ministry of Education for support

Recommended action steps

1. Centralized, sustained funding for bullying prevention & intervention including dedicated lead position & resources to implement programming
2. Centralized expertise & supports such as, resource materials & standardized data collection tools
3. Continued updating of curriculum – emphasis on social-emotional learning
4. Ongoing professional learning targeted to bullying prevention & intervention
5. Examine current supervision policy; address risk posed by areas of low/no supervision

Immediate Actions

1. Reflect upon findings & recommendations & share widely
2. Create lead staff position
3. Coordinate efforts – align with other student well-being initiatives and work such as, Equity Action Plan & Mental Health Strategy
4. Make a commitment - develop commitment statement, establish core organizational values, establish timelines & clear, measurable outcomes
5. Ensure specialized supports for students affected by bullying

Immediate Actions

6. Increase supervision outside of the classroom – pursue creative solutions
7. Collect & widely report school-level data on bullying
8. Design & distribute bullying awareness materials
9. Form a high-level steering committee with wide representation to oversee implementation
10. Develop a community-led, independent committee to advise on implementation at the highest level

Call to Action

- Bullying is a systemic issue that causes significant harm
- Bullying is not a problem unique to Hamilton
- Canada has some of the best conditions for growing up, yet some of the poorest outcomes for child and youth well-being
- It is time for a new moral imperative for education wherein learners are supported in becoming good at learning & good at life

Call to Action

- Take action together to develop *inclusive, caring schools & thriving, compassionate citizens* using a *whole-child approach to education*
- Change the way we learn, teach, lead, set priorities, collaborate, communicate, fund & measure
- **Prioritize child & youth overall well-being**
- Everyone has a role to play locally & beyond

Figure 19. Effective Bullying prevention and intervention requires action at all levels

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Students:

- Increase student ownership and seek out and listen to student voices.

Parents, Guardians & Caregivers:

- Involve parents, guardians and caregivers in meaningful ways.

HWDSB Schools:

- Develop multi-tiered supports and programming.
- Support schools to establish their own plans.
- Examine special education practices from student-centred learning perspective.
- Review policies and procedures from equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression perspectives.
- Ensure policies and procedures are followed consistently.

HWDSB Organization (system-level):

- Set foundation for a culture of caring.
- Strengthen leadership skills needed for culture change.

Hamilton Community:

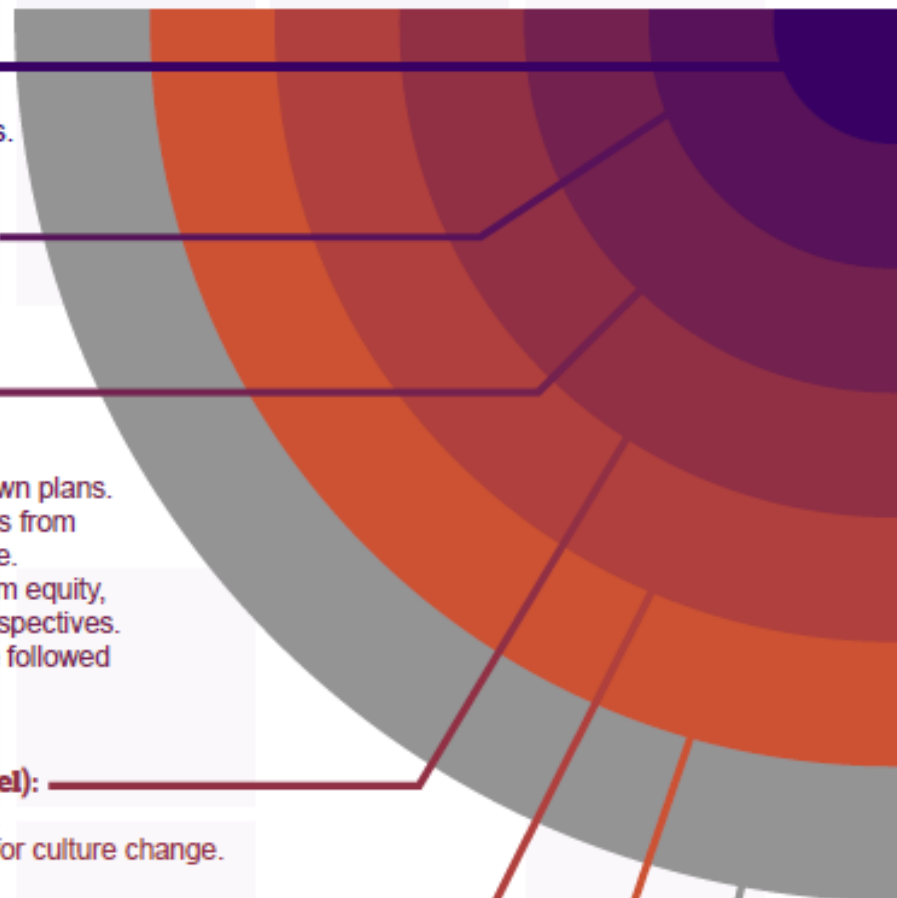
- Work with wide range of community partners.

Ministry of Education:

- Ask Ministry of Education for support.

A Call to Action:

- Develop inclusive, caring schools and thriving, compassionate citizens using a whole-child approach to education that focuses on child and youth well-being. This means changing the way we learn, teach, lead, set priorities, collaborate, communicate, fund and measure.



Questions & discussion

Thank you



Additional background slides

Kojo Institute



Kike Ojo-Thompson and **Evelyn Myrie** from **KOJO Institute** lead the development and implementation of the public consultations, wrote the final report and provided expertise on equity, diversity and inclusion.

External Advisors

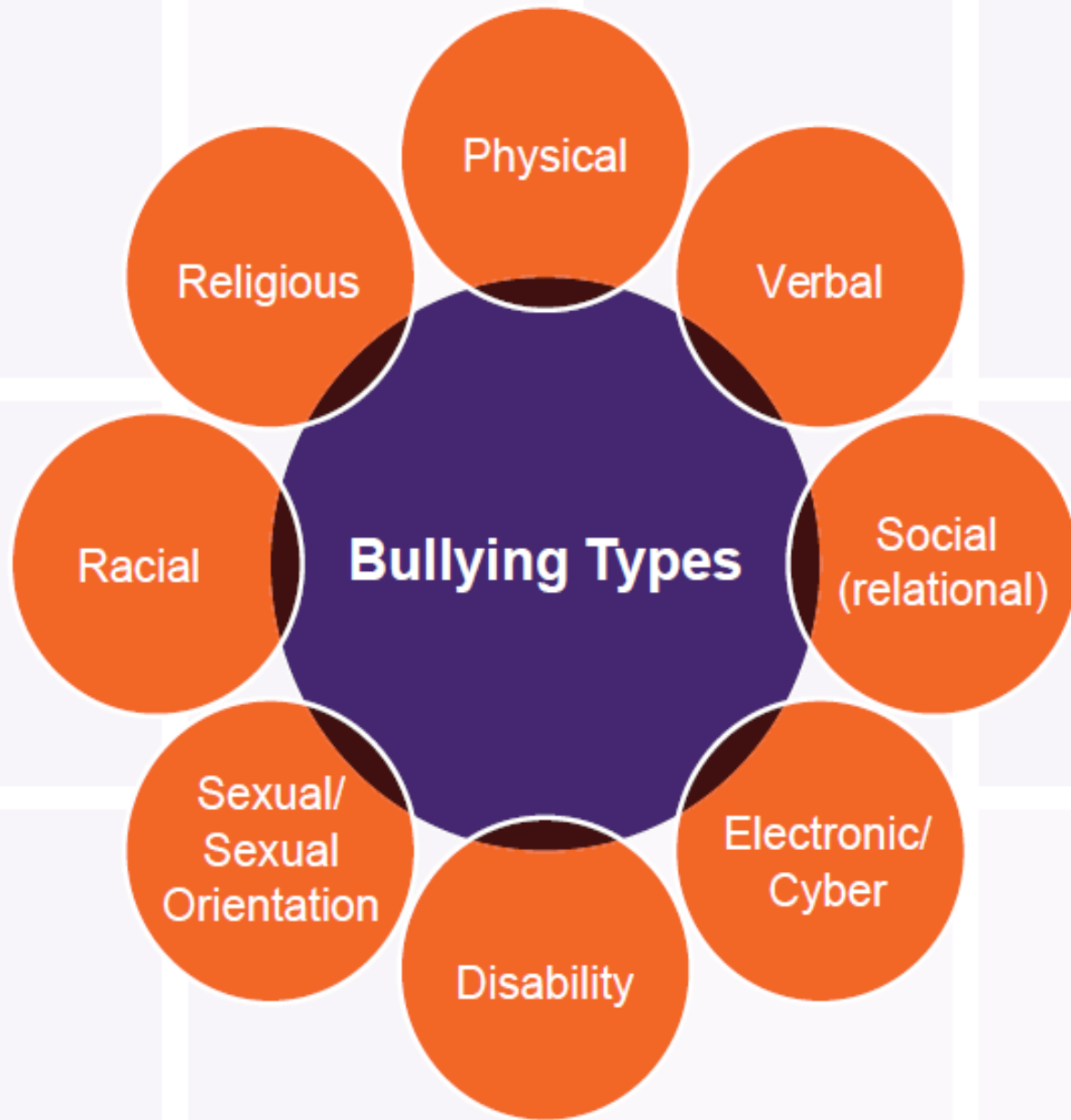
Throughout the process, the review panel has consulted with several independent advisors and experts, including in particular:

- **Barry Finlay**, former Director of Special Education for the Province of Ontario
- **Dr. Debra J. Pepler**, a distinguished Research Professor of Psychology at York University
- **Dr. Kathy Short**, a Clinical Child Psychologist and Executive Director for School Mental Health Ontario
- **Dr. Tracy Vaillancourt**, a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in School-Based Mental Health and Violence Prevention at the University of Ottawa

Review panel process

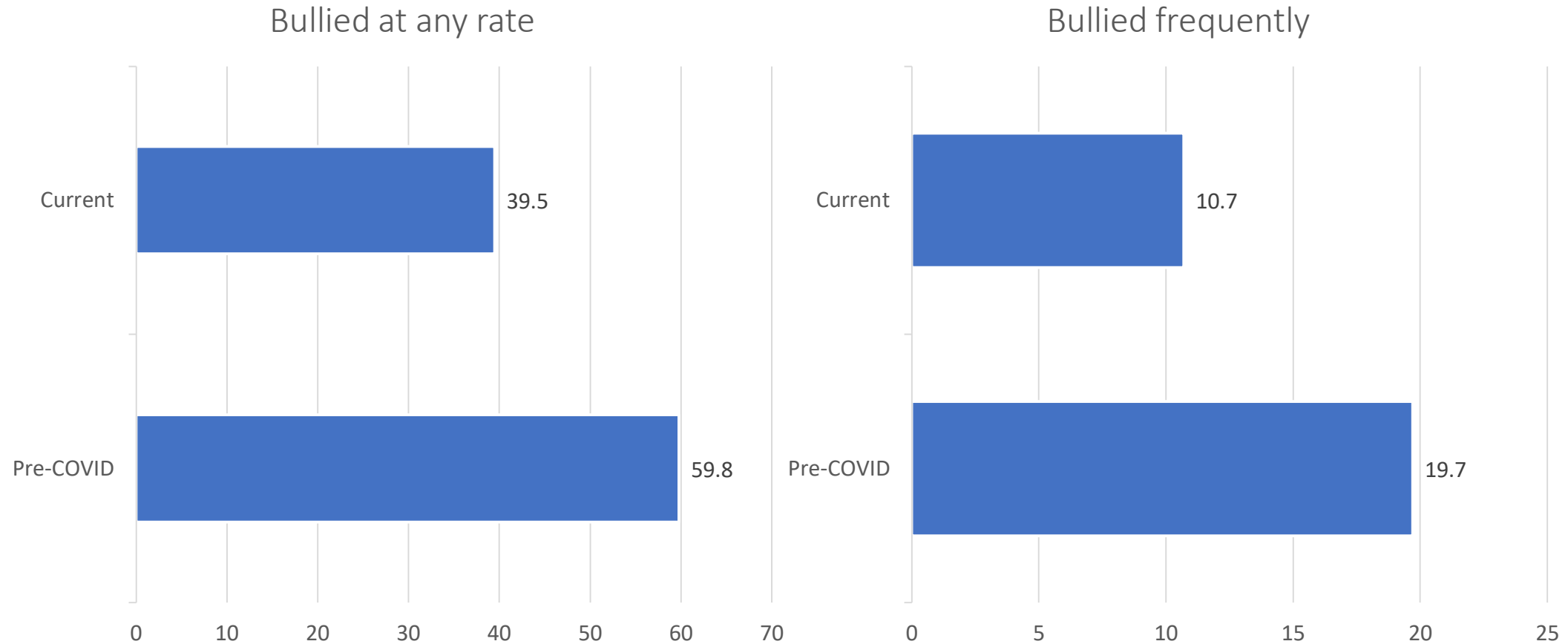
- 26 consultation sessions with over 1,000 people
- On-line survey of students, parents, guardians, caregivers and HWDSB staff (over 9,000 respondents)
- Consulted expert advisors with expertise in bullying prevention and intervention
- Review of research literature

What is bullying?



HWDSB Safe School Survey, 2020

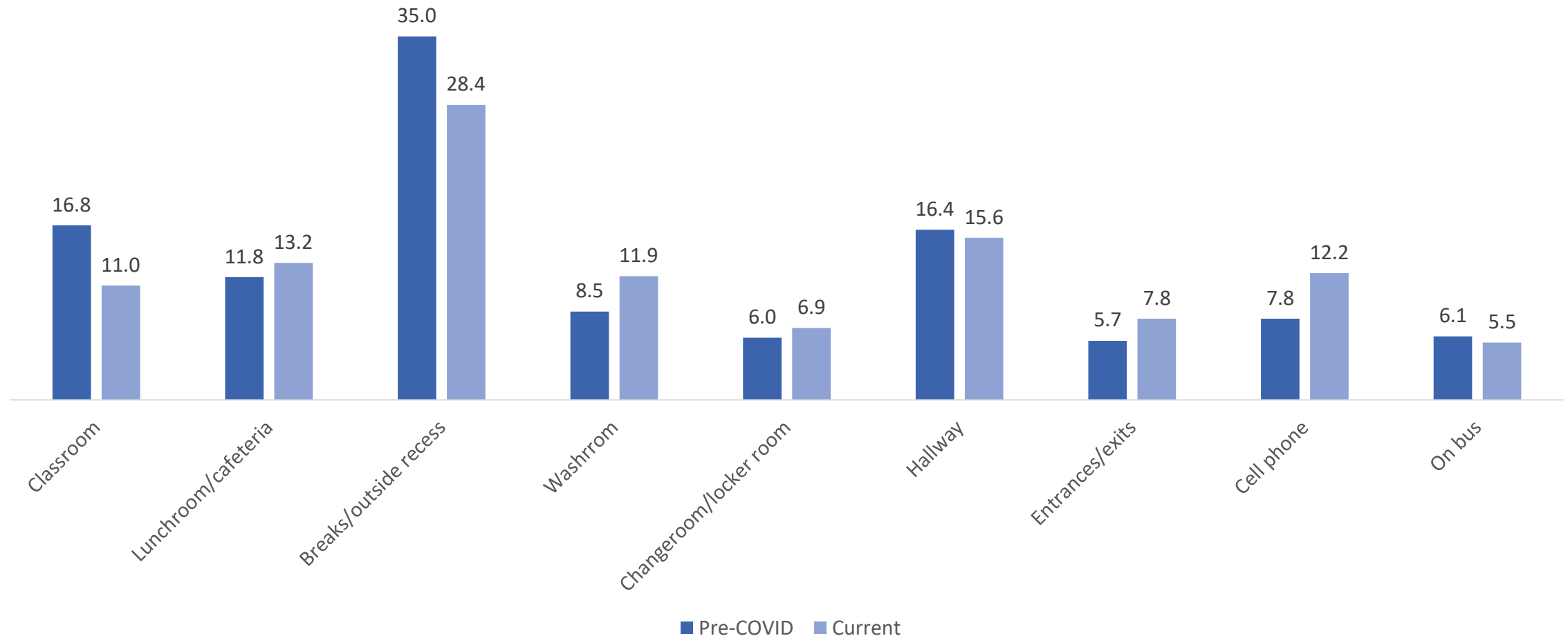
Overall victimization proportions (%)



The timeline for the *current* condition was from the start of September 2020 until November 2020 and for the *pre-COVID* condition it was September 2019 to March 2020.

HWDSB Safe School Survey, 2020

Where does bullying happen most? (%)



What recommended actions have in common

- Focusing on relationships
- Working to end oppression & discrimination
- Providing specialized support
- Communicating & collaborating
- Coaching & training
- Evaluating progress
- Sharing with the public
- Looking beyond bullying
- Finding the resources

Additional Quotes from Community Consultation

I've been a foster child and a student at both boards. My greatest betrayal was adults who refused to help when I asked. We are told to reach out to adults, but they're the ones who betray us. They turn away, telling us to take care of it on our own or get a tougher skin. Then when I react in self-defence, I'm the one who's punished. – Student

My daughter is at home with a concussion and brain bleed after being pushed down the stairs by bullies who have been tormenting her for a long time. She had her wrist broken earlier this year. The principal has done nothing that I am aware of. – Parent

Additional Quotes from Community Consultation

Check in with students and try to keep situations from getting too big.

- Student

Why are there not more conversations about this for students, staff and community on a regular basis? Instead of responding only when there is death or crisis?

- Community member

Tell us how schools are going to change now, instead of later.

- Student