

AGENDA: 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Delegation:
 - Shideh Houshmandi and Carol Gaudet, HWETL Executives, Re: Living Wage Policy (10 mins)
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Correspondence referred (Board, December 4, 2023 – Res #23-163): Union Local Leadership re: Living Wage (discussion)
6. Employee Staffing Update
7. Employee Attendance
8. Adjournment and Resolution Into Private Session as per the Education Act, Section 207.2
(b) the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee member, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian

HWDSB Trustees and Executive Council,

Solidarity is a key feature of Unionism. It identifies the concern, and the willingness to provide support, for the conditions of all workers, not only those within a shared bargaining unit. What happens to one, happens to all.

As such, the affiliated Locals of the HWDSB are writing to the Trustees and Executive Council in support of the members of the board's OCTU Local.

Previously, the HWDSB proudly announced their promise and commitment, in the form of an official motion, to be a Living Wage employer. Trustees declared that the HWDSB would ensure that all of their employees would meet and/or exceed wage levels identified to mark the distinction between poverty and a Living Wage in Hamilton-Wentworth.

The board was celebrated for their progressive labour practices and acknowledged by the Unions as making a significant step towards the mitigation of the effects of poverty. The board was ensuring that, at the very least, it was not contributing to that scourge on society.

All HWDSB workers, and their own children, would arrive at their schools with dignity and respect.

Recently, the HWDSB put aside their commitment to fight poverty within the HWDSB. A portion of the HWDSB "family" are being left behind. This is unacceptable to the Board's Labour partners.

We are in tough economic times. The provincial government is not a collaborative partner in support of education funding. Regardless, a commitment only counts if it is kept in difficult situations. A promise that is easily broken was never really a promise. A Living Wage is needed now more than ever.

The leadership of the Board is asked to reconsider their decision to allow poverty within an institution strategically directed to address inequities and to improve the community. The leadership of the Union Locals is prepared to work with the Board to find and enact solutions.

'The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members'

- **Ghandi**



HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DECE LOCAL





HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

April 3, 2024

Staffing and Operations, Professional Development, and Recruitment Update

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Jason Alexander, Executive Officer, Human Resource Services & Staff Well-being
Lety Goddard, Senior Manager, Human Resource Services & Staff Well-being
Lara Gallagher, Manager, Staffing and HR Operations

Recommendation:

That the Staffing and Operations, Professional Development, and Recruitment report be received, as information by the Human Resources Committee.

Background:

The Human Resource Services and Staff Well-Being Department is committed to supporting the Multi-Year Strategic Direction. As a division, Human Resource Services plays an integral role in each of the priorities. Within Human Resource Services and Staff Well-Being, the Staffing and Operations and Professional Development and Recruitment departments co-lead the major functions within the division to recruiting and staffing qualified individuals for various roles within the organization. In November of each school year, the Staffing and Operations and Professional Development and Recruitment departments provide an update regarding staffing levels.

Status:

Elementary Teachers

Professional Development and Recruitment continue to recruit for Elementary Occasional Teachers in all qualifications, with a focus on French, English as a Second Language, Junior, and Intermediate qualifications. Our data indicates that the unfilled daily absence rates are increasing. As of January 31, 2024, there were 96 occasional elementary teachers removed from the roster due to failure to complete the required number days of teaching. We are continually monitoring daily and replenishing the occasional list as required.

Secondary Teachers

Professional Development and Recruitment continue to recruit for Secondary Occasional Teachers in all qualifications, with a focus on all Technological Studies subjects, Math, English, French and Science. Unfilled daily absences have remained constant and are continually monitored.

Educational Assistants

From September 1, 2023, to February 29, 2024, 133 Education Assistants were hired. At the end of February 2024, an additional 10 school based LTO postings were posted until the remainder of the school year. Professional Development and Recruitment continues to recruit and hire into the EA casual pool to fill daily absences and long-term assignments.

Additional Positions

Since the beginning of the 2023-24 school year, the Board has posted 50 temporary and/or permanent OCTU positions and has added over 43 casual CUPE new hires. In addition, there have been over 15 permanent and 2 temporary PASS hires.

Total Workforce

As of February 29, 2024, the total number of employees working for Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is 8,865 people (6,202 permanent employees; 2,663 occasional or casual staff). This represents an increase of 193 permanent employees and a reduction of 24 in Occasional staff. Some of the reduction in occasional/casual staff is due to the removal of 96 elementary occasional teachers that have not completed the number of days required status by the December 31, 2023 deadline by January 31, 2024.

Fill rates for December 15 to February 23, 2024, of the 2023-2024 school year

Fill rates up to February 29, 2024, are approximate 84% for teachers and approximately 69% for Education Workers. For all other positions are approximately 85%.

Our pressure points continue to be the Educational Assistants group.

Recruitment and Onboarding

During the 2023-2024 academic year, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to maintaining a year-round recruitment process to aptly address the dynamic needs of our schools and departments. Between January and February, HWDSB successfully onboarded 171 new casual staff members.

Throughout the spring recruitment phase, our active involvement in a sequence of job fairs and informational sessions has been pivotal. The focus of the spring job fairs will be concentrated on recruiting for Teachers including new graduates. This year HWDSB will be visiting several Faculties of Education along with hosting an HWDSB Information Session ahead of interviews scheduled

for April. These platforms have not only facilitated the dissemination of information about HWDSB's culture and present job openings but have also served as a conduit to articulate the Board's values. Specifically, we prioritize discussions surrounding Equity and Indigenous Educational Wellness.

Educational Assistant Recruitment

Addressing the demand for Educational Assistants remains a priority. HWDSB has instituted a continuous recruitment process for Casual Educational Assistants. This approach encompasses successive interview rounds coupled with targeted outreach initiatives directed towards post-secondary institutions and community partners whom we have been building and strengthening positive working relationships with.

Community Partnerships

The cultivation of enduring, reciprocal relationships with community partners remains at the forefront of our priorities. In tandem with community partners, including our college collaborators, HWDSB persistently provides opportunities for student placements across a plethora of program areas, including Early Childhood Education (ECE), Educational Assistant (EA), Human Resources (HR), and Office Administration. Recently we started a new partnership with Conestoga College to host Educational Assistant student placements at HWDSB. Further, we work with community partners to encourage their clients to apply for roles with HWDSB and continue to have discussions on how we can best support them during the hiring process.

In-Person Orientation

HWDSB's Professional Development and Recruitment Department remains dedicated to offering regular orientation sessions for new staff. In March, we will be hosting our 2nd session of the current school year, complementing the mandatory onboarding on the HUB. This will provide recently hired staff a chance to connect with peers and meet multiple HWDSB departments and union groups.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications at this time.

Strategic Directions:

Building a Sustainable Education System: We will adapt to a rapidly changing world through responsible fiscal management, investing equitably in accessible and sustainable facilities, and supporting a robust workforce.



HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

April 3, 2024

Employee Attendance Monitoring Report (Sept 2023 - Feb 2024)

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Jason Alexander, Executive Officer, Human Resource Services & Staff Well-being
 Lety Goddard, Senior Manager, Human Resource Services & Staff Well-being
 Lana Zekonjic, Manager, Employee Support and Wellness Officer

Recommendation:

That the Human Resources Monitoring Committee Report for Employee Attendance be received, as information by the Human Resources Committee.

Background:

To support HWDSB staff wellness and improve staff absences rates relate to personal illness, the HWDSB Strategic Wellness and Absence Management Plan was implemented in September of 2019. The plan sets out specific goals to support our HWDSB Annual Plan; Positive Culture and Well-Being strategic goal, with the focus on reducing personal illness usage and supporting staff.

For reference purposes, personal illness or *“sick leave and short-term disability leave”* is an entitlement in Collective Agreements and Terms and Conditions of employment. Such agreements provide entitlements for staff to access sick time to attend medical and dental appointments. The Employee Support and Wellness Department provides support to staff on a case-by-case basis related to medical absence and medically supported accommodation needs in the workplace.

Status:

Staff Findings: Personal Illness Absences

From September 2023 to February 2024 permanent Board employees on average utilized 9.24 personal illness days.

BE YOU. BE EXCELLENT.

Relative to September 1, 2022, to February 28, 2023, this is decrease of 0.14 days.

The HWDSB attendance rate is a review of personal illness, medical appointments, and dental appointments pursuant to central sick leave collective agreement provisions.

Appendix 1 Summarizes attendance rate data for personal illness.

Staff Observations

The Employee Support and Wellness (ESW) Department continues to support staff with return-to-work planning and accommodations. Some observations impacting the wellbeing of staff include but are not limited to:

- Surgery and medical procedure delays from the pandemic continue, prolonging some sick leave durations.
- Increased precautions with regards to illness and transmission resulting in shorter term absences.
- Increased number of staff receiving early intervention communication from Employee Support and Wellness.
- Delays within the health care system to access treatment for emotional and physical health conditions, such as delays with surgical medical procedures, longer wait times to access health care resources, shortage of mental health resources for community to access.
- Pre-existing health conditions that have been exacerbated due to the pandemic.

Next Steps

The Employee Support and Wellness Department continues to monitor attendance rates. The department supports staff through best-practice early intervention programs, workplace accommodation programs, attendance support programs, and disability management programs to promote a safe return to work while working with our staff, system leaders, union leaders, and medical practitioners to further support and remove barriers which may prevent employees from regularly attending work.

To continue promoting and supporting employee wellness, ESW continues to expand the new Staff Wellness and Absence Management Program implemented on September 1, 2022. The Board also continues to work closely with our Employee and Family Assistance Provider (EFAP), Homewood Health, in promoting available resources and services to support HWDSB staff through a variety of avenues. Homewood Health offers a variety of well-being programs and services to support employees in their wellness journey both within the workplace and in their personal life. Examples of services include life coaching, counselling, interactive educational tools, health and wellness assessments, access to a library of health, life balance and workplace articles, crisis response, and more. Homewood Health is a confidential service available to all HWDSB employees and their dependents, 24/7 and is free of charge to the employee.

Staff will continue to provide attendance monitoring reports to the Board including the steps taken to support all staff with the implementation of our Staff Wellness plan.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications at this time.

Strategic Directions:

Upholding Human Rights, Safety & Well-Being: We will support all students and staff to feel safe and secure in our classrooms and school communities.