



Human Resources Committee
Wednesday January 15, 2025
EC-340D & Virtual Meeting

AGENDA: 6:00 p.m.

- I. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Employee Recruitment and Staffing Update
5. Employee Attendance Monitoring
6. 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

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HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT

January 15, 2025

Recruitment and Staffing 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, Recruitment and Staffing

Recommendation:

That the Recruitment and Staffing 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 Directions. As a Division, Human Resource Services plays an integral role in implementing each of the priorities. Within Human Resource Services and Staff Well-Being, the Recruitment and Staffing department leads functions within the division to recruit and staff qualified individuals for various roles within the organization.

Status:

Elementary Teachers

Recruitment has commenced 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 slightly above the beginning of the year. Interviews were scheduled for the week of December 9, 2024.

Secondary Teachers

Recruitment continues for Secondary Occasional Teachers in all qualifications, with a focus on all Technological Studies subjects.

Our data shows that unfilled daily rates remain consistent, with the unfilled job trend primarily stemming from absences reported in the morning. We are continuously monitoring these rates and rely on feedback from Principals to identify subject-specific gaps and address them proactively.

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Additional Positions

As of November 30, 2024, the Board has posted 37 temporary and/or permanent OCTU positions and has posted 26 permanent CUPE positions. In addition, there have been over 20 permanent PASS hires.

In partnership with Professional Development & Employee Experience, the Recruitment and Staffing Departments successfully hosted a highly engaging and impactful resume writing and interview skills workshop for all OCTU staff members. The event was exceptionally well-received, creating a positive and empowering experience for everyone involved.

Total Workforce

As of November 30, 2024, the total number of employees working for Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is 8,744 people (6,357 permanent employees; 2,387 occasional or casual staff).

Fill Rates

Fill rates up to November 30, 2024, are approximately 90% for teachers (Elementary, Secondary, LTO Elementary and LTO Secondary) approximately 62% for Education Workers (CUPE, DECE, EA, CYCP, OCTU) and for or all other positions (BCBA, ADS, ESL, Executive Council, LTO ESL, NUCE, PASS, PSSP, PSSP Temp, PVPE/S) are approximately 87%.

Our pressure point continues to be the Educational Assistant group.

Recruitment and Onboarding

Between October and into December 2024, successful interviews were conducted for the following employee groups:

Employee Group	Interview Month	# applied to postings	# invited to interviews	# interviews accepted	# of successful
Educational Assistants	October, November and December 2024	462	219	179	94
Child and Youth Care Workers	November 2024	52	24	14	14
CUPE	November 2024	265	121	104	43
Secondary	November 2024	625	97	59	in progress
Elementary	December 2024	217	107	107	in progress
Principal and Vice Principal Pool	November 2024	43	25	25	12

The Recruitment department is currently managing interviews across multiple employee groups (EAs, CYCP, CUPE, Secondary, Elementary, and PVP) with several rounds either in progress or scheduled. Additionally, we're attending career fairs, further expanding our reach and ensuring we attract top talent to the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. Addressing the demand for Educational Assistants, 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 allies.

Since August 2024, newly hired casual Educational Assistants have been encouraged to participate in the Educational Assistant Pilot Program. Two cohorts of eighteen (18) participants each opted to take part. The first cohort completed Essential Skills Training, with seven (7) participants also completing Job Shadowing. The second cohort completed Essential Skills Training in December, with Job Shadowing scheduled for January. Following the second cohort's Job Shadowing, Research & Analytics, HR will use collected data to evaluate the program's impact on Educational Assistants retention within HWDSB.

Next Steps in Recruitment

In alignment with HWDSB's Equity Action Plan, exciting progress is being made on the development of the "Equitable Recruitment" training module—a transformative resource set to debut on the HUB. This module is being developed in coordination with Human Resource Services, Equity, the Human Rights Office and the Indigenous Educational Wellness department.

Financial Implications:

Currently, there are no financial implications to report.

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

January 15, 2025

Employee Attendance Monitoring Report

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

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

Recommendation:

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

Background:

Staff continue to monitor absences through HWDSB's Strategic Wellness and Absence Management Plan to support staff wellness and promote improvement in staff absence rates related to personal illness. The goal is to proactively support staff toward early and safe return to work and reduce personal illness usage. This report monitors the status of HWDSB's progress towards the goals implemented under the Strategic Wellness and Absence Management Plan.

Board staff continue to monitor attendance and bring reports to the HR Committee meeting to discuss the progress of attendance support strategies and to the Finance and Facilities Committee to discuss the costs compared to budget.

For reference purposes, personal illness or *"sick leave and short-term disability leave"* is a benefit 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

- HWDSB has seen an increase in employee absence rates related to personal illness from September to October 2024 in comparison to the same time in the 2023-24 school year.
- During this period in the 2024-25 school year, the average permanent Board employee utilized 2.59 personal illness days per 1.0 FTE. In comparison, the average was 2.42 days during the 2023-24 school year. This is an increase of 0.17 days per 1.0 FTE (Appendix I).
- The HWDSB attendance rate is a review of personal illness, medical appointments, and dental appointments pursuant to central sick leave collective agreement provisions.

Staff Observations

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

- Increased precautions with regards to illness transmission resulting in increased short-term absences.
- Delays within the health care system to access treatment for emotional and physical health conditions, including surgical medical procedures, longer wait times to access health care resources, and shortage of mental health resources for community to access.
- Pre-existing health conditions that have been exacerbated due to the pandemic. We are seeing an increase in personal illness absences resulting in increased sporadic illness absences and a high number of workplace accommodation cases.
- Despite increasing absence rates, short-term disability case incidence rate is decreasing. The decrease is significant over a four-year period.
- This decrease suggests that the increases in absence rates due to personal illness are associated with increases in unexpected absences.

Next Steps

ESW will continue to support staff with safe return to work while working with our staff, union leaders, medical practitioners, and Homewood Health to further support and remove barriers which may prevent employees from regularly attending work. These efforts will include continued emphasis on identifying early return-to-work and stay-at-work opportunities.

Current short-term disability case trends will continue to be monitored to guide the strategic response of the Employee Support and Wellness department. These trends will be studied to further understand what components of the personal illness absence rate are driving the overall data.

Financial Implications:

The average number of days used for replacement costs have increased for most employee groups with an increase of approximately \$644 K (\$6,540 K versus \$5,896 K) in replacement costs from the September to November period last year (i.e. 2023/2024 school year), the overall fill rate has decreased. The increase in average number of days requiring replacement and the increase in salary costs because of Bill 124 and collective agreements has increased the period over period spend.

The issue of sick leave and the costs associated with replacement coverage remains a provincial issue and Boards across the Province are struggling with the rising costs.

Strategic Directions

Upholding the human rights, safety, and well-being. *We will support all students and staff to feel safe and secure in our classrooms and school communities.*

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.*

Appendices

Appendix I: Overall Rate of Absence Year Over Year – September –October

School Year	Rate of Absence
2023-24 – Sep-Oct	2.42
2024-25 – Sep-Oct	2.59
Difference:	+0.17