

# PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Thursday May 14, 2015  
Education Centre, Room 301

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## AGENDA

3:00 pm.

1. Call to Order K. Archer
  
2. Approval of the Agenda
  
3. Transforming Learning Everywhere report
  
4. Elementary Program Strategy
  
5. Update on Transitions
  
6. Next Program Committee Meeting: June 3 at 3:30 pm
  - Parent & Community Engagement Report
  - SchoolsPlus Program
  
7. Adjournment

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning/Transforming Learning Everywhere Report – May 2015

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HWDSB's vision for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE), challenges us to create a culture of engaged learners (staff and students) by focusing on instructional practices being used in our classrooms, accelerated by digital tools. Our goal is to improve the essential skills of problem solving, critical literacy, higher order thinking, in addition to foundational knowledge and skills that are required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This vision is driven by the Ontario Ministry of Education's "[Achieving Excellence](#)" vision, the next phase in Ontario's Education Strategy.

As stated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Board report (March, 2014), our theory is that the use of evidence-based instructional practices, accelerated by digital tools will lead to increases in student engagement and student achievement. Further, by providing teachers with appropriate support and resources, their engagement will increase as well.

We know that our students are leading us now and will lead the world in the near future. As we believe that everyone makes a difference in the world, and we hold high expectations for our students, we are responsible for providing them with the opportunity to unleash the creativity and energy that will lead to success in their chosen pathways.

The main goals of the project include:

- 1) Focus on instructional practices that increase:
  - Teacher engagement
  - Student engagement
  - Student achievement
- 2) Implementation and sustainability of one-to-one technology on a larger scale in HWDSB

The attached report outlines the actions the HWDSB has taken over the past year to implement TLE across the system and in four phase one projects:

- 1) North Digital Project ("7 North")
- 2) Nora Frances Henderson ("Henderson")
- 3) Mountain Secondary ("Mountain")/Assistive Technology
- 4) New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in the West Cluster ("West 16")

The action plan included in the report consider how we have implemented TLE with regards to the learning approach in our schools, the professional development that we offer, tools and infrastructure and technical supports.

The report also includes an updated 5 year implementation plan, an updated deployment schedule and updated business plan.

In terms of monitoring the impact of implementing TLE, the report includes a high level overview of data and feedback that has been and will be gathered by June 2015. A multi-method approach is being used, seeking input from various stakeholders from across HWDSB.

This vision and direction will be reviewed and approved annually by the Board over the next five years.

Within the report, the recommended action is to approve the 2015-2016 implementation plan (p.16) as year two of the five year Transforming Learning Everywhere plan.



## EXECUTIVE REPORT TO PROGRAM COMMITTEE

**TO:** PROGRAM COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Pam Reinholdt, Interim Director

**DATE:** May 14, 2015

**PREPARED BY:** Executive Council, E-BEST, Corporate Communications, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Information and Instructional Technology (IIT)

**RE:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning/Transforming Learning Everywhere Report

Action

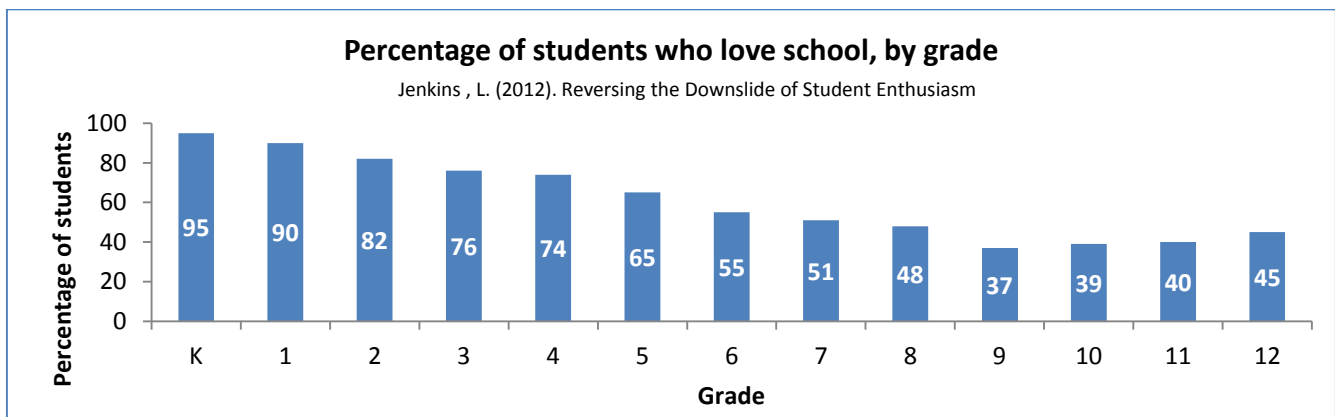
Monitoring

### Recommended Action:

That the 2015-2016 implementation plan (p.16) be approved as year two of the five year Transforming Learning Everywhere plan.

### Rationale/Benefits:

To meet the needs of learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we need to understand and respond to the physical and digital worlds our students interact in on a daily basis. Research ([Stratosphere: Integrating Pedagogy, Technology and Change Knowledge](#), Fullan, M.; 2012) clearly states that a high level of student engagement is essential for a high level of student achievement to occur. Additional research (Jenkins, 2012; see graph below) shows that levels of student engagement drastically declines from the early years (K-3) to the junior years (4-6) and into the intermediate/senior years (7-12) from the 90% range, to the 60% range to the 40% range respectively.



HWDSB's vision for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE), challenges us to create a culture of engaged learners (staff and students) by focusing on instructional practices being used in our classrooms, accelerated by digital tools. Our goal is to improve the essential skills of problem solving, critical literacy, higher order thinking, in addition to foundational knowledge and skills that are required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

[Achieving Excellence: A renewed vision for Education in Ontario \(2014\)](#)

Achieving Excellence is the next phase in Ontario’s Education Strategy. As part of this vision, and to achieve success, Ontario will<sup>1</sup>:

- Invest in the technology, design and infrastructure required for the classrooms of the future to serve the needs of all communities.
- Invest in innovative teaching practices and instructional methods enabled by technology to more precisely engage and address the learning needs of all students.
- Work with partners including TVO (TV Ontario) and TFO (La télé éducative du Canada) to build on existing online resources for students, educators and parents.
- Give students more flexibility and ownership in their learning, allowing them, for example, to determine whether they want to spend more time on e-learning or on learning outside of the classroom.
- Explore different models of learning, such as project-based learning or learning across multiple subject areas.
- Work with teachers, principals, and supervisory officials and their professional associations to identify and share effective and innovative teaching practices that include the use of technology.

*“Our children, youth and adult learners will need [a balance of foundational skills and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills] to meet the opportunities and demands of tomorrow. To help promote this balance, schools must take advantage of the technologies that are connecting us to information and people around the world and around the corner. Our task is to modernize classrooms and support educator’s efforts to bring innovation to learning.”*

[Achieving Excellence: A renewed vision for Education in Ontario \(2014\)](#)

**Background:**

Last spring HWDSB developed an innovative 5-year vision for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning – Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE) – that is transforming the way our students learn. Our vision provides our students with the tools they need to achieve their full potential, regardless of their individual circumstances. TLE supports our students for their chosen post-secondary pathway by supporting their achievement, acquiring valuable skills and becoming engaged members of their community.

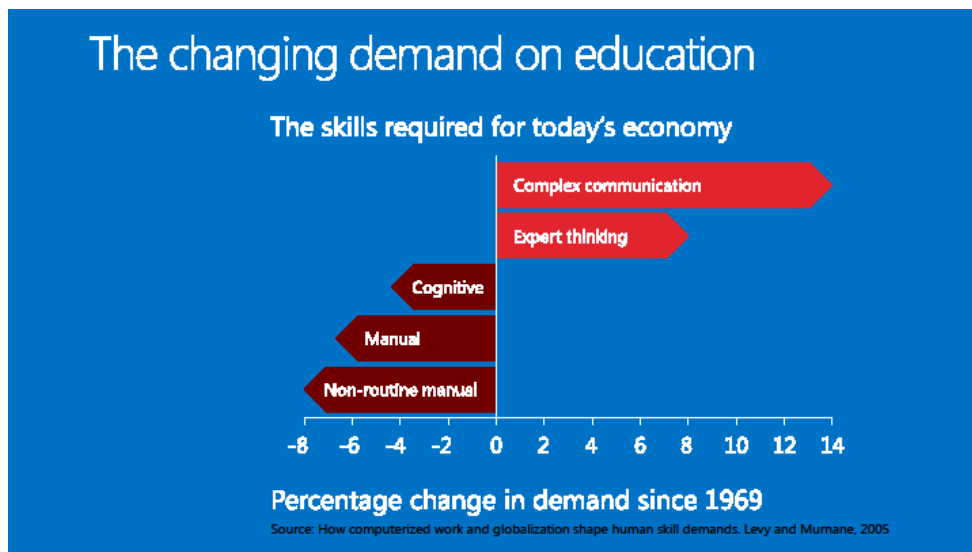
We know that our students are leading us now and will lead the world in the near future. As we believe that everyone makes a difference in the world, and we hold high expectations for our students, we are responsible for providing them with the opportunity to unleash the creativity and energy that will lead to success in their chosen pathways.

Today’s learners have always been connected to the digital world. Our current grade 12 students have never known a world without internet. Touch screen devices have been available before our current kindergarten students were born. There are changing demands on education as a result of this shift in our world as we have moved from the print, through to the broadcast age and now into the collaborative age. Studies of successful North American companies have shown that the basic skills needed today look very different than those required 40 years ago. Skills required by employees in the 21<sup>st</sup> century include basic mathematic and problem solving skills, the ability to work in groups to make effective oral and written presentations, and the ability to use personal computers (Murnane & Levy, 1996).

The Evolving Learning Environment:



<sup>1</sup> Highlights from the Plan of Action for Achieving Excellence.



### What is Transforming Learning Everywhere?

Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE) is centered on learning for success, accelerated by technology and driven by instruction (see Appendix A).

Central to our vision is the instruction (or **pedagogy**) that occurs in our schools. Every day educators make critical decisions about how to design, deliver lessons and assess student learning. They consider the **learners** in their classroom—their needs, strengths, interests – to determine what strategies will help them succeed. Educators use both evidence-based approaches and new innovative practices, all while ensuring we meet the key Ontario **curriculum expectations**. This is the art and science of good teaching. This is **pedagogy**.

Transforming Learning Everywhere is also about accelerating instruction with technology/digital tools. **Technology** introduces some necessary changes to transform our learning environments. Our educators are engaged in training and are provided with access to resources to support the development of **engaging rich learning tasks**. What will result is instructional practice that will increase student engagement and **improved learning outcomes (in foundational skills as well as problem solving, critical literacy and higher order thinking)** in both the physical and digital world.

All of this is nested in our organization that promotes learning, **positive climates** and **healthy relationships**—a system that embraces **academic optimism** (i.e., presence of high expectations, efficacy and trust), **values voice and engagement** and is committed to having clear, system expectations while also being responsive to student, staff, and community needs.

### Overall Goals for Transforming Learning Everywhere:

As stated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Board report (March, 2014), our theory is that the use of evidence-based pedagogy, accelerated by digital tools will lead to increases in student engagement and student achievement. Further, by providing teachers with appropriate support and resources, their engagement will increase as well.

The main goals of the project include:

- 1) Focus on instructional practices that increase:
  - Teacher engagement
  - Student engagement
  - Student achievement
- 2) Implementation and sustainability of one-to-one technology on a larger scale in HWDSB

### What changes do we expect to see and when?

For the past several years, the implementation of system-wide visions and initiatives in HWDSB, such as the Annual Operating Plan, have taken into consideration implementation science. There is a growing literature that suggests that, in order to achieve desired student outcomes (i.e., enhanced student achievement and well-being), system, school and classroom strategies must be implemented according to research-based benchmarks. Further, this literature indicates that there are predictable stages of implementation, and that it takes several years to introduce a strategy and bring it to scale in a school district (National Implementation Research Network, 2009). As such, an updated 5-year implementation plan was developed (see Appendix B).

Through consultation with [Dr. Carol Campbell](#), one of Premier Wynne’s key education advisors and an expert in whole system reform and large-scale change strategies, we developed the following framework to describe changes we expect to see as we move from initial implementation of TLE to sustainability.

<b>Levels of Implementation</b>	<b>Expectations Related to Instructional Goals</b>
① <b>Exploration &amp; Installation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in awareness and understanding of the vision for senior administration</li> </ul>
③ <b>Initial Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in awareness of the vision for teachers and other staff</li> </ul>
④ <b>Partial Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in teachers behaviors and teacher engagement</li> <li>• Changes in student engagement</li> </ul>
⑤ <b>Full Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in student achievement</li> </ul>
⑥ <b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing increases in teacher and student engagement and student achievement</li> </ul>

Phase One (2014-2015) of TLE involved the following 4 projects:

#### 1) North Digital Project (“7 North”):

We engaged all grade 4-8 classes at seven North Elementary Schools (Adelaide Hoodless, A.M. Cunningham, Cathy Weaver, Dr. Davey, Memorial City, Prince of Wales, and Queen Victoria). These students will be attending the future North secondary school beginning in 2017 and beyond.

This was the second year in working with these schools, as in 2013 they were the first set of schools in HWDSB to systematically explore the use of digital devices in the classroom. In 2014, the implementation and inquiry based learning and a focus on critical literacy, problem solving, and higher order thinking was supported through 1:1 tablet technology for all students in grades 4 to 8 and the teachers. Different models of professional development were used to support this direction, with support from our partners (Discovery Education and Apple).

#### 2) Nora Frances Henderson (“Henderson”):

In September 2014 the new south secondary school became the first secondary school in HWDSB to focus on instructional practices accelerated by digital tools with a 1:1 ratio. All teachers and students were provided with tablet technology and this was supported through enhanced infrastructure to allow for this innovative delivery model. Learners (staff and students) had access to digital tools and resources through Desire2Learn (i.e., the Hub), an online course management software. Professional development was delivered to staff on both inquiry based learning, use of digital tools to accelerate learning and how to foster 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in students (e.g., creativity).

#### 3) Mountain Secondary (“Mountain”)/Assistive Technology:

Following an interdisciplinary approach, staff have been working collaboratively to increase the efficacious use of assistive technology with a 1:1 ratio at Mountain Secondary school. All teachers and students were provided with

tablet technology which was supported through enhanced infrastructure at the school. Staff engaged in professional development on the use of digital tools to support and augment the learning environment for students with learning difficulties.

#### 4) New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in the West Cluster (“West 16”):

Sixteen of our schools in the West Cluster are participating in “[New Pedagogies for Deep Learning](#)” or NPDL, a program that involves schools from all over the world like Canada, Australia, Finland, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Uruguay, and the United States. In Canada, only 100 schools have been chosen to participate, including our 16 schools. The program involved implementing change by providing professional development and job-embedded support to create new learning partnerships, define new roles for students, teachers and families. This was to enable new instructional practices and deep learning that advances all learners’ capacity to learn and flourish in a complex world. NPDL focuses on developing the following skills in students: character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking.

### 2014-2015 System Action Plan

TLE: Essential Component	Strategies (What we did)	Evidence (Outcomes)
<b>Learning Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on changing the “learning partner” relationships between teachers and students, students and students, and students and community.</li> <li>• Focused on use of inquiry based learning guided by the voices of students and teachers.</li> <li>• Moved towards Blended Learning in all classrooms through a common virtual learning platform (D2L).</li> <li>• Focused on introducing New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in some schools in the West Cluster.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers started using techniques to engage students in learning by making material personally relevant.</li> <li>• Students providing feedback to each other and their teachers.</li> <li>• Student learning focused on effective questioning techniques to support inquiry based learning.</li> <li>• Students using D2L across all of their courses and use various tools such as e-portfolio.</li> <li>• Created a blended learning environment where students learn in both digitally and face-to-face.</li> <li>• Students engaged in learning tasks that they helped develop.</li> <li>• Students learning seen through a variety of means (e.g., paper, videos, blogs).</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<p>For Administrators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased understanding of Inquiry Based Learning, Blended Learning, changing role of teachers as activators of learning, development of rich learning tasks and supporting students to develop skills such as higher-order thinking, problem solving and critical literacy.</li> </ul> <p>Leadership and Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased capacity to support and promote inquiry based learning, blended learning and New Pedagogies for Deep Learning.</li> </ul> <p>Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided collaborative learning with Instructional Coaches for support.</li> <li>• Provided inquiry-based learning opportunities that facilitate collaboration and critical thinking between educators.</li> <li>• Provided school-based Professional Development and Teacher-Learning Critical Pathway planning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided a variety of professional development learning opportunities (e.g., digital, individual, small group, large group, in school, outside of school).</li> <li>• Created awareness of TLE vision among administrators.</li> <li>• PD needs were met by continuously gathering feedback through surveys, departmental meetings, and focus groups.</li> <li>• Provided teachers with opportunities to self-reflect on own abilities and recognize what support is needed.</li> <li>• Teaching staff have taken leadership roles.</li> <li>• Teachers have increased knowledge about taking an inquiry based approach, how this can be supported by technology and change the way students learn.</li> </ul>

<b>Tools and Infrastructures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided wireless internet in every instructional space.</li> <li>• Shifted from computer labs to pods in some schools.</li> <li>• Deployed 1:1 devices for all students and teachers in Grade 4-8 (7 North) and Grade 9-12 (Nora Henderson and Mountain).</li> <li>• Installed the standard set of software on iPads by the Information and Instructional Technology Department (IIT).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools were wireless by December, 2014.</li> <li>• Approximately 30% of our elementary schools have shifted from the computer lab model to pods or kits of mobile devices.</li> <li>• Deployment in the 9 project schools was completed in a hybrid model of purchased and leased devices.</li> <li>• A standard set of software installed on iPads in 9 project schools and connected through a Mobile Device Management (MDM) system.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implemented Student Technical Assistance Team (STAT) program at the 7 North Schools, Nora Henderson Secondary and Mountain Secondary.</li> <li>• Provided opportunities for parents to engage with staff to discuss issues related to the digital devices (e.g., use at home and school, digital citizenship).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a few schools, Student Technical Assistance Team empowered students to help their classmates and their teachers attend to the technical needs of the school community.</li> <li>• Recognition that the theme of Digital Citizenship and creation of norms is central when introducing devices to students and teachers.</li> </ul>

## 1. Learning Approach

### What we did:

We focused on transforming the relationships that exist in our school communities (e.g., teacher-student, student-student and student-community). We started by building capacity with our administrators in the Fall by engaging them in conversations on how they, as instructional leaders in their schools, can model what it means to be a learning partner or co-learner with their staff. Through these sessions with administrators and professional development with teachers and support staff, we supported our staff at all levels to explore how they can become activators of learning (i.e., those who offer feedback, access student thinking, support challenging goals and monitor learning).

To create a blended learning environment in our classrooms, teaching staff were encouraged to use our common virtual learning platform (The Hub) and the HWDSB App Catalogue to support learning in their classrooms. This ensured that teachers both within schools and across were using similar online tools.

Across the system, administrators and teachers were encouraged to use students' needs, strengths and interests to guide inquiry based learning. In our phase one schools, inquiry based learning was the instructional practice that was used in most classrooms. In the West 16 schools, this work was augmented through the application of strategies from New Pedagogies for Deep Learning and training provided by the Rotman School of Management.

### Impact of what we did:

Our students are becoming partners in learning. Our students' voices and their interests were captured in various formats at the school level (e.g., student voice forums, through Apps, surveys). As a result, students were provided opportunities to have greater input into their learning and teachers were able to make material more relevant. Students began to collaborate together in different ways (e.g., peer review). Not only did they interact with students in their classrooms, but with others in their school and beyond their school walls. Students are also providing more feedback to each other, explaining their thinking to peers and to their teacher.

Teachers have started to use provocative questions, statements and questioning technique to engage students in learning, making the material personally relevant. Inquiry-based activities have been incorporated



throughout each grade 4-12. At Nora Henderson, students experienced using the Hub across all of their courses. Students at both Nora Henderson and Mountain have experienced using e-portfolios to support their learning. As a result, blended learning environments have been created where students learn both digitally and face-to-face.

The learning tasks were being co-developed by students and teachers, reflecting the strengths, needs and interest of our students while still reflecting curriculum expectations. In all subject areas, students are provided with opportunities to demonstrate their learning using technology or other student selected methods.

[Video: Henderson Secondary Transforms Learning](#)



### **What we learned:**

We have learned that our classrooms can be transformed with appropriate supports and when expectations are provided to both staff and students. Engaging in a process that involves shifting the nature of the role of a teacher or student is not an easy one. It can be challenging to accept, by both staff and students, that it is no longer just one person (i.e., the teacher) that holds all the expertise and funnels information to students. Just as we recognize that our students are all at different points on the continuum of learning, so are our staff. The system's role is to recognize where each learner is and to support them in moving to the next stage. The system's expectation is that we will not "stand still", but rather we will support one another to improve our practices and deepen our skills.

When trusting relationships exist, staff are open to sharing their challenges as well as their successes. For example, when teachers participated in a focus group to discuss implementation of TLE, they were forthcoming with each other regarding challenges they have experienced trying out new instructional practices. In other cases, teachers were very interested in showcasing their learning journey at system opportunities (e.g., Professional Development sessions) and conferences (e.g., TLE Taking Flight Launch, RewirED London Regional conference at HWDSB, HWPC School Administrators Conference).

We will begin and continue to collect data that examines levels of engagement of staff and students, as well as achievement data on foundation skills as well as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills (see measurement plan on page 13).

## **2. Professional Development**

### **What we did:**

Monthly professional development was provided for all HWDSB administrators starting in October. The first session focused on creating an understanding of the TLE vision, while subsequent meetings covered a number of topics including teacher as an activator of learning, development of students' foundational skills along with problem solving, critical literacy and higher-order thinking, and creation of rich learning tasks.

An additional focus group for administrators of the phase one schools was held every month and led by their superintendents. This was an opportunity to share successes, challenges and address common concerns.

All teachers involved in a phase one project and those who supported them in their work (e.g., instructional coaches) participated in various forms of professional learning. Both teacher and student needs drove the content that was covered in the sessions and the format they were provided in (e.g., job-embedded, large group sessions). As a result, sessions that took place early in the school year were technical in nature, while later sessions focused on changing instructional practices through use of digital tools (e.g., use of e-Portfolio). Explicit connections were made often to the Continuous Learning & Improvement process occurring in the schools and the collaborative inquiry process in teacher learning teams to create alignment with system-wide practices.

Professional development for teachers and support staff was provided by both internal staff and also key partners (Apple, Discovery Education and the Rotman School of Management). In between these sessions, consultants and instructional coaches provided just-in-time support through ongoing co-planning, co-teaching, co-reflecting and coaching.

#### **Impact of what we did:**

By providing professional development to all administrators in HWDSB, we have built awareness at a system leaders' level of the TLE vision and its direct alignment to work we are already engaged in.

Bringing together administrators from phase one schools on a consistent basis provided them with a new network of colleagues and support system. Many of the discussions revealed that these administrators were dealing with similar issues at each of their schools, including commonalities across elementary and secondary schools. The opportunity to come together, and provide feedback to superintendents was valuable to all involved.

Continuously gathering feedback from staff through surveys, departmental meetings, focus groups and cabinet meetings, allowed for staff learning needs to be addressed. Teachers worked both in grade, division, department heads (cabinet), and cross subject teams. Through the use of a self-reflection tool, teachers were provided with an opportunity to reflect on their abilities and recognize the support that they might need.

Encouraging staff to take leadership roles in supporting peers, teachers became mentors for other staff within their building. For example, staff at one school started an Inquiry Based Learning book club, others have started delivering 20 minute "tech talks", and some have shared resources using online collaborative tools.

Focus groups with teachers from each of the phase one projects revealed that teachers were open and forthcoming about their experiences in implementing TLE. One of the most exciting things observed was the sharing of ideas and solutions. It was clear that many of the challenges reported by teachers were common to all of the schools, but each school had solved these challenges in a variety of ways. Sharing the "successes" from different schools helped all schools think about how they might approach their challenges in a different manner.

[Video: Reflections on New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in HWDSB](#)



### **What we learned:**

Rather than large group training sessions, teachers prefer in school, small, job-embedded training as they are able to immediately put into practice their new skills. We learned the importance of supporting staff prior to the deployment of devices to their students, including introducing them to the resources that are available (e.g., The Hub, e-portfolio, the HWDSB App catalogue) and how to create blended learning environments that use an inquiry-based approach.

Surveys and focus groups held this year will shed light on staff's experience and opinions on the use of digital tools to support creating a blended learning environment focused on inquiry based learning. This data will help to inform the professional development sessions next year.

Support from our external partners helps to develop capacity in our Leadership & Learning staff as well as our teachers. In the future we will continue to draw on these partners to meet the needs of our system – sometimes to train our support staff, sometimes to work directly with our teachers and our leaders.

### **3. Tools and Infrastructures**

#### **What we did:**

We deployed approximately 3000 iPads in our 9 project schools with a 1:1 ratio in the 7 North elementary schools (grades 4-8) and a 1:1 ratio in 2 secondary schools. We ensured that our wireless access within the 9 schools had sufficient wireless access points (WAPs) to ensure connectivity for a 1:1 ratio and we upgraded the internet bandwidth to ensure adequate speed and access to multi-media digital resources. We also connected all teacher and student devices within these schools to a Mobile Device Management (MDM) system that provides remote access to devices and tools. A standard set of software was installed on iPads by the Information and Instructional Technology Department (IIT).

#### **Impact of what we did:**

By deploying a large number of iPads in the fall to these 9 schools, we were able to train more IIT staff in mobile technology and move forward an important collaboration between IIT and program staff in order for the TLE vision to be implemented. We were also required to hire two temporary IIT staff that were trained in the iPad mobile technology. By ensuring wireless connectivity and increase band width, we were able to ensure that the digital resources and tools were made available to staff and students. By implementing a Mobile Device Management (MDM) system, we were able to remotely connect each device to a student's or staff's login and password, track misplaced devices, ensure security within our network, and pull and push applications to devices through an App Catalogue on each device. Standardizing the tools we use with staff and students helps ease adoption, smooth transitions from class to class and school to school, and helped to create a climate where learning can happen colleague to colleague.

#### **What we learned:**

The experience of the IIT team during the deployments and subsequent support of iPads in the schools has revealed some key learnings. Reviewing these lessons learned before embarking on future rollouts is crucial to ensure success. We learned that the deployment of a large number of iPads within the first two months of school start-up required a lot of staff support, collaboration, and problem solving to ensure each staff and student device was connected to each of their HWDSB credentials (i.e., login and password). We have learned that on-going training for IIT staff is necessary as they learn how to provide technical support for new technology. We also learned that the level of wireless connectivity, security and internet bandwidth that was provided at these 9 schools sites was sufficient and that little to no downtime was experienced. We will need to ensure the remaining school sites are upgraded to this standard. We also need to continually promote and model the standard software and collaborative tools within HWDSB (i.e., the Hub, HWDSB Commons, tv.HWDSB, Google Drive, etc).

#### **4. Technical Supports**

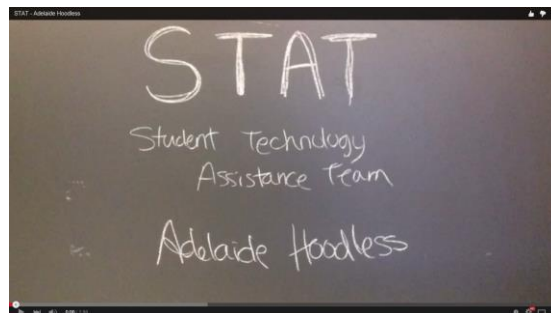
##### **What we did:**

We repurposed two IIT technicians to provide direct technical support in the schools (one supporting the 7 North Schools and 1 supporting the 2 secondary schools). We also ensured these technicians worked closely with our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Consultants in order for focus to remain on providing support for staff and student learning. We also implemented a Student Technical Assistance Teams (STAT) program at a few of the 9 project schools. We also provided opportunities for parents to engage with staff to discuss issues related to the digital devices (e.g., use at home and school, digital citizenship).

##### **Impact of what we did:**

The repurposing of IIT technicians had a positive impact on students and staff as an immediate support was in the school when early technical challenges occurred, such as student logins or connectivity. The Student Technical Assistance Teams provided leadership opportunities for students who have technical strengths and an opportunity for students to learn from peers and for teachers to learn from their students. The parent engagement opportunities provided an opportunity to answer the concerns of parents and for staff to understand concerns parents have regarding safety and security for their children on devices that go home.

[Video: Student Technical Assistance Team at Adelaide Hoodless](#)



##### **What we learned:**

We learned that we need to move to a model of IIT technical support where the home base for a technician is a secondary school, with a responsibility for the elementary family of schools. We also learned students want to be engaged in STAT and this is a strategy we need to promote and support moving forward in all our schools.

Through feedback from parents and teachers, we recognized that the theme of digital citizenship and the creation of norms for use of digital devices will be central when introducing devices to students and teachers in the future.

### 2015-2016 System Action Plan

TLE: Essential Component	Strategies (What we will do)	Evidence (Anticipated Outcomes)
<b>Learning Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on changing the “learning partner” relationship between teachers and students, students and students and students and community.</li> <li>Support Blended Learning in all classrooms through a common virtual learning platform (D2L).</li> <li>Focus on use of inquiry based learning guided by the voices and students teachers.</li> <li>Focus on introducing New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in all Clusters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Throughout all schools, teachers will engage students by making material personally relevant.</li> <li>Increases in teacher and student engagement in phase one schools.</li> <li>Increase in use of D2L across HWDSB.</li> <li>Creation of blended learning environment in all Grade 4 and 5 classrooms.</li> <li>Students learning made visible through variety of means.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<p>For Administrators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase understanding of Inquiry Based Learning, Blended Learning, changing role of teachers as activators of learning, development of rich learning tasks and supporting students to develop skills such as higher-order thinking, problem solving and critical literacy.</li> </ul> <p>Leadership and Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase capacity to support and promote inquiry based learning , blended learning and New Pedagogies for Deep Learning.</li> </ul> <p>Educators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide collaborative learning with Instructional Coaches for support.</li> <li>Provide inquiry-based learning opportunities that facilitate collaboration and critical thinking between educators.</li> <li>Provide school-based Professional Development and Teacher-Learning Critical Pathway planning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional Development opportunities that are varied in format and content to meet the needs of our staff.</li> <li>Ongoing collaboration with external partners to ensure the needs of our learners (staff and students are met).</li> <li>Increased awareness of the TLE among teachers and the community.</li> <li>Teachers and students take leadership roles.</li> <li>Teachers in more schools have increased knowledge about taking an inquiry based approach, how this can be supported by technology and change the way students learn.</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Infrastructures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide wireless internet in every instructional space.</li> <li>Shift from computer labs to pods in all classrooms; student mobile devices, and a projector and teacher device where necessary.</li> <li>Maintain current 1:1 in the nine schools.</li> <li>Deploy 1:1 devices in Grade 6 at Glen Brae.</li> <li>Deploy 1:1 devices in Grade 9 at SJAM and Delta.</li> <li>Deploy shared kits in all Grade 4 and 5 classrooms.</li> <li>Install the standard set of software on iPads by the Information and Instructional Technology Department (IIT).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wireless access within all our learning spaces will provide all students and staff with connectivity.</li> <li>We will increase the number of classrooms with mobile devices and projectors and reduce the number of computer labs.</li> <li>The deployment of 1:1 devices and the shared kits will be completed by October.</li> <li>All iPads within the system will have the standard set of software and will be managed in our MDM environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Student Technical Assistance Team (STAT) program at all 9 project schools and at Delta, SJAM and Glen Brae.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The STAT teams will be implemented to transform the relationships between teachers and students.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for parents to engage with staff to discuss issues related to digital devices to accelerate learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in parent engagement opportunities regarding TLE, with a focus on student learning, security, and digital citizenship.</li> </ul>
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### How are we measuring and monitoring TLE?

E-BEST, the board's research department, is leading the multi-year, multi-method evaluation of TLE. As TLE is a system-wide vision, multiple perspectives are needed to assess its effectiveness of the implementation.

The following principles were used when developing the measurement plan:

- Use existing data-gathering activities whenever possible, both to reduce the burden on schools and participants as well as to develop a culture of measurement to support quality improvement.
- Use measures which have been developed and validated in similar settings wherever possible, both to increase the validity of our results and to allow for comparison with other settings and interventions.
- Ensure that the resources are available to carry-out the measurement plan over 3 to 5 years, the expected time frame of this initiative.
- Utilize early results to improve implementation planning for successive roll-outs, even if this means later data will not be entirely comparable.

Our initial focus has been on the implementation at the phase one schools examining student and teacher engagement, student achievement.

E-BEST will also support IIT to monitor and evaluate the sustainability of the project. This involves evaluating:

- The deployment of devices in a 1:1 ratio with students being allowed to take the devices home
- The deployment of devices in a class-kit shared model starting in grade 4 where teaching digital citizenship and responsible use is a focus, moving to a 1:1 model by grade 7.

The following is a high level overview of the data being gathered:

Method	Constructs	Stakeholders (both in TLE Phase One schools and other schools)
<b>Key informant interviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation support need for instructional practice and use of digital tools</li> <li>• School and system-wide conditions for learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff supporting teachers</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Superintendents</li> </ul>
<b>Focus groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support needed for implementation of instructional practices and use of digital tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Administrators</li> <li>• Parents</li> </ul>
<b>Surveys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher engagement</li> <li>• Student engagement</li> <li>• Use of digital tools to supporting learning at home and at school</li> <li>• Instructional practices being used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Parents</li> </ul>
<b>Various methods (e.g., EQAO, Report Cards, Credit Accumulation, online assessments)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundational skills through EQAO, Report Cards</li> <li>• Credit Accumulation</li> <li>• 21<sup>st</sup> century skills including 6Cs from New Pedagogies for Deep learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> </ul>

E-BEST is also collaborating with educational researchers at Laurier University and at Brock University to assist in the development and deployment of this evaluation plan.

**Appendix A:** Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE) Model

**Appendix B:** 5 Year Implementation Plan

**Appendix C:** Updated Business Plan

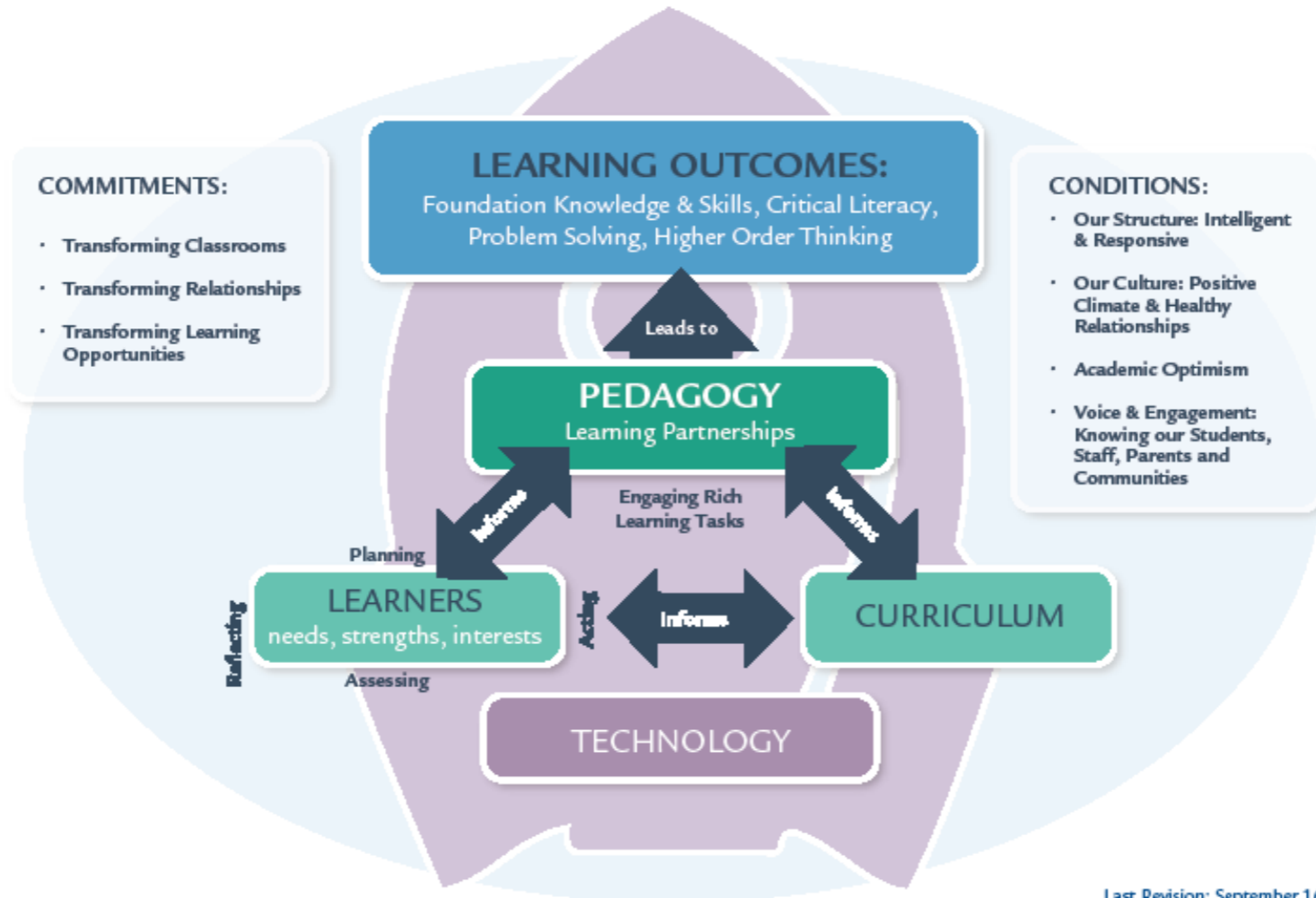
**Appendix D:** Updated Deployment Schedule

**Appendix E:** Glossary of Terms



## Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE) Model

Learning for Success - Accelerated by Technology - Driven by Instruction



Last Revision: September 16, 2014



Appendix B

UPDATED FIVE YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018 (Sept. 2019)
<b>Level of Implementation</b>	Exploration	Exploration & Installation	Initial Implementation	Partial Implementation	Full Implementation
<b>Learning Approach</b>	<b>Moving towards Blended Learning in all classrooms through a common virtual learning platform (D2L):</b> - Access to interactive, digital tools, resources and supporting on-line and face-to-face collaborations - staff/student and student/student and student/community - A virtual space to post student work – sharing with staff, classmates, parents/guardians/caregivers				
	Focus on blended learning at the <b>teacher point of learning</b> and instruction (teacher device)	Focus on blended learning at the <b>teacher point of learning and instruction shifting to student point of learning</b>	Focus on blended learning - <b>teacher and student directed</b>	Focus on blended learning – <b>moving towards teacher and student directed across the system</b>	Focus on blended learning at the <b>teacher and student point of learning</b> - all grades, all subject areas everywhere
	Focus on use of inquiry based learning				
	<b>Student Voice Forums</b> - from system to school level to classroom level discussions where student voices are captured and inform our practice				
		Focus on introducing New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in some classrooms in the West Cluster.	Focus on introducing and maintaining New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in all Clusters.	Focus on introducing and maintaining New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in all Clusters.	Focus on introducing and maintaining New Pedagogies for Deep Learning in all schools.
<b>Professional Development – System and School Level</b>	<b>Administrators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide meaningful understanding of what Inquiry Based Learning and Blended Learning looks like, and how to create a classroom to facilitate this learning (workshops, in-services and summer institute learning)</li> <li>Provide meaningful understanding of the changing role of teachers to support inquiry based learning, develop rich tasks and help students develop skills such as higher-order thinking, problem solving and critical literacy</li> </ul> <b>Leadership and Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21st Century Learning Consultants and system leaders building the capacity of Leadership and Learning Consultants and Instructional Coaches to support and promote inquiry based learning and blended learning as part of effective instruction in all classrooms</li> <li>Leadership and Learning Consultants along with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Consultant building the capacity of Instructional Coaches in New Pedagogies for Deep Learning</li> </ul> <b>Educators</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide collaborative learning with Instructional Coaches for support</li> <li>Provide inquiry-based learning opportunities that facilitate collaboration and critical thinking between educators</li> <li>Coach educators on ways to integrate blended learning into their Annual Learning Plan</li> <li>Provide school-based Professional Development , and Teacher-Learning Critical Pathway planning to include elements of Blended Learning where appropriate</li> </ul>				
<b>Tools and Infrastructure</b>	<b>Wireless Rollout continues</b>	<b>Wireless Internet in Every Instructional Space</b> (projected completion by December 2014)			
	<b>System Level (i.e., shifting technology to the point of learning - from Computer Labs to Pods in Classrooms, Mobile Devices, Classroom Projector and Teacher Device):</b> Begin replacement of Computer Labs with some pods in classrooms	<b>System Level:</b> Complete Shift from computer labs to pods in some classrooms	<b>System Level:</b> Complete shift from computer labs to pods in all classrooms; student mobile devices, and a projector and teacher device where necessary.	<b>System Level:</b> Continue reassessment of existing hardware and software in schools to shift technology to the point of learning (from Computer Labs to Pods in Classrooms, Mobile Devices, Classroom Projector and Teacher Device)	

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018 (Sept. 2019)
	<p><b>7 North Family of Schools:</b> September 2013 – 1:1 Devices for all Teachers (gr. 4-6) January 2014 – Pods – classroom set of devices</p> <p><b>Nora Henderson Secondary:</b> Test Wireless connectivity</p> <p><b>Assistive Technology:</b> Assess/provide assistive technology to support inclusion of students transitioning from Parkview to Delta or Mountain; Assess/provide assistive technology to support inclusion of students with identified needs moving from Grade 8 to 9</p> <p><b>Support Team:</b> Devices for all instructional coaches and consultants</p>	<p><b>7 North Family of Schools:</b> September 2014 – 1:1 Devices for all Students and Teachers (gr. 4-8)</p> <p><b>Nora Henderson Secondary:</b> September 2014 – 1:1 Devices for all Students and Teachers (gr 9-12)</p> <p><b>Assistive Technology:</b> Support, monitor and learn from implementation in order to support other staff and an increasing number of students with specific needs across the system to support Learning For All</p>	<p><b>North Schools:</b> Continue with providing 1:1 Devices for all Students and Teachers at 7 North (gr. 4-8), 1:1 Devices for all Students and Teachers in Grade 6 at Glen Brae, Grade 9 at Delta and SJAM.</p> <p><b>Nora Henderson Secondary:</b> Continue to support and learn in order to support New North Secondary School implementation Sept. 2016 and implementation in other schools</p>	<p><b>System Tablet Technology Rollout Begins:</b></p> <p><b>Elementary schools:</b> shared tablet deployment begins with grade 6 teachers and students across the system</p> <p><b>Secondary Schools:</b> 1:1 tablet deployment begins with grade 9 teachers and students across the system</p>	<p><b>System Tablet Technology Rollout Continues</b>(see Deployment Schedule)</p>
		<p><b>Assistive Technology:</b> Continue to provide assistive technology as required to support Learning For All</p>			
		<p><b>Installing the standard set of software on iPads by the Information and Instructional Technology Department (IIT)</b></p>			
<b>Technical Supports</b>	<p>Explore how to train students as in-school <b>Student Technical Assistance Team</b>-to be a first line of support for technical issues with student and teacher devices (interested students will gain valuable experiential learning towards a potential future career pathway).</p>	<p>Implement <b>Student Technical Assistance Team</b> program at the 7 North Schools, Nora Henderson Secondary and Mountain Secondary.</p>	<p>Continue growth of the <b>Student Technical Assistance Team</b> programs at the North Schools, Nora Henderson Secondary and Mountain Secondary.</p> <p>IIT technical support model to be reviewed</p>	<p>Expand <b>Student Technical Assistance Team</b> programs and teams to other secondary and elementary schools.</p>	<p>Continue with <b>Student Technical Assistance Support Team</b> programs and teams in all secondary and elementary schools.</p>

National Implementation Research Network Levels of Implementation	
Level	Description
① Exploration	Needs assessment, mapping of resources and current practices, review of practices in other jurisdictions, literature review, assessment of organizational/school capacity... <b>resulting in decisions about an evidence-informed course of action.</b>
② Installation	Ensuring infrastructure (organizational processes, funding streams, human resources, technology), policy development, consultation... <b>resulting in settings that are prepared for implementation.</b>
③ Initial Implementation	Awareness-building, preparation for change, training, small scale piloting of strategies... <b>resulting in introductory use of the evidence-informed strategy.</b>
④ Partial Implementation	Introductory use of a strategy into school/district practices, staff are developing skills for implementing the strategy with fidelity. Different parts of the organization may be more advanced than other parts ... <b>resulting in some use of evidence-informed strategy.</b>
⑤ Full Implementation	Integration of strategy into school/district practices, alignment with policies and procedures, strategy carried out with proficiency, ongoing coaching to ensure implementation fidelity... <b>resulting in the strategy becoming a regular part of school/district life.</b>
⑥ Sustainability	Skillful adaptations to new circumstances, succession planning and training to ensure continuity, maintenance of supportive infrastructure... <b>resulting in long-term survival and continued effectiveness of the evidence-informed strategy.</b>

## Appendix C

## Updated Business Plan

This schedule has been updated to incorporate leasing the technology and to incorporate the increase in funding for the Ministry for technology.

Summary	Actual 2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 and beyond
<b>Costs*</b>							
Technology	\$ 636,000	\$ 685,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 2,200,000	\$ 2,800,000	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000
Temporary Assistance	\$ 111,000	\$ 122,000					
Additional Licensing	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000
	<u>\$ 747,000</u>	<u>\$ 907,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,750,000</u>	<u>\$ 2,450,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,050,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,750,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,750,000</u>
<b>Revenue Sources</b>							
School Budgets	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 632,000	\$ 917,000	\$ 1,204,000	\$ 1,483,000	\$ 1,500,000
Ministry Technology EPO **	\$ 437,000	\$ 536,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Operating Savings	\$ 220,000	\$ 281,000	\$ 368,000	\$ 533,000	\$ 846,000	\$ 1,267,000	\$ 1,250,000
	<u>\$ 747,000</u>	<u>\$ 907,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,750,000</u>	<u>\$ 2,450,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,050,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,750,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,750,000</u>
Surplus/Deficit	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

## NOTE:

\* Does not include Professional Development. Professional Development related to TLE is incorporated into the Board's Professional Development Budget.

\*\* Assumption that this grant will increase in 2016-17 and continue into the future.

## Appendix D

## Updated Digital Device Deployment Schedule

	Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
	1 to 1	Teachers and Classroom Sets	1 to 1	Teachers and Classroom Sets	1 to 1	Teachers and Classroom Sets	1 to 1	Teachers and Classroom Sets	1 to 1	Teachers and Classroom Sets				
2014-15	Pilot Project – one-to-one at 7 North Elementary Schools										Pilot Projects – Nora Henderson Secondary School and Assistive Technology at Mountain and Delta			
2015-16		X		X	Glen Brae Gr. 6 (AM Cunningham)						Pilot Projects – Nora Henderson Secondary, Mountain, Assistive Technology, Grade 9 Classes at Delta and SJAM			
2016-17	X		X			X					X			
2017-18	X		X		X			X			X	X		
2018-19	X		X		X		X			X	X	X	X	
September 2019	X		X		X		X		X		X	X	X	X

## Appendix E

## Glossary of Terms

**Blended Learning**<sup>2</sup>: Blended learning uses technology tools and resources to teach and support learning face-to-face.

**Continuous Learning and Improvement**: A collaborative process that school communities engage in to support school improvement and student achievement by identifying student and staff needs.

**Digital Citizenship**<sup>3</sup>: Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior.

**Foundational knowledge and skills**: The essential knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics.

**Inquiry Based Learning**<sup>4</sup>: An approach to teaching and learning that places students' questions, ideas, and observations at the centre of the learning experience.

**Learning Resources**<sup>5</sup>: Refers to any person(s) or any material that is acquired for instruction and/or evaluation.

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<sup>2</sup> From the HWDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and Technology Policy (2013).

<sup>3</sup> From the HWDSB 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and Technology Policy (2013).

<sup>4</sup> Capacity Building Series

<sup>5</sup> From the HWDSB Selection of Learning Resources Directive (2013).

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Elementary Program Strategy – May 2015

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Our Elementary Program Strategy will provide a guide for decision making regarding equity of access and opportunity in all of our elementary schools over the next several years. The way students learn is dramatically changing, and hence our Elementary Program Strategy will address what students need to learn, how they learn, and the types of spaces in which they will learn.

The Elementary Program Strategy identifies a new vision for all our elementary schools. Our vision is grounded in 7 core beliefs.

Our Elementary Program Strategy is grounded in research of best practices related to programs, design of learning spaces, community use requirements, and changing curriculum. The focus on all schools being great schools will address the need for some standardization as it relates to space for program offerings, such as gymnasium size, and instrumental music rooms. Changing demands on schools will cause us to also consider spaces for non-academic needs, such as preparation for breakfast programs, and child-care directives, as an example.

Our first draft of the Elementary Program Strategy will be brought to the Program Committee in May 2015 for review. Upon Board of Trustee approval, the Strategy will be made available for public consultation this fall before the final draft is brought forward to the Trustees in December 2015.

The Elementary Program Strategy is divided into seven sections:

1. K-8 Strategy
2. Curriculum & Transforming Learning Everywhere
3. Elementary Specialized Learning Programs
4. Language Programs: Core French, French Immersion & Native Languages
5. Special Education Delivery Model
6. Facilities
7. Glossary of Terms & References



## EXECUTIVE REPORT TO PROGRAM COMMITTEE

**TO:** PROGRAM COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Pam Reinholdt, Interim-Director of Education

**DATE:** May 14, 2015

**PREPARED BY:** Executive Council, E-BEST and Corporate Communications

**RE:** Elementary Program Strategy

**Action X**

**Monitoring**

### **Recommended Action**

That the Program Committee recommend to the Board of Trustees that the Elementary Program Strategy (DRAFT) be sent out for public consultation in September 2015.

### **Background**

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) continues to revitalize all schools. Our board Strategic Directions coupled with our Secondary Program Strategy and our Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE), we continue to focus our efforts on creating the best learning conditions possible for our students to reach their full potential as learners. We are now developing an Elementary Program Strategy as we consider what education will look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in elementary education. The Elementary Program Strategy will focus on effective programs delivered in renewed facilities that have acceptable spaces for the programs being delivered.

### ***Why an Elementary Program Strategy?***

Our Elementary Program Strategy is rethinking the way we offer programs and facilities, so that we can best meet the needs of each of our students and prepare them for the world they will live and work in. While we will continue to provide students with foundational knowledge and skills (i.e., mathematics and literacy), our teachers will support students to develop those skills required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (for example, problem solving, critical literacy and higher order thinking). To ensure our students benefit from the educational programs, we need to provide engaging programs in safe, nurturing and supportive learning environments.

We envision a school system in which all students can find what they need at any of our schools, or within a cluster of schools. A system where the placement of programs, supports and facilities makes strategic sense. A place where students feel safe, welcome, included and energized as they are moving closer to their goals. This is about providing a pathway to success for every single one of our students.

### ***What is changing? Our vision for Elementary Education K-8***

Our Elementary Program Strategy identifies a new vision for all our elementary schools. Our vision is:

- All of our elementary schools are great schools. Students will access a **balanced interdisciplinary curriculum** in all of our elementary schools.

- All of our elementary schools will focus on using **evidence based instructional practices** accelerated by digital tools to increase student engagement and improve learning outcomes.
- All of our elementary schools will reflect our preferred model of K-8. As we continue to build new schools or unite existing school communities, we will strive for a K-8 model in our schools.
- All of our elementary schools will be **physically accessible** and include flexible learning spaces, wireless accessibility and specialized rooms to support the delivery of the Arts, Special Education, Science and Health and Physical Education curriculum.
- All of our elementary schools will be responsive and collaborative where student, classroom and school learning needs are met within the school, district, and community while valuing **parents, guardians and caregivers as partners**.
- All of our elementary schools will provide a core program that supports achievement for all students, across all schools. Schools will continue to use **student voice and interest** to provide programming, including curricular and extra-curricular activities, unique to the needs of that school community. A few schools will offer specialized learning programs for students who wish to learn in French, Native Languages or a Special Education program. These programs will be available in all three clusters and accessible by every student in HWDSB.
- All of our elementary schools will **be safe, inclusive and welcoming**.

### **Rationale/Benefits:**

HWDSB values inclusion, equity, and engagement, as well as student achievement. Our program strategy and teaching strategies will respond to the needs of diverse groups, as well as the unique needs of each learner. We will do this by adjusting our practices to fit each student's needs.

### **Continuity:**

We want our students to experience the fewest transitions from elementary to secondary schools with appropriate support and program offerings.

### **Engagement:**

We are changing relationships and students are expected and encouraged to play a more active role in their learning as teachers empower them to think deeply about what they are learning and include student interests whenever possible in the curriculum.

### **Equity**

The locations of programs will be accessible to all of our students.

### **Inclusion:**

Inclusive education means that all students are educated with peers of the same age in our schools. Supports will be provided in every school to meet the differential needs of each students.

## **Elementary Education in HWDSB**

### **K-8 Strategy**

We have been moving to the K-8 model for our schools as we have been establishing boundaries and building new facilities. Our K-8 strategy focuses on reducing the number of transitions for students as they move through their elementary school years since studies have shown that too many school transitions have a detrimental influence on school achievement (Lupart & Beran, 2007) and self-esteem (Moore, 1984). In doing so, we strengthen relationships, a sense of connectedness and stability for our students, recognizing how these contribute to student overall well-being. As well, students are able to stay with the same group of peers as they progress from



Kindergarten through to the end of grade 8.

As part of our K-8 Strategy, our core program in all of our elementary schools will support improved achievement for all students, across all schools. Each school will be a place that includes the following:

- A wide range of subjects, courses and experiential learning opportunities.
- Engaging programs and the ability to access what students need for a specific pathway to graduation or exit from school.
- A school climate where students feel safe, welcome and included within their school.
- A wide range of interventions to promote nurturing and diverse learning environments.
- Peer-to-peer support structures.

Elementary schools will offer targeted supports to students who are struggling academically, socially and emotionally. These programs do not require specialized facilities or equipment and are offered to students living within the catchment of their home school.

### ***Role of Community***

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to developing high levels of community participation, collaboration and involvement to support student success and wellbeing, and to strengthen the community. We are committed to working with our community around ways in which student learning experiences can be enhanced through partnerships. In addition, community partners play a critical role in providing direct service and support to our school communities. This includes providing quality, after-school programs, in school facilities.

### ***Early Learning and Child Care***

HWDSB recognizes the importance of quality Early Learning and Child Care experiences for children and families. Where external funding is available, we support the building of child care facilities attached to our schools and encourage the ongoing connections between the programs and our schools. In addition, we continue to be committed to providing a seamless experience for children and families both in transition to school as well as in before and after school programs.

### **Curriculum Delivery & Transforming Learning Everywhere**

The Elementary Program Strategy will ensure that students have access to a balanced curriculum. This includes literacy, numeracy, the Arts (music, dance, and drama), science and technology, geography, history, health and physical education, and social skill development. These subjects comprise the learning expectations as laid out by the Ministry of Education. Through a balanced approach to program instruction, students continue to learn the knowledge and skills outlined in the Ministry documents. With this approach we can incorporate the modifications, accommodations and alternative expectations necessary for some students.

The way we deliver programs is changing, and as we build new or revitalize existing schools we need to recognize this change. A school for the twenty-first century “recognizes that, today and in the future, students need to be critically literate in order to synthesize information, make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and thrive in an ever-changing global community. It is important that students be connected to the curriculum, that they see themselves in what is taught, how it is taught, and how it applies to the world at large. The curriculum recognizes that the needs of learners are diverse and helps all learners develop the knowledge, skills, and perspectives they need to become informed, productive, caring, responsible, and active citizens in their own communities and in the world.” (*Ministry of Education, Social Studies 1-6 & History and Geography, p.3*)

Driven by the Ontario Ministry of Education’s “[Achieving Excellence](#)” vision, the next phase in Ontario’s Education Strategy, our commitments to elementary curriculum delivery are:

- Meeting changing demands on education to reflect changes in our world.
- Providing effective instruction accelerated by technology.
- Developing the skills to succeed within and beyond the classroom.

Education needs to change as the world changes. We must ensure our learners develop foundational knowledge

and skills. However, they also need skills that will allow them to be adaptive in a rapidly changing world we can barely imagine. Educators have an important role to play in developing all learners' capacity to flourish in this complex world. By supporting skills in problem solving, critical literacy and higher-order thinking, we can prepare learners to positively impact their own lives and communities.

The expanded use of technology is a key component of student learning. Technology supports independent learning, access to a wide range of up to date information, and programs that support the learning for students with special needs. Learning spaces that promote student engagement, collaboration, and collective problem-solving are equally as important.

Every day educators make critical decisions about how to design, deliver lessons and assess student learning. We consider the learners we directly serve—their strengths, interests, needs—to determine what strategies will help them succeed. We use evidence-based approaches (both what the research has taught us and what our practice has taught us through collaborating together) to make the best choices to serve students, all while ensuring we meet the key curriculum expectations. This is the art and science of good teaching.

Transforming Learning Everywhere is about innovative instructional practice enhanced by technology that will increase student engagement and improved learning outcomes in both a physical and digital world.

### ***Whole School Approach***

We will provide a whole school approach to a positive school climate that includes the active involvement of all stakeholders to develop healthy relationships throughout the school community. The teaching and learning environment that is inclusive, promotes the engagement of all students and reflects individual student strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives is what we strive towards. As a system and within individual schools we collaborate with community agencies (United Way, Raise the Roof, John Howard Society), organizations and public bodies to improve service and support for student success and well-being in both the school and community environment. Through bullying awareness/prevention programs, accepting schools initiatives, peer mentoring, Positive Space and transition activities between elementary and secondary schools students demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills, such as teamwork, advocacy, leadership and global citizenship.

### **Specialized Learning Programs: French Immersion, Native Languages, Programs of Choice, English as a Second Language (ESL)**

#### ***French Immersion***

To ensure equity of access to students participating in this program, HWDSB elementary French Immersion will be offered in each of the clusters within the Board. This will provide for students in the English stream to attend their local school, or to attend French Immersion within a geographic area close to their home school.

An immersion program means that French is not only the medium in which subjects are taught, but it is also the means of communication between pupils and teacher in the classroom and, as much as possible, beyond the classroom. Research and experience show that early immersion leads to higher fluency in French while maintaining levels of competency in English and math.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board provides compulsory Core French programs in all of our elementary schools in grades 4 through 8, as per Ministry Funding.

#### ***Elementary French Immersion Model***

French Immersion requires that French must be the language of instruction for a minimum of 50 per cent of the total instructional time. At HWDSB, we strive to offer more than the minimum requirement each year.

French Immersion programs must include the study of French as a second language and the study of at least two other subjects taught in French. These two subjects must be selected from the following:

- Social studies / history & geography;
- Mathematics;
- Science & technology
- Health & physical education; and
- The Arts

### ***Native Languages***

Where there is sufficient student interest in a school and staff availability, Native Languages may be offered in an elementary school. Students may opt for Native Languages in place of French. Where there are insufficient numbers for a program at a school, students may apply to attend the school where the program is located.

### ***English as a Second Language***

English as a Second Language programs and supports will continue to be offered in schools where there is a sufficient number of students requiring the program. Where there is limited need, itinerant support will be provided. All schools will receive some support for their English Language Learners.

In response to student needs, ALPHA programs will be located in a specified schools. Accelerated Learning Program Hamilton Area is designed for students who are fluent in their home language and who would benefit from an accelerated program which allow for two years of learning to be addressed in one year. Students are referred to this program upon entry to HWDSB through the Assessment Centre.

### ***Programs of Choice***

Programs of Choice were established several years ago due to student interest and staff expertise. These programs either require specialized facilities, equipment or funding. The current programs will continue to be provided if there is sufficient student interest and funding is available. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent unless the student is attending the program at their home school and would qualify for transportation under the HWDSB Transportation Policy. Should space at the existing school become unavailable due to expanding in-catchment enrolment, the programs may be relocated. These programs will not be expanded.

### **Special Education Delivery Model**

The Ministry of Education document *Learning for All Beliefs* (Ministry of Education) informs HWDSB's Elementary Program Strategy. It guides our belief in a responsive and collaborative system where student, classroom and school learning needs are supported and addressed by staff within the school, district and community while valuing parents/guardians as partners.

### ***Tiered Approach & Support***

HWDSB believes in a tiered and responsive approach to meeting the needs of all students. Most students' needs are met within the regular classroom through differentiated instruction, accommodations and modifications that may be communicated in students' individual education plans.

Some students receive supplemental supports within their home school or through access to short term, targeted interventions or programs.

A few students require intensive programming to address educational and alternative needs which may be provided within a regular classroom, through targeted intervention or in an alternative placement. HWDSB's goal is always to work to develop skills in students so they can be successful within a regular class, school and community.

### ***Specialized Programs***

Specialized programs to accommodate varied needs are available throughout the system for students who require intensive and targeted support to develop skills that will better position them to navigate a variety of settings (school, home and community).

Varied specialized programs are available to meet the diverse and unique learning needs of our students. Our goal is to provide strategic, clear and equitable access to programs aligning with a tiered response to intervention

approach. Schools will be supported to accommodate students' needs within a safe, accepting and responsive environment, with an emphasis on inclusion.

Educators within our specialized programs have the knowledge and skills to support the social, emotional and diverse educational needs of the students accessing the programs. Emphasis is on developing students' academic, social, emotional and self-regulatory skills with a goal of integration into the school and community based on students' individual abilities.

### ***Inclusive Education***

HWDSB believes in an inclusive approach to education with students receiving support within the most inclusive and least restrictive environment.

As we support all students in achieving high expectations and developing skills toward increased independence, we assist our students in "Creating Pathways to Success". We engage with students, staff, families and the community to envision a future for all students where they are engaged in and contributing to the community in which they live. We recognize that for our students with greatest needs, many supports internal and external to our system may be required to achieve optimum engagement.

With this as a vision, HWDSB recognizes that to achieve this outcome, we must work to support staff in meeting student need within the regular classroom as the first line of intervention. When our students' needs exceed our capacity to be responsive within the regular classroom, alternative supports and programs are available.

Schools, families and our communities are aware of available programs and the pathways to access necessary supports, programs and services. Through clearly communicated pathways and entry processes, equitable opportunities will be provided to students. Through intake processes all applicants will be reviewed, taking into consideration students' presenting strengths and needs, suitability of program to support student success based on their profile, interventions tried to date, and potential supports and services that may be available to the student.

### **Facilities**

A Design Manual will be developed that will provide a framework and specific guidelines for the design of the new elementary schools in the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and to assist in the planning and development of the additions and alterations for the existing elementary schools. The guidelines provided in the Design Manual will establish a uniform level of quality and sustainability for all elementary school buildings. The Design Manual applies to new school facilities and additions/renovations to existing buildings. The school facility must be responsive to a school district's educational program and demand. The intent of the Design Manual is to allow the Board to develop building programs and spaces that respond to each school community's unique needs and therefore, the design guidelines will adapt based on the specific and unique characteristics and requirements of each school community and the existing building potential.

Hamilton-Wentworth has been able to build several new elementary schools within the last 10 years. Throughout this time, we continue to consider the learning spaces for today but also for the future. The need for flexible learning spaces, wireless accessibility, specialized rooms for some programs, and accessibility need to be considered. A system-wide standard for elementary school buildings is being developed that will include classrooms, Learning Commons where students can collaborate with others or work independently, and some dedicated spaces. These include: Early Learning/Kindergarten rooms, gymnasiums, sound-proof instrumental music rooms, science rooms, specialty rooms for students with special needs to enable them to follow, where possible, their Pathway within the cluster. We will also be considering spaces that provide a specific service, such as small meeting rooms for itinerant staff or preparation for breakfast programs.

The new elementary school design guidelines aligns with key educational principles and values envisioned by the Board. The design guidelines respond to the current and future needs, unanticipated changes in pedagogy, curriculum, technology and learning expectations. The guideline accommodates a robust enough framework to adapt to specific programming requirements, the community needs and diverse existing site issues. School construction will align with Provincial funding parameters. A new approach to a school layout will introduce new

ways of moving through and interacting with a school facility. The design guideline includes input from the school community including educators and students as well as caretaking and maintenance personnel. The concepts illustrated in the guidelines will demonstrate that new forms of learning will require new spatial conditions alongside the traditional teacher fronted rooms, all spaces in a school will be learning spaces and schools and their communities will share resources extensively.

Flexibility in curriculum delivery, based on personalized learning, supported by appropriate digital tools and quality learning environments are the basis for the design of the new schools and the alterations to existing schools for Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. The guidelines describe learner -centered settings which range from specialized to multi-purpose, from formal to informal and from physical to virtual. Learning spaces must be designed around the patterns of human interaction that respond to the many ways students learn. All learning spaces will have access to natural light and wireless network access will be available on demand.

As an inclusive community, HWDSB will ensure spaces are identified in all locations to support the required practices or tenets of religion as per current HWDSB policies.

## ***Glossary of Terms and References***

**Balanced Curriculum:** A balanced curriculum includes literacy, numeracy, the Arts (music, dance, and drama), science and technology, geography, history, health and physical education, and social skill development. These subjects comprise the learning expectations as laid out by the Ministry of Education.

**Inclusion:**

Inclusive Education: Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

**Individual Education Plan (IEP):** A written plan describing the appropriate special education program and/or special education services to be received by a student with special education needs. ([www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/specialed/iep](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/specialed/iep))

**Special Education Services:** Provides supports such as Psychological Services, Communication Services, Autism Services, and Social Work Services to students with special education needs. ([www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/specialed](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/specialed))

**Specialized Programs:** Unique and innovative learning programs designed to engage students with differing educational interests. These courses are consistent with the Ontario Curriculum and provide specialized learning opportunities, adding depth and intensity. These can build a broad range of skills while enhancing character development, academic achievement, and leadership development. The programs may include the arts, environmental studies, fitness and wellness and languages. ([www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/oyap](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/oyap))