HWDSB

Program Committee
Monday, June 1, 2020
Room 340-D

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558
Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

Virtual Meeting Norms:
- All callers are to place themselves on mute
- Roll call is in place for attendance and for questions

The audio portion of this committee meeting will be made available on our website the day following the meeting.

 AGENDA: 5:30 pm

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of the Agenda

3. 21st Century Learning Report

4. Partnerships Report

5. Adjournment

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**EXECUTIVE REPORT TO
PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

TO: PROGRAM COMMITTEE

FROM: Manny Figueiredo, Director of Education

DATE: June 1st 2020

PREPARED BY: Peter Sovran, Associate Director, Learning Services
Bill Torrens, Superintendent of Student Achievement-Program

RE: 21st Century Learning Report

Action **X**   Monitoring

Recommended Action

That the 21st Century Learning Strategy be implemented in September 2020 and a monitoring report provided to Program Committee following Winter Break (first available meeting scheduled) in 2021.

This report includes two appendices:
1. *Appendix A: Draft 21St Century Learning Strategy*
2. *Appendix B: Draft Implementation Plan*

Rationale

The rationale for beginning implementation of the 21st Century Strategy, with annual reports to the Program Committee includes:

- The closing of schools due to COVID-19 has highlighted the need for a 21st Century Learning Strategy to guide future decision-making and to be a framework for planning for the 2020-21 academic year.
- The school closure has provided an immense amount of learning. Stakeholder voice has been gathered in a different manner than normal and the input needed to move forward has been provided.
- The start the 2020-21 school year is an ideal time to launch the 21st Century Learning Strategy because the strategy builds upon the work of educators, students, and families to adopt distance learning. It also supports educators in building blended learning into their teaching practice.

Context

COVID-19 and the Ministerial Order to close schools has provided HWDSB with a 21st Century Learning "stress test." The school closure raised the question of whether our existing practices and structures could support emergency distance learning. For instance, the school closure required educators to adopt digital platforms, sometimes for the first time, to create virtual learning spaces for distance learning. It also required many students, especially our youngest, to learn in a virtual space for the first time, with the support of their parents. Unlike within the physical school, we could not ensure that all staff and students had access to an internet enabled digital tool and access to Wi-Fi or data, to work and learn from home. School closures also raised questions about the competencies and digital skills needed to work and learn in virtual spaces. As planning begins for September 2020, there clearly is a need to assess the results of this "stress test" and provide the organization with clear guidance.

The Need for a 21st Century Learning Strategy

When schools closed in March 2020, a clear kindergarten to grade twelve modern learning strategy was not in place. As staff worked to support educators in adopting digital platforms and students in accessing distance learning, it was evident that learning strategy with board standards would have been valuable. For instance, the Board standard platforms (The HUB and MS Teams) were new to many educators and students. A 21st Century Learning Strategy would have provided coherence as a framework for distance for teaching and learning in virtual spaces.

The draft 21St Century Learning Strategy sets the direction that from kindergarten to graduation, HWDSB students will learn in environments that are both physical and digital. Students will work and learn in those environments, regardless of their post-secondary destination. The strategy guides the development of a board standard blended learning space (The HUB and MS Teams) to focus training, professional learning, and support for staff and students. The strategy names critical 21st Century Competencies and Digital Skills educators could be intentionally embedded and developed in classroom programming.

Learning from the School Closure

The Ministerial Order of school closures and learning via distance education has been a learning experience and it has provided unexpected opportunities for stakeholder engagement. The parent/caregiver and staff feedback gathered through ThoughtExchange, as well as the learning from supporting staff in the shift to distance learning, has created a unique opportunity to shift the strategy development plan and accelerate implementation.

Throughout the closure period, staff has been gathering insights, feedback and other learning, while undertaking their day-to-day work. At this point, the unique circumstance of school closures has provided the following observations:

- Having blended learning as an on-going classroom practice would enable staff and students to move to distance learning with greater ease in the event of future school closures.
- Possessing digital skills, beyond being able to use a smartphone, is vital to have having staff and students undertake blended teaching and learning.
- Standardizing devices and platforms creates efficiencies, enhances privacy and security, focuses professional learning and support, and reduces student and parent/caregiver frustration at navigating multiple platforms.
- Enhancing our understanding of how to effectively provide blended learning is vital to ensuring that the teaching in blended spaces continues to reflect best practice and foster high levels of student achievement.
- It is vital to building confidence in blended learning and using digital platforms by ensuring privacy and security measures are in place, and known by all stakeholders.

From the outset, gathering stakeholder voice to shape the 21St Century Learning Strategy has been a critical component of strategy development. As noted in the February 4th, 2019, Program Committee Report, the goal has been to "Engage our students, staff, parents, partners, and employers to ensure that the new 21st Century Learning strategy is connected and responsive to our community needs." In the fall of 2019, provincial work action delayed gathering voice through separate staff, student, parent, and partner/employer surveys. However, in early winter 2020, staff conducted partner/employer and parent surveys. The data collected shows broad support for the development of a 21st Century Learning Strategy and the development of digital skills.

Parent/caregiver voice through ThoughtExchange highlights the challenges of families supporting their children in distance learning. It also indicates that there is a need for a board standard digital learning platform. Allowing the use of multiple platforms created confusion and frustration for some families. Parents also observed that educators did not expect to be providing distance learning and were not prepared at the outset of the closure period. Staff voice focused on the challenges of providing distance learning, needing to adopt a virtual learning space mid-year, and acknowledging that different staff had different starting points for distance learning. It was noted that staff and students already using The HUB had an easier transition to distance learning. Student voice is being gathered at this time, for instance.

These conclusions are not definitive but provide guidance in the strategy development and future implementation process. Stakeholder voice has and will continue to guide decision-making. A process to adjust and refine the strategy will be embedded in the implementation; however, it is expected that the overall core components (21st Century Competencies, Digital Skills, and Modern Learning Environments) will remain in place.

Timing

September 2020 provides a unique opportunity to launch a 21st Century Learning Strategy. As schools move towards re-opening, there is an opportunity to build upon the tremendous effort from staff, students, and parents/caregivers to continue learning via virtual tools, and to encourage them to continue to use digital platforms and tools. The 21st Century Learning Strategy validates this effort and identifies key competencies and skills that can be developed within a blended learning environment. It also supports educators in continuing to use the skills and strategies learned during to provide blended learning. Also, the strategy supports the planning for re-opening schools and the resumption of schooling in 2020-21, by communicating a vision and providing guidance on the competencies and skills that can be intentionally taught and developed. Finally, implementation of the 21st Century Learning Strategy prepares the organization, should there need to be a shift to a distance-learning model.

Background

The table below provides a high-level overview of the strategy development process since February 2019.

Updated Strategy Development Timeline

Timeline	Key Actions
February 2019	The Board initiated the development of a 21st Century Learning Strategy through the following motion: 1) *Develop a new "21st Century Learning" strategy focused on developing competencies that prepare HWDSB graduates to "learn and grow to their full potential in a diverse world".* 2) *Finalize the integration of Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE) into the current Strategic Directions and Annual Plan goals by supporting student achievement and well-being through access to digital technology through 1:1 devices in all secondary schools and device kits from grades four to eight.*
April 2019-November 2019	• Staff presented a strategy development process that included stakeholder consultation and a target completion date of February 2020. • A Steering Committee was struck and it created drafts of a strategy and of stakeholder surveys.
December 2019	• Staff presented a strategy development update with a target implementation start-date of September 2020. • Stakeholder consultation delayed due to provincial job action.
February-May 2020	• Staff presented a strategy development update with a target implementation start-date of February 2021. • Partner/Employer and Parent Surveys distributed and results compiled and analyzed.
June 2020	• Staff presents the draft strategy and draft implementation plan to Program Committee (See Appendix A and B) and recommends implementation begins in September 2020. • Staff to revise the strategy and implementation plan and present to Executive Council for approval.

July-August 2020	• Staff will:
	   o Complete a final draft of the strategy and the implementation plan and share with the Program Committee.
	   o Complete an implementation communication plan.

September 2020	• Begin implementation of the 21st Century Learning Strategy (See Appendix B) including:
	   o Setting a Board standard blended learning platform;
	   o Narrowing the platforms and apps available within the HWDSB domain and App Catalog;
	   o Supporting educators in adopting blended learning into their program; and
	   o Continuing to learn about the best match of academic task with the proper learning tool (device) and learning strategy.

February 2021	• Provide an implementation update to the Program Committee

Appendix A: Draft 21ˢᵗ Century Learning Strategy

DRAFT HWDSB 21st Century Learning Strategy

Vision

HWDSB graduates acquire the competencies and digital skills needed to successfully pursue a post-secondary pathway (apprenticeship, college, community, university, or the workplace) and find success in an ever-changing economy and society.

Goal

The HWDSB 21Century Learning Strategy provides guidance to educators on the development of modern learning environments where educators support students to develop 21st century competencies and digital skills. The strategy complements and enhances existing HWDSB strategic directions and strategies (e.g. The Early Reading Strategy and All Students Graduating Strategy).

The 21st Century Learning Strategy is primarily modeled after the International Society for Technology (ISTE) 2016 Standards for Students, which is currently the gold standard for "learning, teaching, and leading in the digital age"[1]. The standards are updated approximately every ten years and are based on extensive research and consultation. According to the ISTE:

> At their core, the ISTE Standards are about pedagogy, not tools. Which is to say, they emphasize the ways that technology amplifies and even transforms learning and teaching. The field of education now realizes the insufficiency of throwing digital tools into classrooms without further support and expecting valid changes in teaching and, more importantly, improved student outcomes.[2]

21st Century Learning Strategy Implementation

Students will begin to develop 21st century competencies and digital skills from the first day of kindergarten through to secondary school graduation. To accomplish this, educators will provide students with developmentally appropriate learning experiences in virtual and physical environments from kindergarten to grade twelve that intentionally foster 21ˢᵗ century competencies and digital skills. The 21st Century Learning Strategy will be embedded in the framework of the Ontario Curriculum, with learning experiences reframed to better incorporate the development of 21st Century competencies and digital skills.

Core Components of the 21st Century Learning Strategy

The 21ˢᵗ Century Learning Strategy consist of three core components:

1. 21st century competencies[3],
2. Digital skills[4], and
3. Modern learning environments[5].

21 Century Competencies

Modern Learning Environment

Digital Skills
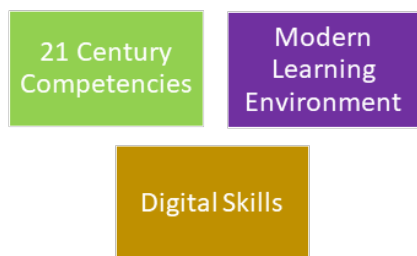
Core Components

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[1] International Society for Technology (2016). ISTE standards for students: A practical guide for learning with technology. Page xii

[2] Ibid, page 3

[3]Competency is defined as "the ability to apply learning outcomes adequately in a defined context (education, work, personal or professional development). A competency is not limited to cognitive elements (involving the use of theory, concepts, or tacit knowledge); it also encompasses functional aspects (involving technical skills) as well as interpersonal attributes (e.g., social or organizational skills) and ethical values. A competency is therefore a broader concept that may actually comprise skills (as well as attitudes, knowledge, etc.) (Cedefop, 2014).

[4] A skill "is seen as the ability to perform tasks and solve problems" (Cedefop, 2014).

[5] Learning environments are the experiences, spaces, and tools available to students through their educators.

21st Century Competencies	Digital Skills (ISTE Technology Scope3)	Modern Learning Environment
Students will acquire the competencies outlined in the *HWDSB 21st Century Learning Policy*: • **Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship**: Students are creative thinkers who construct knowledge and develop innovative products and processes*;* • **Communication**: Students communicate, in the physical and virtual worlds, effectively to support their learning and contribute to the learning of others; • **Collaboration**: Students collaborate with to learn, advance ideas, co-create new knowledge, and achieve learning goals • **Learning to Learn**: Students are aware of their learning strengths and needs, and how to learn most effectively in virtual and physical spaces; • **Critical Thinking**: Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct inquiry-based research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources; • **Global and Digital Citizenship**: Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to citizenship, appropriate use of technology, as well as practicing legal and ethical behavior.	Students will have opportunities to acquire the following digital skills: • **Basic Operations and Concepts.** Example: Turn on/off a computer. • **Logins/File Management.** Example: Use login credentials for access to network devices, accounts, servers, printers, and cloud services. • **Personal Data Management.** Example: Protect accounts by logging out of shared equipment. • **Online Safety.** Example: Understand how to practice safe Internet searches. • **Digital Identity.** Example: Build a positive digital footprint/reputation. • **Keyboarding.** Example: Learn to use special characters as needed. • **Painting and Drawing Programs.** Example: Use basic design principles (i.e., whitespace, colour, balance, texture). • **Communication and Collaboration Tools.** Example: Utilize collaborative workspaces, documents, or other digital tools for collaboration. • **Word Processing.** Example: Use the menu/tool bar functions to format, edit, and print a document. • **Problem solving and Computational Thinking.** Example: Use a block-based visual programming interface to build a game, tell a story, or solve a problem. • **Spreadsheets and Databases.** Example: Identify and explain terms and concepts related to spreadsheets (e.g., cell, column, and row). • **Multimedia and Presentation Tools.** Example: Create a series of slides and organize them to present research or convey an idea. • **Internet Searching and Online Databases.** Example: Locate the URL of a website and make a distinction between the suffixes .org, .ca, .EDU, .net, and international domains. • **Acceptable Use, Copyright, and Plagiarism.** Example: Transfer the information learned from online sources into your own words. • **Organizational and Project Tools.** Example: Use a calendar, task manager, or other tools to organize one's self as well as manage projects	Students will acquire competencies and skills in learning environments that are: • **Blended**: where learning can be in person, on-line, or a blend of the two; • **Modern:** where schools are equipped with a variety of developmentally appropriate learning tools and resources, including digital devices; • **Local and Global**: where learning occurs both in and out of the classroom and in and out of the school; and, considers local and global issues and problems; • **Experiential:** where students learn from experiences (e.g., excursions, experiments, and cooperative education placements); • **Personalized:** where student interests, identities, and abilities are valued and considered in the classroom; • **Success Oriented:** where the process of learning (assessment) rather than the product of learning (evaluation) is the focus; • **Intentional**: where global competencies are explicitly taught, named and noticed when being developed or demonstrated.

References

1. Cedefop (2014). Terminology of European education and training policy (Second Edition) – A selection of 130 key terms. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Retrieved from: www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4117_en.pdf.
2. International Society for Technology. Essential Conditions. Retrieved from https://www.iste.org/standards/essential-conditions
3. International Society for Technology (2016). ISTE standards for students: A practical guide for learning with technology.
4. International Society for Technology (2016). Redefining learning in a technology driven world: A report to support adoption of the ISTE standards for students.

Appendix B: Draft 21st Century Learning Strategy Implementation Plan

Year	Implementation Level	Key Actions	Implementation Measures
2020-21	Exploration, Installation, and Initial Implementation	• Introduce strategy document • Develop and communicate board standards for digital platforms and tools • Align and map digital skills and competencies to Early Reading, Math, and Graduation strategies • Model strategy elements through blended professional learning for school leaders and school staff • Support educators in implementing a blended component to their program	Baseline measures of: • Stakeholder awareness • Student demonstration of 21st Century Competencies • Student demonstration of digital skills • Engagement in blended professional learning • Participation in blended learning • Elements of a modern learning environment
2021-22	Initial Implementation	• Model strategy elements through blended professional learning for school leaders and school staff • Support educators in implementing a blended component to their program Provide professional learning regarding embedding competencies and digital skills into programming K-12	On-going measures of: • Stakeholder awareness • Student demonstration of 21st Century Competencies • Student demonstration of digital skills • Engagement in blended professional learning • Participation in blended learning • Elements of a modern learning environment
2022-23	Partial Implementation	• Model strategy elements through blended professional learning for school leaders and school staff • Support educators in implementing a blended component to their program Provide professional learning regarding embedding competencies and digital skills into programming K-12	On-going measures of: • Stakeholder awareness • Student demonstration of 21st Century Competencies • Student demonstration of digital skills • Engagement in blended professional learning • Participation in blended learning • Elements of a modern learning environment
2023-24	Full Implementation	• Model strategy elements through blended professional learning for school leaders and school staff • Support educators in implementing a blended component to their program Provide professional learning regarding embedding competencies and digital skills into programming K-12	On-going measures of: • Stakeholder awareness • Student demonstration of 21st Century Competencies • Student demonstration of digital skills • Engagement in blended professional learning • Participation in blended learning • Elements of a modern learning environment
2024-25	Sustainability	• HWDSB educators provide blended learning and foster the development of 21st century competencies and digital skills	On-going measures of: • Stakeholder awareness • Student demonstration of 21st Century Competencies • Student demonstration of digital skills

			- Engagement in blended professional learning - Participation in blended learning - Elements of a modern learning environment

Executive Summary

Topic: Partnership Report

Context
HWDSB's Board of Trustees have approved a new Strategic Directions for 2016-20 and staff have developed an Annual Plan for 2019-20. The five priorities are positive culture and well-being, student learning and achievement, effective communication, school renewal and *partnerships.*

Mission: We empower students to learn and grow to their full potential in a diverse world.

Commitment: We are committed to learning, equity, engagement and innovation.

Priority: Partnerships: *We will strengthen our collaboration with new and existing community partners to enhance opportunities for students.*
Summary

The following report includes:
- The review of the 2019-20 implementation of the HWDSB Annual Plan, *Partnerships*
- Appendix A – Parent/Guardian and Caregiver Voice Survey

HWDSB is committed to strengthening our collaboration with new and existing community partners to enhance opportunities for students. This commitment is outlined in our Strategic Directions within the priority, *Partnerships.*

Partnerships include parents, guardians, caregivers and families as well as our community partners. A mid-year *Partnerships* report was presented to Trustees in December 2019. In this edition, the report summarizes the accomplishments of the 2019-20 school year from January to May.

Within the 2019-20 Board Annual Plan, two strategies emerged to support community partnerships. The first strategy states that HWDSB will implement a process to review and align the needs of schools and community partners. A focus on a school-based needs assessment and partnership evaluation process was outlined. In addition, an update is provided on the partnership database. Community Engagement, like many areas in HWDSB, adjusted the way service was provided in the new COVID-19 environment. An update on the engagement efforts during the Ministerial closure is provided as well.

The second strategy goals states that HWDSB will continue to align the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success to support the focus on High Priority Schools. In order to achieve this outcome, staff reviewed and streamlined student awards processes for secondary schools and reviewed for improvement the process related to the Student Support and School Support Grant streams.

Within this section of the report, staff outlined the analysis from the 2020 Parent/Guardian and Caregiver Voice Survey. The sections within the survey are organized by Communications and Learning. The results aim to capture perceptions of how parents/guardians and caregivers and their children experience interactions within classrooms, schools and the HWDSB. A comparison to the 2018 survey is also shared to show trends.

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HWDSB Annual Plan Report

Name of Report: **Partnerships Report**

Date: **June 2020**

Priority: Partnerships: We will strengthen our collaboration with new and existing partners to enhance opportunities for students.

2019-20 Annual Plan

Goal: All new and existing community partnerships will enhance opportunities for students

Target: The number of community partnerships aligning to school needs will increase by August 2020.

STRATEGIES:

1. *Implement a process to review and align the needs of schools and community partners.*

   Needs Assessment and Partnership Evaluation

   There has been significant progress in a short amount of time since the mid-year update was shared with Trustees in December. The progress made in this report reflects time between January and May 2020.

   The Needs Assessment and Partnership Evaluation is part of the overall Engagement Strategy. It is designed to understand the school-based needs related to partner support, as well as to evaluate the partnerships in relation to meeting these needs.

   Approval was given to align and incorporate this strategy into the Continuous Learning and Improvement (CLI) Roadmap, completed yearly by school administrators.

   The CLI Roadmap provides Administrators with critical steps in a year to achieve school improvement through the CLI Process. The CLI Process is a cyclical process that allows leaders and educators to review student progress over time, reflect on impact, refine practice based on student need and re-establish next steps for improvement at several points throughout the school year.

   Including Partnerships in the CLI Roadmap creates a structure for Administrators, Executive Council and Communications and Community Engagement to operationalize the Engagement Strategy.

   School Administrators will complete a Needs Assessment annually in September, followed by a Partnership Evaluation annually in June. The Needs Assessment will ask administrators to rank their top three needs based on HWDSB Areas of Support. This data will allow for appropriate program selection by schools, as well as system level decisions regarding support.

   The Partnership Evaluation will require administrators to provide feedback on partners that operated at their school during the instructional day, as well as the effectiveness of those programs to support the needs outlined in September. This data will then be stored in the Partnership database. The links to access the Needs Assessment and Partnership Evaluation survey will be embedded within the CLI Roadmap.

   The following steps have been completed to date (January – May 2020):

   - The Engagement Officer met with Superintendents of Student Achievement for Family of Schools No. 1, 2 and 4 in January. The purpose of these meetings was to understand the incorporation of this strategy into the CLI Roadmap, and to identify three Advisory Schools to support this work.

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- Advisory Schools that were selected include Pauline Johnson, Elizabeth Bagshaw, Dr. Davey.
- Exploratory meetings with Research & Analytics and Instructional and Information Technology (IIT) took place to understand the platforms to best gather this data, as well as survey development and language to be embedded in the Roadmap.
- The finalized approach to embed the Needs and Evaluation strategy into the CLI Roadmap was approved by the Director of Education and the Associate Director, Learning Services.
- Consultation took place with three Advisory Schools to propose the Needs Assessment and Partnership Evaluation process and gather feedback from the school perspective.

Feedback Summary

Throughout February and March 2020, the Engagement Officer met with Pauline Johnson, Elizabeth Bagshaw, and Dr. Davey to collaborate on strategy development. A summary of administrator feedback in three areas are provided:

- *Strategy Development* - Schools were very positive and supportive of the proposed strategy. Administrators stated that this strategy allows for better understanding of long-term supports, without adding additional workload. The strategy allows for equitable representation of school needs, and full understanding of partnership relationships across the system.

- *Needs Assessment* - Needs Assessment allows relationships to be more equitable, strategic and better aligned to the true needs of school. This strategy allows the schools to better select programming to match their identified needs.

- *Partnership Evaluation* – This stage allows schools to reflect on partners that operated within their school and to have an organized method of tracking programming. Administrators had a positive response to the Evaluation data being directed into the Database. This will allow schools to understand programming at other schools, as well as connect with these schools to learn more about the program. The results will mean more current, relevant and school specific content within the Database.

Next Steps

The Communication and Community Engagement Department will implement the Needs Assessment and Partnership Evaluation as part of the Engagement Strategy for the 2020-2021 school year. Support between HWDSB and community partners are more important than ever. Understanding the needs and alignment of programming post-COVID will be crucial in providing targeted, strategic support to students. This strategy will help to prioritize the focus of partnerships that are needed for the 2020-2021 school year.

The Engagement Officer continues to collaborate with Research and Analytics and IIT to develop the surveys that will be used to collect data on needs as well as evaluation of partnerships. A description of the strategy will be developed and included in the CLI Roadmap, as well as continued work to align the database platform with the evaluation results.

The Communications and Community Engagement Department is recommending the Needs Assessment and Partnership Evaluation strategy to commence September 2020. A module will be created and provided to school administrators in August. The module will outline the scope of the strategy, as well as details regarding completion.

This strategy, however, will need to be launched in a flexible and responsive manner because of the continued monitoring of COVID-19. Through HWDSB Ad Hoc Committees, the department has gathered valuable data that is reflective of the current needs of schools and families. If the proposed Needs Assessment is unable to take place in the fall, the data provided throughout this process will be used to support and connect partnership opportunities to schools.

COVID-19 Response

Community Engagement, like many areas in HWDSB, adjusted the way service was provided in the new COVID-19 environment. The following areas highlight the proactive response to support students, families and partners:

- **Virtual Partnership Strategy:** As part of HWDSB's efforts to support connection between students, educators and community partners, the Engagement Officer created the "HWDSB Partnerships Team" in Microsoft Teams. The goal of this Team is to allow participants access to unique programming and resources provided by partners. HWDSB educators and students will be able to view and utilize approved content to enhance and support classroom learning.

  This platform has been set-up to encourage HWDSB Educational Partners to share resources and programming with staff for approval. These partners are providing content that is relevant and supportive of the current environment, with a focus on student achievement through distance learning. Resources will be provided in both synchronous and asynchronous styles to ensure equity in learning. Privacy requirements and guidelines will be constantly monitored as the Engagement Department collaborates closely with Research and Analytics.

  This platform has been created with a framework of sustainability and long-term usability. Partners have been provided with guidelines on accessing and utilizing MS Teams, and have also been provided training by HWDSB Learning Serivces. MS Teams is flexible in the ability to add partner channels, allowing current and most relevant programming to be provided to students and educators.

- **Ad Hoc Committees:** The Engagement Officer represented Communications and Community Engagement on three Ad Hoc Committees. The department continues to support:

  - *Well-Being: Food for Families Ad Hoc Committee* - HWDSB is committed to collaborating with community partners in efforts to ensure students have equitable access to nutrition supports. The mandate of the Food for Families Committee is to support schools in their continued work to provide access to reliable food sources. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of households experiencing food insecurity, therefore, increasing the potential number of HWDSB students seeking support in this area. The committee has created a process to distribute funding from President's Choice Children's Charity Grants and Tastebuds to families that may be experiencing changing needs related to nutrition due to COVID-19. The Committee has collaborated with The Hamilton Foundation for Student Success in developing a strategy to distribute their COVID Relief Fund, as well as Hamilton Food Share for donation of food within schools and promotion of their Hamper Delivery Program. The Committee will continue to support the changing needs of families and work with community partners in providing equitable access to resources.

  - *Equity of Access Ad Hoc Committee* – The Equity of Access Ad Hoc Committee has focused on support the deployment of devices as well as providing internet access to families in need. This work has required an understanding of the need of our communities, as well as preparing safe methods of device collection and distribution. Data collection and analysis was crucial to this work, as well as support from community partners such as Public Health. The Engagement Department heavily supported conversations and learning to support families that educators were unable to contact. By focusing on methods of re-engagement, the committee was able to provide system recommendations to support the connection to families.

  - *Grade 8 Graduation Ad Hoc Committee* – The Communications and Community Engagement Department continue to support the work being done to provide unique graduation experiences to grade 8 students. Acting as advisors, the CCE department has supported conversations around structures for recognition, technological capabilities of our schools, and equitable approaches for school level initiatives.

Database Maintenance

The Partnership Database is continuing to be redeveloped to reflect recent changes and additions within the Community Engagement Strategy. The Database will be linked to the Needs Assessment and Partnership Evaluation Strategy, allowing relevant data to be captured on a yearly basis. As part of the completion of the Partnership Evaluation, the data will be automatically entered into the Database and organized by relevant categories (ie. School, Program, Area of Support, Year, etc.). Moving forward, the connection between partnership evaluation and the database will create sustainability and usability for administrators, while also providing a dependable data source for system level analysis.

In December, staff reported 190 unique partnership entries. Due to several factors impacting the 2019-20 school year, including crisis communication and job action, as well as the realignment of the database with the engagement strategy, the partnership entries remain unchanged. The unique entry number of 190 and remains the benchmark for the target.

Community Partnership Session: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Panel

The *Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel* is co-ordinating, facilitating and gathering input about bullying from students, families, staff and community partners. The Panel engaged and consulted with many audiences including HWDSB partners, throughout February and March 2020.

The Communications and Community Engagement team supported KOJO Institute by supporting outreach, promoting and providing resources for community consultations through email, social media, media relations and consultation sessions. The team also engaged HWDSB partners to attend a session specifically for them resulting in 90 participants.

Community feedback at each session has been summarized in an interim report and presented on May 25, 2020. A final report, submission date forthcoming. HWDSB is committed to continued communication and collaboration with HWDSB partners as the Panel continues.

2. ***Continue to align the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success to support the focus on High Priority Schools.***

Review and streamline Student Award processes for Secondary Schools

As part of a multi-year strategy to centralize awards in HWDSB, the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success has unified a process to manage and disburse awards. The goal of this process is to ensure that regardless of staff changes within schools, students will be equitably provided an opportunity to receive an award. It will also allow the Foundation to take a donor-centred approach in its fundraising practices to increase opportunities for students.

The Foundation and the assigned K-12 Program Consultant have completed meetings with 4 of the 13 schools identified. Further meetings have been put on hold due to the current job action and Ministerial Order.

In lieu of these meetings, a package of templates was developed by the Foundation and K-12 Learning Consultant responsible for Student Awards to assist secondary schools with securing donations related to annually funded awards. This package was circulated to Secondary Guidance Heads on March 4, 2020.

A presentation to all Guidance Heads regarding 2019-20 Student Award processes is scheduled for March 24, 2020. However, due to the Ministerial Order, the meeting was cancelled.

COVID-19 Update: Despite HWDSB's decision to postpone all Grade 12 June Graduation ceremonies and cancel all elementary year end ceremonies, including Grade 8 graduations, graduation awards will be presented in June 2020. The rationale for this decision was that for awards that are endowed through the Hamilton Community Foundation or held in Trust by the Foundation means that there is an agreement with the donor, and we are obligated to present the awards. In addition, knowing the impact that COVID-19 has had on many students financially, the HWDSB Award Team felt it was imperative to distribute any award related money.

Knowing what a challenge it is for schools to issue cheques under the Ministerial Order, the process for distributing award money was adjusted. On April 28, 2020, a memo was circulated to Principals, Guidance Department Heads (Secondary) and School Award Committees (Other), outlining this adjusted process.

Review and Improve the Process Related to the Student Support and School Support Grant streams

The Hamilton Foundation for Student Success formed its Staff Ambassador Ad Hoc Committee in the fall, 2019. This group provided insights and guidance into gaps and areas of improvement in both the criteria and process. The Foundation worked with Finance and School Compliance to find efficiencies and streamline the process.

New criteria and processes have been developed and are currently being utilized. The new online application process allows for more comprehensive reporting on the number and type of grants being awarded.

The Foundation has seen an increase in the number of Student Support Grants being received since the new system was launched on October 1, 2019.

- To date, the Foundation has allocated 373 Student Support Grants totaling $69,839. The average grant is $187 per student.

- In addition, 42 School Support Grants were awarded in the 2019-20 school year totaling $37,361.

The Foundation continues to monitor the grants process and plans for a survey of staff who have utilized the new application in Spring 2020. The purpose of this survey is to collect feedback on how to better refine the new process. Due to the Ministerial Closure, this survey has been postponed.

> *Staff are **not on track** to meet the target, which is to increase the number of community partnerships aligned to school needs by August 2020. Provincial job action and COVID-19 required a shift in focus. The team, however, is on track with advancements in the strategy that, once activated, will accelerate the data and demonstrate the continued impact that our partners have on our students.*

Appendix A: Parent/Guardian and Caregiver Voice Survey Analysis 2020

Parents, guardians and caregivers play an important part in the lives of their child's education and engagement in education. The *2020 Parent/Guardian and Caregiver Voice Survey* aims to capture perceptions of how they and their children experience interactions within classrooms, schools and the HWDSB.

The 2020 survey continues to build from the goal set in the 2017-18 Annual Plan to strengthen the connection between school and home. In order to measure this connection, parents/guardians and caregivers were asked to rate their knowledge in three areas:

i. Knowledge of what's happening in child's classroom in mathematics
ii. Knowledge of what's happening in child's classroom in literacy
iii. Knowledge of requirements to graduate from high school

Based on 2,359 parent/guardian and caregiver responses, an increase from 1,505 responses in 2018, the following highlights and comparisons are provided.

In the 2020 survey, responses were grouped into three categories ranging from parents/guardians knowing a lot, a little, or not much about mathematics (numeracy), reading and writing (literacy) and requirements to graduation.

- **Mathematics (Numeracy):**
  o 29% said they knew a lot about what their child was learning in mathematics
  o 39% said they knew a little about what their child was learning in mathematics
  o 29% said they knew not much about what their child was learning in mathematics

o   3% said they didn't know, or it didn't apply to them

- **Literacy (Reading and Writing):**
    - o   38% said they knew a lot about what their child was learning in literacy
    - o   38% said they knew a little about what their child was learning in literacy
    - o   22% said they knew not much about what their child was learning in literacy
    - o   1% said they didn't know, or it didn't apply to them.

- **Graduation:** The results also showed that 34% of intermediate division parents knew a lot about graduation requirements although 41% do not have a clear idea of these requirements. Comparatively, 61% of secondary division parents knew a lot about the graduation requirements and 12% said they did not have a clear idea.

Comparison

2018 Parent Voice Survey 1,505 responses	**2020 Parent Voice Survey** 2,359 responses
How satisfied are families with various communication methods? Satisfaction was HIGH for traditional communication method like: 76% Face-to-face contact with teachers, principals, and other school staff 70% Report Cards 68% Parent-teacher interviews	How satisfied are families with various communication methods? Satisfaction was HIGH for communication methods like: 68% Automated phone calls home 64% Parent-teacher interviews 55% Website notification subscription service 53% Report Cards
85% of parents/guardians and caregivers rated their child's school high or medium on being a friendly and welcoming place.	94% of parents/guardians and caregivers rated their child's school high or medium on being a friendly and welcoming place.
Home-school connection - Mathematics: 51% said they were either knowledgeable or somewhat knowledgeable about what their child was learning in mathematics - Literacy: 57% said they were either knowledgeable or somewhat knowledgeable about what their child was learning in literacy - Graduation: 51% of secondary caregivers said they were knowledgeable about requirements to graduate from secondary school	Learning - Mathematics: 68% (*29% a lot + 39% a little*) said they either knew a lot or a little about what their child was learning in mathematics - Literacy: 76% *(38% a little + 38% a lot)* said they knew a lot or a little about what their child was learning in literacy - Graduation: 34% of intermediate division parents/guardians knew a lot about graduation. 61% of secondary division parents/guardians knew a lot about the graduation requirements.
Home-school connection 42% were interested in learning more about EQAO or OSSLT 57% were interested in transitions to secondary school 80% were interested in learning more about: Literacy, Numeracy, Mental health and well-being; Self-regulation	Home-school connection 75% were interested in learning more about Reading and Writing (Literacy) 73% were interested in learning more about Safe Schools (Bullying Awareness, Code of Conduct) 72% were interested in learning more about Mathematics (Numeracy) 71% were interested in Mental Health and Well-Being and Self-Regulation

Conclusion and Next Steps

In summary, parents/guardians and caregivers in both panels were slightly higher in knowledge than from the 2020 survey about what was happening in their child's classroom in literacy compared to mathematics. As expected, more parents/guardians and caregivers of secondary school students indicated they knew more about the requirements to graduate from secondary school compared to elementary responders.

The 2020 survey also asked parents/guardians about Equity, Safe Schools, 21st Century Learning and routine questions related to check-ins on various policies. Results from the Equity sections will be shared with the Equity team to inform their work. The 21st Century Learning results will be shared with the Program team. The Policy Committee will review parent/guardian results as per the policy process led by Associate Director, Support Services.

HWDSB will share the results to the community and build on this data to support future home-school engagement efforts. In addition, staff will learn from the Thoughtexchange experience administered to parents/guardians in May 2020 to reflect on the learning shared during the COVID-19 pandemic and perspectives related to distance learning.