HWDSB

Program Committee

June 5, 2023
EC-340D & Virtual Meeting
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558
Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

AGENDA: 6:00 PM

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Land Acknowledgment
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Modern Learning Update
5. Elementary Focus Program Review Update
6. Safe Schools – Suspensions & Expulsions Update
7. Positive Culture and Well-Being – Mid-Year Update
8. Adjournment

HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO PROGRAM COMMITTEE

TO: PROGRAM COMMITTEE

FROM: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

DATE: Monday, June 5th, 2023

PREPARED BY: Sue Dunlop, Associate Director, Learning Services
Bill Torrens, Superintendent of Student Achievement, Program

RE: Modern Learning Update: Board Provisioned Devices

Action Monitoring X

Background

At the February 14th, 2022, Board Meeting, the Board approved the following recommendations:

1. The Board standard student device will be tablets in kindergarten to grade three and laptops in grades four to twelve.
2. Board standard devices will be deployed as follows:
   - Kindergarten: Classroom kits of three devices in High Priority Schools only.
   - Grades 1-3: Classroom kits of six devices in High Priority Schools only.
   - Grades 4-8: Classroom kits of six devices in all schools.
   - Grades 9-12: 1:1 provisioning of devices with a keyboard (tablet or laptop) to students.
3. Secondary students may choose to use their own device rather than accept the Board provisioned device.
4. The transition to laptops as a Board standard device from grades four to twelve will occur over five years.

In 2022-23, HWDSB deployed laptops to students from grades nine to twelve at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School, as well as kits of tablets in grades four to eight throughout the Board and in kindergarten to grade three classrooms in eighteen High Priority Schools.

This report is an update to the January 24th, Program Committee Report: 21st Century Learning Deployment of Digital Devices Update.

Implementation Update

During semester one, the pilot at Sir Winston Churchill focused on understanding the capabilities of laptops as a 1:1 device and the identifying a suitable device. Semester two has focused on applying the learning from semester one, gathering staff and student feedback about the shift to a laptop, and collecting data on the transition from tablets to laptops.

Semester Two Feedback

The feedback gathered from educators, students, and Information and Instructional Technology (IIT) staff highlights numerous opportunities and challenges emerging from the Laptop Pilot Program. All three groups drew attention to the importance of having a robust device. Additionally, respondents noted infrastructure limitations and other practical concerns regarding charging, imaging, and providing technical support. Beyond these technical considerations, students and educators require training and support in shifting their practice from using a tablet to using a laptop.

Alongside these challenges, our consultations also revealed several opportunities. Laptops have exciting potential as educational tools, and keyboards allow students to move beyond using devices to 'consume,' to using devices to 'create'. The possibilities presented by laptops differentiate them from cell phones or tablets. However, both staff

and students commented that the transition would be easier if students received instruction and training on the new devices and their capabilities.

Next Steps

Preparations for device deployment in 2023-24 address the feedback and learning from 2022-23. A more powerful laptop will be deployed to Grade 9 students to provide better performance. Devices will be imaged and prepared for distribution by September 1st, 2023. IIT and Program are developing self-paced, self-directed learning modules for educators. In response to student feedback, staff will share a presentation explaining how to use the laptop effectively when devices are distributed. This learning will also emphasize the importance of keeping the charger secure and using it nightly, so the device is ready for school the next day. School infrastructure needs will be monitored and, as with the introduction of the tablet, staff will identify and share innovative solutions (e.g., keeping sets of chargers in the Learning Commons or creating class charging stations). Program consultants will provide drop-in professional learning support throughout September.

2023-24 Device Deployment

The chart below outlines the deployment plan for the school year, pending approval of the 2023-24 HWDSB Budget.

2023-24 Device Deployment Plan

Students	Devices	Key Information
Kindergarten to grade 3 in 18 elementary schools	Tablets	Deployed in kits of 6
Grades 4 to 8	Tablets	Deployed in kits of 6
Grade 9	Laptops	Deployed 1:1 to students
Grades 10 to 12	Laptops at Sir Winston Churchill and tablets at all other schools	Deployed 1:1 to students

HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO PROGRAM COMMITTEE

TO: PROGRAM COMMITTEE

FROM: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

DATE: Monday, June 5th, 2023

PREPARED BY: Sue Dunlop, Associate Director, Learning Services
Bill Torrens, Superintendent of Student Achievement, Program

RE: Elementary Focus Program Review Update

Action Monitoring X

Background

On June 7, 2022, staff presented review findings and recommendations to the Program Committee (2022-06-07 Program Report). On June 13, 2022, the Board approved the recommendations (2022-07-13 Board Minutes) below:

1. All six Elementary Focus Programs remain open at their current locations.
2. Elementary Focus Programs will not expand further, as per the Elementary Program Strategy.
3. Systemic barriers to program access will be addressed by:
    a) Creating a system application process and communication strategy;
    b) Developing strategies to mitigate financial and transportation barriers.
4. Programs will receive detailed feedback about program specific barriers to access and concerns about adherence to the program mandates for implementation in 2022-23.
5. A monitoring report regarding the implementation of recommendations #3 and #4 will be provided in 2022-23.

The current Elementary Focus Programs are:

- The Hockey Program at Tapleytown Elementary School.
- Mandarin Transitional Language Program at Cootes Paradise Elementary School.
- Scholastic Arts and Global Education (SAGE) Program at Strathcona Elementary School.
- Scholastic Arts and Global Education Quest (SAGE Quest) at Kanétskare Elementary School.
- Sports Academy-Basketball Program at R.A. Riddell Elementary School.
- Sports Academy-High Potential Program at R.A. Riddell Elementary School.

This report is an update on the implementation of the 2021-22 Elementary Focus Review recommendations.

Implementation Update

Recommendations 1 and 2 :
Staffing levels for each program remained at their 2021-22 levels. No programs were expanded.

Recommendation 3:
Staff created an on-line application process and executed a system-wide communication strategy. To remove barriers in the application process, all families interested in a Focus Program applied via an on-line application rather than applying through the school. The application was open from February 2nd to 23rd, 2023. To prevent preferential treatment, a random selection process seated students in programs rather than having applications evaluated by staff (please see Table 1 Focus Program Enrollment below for more details). Staff created a communication strategy to make HWDSB parents aware of the Focus Programs and application process that included:

a) Messaging to families using email and social media.

b) Updated web pages at List of Programs | Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (hwdsb.on.ca).
c) A system information night, via Teams Live, on February 1st, 2023.

Financial barriers can be addressed through the Student Fees Policy which supports limiting and waiving fees upon request. In addition, Focus Programs are partially supported through experiential learning funding and building partnerships that do not require fees. Families continue to provide their own transportation to Focus Programs due to budgetary constraints.

Recommendation 4:
Each Focus Program received detailed feedback during a learning session in January 2023. The feedback was based on the findings communicated in the 2022-06-07 Program Report, A Program consultant has supported each program this year to develop program materials, document program best practices, and access experiential learning opportunities to enhance the students' learning experience.

Staff Learning

Through the implementation process, staff observed the following:

- Programs draw heavily from their home English catchment for student enrollment, which may be because families must provide transportation.
- Interest in some programs grew, which resulted in increased program enrollment (Hockey Program, SAGE and SageQuest).
- Many non-HWDSB students applied for the programs at R.A. Riddell.
- The on-line application process and random selection process is technically complex.

Next Steps

The next steps for 2023-24:

1) Alignment of the application timelines and communications with the Grade One French Immersion Application process to support families of Grade 1 students in making school decisions.
2) Continued support for Focus Program educators to develop the programs.
3) An exploration of the accommodation impact if programs were to expand.

Focus Program Enrollment

Program	October 31st 2022 Enrollment	Students Accepted March 2023	2023-24 Program Enrollment	Waitlist	Enrollment Change
The Hockey Program (Grades 7-8)	22	18	26	3	4
Mandarin Transitional Program (K-Grade 5)	56	2	50	-	-6
SAGE Program (K-Grade 5)	78	19	86	4	8
SAGEQuest Program (Grades 6-8)	22	8	24	5	2
Basketball Program (Grades 6-8)	78	25	76	12	-2
High Performance Program (Grades 7-8)	55	26	54	1	-1

HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

HWDSB Annual Plan Report

Name of Report: Updated 2021-2022 Suspension and Expulsion Data

Date: June 5, 2023

Background:

The following report represents the updated 2021-2022 Suspension and Expulsion Data Report in accordance with Resolution #23-46: *that HWDSB staff present a redraft of the 2022/23 suspension and expulsion report disaggregated by grade, special education status, high priority schools, according to the 2016 reporting template, and HWDSB student census data alignment at the first Program Committee meeting in June 2023.*

Staff were also to report back on timelines for sharing data disaggregated by HWDSB student census data at the Program Committee meeting in June 2023.

Suspension/Expulsion:

Appendix A is the 2021-2022 Suspension and Expulsion Data redrafted and disaggregated by grade, special education status and high priority schools. The report has been redacted where categories display under 10 incidences to ensure privacy and anonymity of students.

Disproportionality Data:

Throughout the 2022-23 school year, the Equity, Human Rights and Research & Analytics departments have been preparing the disproportionality data for release. This data is derived from the We All Count - Student Census completed in 2021-2022 and linked to other data sets. The forthcoming report to be released in September 2023 will include disproportionalities found in Attendance, Achievement and Well-Being. It adheres to the Anti-Racism Data Standards and feedback from Hamilton community members.

For this updated report, Appendix B Suspension Disproportionality Data for the 2021-2022 school year is included. The findings demonstrate that schools suspend First Nations, Black and Arabic Speaking students at higher rates than the average.

Appendix A – Updated 2021-2022 Suspension and Expulsion Report

Number of Suspensions by Year, 2017-2022

School Year	Total Suspensions	Students Identified as Exceptional
2021-22	3902	233
2020-21	838	87
2019-20	3627	239
2018-19	4452	311
2017-18	4127	268

Number of Suspended Students by Panel, 2021-2022

Category	2021-2022	Elementary	Secondary
Number of Students	**55043**	**40222**	**14821**
Number of Students Suspended	**2322**	**1454**	**868**
Proportion of Students Suspended	**4.2%**	**3.6%**	**5.9%**
Number of Suspension events	**3902**	**2508**	**1394**

Number of Suspended Students by Frequency & Panel, 2021-2022

Category	One	Two	Three or more
Number of Elementary Students Suspended	**943**	**268**	**243**
% of Elementary Students	**2.34%**	**0.67%**	**0.60%**
Number of Secondary Students Suspended	**566**	**193**	**109**
% of Secondary Students	**3.82%**	**1.30%**	**0.74%**

Note: Frequency refers to how many times individual students were suspended in the 2021-2022 school year.

Number of Suspended Students by Grade Level, 2021-2022

Category	Suspended Students	% of Grade Level Suspended
K-Year 1	**<10**	**<0.3%**
K-Year 2	**<10**	**<0.3%**
1	**<10**	**<0.3%**
2	**10**	**0.3%**
3	**30**	**0.8%**
4	**153**	**4.0%**
5	**209**	**5.4%**
6	**306**	**8.2%**
7	**325**	**8.7%**
8	**420**	**11.0%**
9	**274**	**7.4%**
10	**237**	**6.8%**
11	**218**	**6.2%**
12	**139**	**3.3%**

Note: The K-3 data includes incidents that were considered for expulsion, but instead a suspension was imposed. In addition, there are 38 suspensions in these grade levels that were not in accordance with the 2020 Ministry policy. These suspensions will be expunged, and an apology will be offered to the parent/guardian/caregiver by the end of June 2023. For 2022-23 and going forward, K-3 suspensions are closely monitored to ensure Ministry direction is upheld.

Number of Suspended Students in High Priority Schools, 2021-2022

Category	Suspended Students	% of Students in High Priority Schools Suspended
Elementary High Priority Schools	**568**	**8.1%**

Number of Suspended Students by Exceptionality, 2021-2022

Category	Suspended Students	% of Students with Exceptionalities Suspended
Any Exceptionality	**231**	**8.1%**

Note: The Ontario Ministry of Education defines an exceptional pupil as a student who has been identified by an Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC).

Number of Suspended Students by Exceptional Status, 2021-2022

Category	Suspended Students
Behaviour	**<10**
Autism	**16**
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	**<10**
Learning Disability	**119**
Language Impairment	**<10**
Giftedness	**22**
Mild Intellectual Disability	**53**
Developmental Disability	**<10**
Physical Disability	**<10**
Blind/Low Vision	**<10**
Multiple Exceptionalities	**10**

Note: Redaction due to small sample sizes precludes disaggregation by exceptionality type.

Number of Suspensions by Infraction, 2021-2022

Category	2021-2022	Elementary	Secondary
Suspension must be considered (Education Act, Section 306)			
Utter threat to inflict serious bodily harm	**133**	**95**	**38**
Possess alcohol or illegal drugs or cannabis**	**55**	**17**	**38**
(Note: illegal cannabis possession included above)	*32**	*<10*	*<10*
Influence of alcohol or cannabis**	**23***	**<10**	**<10**
(Note: illegal Influence of cannabis included above)	*19**	*<10*	*<10*
Swearing at a teacher or person in authority	**190**	**141**	**49**
Vandalism that causes extensive damage	**82**	**41**	**41**
Bullying	**148**	**128**	**20**
Code of Conduct (e.g., vaping, repeated disrespect)	**1114**	**564**	**550**
Fighting/Violence not requiring medical attention	**809**	**535**	**274**
Other - Board-Set Infraction*** (see details on next page)**	**926**	**714**	**212**
Expulsion must be considered (Ed Act, 310) – suspension imposed after Principal's Inquiry			
Possession of Weapon	**81**	**36**	**45**
Use a Weapon to Threaten/ Cause Bodily Harm	**29**	**16**	**13**
Physical Assault requiring medical	**52**	**13**	**39**
Sexual Assault	**29**	**18**	**11**
Trafficking in weapons or illegal drugs	**<10**	**<10**	**<10**
Robbery	**<10**	**<10**	**<10**
Ed Act 306 Motivated by Prejudice, Hate, Bias	**207**	**175**	**32**
Giving Alcohol or Cannabis to a Minor	**0**	**0**	**0**
Bullying (if previously suspended and presence in school creates an unacceptable risk to safety of another person)	**14**	**<10**	**<10**
Incidents identified in the Education Act with a corresponding Ministry Code for data collection.			
Incidents identified by the Board as per the Education Act with a corresponding Ministry Code for data collection.			
Incidents identified in the Education Act as possible expulsion, but a suspension is imposed after Principal's Inquiry.			

**Note: Small cell sizes prevent disaggregation by panel in some rows*

Number of Suspensions by Infraction, 2021-2022 Continued: Breakdown of "Other Board Set Infraction"

Category	2021-2022	Elementary	Secondary
Other - Board-Set Infraction* (see details below)	**926**	**714**	**212**
Non-consensual sharing of Images	**<10**	**<10**	**<10**
May suspend under Board Policy (e.g., throwing items, pulling alarm)	**145**	**123**	**22**
Violation of Equity Policy (e.g., racist, sexist, hate, derogatory)	**<10**	**<10**	**<10**
Using social media negatively	**129**	**94**	**35**
Inappropriate Behaviour (e.g., biting, spitting, kicking)	**187**	**150**	**37**
Act Harmful to Physical/ mental well-being (e.g., throwing, shoving, pushing)	**442**	**340**	**102**
Influence of Drugs	**14**	**<10**	**<10**
Making a Bomb Threat	**<10**	**<10**	**<10**
Incidents identified by the board as per the Education Act with a corresponding Ministry Code for data collection.			

Number of Expulsions by Year, 2017-2022

School Year	Total Expulsions	Number Students Identified as Exceptional
2021-2022	46	<10
2020-2021	<10	<10
2019-2020	54	<10
2018-2019	28	<10
2017-2018	24	<10

Note: Redaction due to small cell sizes precludes any disaggregation of expulsion data by panel.

Number of Expulsions by Infraction, 2021-2022

Category	2021-2022
Possession of a Weapon	<10
Using a Weapon to Threaten/Cause Bodily Harm	<10
Physical Assault requiring medical	19
Sexual Assault	<10
Trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs	0
Robbery	<10
Bullying (if previously suspended and presence in school creates an unacceptable risk to safety of another person)	<10

Ed Act Section 306 Motivated by Prejudice, Hate, Bias	<10
Giving Alcohol or Cannabis to a Minor	0
Board/School Code of Conduct	12

Note: Redaction due to small cell sizes precludes any disaggregation of expulsion data.

Appendix B – Suspension Disproportionality Data

We All Count: Student Census Disproportionalities

What is the Student Census?

We All Count: HWDSB Student Census is a student demographic data collection that was launched in Spring 2021 and then again during the 2021-2022 school year. All school boards in Ontario have collected or plan to collect student identity data; the Anti-Racism Act, 2017 and Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan require it as it provides critical data boards need to identify and address systemic barriers to students by focusing programming and resources.

The Anti-Racism Data Standards, 2018 (ARDS) were established to help public sector organizations fulfil their obligations under the Anti-Racism Act to identify racial disparities and advance racial equity. The ARDS sets practices for collecting reliable information as well as protecting, analyzing, de-identifying, releasing, and using the data. It describes the personal information public sector organizations should consider collecting to understand intersections of race and other social identities. We All Count, the student census was based on ARDS recommendations and collected information on:

- Indigenous Identity
- Race
- Ethnic Origin
- Religion
- Citizenship
- Immigration Status
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Languages
- Disabilities

Why is it Important to Collect Identity-Based Data?

Identity-based data is necessary to understand barriers created by systemic racism and other forms of discrimination in and across organizations and sectors. The Anti-Racism Data Standards (ARDS) explains that systemic racism occurs when organizations create or maintain racial inequity because of hidden institutional bias in policies, practices, and procedures that privilege some groups and disadvantage others. For example, this can look like people in authority treating members of Indigenous, Black, and racialized groups harshly or differently than others; it can look like informally or unconsciously excluding Indigenous, Black and racialized individuals from opportunities, and it can look like not paying enough attention to issues and problems that disproportionately affect Indigenous, Black and racialized communities.

In HWDSB, when student identity data is linked with other data sets such as suspensions, attendance, achievement and well-being, more knowledge is built about students and their experiences in the school board. Patterns reveal how the school environment affects different students in different ways and how some groups of students are advantaged while others are disadvantaged. Understanding where students are disproportionately represented, for example, in suspensions, enables the Board to address barriers and work toward a more equitable system.

The ARDS provides historical context for why organizations are beset with inequities and contends that "Throughout Canada's history including prior to Confederation, colonial practices, including the oppression of Indigenous peoples and the enslavement of people of African descent, have entrenched public attitudes, beliefs, and practices that continue to negatively impact Indigenous, Black, and racialized individuals and communities in social, economic, and political life. The exclusion and devaluing of different groups are also evident in Canada's history of discriminatory immigration and citizenship policies, including restricted admission for Jewish people at the height of the Holocaust; the Head Tax on Chinese immigrants; and the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II, among many other examples."

The Ontario Human Rights Commission, in its Policy and Guidelines of Racism and Racial Discrimination affirms that racism is tied to social, political, economic, and institutional power that is held by the dominant group in society. HWDSB recognizes that the education sector is very much shaped historically by colonial ideologies and that has resulted in a system that does not support the learning and achievement of all students equally. Collecting identity-based data is the first step in unpacking our shared past and beginning the long work of redressing implicit and hidden biases, in HWDSB's commitment to better serve every student.

We acknowledge that disproportionalities are not new; the data in this appendix confirm what many people have seen, known and experienced all their lives. We also acknowledge that disparate treatment of different identity groups across sectors (e.g., child welfare, justice, education) and in the job market along with lack of adequate supports (e.g., housing, social assistance, mental health, and well-being) indicate whole systems that are lacking and, thus, perpetuate what is seen in the data.

Limitations to the Data

The We All Count: HWDSB Student Census data collection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic (Spring 2021) and was opened again the following year to reach more students. In the end, participation rate included 24,177 students which is just under half the students in the Board or 48%. Further, there were some data quality issues which meant that some responses could not be used. For example, Ethnicity data was not viable because it appears the question may have been difficult to understand resulting in responses that could not be used.

It is also important to note that We All Count was voluntary. Students were not required to fill it out, and parents/guardians were provided with a mechanism to opt their child[ren] out of the survey. This, coupled with the participation rate, causes concern over how representative the data are. Critical voices may be missing in this collection.

This disproportionality analysis is preliminary. Some students didn't participate in the census, and those who did are probably those who felt safe and comfortable sharing their identity data which means the identities of those who do not feel safe are more likely to be absent. Intersectional disproportionalities could not be calculated because numbers become too small. For example, there are so few racialized students who are also female and have a disability that the statistical tests are inconclusive and there is a risk of identifying people. The disproportionality data shared on the following pages is considered by staff to be highly likely to represent the entire student population, meaning that where there are identified disproportionalities that are statistically significant, according to the tests run, staff is confident

that there would be a very similar result if the census included data on all students in the Board and that the disproportionalities calculated are not due to chance.

Format of this Report

On the next two pages, there is a "chapter" in the forthcoming disproportionalities report, namely Suspensions. The chapter is designed to be short and digestible such that the context provided with the data can be easily understood. It is important, and in alignment with the ARDS, that the disproportionality issue and its context is clearly understood. There is information on why it is important, how to read the bar chart, and what it means for HWDSB's current and future actions.

Language is used to frame disproportionalities as outcomes of programs and services the Board provides. This is in keeping with the ARDS which states that analyses must be "client-focused" and reflect individuals' interactions with the services and programs organizations provide. Hence, the outcomes are deliberately framed not as properties of students (e.g., achievement earned, suspensions acquired, etc.) but as characteristics of the organization, (e.g., assessment calculated, suspensions given) to highlight the role systemic factors play in producing the outcomes observed. This delineation will shape discussion of the data and staff implores the HWDSB community, the media, and the public to honour this convention so as not to discuss disproportionality findings using harmful narratives.

It is important to remember that disproportionality data reflects colonial systems that are designed in ways that advantage some and disadvantage others. It is complex and interconnected across sectors and must never be reduced to the actions of individual students and victim blaming.

Next Steps

Staff continues to refine and finalize a full report for September 2023 which will contain multiple disproportionalities as mentioned above. That is done alongside subject matter experts in the community.

In alignment with the ARDS, the effectiveness of initiatives across the Board to eliminate barriers and to dig deeper into intersectionalities will be monitored and evaluated to understand the experiences of students across multiple identity groups (e.g., students who identify as both disabled and racialized). To that end, there will be a yearly student identity data collection in three grades and at registration. Again, all identity data collection is voluntary. Students and parents/guardians can refuse to participate. Communications and schools will continue to share the value and purpose of building this data set over time.

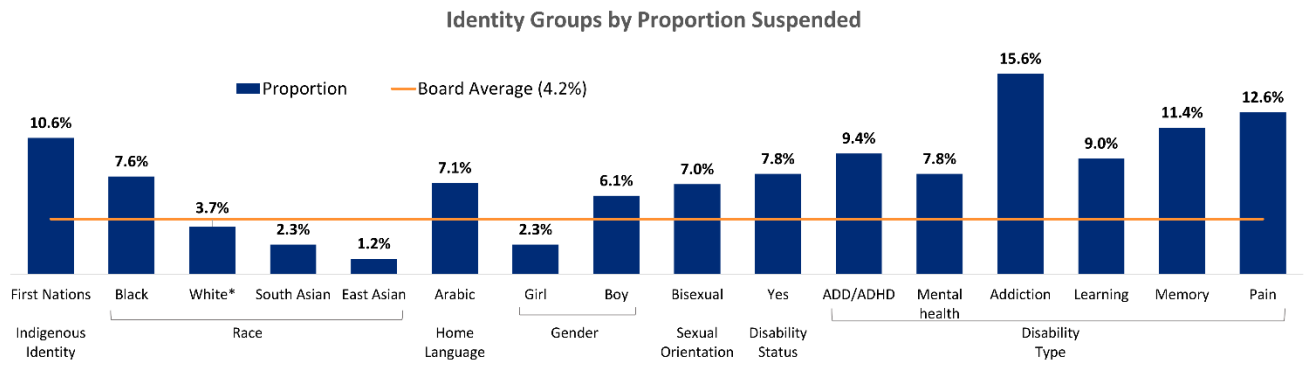
Suspension Disproportionalities 2021-2022

Background

Suspensions are reported once per year to trustees in public reports. The March 2023 report is here. It shows suspensions (and expulsions) over the last five years by infraction type. It also includes the number of students who are identified as exceptional (per Special Education guidelines) who were suspended or expelled.

Community members, parents/caregivers/guardians, educators, and others who support students have expressed concerns over the disproportionate impact suspensions have had on Black students, Indigenous students, racialized students, students with disabilities and other groups of students who experience marginalization. In March 2023, community members brought concerns forward to the Board of Trustees and their presentations can be found here.

With the identity data collected through the We All Count: Student Census project, we have been able to look at suspensions in more detail to gain a better understanding of which groups of students are suspended in HWDSB.



*White is the only proportion shown here that is not significantly different from the board average according to statistical tests

How to Read the Chart

The chart represents the proportion of students who were suspended one or more times within each identity group. This means if a student was suspended one time or five times, they are only counted here once. The orange line represents the proportion of suspensions for all students across HWDSB.

An example of how to read the chart: under the gender category, boys were found to be overrepresented because, of all boys in the Board, 6.1% of them were given a suspension during the 2021-2022 school year. That is higher than the Board average and statistically significant according to the testing applied by Research and Analytics. The testing shows how similar the results would be if there were data from every student in the Board and are not a result of chance.

The bars in this chart represent all the statistically significant findings across all the identity data where the sample size is greater than 50 students. That means it is reasonably certain that the groups included in this bar chart are over- or under-represented in the suspension data.

Findings

- Schools suspend First Nations, Black and Arabic Speaking students at a higher rate than the Board average suspension rate.
- Schools suspend boys, bisexual students, and students with certain disabilities at a higher rate than the Board average suspension rate.
- Schools suspend girls, South Asian and East Asian students at a lower rate than the Board average.

Why Is This Important?

There is a great deal of evidence in the academic research literature that school suspensions have unintended negative consequences such as lower academic achievement, school drop-out, feelings of alienation, substance use, antisocial and violent behaviour. Research also shows that suspensions feed the school to prison pipeline and are possibly not very effective as a disciplinary tool.

When schools suspend students disproportionately, it shows that systems (like education systems) disadvantage some groups of students and advantage others. The Ontario Human Rights Commission report on *The Ontario Safe Schools Act: School Discipline and Discrimination* describes this issue in Ontario. HWDSB data shows the disadvantaging of First Nations, Black, Arabic speaking students along with boys, bisexual students, and those with certain disabilities.

What Does This Mean?

HWDSB has a lot of work to do. Data clearly shows patterns of disparity across identity groups which means that some students are being disadvantaged due to systemic barriers and inequities in the district. There are initiatives in place to begin this work and some examples are provided below. Ultimately, actions matter the most.

What is currently being done?

• Monthly learning sessions for principals, vice principals and system leaders to strengthen their understanding in areas such as Human Rights, Anti-Black Racism, and HWDSB's Indigenous Education Circle Strategic Action Plan (IECSAP).

• Culturally Responsive Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP) is the use of cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of all students as conduits to teach them more effectively. It builds on the lived experiences of students to both motivate them and meet their unique needs.

• Indigenous Education and Indigenous Cultural Safety programs including a culturally immersive program called The Learning Nest in which Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are respected, valued and prioritized.

HWDSB is in the early stages of transforming structures and practices, and much more needs to be done. HWDSB is committed to listening and acting on what we are hearing from students, families, and communities.

HWDSB Annual Plan Report

Name of Report: Positive Culture and Well-Being Report (Update)

Date: June 5, 2023

This report provides an update on the Positive Culture and Well-Being Strategic Direction Priority since the last report on March 23, 2023. This report serves as the monitoring report on this priority area with a number of related monitoring updates being shared throughout the year.

Positive Culture and Well-Being Reporting Schedule for 2022-23:

- November 2022 – Equity Action Plan, Mental Health and Well Being and Safe School Action Plan,
- March 2023 – Behaviour and Analytic Services, Student Voice Survey (led by Student Trustees), Safe Schools and the Safe Schools Action Plan, and Suspension and Expulsion Data
- June 2023 – Equity Action Plan, Community Mapping, Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) and Safe Schools Action Plan (full 18-month update)

Priority: Positive Culture and Well-Being: We will build student and staff well-being through positive climate strategies and supportive relationships.

Goal: Improve the well-being of all students and staff and close the gap for those currently and historically underserved.

Target: At least 80 per cent of students and staff who self-identify as Black, Indigenous, Racialized, Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+, and people requiring special education supports/services report feeling safe, supported, accepted, and affirmed in their diverse and distinct identities.

Equity Action Plan Update

Throughout 2022-2023, staff have continued to implement the Equity Action Plan. We have increased our commitment by allocating resources, strengthening the HWDSB Equity and Human Rights Departments and building staff capacity at different levels. These changes have impacted the Board Annual Plan in both student learning and achievement and positive culture and well-being to address inequities and close gaps for those that have been historically and are currently underserved (students that self-identify as Black, Indigenous, racialized, Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+, and people requiring special education supports/services), by using anti-colonial, anti-racism, and anti-oppression approaches in decision-making.

This report highlights some of the work that is being done and will continue into the 2023-2024 school year. The Equity Action Plan uses anti-racism and anti-oppression approaches in recognizing and challenging socially and historically built-in inequalities that are ingrained in our systems and institution. The plan identifies four focus areas:

A. School and Classroom Practices.
B. Governance, Leadership and Human Resource Practices.
C. Positive Organizational Culture and Well-being.
D. Data Collection, Integration and Reporting.

School & Classroom

What We Did: Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP)

CRRP is the use of cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of all students as conduits to teach them more effectively. It builds on the lived experiences of students to both motivate them and meet their unique needs.

The three tenets of CRRP:

- High Expectations: we ensure that high academic expectations are set for all students.
- Cultural Competence/Cultural Humility: we value students' cultures while learning about the cultures of others who may or may not be represented in classrooms.
- Critical Consciousness: we develop critical consciousness when we challenge students to question, analyze and critique the norms and values that shape society and lead to social inequities for different groups.

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, the Program department, Equity Department, and the Indigenous Cultural Safety Team collaborated to continue implementation of CRRP across the system. Program staff deepened training on the tenets of CRRP. The Principal of Program and Program consultants provided CRRP breakout sessions at monthly Vice Principal and Principal learning sessions. The Principal of Equity and the Principal of Leadership Recovery provided workshops about how to embed CRRP into the School Improvement Plan through Continuous Learning and Improvement. Consultants from the three departments listed above provided targeted training in CRRP to teachers and mentors in the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) and to secondary department heads. Staff also created a CRRP Look-For graphic for principals, vice-principals, and classroom teachers. Equity consultants collaborated with educators throughout the school year to plan effective instruction and assessment using the tenets of CRRP.

Impact: CRRP continues to become the default mindset that frames the work of Program and Equity consultants. CRRP is embedded in all learning at the monthly VPP learning networks to support school-based implementation. With the continued use of the ETFO publication *Respond and Rebuild* as the foundational text in 2023-2024, it will support educators in K-12 in the implementation of the three tenants of CRRP.

What We Did: Graduation Coaches for Black Students

The Graduation Coach Program ensures Black Students have access to targeted programs and services to support their academic goals, while better promoting Black history, experiences, and development of school leaders. There are five Graduation Coaches across six schools. Each coach provides a dedicated space for Black students to develop community. Through formal support and monitoring of a cohort of 25 plus students, coaches curate success plans alongside their students aimed at student achievement, regular attendance, and credit accumulation. Ongoing intervention and advocacy to school staff provide timely interventions. From weekly check-ins to multilayered daily support alongside a whole team of stakeholders, the work the coaches do with students contributes to School Annual Plans to decrease achievement gaps. For the past two summers, the coaches have run a summer program that takes students into the community to learn from community leaders and provides learning with guests and mentors from the community. This summer, staff will add an opportunity for students to earn a secondary school credit during the Summer Graduation Coach Program.

Impact: Student voice is centered in all the work to increase student engagement and understand and eliminate barriers for students. Coaches have deepened student connections through an increase in student led activities such as the trip to the Josiah Henson Homestead and coffee houses organized and run by students after school to provide a space for Black students and allies to gather. Students from the six schools gathered together to attend a movie displaying Black empowerment, to celebrate CultureFest, to participate in a camping trip and to attend the first Black Prom – the Onyx Ball. Student leaders have shared the benefits of the program to community partners. Results show 75 percent of students in the program accumulating midterm credits.

Leadership, Governance and Human Resources

What We Did: Building Vice Principal/Principal and System Leader Capacity

Staff provided a series of differentiated professional learning for superintendents, vice principals, principals, senior managers, managers and PASS/OCTU staff. Monthly vice principal and principal learning has focused on understanding the HWDSB's new Human Rights Policy, Anti-Black Racism Policy, Gender Identity and Gender Expression procedure and other topics including responding to acts of hate, bias, and prejudice. Discussion and learning also included roles and responsibilities under the Human Rights Policy and digging deeper to learn about specific forms of discrimination (e.g., ableism, racism, anti-Black racism, transphobia) and how to address them as duty bearers centering the needs of students and staff, especially those who often experience discrimination and harassment.

For service leaders and staff, the learning focussed on human rights, accountability, anti-racism, and anti-oppression and co-creating workplace environments that are free from discrimination and harassment. Senior managers, managers and staff at the Education Centre participated in these sessions where they discussed the Board's obligation under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Human Rights Policy and how these important topics connect to their work within the organization.

Impact: Data was collected through surveys. Staff expressed varied levels of comfort with the topics and reported an increased understanding of human rights and related policies. Staff want to learn more about their roles and responsibilities under the Human Rights Code and the Human Rights Policy. Vice

principals and principals facilitated learning at staff meetings and school-based learning session and incorporating human rights and equity approaches in school improvement plans.

Positive Culture and Well-Being

What We Did: Inclusion and Equity for Students of Colour Committee

The committee had representation from all HWDSB secondary schools and one elementary school. The meetings were hybrid allowing for in person and virtual participation. Students discussed the importance of racial representation, what it is like to be a racialized student in their school and gave updates on both concerns and celebrations. Students created an Instagram account to keep each other informed. They learned about LEARN.DISRUPT. REBUILD. lessons and provided feedback. One student is filming a short film about the committee with the focus on racialized representation in HWDSB schools.

Impact: This committee built community and validated experiences of racialized students within HWDSB. Students provided valuable feedback on policies and practices that affect students within the district e.g., Student Dress Guidelines, Naming of Schools Policy.

What We Did: Positive Space Student Voice Committee

The Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Student Voice Committee had representation from across HWDSB secondary in all grades and elementary schools from grades seven and eight. The meetings were hybrid allowing for in person and virtual participation. Early work of the committee focused on setting the conditions for a safe and inclusive space. This included soliciting student input on processes around recruitment which prioritize safety and confidentiality, developing comprehensive group norms and working on terms of reference, specifically regarding decision-making, to ensure that committee decisions are fair, and that everyone feels included in the decision-making process. Throughout the year the group has worked towards student-led agendas and meetings, with the goal that in time the staff facilitators provide support and suggestions when needed.

Impact: Students have identified some key themes of concern for Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ students and ideas for work plans/goals to address these issues. They also completed a grant proposal to support a project aimed at improving inclusion and representation for queer and transgender Black, Indigenous and people of colour (QTBIPOC) students. In addition, they have provided input/voice on a number of initiatives e.g., Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy, Naming of Schools Policy, Guidelines for Presentations and Guest Speakers.

What we did: Human Rights and Anti-Black Racism Policies and Procedures

After the approval of the Human Rights Policy and the Anti-Black Racism Policy in October 2022, staff worked to develop procedures to support the implementation of these two anchor policies. Feedback and consultations, especially from and with those who are most impacted by discrimination and harassment are informing the Human Rights Accountability procedure, Human Rights Complaints Resolution Procedure, and the Anti-Black Racism procedure. Staff training has been provided on both new policies throughout the 2022-2023 school year.

Impact: The procedures define right holders' and duty bearers' roles and responsibilities and provide clear next steps to realize the visions that are outlined in the policies to ensure human rights are respected and protected in all HWDSB learning and working environments.

What We Did: Human Rights Office – Resolving Human Rights Concerns and Complaints

The Human Rights Office (HRO) has a mandate to resolve human rights issues through an internal resolution process. Concerns and complaints are expected to be addressed promptly at the school and department levels as much as possible. However, those bringing concerns may choose to contact the HRO directly. In addition, a complaint may be referred to the HRO in circumstances where the matter is complex, when the matter is involves systemic discrimination and/or the matter cannot be resolved through a supervisor/manager led process because of existing or perceived power imbalances, fear of reprisal, a perception of bias or conflict of interest. During this reporting period, the HRO received a total of 24 complaints that have been addressed either through the Early/ Alternative Resolution Process or the Formal Resolution Process. In addition, the HRO has provided advisory support to school principals, superintendents, and department managers to address complaints or concerns.

Impact: An internal mechanism to resolve human rights concerns is in place and rights holders are starting to access this mechanism. Most of the complaints/concerns addressed through the HRO are resolved through Early/ Alternative Resolution.

Data Collection, Integration and Reporting

What We Did: Student Census

Staff assessed the quality of data from the Student Census data collection and identified where questions could be posed differently to improve data quality. We piloted different sets of questions across several grades, adjusted questions based on feedback and are finalizing the forms we propose to use moving forward to collect student demographic information yearly in grades four, seven and ten as well as during the registration process. This is the same information collected through the Student Census, minus Citizenship since that is collected on the Student Registration Form.

Impact: The new student demographic data collection tool will help us to build upon the original data collected through the Student Census and, over the course of 3 years, accumulate a more complete set than what we have currently. Each year, we will continue to grow and replace data to maintain as current and complete a dataset as possible, thus enabling us to not only calculate disproportionalities but look at intersectionality (which requires larger sample sizes than what we have currently) and deepen our understanding of how our system, like other systems, disadvantages some while advantaging others.

Next Steps: Once the new HWDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan has been developed and released, staff will begin to update the Equity Action Plan to support the strategic plan. While the Equity Action Plan is being revised, staff will continue to focus on the four priority areas.

What We Did: Community Mapping

A team of system social workers focused on Indigenous Cultural Safety and equity thoroughly reviewed the Community Mapping document written by Dr. Chavon Niles. This document focused on how the Board can invite community groups for presentations or workshops in schools in a way that is safe, collaborative and reflects student voice and their lived experiences, particularly presentations related to Indigenous Cultural Safety and equity.

The Community Mapping working group outlined recommendations based on the feedback received from different student, staff, parent/guardian/caregiver, and community groups. These recommendations included:

- Students see themselves represented in presentations/guest speakers.
- Learning be related to students' lived experience.
- The importance of creating safety before, during and after the learning.
- Presenters/guest speakers have an Anti-Racist/Anti-Oppressive and Anti-Colonial lens.

Staff have expanded on these recommendations to develop the Guidelines for Presentations/ Guest Speakers.

Originally, the project was called Community Mapping. However, the name has been changed to Guidelines for Presenters/Guest Speakers (GPS), as this aligned with the feedback stakeholders provided around supporting school staff who are considering bringing in presenters/guest speakers. The guidelines have three sections: Questions for Potential Speakers, Student Engagement, and Safety Norms.

We have facilitated engagement sessions with educators, principals/vice-principals, students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and community groups. We are continuing to receive feedback from these interested partners through surveys developed in consultation with the Research and Analytics Department. In addition, we are meeting with the Communications and Community Engagement Department to ensure that GPS can work together with the structures they are developing for connecting with community partners, to inform and enrich both processes.

Impact: The intended impact of the guidelines is to ensure that presentations in schools are done in a safe, collaborative way that reflects students' identities and experiences and has an anti-racist, anti-oppressive and anti-colonial lens. School staff will use the guidelines to plan for presentations and will feel empowered and prepared for guest presenters and speakers in a way that will enrich the learning and create the conditions for safer and more inclusive learning spaces.

Next steps: The goal is to have the GPS project completed by the end of June 2023 and ready to be piloted in the fall. Incorporating feedback and information collected from the pilot will help develop the implementation plan for system-wide roll-out.

What We Did: Middle Years Development Index (MDI)

Staff administered the Middle Development Instrument or MDI during the 2021-2022 school year. This was expanded to include secondary schools to have a single measure from grades 4 to 12. The MDI is a

"population measure" much like the EDI (Early Development Instrument) which is completed in kindergarten. The MDI does not provide an individual reflection of students; instead, it indicates how groups of students are doing across different areas of development in HWDSB schools and communities. As a result, some of the data cannot be directly mapped to the efforts of schools.

The MDI is an indicator of students' overall social and emotional health and well-being in their homes, in their neighbourhoods and in their schools. Schools foster an environment that will support student's overall health and well-being in conjunction with home and community.

MDI measures:

- Social and emotional development.
- Physical health and well-being.
- Connectedness.
- Use of after school time.
- School experiences.
- Overall well-being.
- Adult relationships.
- Peer relationships.
- Health habits.
- Organized activities.

Impact: School level MDI results are made available to school principals/vice-principals who have been using the findings to support Continuous Learning and Improvement (CLI). Although seeing results on assets and indices that are a combination of separate questions (e.g., the Well-Being Index score is calculated using 15 questions that measure everything from optimism to health) may not be obvious indicators for specific school action, principals/vice-principals have been provided with the question collections behind the assets and indices. They use these to focus on areas that are relevant and meaningful in the school context and will contribute to the overall well-being and health of each student.

Data from the MDI also supports the development of the Mental Health Strategy, social work support models and guiding professional development for Emotion Coaching and Validation strategies.

Findings from the 2018 and 2022 MDI administrations are compared in Appendix A. Since this is the first year of MDI in secondary, staff are not yet able to look at trends over time. We can compare a new measure introduced with the MDI called the General Mattering Scale which was used in both the 2022 MDI and the 2020 *Student Peer Relations in the Context of COVID-19: Safe Schools Survey* administered as part of the Safe Schools Review Panel work. Thus, we are able to compare students' sense of mattering over time for both the elementary and secondary panel (see Appendix A).

The MDI also included questions related to bullying and school safety. The results are included in Appendix A.

Next Steps: MDI is scheduled to be administered again during the 2023-2024 school year. Staff are collaborating with Dr. Tracy Vaillancourt to administer a version of the *Student Peer Relations in the Context of COVID-19: Safe Schools Survey* to track changes in school climate, safety and bullying since its administration in 2020. This is a major survey and is being planned for October 2023, the same time of

year it was initially administered. Following that survey, staff will decide when and how to proceed with MDI.

What We Did: Anti-Sex Trafficking (PPM 166)

In the fall of 2022, we sought input and feedback about the HWDSB's Anti-sex Trafficking School Board Protocol from parents/guardians/caregivers, principals/vice principals, union partners, the Parental Involvement Committee (PIC) and community partners. The protocol has been finalized and posted on the policy section of the Board website.

We completed a trauma and violence informed literature review which assisted with the creation of the Response Protocol and staff learning modules. These were drafted in collaboration with several community agencies with expertise in anti-sex trafficking including Native Women's Centre, Sexual Assault Centre of Hamilton and Area (SACHA), and the YMCA. The Response Protocol is in the final stage of receiving input and feedback. It will be released in the fall of 2023-2024.

Impact: Our priority has been creating materials that are informed by local expertise and lived experience as appropriate. As a result, we have engaged in a transparent and accountable process with parent/guardian/caregiver and community groups, agencies, and partners. We also have created community tables that we are accountable to and can seek guidance from in anti-sex trafficking.

Next Steps: Staff will work with Communications and Community Engagement on awareness and education material, both in print and digital format. We will share the draft staff learning modules and engage with a wide variety of interested people and groups for a release in 2023-24. Staff will finalize an age-appropriate awareness plan about healthy & unhealthy relationships in consultation with students, staff, unions, and members of PIC.

Safe Schools Action Plan Update

Strategy #2: Develop and implement a Safe Schools Action Plan to respond to the recommendations from the Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel.

The *Safe Schools Action Plan* Addresses three fundamental areas related to bullying:

- Prevention
- Intervention
- Responding

Work on the Safe Schools Action Plan during the 2022/23 school year has continued to support each of these fundamental areas. Our collaborative work with HWDSB departments, as well as advisory committees and working groups, has resulted in numerous initiatives and resources which are in final stages or are being piloted throughout the system to determine potential impact.

The 2021–2023 Safe Schools Action Plan ends in August 2023 with numerous resources to be shared with students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and staff in September/October 2023. The focus on bullying prevention and intervention will continue in the 2023/24 school year with the release of the 2023–2026 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Strategy.

This is the third update in the 2022/23 school year on the Safe Schools Action Plan. This report reviews the status of the 81 Action Steps (Appendix B) in the HWDSB Safe Schools Action Plan, as well as highlighting key milestones of achievement and next steps moving forward. Recognizing that this work is ongoing, we are excited to demonstrate HWDSB's journey to date in supporting students, families, and staff.

The *HWDSB Bullying Prevention and Intervention Framework* (Appendix C) shows bullying prevention and intervention resources and supports available to schools. Bullying is a relationship problem. Reimagining Wellness introduced in September 2021, has focused on building positive and inclusive cultures in all classrooms and schools (including virtual) so that students feel a sense of belonging and safety in conditions to achieve their full potential. This includes creating student-centered learning environments where identity, voice and lived experience are affirmed and honoured as an essential part of learning. *Reimagining Wellness - Bullying Prevention,* to be introduced in September 2023*,* extends that learning by supporting the development of healthy, positive relationships and universal wellness, with an explicit focus on bullying prevention.

This report provides an update on some of the elements of the framework.

What We Did: Prevention - Engagement

Throughout the 2022-23 school year, staff have continued the relentless focus of working alongside those impacted by bullying through the implementation of the Safe Schools Action Plan. This commitment was shared as part of the Safe Schools Action Plan (Appendix D). Ongoing structures include:

- Student Advisory Group.
- Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Advisory Group.
- Community Advisory Group.
- Organizational Advisory Group (internal departments and unions).
- Working Groups to support each of the nine priority areas within the plan.

Meetings were held on a regular basis to support hearing the voices of those most impacted by bullying.

Impact: Staff have built and modified the structures to be responsive to participants and the invitation to join groups is ongoing. This work has reinforced that:

- Authentic co-creation results in more fulsome outcomes.
- Those with lived experience bring a unique and valued perspective to the work.
- Barrier removal and the collaborative creation of safer spaces are essential.
- Co-creation requires leadership learning.
- The process is part of the outcome and authentic engagement takes time.

In addition, new structures to gather voice from those most impacted by bullying emerged. This included:

- Engagement by a youth facilitator through school-based affinity groups.
- Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit.
- EngageHWDSB.
- ThoughtExchange (for staff).

Appreciation and Thank You

As we look toward the next stage of bullying prevention and intervention work, staff would like to extend a sincere thank you and appreciation to the students, parents/guardians/caregivers, community members/organizations, staff, and union partners, who have given of their time and expertise in support of the work to date. Your input and feedback have been invaluable and will continue to make a difference for students in schools. Staff look forward to our continued work together.

What We Did: Prevention - Reimagining Wellness

Bullying is a relationship issue. Research suggests that "addressing bullying in schools starts with prioritizing and supporting healthy relationships and creating a culture of caring where every adult in every school has the capacity and responsibility to address bullying (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016; Pepler & Craig, 2014). Reimagining Wellness – Bullying Prevention incorporates data-informed strategies to support student learning and achievement as well as mental health and well-being as they relate to healthy relationships across HWDSB. It also includes specific learning on bullying prevention and the co-creation of classroom agreements to support interactions with each other. Reimagining Wellness – Bullying Prevention recognizes the complex integration, intersectionality, and connections that Indigenous Educational Wellness, equity, human rights, mental health and safe schools can play in helping to create these relationships. Reimagining Wellness – Bullying Prevention includes a number of curriculum-linked activities which are used by educators in the classroom. Activities are categorized as follows:

- Bullying Prevention.
- Community & Team Building.
- Social Emotional Skills Development.
- Physical Activation.

Each of these areas support the development of universal wellness. Lessons include a focus on bullying prevention, gratitude, positive self-talk, breathing strategies, caring for one another, relationships, self-care strategies, fitness and physical activity and seeking help. Lessons are implemented at the beginning of the school year and throughout the school year as determined by the teacher.

Impact: Feedback on Reimagining Wellness was gathered from students and staff through a variety of platforms and triangulated to capture common themes. Student feedback (Appendix E) demonstrated an ability to articulate the variety of activities they had participated in, as well as the positive impact. In many cases, students were able to share the three areas that Reimagining Wellness focused on (e.g., Physical Activation, Mental Health and Wellness and Community Building) and the important relationship between the lessons in helping support a healthy mind, as well as relationships in their classrooms and schools.

Staff feedback (Appendix E) included themes around the positive impact the resource provided at the beginning of the school year supporting classroom goals and creating a classroom community. By focusing on these goals, staff felt many students had built self-confidence in the classroom, as well as in the way they addressed peer conflict. Many staff found that students were more willing to help one

another, built kindness among one another and in some cases helped build confidence in some to take on leadership roles in the classroom and at the whole school level.

What We Did: Prevention - Recess Guardians Pilot

Recess Guardians is a program that was developed to empower youth to lead through active play (Appendix F). HWDSB data indicates that students identified breaks and outside recess as places where bullying frequently occurs. Student voice through consultations has confirmed that unstructured times and spaces increase the chances for bullying to occur. Recess Guardians provides an opportunity for students (Kindergarten to grade 3) to participate in inclusive, student led (grades 5 to 8) activities, supported by a staff mentor. The program includes training and ongoing support for the student facilitators and staff mentor. HWDSB is currently piloting the Recess Guardians program in four schools: Lisgar, Lawfield, Lake Avenue and Queensdale. These programs are also supported by a Public Health Nurse.

Impact: Staff are seeking to determine if an increase in structured opportunities for play, led by students, will help reduce incidents of conflict on the playground during nutrition breaks.

What We Did: Prevention - Roots of Empathy

Expert Panel: "Evidence-informed universal approaches and programs based on student needs, such as WITS, Fourth R and Roots of Empathy" and "Participants repeatedly mentioned the Roots of Empathy program as a way to teach children how to use language to communicate both boundaries and caring."

Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based program that has demonstrated it can reduce bullying. The program does this by bringing a baby and a parent into a classroom to cover nine themes throughout the school year focusing on helping children develop empathy skills.

For more than 20 years, HWDSB has hosted Roots of Empathy in classrooms. This year the program expanded to 41 classrooms across 32 schools. Based on research, the focus of the program is on grade four and five classrooms. Programs are facilitated by school staff in a variety of roles including DECEs and CYCPs. HWDSB is also partnering with Public Health and EarlyON to host other programs. Some programs are facilitated by volunteers who have a variety of lived experiences and are often parents. In the past year, Roots of Empathy delivered presentations to Home and School, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and PIC for awareness and to share invitations to participate in the program. Information was also shared with school councils.

Impact: HWDSB along with the Roots organization will be gathering data at the conclusion of the Program in June. This data will be used to inform next steps.

What We Did: Prevention – Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) Healthy Schools

The Healthy Schools Approach (healthyschools.ca) engages the whole school community to promote and enhance the health and well-being of children, youth, school staff, and the broader community. Healthy Schools Certification is based on a 4-Step Healthy Schools Process, inspired by the Canadian

Healthy School Standards and Canada's Comprehensive School Health Framework. This process helps a school to plan and implement a range of activities that promote well-being in the school community, focusing on health topic(s) that are important to the school. Through a point-based system, over the course of the school year, schools will be able to plan their Healthy Schools process steps online and apply for Gold, Silver, or Bronze certification.

Key highlights include:

- Schools that chose to register were offered support by Hamilton Public Health Services School Program.
- Schools assigned a Public Health Nurse (PHN) received direct support and all other schools could access Public Health consultation support (PHN, Dietitian, Physical Activity Specialist).
- All schools that were directly supported by a Public Health Nurse identified mental health (including healthy life promotion and bullying prevention) as their primary health topic to address, often along with other health topics such as physical activity, nutrition, healthy growth & development.

Impact: During the 2022-23 school year, in collaboration with Hamilton Public Health Services, we supported 30 schools that registered for the Healthy Schools Program. 24 schools received a Healthy Schools Certification which is increased from five schools in 2021-22. (See Appendix G.)

Next Steps: Staff are in the process of gathering feedback from those participating in the Advisory Groups on structures for the 2023-24 school year including ways to expand outreach with community partners who work closely with families who experience bullying. This includes determining the structure that will support the monitoring of the work being implemented in schools.

Reimagining Wellness is being expanded for September 2023/24 to include explicit learning connected to bullying prevention (e.g., Reimagining Wellness – Bullying Prevention). It will continue to support the development of healthy, positive relationships and universal wellness and include a series of lessons focusing on classroom conditions and belonging, connecting multiple HWDSB priorities.

As part of the program evaluation of Recess Guardians currently underway, school staff have completed a survey to define the culture before Recess Guardians and how they would measure success of the program. This data will be used as a pre-program comparison for the data being collected in June. As part of post-pilot data collection process, staff will also consider the following:

- Office referrals pre and post program.
- Principal and Staff Mentor interviews.
- Focus groups with student facilitators.
- Interviews with teachers of students engaged in the program.
- Interviews with students who participate in the activities.
- Surveys of staff and parents/guardians/caregivers.

As the pilot continues in 2023/24, Recess Guardians will be included in the HWDSB Bullying Prevention and Intervention Framework.

HWDSB is currently planning for Roots of Empathy program expansion for the 2023-24 school year with a continued focus on grade four and five classrooms. Roots of Empathy will be included in the HWDSB Bullying Prevention and Intervention Framework.

OPHEA is currently preparing a final impact report that will summarize information received from participating schools. This report will highlight important pieces such as further details on the health topics addressed, the activities that occurred in/across schools, community partners engaged and more. This will be valuable information to support health promoting school efforts moving forward. OPHEA Healthy Schools Certification will be included in the HWDSB Bullying Prevention and Intervention Framework.

What We Did: Intervention - Nurturing Safer Schools

The Nurturing Safer Schools Social Work intervention initiative provides students (grades 5 to 8) who demonstrate bullying behaviours and students who have been impacted by peer victimization with six to eight individual therapeutic sessions. The intervention is rooted in evidence-based research practices and informed by Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. The program is designed for delivery in schools, as this is where bullying behaviour has likely occurred. Since this is a social work intervention, school social workers are well positioned to provide it for students with concerning behaviours, as well as those impacted by bullying.

Impact: The Nurturing Safer Schools program has been piloted as an intervention and support as part progressive discipline in schools. The program has been offered to students who have demonstrated bullying behaviour as an alternative to suspension and a way to address concerning behaviour. Unfortunately, throughout the pilot, students and /or families often opted to complete a suspension in place of the program. Students who experienced bullying behaviour and who participated in the program, found the support helpful.

What We Did: Intervention - Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Resources

The development of resources for families has been part of our ongoing work. An important part of the HWDSB Safe Schools Action Plan is a commitment to clear and transparent communication with students and families. Resources shared include:

- DRAFT Student Safety Plan (Appendix H).
- Tip Sheets on bullying prevention and responding.
- Understanding and reinforcing anti-bullying actions.
- Cyberbullying.

Currently, the parent/guardian/caregiver Working Group is finalizing additional material for families including the Bullying: What Parents Need to Know Handbook and communication tools (e.g., magnet, post card) to ensure family friendly tools are available when needed.

Impact: Families have shared that the Student Safety Plan creates clarity around supports for the student and around the actions of the school. Communication tools (e.g., magnet and post card) are being updated and refreshed to reflect feedback from students and families. Feedback also suggests that the resources need to be easy for families to access.

Next Steps: Nurturing Safer Schools is currently being reviewed in order to better understand why the program/model of delivery did not meet student or family needs. Staff are also considering how the

program material can be used in other support ways (e.g., classroom lessons, CYCP support, social worker support, Gateway and the Bullying: What Parents Need to Know Handbook etc.)

The Bullying: What Parents Need to Know Handbook and updated communication tools will be finalized and released in Fall of 2023. School websites will also be updated to improve access to materials.

What We Did: Responding - Principal/Vice-Principal Response Process

A common theme throughout the HWDSB Safe Schools Action Plan has centered around the need for clear, consistent messaging and communication when reports of bullying are brought to a principal/vice principal. Over the past year, parents/guardians/caregivers, students and staff have included their voice with respect to what the process needs to look like. The Principal/Vice-Principal Response Process supports principals and vice principals in working through a detailed process that highlights the importance of communication that is transparent and supportive of the needs of the student and their family.

Key elements of this response include regular communication check-ins to ensure the student and their family are kept up to date throughout the process. When an incident of bullying occurs, parents of the student who experiences bullying will be told:

- The nature of the activity that resulted in the harm to the student.
- The nature of the harm.
- Steps taken to protect the student's safety, including the nature of disciplinary measures taken in response (e.g., a 5-day suspension was issued with the return date clearly communicated).
- The support that will be provided (e.g., Student Safety Plan).

Within this process, principals and/or vice-principals will indicate the type of bullying (e.g., physical, social, verbal, cyber) in the student information system to support system planning and communication with the community. Finally, documentation and log entry standards and expectations have been developed to ensure bullying history is available when students change schools.

A key component to the response process has been the Student Safety Planning document (Appendix H) designed to support principals and/or vice-principals in working alongside students and their families. This resource has been co-created with parents and students over the past year and has been piloted throughout that time. It provides students and their families with an opportunity to plan out how they can feel most safe and supported while at school, with designated check-in opportunities points for the student, as well as their family. Careful consideration has been given to support as described by the student and family and to ensure approaches to safety do not inadvertently blame the victim.

Impact: Feedback during the pilot was positive and provided a good starting point to continue to develop the process. The documents have been updated for re-release in September 2023.

What We Did: Responding – Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit

On Friday, April 28th, 2023, HWDSB hosted its first Student Voice Summit - Let's Talk About Bullying. This event welcomed approximately 150 grade seven to ten students representing 25 schools. The event provided an opportunity for students to share their voice and feedback with respect to HWDSB's bullying procedures, tools and documents, while building community with their peers. The event was

focused on using a student-centered approach that provided all participants with an authentic opportunity to share their thoughts and insight with respect to bullying prevention work.

The Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit was intended to:

- Hear from those most impacted by bullying.
- Empower students and leadership development.
- Make connections and build relationships.
- Support measurement about what students see happen in schools.
- Build momentum and commitment around Bullying Prevention and Intervention week in November.

This is a new approach to empowering HWDSB students to lead the creation of processes, resources and student events and ensure their voice is at the forefront of this work. By creating an annual cycle of engagement (e.g., April, November, April) staff hope to continue to build system capacity by uplifting the voices of those that this work impacts most to inform it.

Impact: Students shared their experiences and thoughts regarding bullying prevention, intervention, and response tools (Appendix I). Their voices included comments about how these tools build community, create safer and more inclusive spaces, and support the creation/maintenance of healthy relationships. In addition, they learned about and engaged with the different tools that they can use when they experience bullying or when a peer needs support.

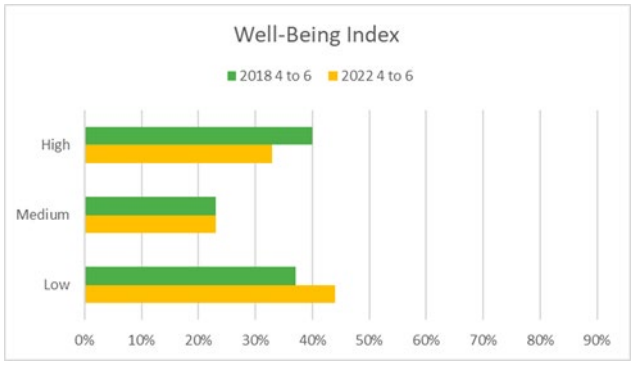
Students shared ideas about the 2023/24 Summit and were also informed about system level and school level student groups that can support bullying awareness and prevention. Student voice also helped to inform lessons and activities to be released system wide during the 2023/24 school year.

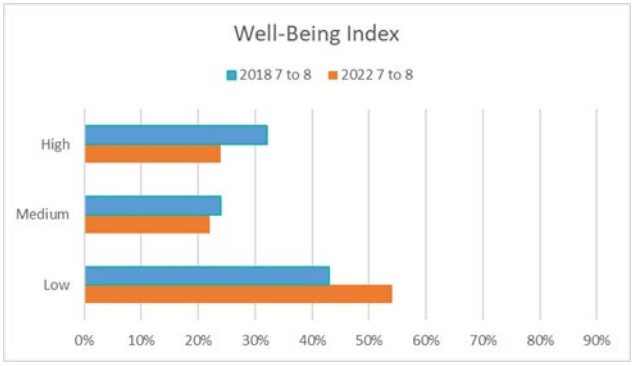
Next Steps: As this work is on-going and reflective in nature, the responding process and Student Safety Plan will continue to be a focus in 2023/24. Students will be invited to participate in planning for the November Bullying Prevention and Intervention Week, taking on a system and school leadership role. In addition, staff are looking at what expansion of the summit could look like (e.g., grades, number of schools, school-based summit) to continue to hear the voices of those most impacted by bullying.

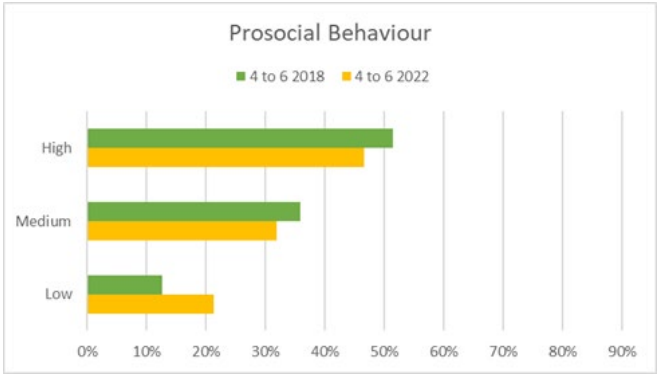
Appendix A – Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)

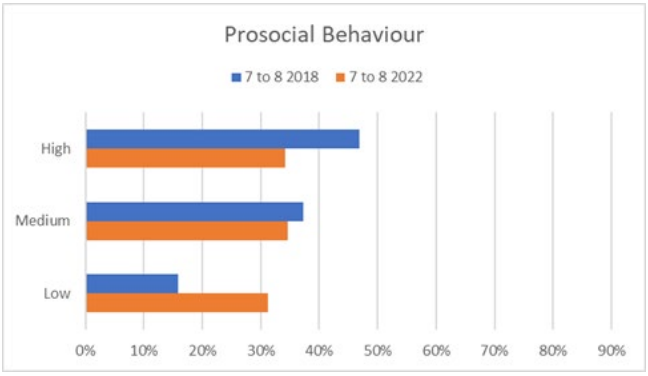
With two years of MDI administration complete, staff can begin comparing data over time. Below are a series of clustered bar charts that show on the left, grades four to six MDI findings for 2018 and 2022. On the right are grades seven and eight MDI findings for 2018 and 2022. Since 2022 was the first time we administered MDI in the secondary panel, we cannot provide the same comparisons.

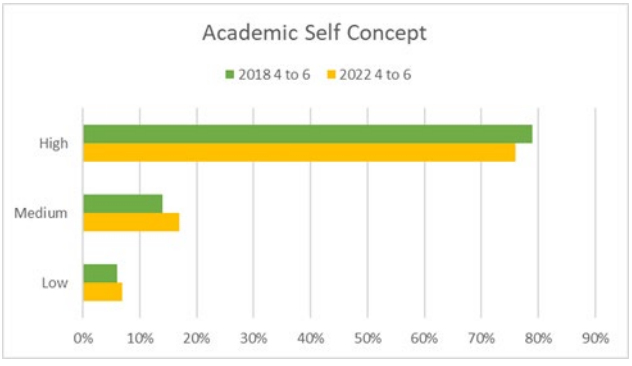
Looking at Well-Being below, we can see a similar pattern across grades four to six and grades seven and eight. The Board averages for students presenting with high well-being have dropped and the Board averages for students presenting with low well-being have increased. The 2018 administration of MDI was before the pandemic and the 2022 administration was during the pandemic. This can help to explain the findings. Student prosocial behaviour and academic self-concept show similar patterns.

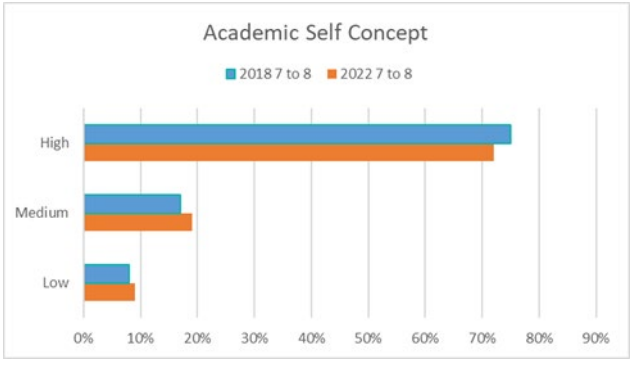




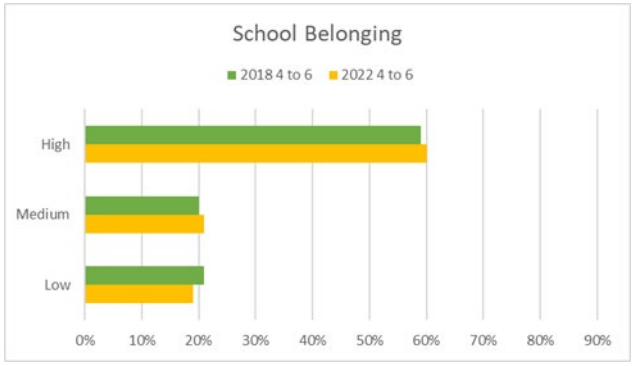


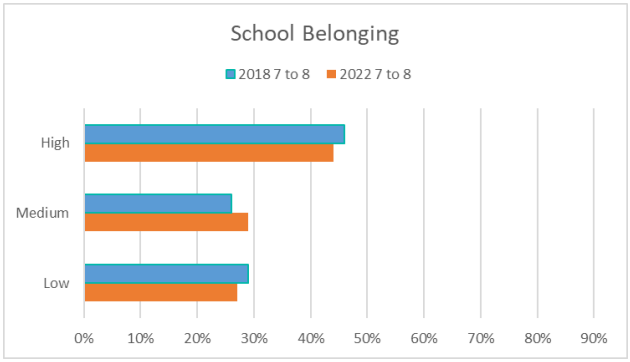




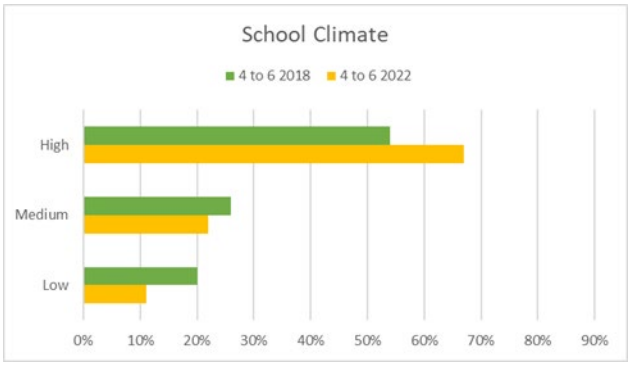


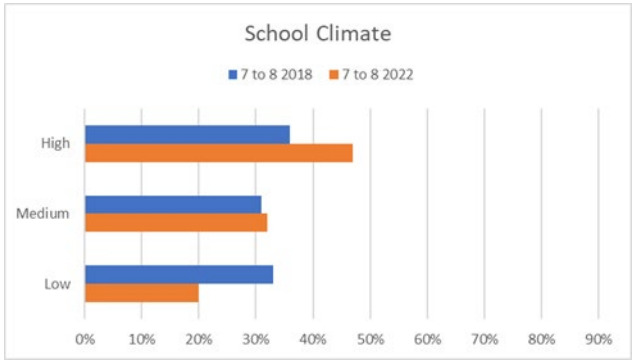
There are slightly different patterns in school belonging. Grades 4 to 6 show slight gains in high sense of school belonging and a small decrease in a low sense of school belonging whereas grades 7 to 8 show the same small decrease in low sense of school belonging but an increase in students with a medium scale sense of school belonging and slight decrease in high.



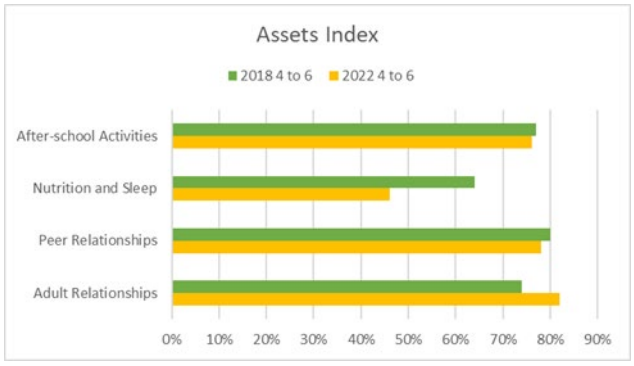


School climate is the one anomaly in which we see marked increases in positive school climate and marked decreases in negative school climate for both junior and intermediate divisions.





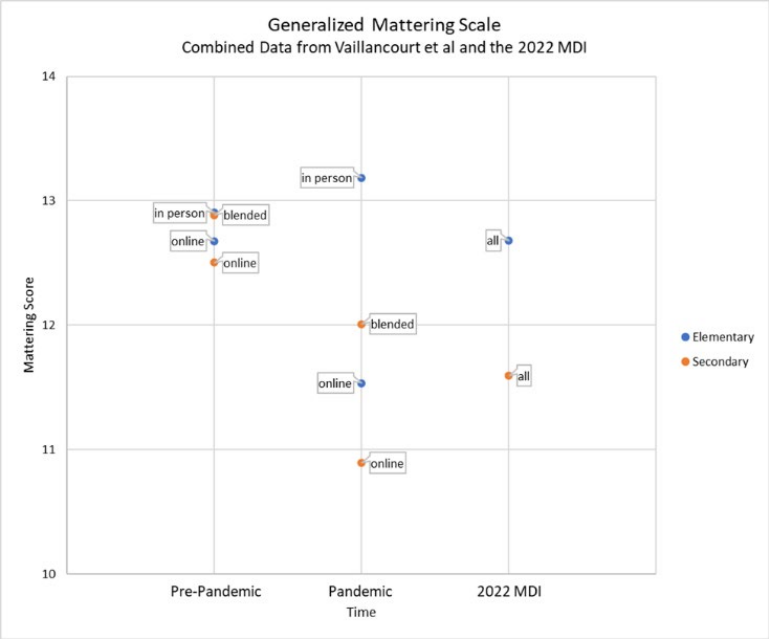
The assets indices measure four different areas of children's lives: after school activities, nutrition and sleep, peer relationships and adult relationships. The most dramatic change in these assets is the decrease of quality of nutrition and sleep. This asset measures if students get enough sleep, if they eat breakfast and if they eat meals with their families. Research indicates that sleep was a major issue during school lockdowns as students spent more time on social media and connecting with friends online. This is an area to monitor upon our next administration of MDI to see if the distance between that future date and past school closures rectifies this problem.



Below is a dot plot showing two years of the General Mattering Scale. The General Mattering Scale has been widely used across all age groups in schools, universities and in the workplace since the 1980s. It measures the extent to which people feel that they matter. It asks how much they feel (at school) that other people pay attention to and depend on them, how interested they are in them and what they have to say and if they would be noticed if they missed school.

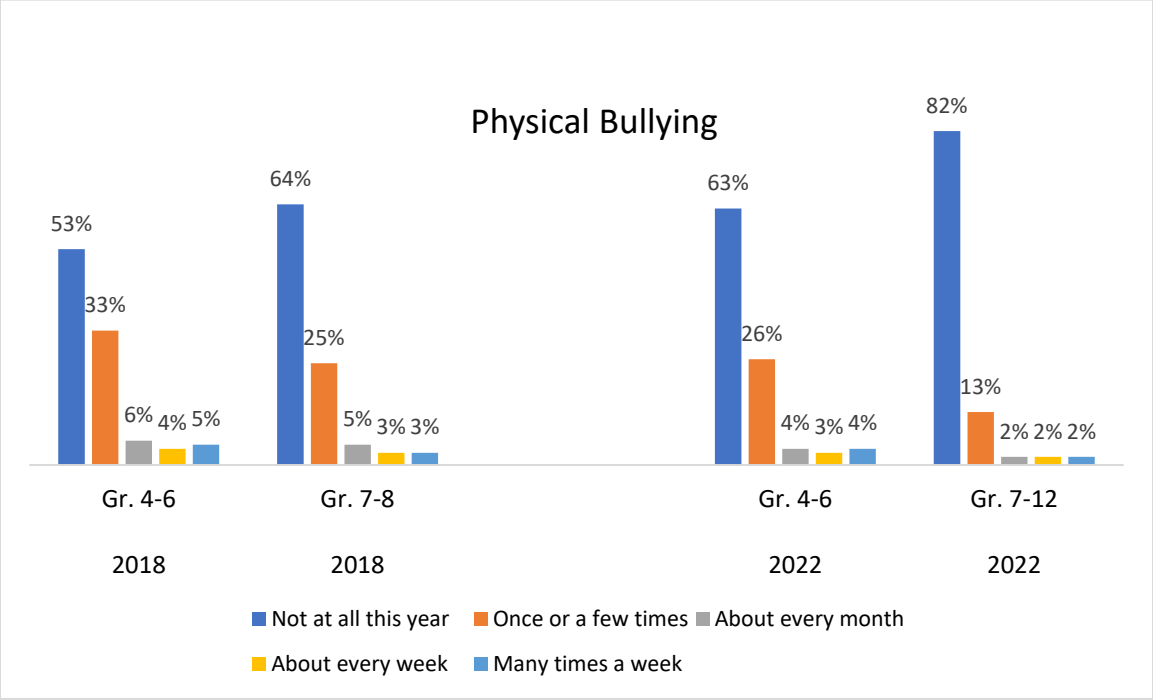
In the data below, students across both panels were asked in 2021 to think back to how they felt before the pandemic and answer the mattering questions. They were also asked to answer the mattering questions according to how they felt that day, in 2021 which was during the pandemic. Then the questions were asked again with the MDI in 2022.

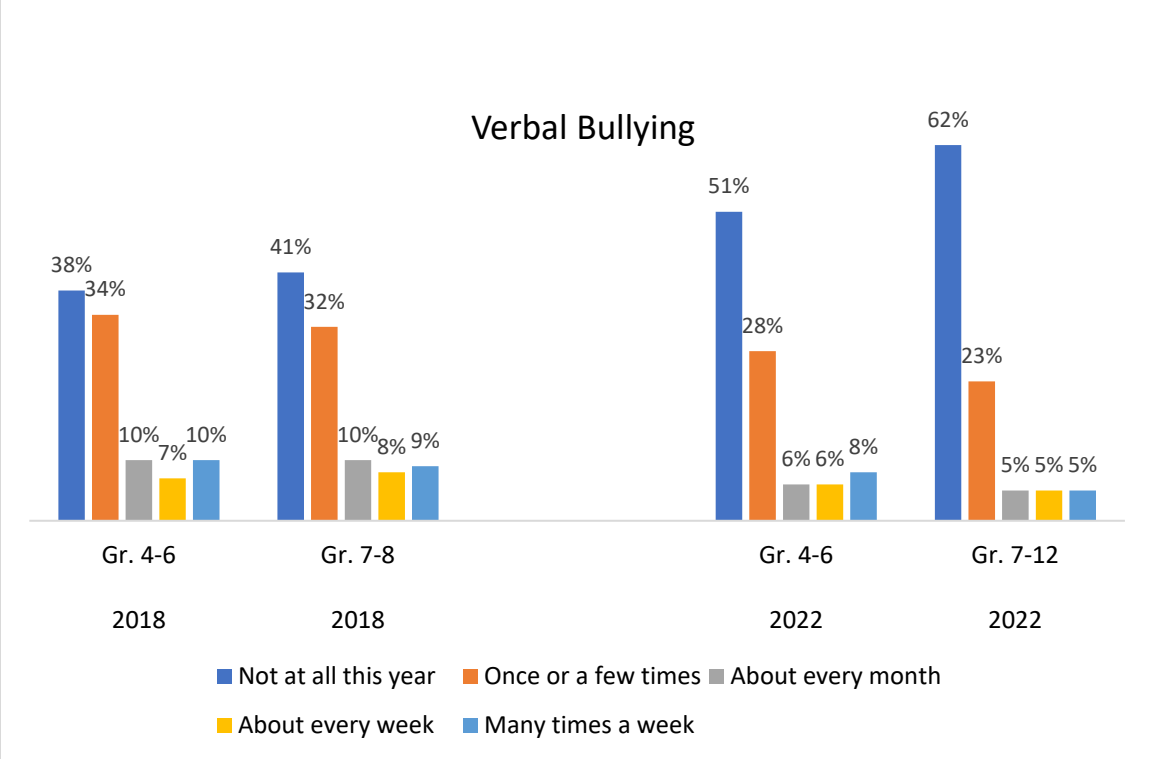
Student perceptions of mattering for both elementary and secondary were clustered between about 12.5 and 13 out of 20 when they thought back to how they felt before the pandemic. During the pandemic, elementary students who were attending school in person had the highest mattering score while secondary students who worked completely online and didn't attend school at all had the lowest mattering score. In 2022, elementary students have somewhat recovered in their sense of mattering but secondary remains at the lower end compared to pre-pandemic.

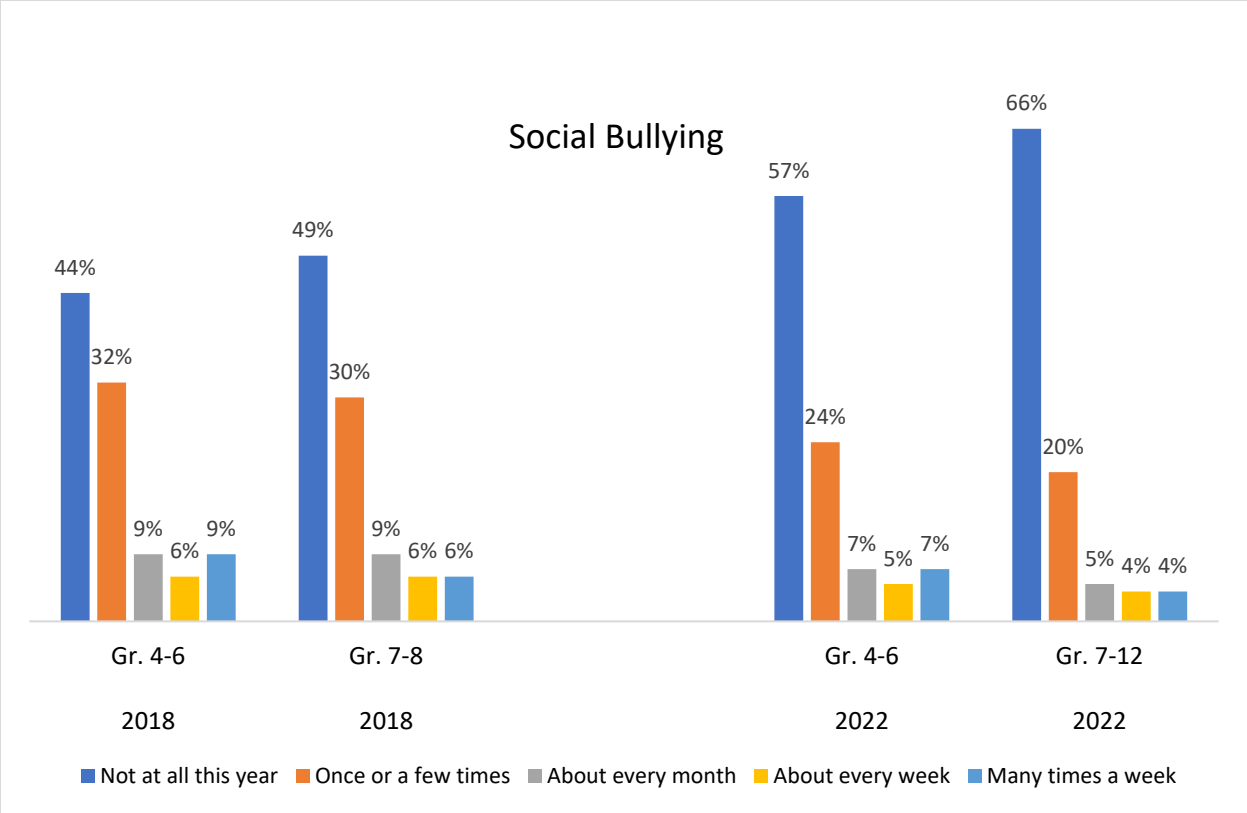


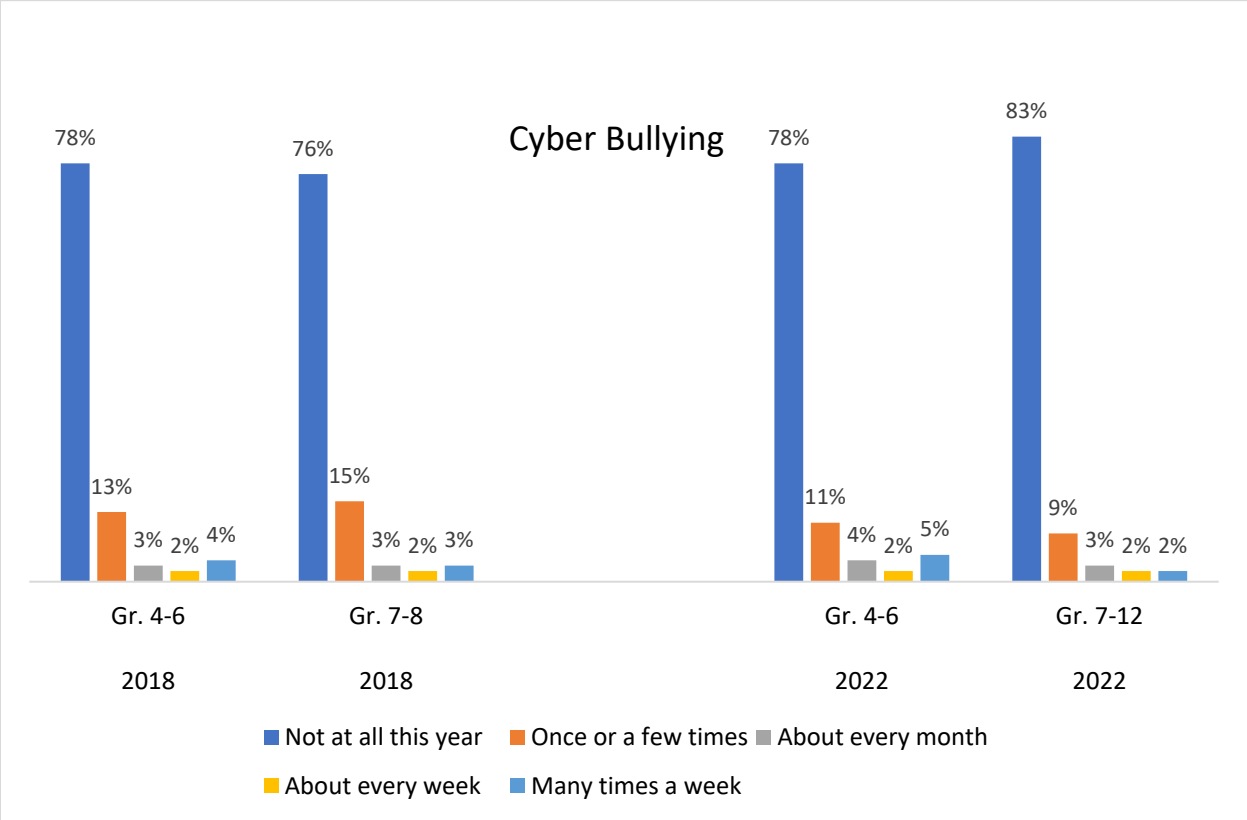
Elementary "online" = virtual school students
Secondary "blended" = half time in person and half time virtual
Secondary "online"= students taking all e-learning courses

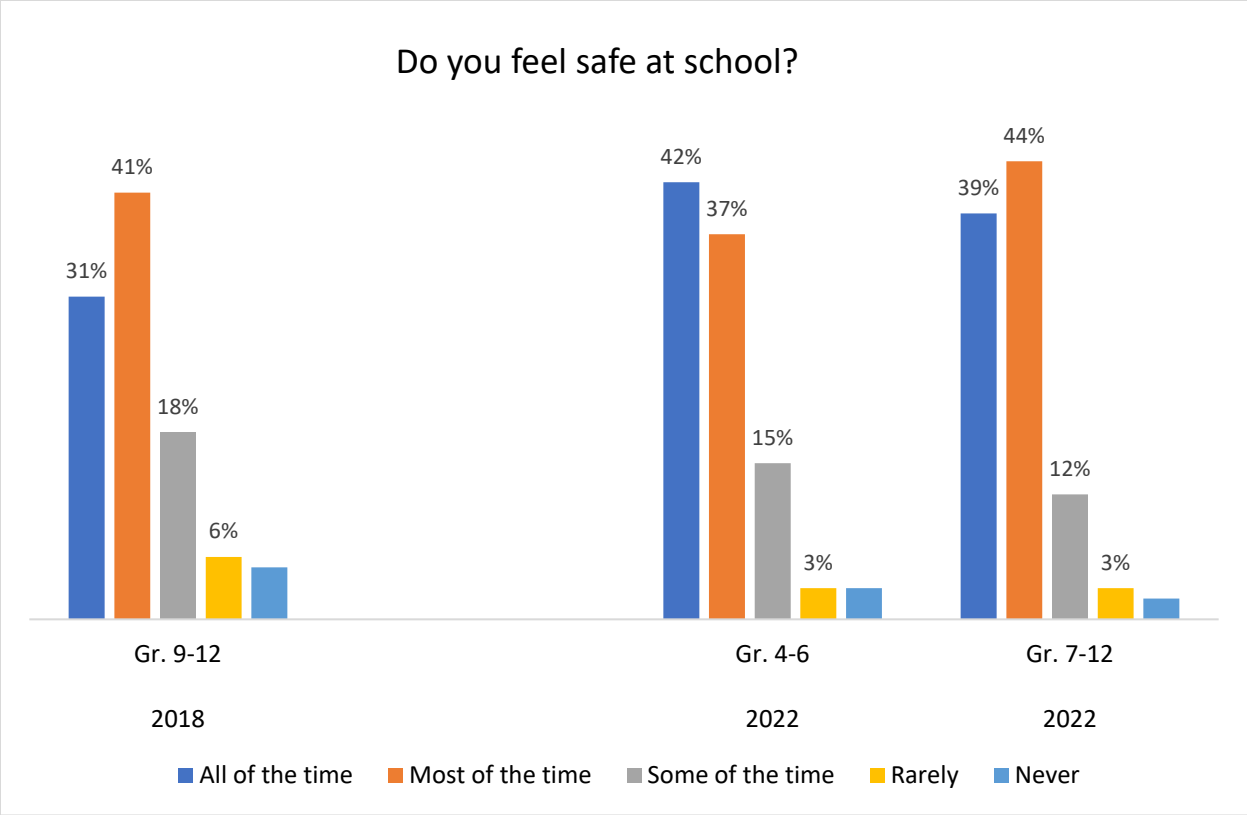
The MDI also included questions around **bullying behavior** and **safety.** Note, the comparator in 2022 is for grades seven to twelve versus 2018 which is grades seven and eight.

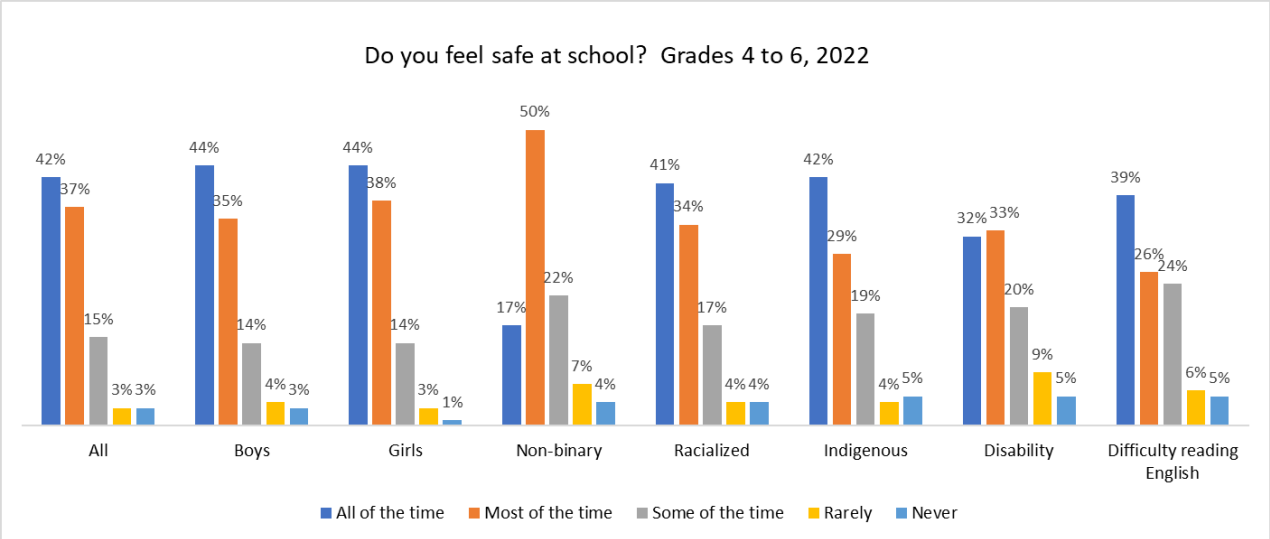


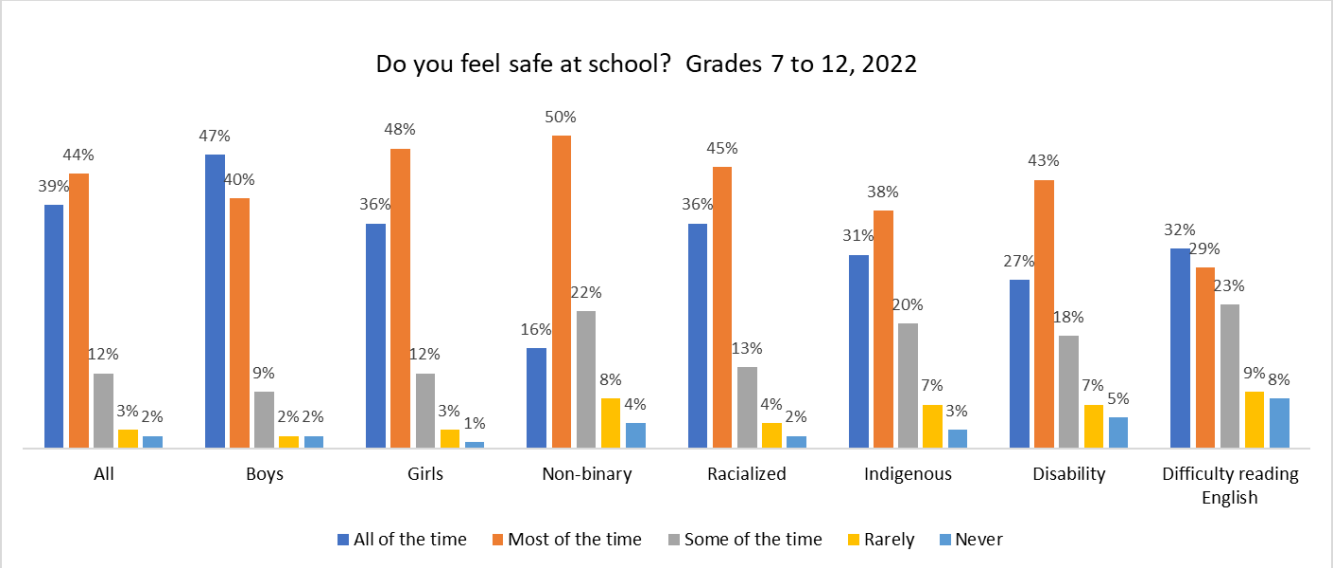



Social Bullying
44%
32%
9%
6%
9%
49%
30%
9%
6%
6%
57%
24%
7%
5%
7%
66%
20%
5%
4%
4%
Gr. 4-6
2018
Gr. 7-8
2018
Gr. 4-6
2022
Gr. 7-12
2022
Not at all this year
Once or a few times
About every month
About every week
Many times a week


Cyber Bullying
78%
13%
3%
2%
4%
76%
15%
3%
2%
3%
78%
11%
4%
2%
5%
83%
9%
3%
2%
2%
Gr. 4-6
2018
Gr. 7-8
2018
Gr. 4-6
2022
Gr. 7-12
2022
Not at all this year
Once or a few times
About every month
About every week
Many times a week


Do you feel safe at school?
31%
41%
18%
6%
42%
37%
15%
3%
39%
44%
12%
3%
Gr. 9-12
2018
Gr. 4-6
2022
Gr. 7-12
2022
All of the time
Most of the time
Some of the time
Rarely
Never


Do you feel safe at school? Grades 4 to 6, 2022
42% 37% 15% 3% 3%
44% 35% 14% 4% 3%
44% 38% 14% 3% 1%
17% 50% 22% 7% 4%
41% 34% 17% 4% 4%
42% 29% 19% 4% 5%
32% 33% 20% 9% 5%
39% 26% 24% 6% 5%
All
Boys
Girls
Non-binary
Racialized
Indigenous
Disability
Difficulty reading English
All of the time
Most of the time
Some of the time
Rarely
Never


Do you feel safe at school? Grades 7 to 12, 2022
39%
44%
12%
3%
2%
47%
40%
9%
2%
2%
36%
48%
12%
3%
1%
16%
50%
22%
8%
4%
36%
45%
13%
4%
2%
31%
38%
20%
7%
3%
27%
43%
18%
7%
5%
32%
29%
23%
9%
8%
All
Boys
Girls
Non-binary
Racialized
Indigenous
Disability
Difficulty reading English
All of the time
Most of the time
Some of the time
Rarely
Never

Appendix B – Safe Schools Action Plan 81 Action Steps Update

The *Safe Schools Action Plan 2021-2023* identifies 81 Action Steps across eleven recommendations.

Students

Recommendation #1: Increase Student ownership and seek out and listen to student perspectives.

Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

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

Schools

Recommendation #3: Develop multi-tiered supports and programming.

Recommendation #4: Support schools so they can establish their own bullying prevention and intervention plans.

Recommendation #5: Examine special education practices from a student-centred learning perspective.

Recommendation #6: Review policies and procedures from equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression perspectives.

Recommendation #7: Ensure policies and procedures are followed consistently.

HWDSB Organization – System Level

Recommendation #8: Set the foundation for a culture of learning.

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

Hamilton Community

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

Ministry of Education

Recommendation #11: Ask the Ministry of Education for support.

Students				
Recommendations	**Recommended Action Steps (summarized)**	**Complete**	**Ongoing**	**Update**
Recommendation #1 Increase student ownership and seek out and listen to student voices.	1. Involve students in the co-creation, implementation, and evaluation of all HWDSB bullying prevention and intervention activities and initiatives at the school-level and system level, including reviewing and updating related policies and procedures.	**X**	**X**	• Student Advisory Group • Youth Facilitator Role – facilitated Advisory meetings, intentional engagement sessions with student groups re: policy. • Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit • Next Step – formalizing school structures
	2. Build on HWDSBs current expertise with student voice initiatives by establishing regular and consistent mechanisms for capturing student voices on the subjects of bullying and school climate. Both school and system levels and use a range of accessible and interactive methods, with the School Climate Survey being only one example.	**X**	**X**	• Student Advisory Group • Youth Facilitator Role – facilitated Advisory meetings, intentional engagement sessions with student groups. • Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit (May, Nov, May Cycle) • CYCP data collection sessions/school support • School Improvement Planning Student Voice Tools – Guide to Focus Groups with Students, Guidelines for Safer and Inclusive Classroom Discussions • Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) • Focused data collection on initiatives (e.g., Reimagining Wellness, Roots of Empathy, Recess Guardians)

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
Recommendation #1 Increase student ownership and seek out and listen to student voices	3. Ensure student voices are sought out and incorporated into the school's response to incidents of bullying. This includes asking student victims to identify what solutions they want to see put into place.	**X**	**X**	• Student Safety Plan • Principal/Vice-Principal Responding Process • Emotion Coaching • Nurturing Safer Schools tools
	4. Include student voice and student-centred bullying metrics, such as bullying prevalence, descriptors of students who are being bullied, school belonging, and caring adult, in HWDSB's performance monitoring framework.	**X**	**X**	• Student Advisory Group • Youth Facilitator Role – facilitated Advisory meetings, intentional engagement sessions with student groups • Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit • CYCP roles supporting data collection and school planning • Next Step – Performance Monitoring Framework to be Finalized as part of the three-year Safe and Caring Schools Strategy (2023 – 2026)
	5. Share student voice data with full school community, including parents, guardians, caregivers and community partners. In keeping with the principles put forth in the Culturally Responsible and Relevant Pedagogy framework and demonstrate how student voices are used to inform school improvement processes and plans using clear, relatable examples. Co-develop these strategies with students and potentially with community partners.		**X**	• Middle Years Development Instrument • School Improvement Planning Student Voice Tools – Guide to Focus Groups with Students, Guidelines for Safer and Inclusive Classroom Discussions • School Improvement Planning Working Group – recommendations finalized
	6. Within the context of a whole-school approach, develop interactive resources that provide students with concrete examples and scripts for being an ally or bullying upstander. Develop these with students. For examples, see WITS Program's Bystander Quiz and PREVNet's What Kids Need to Know resources.		**X**	• Be More Than a Bystander – supports gender-based violence. Exploring links to ally and bystander work in instances of bullying. • Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week - Upstander lessons and activities • HWDSB Helps App. • Next Steps - Ally and Bystander work a focus for 2023/24

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
	7. Have students from Grades 4-12 participate as leaders on existing school improvement teams. With input from students, reflect upon the process, including criteria, for selecting student reps to ensure a range of identities are offered the opportunity to participate, especially those whose cultural, racial, faith, sexual, gender, ability or other identity is outside of the dominant socio-cultural norms. Clearly outline student roles and contributions as well as the mechanisms that will be put into place. Collect age-appropriate data from younger children, for example, by asking them how they feel school.	X	X	• School Improvement Planning Student Voice Tools – Guide to Focus Groups with Students, Guidelines for Safer and Inclusive Classroom Discussions • Health Action Teams – OPHEA Healthy Schools • CYCP data tools • Resources - On the Horizons, Learn, Disrupt, Rebuild, Reimagining Wellness • Next Steps – Consider other existing school-based structures and how students can support this work
	8. Ensure all student-led activities and processes are implemented with appropriate adult allyship. Provide training in the importance of adult support and what constitutes an effective adult ally to educators, other school staff and school volunteers such as volunteer coaches.		X	• Next Step - Ally and Bystander work a focus for 2023/24
	9. When engaging students, consider and include the perspectives and experiences of the student experiencing bullying, the student with bullying behaviours and the student who witnesses. Important given the HWDSB Safe School Survey findings indicate bullying tends to happen among groups of students who are involved in all three roles and who struggle with the same developmental, safety and relationship issues.	X	X	• Student Advisory Group • Youth Facilitator Role – facilitated Advisory meetings, provided student lens to planning engagement • Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit • Principal/Vice-Principal Responding Process • Nurturing Safer Schools • Reimagining Wellness

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
	10. Ensure action steps are aligned with and included in the Equity Action Plan as well as other appropriate student well-being initiatives, such as Mental Health Strategy and Indigenous Education and Indigenous Cultural Safety.		**X**	• All work to date reflects an ARAO approach and aligns with the Equity Action Plan and Human Rights • Next Step – Alignment and action based on the Indigenous Education Circle Action Plan. Integration into the next Equity Action Plan
	11. Students to play a central role in developing and implementing all of the review panel's recommended action steps.	**X**	**X**	• Student Advisory Group • Youth Facilitator Role – facilitated Advisory meetings, intentional student engagement sessions • Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit

Parents, Guardians and Caregivers				
Recommendations	**Recommended Action Steps (summarized)**	**Complete**	**Ongoing**	**Update**
Recommendation #2 Involve parents, guardians and caregivers in bullying prevention and response in meaningful ways.	1. Share available educational resources on bullying with all parents, guardians and caregivers, including information on the types of bullying (including cyberbullying); the difference between bullying, aggression and teasing; impact of bullying; specific examples of how to respond to bullying; and what they can do if their child bullies. Suggested resources: PREVNet, WITS, and Fourth R. websites.	**X**	**X**	• Postcards and magnets for families • Nurturing Safer Schools – parent resource • Family Resources - Cyberbullying, Pink Shirt Day, Tipsheets • Bullying – What Parents Need to Know Handbook – release Fall, 2023 • Website Updates – Fall, 2023
	2. Share new and emerging educational resources on cyberbullying with parents, guardians and caregivers as they become available over the coming months.	**X**	**X**	• Bullying Prevention and Intervention Week - Cyberbullying Caregiver Info Sheet
	3. Involve parents, guardians and caregivers in the co-creation, implementation and evaluation of bullying prevention and intervention activities and initiatives as outlined under Recommendation #3 and #4.	**X**	**X**	• Parent Advisory Group • Working Groups
	4. Establish ongoing, representative and accessible mechanisms for seeking parent input and feedback on bullying prevention and intervention initiatives and activities at both the school and system levels. Should include seeking feedback on bullying reporting and response processes from parents, guardians and caregivers, including those whose children have been involved in bullying in any role.	**X**	**X**	• Parent Advisory Group • Student Safety Plan • Parent Voice Survey • Next Step – enhance engagement via partners and school-based feedback

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
	5. Expand the ways parents, guardians and caregivers can get involved within HWDSB (such as school councils, PIC and Indigenous Education Councils) to participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of school climate initiatives and strengthen school-parent communication.		**X**	• Hamilton Community Foundation – Systems Advisor Secondment – • EngageHWDSB Tool • Next Step – continue to work with community on ways to work alongside families

HWDSB Schools				
Recommendations	**Recommended Action Steps (summarized)**	**Complete**	**Ongoing**	**Update**
Recommendation #3 Develop multi-tiered supports and programming	1. Establish a bullying prevention and intervention lead position at the board. Will lead system-level content and process efforts to create a culture of caring. Accountability shared with Executive Council.	**X**		• Safe and Caring Schools Superintendent Role • Safe and Caring Schools Principal Role
	2. Create Board-wide framework that establishes overarching expectations and procedures for a multi-tiered system of supports and programming including: a) Supports at three levels, leveraging universal, selective and indicated programs and activities *(examples provided within report pages 69-70)*.	**X**	**X**	• Tiered approach for supporting all, some, few students • Universal (e.g., On the Horizons; Learn, Disrupt, Rebuild (LDR); Reimagining Wellness (RW)) • Selective (e.g., Recess Guardians, Roots of Empathy, OPHEA Healthy Schools, Nurturing Safer Schools, LDR specific lessons, RW specific lessons, PCWB CYCP support team) • Indicated (e.g., Social Work, Behaviour and Analytic Services, Safe and Caring Schools CYCPs, Alternative Suspension Program, Gateway, John Howard) • Response and reporting tools developed and/or reviewed through student facilitator and advisory • Student Voice Summit – next steps for 2023 include creation of a "take home" classroom/school version of the conference

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
	b) Broad, representative student involvement to guide the selection of supports and co-create activities, initiatives and solutions at both the school level and individual incident level.	X	X	• Student Advisory Group • Youth Facilitator Role – facilitated Advisory meetings, intentional student engagement sessions • Let's Talk About Bullying Student Voice Conference • Student Safety Plan
	c) Engagement of key stakeholder groups in the development and implementation process. Identify and recognize the bullying prevention and intervention expertise within the Hamilton community.	X	X	• Community Advisory Group
	d) Application of an intersectional lens to bullying prevention and intervention. Consider a student's multiple identity layers and the role of social and structural inequities. Recognize and work to remedy interlocking systems of oppression. Seek opportunities to align with other well-being initiatives, including Equity Action Plan, Indigenous Education and Indigenous Cultural Safety, Mental health, special education and other safe schools activities.	X	X	• Work completed to date reflects Human Rights Policy, Anti-Black Racism Policy, Equity Action Plan, Mental Health • Principal/Vice-Principal learning and associated resources • Principal/Vice-Principal Responding Process

	e) Continue with existing practices that were identified as important and successful during the community consultations - including restorative approaches, TipOff, HWDSB Helps and We Help campaign.	**X**		• Principal/Vice-Principal Responding Process • HWDSB Helps • We Help

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
	3. Support students involved in bullying. Ensure selective and indicated supports, including mental health supports and other professional assistance, are made available to students who have been bullied or who have witnessed bullying. Ensure students who have engaged in bullying also receive appropriate supports. For example, continue to support the implementation and evaluation of the Nurturing Safer Schools: A Social Work Intervention pilot project in Grades 6 to 8. Expand the program's availability beyond the pilot sites if warranted by evaluation findings.	X	X	• Principal/Vice-Principal Responding Process • Student Safety Plan • We Help • Emotion Coaching • Nurturing Safer Schools • Social Work, Behaviour and Analytic Services, Safe and Caring Schools CYCPs, Alternative Suspension Program, Gateway, John Howard
	4. Develop the tools and resources to support schools in developing their own bullying prevention and intervention plans using the PREVNet whole-school approach and other whole-school resources. (See Recommendation #4).	X	X	• September 2023 – schools implement Board Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan • September 2024 – schools respond to their student data within the plan
	5. Work with the Ministry of Education to explore the effectiveness of additional digital monitoring tools specific to cyberbullying and cyber safety. Incorporate effective tools into HWDSB's multi-tiered system of supports and programming for bullying prevention and intervention.			• Next Step – explore in 2023/24
	6. Use data collection tools and procedures, including standardized tools, for more localized periodic school-based climate assessment between school climate survey cycles.	X	X	• CYCP data collection support • Changes to recording bullying in the student information system log entries • School Improvement Planning Student Voice Tools – Guide to Focus Groups With Students, Guidelines for Safer and Inclusive Classroom Discussions

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
				• Next Step – develop the Let's Talk About Bullying – School Summit Toolkit to support gathering voice at the school-level
	7. Collect school-level disaggregated data by identity on all reported incidents of bullying, both formal and informal, every six months. This data should be supplied at regular intervals to the dedicated lead position and annually to the board of trustees. Encourage full participation in School Climate Surveys and share results with students, parents, guardians, caregivers and the public.		X	• Updated data entry in log entries • Next Steps – reporting disaggregated data based on work with community
	8. Create clear lines of accountability and oversight for school plans, including expectations for monitoring and evaluation.	X	X	• School improvement planning process including Superintendent visits
	9. Establish a board-wide mechanism to positively acknowledge and share models of good practice at the school level. For example, create a peer review team that reviews and provides guidance and feedback on school bullying prevention and intervention plans and shares what has worked well at other schools in the spirit of continuous quality improvement. This team's work should be guided by the board's dedicated lead position.		X	• Reimagining Wellness review team engaging staff and students in feedback re: activities and impact • Next Step – explore for 2023-24

Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Update
Recommendation #4 Support schools so they can establish their own bullying prevention and intervention plans.	1. Ensure that school improvement plans prioritize positive culture and well-being and contain a feasible number of goals with clear measurable targets, for example a maximum of two goals with one already included in the Board Annual Plan.		**X**	• Supports provided by Leadership Recovery principal, Safe Schools CYCPs and consultants • Next Steps – focus for 2023-24
	2. Immediately explore alternative sources of additional adult supervision outside of the classroom during non-instructional time. Options include parent volunteers; lunch buddy mentoring approaches (see Gregus et al., 2015 as one example); and staff from local recreation programs and youth- serving agencies, starting with the agencies already providing before and after school programming within schools. These alternative adult supervisors could offer unstructured opportunities to connect during recess as well as an additional caring adult in the hallways during breaks. Ensure these supervisors are involved in the co-creation of the role and expectations and are adequately trained in bullying prevention and intervention, as well as related school protocols and codes of conduct.	**X**	**X**	• All staff trained in bullying prevention and responding to start school year (compliance training) • Recess Guardians to support structured activities during recess/nutrition times • Recess Guardians to support peer mentorship in leading activities, as well as low level conflict and conflict resolution • Next Steps – communicate in September 2023 the expectations of supervision in elementary and secondary

	3. Each school, including fully remote learning programs, should establish its own bullying prevention and intervention plan and be provided with the necessary resources and expertise to develop and implement a whole-school approach. Direct more resources to schools with the greatest needs based primarily on a review of School Climate Survey results, particularly bullying prevalence, and principal reports. Key components of a whole-school approach include: a) Capacity and resources at the school level. These should be sufficient to coordinate the safe school team as well as build new and strengthen existing school-level partnerships with local community groups, programs and service providers. (Phase 1 – Structures)		**X** **X**	• Every school will have a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (implementation of Reimagining Wellness lessons) and supported with learning throughout the 2023-24 school year to engage students, staff, parents and community Learning to include: • Principal/Vice-Principal • Staff in schools • Partners who work in schools (e.g., Early Learning and child care, bus drivers) • Classroom lessons to support • School council and Home and School presentations and voice opportunities

	b) Ongoing, interactive education for all students and staff offered at least annually. Cover types of bullying; the difference between bullying, aggression and teasing; the impact of bullying; and how to respond to bullying, including specific examples. Material should acknowledge that bullying occurs between students, between staff and students, and between staff members. Incorporate role-playing scenarios and provide scripts for intervening in a positive way, for example, as a bullying upstander. Educational resources should be shared broadly with all school staff, including non-teaching staff, administrators, custodial staff, bus drivers and crossing guards, as well as parents, guardians and caregivers.	**X**	**X**	• Compliance learning • PA Day and staff meeting Learning • Reimagining Wellness lessons • Bullying Prevention and Intervention Week • Let's Talk About Bullying Student Summit
	c) Essential structures and processes. These should support building and strengthening school-level partnerships with those who share a common interest in addressing bullying. Should use outside expertise and resources; augment existing safe school teams with student, parent, educator and community representation; identify a leader or leaders within the school administration; and integrate bullying prevention into classroom learning curriculum.		**X**	• Guidelines for Presenters/Guest Speakers (GPS) • Reimagining Wellness lessons

	d) Assessment. Suggestions include conducting an environmental scan of bullying frequency, including when and where bullying happens in a school; collecting and using school-level, disaggregated data to identify at-risk situations and students in ways that assure the confidentiality of those involved; and completing a bullying prevention needs assessment.		**X**	• Formalized as part of bullying prevention and intervention planning and training process, in coordination with CYCPs and PrevNet survey and resources • School improvement planning student voice tools – Guide to Focus Groups with Students, Guidelines for Safer and Inclusive Classroom Discussions
	e) School-level prevention and intervention. Each school plan should include a range of developmentally attuned and effective bullying prevention and intervention activities and approaches. These should be tailored to the school's needs by matching the level of risk to the level of intervention. They should also draw from the multi-tiered system of programming and supports discussed in Recommendation #3.		**X**	• Bullying Prevention and Intervention Framework 2023
	f) Communication and evaluation of the school plan. Share the school's plan with all school stakeholders, including students, parents, guardians, caregivers, staff, unions and community partners. Evaluate how school initiatives are regarded by students, staff, parents, guardians and caregivers at least annually and adjust accordingly. Evaluations should incorporate standardized school level data collection and analysis			Next Step – 2023-24

	on key bullying indicators, such as bullying prevalence, school belonging and caring adults.			
	4. Ensure student voices are sought out and incorporated into the school's response to incidents of bullying. This includes asking student victims to identify the solutions they want to see implemented. (duplicate)	**X**	**X**	• Student Safety Plan
	5. Ensure that students who are vulnerable or potentially vulnerable, whether they have been bullied, are supported in a variety of ways, e.g., through a formal initiative that involves a designated staff member.	**X**	**X**	• Student Safety Plan
	6. Ensure that assistance is available to parents, guardians and caregivers, including workshops, an inventory of available resources and information on all aspects of bullying. This assistance should be offered to parents, guardians and caregivers whose children have been bullied, witnessed bullying and engaged in bullying, as well as to those who are concerned about bullying.		**X**	• Parent resources and associated links organized on school and HWDSB website • September 2023: Parent resource booklet; postcard; magnet
	7. Establish consistent funding for ongoing board-wide professional learning opportunities for educators on bullying prevention and intervention. Examples include education and coaching to address complex peer interactions and challenging students; concrete, specific and effective strategies for early detection and intervention; forms of power abuse, whether by students, educators or parents, guardians and caregivers, and the forms of protection needed within classrooms and schools; and	**X**	**X**	• Compliance training every fall to start year • Staff meeting and PA day learning to include for 2023-24

	learning about educator roles and responsibilities for reporting bullying. Ensure the professional learning plan establishes and evaluates measurable outcomes. Use what is learned from past professional learning opportunities to select, develop and implement subsequent opportunities.			
	8. Collect school-level disaggregated data by identity on all reported incidents of bullying, both formal and informal, and report every six months to the dedicated lead position.		**X**	• Current collaboration with community on use of student census data
	9. Encourage full participation in school climate surveys and share results with students, parents, guardians, caregivers and community partners.	**X**	**X**	• CYCP school climate survey • Environmental scan survey part of Reimagining Wellness
	10. Use available PREVNet resources to train all staff who have contact with students to respond appropriately when they observe bullying. Include non-teaching staff, administrators, janitors, bus drivers and crossing guards. Consider creating an online code of conduct for all staff that is specific to bullying prevention and intervention.	**X**	**X**	• Prevnet best practice(s) have been included in training and learning resources for students, parents/guardians/caregiver, staff and principals/vice-principals to support healthy relationships
	11. Ensure school-level plans are developed using an intersectional approach to bullying prevention and intervention so they reflect the co-occurrence of bullying and discrimination in its many forms. Plans should align closely with other student well-being activities at the school-level, including those connected to the Equity Action Plan, Indigenous Education Circle Strategic Action Plan (IECSAP) mental health, special education and other safe schools initiatives.		**X**	• School improvement planning process supported by principal of Leadership Recovery has embedded intersectional approach into the school improvement planning process and associated cycles
Recommendation #5 Examine special education practices from a student-	1. Review current research on the impact of placement in self-contained classes on student learning, belonging and engagement.	**X**	**X**	• Thorough literature review on the impact of placement in self-contained classes on student learning, belonging and engagement completed by external researchers.

				• Next Step: An overview of the findings will be shared with the Special Education Advisory Committee.

centred learning perspective.	2. Identify evidence-informed best practices to maximize student learning, belonging and engagement.		**X**	• *Positive Behaviour Supports* indicates that it supports academic and social inclusion of all learners. Decision pending on trial implementation, • <u>Learning:</u> Differentiated Instruction, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Culturally Relevant & Responsive Pedagogy. *Focus*: creation of a UDL Hub Course and inservice to some Principals and Vice-Principals has occurred. • <u>Belonging:</u> Ableism is a systemic barrier for students with disabilities Next Step - Work on identifying examples of ableism will begin in 2023/24 • <u>Engagement</u>: Next Step – Gathering information on participation will be undertaken in 2023/24
	3. Review student achievement data in the context of HWDSB's priority goals, such as early reading and graduation.			• A thorough review of achievement data in the context of HWDSB's priority goals, such as early reading and graduation for students with disabilities or requiring special education supports or services has not yet been completed.
	4. Continue to review and refine the special education plan, including programs and services, in keeping with research on equity and inclusion for students with disabilities.		**X**	• The Special Education Plan is updated annually. Programs, services and resources that align with research on equity and inclusion for students with disabilities continue to be introduced. An example would be *Case Management* which is now provided in three high schools.

	5. Identify ways to enhance supportive inclusion to mitigate the behaviour of some students with special education needs who have difficulty with self-regulation. Examples include developmental strategies, staffing levels and activities that foster students' empathy and support of peers.	**X**	**X**	• Behaviour Analytic Services (BAS), was introduced in the Fall of 2021 to support students that have not yet acquired pro-social skills. Programs and services provided by Behaviour Analytic Services for students are ▪ Compassionate ▪ Systematic ▪ Evidenced-based ▪ Data Informed • Staff in Behaviour Analytic Services support *Social Emotional Learning* with a small number of students. • Board Certified Behaviour Analysts and Child & Youth Care Practitioners (CYCP). • AIM CYCP Program. There are now 33 AIM programs located in in various elementary schools. • Interdisciplinary Studies Course on Human Rights, Disability and Allyship has been developed. The course is currently being offered in four secondary schools.
Recommendation #6 Review policies and procedures from equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression perspectives	1. Establish a review process with representation from administration, educators and other school staff, principals, students, student councils, parents, guardians, caregivers, unions, Indigenous Education Councils, and community advocacy and service provider partners.	X		• Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy Developed

	1. Address the areas of concern identified during the review panel consultations. Specific suggestions include: • Using a consistent and comprehensive definition of bullying and the ways in which it can take place, including appropriate and inappropriate use of technology and social media. • Ensure racist bullying, particularly micro aggressions, is explicitly defined.	**X**	**X**	• Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy – definitions • Consistent response when working with allegations of bullying

	b) Ensuring those connected with schools, including students, educators, other school staff and volunteers clearly understand their obligations to not participate in bullying and the expectations if they witness bullying or related conduct, including the misuse of social media to further demean the person bullied.	**X**	**X**	• Annual learning for all staff • Cyberbullying focused learning • Next Steps – learning for partners who work in schools and updates to the Volunteer Procedure
	c) Ensuring students can report incidents of bullying in a safe, welcoming and accessible way that is both efficient and minimizes the possibility of reprisals. Reporting procedures must apply to victims of bullying and those who witness bullying. They must encourage parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, coaches and other staff to report incidents of bullying. Examples include anonymous tip phone numbers, anonymous letter templates, and an independent student ombudsperson who listens to complaints and provides protection for and advice to students affected by misconduct and harassment.	**X**	**X**	• HWDSB Helps – refresh based on student input • Reimagining Wellness – first five days of school – based on student input
	d) Creating and documenting a student safety plan for the student experiencing bullying victimization when high-risk bullying involvement is reported. An example is PREVNet's Bullying Identification and Intervention Tool.	**X**	**X**	• Student Safety Plan
	e) Clearly articulating and widely sharing the role played by each administrator and school staff member in bullying		**X**	• Required learning in September 2022 • Bullying Prevention and Intervention Procedure – release September 2023

	prevention and intervention. Include practical examples or case studies to illustrate how to respond in different situations and help distinguish bullying from other behaviours. PREVNet's tip sheet for differentiating between bullying, aggression and teasing is an example.			
	f) Creating clear communication guidelines and expectations for reporting and response that ensure parents, guardians and caregivers (especially those connected to the victims) are kept informed at every step of the bullying reporting and response process. This includes notifying them at the time of a reported bullying incident (or even earlier when concerning behaviours are identified), seeking their input with respect to an appropriate response, and communicating the outcome in a way that maintains privacy.	**X**	**X**	• Principal/Vice-Principal Responding Process • Bullying – What Parents Need to Know Handbook – release September 2023 • HWDSB and School websites
	g) Documenting bullying incidents, for example, in an education file, so they are on record for the student victim as well as the student or school adult who bullied.	**X**	**X**	• Principal/vice principal Responding Process – Safe School Documentation
	h) Ensuring existing policies and guidelines do not punish student upstanders for intervening and trying to help.	**X**		• Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy
	i) Providing schools with sufficient autonomy and flexibility to respond to the needs of their students and school community within the context of a whole-	**X**	**X**	• Bullying Prevention and Intervention Framework

	school approach (see Recommendation #4).			
	j) Ensuring each school has a full checklist of existing policies, guidelines, statutory duties and responsibilities and ensuring, in a systemic way, that occasional and permanent staff are trained on them all.		**X**	• Next Step – explore for 2023-24
	k) Examining policies, guidelines and current practices related to progressive discipline through an equity lens, as well as according to inclusive education and human rights principles (Ontario Ministry of Education & Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2013). This examination should also take into consideration the concerns regarding discipline that were shared during this review and the need to provide clarity and consistency regarding how, when and for whom discipline is imposed. Consequences need to be educational or developmental to ensure that students are learning and developing optimally. Furthermore, when a student is suspended as a result of a bullying incident, there should be an articulated and shared re-integration strategy to promote healing and the student's positive development. HWDSB should monitor disciplinary outcomes, check in with involved students and their parents, guardians and caregivers, and seek feedback to improve		**X**	• Human Rights Policy – including learning • Anti-Black Racism Policy – including learning • Disaggregating suspension and expulsion data • Student Safety Plan • Alternative Suspension Program

	protocol and process as needed.			
	3. Ensure there is a plan to address, monitor and report on gaps in staff diversity and inequities in professional outcomes at all board levels. Examples of inequities in professional outcomes include higher turnover rates and fewer opportunities for promotion experienced by diverse staff.	**X**	**X**	• Equity Action Plan • Employment Equity Action Plan
	4. Reaffirm the role of HWDSB's Equity Policy as a permanent guide to relations between HWDSB and the police.	**X**	**X**	• Currently being revised using anti-racist, anti-oppressive, anti-colonial lenses
	5. Create a formalized process for periodic review of policies and procedures with feedback from educators, other school staff, principals, students, student councils, parents, guardians, caregivers, Indigenous Education Councils, unions and community partners. This review should take place every two years as per Ministry requirements and more frequently as improvement opportunities arise.	**X**		• Policy review process
	6. Align and integrate the above action steps with HWDSB's Equity Action Plan where appropriate.	**X**	**X**	• Pending review of the Equity Action Plan. The approach and materials are already aligned
Recommendation #7 Ensure policies and procedures are followed consistently	1. The new bullying prevention and intervention lead at the Board should establish a review process to address inconsistent and ineffective application of safe schools policies and procedures and related guidelines or codes of conduct. The lead should establish clear timelines and accountabilities for any review committee.			• Next Step – development in 2023-24
	2. The review process must proactively address the real and perceived unequal application of bullying policies and guidelines based on a student's identity.			• Next Step – development in 2023-24
	3. The review process must address the need for accountability and transparency when an employee is not following proper			• Next Step – development in 2023-24 • Whistleblower Policy • Ombudsperson

	protocol, including identifying and addressing the abusive behavior of school employeessoward students, other employees, and parents, guardians and caregivers.			
	4. The review process should examine ways to enhance understanding and support more consistent application of mitigating factors, as defined by the Ministry of Education policy (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018b) on suspension and expulsion, when principals are making progressive discipline decisions about incidents of bullying.	**X**	**X**	• Principal and vice principal learning on mitigating factors • Next Step – development in 2023-24
	5. Principals, vice principals and school staff should work together to develop a clear understanding of what information will and will not be shared, based on privacy obligations, and incorporate this understanding in updated policies and procedures. Policies and procedures should ensure that teachers, parents, guardians, caregivers and, where appropriate, other staff who regularly interact with students are not unnecessarily left "in the dark" about a student's involvement in a bullying incident, whether alleged or proven, and the outcome of the response. Such an understanding is consistent with the need to protect a student's privacy and prevent unnecessary disclosure.	**X**	**X**	• Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy • Principal/Vice Principal Responding Process • Principal and vice principal learning re: log entries and proper documentation of all incidents
	6. To prevent situations that cause inequities for students, encourage senior leadership, with input from unions, students and educators, to develop consistent messages about staff roles and responsibilities with respect to bullying prevention and intervention, including active supervision standards such as scope and quality of supervision. Consider union representatives as allies in the process and seek	**X**	**X**	• Annual learning for all employees • Fall 2023: Supervision Memo and awareness re: supervision standards

	their assistance in providing consistent messages and sharing resources with their members.			
	7. Determine, with the help of educators, principals and vice principals, what is required to increase uptake and maximize potential of available electronic tools so that critical student background information related to bullying behaviours and incidents is captured and can inform future decisions as the student moves through the system, for example, as they change schools and transition between elementary and secondary. These tools can be used for reporting bullying incidents (e.g., the digital safe schools infraction reporting tool), and capturing student log entries esuch as the Student Information System). This may require developing documentation standards and protocols in partnership with educators and administrators.	**X**	**X**	• Principal/Vice-Principal Responding Process – including documentation • SIS/PowerSchool tools and resources used in ways that support students
	8. Explore the feasibility of and costs associated with developing an electronic decision tree resource for educators and principals and vice principals based on PREVNet resources. This resource will guide the user through standardized bullying assessment, intervention and response protocols, including assessment questions and scripts, suggested response options to match the level of risk; and suggested next steps, including reporting and follow up requirements. Involve educators and school administrators in identifying user needs and system requirements. Consider developing a business case and seeking Ministry of Education funding for its development and implementation across school		**X**	• In development- to pilot/assess effectiveness in target schools for 2023-24 school year

	boards, with HWDSB serving as a pilot site.			
	9. Consider creating an independent student ombudsperson position for hearing incidents of bullying where the student, parents, guardians and caregivers do not feel safe following the line of authority from teacher to principal, superintendent and trustee. The ombudsperson would report to senior leadership and could be affiliated with HWDSB's Human Rights and Equity office.			• Consideration for 2023-24
	10. Create a formal process for periodic review at multiple levels with a public accountability component. This review should include an examination of the overall procedures being implemented to ensure they effectively fulfill their intended purpose without creating bureaucratic gridlock.			Next Step – For development in 2023-24

HWDSB Organization: System-level				
Recommendations	**Recommended Action Steps (summarized)**	**Complete**	**Ongoing**	**Update**
Recommendation #8 Set the foundation for a culture of caring	1. Develop, together with students, a commitment statement specific to bullying prevention and intervention that acknowledges the right of every child to have an education that is free from violence and discrimination. The commitment statement should state that identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers at all levels are key activities to support positive school climates and decrease bullying. The statement should include clear and measurable goals.	**X**	**X**	• To complete following Multi-Year Strategic Plan process
	2. Establish, with input from students, parents, guardians, caregivers and staff, a set of core organizational values and operational principles that will ensure a culture of caring and respect.	**X**	**X**	• To complete following Multi-Year Strategic Plan process

	• Establish oversight and accountability structures at the school, system/HWDSB, governance and community levels. Build on existing, aligned structures where appropriate and indicate where new structures are needed. Structures should be: • **School level**: for example, revitalized school climate teams with refreshed expectations. • **HWDSB system-level**: for example, a system-level steering committee charged with overseeing the implementation of review panel recommendations, with broad membership that includes students, parents, educators, unions and community partner representatives, plus at least one community advocacy group specifically focused on bullying. Consider a student and/or advocacy group co-chair. • **Governance level**: for example, a sub-committee aligned with current strategic directions. • **Community level**: for example, a community-led group (see Recommendation #10-3).	**X**	**X**	• Student Advisory Group • Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Advisory Group • Community Advisory Group • Organizational Advisory Table (internal including union partners) • Various working groups
	4. Incorporate consistent, standardized bullying outcome measures in the HWDSB performance monitoring framework. Examples of measures are bullying prevalence, demographic characteristics of students who are bullied, school belonging, caring adults and student voice.		**X**	• Next Step – Framework to be finalized as part of the three-year Safe Schools Strategy (2023 – 2026)
	5. Establish a transparent and timely monitoring system for reporting to the Board of Trustees and the broader community on HWDSB's bullying prevention and intervention efforts. This should be created in partnership with the review panel		**X**	• Regular meetings with the panel have continued throughout 2022-23 school year.

	external advisors. Include targets and measures at the school and system level that are tracked between School Climate Survey cycles to ensure HWDSB knows where it is making progress and where it needs to improve. Localized school-based climate assessments will help schools tailor their bullying prevention and intervention activities and approaches			
Recommendation #9 Strengthen the leadership skills needed for culture change	1. Identify and build upon current leadership best practices to create a culture of caring and positive school climate within HWDSB. Establish systems and processes to continuously spread these practices throughout the whole organization, for example, professional learning communities.		**X**	• Principal/vice principal learning structures
	2. Identify the leadership competencies that will enable a whole-child, student-centred, nurturing environment and incorporate them in current and future leadership and performance development opportunities throughout the organization. Examples include relational leadership, facilitation, coaching, integrated thinking and a continuous quality improvement mindset.		**X**	• Leadership Strategy under development • Principal and Vice-Principal Readiness Competencies redefined
	3. Leverage opportunities to reinforce the organizational values and culture shift described under Recommendation #8.		**X**	• Multi-Year Strategic Plan • Director's messaging
	4. Ensure there is a plan to address, monitor and report on the gap in staff diversity and inequity of professional outcomes at the senior leadership level, for example turnover rates and opportunity for promotion.	**X**	**X**	• Employment Equity Action Plan
	5. Establish the desired leadership performance outcomes for the Board's leadership strategy. Then, using a model of continuous improvement, deliver training and support, monitor practice and measure to see if		**X**	• Leadership Strategy under development

	these outcomes have been achieved.			
	6. Consider using an external facilitator for the Board's transformation process in order to add credibility and authenticity to the process in the eyes of the community	**X**	**X**	• Development of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan
	7. Recognize and celebrate great relational leadership work.		**X**	• Next Steps 2023-24 include developing an approach to internally share promising practices

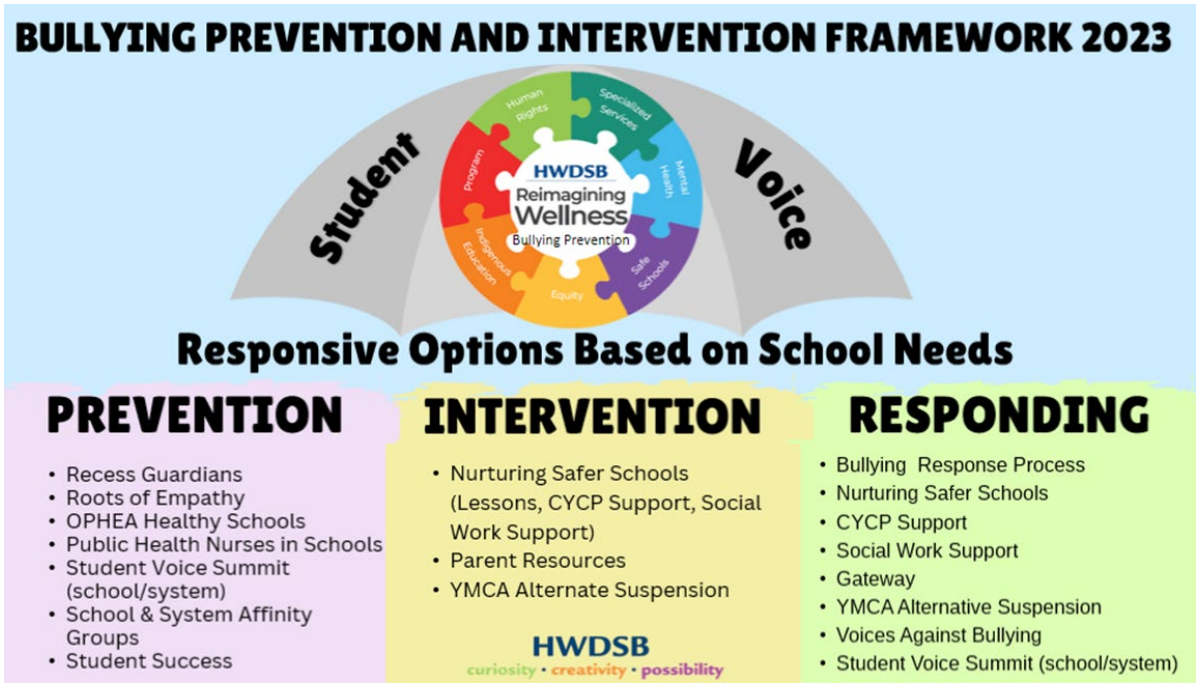
Recommendations	Recommended Action Steps (summarized)	Complete	Ongoing	Updates
Recommendation #10 Work with a wide range of community partners	1. Co-create, implement and evaluate the bullying prevention and intervention activities and initiatives in Recommendations 3# and #4 in collaboration with a wide range of new and existing community partners. This action will reinforce HWDSB's strategic direction on Partnerships and enhance the range of bullying prevention and intervention resources and expertise available to students.	**X**	**X**	• Student Advisory Group • Parent/Guardian/ Caregiver Advisory Group • Community Advisory Group • Organizational Advisory Table (internal including union partners)
	2. Utilize existing HWDSB community involvement structures such as parent councils, PIC, SEAC, Indigenous Education Circle and HWDSB Community Advisory committees to support a strengthened focus on school climate.		**X**	• Next Steps 2023-24 school improvement planning process includes strong school climate component and how community involvement can support/strengthen it
	3. Establish a community-led, independent table with broad representation, including from HWDSB, to oversee implementation of review panel recommendations at the highest level. This entity should also identify and address barriers to school-community working relationships that are specific to	**X**	**X**	• McMaster collaboration – literature review and individual interviews – Final Report due June 2023

	bullying prevention and intervention and overall student well-being. Ensure the entity's terms of reference give it moral authority for and public recognition of its oversight role without impinging on the board's authority. Consider building upon existing community structures that bring together a range of partners to address the health and well-being of children and youth in Hamilton.			
	4. Identify and learn from schools that have established strong working relationships between community and school for the purposes of bullying prevention and intervention and positive school climate work. Share lessons learned across HWDSB.		**X**	• Next Steps 2023-24 include developing an approach to internally share promising practices
	5. Identify and support opportunities to work with community partners to address the needs and gaps identified in the review panel process and implement the review panel's recommendations. Examples include: a) Developing or enhancing an alternative suspension program with local youth-serving organizations. b) Re-examining the use of restorative practices with local youth justice organizations. c) Participating in the co-creation of educational curriculum, for example through the City of Hamilton's Hate Prevention and Mitigation Initiative. d) Partnering with local recreation and children/youth-serving organizations to provide additional adult supervision during non-instructional time such as recess, lunch breaks and in hallways. Start with the organizations and programs already providing school- based programming before and after school.	**X**	**X**	• Community Advisory Table • Alternative Suspension Program • Voice Against Bullying Advocacy Program • OPHEA Healthy Schools Certification • Recess Guardians • Roots of Empathy • Hamilton Community Safety & Well-Being Plan – Leadership Table

	e) Continuing to participate in and contribute to Hamilton's Early Years Community Plan at both the strategic and operational levels.			
	6. Share strategies and experiences related to bullying prevention and intervention with the four local school boards.		**X**	• Next Step – 2023-24
	7. Assess, monitor and evaluate investments in bullying intervention and prevention programs in partnership with academics to improve programs and continuously align them with the recommendations in this report.		**X**	• Develop internal evidence-informed material to support scalability • Ongoing discussions with researchers around data gather and measurement

Ministry of Education				
Recommendations	**Recommended Action Steps (summarized)**	**Completed**	**Ongoing**	**Update**
Recommendation #11 Ask the Ministry of Education for support	1. Ask the Ministry for centralized, sustained funding for bullying prevention and intervention and positive school climate work, including a dedicated safe schools lead for each school board and resources to implement evidence-informed bullying prevention and intervention programs in schools.			• Work on Recommendation #11 has been undertaken by the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel
	2. Ask the Ministry to make centralized bullying prevention and intervention expertise and supports available to school boards over the long term. This could include guidance documents, standardized tools for school climate and supports for data analysis and interpretation.			• Ministry resources provided in 2021 including sample school climate surveys
	3. Ask the Ministry to continue to update learning curriculum with additional emphasis on social-emotional learning, including empathy and perspective taking, that is implemented through an anti-racist, culturally responsive and relevant lens. This could include citizenship education and 21st century skills.			• Curriculum updates are ongoing and with a focus on social-emotional learning and transferable skills
	4. Ask the Ministry for funding for ongoing professional learning targeted at bullying prevention and intervention and safe schools.			• Mental Health and Well-Being Grant
	5. Ask the Ministry to review current supervision policy to address the finding that areas and times of low or no supervision, such as breaks and outdoor recess, present the greatest risk for students.			• Concern shared in 2022

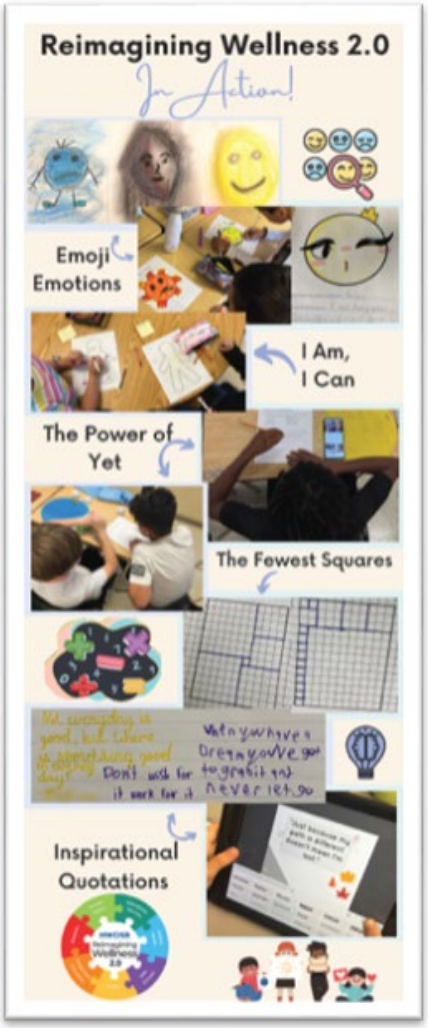
Appendix C - Bullying Prevention and Intervention Framework



Appendix D: Safe Schools Action Plan Commitments to Students, Parents/Guardians/Caregivers and Staff

1. Being transparent with students, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff, and community about the Safe Schools Action Plan – what we are doing to be shared regularly – website, reporting to Trustee (4 times a year).
2. Create structures to ensure student, parent/guardian/caregiver, staff, and community voice inform school and board plans and that these plans are publicly shared and reported on.
3. Improved engagement with attention to working with those impacted by decisions.
4. Building relationships and trust through our actions – listening and responding and being accountable at the school and system-level for improvement in student safety and well-being.

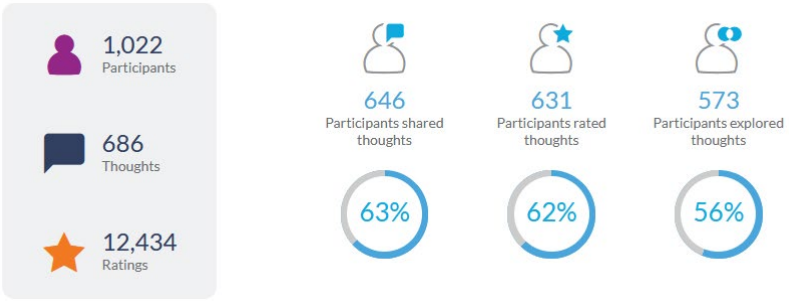
Appendix E – Student Voice Feedback on Reimagining Wellness

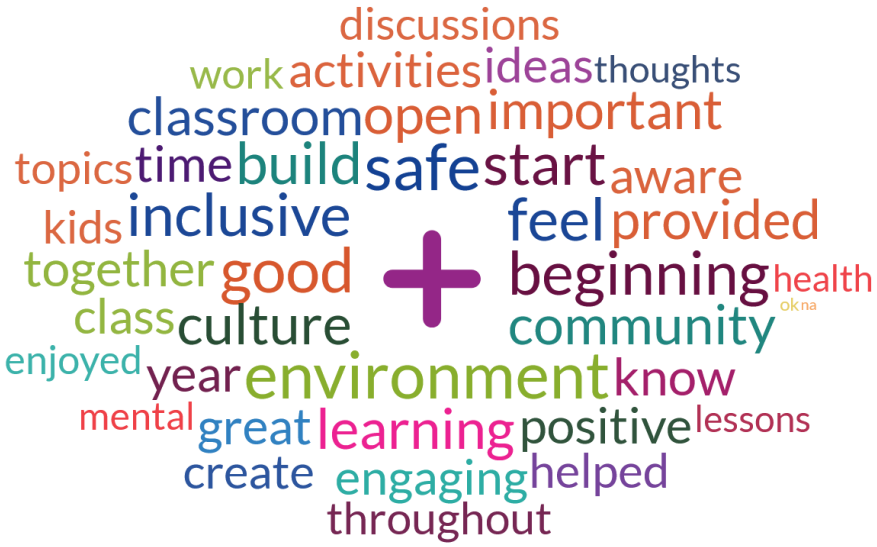


Student Voice Summit Feedback on Reimagining Wellness

- "It provides a foundation of values upon which to build."
- "It supports anti bullying because it makes us understand things that we may not have known make people feel unsafe or bullied."
- "Hearing things like this makes you feel in a safe environment and easy to talk to people."
- "It builds bonds with classmates and makes them feel like someone in the classroom wrote that affirmation for them."
- "A lesson like this supports community building by bringing a group/community together to share positive views and kind words."
- "It helps support the community by breaking barriers between people."
- "It helps others feel more comfortable with each other."

Appendix E – Staff Feedback on Reimagining Wellness





Appendix F - Overview of Recess Guardians

The History

Recess Guardians is a program that was developed to empower youth to lead through active play. We saw that recess had become a time where negative things happened due to youth not taking an active leadership role.

We knew that we could make a change, and thus our program was born.

The idea is that youth today have the ability to lead their peers in activities and games, we just need to give them that extra little lift to do so. To date we have worked with over 700 schools across Canada and impacted over 400,000 youth. Our program is simple, yet effective. By teaching youth to lead their peers in games and activities, we are seeing that they now have more confidence than ever before, and it follows them into the classroom and beyond. Youth can be absolutely incredible leaders and we are the program that is making that happen.

*Note: Data provided by the Recess Guardians

What educators have said:

86% Increase in leadership skills

83% Increase in social inclusion on the playground

88% Increase in social confidence in the classroom

72% Decrease in negative incidents on the playground

RECESS GUARDIANS Sponsored by SASKATCHEWAN BLUE CROSS BLUE IMP Play Strong. LEO youth+us

Appendix G - OPHEA Healthy Schools Certification

School	Banner
Millgrove Public School	Gold
Cathy Wever Elementary Public School	Gold
Sir William Osler Elementary School	Gold
Glendale Secondary School	Gold
Westdale Secondary School	Gold
Parkdale School	Gold
James MacDonald Public School	Gold
Prince of Wales Elementary School	Gold
Strathcona Junior Public School	Gold
Gordon Price School	Gold
Viscount Montgomery Public School	Gold
Chedoke Middle School	Gold
Queen Mary Elementary School	Gold
Westmount Secondary School	Gold
R A Riddell Public School	Gold
Sherwood Secondary School	Gold
Holbrook Junior Public School	Gold
Westwood Junior Public School	Gold
Mountview Junior Public School	Gold
Hillcrest Elementary Public School	Silver
Queen Victoria Elementary School	Silver
Collegiate Avenue School	Bronze
Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School	Bronze
A M Cunningham Junior Public School	Certified

Appendix H: Student Safety Plan (Draft version)

HWDSB Student Safety Plan

The Student Safety Plan identifies steps that will be taken to support a student impacted by bullying in feeling safe, supported, and included in their school community. This document is co-created with the student, parent/guardian/caregiver and principal or vice principal after a first incident of bullying. This plan is fluid and can change as necessary. Families are welcome to include other support individuals in the process.

Student Safety Plan for:	
Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Name(s)	**Homeroom Teacher** (if applicable) ☐ Receive a copy of the Plan
Rotary Teachers, DECEs, EAs, Period Teachers ☐ Receive a copy of the Plan	**" Go To" Contacts** ☐ Receive a copy of the Plan
Student/Family Feeling Positive About…	**Student/Family Feeling Concerned About …**
Student/Family Goals (short and long term – what you want to accomplish)	**Members of the Student Support Team (can be internal and external to the school):**
Important Responsibilities	**Notes:**
☐ **Any school staff who witness/made aware of bullying behaviour directed toward the student will intervene immediately and report the behaviour to the principal** ☐ **School staff to be made aware of any further incidents of bullying at school, outside of school or online (by student or family)**	

Important Items to Review	Notes
☐ **staff will be made aware of the plan (as indicated above) and will make every effort to implement it** ☐ **Identification of "Go To" contacts (i.e., as needed, and regular check-ins)** ☐ **School and Classroom Supports** ☐ **Students should not to have face to face or online contact (plan if contact is made)** ☐ **Arranged time(s) for Student, Parent/guardian/caregiver and/or Principal/Vice Principal to communicate as "check ins" on the plan** ☐ **Times before and after school, during lunch, recesses, transition times** ☐ **Internet Safety** ☐ **Off site review (e.g., travelling to/from; lunch times)** ☐ **Class review (e.g., reviewing student timetable, class lists, seating plans, discrete way(s) to leave class to see Go To person)** ☐ **Classroom structures controlled by educators (e.g., seating, groupings, etc.)** ☐ **Washroom review** ☐ **Support(s) to further nurture response skills (e.g., leaving the situation, seeking help from an adult or peer)** ☐ **Connections to school/community activities/clubs/teams (i.e., competence, interests, highlight talents)** ☐ **Trips, special event planning (e.g., dances)** ☐ **Child and Youth Care Practitioner support (if applicable)** ☐ **Social Worker support (if applicable)** ☐ **System supports (staff and/or programs)** ☐ **Other considerations**	

Note: Any concerns related to the Safety Plan should be reviewed with the school principal or vice principal. Families may contact the school superintendent for concerns not resolved.

SCHEDULE FOR FOLLOW UP AND COMMUNICATION (as recommended by PREVNet)	
WEEK 1: Daily for the first week	
Date: **Time:** **Person Responsible:** **People in Attendance:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**
Date: **Time:** **Person Responsible:** **People in Attendance:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**
Date: **Time:** **Person Responsible:** **People in Attendance:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**
Date: **Time:** **Person Responsible:** **People in Attendance:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**
Date: **Time:** **Person Responsible:** **People in Attendance:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**

WEEK 2: Every other day	
Date: **Time:** **People Present:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**
Date: **Time:** **People Present:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**
Date: **Time:** **People Present:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**
WEEK 3 +: At least once; intermittent check-ins as needed or requested	
Date: **Time:** **People Present:**	**Details/Follow-up (if any):**

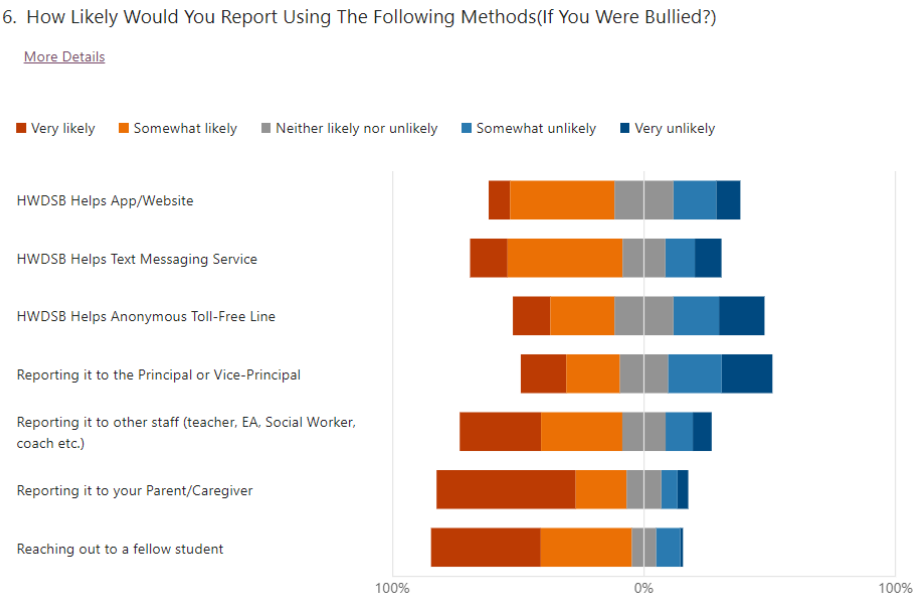
Appendix I: Student Voice Summit: Overall Student Feedback

Overall:

Appendix I: Student Voice Summit: HWDSB Helps and Recess Guardians Student Feedback

Quantitative Data: HWDSB HELPS

- 84 % of students from grade seven to ten had heard of HWDSB Helps prior to the student conference.
- 91% responded yes/maybe when asked if they would recommend the application.
- HWDSB Helps received an average rating of 6.79/10.



Quantitative Data: Recess Guardians

- 73% of respondents said this program would encourage them to come to school.
- 90% of respondents said "yes" or "maybe" when asked if this program would make recess more enjoyable for all.