

AGENDA: 2:00 pm

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Review of the Committee Workplan
5. [Program Strategy & French Immersion Review \(update\)](#)
6. [Safe Schools Action Plan 2021-2023, Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan 2024-2027](#)
7. [2023-2024 Student Suspension and Expulsion Data](#)
8. Adjournment



PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT

January 30, 2025

Elementary Program Strategy, Secondary Program Strategy & Elementary French Immersion Location Strategy and Application Process

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Jamie Nunn, Associate Director, School Improvement, Learning Services,
Michelle Lemaire, Superintendent of Program, Equity and Innovation
Brian Goodram, Principal, Westdale Secondary School

Recommendation:

That the Program Strategy Report be received.

Background:

On June 10, 2024, the Board of Trustees passed the following Motion:

That the Elementary Program Strategy, including the French Immersion Location Strategy and Application Process, and the Secondary Program Strategy be reviewed over the next year to ensure alignment with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), that both strategies meet the needs of HWDSB students and ensure balance, fair and equitable distribution of resources delivered in a fiscally responsible manner.

Together, the consultant and staff will ensure that human rights and equity, anti-colonialism, anti-racism, anti-oppression are considered throughout the review and include consultations with community throughout the review. Staff will provide updates on the review process to the Board of Trustees throughout the process. The review is expected to take at least one year.

Status:

Through a procurement process, staff have secured the consulting services of Malatest Consulting to conduct the review. The review will encompass the Program Strategy Review Scope ([Appendix A](#)) as approved by the Program Committee on October 21, 2024. The consulting firm has developed a detailed workplan for this project divided into four phases:

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Phase	Focus	Timeline	Status
Phase 1	Project Planning and Scoping	November 2024– January 2025	Complete
Phase 2	Primary Data Collection	February – May 2025	
Phase 3	Analysis	September – October 2025	
Phase 4	Report of Findings and Recommendations	November 2025	

The first phase of the review is complete. Staff are prepared to launch the consultation process in February 2025 as part of the second phase of this work.

Staff will provide a further update on the process of the review in May 2025 at the Program Committee in addition to timely updates from the Director and via our board website. Staff anticipate being able to deliver the findings of this review in November 2025.

Financial Implications:

In the 2024-2025 budget development process, Trustees approved \$150,000 in one time funding to support the Program Strategy review. Currently, the program review remains, in all material respects, within the approved budget.

Strategic Directions:

Upholding Human Rights, Safety & Well-Being

We will support all students and staff to feel safe and secure in our classrooms and school communities.

Providing Equitable Quality Education

We will offer equitable quality educational opportunities to improve student engagement, learning and achievement for future-readiness.

Collaborating with Students, Families & Communities

We will build reciprocal relationships and partnerships to enhance access and engagement for students, families, and communities.

Building a Sustainable Education System

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

Reinforcing Indigenous Educational Wellness & Reconciliation

We will honour our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by nurturing respectful and reciprocal relationships among Indigenous Peoples and Treaty Partners, and by cultivating intergenerational healing and wellness in a restorative education system.

Scope of the HWDSB Program Strategy Review

Board Approved Motion: June 10, 2024

That the Elementary Program Strategy including Elementary French Immersion and Secondary Program Strategy be reviewed over the next year to ensure alignment with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), ensure both strategies meet the needs of HWDSB students and ensure balance, fair and equitable distribution of resources delivered in a fiscally responsible manner.

Scope of the Program Strategy Review:

- [HWDSB Secondary Program Strategy](#) (June 10, 2013)
- [HWDSB Elementary Program Strategy](#) (November 10, 2016)
- [Elementary French Immersion](#) (November 10, 2016)
 - French Immersion Application Process
 - French Immersion Location Strategy

Secondary Program Strategy (June 10, 2013)

- **Background Study:** Creating Secondary Education of the Future
- **Vision:**
 - All secondary schools will be great schools
 - Students will have choice
 - Equity of access, opportunity and outcome across our system (Tier 3 programs)
- **Variety of Program Offerings:**
 - Students work towards their goal, at their local schools. These choices include the five pathways.
 - Student voice is captured before option sheet distribution.
- **Tiered program offerings to address student needs**
 - Tier 1 Schools – All Students
 - Tier 2 Schools – Some Students
 - Tier 2 programs and interventions are offered in some schools if there is enough student interest within a school. Student interest will be captured through the option sheet process. These are programs that do not require specialized facilities or equipment and are offered to students living within the catchment of their home school.
 - Tier 3 Schools – Few Students
 - Programs and interventions requiring specialized facilities, equipment or funding enhancement. Strategically located in a few school sites. Transportation provided according to Board policy.
 - Programs: Arts & Culture: Digital Media, ArtSmart, Aviation/Aerospace, Construction, Cosmetology, ESL/ELD (4 schools), French Immersion (2 schools), Horticulture, Hospitality/Tourism (Food Services), Information/Communication Tech, International Baccalaureate (IB) (3 schools; now 2), Manufacturing, Ontario Public Service Program, Performing Arts (auditioned program) (1 school), Transportation
 - Westmount Secondary School (no transportation provided).
- **Targeted Interventions:** All schools will offer targeted interventions to meet the needs of students who require them. The interventions will include programs and/or supports to students who are struggling academically, socially and emotionally. (for example, Literacy intervention programs Empower High School, Wilson Reading Program, Numeracy intervention programs Jump Math (with other strategies), In-school alternative education, credit recovery, self-directed/self-paced, specific Co-op and/or experiential learning Workplace placements, job shadowing)

Elementary Program Strategy (November 10, 2016) (Follow-Up Motion June 13, 2022)

- **Strategy comprises of three specific areas:**
 - **Specialized Programming**
 - We will provide focus programs for all elementary students.
 - The Viability Criteria for Maintaining Optional Programs:
 - Program maintains the original intent /mandate of the program
 - Sufficient student enrolment to assign a teacher
 - Ontario Curriculum is embedded in the delivery model
 - Feasibility of maintaining on-going operating costs, including fees to external organizations
 - Continuation of exemplary program delivery and sustainability
 - The following focus programs will be maintained and reviewed every two years to determine the continued interest and viability of the programs, according to the criteria listed above:

▪ Hockey Program	Tapleystown
▪ Mandarin (Language Transition Program)	Cootes Paradise
▪ Sage	Strathcona
▪ Sagequest	Kanétskare
▪ Sports Academy; Basketball	R.A. Riddell
 - **Instrumental Music**
 - Ensure instrumental music programming is offered at the grade 7 and 8 level in all elementary schools, as outlined in the HWDSB Arts Strategy. This will include the provision of band instruments, appropriate facilities and qualified staff to deliver the program and will allow the equity of access for all intermediate students so that they can make an informed choice for music programming at the secondary level.
 - **Interventions in special education**
 - Every school will have shared spaces designated to support student needs, such as:
 - Assessment and Intervention space (System Staff and Community Partners)
 - Student Success space (For alternative programming, calming spaces, quiet setting)
 - Sensory space
 - Fitness space (Gross Motor Development)
 - Calming space (Specialized locations only as determined by the Superintendent of Specialized Services)

Elementary French Immersion: (November 10, 2016)

- **Vision:** All students communicating and interacting with growing confidence in French.
- Program begins in Grade 1. HWDSB also offers Core French beginning in Grade 4.
- **Core Priorities:** HWDSB's FSL programming is guided by the three core priorities set out in [*A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 1-12:*](#)
 - Increase student confidence, proficiency and achievement in FSL
 - Increase the percentage of students studying FSL until graduation
 - Increase student, educator, parent, and community engagement in FSL
- French Immersion requires that French must be the language of instruction for a minimum of 50 per cent of the total instructional time and provide a minimum of 3,800 hours of French instruction by the end of grade 8. At HWDSB, we strive to offer more than the minimum requirement each year from grades 1 to 6. In grades 7 and 8, 50 to 60 per cent of the program is taught in French.
- Currently 18 elementary schools offer French Immersion programming, Grade 1 – 8. 8 elementary schools are associate schools for Sherwood Secondary School and 10 elementary schools are associate schools for Westdale Secondary School.
- Transportation to a French Immersion program is offered according to [HWDSB's Transportation Policy](#).
- The French Immersion Application Process is in accordance with a Board approved report (November 10, 2016) which specifically outlines:
 - **Timelines for the Application Process**
 - The system application process for grade 1 students entering French Immersion would be promoted each year with specific dates attached to the applications. Where there are accommodation pressures, all FI boundaries and school locations will be displayed on the application form. The schools that do not have accommodation pressures will have a notation on the application form that grade 1 students living within the FI catchment for these schools will be automatically accepted into the program at the FI catchment school. Parents will still need to complete the application form. For all other Grade 1 FI applications for schools with accommodation pressures, program locations will be offered by Mid-December.
 - **Late Applications:**
 - If the application deadline is missed, then placement at the FI catchment school will only be offered, if space is available. Transportation will be provided according to the transportation policy. If there is no space in the FI catchment school, the placement will be offered in another school with FI programming, and no transportation will be provided.
 - **Admissions beyond Grade 1 Entry:**
 - Students presently in HWDSB or moving to HWDSB from another board may be offered a French Immersion program location for grades other than the grade 1 entry after a review of student records or confirmation of an equivalent background in French, as determined by Program staff from French as a Second Language. The staff application review committee will also review late these admissions to determine student placement. Students who are deemed ready will be offered a placement in their FI catchment school if space permits. Transportation will be provided according to the transportation policy. If there is no space in the FI catchment school, the placement will

be offered in another school with FI programming, and no transportation will be provided.

- **Criteria for Grade 1 French Immersion Program Placement Offerings:**
 - Availability of the program closest to the student's home address, based on the French Immersion boundary:
 - Grade 1 siblings entering French Immersion may attend the same school as their older sibling currently in FI,
 - space permitting and providing they remain in FI.
 - Balance of English and FI enrolment in dual track schools (50-60% in English or French)
 - Year over year impact as pupils progress through grades 1-8



Program Committee Report

January 30, 2025

Safe Schools Action Plan, 2021-2023, Update and Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, 2024-2027

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Jamie Nunn, Associate Director, School Improvement, Learning Services
Gerry Smith, Superintendent, Safe, Compassionate, and Equitable Schools, K-12
Jason Rizza, System Principal, Caring and Safe Schools

Recommendation:

That the Safe Schools Action Plan (2021-2023) update and the Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, 2024-2027 monitoring report be received.

Background:

In October 2019, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) Trustees created the *Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel* (hereafter referred to as the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel or the Review Panel for short). The Review Panel's purpose was to gather qualitative and quantitative community feedback, summarize research and create recommendations for HWDSB, the Hamilton community and government to address bullying. The Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel delivered to Trustees its [final report](#) and recommendations, which are based on extensive community consultation on how HWDSB can better address and prevent bullying. The final report was received and approved by the Board of Trustees on January 25, 2021.

As a result of this report, HWDSB implemented a two-year [Safe Schools Action Plan, 2021-2023 \(Appendix A\)](#) that has served as a roadmap to guide the Board's work to deliver upon the Review Panel's recommendations. In total, there were 104 recommendations. Staff can confirm that 101 of 104 (97%) of the recommendations are complete or ongoing.

In October 2023, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) Board of Trustees approved a new [Multi-Year Strategic Plan \(MYSP\)](#) 2023-2028 which was officially launched in January 2024. The Strategic Directions of the MYSP helped to inform the creation of a new [Board Improvement Plan \(BIP\)](#) which specifically identifies five important goals for students. Two of the

goals are: 1) increase engagement for every student and 2) improve well-being for every student. These goals demonstrate our commitment to build upon the work rooted within the Safe Schools Action Plan, 2021-2023 across HWDSB schools and learning sites. To further the work and our commitments, staff have developed a Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, 2024-2027, with 17 deliverables.

Status:

Building on the insights from the Safe Schools Action Plan, 2021-2023 the Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan 2024-2027 ([Appendix B](#)) continues to prioritize identity, equity, and human rights as key elements to create safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments. This approach recognizes the importance of relationships and partnerships, reflected through the Two Row Wampum, which emphasizes mutual respect and shared responsibility. The plan affirms the significance of diverse voices and identities, aiming to foster a sense of belonging for all students while acknowledging the vital role that each community plays in supporting and maintaining human rights and promoting equity.

Guided by HWDSB's [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#), this framework also integrates the [Human Rights and Equity Action Plan 2023-2027](#), [Special Education Action Plan 2024-2025](#), [Mental Health and Addiction Strategy 2024-2027](#), and [Indigenous Education Circle Action Plan 2021-2025](#), creating a collective support system rooted in strong, collaborative relationships. By fostering shared responsibility across these initiatives, we aim to build positive school climate that nurtures every student's well-being and potential. Through collaborative efforts, HWDSB aims to fulfil its Vision which is to ensure that every student experiences a sense of belonging and engages in dynamic, inclusive learning environments that empower them to thrive, reach their full potential, and build their own future.

The HWDSB Caring and Safe Schools team collaborated with many HWDSB departments and teams in the creation of a Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, 2024-2027. These included: Special Education, Mental Health and Well-Being, Indigenous Education, Human Resources, Black Graduation Coaches, Hamilton-Wentworth Principal Council, and Executive Council. The plan was also developed using community and partner feedback from policy consultations, and student feedback (e.g., Student Voice Survey and affinity groups).

The goals of the Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan, 2024-2027 plan are:

- We will foster positive, inclusive environments where student identity, voice, and relationships are prioritized, ensuring every student feels valued and empowered to succeed.
- We commit to maintaining a safe and secure environment for students, families, and caregivers with transparent communication and collaborative approaches to addressing safety concerns.

- We will amplify student and family voices in decision-making, creating inclusive structures that reflect the needs and experiences of the entire school community.

The plan has five key priorities with a corresponding action and commitments:

- Creating the Conditions for Learning
- Identity Affirming Curriculum, Teaching Practices and Learning Environments
- Responding to Student Need
- Secure Schools Awareness and Response
- Accountability and Transparency

Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan 2024-2027 will guide our work through each school year; however, we are committed to remaining current and responsive to emerging needs and priorities. As such, staff will develop a specific annual work plan with key actions and steps that will be taken at both the system and school levels to achieve the implementation of the priority areas. Staff will provide a report on this work at the Program Committee in fall 2025.

Financial Implications:

The Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan 2024-2027 is funded through both Core Education Funding and Responsive Education Program (REP). The implementation of this plan is within the budget previously approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2024.

Strategic Directions:

Upholding Human Rights, Safety & Well-Being

We will support all students and staff to feel safe and secure in our classrooms and school communities.

Providing Equitable Quality Education

We will offer equitable quality educational opportunities to improve student engagement, learning and achievement for future-readiness.

Collaborating with Students, Families & Communities

We will build reciprocal relationships and partnerships to enhance access and engagement for students, families, and communities.

Building a Sustainable Education System

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

Reinforcing Indigenous Educational Wellness & Reconciliation

We will honour our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by nurturing respectful and reciprocal relationships among Indigenous Peoples and Treaty Partners, and by cultivating intergenerational healing and wellness in a restorative education system.



Safe Schools Action Plan

 2021-2023

Mission

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

Commitment

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



Note: Some photos were taken before enhanced public health measures for COVID-19.

To address bullying, HWDSB is committed to responding to the voices of students, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff and community as shared within the Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel's final report, [Building Healthy Relationships and an Inclusive, Caring Learning Environment](#).

This means:

- a relentless focus on building positive and inclusive cultures in all classrooms and schools – a place where everyone belongs, everyone is safe and everyone achieves;
- creating learning environments where student identity and voice are centered – students' lived experiences are honoured and an essential part of learning;
- relationships are positive, supportive, caring and kind;
- creating structures to gather, listen and respond to student voice – student voice must inform school and board plans;
- safety is paramount and incidents of bullying are addressed with active involvement of students and families – this includes the student who experiences bullying, the student who displays bullying behavior and the student who witnesses bullying.

We will do this by:

- being transparent and sharing regular updates with students, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff and community;
- creating 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;
- improved engagement with attention to working with those impacted by decisions;
- 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.

This abridged Safe Schools Action Plan provides an overview of the recommendations and actions essential to transform the cultures within our schools.

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.
2. Build on HWDSB's 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 School Climate Survey being only one example.
3. Ensure student voices are sought out and incorporated into the school's response to incidents of bullying.
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.
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, demonstrate how student voices are used to inform school improvement processes and plans using clear, relatable examples.
6. Within the context of a whole-school approach, develop interactive resources with students that provide students with concrete examples and scripts for being an ally or bullying upstander.
7. Have students from Grades 4-12 participate as leaders on existing school improvement teams.
8. Ensure all student-led activities and processes are implemented with appropriate adult allyship.
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.
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.
11. Students to play a central role in developing and implementing all of the review panel's recommended action steps.

PARENTS, GUARDIANS, CAREGIVERS

6-9

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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.
2. Share new and emerging educational resources on cyberbullying with parents, guardians and caregivers as they become available over the coming months.
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.
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.
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.



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

1. Establish a bullying prevention and intervention lead position at the board.
2. Create Board-wide framework that establishes overarching expectations and procedures for a multi-tiered system of supports and programming.
3. Support students involved in bullying.
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.
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.
6. Use data collection tools and procedures, including standardized tools, for more localized periodic school-based climate assessment between School Climate Survey cycles.
7. Collect school-level disaggregated data by identity on all reported incidents of bullying, both formal and informal, every six months.
8. Create clear lines of accountability and oversight for school plans, including expectations for monitoring and evaluation.
9. Establish a board-wide mechanism to positively acknowledge and share models of good practice at the school level.



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's Annual Plan.
2. Immediately explore alternative sources of additional adult supervision outside of the classroom during non- instructional time.
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.
4. Ensure student voices are sought out and incorporated into the school's response to incidents of bullying.
5. Ensure that students who are vulnerable or potentially vulnerable, whether or not they have been bullied, are supported in a variety of ways, for example, through a formal initiative that involves a designated staff member.
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.
7. Establish consistent funding for ongoing board-wide professional learning opportunities for educators on bullying prevention and intervention.
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.
9. Encourage full participation in School Climate surveys and share results with students, parents, guardians, caregivers and community partners.
10. Use available PREVNet resources to train all staff who have contact with students to respond appropriately when they observe bullying.
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.

Recommendation #5:

Examine special education practices from a student-centred learning perspective.

1. Review current research on the impact of placement in self-contained classes on student learning, belonging and engagement.
2. Identify evidence-informed best practices to maximize student learning, belonging and engagement.
3. Review student achievement data in the context of HWDSB's priority goals, such as early reading and graduation.
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.
5. Identify ways to enhance supportive inclusion to mitigate the behaviour of some students with special education needs who have difficulty with self-regulation.



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.
2. Address the areas of concern identified during the review panel consultations.
3. Ensure there is a plan to address, monitor and report on gaps in staff diversity and inequities in professional outcomes at all levels in the board.
4. Reaffirm the role of HWDSB's Equity Policy as a permanent guide to relations between HWDSB and the police.
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.
6. Align and integrate the above action steps with HWDSB's Equity Action Plan where appropriate.



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.
2. The review process must proactively address the real and perceived unequal application of bullying policies and guidelines based on a student's identity.
3. The review process must address the need for accountability and transparency when a staff member is not following proper protocol, including identifying and addressing the abusive behavior of school staff toward students, other staff, 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.
5. Administration and 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.
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.
7. Determine, with the help of educators and administrators, 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.
8. Explore the feasibility of and costs associated with developing an electronic decision-tree resource for educators and school administrators based on PREVNet resources.
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.
10. Create a formal process for periodic review at multiple levels with a public accountability component.

HWDSB ORGANIZATION: SYSTEM LEVEL

6-15

Appendix A

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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.
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.
3. Establish oversight and accountability structures at the school, system/HWDSB, governance and community levels.
4. Incorporate consistent, standardized bullying outcome measures in the HWDSB performance monitoring framework.
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.



HWDSB ORGANIZATION: SYSTEM LEVEL (continued)

6-16

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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.
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.
3. Leverage opportunities to reinforce the organizational values and culture shift described under Recommendation #8.
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.
5. Establish the desired leadership performance outcomes for the board's leadership strategy.
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.
7. Recognize and celebrate great relational leadership work.



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.
2. Utilize existing HWDSB community involvement structures such as parent councils, the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), SEAC, Indigenous Education Councils and HWDSB Community Advisory committees to support a strengthened focus on school climate.
3. Establish a community-led, independent table with broad representation, including from HWDSB, to oversee implementation of review panel recommendations at the highest level.
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.
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.



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.
2. Ask the Ministry to make centralized bullying prevention and intervention expertise and supports available to school boards over the long term.
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.
4. Ask the Ministry for funding for ongoing professional learning targeted at bullying prevention and intervention and safe schools.
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.



HWDSB Equity Action Plan 2019/20 – 2021/22

HWDSB Employment Equity Action Plan 2020

HWDSB Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan (2019)

HWDSB Indigenous Education Action Plan (2018)

HWDSB Reimagined: Strategic Priorities (2018)

HWDSB Equity and Inclusion Policy (2018)

HWDSB Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (2015)

HWDSB Code of Conduct Policy (2019)

HWDSB Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy (2015)

Appreciation

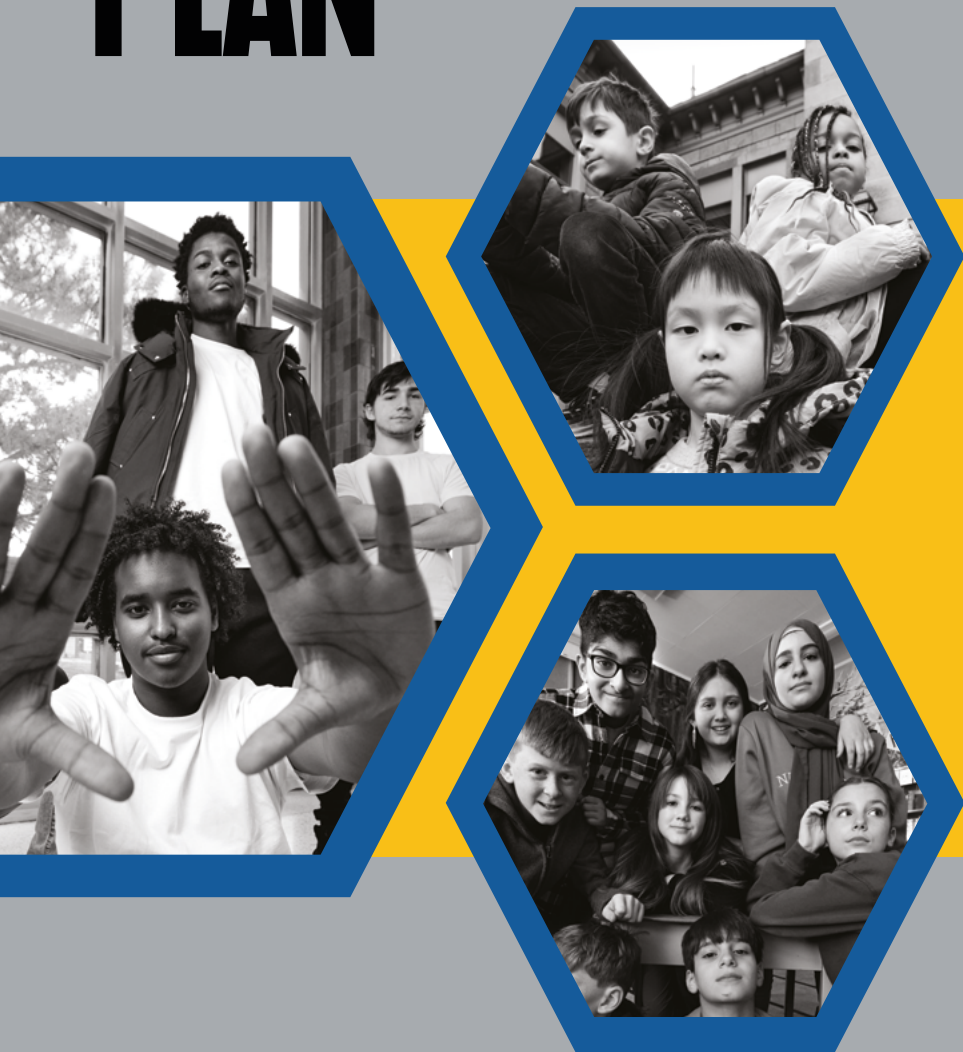
We thank the many students, families, staff and community members for sharing their voices, stories and expertise so that HWDSB can offer students safe and inclusive schools.



For more information, contact:
equity@hwdsb.on.ca

www.hwdsb.on.ca/equity

2024-2027 CARING & SAFE SCHOOLS ACTION PLAN



HWDSB
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CARING AND SAFE SCHOOLS ACTION PLAN: A HOLISTIC APPROACH8

HWDSB's **2024-2027 Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan** commits to fostering a positive, inclusive, and supportive educational environment where student identity and voice are centered, relationships are nurtured, and safety and well-being are prioritized. HWDSB is dedicated to transparent communication and accountability in decision-making, ensuring that all students and families feel safe, secure, valued, and supported. Through active involvement, HWDSB aims to create and support environments where every voice is heard and listened to.

HWDSB's Mission Statement:

"Every student experiences a sense of belonging and engages in dynamic learning to reach their potential and build their own future." ([HWDSB 2023-2028 Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)).

HWDSB's Values:

<p>Compassion:</p> <p>Leading with peace, friendship and love creates space for compassionate accountability, where we are responsible to one another in creating a culture of care.</p>	<p>Dignity:</p> <p>Reciprocity, anti-racism and anti-oppression lead to a just and equitable learning community, where every person is included, respected and valued.</p>
<p>Trust:</p> <p>Humility and transparency build the trusted relationships, connections and education system necessary for growth, change and evolution.</p>	<p>Joy:</p> <p>Curiosity, play and fun are catalysts for meaningful student learning outcomes and support joyful and enriching experiences.</p>

Guiding Principles:

The following principles guide HWDSB's work in implementing **the Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan** by having a shared understanding of the work and its application to our mission:

- We honour local Indigenous knowledge and practices, recognizing that cultural disconnection has adversely affected community wellness and healing across generations.
- We prioritize safety and care for all, deeply valuing the well-being of every individual in our educational community.
- We commit to ethical consultation and collaboration, actively engaging with students, families, staff, and the community to create a supportive environment.
- We intentionally seek input from individuals and communities historically underserved by the education system, acknowledging our responsibility to learn from their experiences.

Guiding Principles continued:

- We openly share our engagement processes with students, families, staff, and the community, as we believe in nurturing trusting relationships founded on transparency.
- We embrace a consensus-building approach to decision-making, ensuring that every voice is heard, valued, and honoured within our community.
- Our work is dedicated to benefiting students, families, staff, and the community, respecting and promoting self-determination at all levels.
- We strive to communicate in accessible language, ensuring that our messages resonate with and are understood by everyone in our community.

Impacts when Students Feel Safe and Secure:

- **Engaged School Communities:** School communities actively participate in practices that establish and sustain safe, equitable, and inclusive classrooms, fostering a secure environment for all students.
- **Amplified Voices:** Students from historically marginalized communities feel safe to share their perspectives, promoting collaboration and inclusivity among students, staff, families, and the community.
- **Profound Sense of Belonging:** Students feel safe to explore their identities, experiencing acceptance and honour that fosters a deep sense of belonging and authenticity.
- **Connected Relationships:** Students build secure and meaningful connections with responsive adults and peers, which enhances their learning experience through nurturing relationships.
- **Recognition of Value:** Students feel that they matter and are valued within their school community, receiving the support and attention necessary for their health and wellness.
- **De-stigmatized Mental Health Conversations:** Conversations about mental health are encouraged and normalized, creating a safe space for understanding and support among students.



GOALS: 2024-2027 CARING AND SAFE SCHOOLS ACTION PLAN

- We will foster positive, inclusive environments where student identity, voice, and relationships are prioritized, ensuring every student feels valued and empowered to succeed.
- We commit to maintaining a safe and secure environment for students, families, and caregivers with transparent communication and collaborative approaches to addressing safety concerns.
- We will amplify student and family voices in decision-making, creating inclusive structures that reflect the needs and experiences of the entire school community.

2024-2027 Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan:

This section provides an overview of the key objectives and actions at the system and school levels under the following five priority areas and commitments:

- Creating the Conditions for Learning
- Identity Affirming Curriculum and Teaching Practices and Learning Environments
- Responding to Student Need
- Secure Schools Awareness and Response
- Accountability and Transparency

Creating a nurturing and secure environment is essential for fostering well-being and enabling every student to thrive within our school communities. A sense of safety and belonging shapes how students learn, interact, and develop. It is vital to recognize and address the systemic barriers that can impact students' experiences, ensuring that every individual has the resources they need to succeed.

Implementing an identity-affirming curriculum and inclusive teaching practices fosters a sense of belonging, allowing students to feel valued and engaged in their learning journeys. Every student's experience is unique and influenced by their diverse identities, including age, race, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and ability. Embracing these identities helps create an environment where everyone feels respected and understood.

By actively responding to the needs of students and promoting a culture of safety within schools, we cultivate a supportive atmosphere where all individuals feel secure and empowered. Our commitment to accountability and transparency ensures that our actions are continuously assessed and refined, leading to an equitable and caring educational experience for everyone.

1. Creating the Necessary Conditions for Learning

Objective:

To create student-centred learning environments where identity, voice and lived experience are affirmed and honoured, contributing to safety and the development of positive, caring and respectful relationships.

Actions:

- Establish regular opportunities for students to share their voices and lived experiences through discussions, forums, or focus groups, fostering an environment of trust and understanding.
- Encourage cooperative learning activities that build community and mutual respect, helping students develop positive relationships with their peers.
- Recognize and implement strategies to mitigate disproportionalities and inequities observed in student achievement, attendance, disciplinary actions, and well-being, aiming to foster a more equitable learning environment for all students.
- Ensure access to resources and support systems that address students' emotional and social needs, reinforcing their sense of safety and belonging within the school community.

2. Identity Affirming Curriculum and Teaching Practices and Learning Environments

Objective:

To create identity-affirming curricula and learning environments that ensure every student feels safe and secure. By celebrating diverse backgrounds and voices, we foster a culture of belonging and positive relationships, prioritizing students' well-being and success in a supportive learning environment.

Actions:

- Enhance inclusivity and cultural relevance across teaching, curriculum, assessment, and resources to ensure responsiveness to diverse student needs and backgrounds.
- Design and implement a curriculum that reflects diverse identities and cultures, allowing students to see themselves represented in their learning materials.
- Involve students and families in the planning and decision-making process regarding educational pathways that provide diverse pathway options, ensuring every student has opportunities to achieve success and fulfillment in their educational journey.

3. Responding to Student Need

Objective:

To foster a responsive educational environment that meets diverse student needs through bias-free progressive discipline, ensuring that all students feel safe, respected and supported.

Actions:

- Provide role -embedded learning for all staff on recognizing and addressing implicit bias, and systemic racism, and how these factors influence student discipline.
- Involve student voice in the development and revision of school policies related to discipline, ensuring they reflect the lived experiences and needs of diverse student populations.
- Expand and further develop anti-bullying resources that are informed by student voice, and foster and strengthen compassion, dignity, trust and joy for every student.
- Develop clear, consistent communication mechanisms that allow students and caregivers/families to report safety concerns, biases, or other needs. This should include anonymous reporting options and appropriate follow-up support(s).

4. Secure Schools Awareness and Response

Objective:

Ensuring that school emergency procedures, including evacuation, hold and secure, shelter in place, lockdown, and bomb threat protocols, are communicated and practiced for student safety and security.

Actions:

- Develop and maintain a clear reporting system to transparently communicate the implementation of secure school procedures and emergency readiness, using comprehensive data collection to assess safety outcomes, support inclusive practices, and enhance preparedness across all HWDSB sites.
- Provide regular progress updates on the organization's website and at board meetings to ensure accessible information on both equity initiatives and emergency preparedness for all HWDSB community members.
- Actively seek feedback from students, staff, and families on safety, inclusivity, and emergency protocols to guide future planning and enhance accountability and effectiveness in creating secure, inclusive learning environments.

5. Accountability and Transparency

Objective:

To consistently evaluate and adapt our Caring and Safe Schools commitments, using auditing tools to assess secure environments, identity-affirming practices, and inclusive responses. We will remain accountable to our community by transparently communicating progress and evolving with the educational landscape and student needs.

Actions:

- Conduct regular audits of secure schools practices and inclusive environment initiatives, using findings to refine policies and practices. This continuous assessment ensures our response evolves alongside the needs and experiences of our students, staff, and community.
- Provide accessible, periodic updates on the implementation of Caring and Safe Schools initiatives, including secure schools protocols. By sharing this information through multiple channels, we foster transparency, trust, and accountability across the community.
- Actively invite and incorporate feedback from students, families, and staff on safety and inclusion practices, using these insights to shape future planning and decision-making.

Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan: A Holistic Approach

HWDSB's continuous and ongoing commitment to creating a caring and safe learning and work environment is linked to the work of all departments in the organization, including:

- [HWDSB's Mental Health and Addictions Strategy](#)
- [Equity Action Plan](#)
- [Indigenous Education Circle Strategic Action Plan](#)
- [Special Education Action Plan](#)

Braided together, these initiatives promote a holistic approach to student well-being, ensuring every student feels valued and supported. We recognize that collaboration can create a cohesive framework that fosters safety, belonging, and equitable outcomes for every student.

HAMILTON

WENTWORTH
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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HWDSB



PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT

January 30, 2025

2023-2024 Student Suspension and Expulsion Data

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Jamie Nunn, Associate Director, School Improvement, Learning Services
Gerry Smith, Superintendent, Safe, Compassionate, and Equitable Schools, K-12
Sally Landon, Manager, Research and Analytics

Recommendation:

That the 2023-2024 Suspension and Expulsion report be received.

Background:

The Ministry of Education lays the foundation for student behaviour. Specifically, the [Education Amendment Act \(Keeping Our Kids Safe at School\)](#) came into effect in February 2010, amending Part XIII of the Education Act dealing with behaviour discipline, and safety. In 2012 the [Accepting Schools Act \(Bill 13\)](#) re-established the goal of promoting a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils and promotes the prevention of bullying. PPM 145: [Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour](#) was also revised to provide further direction to school boards whereby *“When inappropriate student behaviour occurs, school staff consider individual circumstances and different options to determine the most appropriate way to respond to each situation and help students learn from their choices. School staff use a progressive approach to discipline that includes early and ongoing interventions to promote positive student behaviour. In some cases, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student”*.

Ministry legislation as outlined above forms the basis of HWDSB’s current [Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy](#) and [Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour Procedure](#) and [Suspension, Expulsion and Programs for Long-Term Suspended or Expelled Students Procedure](#). All of these policies and procedures are currently under review and the HWDSB community will have the opportunity provide their feedback on the revised Student Behaviour and Bias-Free Progressive Discipline Policy this winter and early spring.

In October 2023, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) Board of Trustees approved a new [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) (MYSP) 2023-2028 which was officially launched on

BE YOU. BE EXCELLENT.

January 17, 2024. The Strategic Directions of the MYSP helped to inform the creation of our [Board Improvement Plan](#) (BIP) which specifically identifies five important goals for students. Two of the goals are: 1) increase engagement for every student and 2) improve well-being for every student. These goals demonstrate our commitment to improving student achievement and well-being and reducing the number of days students are absent from school or suspended from school.

Status:

Monitoring student suspension and expulsion data is critical. The following represents important considerations when reviewing HWDSB suspension and expulsion data, 2023-2024 ([Appendix A](#)).

Suspensions

In the 2023-2024 school year, the total number of suspension incidents decreased relative to the previous year (Table 1). Of the students registered in 2023-2024 school year, HWDSB registered a 4.4% rate of suspension (Table 2a). Our data indicates a continued trend that consistently displays a lower number of reported suspensions compared to the number of investigations in both the elementary and secondary panels (Table 2b).

Staff observe a noted increase in the number of suspensions by exceptional status (Table 7). Specifically, students identified with a learning disability, Autism, and mild intellectual disability were suspended at a higher rate than previous school years.

It is important to review suspension data by grade. 2023-2024 suspension data shows an increase in grade-specific suspensions, when compared to 2022-23, specifically in grade 8 and grade 12. Grade 7 and grade 9 showed a decrease in suspensions when compared to the data from the previous school year.

Expulsions

In the 2023-2024 school year, HWDSB completed 364 investigations resulting in 38 expulsions board-wide. When compared to 2022-2023, this represents an increase in the overall number of expulsions (Table 10).

HWDSB's 5-year data does show an overall reduction of expulsions. In the 2023-2024 school year, 38 students were expelled from school compared to 54 students in 2019-2020. This can in part be attributed to the successful implementation of progressive discipline practices, as well as supportive interventions aimed at creating the conditions necessary for learning and building more inclusive school and classroom environments. While the overall trend is downward, 38 expulsions remain high, indicating a continued need to focus on strengthening preventative measures, restorative practices, and student engagement strategies to reduce the number of expulsions from school.

Prevention/Intervention/Responding

Our commitment to compassionate, caring and safe schools is a priority as we work to support staff, students, and school communities thrive in HWDSB. Since our last Board report, we have

taken the following steps to address suspensions/expulsions and the disproportionalities that we know exist within our data:

- Continue to educate school, department and division teams and engage in anti-racism and anti-oppression training. This training is shared with staff in professional development sessions and in combination with additional mandatory training offered throughout the school year. As an example, 33 elementary and secondary school teams are currently engaged in a Critically Critical Consciousness Practitioner's Inquiry to address anti-Black racism with Dr. Nicole West-Burns, NWB Educational Equity Consulting Inc.
- Continue to model and encourage educators to embed culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy (CRRP) into their classroom lesson planning to reflect and affirm our students' cultural and social identities, languages, and family structures to promote student learning. We continue to promote and implement *Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild.* and lessons from *Reimagining Wellness* on human rights, identity, race and racism with students to help lay a foundation for learning and discussions related to anti-racism.
- Support school principals and vice-principals in the application of human rights, anti-racism and anti-oppression principles in understanding and addressing potential bias when implementing the progressive discipline process.
- Enhance the role of *Graduation Coaches for Black Students* to work in collaboration with guidance and school administration to support and problem solve issues that may impact the suspension/expulsion process.
- Improve our capacity to hear from parents, guardians, caregivers and students to specifically gather feedback from students and families directly impacted by the suspension/expulsion process. We now include an exit feedback process for parents and students who are leaving long term suspension programming. The feedback gathered will support our work to decrease suspensions and empower students to experience successful outcomes.
- Expand our partnership with the YMCA and its Alternative Suspension Program to now support all schools (grade 6-9). This expansion provides more students with opportunities to turn possible suspension and suspension periods into positive learning experiences, fostering personal growth, autonomy, and improved academic engagement.
- Continue to work in collaboration with the Special Education division to review student discipline matters to understand how mitigating circumstances need to be considered when student behaviour may require a suspension from school.

Disproportionality Data

The HWDSB Research and Analytics Department is actively working to provide accurate disproportionality data. Currently, the HWDSB is in the middle of a multi-year data collection cycle that upon completion, will provide a robust data set to better inform our work with all students. For example, historical HWDSB disproportionality data has displayed that students who self-

identified as having a disability, Boy/Male, Bisexual, First Nations, Black, Middle Eastern and Arabic Speaking students were suspended at higher rates than the average ([2021-22 Disproportionality Data Report](#)). We look forward to an updated multi-year data set. More importantly, we are committed to creating conditions that better support these learners experience success in our schools and school communities.

Our work to address disproportionality is an ongoing priority. For example, we have started to review our policies and procedures, beginning with the Student Behaviour and Bias-free Progressive Discipline policy and Code of Conduct policy, to better reflect our focus to ground our collective work in human rights and equity. These policies and ensuing procedures, revised with an anti-racist, anti-oppressive lens, now reflect a person-centred, trauma-informed approach to supporting students. We look forward to fully implementing these updated foundational documents in our work to disrupt historical disproportional trends evident in HWDSB suspension/expulsion data and support these learners experience success in their school environment.

Financial Implications:

There are no incremental financial implications resulting from this report.

Strategic Directions:

Upholding Human Rights, Safety & Well-Being

We will support all students and staff to feel safe and secure in our classrooms and school communities.

Providing Equitable Quality Education

We will offer equitable quality educational opportunities to improve student engagement, learning and achievement for future-readiness.

Collaborating with Students, Families & Communities

We will build reciprocal relationships and partnerships to enhance access and engagement for students, families, and communities.

Reinforcing Indigenous Educational Wellness & Reconciliation

We will honour our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by nurturing respectful and reciprocal relationships among Indigenous Peoples and Treaty Partners, and by cultivating intergenerational healing and wellness in a restorative education system.

Appendix A: 2023-2024 Suspension and Expulsion Report

Table 1: Suspension Incidents and Suspended Students by Year, 2019-2024

School Year	Total Suspension Incidents	Students Suspended one or more times	Students Identified as Exceptional
2023-24	3775	2521	274
2022-23	4486	2598	218
2021-22	3902	2322	233
2020-21*	838	595	87
2019-20	3627	2165	239

* COVID 19 year

Note: Our Student Data Strategy involves ongoing system data engineering to improve accuracy and transparency; in light of newly structured data, we have been able to retroactively adjust 2022-2023 rate of students identified as exceptional. Further adjustments will occur as we continue this work into 2025-2026.

Table 2a: Number and Proportion of Suspended Students by Panel, 2023-2024

Category	2023-2024	Elementary	Secondary
Number of Students ¹	56893	34867	22026
Number of Students Suspended	2521	1450	1067
Proportion of Students Suspended	4.4%	4.2%	4.8%
Number of Suspension Incidents	3775	2361	1409

¹Enrollment as of October 2023

Table 2b: Number of Suspended Students by Panel, 2021-2024

Category		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Elementary	Number of Suspension Incidents	2508	2479	2361
	Number of Students Suspended	1454	1429	1450
Secondary	Number of Suspension Incidents	1394	2007	1409
	Number of Students Suspended	868	1169	1067
Total	Number of Suspension Incidents	3902	4486	3775
	Number of Students Suspended	2322	2598	2521

Table 3a: Number of Suspended Students by Frequency² & Panel, 2023-2024

Category	One	Two	Three or more
Number of Elementary Students Suspended	918	250	282
% of Elementary Students	2.4%	0.6%	0.7%
Number of Secondary Students Suspended	720	195	152
% of Secondary Students	4.0%	1.1%	0.8%

²Frequency refers to how many times individual students were suspended in the 2023-2024 school year

Table 3b: Number of Suspended Students by Frequency² & Panel, 2021-2024

Category		One	Two	Three or more
Elementary	2023-2024	918	250	282
	2022-2023	926	266	237
	2021-2022	943	268	243
Secondary	2023-2024	720	195	152
	2022-2023	746	218	205
	2021-2022	566	193	109

Table 4: Number of Suspended Students by Grade Level, 2021-2024

Category	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
4	153	137	151
5	209	207	198
6	306	283	274
7	325	402	379
8	420	305	442
9	274	343	272
10	237	338	339
11	218	235	253
12	139	119	208

Note: K-3 data is not included in this table. Beginning in September 2022, K-3 suspensions are closely monitored to ensure Ministry direction whereby discretionary suspensions for students in junior kindergarten to grade 3 are eliminated

Table 5: Number of Suspended Students in High Priority Schools, 2023-2024

Category	Suspended Students	% of Students in High Priority Schools Suspended
Elementary High Priority Schools	466	5.2%

Note: To facilitate comparison with prior years, this table uses the terminology HWDSB "High Priority School" designation.

Table 6: Number of Suspended Students by Exceptionality, 2023-2024

Category	Suspended Students	% of Students with Exceptionalities Suspended
Any Exceptionality	274	7.2%

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).

Table 7: Number of Suspended Students by Exceptional Status, 2021-2024

Category	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Behaviour			
Autism	26	20	35
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	<10	<10	<10
Learning Disability	106	109	133
Language Impairment	<10	<10	<10
Giftedness	22	16	15
Mild Intellectual Disability	47	58	74
Developmental Disability	<10	<10	<10
Physical Disability		<10	<10
Blind/Low Vision			
Multiple Exceptionalities	<10	<10	<10

Notes: The Ontario Ministry of Education defines an exceptional pupil as a student who has been identified by an Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC). Small cell counts are suppressed as a standard practice to prevent the identification of individuals in small groups or those with unique characteristics.

Table 8: Number of Suspension Incidents by Infraction, 2023-2024

Infraction Type	Category	All	Elementary	Secondary	Alt Ed
Swearing	Ed. Act, 306	302	203	99	
Utter Threat	Ed. Act, 306	194	143	51	
Bullying	Ed. Act, 306	130	97	32	<10
Vandalism	Ed. Act, 306	75	47	28	<10
Possessing Cannabis	Ed. Act, 306	31	<10	*	
Influence of drugs	Ed. Act, 306	15		15	
Possess Alcohol/Drugs (Excluding Cannabis)	Ed. Act, 306	31	<10	*	
Other Suspendable Under Board Policy	Board	652	300	351	<10
Fighting/Violence	Board	814	541	273	<10
Act Harmful to Physical/Mental Well-being	Board	450	361	88	<10
Inappropriate Behaviour	Board	300	269	31	<10
Using Social Media Negatively	Board	80	58	22	
Code of Conduct, Board and School Policy	Board	324	134	189	<10
Influence of Cannabis	Board	30	<10	25	<10
Non-consensual Sharing of Intimate Images	Board	<10	<10	<10	
Influence of Alcohol	Board	<10	<10	<10	
310 (1) Investigation Process	Ed. Act, 310	364	199	164	<10

Blue = Incidents identified in the Education Act with a corresponding Ministry Code for data collection.

Green = Incidents identified by the Board as per the Education Act with a corresponding Ministry Code for data collection.

Grey = Incidents identified in the Education Act as possible expulsion, but a suspension is imposed after Principal Inquiry.

Note: Small cell counts are suppressed (<10) as a standard practice to prevent the identification of individuals in small groups or those with unique characteristics. Redactions () are made where numbers would reveal the adjacent suppressed cell counts. Infraction types are not mutually exclusive; some incidents involve multiple infraction types.*

Table 9: Suspensions by Infraction, 2021-2024

Infraction Type	Category	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Swearing	Ed. Act, 306	190	238	302
Utter Threat	Ed. Act, 306	133	166	194
Bullying	Ed. Act, 306	146	149	130
Vandalism	Ed. Act, 306	82	103	75
Possessing Cannabis	Ed. Act, 306	32	47	31
Influence of Cannabis	Ed. Act, 306	19	31	30
Possess Alcohol/Drugs (Excluding Cannabis)	Ed. Act, 306	23	17	20
Other Suspendable Under Board Policy	Board	138	1159	652
Fighting/Violence	Board	805	909	814
Act Harmful to Physical/Mental Well-being	Board	430	543	450
Inappropriate Behaviour	Board	180	315	300
Using Social Media Negatively	Board	129	136	80
Code of Conduct, Board and School Policy	Board	1095	66	324
Influence of Drugs	Board	14	35	15
Non-consensual Sharing of Intimate Images	Board	<10	20	<10
Influence of Alcohol	Board	<10	<10	12
Motivated by Prejudice/Bias/Hate	Ed. Act, 310	203	14	
Possess Weapon	Ed. Act, 310	81	12	
Physical Assault	Ed. Act, 310	52	10	
Sexual Assault	Ed. Act, 310	29	<10	
Bullying - Previous Suspension	Ed. Act, 310	14	<10	
Giving Alcohol or Cannabis to a Minor	Ed. Act, 310	<10	<10	
Weapon to Threaten Bodily Harm	Ed. Act, 310	29	<10	<10
310 (1) Investigation Process	Ed. Act, 310	n.s.	497	364
Total		3846	4486	3775

Blue = Incidents identified in the Education Act with a corresponding Ministry Code for data collection.

Green = Incidents identified by the Board as per the Education Act with a corresponding Ministry Code for data collection.

Grey = Incidents identified in the Education Act as possible expulsion, but a suspension is imposed after Principal Inquiry.

Note: Small cell sizes prevent disaggregation by panel in some rows. Incidents from grades K-3 are excluded from this table.

*n.s. = not specified.

Table 10: Number of Expulsions by Year, 2019-2024

School Year	Total Expulsions	Number Students Identified as Exceptional
2023-2024	38	<10
2022-2023	28	<10
2021-2022	46	<10
2020-2021	<10	<10
2019-2020	54	<10

Note: Small cell counts are suppressed as a standard practice to prevent the identification of individuals in small groups or those with unique characteristics.

Table 11: Number of Expulsions by Infraction, 2023-2024

Category	2023-2024
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
Other	11
Physical Assault requiring medical	<10
Possession of a Weapon	<10
Robbery	<10
Sexual Assault	<10
Using a Weapon to Threaten/Cause Bodily Harm	<10

Note: Small cell counts are suppressed as a standard practice to prevent the identification of individuals in small groups or those with unique characteristics.