

# SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

*Wednesday, October 7th, 2020*

## 6:00 pm Teams Meeting

### WCDSB Mission Statement

*As disciples of Christ,  
we educate and nurture hope  
in all learners  
to realize their full potential  
to transform God's world.*

**CHAIR: Irene Holdbrook**

### MEMBERS

WCDSB Trustee – **Jeanne Gravelle**  
WCDSB Trustee – **Tracey Weiler**  
Waterloo Regional Down Syndrome Society – **Kim Murphy**  
Waterloo Regional Police - **John Gilbert**  
Autism Ontario – Waterloo Chapter  
CNIB – **Irene Holdbrook, Chair**  
Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region  
Waterloo Region Family Network – **Sue Simpson**  
Members at Large – **Sarah Van Dyke**



**Waterloo Catholic  
District School Board**  
Quality, Inclusive, Faith Based Education

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519-578-3660  
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## SEAC Committee Meeting Agenda

<b>Date&amp; Time:</b>	October 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2020 at 6:00 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Teams Meeting
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	November 4 <sup>th</sup> 2020
<b>Committee Members:</b> Kim Murphy, John Gilbert, Tracey Weiler, Jeanne Gravelle, Irene Holdbrook, Sue Simpson, Sarah Van Dyke	
<b>Administrative Officials:</b> Laura Shoemaker, Gerald Foran	

<b>1. Opening Prayer</b>  Welcome	L. Shoemaker
<b>2. Approval of Agenda</b>  Motion by: Seconded:	
<b>3. Declared Pecuniary Interest</b>	
<b>4. Approval of the September 9<sup>th</sup> Minutes</b>  Motion by: Seconded	
<b>5. School System Operational Business</b>  5.1 ABA/BCBA Report 5.2. Mental Health Report	L. McDonald S. Porty
<b>6. Ministry Updates (10 min)</b>  6.1. Durham District School Board SEAC Letter to the Minister of Education; September, 2020	L. Shoemaker
<b>7. SEAC Committee Functions</b>	
<b>8. Policy Advice to the Board</b>	
<b>9. Updates (20 minutes)</b>  9.1. Association Updates  9.2. Trustee Updates	

<b>10. Pending Items</b>	
<b>11. Adjournment</b>  Motion by: Seconded:	
<b>12. Action Items Place Holder</b>	



## SEAC Committee Meeting Minutes

<b>Date&amp; Time:</b>	September 9th, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	Teams Meeting
<b>Next Meeting:</b>	October 7 <sup>th</sup> 2020
<b>Committee Members:</b> Kim Murphy, John Gilbert, Tracey Weiler, Jeanne Gravelle, Irene Holdbrook, Sue Simpson, Kristen Feduck, Sarah Van Dyke	
<b>Administrative Officials:</b> Laura Shoemaker, Gerald Foran	

<b>1. Opening Prayer</b>  Welcome	L. Shoemaker
<b>2. Approval of Agenda</b>  Motion by: Jeanne Gravelle Seconded: Tracey Weiler	
<b>3. Declared Pecuniary Interest</b> N/A	
<b>4. Approval of the July 8<sup>th</sup> Minutes</b>  Motion by: Kim Murphy Seconded: Jeanne Gravelle	
<b>5. School System Operational Business</b>  5.1. Updated Concussion Policy APH027  <div data-bbox="228 1457 1031 1908" data-label="Image"></div>	D. Stryker

# PPM 158

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm-158-jan-2020.pdf>



- Understanding PPM 158 is necessary to understand why APH027 is so robust.

## Rowan's Story

**FRIDAY, MAY 3rd 2013**

- Rowan Stringer, captain of Ottawa's John McRae High School rugby team, plays three games in an all-day tournament.
- Her mom, Kathleen, leaves briefly after the second game to make a Tim Hortons run and returns part way through the third game.
- While she is gone, Rowan is hit in the head.
- She goes to the bench, shakes it off for a bit, then returns to the field.
- In the evening, she complains to her mom of a headache and asks for a painkiller, but does not mention the incident in the game.

**MONDAY, MAY 6th, 2013**

- Kathleen Stringer travels to Brandon, Manitoba for work.
- Rowan plays another game in which she is dragged to the ground and clocked in the head with a shoe.
- The headache returns.

#### TUESDAY, MAY 7th, 2013

Rowan is not feeling right, as evidenced by her exchange of texts with friend Michelle Hebert:

Rowan: "I might have gotten a concussion ... have a headache again."

Michelle: "How was your game?"

Rowan: "Well I smashed it on the ground and then got kicked in the head."

Michelle: "Doesn't that happen every time?"

Rowan: "Which is why I probably have a concussion."

Michelle: "Ya well, you need to stop dying ... Are you still going to play on Wednesday?"

Rowan: "Yeah. Nothing can stop meeee! Unless I'm dead."

Michelle later suggests Rowan see a doctor which Rowan dismisses.

#### WEDNESDAY, MAY 8th, 2013

- Rowan suits up for another rugby match.
- In the second half, she is grabbed by the shirt and thrown to the ground with an illegal swing tackle.
- Rowan lands on her head.
- She sits up momentarily, then falls back to the ground, losing consciousness.
- She is rushed by ambulance to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

#### SATURDAY, MAY 11th, 2013

- Rowan is wheeled into the operating room where — in a final act of kindness, according to her previously stated wishes — surgeons remove her heart, lungs, liver, pancreas, kidneys and corneas for organ donation.

#### SUNDAY, MAY 12th, 2013

- Rowan Stringer is removed from life support on Mothers' Day. Her official cause of death is second-impact syndrome, a rare condition when a second concussion occurs before a previous one has time to heal, causing severe swelling of the brain.

## **Resources**

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-information-sports-organizations-and-schools>

### Rowan's Law - The Risk Commercial



<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rowans-law-information-sports-organizations-and-schools>

## **Some Key Points**

- PPM 158 was written for student concussions based from Rowan's Law which was enacted in March 2018.
- Staff dealing with concussions will continue to be supported through Health & Safety policies.
- All resources have been adopted from OPHEA & Parachute Canada and align with the Berlin consensus on concussions.
- Large increase and focus on staff training.

## **Three Pillars of APH 027**

- Awareness & Prevention
- Identifying Suspected Concussions
- Return to School Plan

## **Awareness & Prevention**

- Rowan's Law Day - Last Wednesday in September (Oct 7, 2020)
- Creation of Codes of Conduct
  - Students
  - Parents/Guardians
  - Coaches/Trainers
- Concussion Awareness Resource
- [www.wcdsb.ca/concussions](http://www.wcdsb.ca/concussions)

## **Return to School Plan**

- Return to School (RTS) = Return to Learn (RTL) + Return to Physical Activity (RTPA)
- Updated Passport for RTS Plan includes school and parental sign off at various stages of recovery
- Requires Medical Clearance to enter final stages of RTPA
- Includes a nine page RTS Plan resource for school and parents/guardians
- Collaborative team meetings occur when students cannot progress through the RTS plan in a 'normal' time

## **APH027**

### **Forms**

**01F-** Sport & Rec Consent  
**02F-** Suspected Concussion Identification  
**04F-** [Concussion Passport](#)  
**07F-** Intramurals Consent  
**09F-** Concussion Medical Assessment  
**10F-** Officials Confirmation  
**11F-** Suspected Concussion Tracking Tool  
**12F-** Concussion Awareness Tracking Coaches  
**13F-** Concussion Awareness Tracking Student/Parents  
**14F-** Concussion Code of Conduct Students  
**15F-** Concussion Code of Conduct Parents

### **Appendices**

**A-** Concussion Awareness Resource  
**B-** Code of Conduct Coaches & Trainers  
**C-** Identifying a Suspected Concussion Steps & Responsibilities  
**D-** [Return to School Plan](#)  
**E-** Return to Learn Accommodations



## **Final Points**

- Procedure is robust and heavily based on tracking, communication & documentation... we expect push back, but so far so good.
- If we do the awareness/training/prevention well, it will make the rest much easier.
- This will be a mindset shift:
  - Smoking
  - Seatbelts
  - Bike helmets

Q&A

### 5.2. COVID update - Question & Answers

- Protocols are provided by the Chief Health Officer and are implemented on the local level (boards are reviewing and updating practices)

Q&A

### 5.3. SEAC topics for 2020/21

#### **SEAC TOPICS FOR 2020-2021**

Month	Topic	Presenter	Location
September 9, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Covid Update</li><li>• New Concussion Policy</li></ul>	L. Shoemaker D. Stryker	Teams Online Meeting
October 7, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ABA/BCBA and Mental Health</li></ul>	T. Battistella S. Porty	Teams Online Meeting
November 4, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assistive Technology</li></ul>	C. Runstedler	Teams Online Meeting
December 2, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting
January 6, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting
February 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting
March 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting
April 7, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting
May 5, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting
May 19, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting
June 2, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• T.B.D.</li></ul>		Teams Online Meeting

L. Shoemaker

L. Shoemaker

<p><b>6. Ministry Updates (10 min)</b></p> <p>Ministry has been providing protocols, updates and answering questions. We are now working more with the public health. Our senior team is meeting weekly with the public health and working along side with them.</p>	
<p><b>7. SEAC Committee Functions</b> N/A</p>	
<p><b>8. Policy Advice to the Board</b> N/A</p>	
<p><b>9. Updates (20 minutes)</b></p> <p><b>9.1. Association Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>WRDSS</b> – Buddy Walk yearly event was transitioned to virtual event.</li> <li>• <b>WRFN:</b> Link to September Family Pulse newsletter that refers to the Q and A session on August 18. <a href="https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmailchi.mp%2F136bbcc67672%2Fwrfnfamilypulse%3Fe%3Dfc3c78289c&amp;data=02%7C01%7C0Ija.Djukanovic%40wcdsb.ca%7Cd5a9156a66484b40882908d855c258d6%7C723db89317ed44ec8613011938c37276%7C0%7C1%7C637353640487845291&amp;sdata=X7tRNu6KkqyloAaCBkxa4V64KYM3cTBDsAmHPBOshIM%3D&amp;reserved=0">https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmailchi.mp%2F136bbcc67672%2Fwrfnfamilypulse%3Fe%3Dfc3c78289c&amp;data=02%7C01%7C0Ija.Djukanovic%40wcdsb.ca%7Cd5a9156a66484b40882908d855c258d6%7C723db89317ed44ec8613011938c37276%7C0%7C1%7C637353640487845291&amp;sdata=X7tRNu6KkqyloAaCBkxa4V64KYM3cTBDsAmHPBOshIM%3D&amp;reserved=0</a> Direct link to the Q&amp;A document. <a href="https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwrfn.info%2FuserContent%2Fdocuments%2FQA%2520Aug%252018%2020.pdf&amp;data=02%7C01%7C0Ija.Djukanovic%40wcdsb.ca%7Cd5a9156a66484b40882908d855c258d6%7C723db89317ed44ec8613011938c37276%7C0%7C1%7C637353640487855286&amp;sdata=GPqhwmEpaQ8GK%2Bp9YYeqwrlS1xKXP87XeZNyGb2o8Co%3D&amp;reserved=0?">https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwrfn.info%2FuserContent%2Fdocuments%2FQA%2520Aug%252018%2020.pdf&amp;data=02%7C01%7C0Ija.Djukanovic%40wcdsb.ca%7Cd5a9156a66484b40882908d855c258d6%7C723db89317ed44ec8613011938c37276%7C0%7C1%7C637353640487855286&amp;sdata=GPqhwmEpaQ8GK%2Bp9YYeqwrlS1xKXP87XeZNyGb2o8Co%3D&amp;reserved=0?</a></li> </ul> <p><b>9.2. Trustee Updates</b></p> <p><b>Aug 24<sup>th</sup> – Special meeting regarding school reopening</b></p> <p>At the August 24th Special Board meeting, the Board received a more comprehensive overview of planning and proposals moving into the school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motion passed to write the letter to Minister with raised concern about class sizes and number of busses.</li> <li>• Passed the motion for masks to be required gr 4-12 but JK-3 do not require official exemption.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>10. Pending Items</b></p> <p>Reach to organizations we currently have a gap in membership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region</li> <li>• Autism Ontario – Waterloo Chapter)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>11. Adjournment</b></p> <p>Motion by: Kim Murphy Seconded: Jeanne Gravelle</p>	
<p><b>12. Action Items Place Holder</b></p>	





**Date:** October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
**To:** SEAC  
**From:** Director of Education, Superintendent of Learning: Special Education  
**Subject:** Autism Report

**Type of Report:**

- ☐ Decision-Making
- ☐ Monitoring
- ☐ Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

**Type of Information:**

- ☐ Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making
- ☐ Monitoring Information of Board Policy **XX XXX**
- ☒ Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

**Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)**

To communicate Waterloo Catholic District School Board's protocol for accessing support services for students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

**Alignment to the MYSP:**

*Nurturing Our Catholic Community:*

*Faith is lived and witnessed in community:* To strengthen and cultivate school, parish and home relationships.

*Students and Staff are healthy in mind body and spirit:* To strengthen system commitment to school, student and staff spiritual health.

*Everyone is included, respected and welcomed:* To increase improved awareness respect of differences within our school communities.

**Special Education Plan:**

Section 9. pg.107

**Background/Comments:**

Within the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, there are many support services available for students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Through a collaborative approach within a school team, the Classroom Teacher works alongside the Special Education Teacher to develop and provide appropriate programming for students diagnosed with ASD. Other school-level support staff involved may include an Educational Assistant and/or Child and Youth Care Worker. Additional supports are also available for students:

- arriving from another school or school board
- transitioning from Preschool
- newly diagnosed
- an updated assessment result that call for a review of strategies
- Individual Education Plan(IEP) revisions
- development of an IEP for students who may be experiencing challenges with transitions and the classroom environment.



When necessary, the school team will contact the Special Education Liaison (SEL) to discuss the need for other Student Services support. With parent consent, a student profile will be reviewed at a case conference or at a collaborative team meeting which includes some or all of the following members: Special Education Liaison, Speech & Language Pathologist, Psychoeducational Consultant, Social Worker, Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA)/Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Facilitator and Child & Youth Care Worker (CYCW). Through this multi-disciplinary team, further supports may be required from members of Student Services, for example, our Speech and Language Pathologists may complete an assessment and make a recommendation for an iPad with specialized software to augment a student's limited verbal output. The Collaborative Team may also determine that involvement from a BCBA/ABA Facilitator is necessary. This may include providing support for the school team in the use of understanding and applying Universal Supports, ABA strategies, identifying skill deficits and acquisition and the recommendation of ABA strategies to help students maintain and generalize new skills.

BCBA's and ABA Facilitators are a group of dedicated professionals who focus on the application of Applied Behaviour Analysis and Universal Supports in the classroom for all students, especially those with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Applied Behaviour Analysis uses methods based on scientific principles of learning and behaviour to build useful repertoires of behaviour and reduce problematic ones. Universal Supports are strategies designed for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, based on the principles of ABA. These strategies aid educators in promoting independence, preventing problem behaviours, increasing learning opportunities and assisting students in accessing the curriculum in a meaningful and inclusive way.

Our BCBA/ABA Facilitators serve as members of our Family of Schools Collaborative Teams. Including BCBA/ABA Facilitators as part of interdisciplinary Collaborative Teams promotes a holistic, creative and effective approach to supporting all our students, not just those diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

With the guidance of Universal Supports and the implementation of a variety of evidence-based ABA strategies, BCBA/ABA Facilitators focus on building capacity with school staff to assist with student skill acquisition that will allow the student to increase independence across all school environments, as well as participate with their peers in a socially significant and inclusive manner. Through data collection, review and analysis, BCBA/ABA Facilitators strive to determine the "why" (e.g., the function) behind behaviour(s). BCBA/ABA Facilitators will make recommendations based on function to assist with decreasing the unwanted behaviour(s) while teaching socially significant replacement skills. They also focus on teaching new skills and maintaining and generalizing existing skills. This could include the use of visual supports, reinforcements, prompts and prompt fading, data collection, environmental manipulations, transition supports and coaching/modelling of recommended strategies etc. Our BCBA/ABA Facilitators can also provide a variety of ABA based training and educational opportunities for school staff and assist in goal setting and measurement goals relevant to the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). They also develop and deliver training, workshops and resources to board wide to a variety of staff including Administrators, Classroom Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Educational Assistants and Child and Youth Care Workers. BCBA/ABA Facilitators have designed and delivered a series successive of Professional Development sessions that train staff in the understanding and application of Universal Supports and ABA Strategies. This includes topics such as: Universal Supports in the Classroom, Universal Supports Through the Lens of an Educational Assistant, The Application of Universal Supports, The Application of Universal Supporting During Challenging Behaviour and Supporting Student Transitions.

BCBA/ABA Facilitators will continue deliver the After-School Skill Development Program (ASSDP) using an evidence-based curriculum (PEERS) across each of our five Secondary Schools through 2021-2022 school years. BCBA/ABA Facilitators will also develop and deliver a hands on training (using an evidence based Behavioural Skills Model Training model (BST)) for all Child and Youth Care Workers (CYCW) with the expected outcome being that all CYCW's will be equipped to implement a series of PEERs groups within their own school by 2021-2022.

Further to this, BCBA/ABA Facilitators have developed a series of Educator and Parent Tip Sheets and Handouts, to support the continued implementation of ABA strategies for students both in the school and in the virtual environment.

### How to Access BCBA/ABA Facilitator Services:

The school team will contact the Special Education Liaison to discuss the need for Student Services support. With parent permission, a student profile will be reviewed at a case conference or at a collaborative team meeting that includes some or all of the following members: Special Education Liaison, Speech & Language Pathologist, Psychoeducational Consultant, Social Worker, BCBA/ABA Facilitator and Child & Youth Worker. Through this Collaborative Team or Case Conference and if deemed appropriate, the Special Education Liaison will direct the school to make an online referral using eLite. Once the BCBA /ABA Facilitator has received the referral, a decision will be made about the level of support required. Levels of support are *individual* and *student specific*. Such services may include: a review of ABA strategies (e.g., the use of prompts/prompt fading and reinforcement to support independence building), implementing effective strategies for students with ASD to ensure student success in an educational setting, building capacity by offering professional development and training to WCDSB staff for students with ASD and Universal Supports, collaborating with a multi-disciplinary team about students with ASD, assisting in the transition of students with ASD and other behavioural challenges. Recommendations and/or strategies will be provided, which can be woven into the student's current Individual Education Plan. Follow-up in classroom coaching and modelling (of recommendations) is provided using an evidence-based teaching procedure called Behavioural Skills Training.

One of the key principles of ABA programming is the collection and analysis of data. Reliable data must be collected and analysed on an ongoing basis to measure student progress in the acquisition of new behaviour and skills and identify skills or behaviours that need to be taught. The BCBA/ABA Facilitator can assist the school team around the development of individualized skill tracking, as outlined on the students IEP.

BCBA/ABA Facilitators will be available (via the referral process above) to support students in collaboration with the school-based team, in both classroom and virtual environments.

### **Recommendation:**

Presented for your information.

**Prepared/Reviewed By:** Loretta Notten  
Director of Education  
Laura Shoemaker  
Superintendent of Learning: Special Education

\*Bylaw 5.2 "where the Board of Trustees receives from the Director of Education a monitoring report that flows from a responsibility delegated to the Director under Board Policy – **except where approval is required by the Board of Trustees on a matter delegated by policy to the Board** – the minutes of the Meeting at which the Report is received shall expressly provide that the Board has received and approved of the Report as an action consistent with the authority delegated to the Director, subject in all instances to what otherwise actually occurred."





**Date:** October 7, 2020  
**To:** SEAC  
**From:** Director of Education, Superintendent of Learning: Special Education  
**Subject:** Mental Health Update

**Type of Report:**

- ☐ Decision-Making
- ☐ Monitoring
- ☒ Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

**Type of Information:**

- ☐ Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making
- ☐ Monitoring Information of Board Policy **XX XXX**
- ☒ Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

**Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)**

SEAC opportunities for informal and continuous consultation with SEAC are afforded at each SEAC meeting during which presentations are made about Special Education Programs.

**Alignment to the MYSP:**

*Nurturing Our Catholic Community:*

*Faith is lived and witnessed in community: To strengthen and cultivate school, parish and home relationships.*

*Students and Staff are healthy in mind body and spirit: To strengthen system commitment to school, student and staff spiritual health.*

*Everyone is included, respected and welcomed: To increase improved awareness respect of differences within our school communities.*

**Special Education Plan:**

Special Education Plan, Section 9

**Background/Comments:**

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board is dedicated to the wellbeing of students, families and staff by addressing the need for further development of programming that promote a strengths-based approach to develop resiliency skills, socioemotional learning, and behavioural competence within the context of Catholic Education and our Catholic community. The concentration on Mental Health and Wellbeing is an extension of the board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and is guided by a comprehensive 3-year Mental Health Strategy (2019-2020).

The goal at WCDSB is to promote mentally healthy school communities through a variety of approaches including providing learning opportunities for staff and students, raising awareness, combatting stigma, offering preventative skill-building programming, and promoting links to appropriate community resources. Our hope is that students and staff will have a foundational language and functional grasp of social-emotional and self-regulation skills, an understanding of how to promote positive mental health, a lens to identify when further help is needed, and an increased likelihood of engaging with supports when required.





To accomplish this, we are employing a number of different strategies to shared and reinforce key messages including offering professional development, providing access to online learning resources, student presentations, materials and lesson plans to integrate into the curriculum, social media links, and engagement with community partners on mental health and wellness initiatives. To measure the effectiveness of these initiatives we are engaging in formal bi-annual data collection and analysis re: resilience factors via MDI, and feedback from staff, administrators, students, and community partners.

In the unique situation with the global pandemic, we have adapted our practices to place a very strong emphasis on preparing our system to promote a mentally healthy return-to-school. Our annual plan (Appendix A) provides the broader objectives of what we hope to achieve over the course of the year, while remaining flexible and adaptive as the needs of our students and system evolve. A new Board Scan adapted to focus the work that needs to unfold in the context of Covid will be released by School Mental Health Ontario later this fall and will continue to inform the work we will do to achieve these overarching goals for the 2020-2021 school year:

- a) To strengthen system-wide commitment to WCDSB's vision for mental health and wellbeing through initiatives which engage students, parents and staff in working towards mentally healthy school communities.
- b) To continue to support strengths-based, trauma-informed practice in the education setting.
- c) To build staff capacity to support students and ourselves in the area of mental health and wellbeing.
- d) To continue to expand and strengthen our community partnerships, creating a coordinated and integrated pathway of care for students
- e) To continue to promote and educate regarding our Suicide, Self-harm and Depression protocol, while continuing to review prevention programming, interventions and postvention unique to the needs of students within WCDSB.
- f) To promote evidence-informed practice across all three Tiers with clear and measurable objectives.

To highlight specifically the accomplishments for the 2019-2020 school year and goals for the coming year please consult the below summary:

Over the course of 2019-2020 we continued to prioritize equipping staff, students, and families with the knowledge they need to promote positive mental health in their students. This included PD opportunities that reached over 2664 staff, students, and/or families this past year, which included tailored training to targeted groups including the Secondary School Improvement Heads, the Student Success Team, the Vision Itinerants, Guidance Teachers, EA's, CYCW's, and Parent Council groups. We also made substantial investment in co-facilitating the Mo Willems Emotional Literacy lessons in multiple classrooms at two targeted schools.

To ensure our pathways to service were clear, we created and launched a Mental Health and Wellness webpage (<https://www.wcdsb.ca/programs-and-services/mental-health-and-well-being-at-wcdsb/>). Staff, students and families have used this accessible resource for information about mental health, examples of self-care/calming practices, and links to services in the community. This will continue to be a priority in 2020-2021 as we expand on this work, and we will continue to incorporate resources that can specifically promote wellness in the context of the pandemic.

In response to Covid-19, our goals and activities shifted to meet the emerging needs of students, staff and families in our WCDSB community in the emergency distance learning format. This included providing virtual presentations to a variety of audiences on Cultivating Wellness during Covid (i.e. PD days, staff meetings, parent council meetings), with a focus on normalizing the impact that chronic stress has on our brains and bodies and the need for adjusted expectations, self-compassion, and hope-filled conversations as we moved through these uncertain times. To ensure our students received seamless care after the school closures, our Social Work Team shifted to phone-based care, and in September 2020 launched a virtual care option via the OTN network. We have placed a strong emphasis on supporting students with identified mental health concerns to meet their unique needs in the context of the pandemic, including providing access to Social Work support over the summer months, and additional support to facilitate re-engagement with school this fall.

Last year we also continued to target skills around understanding and managing stress/anxiety through the GoZen elementary classroom programming. Following the school closures we launched over 160 elementary "student licenses" so that interested students and their families could continue to develop these skills during the period of distance learning.

This fall we have focused on promoting a mentally healthy return-to-school through resources provided by School Mental Health Ontario. Recognizing that re-establishing a sense of safety, belonging and connection would be pivotal to effectively re-engaging our students in learning activities, our initial focus was in-servicing all educators





and support staff on how to support wellbeing through the transition back to learning, as described in “The First Ten Days” <https://smho-smso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/The-First-10-Days.pdf>. We will continue to draw from the SMHO resources to promote wellbeing in the coming school year.

Our plan for 2020-2021 will include continuing to prioritize flexible Tier One “good for all” programming, including options which are specifically designed for the distance learning format. As one new tool, we plan to provide our St. Isidore educators with access to a digital library of children’s books that target specific socioemotional skills (i.e. optimism, empathy, gratitude, coping skills).

To ensure our system is equipped to support Tier Two/Three students we will continue our commitment to suicide alertness and prevention. Whereas last year we were able to certify 63 staff through the in-person safeTALK training, in 2020-21 we will shift to alternative means to accomplish these same goals in a manner that is consistent with covid protocols. Additionally, given the need for most services to shift to adapted service delivery models during Covid, we will continue to work very closely with our community partners to continue to ensure there continue to be clear, flexible, and comprehensive pathways to supports that meet the needs of children and youth in our community.

Finally, much of the broader, system-level work is taking place through the work of the Wellbeing Strategy Steering Committee. One goal for this year is to create a new section on the website that reflects the multiple dimensions of wellbeing, including Spiritual, Physical, Mental Health, Equity, and promoting safe and inclusive schools. As our focus on multi-dimensional aspects of wellbeing has increased, we will also continue to use natural opportunities to incorporate a wellbeing component into existing whole-board initiatives (i.e. Faith Day, Catholic Education/Mental Health Week, Pray@Home webpage).

### **Recommendation:**

Presented for your information.

**Prepared/Reviewed By:** Loretta Notten  
Director of Education  
Laura Shoemaker  
Superintendent of Learning: Special Education

\*Bylaw 5.2 “where the Board of Trustees receives from the Director of Education a monitoring report that flows from a responsibility delegated to the Director under Board Policy – **except where approval is required by the Board of Trustees on a matter delegated by policy to the Board** – the minutes of the Meeting at which the Report is received shall expressly provide that the Board has received and approved of the Report as an action consistent with the authority delegated to the Director, subject in all instances to what otherwise actually occurred.”

# Waterloo Catholic District School Board

## (Draft) Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2020-2021

<div> <div>Called to Belong</div> <div>Called to Become</div> <div>Sent to Build</div> </div>				
WCDSB Mental Health and Wellness 3 Year Plan 2018-2021	SMHO PRIORITY	Action 2020-2021	Responsibility	Targeted Timeline
To strengthen system-wide commitment to WCDSB's vision for Mental Health and Wellbeing through initiatives which engage students, parents and staff in working towards mentally healthy school communities.	Organizational conditions at the provincial, district AND school level	Consulting with a range of stakeholders to inform the mental health and wellness initiatives in the board	MH Lead	Winter term
		Support the development and implementation of the WCDSB Wellness Strategy, and promote alignment to the mental health and wellbeing initiatives	Wellness Strategy Steering Committee, Superintendents, Administrators	Ongoing
		Collaborate with the Math and PhysEd leads to support delivery of evidence-informed socioemotional literacy skill building through the new curricula that have rolled out	Mental Health Lead, Healthy Living Consultant & SO, Mathematics Student Achievement Consultant	Fall term
		Promote Everyday Mental Health principles and practices	Mental Health Lead	Fall term
	Parent and family engagement for mental health awareness-building	Engage interested families in building their child's socioemotional literacy skills through GoZen student licenses	MH Lead, Student Services Team, Schools, parents/caregivers	Fall term

		Increased engagement with families in planning and implementation.	MH Lead, CSAC Chair/SO, community partners	Fall term
		Collaborate with community partners together with WRDSB (WRFN, PCMH, FOW's)		
		Increased focus on parents/caregiver wellness, promoting services in the community	MHLead, SW Team -> Collaborative Teams	Fall term
	Best Practices for Youth Engagement	Increase connection to students in mental health planning and implementation (i.e. Leadership classes, SAC's, focus groups)	MH Lead	Fall term
To continue to support strengths-based, trauma informed practice in the education setting.	Development/support for evidence-informed, implementation-sensitive practice	Support the use of SEL programming to engage students in concrete skill-building activities (i.e. Umbrella Project, GoZen)	MH Lead, SO (Safe Schools)	Fall term
		Tier One and targeted Tier Two positive mental health promotion activities (i.e. promoting self-regulation practices, growth mindset, etc.) and combat stigma (i.e. Bell Let's Talk, Mental Health Week)	MH Lead, SW Lead, SW's, Student Services, school staff	Fall term
To build staff capacity to support students and ourselves in the area of Mental Health and Wellbeing.	Learning and training for Educators, principals, superintendents	Contribute to PD for all teachers on promoting a mentally healthy return-to-school	MH Lead, Transitions Team	Fall term
		Promote the Mental Health Literacy in Action course for Teachers, ECE's, and EA's	MH Lead, Supervisors of the respective departments	Winter term
		Support the development of a strategy and resources for effectively implementing SEL in the context of distance learning	MH Lead, St. Isidore leadership team	Fall term
		Create and launch a catalogue of SEL themed books that are available in print and/or electronically.	MH Lead, Library Support Services Supervisor	Fall term

		Livestreamed and/or recorded PD opportunities (i.e. lunch 'n learns, staff meeting presentations) on targeted topics (i.e. promoting wellness during covid, anxiety, trauma-informed schools)	MH Lead	Fall term
		Offer training to targeted groups (i.e. CYCW's, NTIP, BCBA's, Induction Program)	MH Lead	Fall term
		Administrator meeting presentations	MH Lead, SO	1-3x per year
	Focused learning and training for educators in special roles (e.g., Guidance)	Recorded PD for targeted groups (i.e. St. Isidore, Guidance, EA's, Planning time Teachers) Supporting Student Mental Health during the Pandemic	MH Lead and/or SW's	Fall term
		Co-create resources and wellness activities that promote wellbeing both lenses during the shared Mental Health Week/Catholic Education Week	MH Lead, Religion & Family Life Consultant	Winter Term
		Equip the SET team as mental health champions in the schools	MH Lead, SEL's	Ongoing
	Learning and training for Social Workers	Targeted training via School Mental Health Ontario (i.e. BRISC, CBT training, Brief Digital Interventions, etc.)	Lead SW Social Workers	Ongoing
	The lens of equity across mental health and substance use prevention initiatives.	Promote initiatives aimed to help all students feel safe, welcomed, accepted and a sense of belonging	MH Lead	Ongoing
		Considering the needs of a diverse group of students in the design and implementation of mental health promotion initiatives	MH Lead	Ongoing
		Make connections with the Equity committee to determine how we can support positive mental health in marginalized populations	MH Lead, SO, Indigenous Support Teacher	Fall

		Promote resources to support educators in facilitating safe and healthy conversations about anti-black and anti-indigenous racism, etc.	MH Lead, K-12 Indigenous Support Teacher	Fall
	Cannabis and Vaping Prevention	Support the Board’s Cannabis and Vaping Prevention initiatives	Healthy and Active Living Consultant, MH Lead	As needed
To continue to expand and strengthen our community partnerships creating a coordinated and integrated pathway of care for students.	Tools for developing and communicating about system pathways.	Improve web-based information about community resources, apps and reliable sources of mental health information	MH Lead	Fall term
		Launch SMHO help-seeing brochures in secondary schools	MH Lead	
		Every school staff member can articulate the pathways to mental health support	MH Lead, SO’s, Principals	
		Every student can articulate the pathways to mental health support	MH Lead, Teachers, all school staff, SW’s, Guidance	
		Students feel supported with their mental health		
To continue to promote and educate regarding suicide, self-harm and depression protocol, while continuing to review prevention programming, interventions and postvention, unique to the needs of students within WCDSB.	Suicide Prevention Protocol	Continued commitment to annual board-wide training on suicide protocols in all schools	SO’s, Principals, SW Supervisor, SW’s	Fall term
		Investigate alternatives to SafeTALK training to promote suicide alertness and help-seeking	MH Lead	Ongoing
To promote evidence-informed practice across all three Tiers with clear and measurable objectives.	Progress and impact monitoring	Use of PD feedback forms to measure effectiveness of content and delivery of Mental Health PD being offered	MH Lead	Ongoing
		Support Administrators in developing goal-directed plans to promote wellness in their their schools	WCDSB Researcher, MH Lead	Ongoing

		Solicit feedback on GoZen programming via staff survey	MH Lead, WCDSB Researcher	Winter term
		Collaborate with Research Coordinator to collect data about our Social Work service delivery in Tier Two/Three supports	Lead Social Worker, Research Coordinator	Ongoing

September 21, 2020

The Honourable Stephen Lecce  
Minister of Education  
22<sup>nd</sup> Floor Mowat Block,  
900 Bay St  
Toronto, ON, M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Lecce:

**Re: Request for Fall 2020 Process Exemption: Special Incidence Portion Submission Requirements**

We are requesting that the Ministry of Education provide an exemption to the submission requirements for all Boards of Education specific to the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) for Fall 2020. In the past, the dollars received through this process provided essential funding to support the staffing support requirements for students with high needs; it continues to be essential within Special Education budgeting.

The 2020-21 school year poses unique challenges to students, families and educational staff, as there is a need to ensure a continued high level of education services, albeit in different forms and structures, while maintaining essential health and safety protocols. As such, the Ministry of Education has already acknowledged that mental health and special education programming requirements will be heightened this fall in response to COVID. Embedded within the Ministry of Education planning for the 2020-21 is acknowledgement that the mental health and special education needs of students will be heightened and require augmented strategies and staffing. Boards are, rightfully, required to “implement a tiered approach for mental health supports that will capture all students and target intensive help to those who have been most affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.” Reference : <https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-reopening-ontarios-schools>, Section 7).

Within this context, it will prove challenging to proceed with typical SIP application processes. The focus and time of staffing including Mental Health Professionals, Special Education school staff, and Administrators must be on the health, well-being and safety of students. Pulling time away this fall for these professionals to engage in a submission process is not effective use of their skills and time.

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As a solution, we propose that for this current school year, a funding formula be based on a 'five-year funding approval average' to confirm SIP Funding to each Board of Education. This would accomplish:

- Maintaining staffing complement, which SIP funding helps contribute to the cost of providing to the students with intensive needs;
- Allow the staff involved in the extensive application process to focus that time and support directly into student service rather than grant application and documentation process.

The Ministry of Education has the opportunity to send a strong message on the prioritization of health & safety, well-being, and direct service of students with complex needs by waiving the SIP submission process for Fall 2020 and confirming continuity of the funding provided through that amount to boards for the longer-term stability of related staffing. The DDSB is requesting that a one-year submission exemption to SIP applications be supported and that, based on 2019-20 funding amounts of \$27,679 per full time (1.0 ADE) eligible student per year, an average of the *previous five-year funding amounts* be allocated to each Board in lieu of the submission process being engaged in for fall 2020.

The Ministry of Education sets expectation for the efficient use of resources to support students:

*Boards of Education are responsible for the effective, efficient and impactful use of funding. The Ministry of Education grounds this requirement for the effective use of public funding: "The government remains committed to investments that have the greatest impact on the classroom, while ensuring tax dollars are used more effectively."* Reference: [https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/B2020/B08\\_EN.pdf](https://efis.fma.csc.gov.on.ca/faab/Memos/B2020/B08_EN.pdf), p.1

For this unique school year where responsivity is paramount, the DDSB is requesting that SIP Application procedures be waived, and that funding be based on the average of our previous five years of SIP submissions.

Sincerely,



Chris Braney, Chair  
Durham District School Board

cc: Chairs of all Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees  
Norah Marsh, Acting Director of Education  
Local MPPs

