



Special Board of Trustees' Board Meeting

Date: Monday, June 6, 2022

Time: 6:00 p.m.

** Committee of the Whole In Camera, if necessary, will precede or follow the Board Meeting, as appropriate.*

Location: 1st floor Board Room, Catholic Education Centre, 35 Weber Street, Kitchener

Attendees:

Board of Trustees:
Bill Conway, Manuel da Silva, Jeanne Gravelle (Chair), Shannon Nash, Wendy Price, Hans Roach, Brian Schmalz, Melanie Van Alphen (leave), Tracey Weiler

Student Representatives:
Sarah Simoes, Sarah Wilson

Senior Administration:
Loretta Notten, Jason Connolly, Gerald Foran, John Klein, Shesh Maharaj, Judy Merkel, Jennifer Ritsma, Annalisa Varano

Special Resource:

Recording Secretary:
Alice Figueiredo

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
1. Call to Order	Chair		
1.1 Opening Prayer/Memorials	Board Pastoral Team		
1.2 Territorial Acknowledgement I (we) would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather today is the land traditionally used by the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral People. I (we) also acknowledge the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge, laws and philosophies of the Indigenous People with whom we share this land today.	Chair		
1.3 Approval of Agenda	Board of Trustees		Approval
1.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest	Individual Trustees		
1.4.1 From the current meeting			
1.4.2 From a previous public or in-camera meeting			
1.5 Items for Action: In-Camera meeting of May 30, 2022, regarding HRS matters.	Board of Trustees	--	Approval
2. Consent Agenda: Director of Education (e.g.: day –to –day operational matters from the Ministry of Education that the Board is required to do)			
3. Consent Agenda: Board (Minutes of meetings, staff report)			
4. Delegations/Presentation			

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
5. Advice from the CEO			
5.1 Middle Years Index and Student Well-Being 5.2 Proposed 2022-23 School Year Budget https://www.wcdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2022/06/2022-2023-Budget-Book.pdf	J. Merkel/K. Roberts S. Maharaj /L. Isaac/R. King	pp. 4-14 pp. 15-16	Information Information
6. Ownership Linkage (Communication with the External Environment)			
7. Reports from Board Committees/Task Forces			
8. Board Education (at the request of the Board)			
8.1 OCSTA/CCSTA Communications	Chair	pp. 17-31	Information
9. Policy Discussion			
10. Assurance of Successful Board Performance			
11. Assurance of Successful Director of Education Performance			
12. Potential Agenda Items/Trustee Inquiry Report (CEO)			
13. Announcements			
13.1 Upcoming Meetings/Events (all scheduled for the Catholic Education Centre unless otherwise indicated): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 9: Blessing/Community Leaders Event June 13: Board of Trustee's Meeting June 15: Resurrection Convocation June 21: St. Mary's Convocation June 23: Monsignor Doyle Convocation June 27: St. Benedict Convocation June 28: St. David Convocation 	Chair	--	Information
13.3 Pending Items: 13.4 Pending Items for OCSTA Consideration	<u>Committee/Task Force</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>
14. Items for the Next Meeting Agenda	Trustees		
Board of Trustees' Board Meeting– June 13, 2022 General Exec Limitations IV – 002 and 003 Financial Planning/Budgeting – Monitoring Report IV – 007 Student Census Update MYSP Report General Exec Limitations – Monitoring Report IV – 001 Linkages/Pastoral Committee Report to Board Interim Financial Report #3 Board Policy II 001 General Governance Commitment Board Policy II 009 Board Committee Principles Board Policy II 010 Board Committee Structure John Sweeney Award	Board of Trustees	--	Information

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
15. Adjournment	Director of Education		
Confirm decisions made tonight			
15.1 Confirm Decision made tonight	Recording Secretary	--	Information
16. Closing Prayer			
17. Motion to Adjourn	Board of Trustees	Motion	Approval

CLOSING PRAYER

O Risen Lord, you have entrusted us with the responsibility to help form a new generation of disciples and apostles through the gift of our Catholic schools.

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

May our Catholic schools truly be at the heart of the community, fostering success for each by providing a place for all.

May we and all whom we lead be discerning believers formed in the Catholic faith community; effective communicators; reflective and creative thinkers; self-directed, responsible, life-long learners; collaborative contributors; caring family members; and responsible citizens.

Grant us the wisdom of your Spirit so that we might always be faithful to our responsibilities.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Rev. Charlie Fedy, CR and the Board of Trustees, 2010



Date: June 6, 2022
To: Board of Trustees
From: Director of Education
Subject: Middle Years Index and Student Well-Being

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)

- Education Act: 306-311; Regulations: 37/01 (2), 106/01
- Ministry Policy & Program Memoranda 119, 120, 128, 130, 141, 142, 144, 145,
- Safe Schools Act (2000) (2009): 309-312
- Bill 13, Accepting Schools Act (2012)
- Bill 157, Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act (Feb.1, 2010)
- Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations
- 1001: Ends

Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:

- [Ontario's Well-Being Strategy](#)

Alignment to the MYSP:

Strategic Priority: Building Capacity to Lead, Learn and Live Authentically

Strategic Directions: Nurture the wellbeing of all students and staff.

Goal: Increase in student attendance and engagement

Strategic Priority: Nurturing Our Catholic Community

Strategic Directions: Promote a culture of belonging and respect, that supports success for all

Goal: Equitable Access to Learning Opportunities



Background/Comments:

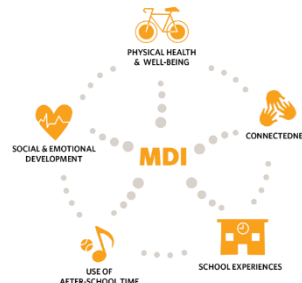
The Waterloo Catholic District school board has a Ministry requirement to conduct a [School Climate Survey](#) with students, staff and parents at least once every two years as they all play a key role in contributing to a positive school climate.

The students, staff and parent community completed the school climate surveys is year between February 22nd and March 22nd. The Staff and Parent/Guardians completed the survey created by the Ontario Ministry of Education, whereas student from Grades 4 through 12 completed the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) developed by the [Human Early Learning Partnership](#) at the University of British Columbia. The Waterloo Catholic District School Board has used the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) as our Safe Caring and Inclusive School (SCIS) survey for students for the past two cycles (i.e., first implementation in 2019, and deferred to 2022 from 2021 due to the COVID19 pivot to virtual learning). The MDI is a self-report questionnaire that asks children in Grade 4 through 12 about their thoughts, feelings and experiences in school and in the community. The MDI uses a strengths-based approach to assess five areas of development that are strongly linked to well-being, health, and academic achievement.



These areas are:

- Physical Health & Well-Being
- Social & Emotional Development
- Connectedness
- Use of After-School Time
- School Experiences



HOW ARE MDI DATA REPORTED?

Each of the 5 areas of development (dimensions) have a variety of measures based on groups of survey questions developed by the [Human Early Learning Partnership](#). Overall index scores are then generated using the measures indicated below:



* Indicates measures for Grades 7 through 12 only

5 DIMENSIONS OF THE MDI



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MEASURES

- Optimism
- Empathy
- Prosocial Behaviour
- Self-Esteem
- Happiness
- Absence of Sadness
- Absence of Worries
- Self-Regulation (Short- & Long-Term)
- * Responsible Decision-Making
- * Self-Awareness
- * Perseverance
- * Assertiveness
- * Citizenship and Social Responsibility



PHYSICAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

MEASURES

- General Health
- Eating Breakfast
- Meals with Adults in Your Family
- Food
- Frequency of Good Sleep
- Help-Seeking for Emotional Well-Being
- Transportation to and from School

* These questions are on the Grade 6/7/8 MDI only



CONNECTEDNESS

MEASURES

- Adults at School
- Adults in the Neighbourhood
- Adults at Home
- Peer Belonging
- Friendship Intimacy
- Important Adults



USE OF AFTER-SCHOOL TIME

MEASURES

- Organized Activities
 - Educational Lessons or Activities
 - Youth Organizations
 - Sports
 - Music or Arts
- How Children Spend Their Time
- After-School People and Places
- Children's Wishes and Barriers



SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

MEASURES

- Academic Self-Concept
- School Climate
- School Belonging
- Motivation
- Future Goals
- Victimization and Bullying

WELL-BEING INDEX

- A measure in the Well-Being Index

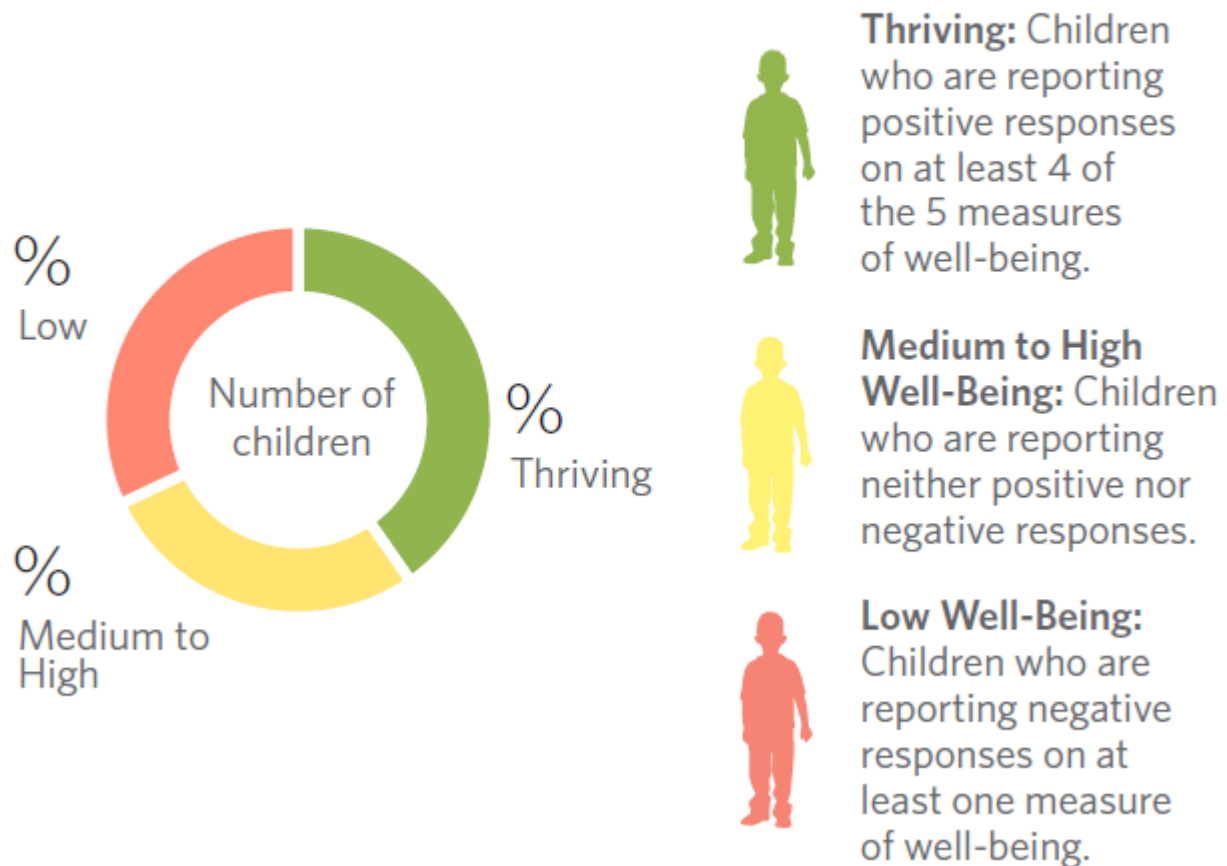


ASSETS INDEX

- A measure in the Assets Index



FIG 1: THE WELL-BEING INDEX



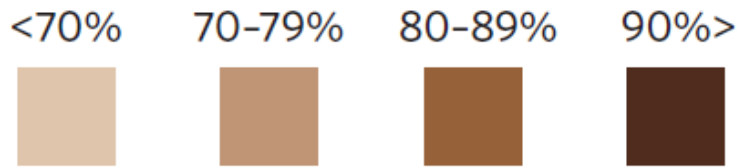
MEASURING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

WELL-BEING & ASSETS

The first overall index score that is generated is the MDI Well-Being Index which includes the critical measures of importance relating to children's physical health and social and emotional development: *Optimism, Happiness, Self-Esteem, Absence of Sadness, and General Health*. Scores from these five measures are combined to create the MDI Well-Being Index, which assesses three categories of well-being: 'Thriving,' (or experiencing 'High' well-being), experiencing 'Medium to High' well-being, or 'Low' well-being. (Fig. 1)

FIG 2: THE ASSETS INDEX

Percentage of children reporting the presence of assets in their lives



Fewer assets \longleftrightarrow More assets

All Participating Districts

%
Adult
Relationships



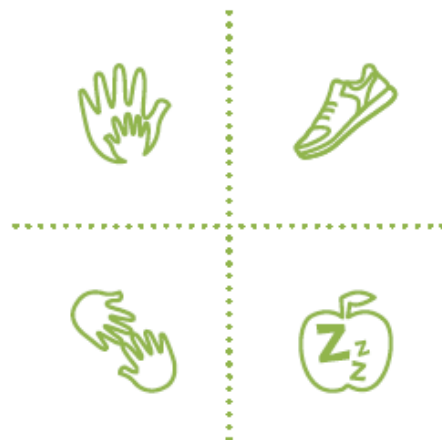
%
After-School
Activities



%
Peer
Relationships



%
Nutrition and
Sleep



Assets are positive, everyday influences and resources that are known to protect children against vulnerability and promote positive well-being during the middle years. The MDI Assets Index measures qualities present in children's lives that make a difference: *Positive Adult Relationships, Positive Peer Relationships, After-school Activities, and Nutrition & Sleep*. (Fig.2) Each asset is calculated and reported as the percentage of children reporting the presence of the asset in their lives.

Resiliency research shows that assets are qualities in children's lives that promote positive development. This aligns with one of the key findings of the MDI that indicates children's self-reported health and well-being is related to the number of assets they perceive in their lives. As the number of assets in a child's life increases, they are more likely to report higher levels of well-being.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS STUDENT POPULATION BREAKDOWN

	2019		2022	
	Student Responses (#)	Approximate Response Rate (%)	Student Responses (#)	Approximate Response Rate (%)
Grade 4 to 6	~4,466*	89%	4812	93%
Grade 7 to 8	3,114	93%	3304	92%
Grade 9 to 12	2,309	35%	4192	56%
Total**	9,889	66%	12,308	75%

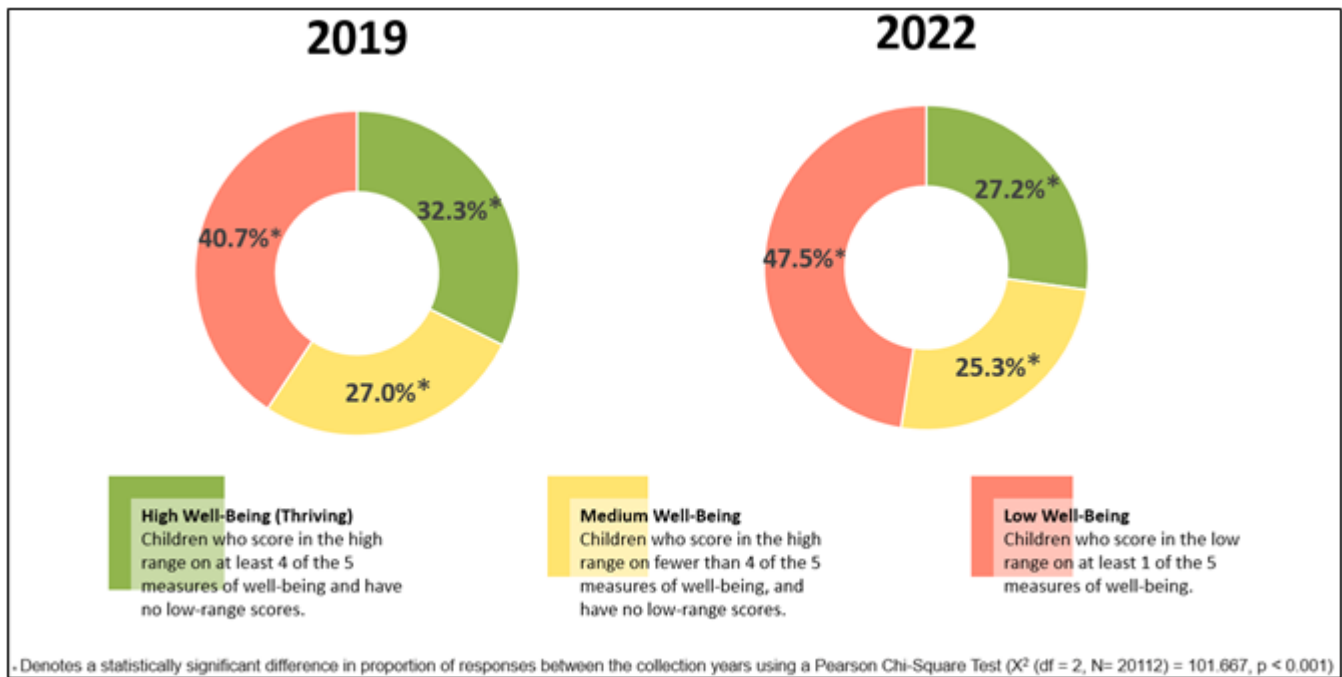
*Approximate number of participants due to methodological design for Grades 4 through 6. The MDI survey was administered as two separate anonymous surveys with 8930 total responses combining part A and part B.

**Total Sample: Refers to the total number (#) of students represented in this report. Students are included in the sample if they complete a question, and the data are reported. Some students did not indicate their grade and are included in the total.

WELL-BEING INDEX

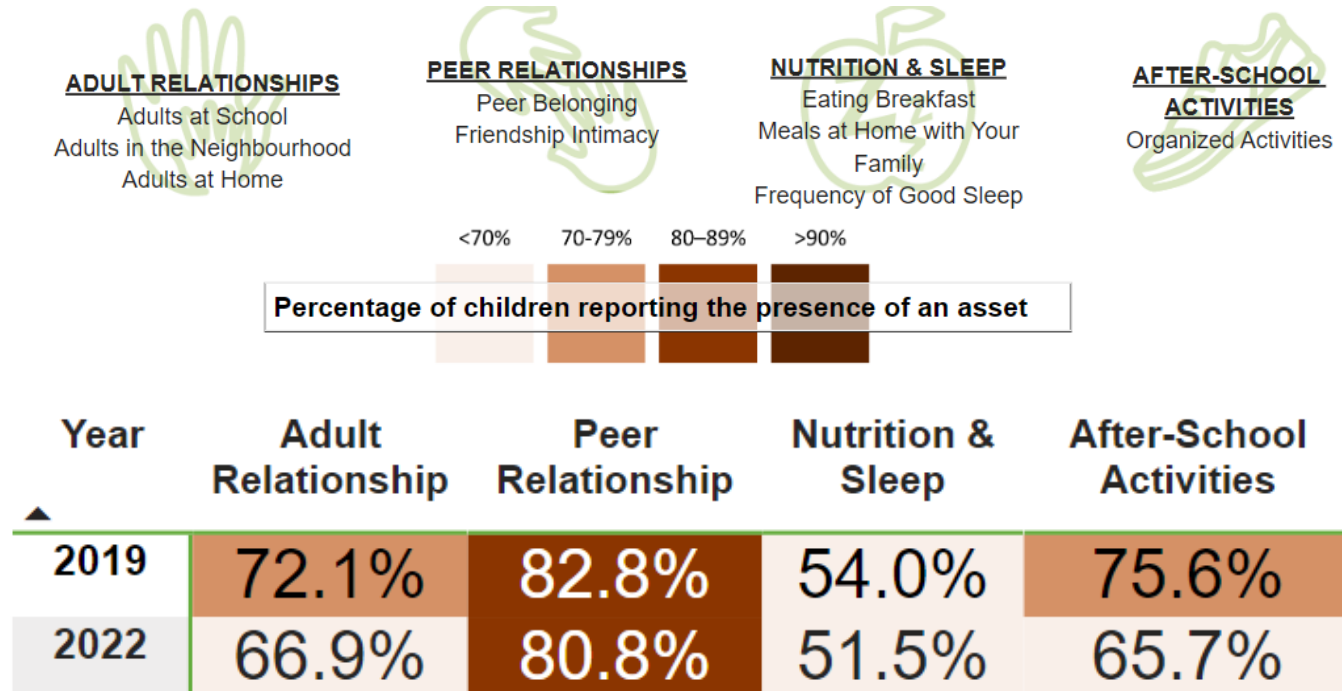
The Well-Being Index consists of measures relating to children's physical health and social and emotional development that are of importance during the middle years. Students are identified on the Well-Being Index as 'Thriving', 'Medium to High Well-Being' or 'Low Well-Being' based on their responses on 5 measures of well-being. The results of the 2019 and 2022 MDI Well-Being Index are included below. Although we are seeing a significant increase in the proportion of students who are categorized as having "LOW Well-being", we do know that 45% of these students contained only 1 negative response when we look at the 5 contributing measures that are used in the calculation.





ASSET INDICES

The Assets Index combines MDI measures that highlight four key assets that help to promote children's positive development and well-being. Assets are positive experiences, relationships or behaviours present in children's lives. Assets are considered actionable, meaning that schools and communities can focus their efforts in these areas to create the conditions and contexts where children can thrive.



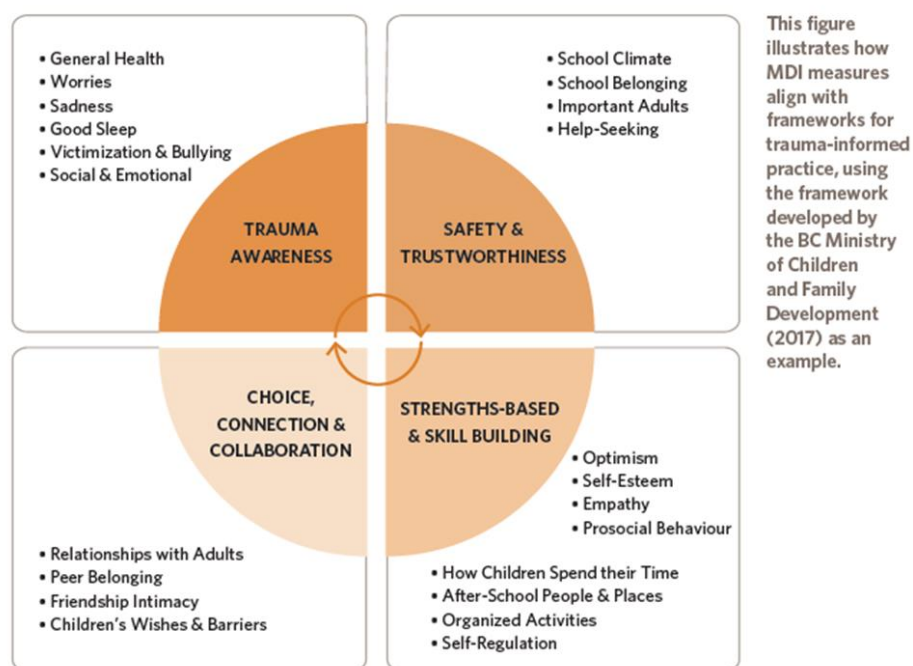
This data suggests that based on pre-covid survey and post-covid our students have experienced an overall decline in positive well-being. This important information will guide us going forward to establish and assess perceptions of safety – from students, parents, and school staff, make informed planning decisions about programs to help promote safe and inclusive schools, and determine the effectiveness of our programs on an ongoing basis and build and sustain positive school climates.

MDI and Connections to our Tier 1 Mental Health Support

Once schools have some time to get to know their data, they'll be looking to consider what can be done to make a positive impact in the areas where their students are struggling, and where can they build on strengths. The data can be used to understand the overall wellbeing of students and to plan interventions.

Two mental health practices and resources that can be linked to MDI measures currently being offered through WCDSB's Mental Health Lead are Trauma Informed Practices, and Social Emotional Learning, through School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO). These two practices are complementary and both essential for classrooms in terms of student mental health and wellbeing. Trauma Informed Practices are 'Good for All' Classroom approaches that focus on how we understand students, how we see and relate to them. Social Emotional Learning are skills that we support students in building, ideally in everyday classroom interactions.

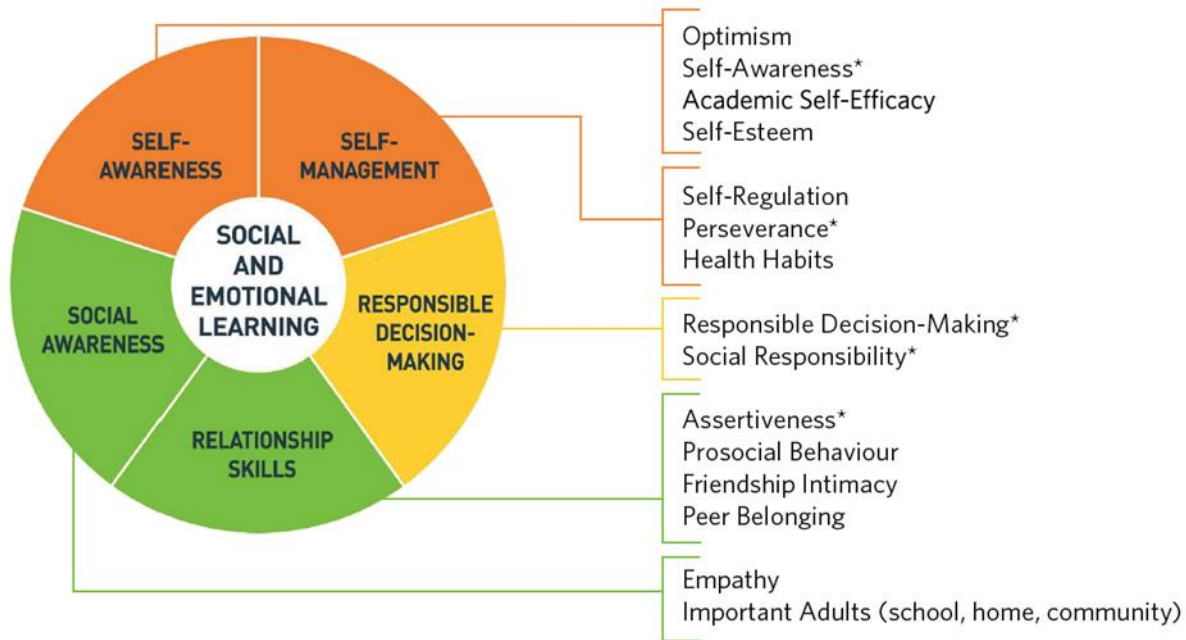
This graphic shows us how some of the MDI measures align with Trauma Informed Practice and can help us see patterns in the data that may indicate populations that are more impacted than others and areas where we can put our focus to make the most impact.



This graphic highlight indicates the clear ties from MDI measures to Social and Emotional Learning Skills. Years of research have demonstrated that SEL promotes academic learning and achievement in addition to fostering social and emotional competencies (Corcoran et al, 2018).

CASEL SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING SKILLS

MDI MEASURES *Grade 6/7/8



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Thomson et al. (2017)

To support school's implementation of both practices, tools are being released to tie specific MDI measures to the resources that can support the learning.

A two-page Trauma Informed Classroom Practices Guide serves as a reminder of the five core principles of trauma informed practice and provides links to additional resources to dive into each principle more deeply. In the 2022-2023 school year, a learning module for each principle will be released monthly as an opportunity for schools to learn more deeply and embed the practices.



Moving to Action: Trauma Informed Classroom Practices



CONNECTEDNESS

MEASURES

- Adults at School
- Adults in the Neighbourhood
- Adults at Home
- Peer Belonging
- Friendship Intimacy
- Important Adults

Trauma-Informed Approach for WCDsb Schools

Adapted from WCDsb & Four Core Priorities for Trauma-Informed Distance Learning

Establish Connection

- Focus on Student well-being and foster relationship through respectful curiosity and compassion
- Listen, Affirm, and validate students' feelings and experiences to build trust and safety
- Become aware of your unconscious biases to build community where all have a sense of belonging

Be Predictable ↔ Be Flexible

Be Predictable

- Create consistent daily routines
- Establish clear, achievable expectations
- Nurture & sustain an inclusive environment through warm relationships free from judgement

Be Flexible

- Offer developmentally appropriate choices
- Engage students in decision making
- Be responsive to unpredictable situations by modeling a growth mindset


Delight in your Students

- Provide an inviting welcome whenever, and however, students enter your room
- Welcome mistakes as teachable moments
- Believe in your students...celebrate them!

Co-Regulate

- Regulate your emotions to model and support students to self-regulate
- Teach and co-create strategies to build calm minds and bodies
- Respond with empathy and share your calm

* Necessary for Some, Good for All!



SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

MEASURES


- Academic Self-Concept
- School Climate
- School Belonging
- Motivation
- Future Goals
- Victimization and Bullying

Recommended Links to Trauma-Informed Resources

- [Helping Students Cope with Change and Disruption](#)
- [Helping Traumatized Children Learn](#)
- [Trauma Toolkit for Educators](#)
- Connection**
[Building Relationships with Students who have experienced Trauma](#)
[Brene Brown on Empathy](#)
[Framing Brave Conversations about Race and Ethnicity](#)
- Predictable**
[Consistency & Predictability: Trauma Informed Educational Practices Project](#)
- Be Flexible**
[The Flexible Teacher](#)
[Flexible Classrooms - YouTube](#)
- Delight**
[The Importance of Delighting in our Children](#)
[Fresh Starts for hard to Like Students](#)
- Co-Regulate**
[Dr. Dan Siegel's Hand Model of the Brain](#)
[Calming Together: the Pathway to Self-Control](#)

As school staff, we aren't always aware of students' experiences of trauma
Therefore, it is vital for all of us to adopt a trauma-informed approach
Necessary for Some, Good for All!

Social and Emotional Development is a key area of focus for School Mental Health Ontario. SMHO has developed a catalogue of classroom ready resources designed to be implemented by teachers in classrooms as part of everyday practices. Our Mental Health Lead has created a resource to guide MDI measures to Specific Faith and Wellness Classroom Practices through SMHO to strengthen each Social Emotional Skill.




SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MEASURES

- Optimism
- Empathy
- Prosocial Behaviour
- Self-Esteem
- Happiness
- Absence of Sadness
- Absence of Worries
- Self-Regulation (Short- & Long-Term)
- Responsible Decision-Making
- Self-Awareness
- Perseverance
- Assertiveness
- Citizenship and Social Responsibility

Moving to Action: SMHO SEL (Faith & Wellness Daily Classroom Practices)



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Optimism

Elementary: Practising optimism... Positive motivation and perseverance... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource (smho-smho.ca)

Secondary: Practising optimism... Positive motivation and perseverance... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource... Secondary Edition... From School Mental Health Ontario and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (smho-smho.ca)

Empathy

Elementary: Empathy... Healthy relationship skills... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource (smho-smho.ca)

Secondary: Empathy... Healthy relationship skills... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource... Secondary Edition... From School Mental Health Ontario and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (smho-smho.ca)

Prosocial Behaviour

Elementary: Healthy relationship skills... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource (smho-smho.ca)

Secondary: Healthy relationship skills... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource... Secondary Edition... From School Mental Health Ontario and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (smho-smho.ca)

Self-Esteem

Elementary: Healthy relationship skills... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource (smho-smho.ca)

Secondary: Self-awareness and sense of identity... Faith and Wellness... A Daily Mental Health Resource... Secondary Edition... From School Mental Health Ontario and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (smho-smho.ca)



Practising optimism

Positive motivation and perseverance

When students are optimistic in their interactions with others and in their world view, they are more likely to experience positive relationships and have the motivation to persevere and succeed.

From: Positive motivation and perseverance: Practising optimism

Practices

- Explore practices
- Critical and creative thinking (executive functioning)
- Healthy relationship skills
- Identification and management of emotions
- Positive motivation and perseverance

Inspirational snowfall

Grades: Primary / Junior / Intermediate

Practice: Opportunities for students to seek out other positive affirmations and to encourage an optimistic attitude among others



Our Mental Health Lead is also available to meet with schools to assist them in identifying patterns or to design implementation plans that best fit schools' strengths and needs. Administrators have had the opportunity to access their school level data and will use this data to inform school improvement planning that supports student achievement and well-being.

Recommendation:

This report is provided as information for the Board.

Prepared/Reviewed By: Loretta Notten Director of Education
Judy Merkel Superintendent of Learning
Kelly Roberts Research Co-ordinator
Andrea Snyder Mental Health Lead

*Bylaw 4.2 "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: June 6, 2022
To: Board of Trustees
From: Director of Education
Subject: Proposed 2022-23 School Year Budget

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
- ☐ Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

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

Trustees are required to approve a budget based on estimates of enrolment, revenues, and expenses on an annual basis. Management is proposing a budget which is outlined in the Budget Book and presentation materials.

Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:

IV 007		“Financial Planning/Budgeting”
Education Act		232 “Estimates”
February 17, 2022	2022: B02	Learning Recovery Action Plan
February 17, 2022	2022: B03	2022-23 Grants for Student Needs Funding (GSN)
February 17, 2022	2022: B04	Capital Funding for the 2022-23 School Year
February 17, 2022	2022: B05	2022-23 Priorities and Partnership Funding (PPF) Appendix A 2022-23 Priorities and Partnership Funding Allocations
April 20, 2022	2022: B11	2022-23 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) and Related Regulations
February 17, 2022	2022: SB04	Student Transportation - Grants for Student Needs 2022-23
March 25, 2022	2022: SB08	Special Education Grant Changes for 2022-23
March 25, 2022	2022: SB09	2022-23 Estimates (District School Boards)



Alignment to the MYSP:

The proposed budget aligns with the draft priorities for the 2022-2026 MYSP:

- Improving Graduation Rates
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Wellbeing
- Innovation

Additional Resources:

2022-23 Budget Presentation
2022-23 Budget Report

Both can be found at <https://www.wcdsb.ca/financial-information/>

Background/Comments:

Trustees are required by legislation to approve a school year budget on annual basis, based on estimates of enrolment, revenue, and expenses.

This year, a balanced budget for the 2022-23 school year must be submitted to the Ministry of Education by June 30, 2022.

The budget proposed by management is balanced and does not rely on the use of uncommitted reserves.

It meets all legislative requirements, government directives, and honours existing contracts and agreements.

Allocations to support portfolio level multi-year plans have been incorporated into the proposed budget.

Finally, the proposed budget aligns with all elements of Board Policy IV 007 “Financial Planning/Budgeting”. A formal monitoring report will be brought to Trustees on June 13, 2022.

Management will respond to Trustee questions on the proposed budget between June 6th and June 13th with a request for approval on June 13, 2022.

Recommendation:

This report is provided as information only.

Prepared/Reviewed By:

Loretta Notten
Director of Education

Shesh Maharaj
Executive Superintendent of Corporate Services + CFO

*Bylaw 4.2 “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.”



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Newsletter – June 2022

A A A



Article By: **CCSTA News**

Post Date: **May, 2022**

To keep our board, trustees, bishops, educators and parents up to date, CCSTA publishes a bi-annual newsletter. You'll read up on school success stories, provincial reports and much more news related to Catholic education in Canada.

reports and much more news related to Catholic education in Canada!

FR / EN 

READ NEWSLETTER HERE!



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Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association

Enlivened by the Word of God and our tradition, we promote and protect the right to Catholic education in Canada. We speak as one.



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From: [Loretta Notten](#)
To: [Alice Figueiredo](#)
Subject: FW: OCSTA MEMO: OSTA-AECO Document - "The Student Blueprint"
Date: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 6:07:29 PM
Attachments: [The Student Blueprint.PDF](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image004.jpg](#)

Loretta Notten

Director of Education

Waterloo Catholic District School Board | www.wcdsb.ca

35 Weber St W Unit A, Kitchener, ON, N2H 3Z1

519-578-3660 | loretta.notten@wcdsb.ca



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

From: OCSTA - Connie DeMelo <CDeMelo@ocsta.on.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 3:59 PM
To: OCSTA - Connie DeMelo <CDeMelo@ocsta.on.ca>
Subject: OCSTA MEMO: OSTA-AECO Document - "The Student Blueprint"

Caution - External Email - This Message comes from an external organization. Do NOT click on unrecognized links or provide your username and/or password.

May 31, 2022

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
• All Catholic District School Boards

CC: OCSTA Directors and Staff
Board Secretaries and Administrative Assistants

FROM: Patrick J. Daly, President

SUBJECT: OSTA-AECO Document – *“The Student Blueprint”*

The Ontario Student Trustees’ Association (OSTA-AECO) recently published *“[The Student Blueprint](#)”*.

The Blueprint includes a summary of recommendations from the past four OSTA-AECO publications the Association hopes will be implemented in the coming years by both the Ministry of Education and Ontario school boards. The list of recommendations is outlined in five sections: Equity, Student Well-Being, Governance, System Modernization, and Funding, which seek to address the various concerns of students from across the province.

Attached please find a copy of *“The Student Blueprint”* document for your information.



Attachment

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The Student Blueprint

2022

OSTA AECO
Ontario Student
Trustees' Association l'Association des élèves conseillers
et conseillères de l'Ontario

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Introduction

The integrity of any building depends on its foundation - concrete pillars that are dug into the solid ground. We can say the same for institutions such as Ontario's publicly funded education. It is built on pillars that provide strength and integrity. As with any structure, time takes its toll and improvements must be made as the structural integrity weakens. When we establish what must change, we can move forward with a cohesive and detailed plan: the blueprint for the future of Ontario's education system.

The Ontario Student Trustees' Association-l'Association des élèves conseillères et conseillers de l'Ontario (OSTA-AECO) is the largest student stakeholder for education in Ontario, having spent the last 21 years striving to represent and amplify the voices of two million students across the province. In the past five years, OSTA-AECO has published four documents that push for our vision of an education system built by students, for students. The Student Platform, The Students' Vision for Education, eLearning: The Students' Perspective, and most recently, the three-part publication The Volume of Our Voices, all emphasize the values that OSTA-AECO holds as an organization through student experiences, collected data, and specific calls to action. In The Student Blueprint, we've summarized recommendations from these publications and other advocacy of OSTA-AECO and have listed those which have yet to be addressed. The Student Blueprint features specific recommendations and calls to action at the provincial, school board, and school levels under five pillars: Equity, Governance, Student Well-Being, System Modernization, and Funding. As we approach the provincial and municipal elections in Ontario, we want to ensure that the student voice will guide the educational platforms of all publicly elected officials to eliminate barriers for students and strengthen education in this province.

Ontario's education system has a profound impact on students' lives, and the years they spend in school support the development of great minds, ambitious goals, and successful futures of our students. This development would not be possible without the guidance and leadership of school administrators and the day-to-day efforts of hardworking educators.

There's a lot to be proud of regarding Ontario's publicly funded education system. However, to realize our organization's vision of learning environments that meet the needs of every student, it's crucial to include student voice in the development of strategies at the provincial, school board, and school levels.

Equity



As we seek to rebuild the education system in Ontario, we must acknowledge the historical context that has led us to where we are today. Racialized groups, religious minorities, the 2SLGBTQ+ community, as well as First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples have been historically underserved and underrepresented. Ontario must work to improve the foundations of publicly funded education so that we can support the intersectional identities of students in this province. Our recommendations fall under two aspects of equity: gender and sexuality, and racial and cultural identity.

The current Kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12) curriculum must be extensively reviewed to ensure that students are receiving an education that reflects the histories and experiences of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, racialized communities, and all underserved groups. Culturally relevant curriculum materials and learning methods benefit all students and foster a culture of inclusion and awareness. We recommend that:

1.1 The Ministry of Education engages with educators and additional stakeholders to revise the K-12 curriculum, ensuring the inclusion of topics supporting 2SLGBTQ+ students.

1.2 The Ministry of Education engages with educators and additional stakeholders to integrate diverse racial identities, histories, and perspectives across the K-12 education curriculum. Building an inclusive school environment means ensuring that all students feel safe to express all aspects of their identities.

There must be systemic reform within the education system to best support students with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. We recommend that:

1.3 School boards modify school record-keeping systems to allow all students to specify the name and pronouns that they wish to use in school and ensure said educators respect identifiers and that they reflect this in school records such as class lists, yearbooks, and diplomas.

It is integral to the student experience within Ontario schools that the student-educator relationship is free of barriers to the student's identity. The Ministry of Education must ensure that professional development and training for staff addresses the recommendations we've outlined under the Equity Pillar, particularly regarding students' identities. School boards must also establish effective strategies to create the most inclusive and equitable environment possible. Thus, we recommend:

1.4 School boards establish regular, mandatory professional learning for school and school board staff on anti-oppression and human rights with a specific action plan on how to best support students of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, and

1.5 School boards develop specific strategies to create anti-racist school environments. This includes establishing ways to assess the effectiveness of these strategies by collecting information from students, such as censuses and student forums.

Governance



The role of a student trustee both amplifies the importance of student voice at the board table and improves the accessibility and presence of student concerns, questions, and perspectives in decision-making. Students are the largest stakeholder in education: student advocacy is essential to determine what is best for Ontario's youth. It's critical that the students' voices guides all decision-making at a provincial, school board, and school level.

The student voice must be represented fairly and articulated expressively for the benefit of the school board and to accurately reflect the students' decision-making. To remove barriers faced by student trustees in their efforts to effectively represent their constituents, we recommend:

2.1 That the Ministry of Education allows students to begin discussions surrounding items they feel are most pertinent to their constituency, by allowing student trustees the right to independently move and second motions during board meetings.

In order to gain adequate and accurate student perspective at the school board level, student representatives at the board table must be diverse. We recommend that school boards:

2.2 Seek perspective and feedback from students. Examples include consulting school clubs, hosting roundtable discussions with students, and conducting thought exchange surveys. With specific efforts towards reconciliation on a province-wide level within education, representation of Indigenous students is essential to equitable decision-making at the board level.

2.3 Consult with local Indigenous communities in school boards to establish a role for Indigenous student representatives, such as a student Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) or an Indigenous student trustee

Student Well-Being



Ontario's education system should always actively work to prioritize student achievement. To achieve this, it's essential that students' mental and physical health is supported, but in many cases, opportunities for students to seek help with support for their mental and physical well-being are not available outside of school. Under these circumstances, schools become the primary facility to provide the necessary support.

For students to not only succeed, but enjoy and look forward to schooling, their well-being must continue to be supported. Resources must be made available and accessible to students within schools. We recommend:

3.1 The Ministry of Education specifically outlines the role of a guidance counsellor to ensure they can perform their jobs to the best of their abilities, and students recognize who to turn to for assistance in mental well-being and academic success.

Seeking perspective and collaboration from specific organizations is crucial to the success of implementing support in schools. The collaboration of educators, mental health advocacy groups, and other organizations is necessary for establishing strategies to best support students' well-being. We recommend that:

3.2 School boards seek opportunities to collaborate with mental health organizations to increase support for mental health and ensure students are informed of these organizations and resources.

System Modernization



To ensure that our education system is keeping up with the changing world, we must equip students in Ontario with the relevant tools they need to succeed. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed our education system rely more heavily on digital learning tools, therefore these tools must be accessible to all students. We recommend that:

4.1 The government ensures that reliable broadband internet services are accessible to all schools in the province.

With each student having a specific set of needs that are essential to their academic success, the necessary resources must be available to them. Specifically, for students identified as exceptional, accommodations must be accessible. We recommend that:

4.2 School boards review relevant policies to ensure that every student identified as exceptional has access to special education accommodations.

Funding



Properly allocated funds ensure that our education system can sustainably, equitably, and adequately address the concerns and needs of students and families. We recommend that:

5.1 The government updates the current funding formula to reflect school boards' local transportation needs. It must consider factors including but not limited to geographical location, availability of public transportation, and the number of students who require transportation services.

With the cost of post-secondary education being a barrier in many students' lives, grants must increase in size. The Ministry of Education should specifically provide these grants to those of low-income households to aid disadvantaged students in obtaining a post-secondary education. We recommend that:

5.2 The Ministry of Education increases the grants towards middle and low-income families to allow students from more diverse socioeconomic demographics to obtain a post-secondary education.

School board transportation plans require constant research and consultation for the allocation of funds, as they differ across the province. We recommend that:

5.3 School boards continue to thoroughly examine the local transportation needs of students, considering factors such as socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and geography to provide targeted financial support to students' families.

Conclusion



The Student Blueprint is a roadmap for success and a vision for Ontario's publicly funded education system that is cohesive, constructive, and created by students, for students. The recommendations listed must be implemented through consultations with various stakeholders in education, such as educators, school board trustees and, most importantly, students. All candidates in the upcoming provincial and municipal elections must ensure that the well-being, success, and educational experience of students is at the forefront of all election platforms and decisions made.

The Ministry of Education, and school boards across the province, must continue to turn to student leaders for guidance and insight to effectively implement the changes laid out in this document.

Student leaders of Ontario will continue to work towards creating an education system that equitably supports every student by holding the publicly elected officials accountable for implementing the recommendations in The Student Blueprint and with future OSTA-AECO publications. Student trustees will continue to work in partnership with the Ministry of Education, school boards, and other stakeholders to realize our vision for an education system that adapts in response to the changing needs of students. When these recommendations are implemented, we hope students will feel safer, more supported, and eager to engage in the classroom.

The education system in this province will outlast students, politicians, and educators alive today. Therefore, we must act now to protect and support generations of students in Ontario to come.

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