

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
AGENDA**

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020
Time: 7:30 pm
Location: Teleconference

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13. Open Question Period

14. In Camera
15. Resolution re Absentees
16. Adjournment and Closing Prayer (P. DeRosa)

Good Evening Director Daly, Chair Iantomasi, Trustees, and Superintendents. My name is Kristy Dickinson and I am speaking to you tonight as a ratepayer and parent of three children who are in grades 3, 5 and 8 in Burlington. I am delegating on behalf of parents who are in favor of the mandatory mask policy that was put in place during the August 19th board meeting. I am immunocompromised. I live with a rare disease and autoimmune disease that is managed by weekly injections of a drug to suppress my immune system. I am one of the medically vulnerable Canadians that the government is talking about when they describe who can be most impacted by Covid-19.

I am not unique. Our Board is made up of thousands of immunocompromised parents, teachers, grandparents or medically fragile children. According to Stats Canada, 44% of the Canadian population live with a chronic illness and nearly 50% of the Canadian population cares for an aging, ill or disabled family member or friend. By putting in place mandatory masking for all students within the Halton Catholic District School Board you enable families like mine to be able to send our children back to school with an additional layer of protection as well as provide any immunocompromised educators with an added layer of safety precautions.

A lot of us live with what is considered to be an invisible illness. If you saw me walking down the street you would have no idea that I do not have a functioning immune system. My advocacy work has introduced to me hundreds of medically fragile children who do not look any different to healthy children on the outside. Their conditions or diseases are managed with treatment and as long as they take additional safety precautions like good hand hygiene and staying away from people who are sick they can live relatively normal lives. So perhaps you might be listening to this thinking “this does not apply to me or the children in my child’s class”, and I would challenge you to please keep in mind that those of us with compromised immune systems aren’t often recognizable. I would argue that everyone listening to this meeting tonight knows of or perhaps lives with someone who is considered “medically vulnerable”. For all of us, the decision as to whether or not to send our children back to school this fall has been agonizing. Trying to balance the mental health needs of our children versus the potential negative effects to our physical health should our children be exposed or contract Covid-19 is a lose-lose situation. We made the decision to send our children back to school partially because all kids would be wearing masks. Given that the physical distancing recommendations made by Sick Kids and the WHO cannot be met due to financial constraints, masking our children is the next best precaution. The Bible teaches us in Phillipians 2:4 “Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others” As Catholics is it not our duty to live the values of “you wear your mask to protect me and I wear my mask to protect you”?

I completely appreciate that for an FDK teacher trying to manage 20 3, 4 and 5 year old children’s back to school experience as well as navigate this new normal with masking and physical distancing is going to be a challenge. I also understand there are parents who are concerned about their child’s ability to put on their mask, wear their mask and keep their mask on during the day. I am grateful that the motion that was passed clearly states that there will not be punitive measures enforced for those who can’t adhere to the policy. This will be a lot of learning on the go for all of our children and I know that educators will be spending time teaching our children the various ways to keep themselves and their classmates healthy as our country navigates this pandemic. Given that the province passed mandatory masking for everyone over the age of 2 back in July, our children have had the last few months to understand and participate in wearing a mask when entering into public places so for them, wearing a mask when they go to school will be the same as when they go to the grocery store, the mall or any

children's play place like Rock and Jump. They have had the time to adapt to this way of life and school will be no exception.

Parents responded to the return to school survey with the understanding that this policy had been put in place and would be in place for the school year. Decisions about sending children to school because of the mandatory masking or conversely, keeping children home because of the mandatory masking were made and the class lists that are in place today are based on these results. If Trustee Karabela's motion to reverse mandatory masking for children from K-3, who, to my understanding make up 48% of the elementary school population, passes, is the expectation that a new return to school survey will be sent out for parents to answer and class lists and cohorts will be updated accordingly? Our children have only been back in class for 2 days based on the date of this meeting. So would we pause back to school to give families time to reconsider if this policy is overturned? The last 6 months have been so fraught with daily changes, information updates, procedures and policy changes that have caused everyone involved to feel anxiety and fear of the unknown. It has taken months for the Minister of Education and our Board to create a return to school plan and our children and educators are finally back in school for the first time in 7 months. "Wait and see" decisions are best made when they err on the side of caution. I implore Trustees who are deliberating on this motion to consider the lengthy road that everyone has taken to get to where we all are today, September 15th, 2020.

No one knows what the next few months will bring. I am sure we are all praying for a safe return to school without Covid-19 outbreaks and for our children to have uninterrupted access to education, whether that be online or in person. We know from the World Health Organization and the CDC that masks are recommended in situations where physical distancing is not an option – such as in our classrooms. Quebec is a good case model for what happens when masks are not mandatory. On September 8, 2020 the Quebec government released a list of Covid-19 cases and outbreaks in schools. The province tallied up 70 schools that have at least Covid-19 case, with infections reported between August 26 – September 4th 2020 with, according to Quebec's Education Minister, Jean-Francois Roberge, and additional 50 others that are still in the process of being validated. These numbers, of course, need to be analyzed with context and I am not sharing to scare parents but to reiterate that we should be learning from a lack of precautionary measures to mitigate risks to all students, staff and our community. I also feel that we have a duty to do what we can to protect the low rate in Halton, rather than using the low rates in Halton as permission to lift precautionary measures. Please, do not overturn this motion tonight. Our kids are back in school, wearing their masks. They understand what is required to keep them safe and healthy. Overturning the mandatory masking at this late stage is a very risky gamble without having insight as to what is going to happen in the coming months.

Yours in Christ,

Kristy Dickinson

September 8, 2020

Dear Halton Catholic District School Board Trustees,

My name is Arina Knorr. I have a child who is starting the Grade 1 French Immersion Program at Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB). I have a Bachelor's degree in Education as well as a Bachelor's degree in Occupation and Public Health with 16 years of hands-on experience in a field.

There are 27 Catholic District School Boards in Ontario and only 8 of those school boards passed motions requiring all students (in some cases from Grade 1) to wear non-medical masks. I would like to present an epidemiological comparative analysis between the Catholic School Boards comprising the Central Region which includes the HCDSB.

From a table provided below (*Note #1*), out of 8 school boards in the Central Region only 4 decided to EXCEED the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health school reopening guidelines. These government guidelines have been approved by the Office of the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health. From my understanding, Dr. Williams as well as many other health professionals, including Dr. Meghani, Halton Region's Medical Officer of Health recommend but don't mandate non-medical masks for students attending Grade 3 and below.

As per the table (*Note #1*), Halton Region has the second LOWEST confirmed number of Covid-19 cases (985) among all 8 school boards in the Central Region. Only Niagara Region has a lower number of confirmed cases (948) compared to Halton Region. However, Halton Region has the lowest number of deaths among all school boards. This number currently stands as 25 deaths. During an operation (March – July 2020) of emergency day care centres in Halton Region opened for children of first responders (doctors, nurses, paramedics, policemen), there were ZERO cases of Covid-19 reported among attending children or staff.

There was no single death reported from Covid-19 among children ≥ 18 years of age in Ontario. However, 11 Indigenous children died during the Covid-19 outbreak but not from Covid-19 from March 11 – July 16, 2020 while being classified as "in care" of the Ontario Children's Aid Societies (*Note #2*). This year in British Columbia, 909 deaths from illicit drugs continue to eclipse deaths from homicides, suicides, car crashes and Covid-19 combined (*Note #3*). There will be an estimated 225,800 new cancer cases and 83,300 cancer deaths in Canada in 2020 (*Note #4*). During the influenza 2018-2019 season in Canada, there were 39,192 laboratory confirmed influenza cases with 1,352 pediatric hospitalizations. However, Canadian children weren't required to wear masks last year to minimize influenza transmission (*Note #5*). All of these examples suggest that the Board Trustees need to look beyond Covid-19 when making an informed decision affecting the well-being of thousands of Halton Region children and their families.

Halton Region is doing an excellent job in minimizing the risk of Covid-19 transmission among its residents. We are now in the Stage 3 of Ontario reopening, which implies a low risk of Covid-19 transmission within our community. As of writing this letter, there are zero Covid-19 cases in our regional hospitals and only 24 active cases recovering at home per 569,940 Halton residents (*Note #6*). I would like the Board Trustees to know and be reassured that I have faith and

confidence in our local Health Department. Its workforce has all the capabilities to respond to and manage Covid-19 outbreaks within our school system in a timely manner by providing professional expertise and leadership. Our hardworking public health professionals have done it before and will do it again for our Region.

I'm asking Board Trustees who voted for mandatory masks for kindergarten to grade 3 students to reconsider their decision at this time. Please review risks versus benefits for this age group before your voting. As per Dr. Gould, the Associated Medical of Health of York Region (*Note #7*) as well as per the SickKids guidelines (*Note #8*), the benefits of wearing a mask in this age group are limited. However, the risk of contaminating faces and/or masks with viruses, including Covid-19 is real. Without parental assistance, it is impossible to ensure safe mask wearing for children in this group age for prolonged periods of time. Also, the epidemiological evidence suggests that children are unlikely to get very ill from Covid-19 and that in most cases the virus transmission happened from adult family members to children and not from kids to adults. Handwashing remains the best infection control method for fighting any viruses.

Please ask yourself a simple question: **"Am I a health expert?"**

Please don't make masks mandatory for young children. Please respect the rights of those children, especially ESL /immigrant students to a quality education. Don't deprive our kids from positive social experiences that will foster and ensure positive bonding with their educators and classmates. Our children are our future. If we don't stand for them, they may not be able to successfully participate in the 21st century economy. Worse, this young generation may end up dependent on government programs to support and raise their own children. As individuals who get compensated by the Ontario and Halton taxpayers, please remember that our children and grandchildren will be responsible for paying not only *your* pensions but other expenditures that are necessary to keep Ontario strong and healthy. Help our children to meet this immense challenge by showing courage in making tough decisions based on science and not politics.

I would like to encourage and thank all of you in advance for **voting IN FAVOR of making non-medical masks NON-mandatory for JK-Grade 3 Catholic students in Halton Region**. I will pray for all Trustees to be guided by our Lord to make decisions from your inner sanctum where the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has no power to overcome it. As a Christian, I believe in the Last Judgement. Nevertheless, in case of a negative outcome with regards to this matter, please be advised that I reserve my right to challenge the Board's decision in the Ontario Court of Justice.

With great respect and warm-heartedness,

Arina Knorr

Note #1

Central Region CDSB	Mandatory masks for ALL Students	Epi Situation as of September 7, 2020
Dufferin-Peel CDSB	Yes	<p>Peel Region</p> <p>Total confirmed cases 7,338</p> <p>Resolved cases.... 6,638</p> <p>Deaths 319</p> <p>Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 410</p> <p>Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0</p> <p>Currently hospitalized 2</p>
Durham Catholic DSB	No	<p>Durham Region</p> <p>Total confirmed cases 1,912</p> <p>Resolved cases 1,699</p> <p>Deaths 181</p> <p>Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 106</p> <p>Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0</p> <p>Currently hospitalized 0</p>
Halton CDSB	Yes	<p>Halton Region</p> <p>Total confirmed cases 985</p> <p>Resolved cases 936</p> <p>Deaths 25</p> <p>Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 98</p> <p>Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0</p> <p>Currently hospitalized 0</p>
Hamilton-Wentworth CDSB	Yes	<p>Hamilton Health Department</p> <p>Total confirmed cases 992</p> <p>Resolved cases 876</p> <p>Deaths 45</p> <p>Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 79 (8%)</p> <p>Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0</p> <p>Currently hospitalized: St. Joseph – 0 Hamilton Health Service – less than 5 cases. I wasn't able to find exact numbers on current Covid-19 patients</p>
Niagara CDSB	No	<p>Niagara Region</p> <p>Total confirmed cases 948</p> <p>Resolved cases 868</p> <p>Deaths 64</p> <p>Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 63</p> <p>Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0</p> <p>Currently hospitalized unable to find info</p>

Central Region CDSB	Mandatory masks for ALL Students	Epi Situation as of September 7, 2020
Simcoe Muskoka CDSB	No	Simcoe-Muskoka Health Department Total confirmed cases 1,436 Resolved cases 1,320 Deaths 74 Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 39 Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0 Currently hospitalized 2
Toronto CDSB	Yes	Toronto Health Department Total confirmed cases 16,361 Resolved cases 14,720 Deaths 1,176 Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 1,128 (*) Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0 Currently hospitalized 0.1% (*) 6.8% of all cases
York Catholic DSB	No	York Region Total confirmed cases 3,563 Resolved cases 3,178 Deaths 253 Total cases (≥ 18 years of age) 179 Deaths (≥ 18 years of age) 0 Currently hospitalized 1

Note #2

<https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/11-indigenous-children-died-in-last-four-months-connected-to-ontarios-child-welfare-system/>

Note #3

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/drug-overdoses-covid19-1.5605563>

Note #4

<https://www.cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/cancer-101/cancer-statistics-at-a-glance/?region=on#:~:text=There%20will%20be%20an%20estimated,%2Dmelanoma%20skin%20cancer%20cases.>

Note #5

https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/fluwatch/annual-reports/2018-2019/FW2018-19_annual-report.pdf

Note #6

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?B1=All&Code1=3524&Code2=35&Data=Count&Geo1=CD&Geo2=PR&Lang=E&SearchPR=01&SearchText=Halton&SearchType=Begins&TABID=1>

Note #7 (start watching from 32 min)

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/school-reopening/Pages/Virtual-Townhall.aspx>

Note #8

<http://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf>

ONTARIO GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES:

Operational Guidance During Covid-19 Outbreak – Child Care Re-opening

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/child-care-re-opening-operational-guidance.pdf>

Guide to Reopening Ontario's Schools

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-reopening-ontarios-schools>

Requesting a Response and Appropriate Action to the Evidence Presented on September 1st

HCDSB Trustees,

On September 1st you all listened to over 2 hours of well thought out delegations complete with references and research from top medical experts around the world. However, a select number of trustees on this Board can somehow just continue to dismiss all of the evidence and continue to base their decision to mask students from JK – Gr 3 on their personal beliefs and alternate agendas versus cold hard facts.

If you recall when this motion was introduced “Out of Left Field” (as Trustee Derosa commented) by Trustee Guzzo on August 19th, there was

- 1)** Little to no advanced notice of the introduction of the motion
- 2)** Absolutely zero fact based medical evidence from any professional body such as the CDC, WHO or any domestic or international medical organization. Nor did it align to any provincial or federal guidelines around the masking of students from JK – Gr 3. Every reason for introducing the motion on August 19th was purely anecdotal with not one bit of it rooted in fact.
- 3)** No plan to engage with parents or have a survey completed specific to this matter to understand their position prior to the motion being introduced.
- 4)** A mere 41 minutes of questions and debate on a motion that will impact thousands of students personal and mental well being, educational and social development
- 5)** No implementation guidelines discussed in order to properly deploy this in the “real world” at the classroom level

At the September 1st meeting this Board received and heard from an overwhelming number of parents in response to the events that transpired at the August 19th meeting for the decision to mask students from JK – Gr 3. It is my understanding that this has rarely occurred for motions that have been presented in the past. What the public provided the Board on September 1st was nearly all rooted in fact and was a stark contrast to what was provided when the original motion was introduced and passed. The delegations that were read aloud as well as the numerous letters submitted presented a plethora of scientific and medical research, studies, evidence and facts as to why masking these children is a misinformed decision that can carry long term consequences. The response from parents and the abundance of information that was provided to this Board should have been a clear indication that you made the wrong decision.

I thought to myself after hearing all the delegations; “How could they turn a blind eye to all of this data and perspectives from trained professionals” However, I was once again shocked by the lack of interest this Board showed and the little time that was spent discussing the facts that were presented. Facts that

parents spent their personal time researching, validating and crafting into very compelling correspondences. Facts that need to seriously be considered by this Board when they impact the youngest individuals in our school system. One thing I do know for certain is that you heard 100% more facts than you heard when Trustee Guzzo introduced this motion on August 19th.

Upon the completion of my correspondence I would like each Board member who was in favour of the August 19th motion to answer all the questions presented below. Whether you each answer them live in this meeting or written to me and all the parents who have raised concerns to this Board.

Parents deserve specific and direct answers to these questions;

- 1) On what basis did Trustees vote in favour of the motion to mask students from JK- Gr 3 initially on August 19th when no research, support or documentation was provided and it was only debated for 41 mins, with no facts provided?
- 2) How can you accept the approach by which this motion was introduced, supported, debated and passed was acceptable?
- 3) How can the majority of you consciously turn a blind eye to over 2 hours of facts, research and advice from medical experts that were presented by delegates at the September 1st meeting?
- 4) How are you not compelled to table a vote to repeal this motion and reconsider your position on the matter given all the facts presented on September 1st versus no facts presented when this was tabled on August 19th?
- 5) How can you not even entertain a motion to poll the parents (who elected you to office) on this matter, which was not done, or even thought of, prior to the motion being introduced?

The concerned parents who delegated on September 1st clearly provided their research and facts and invested a great deal of time in doing so. I would appreciate that Trustees took the same amount of time and effort and share the studies, reports, and evidence written by medical professionals that they used to inform their decision to support mandatory masking of students JK – Gr 3.

I would be hard pressed to believe that any of you have compiled as much evidence to support your motion compared to what you heard from parents opposing the motion during the September 1st delegations.

I would now like to comment on the fact that this rushed change to the provincially recommended approach to masking has absolutely no execution plans when it comes to the implementation of this mandate at the classroom level. I can make this statement as I just completed my introductory phone call with my child's JK teachers on Tuesday Sep 8th prior to when she goes to school for the first time on Friday September 11th. I asked both of my child's educators several of the questions I asked this Board and the Director at the meeting on September 1st, to understand how they were going to administer this new protocol. Questions such as; What is the number and length of mask breaks? Where are masks stored and placed when not in use? What are the consequences if a child refuses to wear a mask? How does one apply for an exemption? What circumstances is the exemption list inclusive of? How are you dealing with children who have anaphylaxis allergies and the teacher's ability to identify a reaction?

How will teachers mandate/enforce this policy in the event of parents or student's unwillingness to comply?

There are many more questions that parents have in addition to those. The unfortunate part is that the educators could not answer one of my questions, and my daughter is going to school in less than 3 days.

Some of these questions were posed at the prior meeting as well at the meeting on August 19th by both trustees and parents. During the introduction of the motion on August 19th, Director Daly, stated *"The motion as written is pretty clear on what the intent is. I would argue that is sufficient and I don't think we need to add into the motion specific directions to teachers at the classroom level as to how they would administer a particular policy, that would be something we do through senior staff. I think the spirit and intent of the motion is pretty clear"*

While the spirit of this motion (with no medical facts) may have been clear (which is debatable), the administration and deployment of this mandate is a complete disaster with practically no guidance provided to the parents or teachers as of the writing of this document. On top of everything else you have burdened teachers with this year; from enforcing physical distancing, to sanitization, to class cohorts, and a number of other protocols, this Board just threw another curve ball at teachers. School administrators have just left teachers "to figure it out" as I expected and as I stated in my previous correspondence. My discussion with the teachers proves this.

I honestly felt sorry for the position this Board, the Director, and the Senior School Board staff have put the teachers in. Every single question I asked them, they had to tell me they would "take it away to get an answer". I sympathized with them and articulated to both of my child's teachers that this was not their fault and I'm not surprised they don't have all the answers.

I would have expected some sort of execution plan and guidelines be demanded from this Board of Directors with a clear plan of attack that the Director and Senior staff would deploy to frontline teachers. But I guess having a well thought out implementation plan wasn't as important as rushing to get this mandatory masking motion passed.

It has become clear to me that the reluctance of this Board to entertain a motion to repeal the JK – Gr 3 masking mandate is rooted in the members who supported this change not wanting to be exposed for the lack of thought, research, and engagement of the parents that should have been required with a change of this magnitude.

It would be interesting if the individuals who have sent delegations and correspondences were to engage media channels to shine a light on the process by which this Board goes about making decisions. Decisions that should be made based on facts of what we know versus what certain trustees "think". Decisions that should be made through consultation with parents and the constituents of elected officials. Decisions that impact the health, development and mental well being of our children.

I suspect if the broader public at large was to be made aware of this, more people like myself would take a greater interest in this lackadaisical approach to policy making and front-line implementation. When I hear a trustee tell the Board members that "I apologize for the spelling and grammar errors, I did it quite

quickly”; it is a clear indication that tax paying parents should expect more rigour in the decision making process from their Board of elected officials.

I ask this Board to take more rigour, read and understand the facts that have been presented, and use them to inform the decision to both introduce and pass a motion to repeal the mandatory masking motion for kids in JK – Grade 3.

M. Fabiano

Hello, my name is Steven Rodriguez. I am delegating once again on the matter of mandatory masks for children in grades JK through 3.

It was difficult for me to compose this letter, having been told that the subject matter must be substantially different from my previous delegation. This seems almost impossible as we are back where we left off on essentially the same issue. What makes this particularly difficult, is how I am feeling. During the meeting of September 1st, myself and several other parents spoke directly to the trustees and others had letters read which they prepared. After providing what was seemingly a convincing argument, our voices were dismissed by a quick 5 minute vote. The response to the delegations was to accept them as information. I find it very hard to accept that all the trustees made a conscious effort to read our letters prior to the meeting. These letters contained links to irrefutable science based facts which supported everything we said. I am not alone when I say that we, the parents who wrote and delegated feel that we were not given a real and honest consideration. It felt very much that some trustees were close minded, having already made their decision before we even spoke. In addition, myself and other delegators felt attacked with pointed and non-relevant questions during what was supposed to be a time for clarification after we read our scripts. I understand this is a heated issue but we, the delegators, all remained cool and calm, answering to the best of our abilities yet the attacks continued until finally overruled by the chair. This really speaks to how heated and charged this issue is. I am therefore grateful that the trustees voted in favor of seeking parliamentary assistance.

I will now speak about what has changed since September 1st.

Myself and others have repeatedly tried to speak directly with Dr. Meghani. For the past two weeks, our attempts to do so have been completely stonewalled. The only correspondence we received were generic canned responses which echoed what Dr. Meghani stated in her webinar that Halton Public Health only consults with the school boards and does not make decisions. When pressed asking specifically "Did Dr. Meghani recommend to the HCDSB or support their decision to mandate masking for JK-3", the responses stopped coming and it was radio silence. Additionally, there is no publically visible documentation of the details of this meeting. I have therefore proceeded to request the details of this meeting through the "Freedom of Information Act". At the time of this writing, I am waiting to hear back from Mark Grysiuk who as I understand is the privacy officer for the HCDSB. I want to know when this meeting occurred, in what format it took place, who participated and what was said. Should we find this formal meeting never actually occurred it could bring serious consequences.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-make-freedom-information-request>

It is my opinion that the trustees exceeded their authority when voting to mandate the masks on August 19th. For example, in the HDSB, the **superintendent of education** made their policy **after** speaking to Halton Public Health. (see link below)

54:35

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUiBJKSvNSw>

By contrast, the HCDSB **trustees** made the decision **before** speaking to Halton Public Health.

The Peel and Toronto school boards also had their masking policies set by senior staff and not by the trustees. My main point here is that a subject which directly impacts the health of thousands of students should not be decided based on a majority vote of just 8 trustees. We are not talking about uniforms here, this is a serious matter and a health issue that directly impacts our children. This needed parent consultation and Trustee DeRosa's motion to that effect was voted down.

Trustee Duarte made the statement that parents were aware that masks would be required for all grades and 84% decided anyway to send their children back to school. I have some issues with this statement. First, this decision was made under duress. What choice did parents who could not feasibly opt for remote learning really have with the school year quickly approaching? Many parents made the decision to send their children back after hearing the provincial recommendations. There was very little time for parents to react after the August 19th motion passed which was essentially a bait and switch. Would you want to be forced to make a "rock and a hard place" decision that impacts your child and likely your career with so little time?

Trustee Duarte also indicated that there was a poll in which parent could indicate their reasons **for keeping their children out of in school learning**, In the elementary level there were 3500 responses. It is VERY important to note that this question was NOT asked for parents opting to send their children back to school. This does not make sense, as these children would be the ones directly impacted by having to wear masks, not the children in remote learning. If this survey had simply asked those parents if they felt comfortable having their child wear a mask, this may have turned out quite differently.

The #1 response in this survey from parents who opted for remotely learning was that they were concerned it would be difficult to keep a safe distance due to class sizes. I would like to point out that the trustees recently passed a motion limiting class sizes to 25, targeting 22 as ideal. It is also important to note this was not a question available to those parents who opted for back to school instruction.

I understand that school has already started and that the masking policy is in place, but the school year is long and the argument that there isn't enough time to amend or change this policy now is invalid. Parents need to be consulted and given the opportunity to make their own choices in matters that affect the health of their children. We as their primary caregivers know what is best for them and have the right to decide on issues which directly impact their health. I will remind everyone that I am not saying that all JK-3 children should not wear masks. I am saying that parents need to be the ones to choose. Parents who wish their children to wears masks are free to do so and I am only asking that parents who do not wish it be given the freedom to choose so.

Subject: Opposing mandatory masks for JK to Grade 3 students.

My name is Paul Haddaden, the father of a 4-year-old girl just starting at a Catholic School in Burlington.

As per the abovementioned subject, I would like to convey the following messages to the board and ask a group of them Five Questions regarding the motion mandating mandatory masks for JK to Grade 3 students.

I won't be long, and I won't be presenting any evidence to convince anyone that kids grade 3 and younger should have their own choice to wear a mask or not. Evidence has been brought forward and presented on an earlier session by many parents. Apparently, it means little to nothing, especially to those supporting the mandate of masking kids.

Just to remind you all of two historical lessons:

1. What's legal isn't always right and won't make it right if the foundation is corrupt.
2. What's popular isn't always good and won't be good if the foundation is fear.

I do not need to present examples or evidence to support above statements either, since it's of little to no relevance, especially to those supporting the mandate of masking kids.

On the contrary, the responsibility to present evidence is on those forcing every kid to cover their face. You, board members, should present your case. You must convince us that you have done your work and up to our standards if not higher. Therefore, if you have the courage and the humility to carry the burden of this responsibility, then you won't hesitate to answer the following questions, at least to yourself, I am not here to embarrass you but to bring awareness.

So, my Five Questions to all members supporting the mandate of masking kids are as follows:

1. Since you're supposed to be serving the interest of kids and parents alike with evidence-based policies, what evidence have you found so compelling supporting your vote?
2. How would you describe the influence of the policies and practices of others around you on your own vote?
3. Which consequences are more concerning to you, looking bad and losing popularity or not doing the right thing? How is this related to your answer to question 1?

4. Did you do your own due diligence relating to this matter or have you mostly relied on what was presented or pushed onto you? What was the conclusion, really?

5. What kind of evidence are you looking for to change your vote, if ever?

I appreciate your patience reaching to the end of the five questions, but when your vote is influencing the lives and future of generations, this is what becomes expected of each of you to answer. It is not a courtesy.

Stewardship has never been harder than these days.

For your pleasure reading, please check below link <http://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf>.

Peace,

Paul

Dear HCDSB Trustees,

Hi, my name is Nicole Deveau and I am the mother of a grade 3 student at a Halton Catholic school in Oakville. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to talk this evening about why I believe it is in the best interests of our children to rescind the mask mandate, specifically for K-3, as the power to do so is in your hands.

During last week's board meeting, I listened to a number of delegates put forward compelling evidence to rescind the mask mandate. For example, we heard about the recommendations from the COVID-19 Guidance for School Reopening authored by at least 30 pediatric and infectious diseases specialists in Ontario with 80 references listed. The full document was included in the board package. Specifically on page 12, 1st column, 2nd bullet: "When transmission in the community is low, the use of NMMs throughout the entire school day should not be mandatory for elementary, middle or high school students returning to school. But, NMM use should always be respected if a student chooses to wear one." The 3rd bullet states "Given the current epidemiology, the use of NMMs is not recommended for elementary school students."

References were also provided to support that masking is not effective in preventing transmission of Covid-19 in the general public setting and a randomized controlled trial indicating the penetration of particles in cloth masks was almost 97%. I've included below a few additional references regarding the particle size and the filtering capacity of masks. For example, from Mask Facts by the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons "All of the cloth masks and materials had near zero efficiency at 0.3 μm , a particle size that easily penetrates into the lungs." They also state "A COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) particle is 0.125 micrometers (μm)". This includes their citation to the direct references. I have also included "Masks Don't Work: A review of science relevant to COVID-19 social policy." Even currently on the Government of Canada website about Non-medical masks and face coverings it states about homemade (non medical) masks: "These types of masks may not be effective in blocking virus particles that may be transmitted by coughing, sneezing or certain medical procedures. They do not provide complete protection from virus particles because of a potential loose fit and the materials used."

What should be concerning is what are the potential health risks to the wearer from wearing a mask? There is evidence to suggest that by wearing a mask, exhaled viruses are being breathed back in "Newer evidence suggests that in some cases the virus can enter the brain. In most instances it enters the brain by way of the olfactory nerves (smell nerves), which connect directly with the area of the brain dealing with recent memory and memory consolidation. By wearing a mask, the exhaled viruses will not be able to escape and will concentrate in the nasal passages, enter the olfactory nerves and travel into the brain." There is also evidence to indicate that wearing a face mask can cause headaches and reduce oxygen levels. A recent study of healthcare workers wearing masks and PPE in Singapore during the COVID-19 outbreak indicated that approximately 81% developed headaches. Wearing a mask can result in a drop in oxygen levels (hypoxia), which is associated with an impairment in immunity and thus

increasing the risk of infections. In May, it was reported that two schoolboys in China collapsed and suddenly died within a week of each other, both were participating in a gym class while wearing a mask.

When thinking about it logically, for optimum health through a variety of mechanisms, our bodies are meant to inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide and toxins. So does it not make sense even without examining the science that something that up against your nose and mouth is going to interfere with this important function? Does it also not make sense that the longer a mask is worn, the more the risk of negative health effects increases?

If there is adequate science from at least a decade of studies indicating the lack of efficacy with masks and we know the filtration capacity of different types of masks along with the size of the COVID-19 virus particle, along with potential health risks with continued mask use, what has changed dramatically in the past few months? Towards the beginning of the lockdown and even as late as May, the WHO, Dr. Anthony Fauci and also Dr. Theresa Tam were saying that face masks might provide piece of mind but are not necessary for the general public. Fauci said “they do not offer the perfect protection people think they do”. Even Tam said that if we’re not sick or around someone who is sick, we don’t need to wear a mask.

In July, Canadian constitutional lawyer, Rocco Galati, on behalf of Vaccine Choice Canada, Denis Rancourt, PhD and about 6 other plaintiffs, launched a lawsuit against the Government of Canada, Government of Ontario, Municipality of Metro Toronto, public health officials including Dr. Theresa Tam and the CBC. The lawsuit is in regards to persistent violations of Canadian’s constitutional rights by those governments in response to COVID-19. In particular section 1d) that COVID measures violates certain sections of the charter, one of the measures being the compulsory wearing of face masks in that the measures are not i) scientifically nor medically based nor proven to be effective whatsoever; ii) pose physical and psychological harm and iii) are extreme, unwarranted and unjustified. Government and public health officials need to be held accountable to provide evidence-based benefits and mitigation of health risks for implementing such broad based policies such as mask mandates.

In conclusion, I would like to again point out that at the last board meeting, delegates put forth a number of sources and evidence to dispute the mask policy. What I noticed was that those letters in favour of the mask policy did not provide evidence. These were primarily based on the idea that the masks will keep us safe and on feeling that’s safer rather than provide the evidence to back up this claim. The evidence shows a lack of efficacy and that there could be potential health risks. Why take this risk and especially for the younger kids where wearing the mask could increase the risk not to mention the issues getting them to wear them. If parents want to send their kids with masks, let that be their choice if it makes them feel safer. But a decision to mask all kids should be evidence based and not feelings of safety and fear.

Based on the evidence I have provided here and considering previous delegations I respectfully ask the board to rescind the mask mandate for K-3, in the best interests of our children.

Thank you,

Nicole Deveau

References regarding efficacy of masks and particle size:

1. American Association of Physicians and Surgeons. Mask Facts. June 1, 2020. <https://aapsonline.org/mask-facts/>
2. Zhu, Na, et al. (2020). "A Novel Coronavirus from Patients with Pneumonia in China, 2019" N Engl J Med 2020; 382:727-733. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmoa2001017>
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4. Shakya, Kabindra M, et al. "Evaluating the efficacy of cloth facemasks in reducing particulate matter exposure." J Expo Sci Environ Epidemiol. 2017;27(3):352-357. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27531371/>

References summarizing research on either mask efficacy and/or health risks:

5. Conclusion regarding masks: They do not work. Dr. Sherri Tenpenny. <https://vaxxter.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Masks-Final.pdf>
6. Masks Don't Work: A review of science relevant to COVID-19 social policy. D.G. Rancourt. Ontario Civil Liberties Association. <https://covidinfos.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/MasksDon-twork-4.pdf>
7. Children's Health Defense: The Risks vs. Benefits of Face Masks – Is there an agenda? Dr. Alan Palmer. <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/news/the-risks-vs-benefits-of-face-masks-is-there-an-agenda/>
8. Wearing a mask can harm your health. Jennifer Margulis, PhD. <https://jennifermargulis.net/wearing-mask-can-harm-your-health/>

Quotation "Newer evidence...into the brain." taken from Children's Health Defense but original source:

9. Blaylock: Face masks pose serious risk to the healthy. Russell Blaylock, MD. May 2020. <https://www.technocracy.news/blaylock-face-masks-pose-serious-risks-to-the-healthy/>

Potential health risks discussed:

10. Baig AM et al. [*Evidence of the COVID-19 virus targeting the CNS: Tissue distribution, host-virus interaction, and proposed neurotropic mechanisms.*](#) ACS Chem Neurosci 2020;11:7:995-998.
11. Ong JJY et al. [*Headaches associated with personal protective equipment- A cross sectional study among frontline healthcare workers during COVID-19.*](#) Headache 2020;60(5):864-877.
12. Shehade H et al. [*Cutting edge: Hypoxia-Inducible Factor-1 negatively regulates Th1 function.*](#) J Immunol 2015;195:1372-1376.

13. Two Chinese boys reportedly die within week of each other while wearing face masks in gym class. Daily News. May 7, 2020. <https://www.nydailynews.com/coronavirus/ny-coronavirus-two-chinese-boys-die-face-masks-gym-class-20200507-ruyinz7czjbqde3tprx647q3dm-story.html>

Other:

14. Fauci Says No Masks. Youtube. May 10, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6pEcgDmEUk&app=desktop>
15. Canada's top doctor says wearing a mask is not recommended: <https://www.mylethbridgenews.com/8351/canadas-top-doctor-says-wearing-a-mask-is-not-recommended/>
16. Vaccine Choice of Canada Statement of Claim: <https://vaccinechoiccanada.com/wp-content/uploads/vcc-statement-of-claim-2020-redacted.pdf>
17. Interview with Rocci Galati re: lawsuit against Canadian and Ontario governments: <https://www.bitchute.com/video/7xjoNdGmQ5PL/>

Good evening Director Daly, Chair Iantomasi, trustees and superintendents. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to delegate to you all this evening.

This delegation was prepared by two parents of children in the HCDSB. My name is Julie Craddock, and I use evidence-based practices to develop, implement and evaluate new technologies and processes as a seasoned law enforcement officer in Halton. I worked on this delegation with Dr. Laura Keating, who holds a PhD in neuroscience, has 20 years' experience collecting, analyzing and publishing medical science data.

First of all, I would like to thank the board staff and trustees, as well as administrators, teachers and all school staff, for all of your hard work getting our kids back to school. We are truly thrilled to be feeling a little bit of normalcy after the last 6 months.

I realize there have been some difficult decisions, and it is impossible in this complex situation to please all parents. Ensuring the safety of our children and school staff is no easy task, and we appreciate the efforts and decisions to date. To that end, we are aware that a small group of parents are trying to overturn the masking policy, and we are here tonight to clarify some of the science that has been used in support of this effort. We also want to raise awareness with the board and trustees that many parents are informed across the spectrum of medical evidence to date, and with this knowledge, we support the mandate for masking of children in our schools.

I want to start by addressing some of the common claims that have been used to advocate for getting rid of masks. One common claim is that there is no scientific evidence to support the use of masking to prevent transmission or infection of SARS-CoV-2 in healthy, asymptomatic people in a general public setting. In fact, there is emerging evidence suggesting that cloth masks may be quite effective. A recently published article states: "By analyzing the trend and mitigation measures in Wuhan, China, Italy, and New York City, from January 23 to May 9, 2020, we illustrate that the impacts of mitigation measures are discernable from the trends of the pandemic. Our analysis reveals that the difference with and without mandated face covering represents the determinant in shaping the pandemic trends in the three epicenters. This protective measure alone significantly reduced the number of infections, that is, by over 78,000 in Italy from April 6 to May 9 and over 66,000 in New York City from April 17 to May 9. Other mitigation measures, such as social distancing implemented in the United States, are insufficient by themselves in protecting the public. We conclude that wearing of face masks in public corresponds to the most effective means to prevent interhuman transmission, and this inexpensive practice, in conjunction with simultaneous social distancing, quarantine, and contact tracing, represents the most likely fighting opportunity to stop the COVID-19 pandemic. Our work also highlights the fact that sound science is essential in decision-making for the current and future public health pandemics."¹ There are other recent studies supporting the effectiveness of cloth masks in reducing transmission as well.^{2,3}

Public health groups have also been quoted, including Sick Kids and the WHO, as support that masks should not be used in children under the age of 10. However, these delegations have cherry-picked statements to support their personal beliefs. These guidelines are meant to be taken as a whole, not to pick out sentences in isolation. Regarding the WHO and UNICEF statements that "children 5 years and younger should not be required to wear masks...", an additional statement advises that the use of masks for children aged 6-11 should be based on multiple factors, including in: "specific settings and interactions the child has with other people who are at high risk of developing serious illness, such as the elderly and those with other underlying health conditions."⁴ Although children are at much lower risk of being infected or transmitting covid, this does not mean they are at zero risk. **Covid-19 is a community issue, and demands a community response.** This means that curbing transmission in the classroom should be considered an essential part of the community response to managing this illness, to protect those who are vulnerable to this disease, including the elderly and immunocompromised friends and family members in our lives. Further, the CDC advocates masks in children older than the age of 2, in settings where physical distancing is not possible: "Children 2 years and older should wear a mask over their nose and mouth when in public settings where it's difficult to practice social distancing. This is an additional

public health measure people should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in addition to (not instead of) the other everyday preventive actions listed above [physical distancing, good hygiene and avoiding people who are symptomatic].”⁵ The RNAO also advocates for masks in schools: “Masks must be mandatory for all students in schools. We know children as young as three years of age can be taught to wear a mask and do this consistently over a period of time.”⁶

In one delegation, we heard that “...children do not carry SARS-COV-2 to others and infect them...”. It is critically important to recognize that this statement is NOT supported by science. The data does support that children are less likely to infect others, but this is not the same as stating that children do not transmit covid at all, and is a very misleading statement. Studies have reported transmission rates of between 5-10% from children to adults.^{7,8} Though numbers are low, and therefore should provide comfort for parents and administrators on the risk of transmission among school children, these studies do not support sweeping statements suggesting there is zero risk of transmission from children. Further, this data is based on children who tested positive for covid – there remains a paucity of knowledge around the transmission rates in children who are asymptomatic. To this point, the CDC claims the following: “It is unclear whether children are as susceptible to infection by SARS-CoV-2 compared with adults and whether they can transmit the virus as effectively as adults. Recent evidence suggests that children likely have the same or higher viral loads in their nasopharynx compared with adults and that children can spread the virus effectively in households and camp settings.”⁵

There has been a claim that the WHO confirmed that asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 is rare. On the WHO website, we found the following statement: “Yes, infected people can transmit the virus both when they have symptoms and when they don’t have symptoms. This is why it is important that all people who are infected are identified by testing, isolated, and, depending on the severity of their disease, receive medical care. Even people confirmed to have COVID-19 but who do not have symptoms should be isolated to limit their contact with others...This is why it is always important to stay at least 1 metre from others, cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze with a bent elbow or tissue, clean hands regularly, and stay home if you become unwell or if asked. In areas where there is widespread transmission, it is also important that people wear a fabric mask where physical distancing and other control measures cannot be implemented.”⁹ Further, in an article dated June 9, the comment about asymptomatic spread was clarified, due to backlash from the medical community: “A top World Health Organization official clarified on Tuesday that scientists have not determined yet how frequently people with asymptomatic cases of Covid-19 pass the disease on to others, a day after suggesting that such spread is “very rare.” The clarification comes after the WHO’s original comments incited strong pushback from outside public health experts, who suggested the agency had erred, or at least miscommunicated, when it said people who didn’t show symptoms were unlikely to spread the virus. Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO’s technical lead on the Covid-19 pandemic, made it very clear Tuesday that the actual rates of asymptomatic transmission aren’t yet known.”¹⁰ It is important to keep in mind that the reason for wearing masks is to minimize transmission, to limit community spread, not solely to minimize the risks for children.

There have been claims that requiring masks is a violation of human rights of children. The counter point to this claim is that the human rights of children and their families who are immunocompromised are threatened if masks are not adopted across the board. The factors in this situation are complex – and it is unlikely that a single solution will be found that does not infringe on the rights of some members of our community. The goal should therefore be to mitigate risk to as many people as possible. Further, evidence suggests that most Ontario parents support the use of masking in school as a preventive measure: 72% in a recent survey by the Leger group.¹¹

Data from other countries suggests that covid cases will rise when children return to school. It is important to continue to be vigilant and do everything we can to minimize the spread, so we can keep our kids in school, where they need to be. Masking is a simple, cost-effective way to control the spread, and protect the vulnerable, as noted in this recent publication on community risks: “Our findings indicate that COVID-19 is not just dangerous for the elderly and infirm but also for healthy middle-aged adults, for whom the fatality rate is

more than 50 times greater than the risk of dying in an automobile accident. Consequently, the overall [infection fatality rate] for a given location is intrinsically linked to the age-specific pattern of infections. In a scenario where the U.S. infection rate reaches 20 percent, our analysis indicates that protecting vulnerable age groups could prevent more than 200,000 deaths.”¹²

We hope that the information shared tonight provides some clarity around the data that has been published to date. What the experts know is evolving over time, as more and more data is being analyzed. Transmission of covid from children to people in our community who are at high risk for serious complications is possible, even if children are at very low risk of serious complications themselves. So in closing,

- 1) Children can transmit covid to adults
- 2) Covid rates will rise now that children are back to school
- 3) It is everyone’s responsibility to protect the vulnerable in our communities – schools are part of our communities and should do their part to mitigate spread
- 4) Masks are a cost effective and easy solution to help mitigate the spread of source infections, especially in children where symptoms may be mild or not detectable
- 5) A lot of work has gone into getting kids back to school – we want to keep them there! If cases start to rise, and we are forced into another lockdown, we are back to social isolation, online learning, and worrying about increasing rates of anxiety and depression.

Let’s work together to keep our communities safe. If changes are to be made, let them be considered after kids have been back to school for at least a month, so we can make informed decisions, not emotional ones.

Thank you for listening.

References

1. Zhang et al, 2020. <https://www.pnas.org/content/117/26/14857>
2. Yang et al 2020. <https://gh.bmj.com/content/bmjgh/5/5/e002794.full.pdf>
3. The Royal Society 2020. <https://royalsociety.org/-/media/policy/projects/set-c/set-c-facemasks.pdf?la=en-GB&hash=A22A87CB28F7D6AD9BD93BBCBFC2BB24>
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5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/pediatric-hcp.html>
6. <https://rnao.ca/covid19/rnaos-advice-reopening-schools-ontario>
7. Lee & Raszka, 2020. <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/146/2/e2020004879>
8. Park et al, 2020. https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/10/20-1315_article
9. https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-how-is-covid-19-transmitted?gclid=CjwKCAjwNf6BRAwEiwAkt6UQt0O8rR_a5mlzc8zDdYu9JYIHagZBxlgsgafRW5GwLrTN5zhGEPUMhoCI8QQAvD_BwE
10. <https://www.statnews.com/2020/06/09/who-comments-asymptomatic-spread-covid-19>
11. https://acs-aec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Legers-Weekly-Survey-July-27-2020_compressed.pdf (conducted on July 27th)
12. Levin et al, 2020. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3661089

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Date: September 1, 2020
 Time: 7:30 p.m.
 Location: Catholic Education Centre
 802 Drury Lane, Burlington

Board Room Attendance: V. Iantomasi, Chair of the Board
 B. Agnew
 P. DeRosa
 M. Duarte, Vice-Chair of the Board
 N. Guzzo
 P. Daly, Secretary of the Board
 A. Lofts
 A. Swinden, Manager, Strategic Communications
 R. Di Pietro, Recording Secretary

Trustees:	H. Karabela	T. O'Brien
(Electronically)	P. Murphy	J. O'Hearn-Czarnota

Student Trustees:	N. Gubert	J. Roshdy
(Electronically)	K. Kelly	

Senior Staff:	S. Balogh	L. Naar
(Electronically)	J. Crowell	J. O'Hara
	R. Merrick	T. Pinelli

Also Present: L. Collimore, Chief Officer, Research and Development Services
 (Electronically) R. DeFranco, Creative Design Officer, Strategic Communications

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

1.1 Opening Prayer, National Anthem, and Oath of Citizenship (K. Kelly)

The meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. with a prayer led by Student Trustee Kelly.

1.2 Motions Adopted In-Camera

There were no motions adopted in-camera to be read in public session.

1.3 Information Received In-Camera

The following information was received in-camera:

Retirements

Kelly Atto retired June 30, 2020. Albertina Carubba retired July 31, 2020. Martha Hughes, Debora Ramelli and Carol Schneider retired August 31, 2020.

Resignations

Joanne DeSantis resigned August 30, 2020. Lorrie Field, Sarah Hayes, Shannon Johnston, Kim Kinney, Lydia McGowan, and Christina Silveira resigned August 31, 2020.

Acting Department Heads

Sean-Edward Livingston and Myra Pierias appointed as Acting Department Heads effective September 1, 2020 for period of up to one (1) year.

Night School Principal 2020-2021 School Year

Gino DeLuca appointed as Night School Principal effective September 1, 2020 with a renewable one-year term at the Board's discretion.

Consultant Curriculum Generalist – French

Renata Dean appointed to the position of Curriculum Consultant Generalist – French effective September 1, 2020 for a period of up to three (3) years.

Acting Administrator Appointments

Tom Durran appointed as Acting Elementary Vice Principal effective September 1, 2020 with an end date to be determined. Paul Cianciolo appointed as Acting Secondary Vice Principal effective September 1, 2020 with an end date to be determined.

Teacher Hiring

Michael Capobianco, Brianne Chaffay, Aurelie Chuen Cheong, Maria Culjak, Jessica Curtis, Sarah Daum, Sara DiMichele, Adriana Ferlisi, Jordan Huffman, Tina Milicevic, Mary Miller Natacha Moniz, Stephen Nicholson, Abigail Nogiec, Olivia Pellegrino, Steve Sothiratnam Madeline Viera-Troke, Brandon Walker, Nicole Zinkann hired as probationary teachers effective September 1, 2020. Daniel Urciuoli hired as a probationary teacher effective February 1, 2021.

2. Approval of the Agenda

A request was made to move agenda item 12 - Correspondence to after agenda item 5 - Delegations.

#203/20

Moved by: B. Agnew

Seconded by: N. Guzzo

RESOLVED, that agenda item 12 - Correspondence to come after agenda item 5 - Delegations.

The Chair called for a vote on **#203/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	P. DeRosa		
M. Duarte	N. Gubert (non-binding)		
N. Guzzo	H. Karabela		
P. Murphy	K. Kelly (non-binding)		
J. O’Hearn-Czarnota	T. O’Brien		
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED**.

#204/20

Moved by: N. Guzzo

Seconded by: B. Agnew

RESOLVED, that Class Sizes and Operating Reserve Funds be added to the agenda as an action item.

The Chair called for a vote on **#204/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	P. DeRosa		
M. Duarte	N. Gubert (non-binding)		
N. Guzzo	H. Karabela		
P. Murphy	K. Kelly (non-binding)		
J. O’Hearn-Czarnota	T. O’Brien		
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The vote was not unanimous and therefore **DEFEATED**.

The following was added to the agenda:
 Notice of motion – Masking at HCDSB (H. Karabela)

#205/20

Moved by: M. Duarte

Seconded by: T. O’Brien

RESOLVED, that agenda be approved as amended.

The Chair called for a vote on **#205/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	P. DeRosa		
M. Duarte			
N. Gubert (non-binding)			
N. Guzzo			
H. Karabela			
K. Kelly (non-binding)			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED**.

3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

4. Presentations

There were no presentations.

5. Delegations

5.1 Secondary Timetable (J. Moore)

A delegation was presented regarding changes to the secondary timetable.

5.2 Mandatory Masks - K-3 (S. Rodriguez)

A delegation was presented requesting Trustees to rescind their decision on mandatory masks from K-3.

5.3 Mandatory Masks K-3 (L. Kasper-Leochko/S. Bilbao)

A delegation was presented requesting Trustees to rescind their decision on mandatory masks from K-3.

5.4 Mandatory Masks - K-3 (Dr. C. Wendler)

A delegation was presented regarding a primary healthcare provider's concern about masking in school children.

5.5 Mandatory Masks - K-3 (J. Krmencik)

A delegation was presented regarding mandatory masks for students K-3 and specifically that medical advice was not considered.

5.6 Mandatory Masks K-3 (S. Di Murro)

A delegation was presented regarding mandatory masks for students K-3.

5.7 Mandatory Masks K-3 (R. Kosilos)

The delegation requested that Trustees rescind their decision on mandatory masks from K-3.

Due to technical difficulties, the delegate was unable to present her delegation.

An expectation was made and requests made for correspondence to be read aloud were granted.

#206/20

Moved by: M. Duarte

Seconded by: T. O'Brien

RESOLVED, that correspondence from M. Fabiano also be read into the public record.

The Chair called for a vote on **#206/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	N. Guzzo		
P. DeRosa			
M. Duarte			
N. Gubert (non-binding)			
V. Iantomasi			
H. Karabela			
K. Kelly (non-binding)			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED**.

Director Daly read into the public record, correspondence from submitted requests.

#207/20

Moved by: B. Agnew

Seconded by: P. DeRosa

RESOLVED, that the meeting move past 10:00 p.m.

The Chair called for a vote on **#207/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

#208/20

Moved by: P. DeRosa

Seconded by: M. Duarte

RESOLVED, that the delegation from R. Kosilos be read into the public record.

The Chair called for a vote on **#208/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew		N. Gubert (non-binding)	
P. DeRosa			
M. Duarte			
N. Guzzo			
V. Iantomasi			
H. Karabela			
K. Kelly (non-binding)			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED** and Director Daly read the delegation into the public record.

6. Approval of Minutes

6.1 Minutes of the June 2, 2020 Regular Board Meeting #209/20

Moved by: T. O'Brien

Seconded by: P. DeRosa

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the June 2, 2020 Regular Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#209/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew		N. Gubert (non-binding)	
P. DeRosa		K. Kelly (non-binding)	
M. Duarte		J. Roshdy (non-binding)	
N. Guzzo			
V. Iantomasi			
H. Karabela			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			

The motion **CARRIED**.

6.2 Minutes of the June 16, 2020 Regular Board Meeting #210/20

Moved by: M. Duarte

Seconded by: H. Karabela

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the June 16, 2020 Regular Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#210/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew		N. Gubert (non-binding)	
P. DeRosa		K. Kelly (non-binding)	
M. Duarte		J. Roshdy (non-binding)	
N. Guzzo			
H. Karabela			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			

The motion **CARRIED**.

**6.3 Minutes of the July 8, 2020 Special Board Meeting
#211/20**

Moved by: M. Duarte

Seconded by: T. O'Brien

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the July 8, 2020 Special Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#211/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Ba Agnew		N. Gubert (non-binding)	
Pn DeRosa		K. Kelly (non-binding)	
Ml Duarte		J. Roshdy (non-binding)	
N. Guzzo			
H. Karabela			
Pt Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J ^u O'Hearn-Czarnota			

The motion **CARRIED**.

**6.4 Minutes of the July 22, 2020 Special Board Meeting
#212/20**

Moved by: P. DeRosa

Seconded by: T. O'Brien

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the July 22, 2020 Special Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#212/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew		N. Gubert (non-binding)	
P. DeRosa		K. Kelly (non-binding)	
M. Duarte		J. Roshdy (non-binding)	
N. Guzzo			
H. Karabela			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			

The motion **CARRIED**.

#213/20

Moved by: B. Agnew

Seconded by: H. Karabela

RESOLVED, that the meeting move past 10:30 p.m.

The Chair called for a vote on **#213/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

6.5 Minutes of the July 23, 2020 Special Board Meeting

#214/20

Moved by: M. Duarte

Seconded by: T. O'Brien

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the July 23, 2020 Special Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#214/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew		N. Gubert (non-binding)	
P. DeRosa		K. Kelly (non-binding)	
M. Duarte		J. Roshdy (non-binding)	
N. Guzzo			
V. Iantomasi			
H. Karabela			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			

The motion **CARRIED**.

6.6 Minutes of the July 29, 2020 Special Board Meeting

#215/20

Moved by: T. O'Brien

Seconded by: M. Duarte

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the July 29, 2020 Special Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#215/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew		P. DeRosa	
M. Duarte		N. Gubert (non-binding)	
N. Guzzo		K. Kelly (non-binding)	
V. Iantomasi		J. Roshdy (non-binding)	
H. Karabela			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			

The motion **CARRIED**.

6.7 Minutes of the August 12, 2020 Special Board Meeting

#216/20

Moved by: P. DeRosa

Seconded by: T. O'Brien

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the August 12, 2020 Special Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#216/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

6.8 Minutes of the August 18, 2020 Special Board Meeting

#217/20

Moved by: T. O'Brien

Seconded by: H. Karabela

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the August 18, 2020 Special Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#217/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

6.9 Minutes of the August 19, 2020 Special Board Meeting

#218/20

Moved by: P. DeRosa

Seconded by: T. O'Brien

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the August 19, 2020 Special Board Meeting be approved.

The Chair called for a vote on **#218/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	J. O'Hearn-Czarnota		
P. DeRosa			
M. Duarte			
N. Gubert (non-binding)			
N. Guzzo			
V. Iantomasi			
H. Karabela			
K. Kelly (non-binding)			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED**.

7. Business Arising from Previous Meetings

7.1 Summary of Outstanding Items from Previous Meetings

The Summary of Outstanding Items from Previous Meetings was received as information.

8. Action Items

8.1 Response to Delegations (5.1 – Secondary Timetable)

#219/20

Moved by: H. Karabela

Seconded by: N. Guzzo

RESOLVED, that the Halton Catholic District School Board receive the delegation regarding the secondary timetable as information.

The Chair called for a vote on **#219/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	M. Duarte	K. Kelly (non-binding)	
P. DeRosa	N. Gubert (non-binding)		
N. Guzzo	J. Roshdy (non-binding)		
V. Iantomasi			
H. Karabela			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			

The motion **CARRIED**.

Response to Delegations (5.2 – 5.7 – Mandatory Masks K-3)

#220/20

Moved by: P. DeRosa

Seconded by: H. Karabela

RESOLVED, that the response to delegations 5.2 to 5.7 be a staff report consisting of a survey of our constituents (as per Policy V-18 Community Engagement and Public

Consultation), to establish their position on the Board Motion resulting from the special board meeting of August 19, 2020 (ref, 198/20 RETURN TO SCHOOL PLANNING) making it mandatory the wearing of masks for JK-3.

The Chair called a vote on **#220/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
P. DeRosa	B. Agnew		
N. Gubert (non-binding)	M. Duarte		
H. Karabela	N. Guzzo		
K. Kelly (non-binding)	P. Murphy		
T. O'Brien	J. O'Hearn-Czarnota		
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion was **DEFEATED**.

#221/20

Moved by: P. DeRosa

Seconded by: N. Guzzo

RESOLVED, that the meeting move past 11:00 p.m.

The Chair called for a vote on **#221/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

#222/20

Moved by: M. Duarte

Seconded by: T. O'Brien

RESOLVED, that the Halton Catholic District School Board receive the delegations regarding mandatory masks K-3 as information.

The Chair called for a vote on **#222/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	P. DeRosa		
M. Duarte	N. Gubert (non-binding)		
N. Guzzo	V. Iantomasi		
K. Kelly (non-binding)	H. Karabela		
P. Murphy	T. O'Brien		
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED**.

#223/20

Moved by: T. O'Brien

Seconded by: P. DeRosa

RESOLVED, that the meeting move past 11:30 p.m.

The Chair called for a vote on **#223/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

8.2 Board Meetings (J. O'Hearn-Czarnota)**#224/20****Moved by:** J. O'Hearn-Czarnota**Seconded by:** M. Duarte**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees direct Pat Daly, Director of Education to retain the services of a Parliamentarian (chosen by majority vote of Trustees) to attend (sit in) on 3 Regular Board meetings for September 15th, October 6th and October 20th, 2020.**#224/20 (AMENDMENT)****Moved by:** H. Karabela**Seconded by:** P. DeRosa**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees direct Pat Daly, Director of Education to retain the services of a Parliamentarian (chosen by majority vote of Trustees) to ~~attend (sit in) on 3 Regular Board meetings for September 15th, October 6th and October 20th, 2020.~~ **review 3 recent recording of Regular Board meetings (May 19, June 2 and June 16) and provide constructive feedback; provide an advanced training session on parliamentary procedures and answer specific questions collected from Trustees.**The Chair called for a vote on **#224/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.**#224/20 (AMENDMENT 2)****Moved by:** M. Duarte**Seconded by:** P. Murphy**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees direct Pat Daly, Director of Education to retain the services of a Parliamentarian (chosen by majority vote of Trustees) to ~~attend (sit in) on 3 Regular Board meetings for September 15th, October 6th and October 20th, 2020.~~ **review 3 2 recent recording of Regular Board meetings (May 19 and June 2; and June 16) be physically present in the Board Room at future meetings; and provide constructive feedback; provide an advanced training session on parliamentary procedures and answer specific questions collected from Trustees.**The Chair called for a vote on **#224/20 (AMENDEMNET 2)** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.**#224/20 (AS AMENDED)****Moved by:** J. O'Hearn-Czarnota**Seconded by:** M. Duarte**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees direct Pat Daly, Director of Education to retain the services of a Parliamentarian (chosen by majority vote of Trustees) to ~~2 recent recording of Regular Board meetings (May 19 and June 2);~~ **be physically present in the Board Room at future meetings; provide constructive feedback; provide an advanced training session on parliamentary procedures and answer specific questions collected from Trustees.**The Chair called for a vote on **#224/20 (AS AMENDED)** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

The vote on choosing a Parliamentarian will take place at the September 15, 2020 Regular In-Camera Board meeting.

#225/20

Moved by: B. Agnew

Seconded by: N. Guzzo

RESOLVED, that the meeting move past 12:00 a.m.

The Chair called for a vote on **#225/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

9. Staff Reports

There were no staff reports.

10. Information Items

10.1 Student Trustees Update (N. Gubert, K. Kelly, J. Roshdy)

The pillars of Achieving, Believing and Belonging were shared.

#226/20

Moved by: N. Guzzo

Seconded by: P. DeRosa

RESOLVED, that the meeting move past 12:30 a.m.

The Chair called for a vote on **#226/20** :

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	N. Gubert (non-binding)		
P. DeRosa			
M. Duarte			
N. Guzzo			
V. Iantomasi			
H. Karabela			
K. Kelly (non-binding)			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED**.

10.2 Return to School Planning (P. Daly)

Director Daly provided an overview of the intent to return to school survey, gradual return and preparations for a safe and healthy return to school.

The following motion was put forward:

#227/20**Moved by:** N. Guzzo**Seconded by:** B. Agnew**WHEREAS** safety of our students and staff are of the utmost importance to the HCDSB,**WHEREAS** the Federal/ Provincial Government has provided additional funding to the HCDSB for the Back to School plan;**WHEREAS** funding will be streamed to the board for the Start of School Year from the Provincial government in the amount of \$3,483,375.00 to be utilized for one time staffing and school opening costs;**WHEREAS** there will be a second amount of money to come down from the Provincial government to the board in amounts yet to be defined;**BE IT RESOLVED** that the HCDSB organize class sizes in elementary with an average of 22 but no more than 25 students per class.**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board direct staff to access Operating Reserve Funds to implement the above class sizes,**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that any further funds allocated to the Board in term two will be used to offset any costs that were drawn from the Operating Reserve Funds.**#228/20****Moved by:** H. Karabela**Seconded by:** P. DeRosa**RESOLVED**, that the motion be postponed until staff can provide a plan at the September 15, 2020 Regular Board meeting.The Chair called for a vote on **#228/20**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
P. DeRosa	B. Agnew		
N. Gubert (non-binding)	M. Duarte		
H. Karabela	N. Guzzo		
	K. Kelly (non-binding)		
	P. Murphy		
	T. O'Brien		
	J. O'Hearn-Czarnota		
	J. Roshdy (non-binding)		

The motion was **DEFEATED**.

#229/20**Moved by:** N. Guzzo**Seconded by:** B. Agnew**RESOLVED**, that the meeting move past 1:00 a.m.The Chair called for a vote on **#229/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.**#227/20 (AMENDMENT)****Moved by:** N. Guzzo**Seconded by:** B. Agnew**WHEREAS** safety of our students and staff are of the utmost importance to the HCDSB,**WHEREAS** the Federal/ Provincial Government has provided additional funding to the HCDSB for the Back to School plan;**WHEREAS** funding will be streamed to the board for the Start of School Year from the Provincial government in the amount of \$3,483,375.00 to be utilized for one time staffing and school opening costs;**WHEREAS** there will be a second amount of money to come down from the Provincial government to the board in amounts yet to be defined;**BE IT RESOLVED** that the HCDSB organize class sizes in elementary with an average of 22.18 but no more than 25 students per class.**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board direct staff to access Operating Reserve Funds to implement the above class sizes,**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that any further funds allocated to the Board in term two will be used to offset any costs that were drawn from the Operating Reserve Funds.The Chair called for a vote on **#227/20 (AMENDMENT)**:

IN FAVOUR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
B. Agnew	P. DeRosa		
M. Duarte	H. Karabela		
N. Gubert (non-binding)			
N. Guzzo			
K. Kelly (non-binding)			
P. Murphy			
T. O'Brien			
J. O'Hearn-Czarnota			
J. Roshdy (non-binding)			

The motion **CARRIED**.

10.3 Variance between Board Approved 2020-21 Budget and Ministry of Education Budget Submission (A. Lofts)

Trustees updated on the 2020-21 Budget Estimates online Education Finance Information System (EFIS) forms submission.

10.4 Notice of Motion - Masking at HCDSB

BE IT RESOLVED that only students in grades 4-12 be required to wear non-medical masks/ face coverings (with the exception of students with exemptions) to align our Board with the directives received from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in conjunction with Halton Regional Health, and leaving the final decision to the parents/guardians of JK-grade 3 students whether to send them to school with or without a mask.

This will be an action item at the September 15, 2020 Regular Board Meeting.

11. Miscellaneous Information

11.1 Minutes of the May 11, 2020 SEAC Meeting

Minutes of the May 11, 2020 SEAC meeting provided as information

11.2 Minutes of the May 25, 2020 SEAC Meeting

Minutes of the May 25, 2020 SEAC meeting provided as information.

12. Correspondence

12.1 A. Cavalcanti

12.2 J. Pustai

12.3 C. Zaffuto

12.4 K. Dickinson

12.5 N. Deveau

12.6 A. Knorr

12.7 M. Fabiano

12.8 M. Cookson

12.9 S. McMillan

12.10 M. Ramsey

12.11 S. Gowan

12.12 C. Jones

12.13 Y. Spellman

12.14 J. Santos

12.15 J. Bobanovic

12.16 L. Messom

12.17 D. Otterman

12.18 J. Zasiwski

12.19 C. DeJong

12.20 S. Thompson

12.21 C. Settimi

12.22 H. Albertson

12.23 D. Zasiwski

12.24 D. Kuypers

Correspondence was provided as information.

13. Open Question Period

Question 1

In the return to school plan, it was clear that lockers were not to be used. In schools that have enough lockers to accommodate 1 per child, why not allow them to be used? Some classrooms are already spatially challenged, and to add the clutter of coats, backpacks and shoes doesn't seem reasonable if the school has the resources to have 1 locker per child. COVID-19 can live on soft surfaces such as clothing for a period of hours to days and to have those items brought into the classroom, to me doesn't make sense.

It was decided at both elementary and secondary that lockers would be locked to encourage students to bring what only is needed to school. This will also help avoid congregation in the hallways.

Question 2

I have completed the intent to return form and I have opted at this time to send my kids to school. I have to admit I have a lot of anxiety with this decision but at the same time am uncertain about distance learning at home as well. That being said, if I decide once the children start school that it is not the right decision am I able to change to home learning? Will there be "withdrawal" Opportunities as there are entry points for those who choose home learning ie. at Thanksgiving, Christmas etc. ?

Thanksgiving and Christmas have been designated to opt back into face to face learning.

Question 3

Can the Board of Trustees do everything in its power, including dipping into the operational reserve funds if necessary, to guarantee that those HCDSB conventional class lists and the corresponding funding that existed pre August 26th for those classes will remain intact for the school year regardless of the results of the Return to School Survey and regardless of what class sizes will actually be by the end of September. Put another way, even if class sizes go down as a result of parents opting for their child to learn on-line, will the Board of Trustees use every resource in its power to ensure funding for existing school classes and to ensure no classes are collapsed, in particular if the funding is cut off from the Ministry?

The Ministry has assured us that they will continue to fund students whether it be face to face or online. Trustees passed a motion to use resources that are at their disposal to lessen or reduce class sizes.

Question 4

Will there be school councils for virtual schools? Will parents whose children are studying remotely remain eligible to participate in their home school's school council?

We would want to keep the connection with parents and students with their home school. Have not talked about council for virtual schools. Depending on numbers a principal may be designated.

Question 5

What will the uniform policy be for students... What will the uniform policy be for students studying remotely (personally, I would recommend continuing to require uniforms or at least uniform tops although other parents will differ)?

Students will not be expected to wear uniform but expected to dress appropriately.

Question 6

When will students know who their teacher and principal will be? When will students be given login information, timetable information, etc?

Virtual classes are currently being created. Do not currently have definitive date on log in information. Goal is to have virtual classes up and running by September 14th.

Question 7

What options will be provided to allow continued connection with their home school? What measures will be taken to foster community between students studying remotely?

A well-being and maintaining community committee was struck. Considerations were incorporated in the Return to School Plan.

Question 8

Where are kids placing their mask when they go to the bathroom, have a drink of water, eat their food, are at recess etc. etc.? The risk for transmitting bacteria by taking the mask on and off is far greater than not having it on at all. Are we going to place more effort and time on masking than actual teaching and instruction?

Students will wear masks when go to washroom and remove when eat and drink and recess. Teachers will work with students on good hand hygiene to support taking mask off and on etc.

Question 9

When a kid must sneeze, what are they to do? Sneeze in the mask and soil it, and then have to wear it for the full day? Nothing about that sounds healthy or sanitary for a child.

Student sneezes and its dry they can continue to wear mask. If sneeze and its wet, practice hand hygiene first, take mask off and replace with another mask. Respiratory etiquette that will be reviewed with all students.

Question 10

A huge part of entering school in JK is making new friends. How can these youngest students even know what people look like, or understand facial expressions as they create new relationships?

Expectation is students wear masks. There will be opportunities to be outside and have masks off. There will be mask breaks in class which will help create those new relationships.

Question 11

Where exception cases arise and certain children are exempt from masking, how are you going to address the other kids questions around “why do I have to wear one and they don’t” and all the unintended segregation and bullying that can arise from that?

Teachers and hopefully parents will do some of that groundwork. Letting their children know that not everyone will be able to wear a mask and do some prep work at home. Message from teachers is to always important to emphasize care, kindness, and acceptance for all students.

Question 12

How do we expect children aged 3-8 to wear masks for close to 6 hours a day when medical professionals in many cases have expressed challenges in doing so? (And don’t say “We will give them mask breaks”)

There will be opportunities during the day for students to demask.

Question 13

Are children with a peanut allergy or any allergy with an Epi Pen exempt from masking up until Grade 4? If not, how will you be able to identify if a child is having a reaction with only their hands, eyes and forehead exposed? Especially in the younger grades where a child may not be able to understand or fully identify the symptoms of a reaction? Is this Board willing to take responsibility for being late to recognize and respond to an allergic reaction and the potential need to administer an EpiPen?

Parents can work with principal through plan of care and request exemption based on the needs of the child.

Question 14

Have you done even a minute of research on the origins of things like Peanut allergies? Likely not, so I would implore you to watch the CBC documentary “The Allergy Fix”. These decisions will have long term unintended consequences on immunity health of our children for years to come. In the next 5-10 years we won’t be talking about mandatory masks as the majority of children will need EpiPens. Has anyone considered for a moment the need to build a child’s natural immune system?

In regards to masking, we have no done research in terms of peanut allergies.

Question 15

Should a classroom actually be large enough to accommodate physical distancing given the number of students in the class, will the children be allowed to demask while at their desk (All Grades)?

There will be opportunities during the day for students to damask.

Question 16

What is the policy / criteria for including correspondence in the board report? In particular, please address:

- Why correspondence from some organizations is included but not others;
- Why correspondence from the Ministry of Education to the Director and/or Trustees is not included;
- Why some correspondence to individual trustees is included, but not all such correspondence, and not even all correspondence that is addressed to all trustees; and
- Why the board allows bias by sharing some correspondence, but not others.

If correspondence is received in a timely fashion we try to include in the Board agenda. Exception made in this case because of the level of correspondence and requests to have read into the record.

Ministry letters are not typically part of Board package. Information is shared with parents and also shared on social media.

There is no bias and try to include correspondence received in a timely fashion.

Question 17

How will secondary students develop exam writing skills which are crucial for post-secondary pathways if they won't be writing exams this year? What if the adapted/hybrid model and/or remote learning continues past this current school year?

Students may not be writing a traditional 2 hour exam but will have opportunities for test taking. Exams not required for final evaluation.

Question 18

Why haven't the school level "return to school committees" been established yet? What is their purpose if they are not established until after the return to school is complete, and the school year is well underway?

Return to school committees have not started up as councils have not been established. Committee to return throughout the fall as circumstances change.

14. In Camera

There was no follow-up In-Camera session.

15. Resolution re Absentees

There were no absentees.

16. Adjournment and Closing Prayer (B. Agnew)

#230/20

Moved by: P. DeRosa

Seconded by: M. Duarte

RESOLVED, that the meeting adjourn.

The Chair called for a vote on **#230/20** and it **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 a.m. with a prayer led by Trustee Agnew.

Secretary of the Board

Chair

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

DATE OF THE BOARD MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS
November 5, 2019	Math Action Plan	BE IT RESOLVED , that in December 2020, the Board of Trustees receive a staff report on the progress made toward achievement of the goals of the Math Action Plan with measurable outcomes using qualitative and quantitative data.	Curriculum	December 2020
November 19, 2019	Response to Delegations	WHEREAS , the Board of Trustees give direction to the Director of Education and Secretary of the Board to present a comprehensive plan to eliminate the waiting list, meet future demand and growth of French Programming for the 2020/2021 school year. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED , that the Board of Trustees further direct that the Multi year French Teacher Recruitment Plan include those schools identified in the delegation, including but not limited to Laurentian, Sherbrook, Bishops, Concordia, University of Quebec, etc.	Senior Staff	
March 31, 2020	Math & Science Extra Curricular Engagement – Past/Present Initiatives and Future Opportunities	BE IT RESOLVED , that the Board of Trustees give instructions to its Secretary and Director of Education to prepare and present to the Board of Trustees on May 5, 2020 a detailed report outlining the current co-curricular and extra-curricular events being conducted in elementary and secondary math and science. The report should include the level of student participation in local, regional, university, national and international competitions for the past academic year.	Curriculum	It was agreed to establish a Steering Committee consisting of but not limited to HCDSB staff, Trustees representatives and community partners with the following timelines: Draft Terms of Reference for June 2020 Committee Final Terms for September 2020 Initial Staff Report back to the Board of Trustees for the

		BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED , that subject to the May 5, 2020 report a plan be presented to the Board for review which includes the initiatives that support and encourage participation in local, regional, university, national shows and competitions in math and science, along with STEM initiatives moving forward.		October 20, 2020 Regular Board Meeting A request was made regarding what the costs would be to dedicate staff to this program.
March 31, 2020	Update to Board Room Technology	WHEREAS , the boardroom located in the Halton Catholic District School Board's Catholic Education Centre offices, is also the location where public meetings are held and in keeping with Section 208.1 sub sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Education Act which states that access to proceedings be allowed from remote locations to Trustees; and, WHEREAS , current audio, video and data transfer equipment is antiquated and unsatisfactory BE IT RESOLVED , that the Board gives instruction to the Secretary of the Board to investigate and provide at least three (3) costed reports at a regular board meeting, for the purpose of upgrading the current communication system and replace the same so as to allow seamless remote access with the latest technology (such as: speech timing, floor queuing, live streaming, recording, screen sharing, document comparing, etc..) that has the capability of allowing a minimum of 25 remote users by no later than the May 5, 2020 Regular Board meeting; and that this technology be capable of relocation to any board office if required.	A. Lofts	Trustees in agreement that a staff working committee be struck in the Fall of 2020.
June 16, 2020	HCDSB Procedural By-Laws	Ad Hoc/Standing By-Law Review Committee	P. Daly	

June 16, 2020	Food Waste Management Practices	<p>BE IT RESOLVED, that a staff report be completed and brought to the December 1, 2020 Regular Board meeting with regards to the Board's strategy in combatting food waste in secondary school serveries including details on waste audits and other pertinent information;</p> <p>BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that additional details be provided in the report around investigating the possibility of participation in food donation programs and if the Board is currently involved with same.</p>	R. Merrick	December 1, 2020
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OUTSTANDING POLICY ITEMS

DATE OF THE BOARD MEETING	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION REQUIRED	RESPONSIBILITY	STATUS



Masking at HCDSB	Item 8.2
Tuesday, September 15, 2020	

The following Notice of Motion was presented at the September 1, 2020 Regular Board meeting:

<p style="text-align: right;">Moved by: H. Karabela</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Seconded by:</p> <p><i>BE IT RESOLVED</i>, that only students in grades 4-12 be required to wear non-medical masks/ face coverings (with the exception of students with exemptions) to align our Board with the directives received from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in conjunction with Halton Regional Health, and leaving the final decision to the parents/guardians of JK-grade 3 students whether to send them to school with or without a mask.</p>
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Policy I-19 Occupational Health and Safety	Item 8.3
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to our strategic priority of **Foundational Elements:** Optimizing organizational effectiveness.

Purpose

To approve *Policy I-19 Occupational Health and Safety*, as presented.

Background Information

The Occupational Health and Safety Act Section 25 (j) states that School Boards are required to “prepare and review at least annually a written Occupational Health and Safety Policy” and Section 25 (k) requires the employer to post a copy of the policy in a conspicuous location in the workplace.

The Occupational Health and Safety Policy must include the employer’s commitment to preventing occupational illness and injury in the workplace as well as their responsibility to implement and maintain a safe and healthy work environment. The policy must also include supervisor and worker responsibility statements as they pertain to health and safety in the workplace. Supervisors have the responsibility to ensure that safe and healthy work conditions are maintained in their work areas. Workers have the responsibility to work safely and in accordance with both legislated and employer procedures.

As per legislated requirements, this policy will be reviewed, revised if necessary and dated within a twelve (12) month period. Copies will be provided to each site and supervisors will be responsible for posting the policy annually in a conspicuous location in the workplace.

The Executive Officer of Human Resources and Human Resources Services Management staff have reviewed the policy and recommend that apart from minor housekeeping, there are no changes to the policy for the 2020-2021 school year.

Conclusion

Policy I-19 Occupational Health and Safety was presented at the Policy Committee Meeting on September 8, 2020 with a recommendation that it be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval.



Recommendation

The following recommendation is presented for the consideration of the Board:

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Resolved, that the Halton Catholic District School Board accept the recommendation of the Policy Committee that Policy I-19 Occupational Health and Safety, be approved.

Report Submitted and
Approved by:

N. Guzzo
Chair of the Policy Committee

Occupational Health & Safety	
Adopted: September 26, 1995	Last Reviewed/Revised: September 15, 2020
Next Scheduled Review: 2021-2022	
Associated Policies & Procedures: VI-79 Indoor Air Quality Investigation Process VI-92 Roof Access Procedures II-12 Management of Aggressive Student Behaviours Within Our Schools III-15 Workplace Violence III-16 Workplace Discrimination and Harassment VI-04 Complaints Resolution Process - Workplace Discrimination/Harassment/Violence	

Purpose

The Halton Catholic District School Board is dedicated to providing a safe working environment for its workers/employees. All workers/employees of the Board must be committed to an objective of reducing the risk of injury and illness.

Application and Scope

This policy applies to all workers/employees within the jurisdiction of the schools of the Halton Catholic District School Board.

Principles

It is in the best interest of all workers/employees to consider health and safety in every activity. Commitment to health and safety must form an integral part of the Halton Catholic District School Board and its workers/employees.

Requirements

- The Halton Catholic District School Board is committed to taking every reasonable precaution for the protection of all workers/employees.
- The Halton Catholic District School Board is responsible for providing adequate training for workers/employees in their specific work tasks to protect their health and safety.

- Supervisors at all levels will be accountable for the health and safety of workers/employees under their supervision.
- Supervisors at all levels are responsible to ensure that machinery, equipment and work methods are safe and that workers/employees perform their duties in compliance with legislation and established safe work practices and procedures.
- Supervisors shall advise a worker/employee of the existence of any potential or actual danger to the health and safety of the worker/employee of which the supervisor is aware.
- Supervisors shall take every reasonable precaution for the protection of workers/employees health and safety.
- Workers/supervisors must receive adequate training in their specific work tasks to protect their health and safety.
- Every worker/employee must protect her or his own health and safety by working in compliance with the legislation and with safe work policies, procedures and practices established by the Board.
- Workers/employees are required to report, immediately, unsafe or unhealthy situations to their immediate supervisor or designate.
- This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and posted in all Board locations in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Chair of the Board



Policy III-05 Employee Assault	Item 8.4
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to our strategic priority of **Foundational Elements:** Optimizing organizational effectiveness.

Purpose

To approve *Policy III-05 Employee Assault*, as presented.

Background Information

For the purpose of this policy, assault is defined as an act of intentional force applied to an individual; where one attempts or threatens by an act or gesture to apply force to another person; or caused the other person to believe upon reasonable grounds that the person issuing the threat has the ability to effect his/her purpose. This policy applies to all forms of assault, including sexual assault and assault with a weapon. Reference: Section 265, Criminal Code. Any attempt by a teacher or employee to restrain a student/individual from harming himself/herself or others is not governed by this policy.

The Executive Officer of Human Resources and Human Resources Services Management staff have reviewed the policy and recommend that apart from minor housekeeping, no changes to the policy for the 2020-2021 school year.

The revised *Policy III-05 Employee Assault* is attached for review and consideration by the Policy Committee.

Conclusion

Policy III-05 Employee Assault was presented at the Policy Committee Meeting on September 8, 2020 with a recommendation that it be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval.



Recommendation

The following recommendation is presented for the consideration of the Board:

Moved by:
Seconded by:

Resolved, that the Halton Catholic District School Board accept the recommendation of the Policy Committee that Policy III-05 Employee Assault, be approved.

Report Submitted and
Approved by:

N. Guzzo
Chair of the Policy Committee

Employee Assault	
Adopted: June 25, 1991	Last Reviewed/Revised: September 15, 2020
Next Scheduled Review: 2021-2022	
Associated Policies & Procedures: VI-04 Complaints Resolution Process Workplace Discrimination/Harassment/Violence II-12 Management of Aggressive Student Behaviours Within Our Schools	

Purpose

Employees shall be supported by the Board in situations arising from an assault upon their persons sustained in the performance of their duties.

References

[Criminal Code](#)

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, assault is defined as an act of intentional force applied to an individual; where one attempts or threatens by an act or gesture to apply force to another person; or caused the other person to believe upon reasonable grounds that the person issuing the threat has the ability to effect his/her purpose. This policy applies to all forms of assault, including sexual assault and assault with a weapon. Reference: Section 265, Criminal Code. Any attempt by a teacher or employee to restrain a student/individual from harming himself/herself or others is not governed by this policy.

Requirements

Where an employee has suffered an assault, the following steps are to be followed by the principal or supervisor:

- the assailant is to be removed immediately from the presence of the employee;
- the employee is to receive medical attention if warranted;

- the employee, or if necessary, a colleague, shall inform the principal or supervisor who shall inform the school Superintendent or Executive Officer, Human Resources Services that an assault has taken place;
- the supervisor or principal shall move to restore the environment to normalcy and conduct an immediate investigation into the assault. An Incident Report Form shall be completed and filed with the Superintendent of Schools or Executive Officer, Human Resources Services. Copies distributed as required;
- where the assailant is a student, the principal shall take appropriate action under the Education Act and the Safe Schools Policy and Procedures.
- where the investigation establishes that the assailant is a person other than a student at that school, or where the assault is perpetrated by an adult or student and is of a serious nature in terms of bodily harm, as defined above, or if requested, the principal shall alert the police to investigate;
- the principal or supervisor shall forward a written summary of the assault to the school superintendent or to the Executive Officer, Human Resources Services and shall furnish the employee with a copy of the summary and a copy of any other reports pertaining to the assault.

DUTY TO COMMUNICATE:

All principals must review this policy and associated *Administrative Procedure VI-04 Complaint Resolution Process* on an annual basis with staff at the start of each school year. The principal must ensure that all teaching and support staff in the building who may have been absent on the day of the review of the policy, review the policy and procedure at a later date.

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Chair of the Board



Policy III-15 Workplace Violence	Item 8.5
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to our strategic priority of **Foundational Elements:** Optimizing organizational effectiveness.

Purpose

To approve *Policy III-15 Workplace Violence*, as presented.

Background Information

The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2010 states that school boards are required to review annually, and revise if necessary, its policy on Workplace Violence.

The Executive Officer of Human Resources and Human Resources Services Management staff have reviewed the policy and recommend that apart from minor housekeeping, no changes to the policy for the 2020-2021 school year.

Conclusion

Policy III-15 Workplace Violence was presented at the Policy Committee Meeting on September 8, 2020 with a recommendation that it be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Recommendation

The following recommendation is presented for the consideration of the Board:

<p>Moved by:</p> <p>Seconded by:</p> <p>Resolved, that the Halton Catholic District School Board <i>accept the recommendation of the Policy Committee that Policy III-15 Workplace Violence, be approved.</i></p>
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Report Submitted and
Approved by:

N. Guzzo
Chair of the Policy Committee

Workplace Violence	
Adopted: June 29, 2010	Last Reviewed/Revised: September 15, 2020
Next Scheduled Review: 2021-2022	
Associated Policies & Procedures: VI-04 Complaints Resolution Process: Workplace Discrimination/ Harassment/Violence III-05 Employee Assault II-39 Progressive Discipline and Safety In Schools VI-44 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools	

Purpose

To ensure that the environment of the Halton Catholic District School Board in which its employees work and its students learn is free of workplace violence as defined under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Application and Scope

This policy applies to all Board employees, trustees and other users of the Board's facilities, such as members of consultative committees, parents, volunteers, permit holders, contractors and employees of other organizations not related to the Board but who nevertheless work on or are invited onto Board premises. This policy also covers workplace violence by such persons which are proven to have repercussions that adversely affect the Board's learning and working environment.

The rights of students to a respectful working and learning environment, free from violence, are dealt with under other appropriate policy, legislation or regulations including, but not limited to, the *Education Act*, Ontario Schools Code of Conduct and codes of behaviours.

References

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

[Education Act](#)

[Ontario Schools Code of Conduct](#)

Definitions

Workplace Violence - Workplace Violence means:

- a) the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- b) an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; and
- c) a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

Workplace - The Workplace is any place where employees perform work or work-related duties or functions. Schools and school-related activities, such as extra-curricular activities and excursions, comprise the workplace, as do Board offices and facilities. Conferences and training sessions fall within the scope of this policy.

Principles

The Halton Catholic District School Board is committed to providing a safe working environment in which all employees are treated with respect and dignity, safe from violence and harassment.

It is the policy of the Board to ensure conduct in its workplaces is in accordance with the gospel values of Jesus Christ, the Board's Mission and Vision Statement, and Guiding Principles.

This policy is intended to provide greater awareness of the value of establishing and maintaining respectful working and learning environments.

The Board will assess the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, in accordance with the provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Requirements

1. Information and Instruction with Respect to Workplace Violence:

- a) The Board will provide an employee with,
 - i. information and instruction that is appropriate for the employee on the contents of the policy and program with respect to workplace violence; and
 - ii. any other prescribed information or instruction.
- b) The information provided to an employee may include personal information related to a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour if,
 - i. the employee can be expected to encounter that person in the course of his or her work; and

- ii. the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury.
- c) The Board will not disclose more personal information than is reasonably necessary to protect the employee from physical injury.

2. Domestic Violence:

- a) The Board will take every reasonable precaution to protect an employee from domestic violence, if aware, that is likely to expose an employee to physical injury that may occur in the workplace.

3. Assessment of the Risks of Workplace Violence:

- a) The Board will assess the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work.
- b) The Board will reassess the risks of workplace violence as often as necessary to ensure that the related policy and the related program continue to protect employees from workplace violence.
- c) The assessments and reassessments shall take into account:
 - i. circumstances that would be common to similar workplaces;
 - ii. circumstances specific to the workplace; and
 - iii. any other prescribed elements.
- d) Circumstances that would be common to schools of the Board are:
 - i. the existence of potential risks due to interactions with the public, students, parents and employees; and
 - ii. the existence of protocols between the Board and the police force on its territory.
- e) Circumstances specific to a school are:
 - i. the school safety plan;
 - ii. the provisions of the lockdown plan of the school;
 - iii. the relationship between the school and the local police.
- f) The Board shall advise the local committee or the local health and safety representative of the results of the assessment and reassessment, and provide a written copy to same.
- g) If there is no local committee or the local health and safety representative, the Board will advise the employees of the results of the assessment and reassessment and, if the assessment or reassessment is in writing, will provide written copies on request.

4. Program to Implement the Policy with Respect to Workplace Violence:

- a) The Board will develop and maintain a program to implement the policy with respect to workplace violence.
- b) Without limiting the generality of paragraph a) above, the program will;

- i. include measures to take and procedures to follow in order to control risks of workplace violence identified in the risk assessment that is required under section 3, as likely to expose an employee to physical injury;
- ii. include measures to take and procedures to follow in order to summon immediate assistance when workplace violence occurs or is likely to occur;
- iii. include measures that employees must take and procedures that they must follow to report incidents of workplace violence to the Board or their supervisor;
- iv. set out how the Board will investigate and deal with incidents or complaints of workplace violence, then subsequently act in a fair and timely manner; and
- v. include any prescribed elements.

5. Posting of the Policy:

- a) The policy and procedures concerning workplace violence will be posted in a conspicuous place at the workplace.

6. Review of the Policy:

- a) The Board will review the policy with respect to workplace violence as often as is necessary, but at least annually.

7. Duties of the Supervisor:

The supervisor will advise an employee of the existence of any potential or actual danger to the health and safety of the employee of which the supervisor is aware, or ought to be aware, including personal information, related to a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violence behaviour if,

- a) the employee can be expected to encounter that person in the course of his or her work; and
- b) the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury.

8. Duties of the Board:

The Board will inform and communicate with the appropriate Union leader should a threat or act of serious and/or violent nature be made towards one of its members.

9. Duties of the Employee:

The employee shall advise the Board or the supervisor of any incident or risk of workplace violence of which he or she is aware.

10. Reprisal:

This policy prohibits reprisals against individuals, acting in good faith, who report incidents of workplace violence or act as witnesses. The Board will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent reprisals, threats of reprisal, or further violence. Reprisal is defined as any act of retaliation, either direct or indirect.



Policy No. III-15 | Workplace Violence

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: _____

Chair of the Board



Policy III-16 Workplace Discrimination and Harassment	Item 8.6
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to our strategic priority of **Foundational Elements:** Optimizing organizational effectiveness.

Purpose

To approve *Policy III-16 Workplace Discrimination and Harassment*, as presented.

Background Information

Policy III-16 Workplace Discrimination and Harassment is reviewed on an annual basis. The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act requires that employers implement specific workplace harassment policies and procedures and ensure that incidents and complaints of workplace harassment are properly investigated. Similarly, the Ontario Human Rights Code requires employers to ensure the workplace is free from harassment on a number of prescribed and prohibited grounds.

The Executive Officer of Human Resources and Human Resources Services Management staff have reviewed the policy and recommend that apart from minor housekeeping, no changes to the policy for the 2020-2021 school year.

Conclusion

Policy III-16 Workplace Discrimination and Harassment was presented at the Policy Committee Meeting on September 8, 2020 with a recommendation that it be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval.



Recommendation

The following recommendation is presented for the consideration of the Board:

Moved by:
Seconded by:

Resolved, that the Halton Catholic District School Board accept the recommendation of the Policy Committee that Policy III-16 Workplace Discrimination and Harassment, be approved.

Report Submitted and
Approved by:

N. Guzzo
Chair of the Policy Committee

Workplace Discrimination and Harassment	
Adopted: June 29, 2010	Last Reviewed/Revised: September 15, 2020
Next Scheduled Review: 2021-2022	
Associated Policies & Procedures: VI-04 Complaints Resolution Process Workplace Discrimination/Harassment/Violence I-36 Trustee Code of Conduct I-43 Use of Technology and Digital Citizenship VI-62 Use of Technology and Digital Citizenship II-39 Progressive Discipline & Safety in Schools Code of Conduct - Suspensions & Expulsions VI-44 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools	

Purpose

To uphold Halton Catholic District School Board's commitment to providing an environment free of discrimination and harassment for all its employees, stakeholders and students, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, can contribute fully and have equal opportunities.

The Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy is guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Application and Scope

This policy applies to all Board employees, trustees and other users of the Board's facilities, such as members of consultative committees, parents, volunteers, permit holders, contractors and employees of other organizations not related to the Board but who nevertheless work on or are invited onto Board premises. This policy addresses workplace harassment and discrimination from all sources including third parties, supervisors, employees, students, parents and members of the public.

The rights of students to a respectful working and learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment, are protected under other appropriate policy, legislation or regulations including, but not limited to, the *Education Act*, Ontario Schools Code of Conduct and codes of behaviours.

This policy applies to the workplace. The Board's workplace is any place where employees perform work or work-related duties or functions. Schools and school-related activities, such as extra-curricular activities and excursions, comprise the workplace, as do Board offices and facilities. Conferences and training sessions fall within the scope of this policy.

References

[Human Rights Code](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

[Education Act](#)

[Ontario Schools Code of Conduct](#)

Definitions

Protected Grounds of Discrimination - Protected grounds as set out in applicable human rights legislation (Human Rights Code Part I Section 5 (1)).

Discrimination - Discrimination includes, but is not limited to, a differential act, system or behaviour which differentiates between individual or groups, imposes a disadvantage or withholds an advantage on the basis of any protected ground in the Ontario Human Rights Code (The Code). It may involve direct actions, or it may involve rules, practices or procedures that appear neutral, but disadvantage certain groups of people.

Workplace Harassment -

- engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- workplace sexual harassment.

Harassment typically involves a pattern of comment or conduct that occurs over time. However, a single incident or a serious nature may be sufficient to constitute harassment.

Harassment may include slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and teasing. Harassment can be verbal, visual, by conduct, or in the written word.

Workplace Sexual Harassment -

- engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

Examples of discrimination or harassment or sexual harassment include (but are not limited to):

- Epithets, remarks, jokes or innuendos related to a person's race, gender identity, gender expression, sex, disability, sexual orientation, creed, age, or any other ground

- Display or distribution of offensive or racist pictures, graffiti or other derogatory material.
- Singling out a person for humiliating or demeaning “teasing” or jokes because they are a member of a Code-protected group
- comments about a person’s dress, speech or other practices that may be related to their sex, race, gender identity or creed.
- Sexual advances or requests for sexual favours which are known or ought reasonably to have been known by the person making the advances to be unwelcome.
- Sexually oriented remarks or behaviours which are known or ought reasonably to have been known by the person making the remarks and/or engaging in the behaviour to be unwanted or unwelcome.
- The display of sexually explicit or exploitative pictures, cartoons or jokes within the Board premises or on Board property or the telling of jokes of a sexual nature.

However, the standard exercise of supervisory responsibilities, including training, evaluation, counseling, and discipline when warranted, does not constitute workplace discrimination or harassment.

Principles

The Halton Catholic District School Board expects that conduct in its workplaces shall be in accordance with the gospel values of Jesus Christ, the Goals of Education and the Board’s Mission Statement.

The Halton Catholic District School Board is committed to providing a learning and working environment that is safe and inclusive of the needs and well-being of the individual employee and student.

The Board will not tolerate, condone or ignore any workplace discrimination or harassment.

Where any employee of the Board is found to have violated this Policy, they may be disciplined, up to and including termination of employment.

Requirements

1. Information and Instruction with Respect to Workplace Discrimination and Harassment:

- a) The Board will provide employees with,
 - i. Information and training that is appropriate for employees on the contents of the policy and program with respect to workplace discrimination and harassment; and
 - ii. Any other prescribed information

2. Procedure to Implement the Policy with Respect to Workplace Discrimination and Harassment:

- a) The Board has developed a procedure to implement the policy with respect to workplace harassment. Refer to *Administrative Procedure VI-04 Complaints Resolution Process - Workplace Discrimination Harassment Violence* for more information.
- b) Without limiting the generality of paragraph a) above, the procedure includes:
 - i. Measures and procedures for employees to report incidents of workplace discrimination or harassment to a person other than the employer or supervisor, if the employer or supervisor is the alleged harasser;
 - ii. How incidents or complaints of workplace discrimination or harassment will be investigated and dealt with;
 - iii. How information obtained about an incident or complaint of workplace discrimination or harassment, including identifying information about any individuals involved, will not be disclosed unless the disclosure is necessary for investigating, taking corrective action, or by law; and
 - iv. How an employee who has allegedly experienced workplace discrimination or harassment and the alleged harasser (if an employee of the Board) will be informed of the results of the investigation and of corrective action that has been, or will be taken.

3. Dissemination of the Policy:

The policy and procedures concerning workplace discrimination and harassment will be posted at a visible place in the workplace.

The Director of Education, through Human Resources will ensure that new employees receive a copy of this policy and ensure that it will be highlighted at orientations for new principals and supervisors and at parent meetings.

All principals must review this policy and associated Administrative Procedure VI-4 Complaints Resolution Process on an annual basis with all staff at the start of each school year. The principal must ensure that all teaching and support staff in the building who may be absent on the day of the review of the policy, review the policy and procedure as soon as possible.

4. Review of the Policy:

- a) The Board will review the policy with respect to workplace harassment as often as is necessary, but at least annually.

5. Duties of the Supervisor:

The Board strives to maintain an environment respectful of human rights and free of objectionable behaviour for all persons served by it. It must be ever vigilant of anything that might interfere with this duty. The Board expects that all persons in its learning/working environment will:

- Be aware and sensitive to issues of harassment;

- Support individuals who are, or have been targets of harassment;
- Prevent harassment through training;
- Take all allegations of harassment seriously and respond promptly;
- Provide positive role models; and not demonstrate, allow or condone behaviour contrary to the policy, including reprisals.

6. Role and Responsibilities:

All employees of the Board are expected to uphold and abide by this policy and maintain an environment respectful of human rights and free of discrimination and harassment for all persons served by it.

The Board will investigate and deal with all complaints or incidents under this policy in a fair and timely manner. Information about a complaint or incident will not be disclosed except to the extent necessary to protect workers; to investigate the complaint or incident; to take corrective action; or as otherwise required by law.

All employees, and in particular, principals, managers and supervisors have the additional responsibility to act immediately on observations or allegations of discrimination or harassment and should address potential problems before they become serious. All employees are encouraged to report workplace harassment and discrimination to the appropriate person.

7. Reprisal:

This policy prohibits reprisals against individuals, acting in good faith, who report incidents of workplace discrimination or harassment, participate in an investigation and/or act as witnesses. The Board will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent reprisals, threats of reprisal, or further harassment. Reprisal is defined as any act of retaliation, either direct or indirect.

8. Complaints:

All employees have a right to claim and enforce their right to a workplace free of discrimination and harassment and are entitled to have access to the complaint procedures. Every attempt should be made to resolve matters through an information resolution. In order to resolve workplace harassment, supervisory and managerial personnel must address and attempt to resolve complaints under this policy and procedure in a timely fashion and keep records of complaints and any subsequent response or action taken. Refer to *Administrative Procedure VI-04 Complaints Resolution Process - Workplace Discrimination Harassment Violence* for more information.

9. Attendant Procedures:

The Director of Education shall establish administrative procedures relative to the complaint process in collaboration with Human Resources Services.

The Executive Officer, Human Resources Services shall be responsible for implementing and monitoring this policy and its attendant administrative procedures.



APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board

AUTHORIZED BY: _____
Chair of the Board



School Generated Funds Overview and Reporting	Item 9.1
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to our strategic priority of **Foundational Elements:** Optimizing organizational effectiveness.

Purpose

This report is in response to Resolution #144/20, which was passed at the June 16, 2020, Regular Board Meeting. The resolution reads as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees direct the Secretary and Director of the Halton Catholic District School Board to provide the Board of Trustees with a report on School Generated Funds (SGF) explaining the program and including SGF reports from all schools, with a summary (SGF) report totaling all schools for the years ending 18/19, 19/20 as well as the schools budget for 20/21 at the September 15, 2020 Regular Board meeting. The total (SGF) summary report as shown below will show, opening balances at the beginning of the year, revenues and expenses by source for the year and ending balances at the end of the year by category with a description of what is included in each category.

Category	Opening Balance	Year		Ending Balance
		Revenues	Expenses	
Administration				
Athletics				
Clubs & Activity Fees				
Commissions				
Departments				
External Charities				
Fieldtrips/Excursions				
Fundraising				
School Council				
Special Events				
Other				
Other Categories as Applicable				
Total				



BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a list of cash balances (including a physical count of cash on hand where applicable) as at August 31, 2020 by school, be provided at the September 15, 2020 Regular Board meeting.

Comments

This report provides the Board of Trustees with an overview of the School Generated Funds ("SGF") program and provides a summary report for the years ending 2018-19 and 2019-20 (see attached). While the resolution also requested the SGF budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the individual schools' annual SGF plans are not due until November 30 and, as a result, are not available at this time. As part of Halton Catholic District School Board's ("HCDSB") 2020-21 Budget that was approved at the July 29, 2020, Special Meeting of the Board, the \$10 mil SGF revenue and \$10 mil SGF expenses were budgeted based on historical information. Given that these amounts net to zero, the overall surplus/deficit balance of HCDSB is not impacted by SGF.

School Generated Funds Program Overview

HCDSB parents and community partners may choose to support schools through fundraising activities. These activities have the potential to enrich the experience of our students and also help build a broader sense of community. When a school chooses to engage in fundraising, these activities are conducted under the guidance of the Principal, in accordance with Board Operating Policy V-04 School Fundraising Activities, Administrative Procedure VI-59 School Fundraising Activities and with advice and input from the school community.

Halton Catholic District School Board Operating Policy No. V-04 defines school generated funds as:

School Generated Funds are funds that are raised and collected in the school or broader community in the name of the school by catholic school councils or other school or parent administered groups. These funds are administered by the school principal and are raised or collected from sources other than the school board's operating and capital budgets.

School generated funds is a broad category which includes not only fundraising for school purposes, but also all funds that are collected and paid out through school accounts to support a variety of programs such as payments to charities or other third parties.

School Generated Funds Annual Plans

At the beginning of each school year, Principals are required to develop an annual SGF plan, after seeking sufficient and appropriate input from the school community. The approved annual SGF plan is posted on the school's website and includes all revenues to be generated in the name of or under the auspices of the school regardless of its source or use and indicate the following:



- The purpose for which the net proceeds will be used and the anticipated total costs of the item(s) being fundraised for;
- The source of revenue;
- The time period during which it will be generated;
- The person or group responsible for the activity ;
- The anticipated fundraising revenues;
- The anticipated fundraising expenses;
- The anticipated net proceeds.

A copy of the plan, signed by the School Principal, will be submitted to the School Superintendent for approval by October 31.

Financial Reporting

From an accountability and financial reporting perspective, Administrative Procedure No. V-59 School Fundraising Activities outlines the requirements, including the following:

- The school Principal will prepare an annual report on school generated funds, which includes proceeds raised through fundraising initiatives. The annual report must be communicated to the local school community (i.e. newsletter, posting to school website).
- The Principal will report on School Generated Funds at Catholic School Council meetings at a minimum of three (3) times a school year and will post these reports on the school website at a minimum of three (3) times a school year.
- All funds collected through school fundraising are subject to the Board's regular audit, and accountability requirements and the recording and reporting of such funds must adhere public sector accounting standards as well as to the Ontario Association of School Business Officials "Guideline for School Generated Funds (Revised June 2015)."
- School administrative staff are trained on procedures for the collection, disbursement and accounting of school generated funds.

The HCDSB is also required to report on an annual basis through the Ministry's Education Finance Information System ("EFIS"), the total of all SGF funds received and all disbursements.

Bank Balances

Bank reconciliations are to be performed on a monthly basis and reviewed and signed off by the school Principal.

Resolution #144/20 requested that the cash balance as of August 31, 2020, also be reported to the Board by September 15, 2020. This information is currently not available as schools do not have access to online banking and must wait to receive a mailed copy of its bank statements. As part of



the School Board's year-end close process, all schools are required to submit its August 31, 2020 bank reconciliations and statements to the finance department by September 25, 2020.

Conclusion

Staff will provide a subsequent report with the outstanding items (2020/21 Budget and the August 31, 2020 cash balances) once they are available.

Report Prepared by: A. Cross
Senior Manager, Financial Services

Report Submitted by: A. Lofts
Superintendent, Business Services and Treasurer of the Board

Report Approved by: P. Daly
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board

Halton Catholic District School Board
School Generated Funds Summary

Category Type	2018-2019 School Year				2019-2020 School Year (DRAFT*)			
	Opening Balance	Revenue	Expenses	Ending Balance	Opening Balance**	Revenue	Expenses	Ending Balance
Administration	\$824,547	\$1,420,027	\$1,533,903	\$710,671	\$805,387	\$932,408	\$1,022,747	\$715,048
Athletics	\$174,829	\$1,348,790	\$1,391,365	\$132,254	\$196,371	\$1,007,129	\$1,039,890	\$163,610
Clubs	\$25,204	\$121,357	\$146,784	(\$224)	\$20,302	\$67,968	\$75,564	\$12,706
Activity Fees	\$656,038	\$983,307	\$879,243	\$760,101	\$706,511	\$760,013	\$559,056	\$907,468
Commissions	\$119,731	\$289,330	\$203,300	\$205,761	\$142,238	\$172,939	\$157,959	\$157,218
Culture of Life	\$2,476	\$18,828	\$20,606	\$698	\$3,361	\$2,010	\$2,751	\$2,620
Departments	\$173,525	\$716,521	\$767,488	\$122,559	\$197,359	\$360,439	\$416,008	\$141,791
External Charities	\$63,382	\$279,599	\$275,664	\$67,316	\$44,409	\$260,112	\$228,821	\$75,701
Field Trips/Excursions	\$102,963	\$2,353,163	\$2,346,729	\$109,397	\$111,703	\$1,008,391	\$1,164,777	(\$44,683) ***
Halton Food for Thought	\$72,759	\$268,184	\$312,385	\$28,558	\$67,530	\$200,691	\$194,190	\$74,031
I.B. Programme	\$238,286	\$163,916	\$158,621	\$243,581	\$243,111	\$119,727	\$117,944	\$244,893
Other	\$299,272	\$590,706	\$681,641	\$208,337	\$279,698	\$487,164	\$456,556	\$310,306
School Council	\$65,181	\$73,475	\$29,111	\$109,545	\$70,230	\$41,430	\$29,410	\$82,250
School Fundraising	\$443,231	\$3,358,387	\$3,108,097	\$693,521	\$420,286	\$2,289,358	\$1,981,131	\$728,512
Special Events	\$130,436	\$877,026	\$962,502	\$44,960	\$128,540	\$275,421	\$461,496	(\$57,535) ***
Student Activities and Resources	\$115,717	\$60,940	\$67,888	\$108,769	\$108,769	\$62,675	\$38,693	\$132,751
Total:	\$3,507,576	\$12,923,555	\$12,885,327	\$3,545,804	\$3,545,804	\$8,047,875	\$7,946,993	\$3,646,686

Notes

* The 2019-20 balances are draft until the year end audit has been completed.

** The 2019-20 opening balances by category may not align to the 2018-19 ending balances due to transfers between categories.

*** Several field trips and special events took place after March break in which schools incurred upfront costs to pay vendors with the intention of collecting final payments in the spring. Final payments either were not collected from students or refunds were issued.

The budget for each of the 2018-19 and 2019-20 School Years was \$13,000,000.

Category Type	Category Type Description
Administration	HST rebates, agendas, software & credit card fees, bank charges, bank interest, school photos, yearbooks (elementary only)
Athletics	Secondary schools only: athletic fees, various team fees, tournament fees, team uniforms & spirit ware
Clubs	Elementary athletics, health & wellness clubs, public speaking clubs, music programs, drama programs
Activity Fees	Secondary schools only: agendas, yearbooks, guest speakers, angel fund, various clubs, stage crew, student council
Commissions	Secondary schools only: cafeteria, vending machines, school photos, school uniforms
Culture of Life	Pro-life activities: materials, guest speakers, field trips
Departments	Various departments within schools, ex. chaplaincy or library
External Charities	Raising funds and payments to registered charities
Field Trips/Excursions	Raising funds and payments for trips outside school property
Halton Food for Thought	Registered charity which helps provide meals/snacks to both elementary and secondary students
I.B. Programme	St. Thomas Aquinas only: funds raised and expenses related to International Baccalaureate program
Other	Miscellaneous items, ex. donations or HCCEF
School Council	Secondary schools only: parent council, used uniform sales
School Fundraising	Parent council for elementary schools, funds raised and expenses related to raising money for all schools, ex pizza days, milk programs, dance-a-thons et
Special Events	One-time school events: plays, concerts, communions, confirmations
Student Activities and Resources	Adult Learning Centre only: international language classes



Student Trustees Update	Item 10.1
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to the strategic priorities:

Achieving: Meeting the needs of all learners

Believing: Celebrating our Catholic faith & aspiring to be models of Christ

Belonging: Embracing relationships & sustaining safe, welcoming schools

Achieving

These past few days have marked the start of the new Quadmester approach. Students have engaged in both online and in class learning. Students have noted in-class learning has run exceptionally well and that COVID-19 protocols are being followed / enforced properly. As for online learning, students have expressed connectivity issues on both their end, and the teachers. For schools that have extended the day to accommodate for student transportation, students are finding they have to leave class early to get to their part-time jobs. Students have expressed concern with academic support, suggesting that it be placed after period two in efforts to reduce the time gap. Continued support and training with online platforms such as TEAMS, and technological hardware is encouraged.

Believing

In light of the school re-opening, Teachers and staff members have been great at helping students learn their education whilst caring for their safety. Jesus told us to care for one another, and I have seen teachers and staff members do nothing less in our board. Students, whether they are learning remotely or in-person, have continued to put faith in our school system, and we must continue to keep their best intentions when making decisions.

This year, the trustee team must continue to look towards the staff, students, and parents of the board; the trustee team must listen to their concerns, and now more than ever, the



trustee team must continue to prioritize their safety and education. Concluding this pillar, we must put our faith in the Lord Jesus, and trust in his infinite goodness, that all students and staff, will continue to be safe, healthy, and continue to follow the teachings of our Savior.

Belonging

Being away from school is a big thing for all of us but that does not mean that the connection with the school community is lost. We all belong to the same board and we are all connected to the same community either in person or online, we will get through it together using the great help from our staff and teachers. No one should feel left out as we all here near you to help you at any time.

Report Prepared & Submitted by: N. Gubert
Student Trustee, North Halton

K. Kelly
Student Trustee, Burlington

J. Roshdy
Student Trustee, Oakville

Report Approved by: P. Daly
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board



STEM Extra Curricular Engagement	Item 10.2
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to the strategic priorities: **Achieving: Meeting the needs of all learners**

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Trustees on plans to support and encourage the participation of students in local, regional, university, national activities and competitions in math and science, along with other STEM initiatives

Background Information

On April 27, 2020 the HCDSB Research group compiled a report entitled, “HCDSB Participation in Math and Science Events” that was submitted to the board. This report focused on optional and extracurricular opportunities for student participation in STEM initiatives. On June 2, 2020 Curriculum Services followed up with a report outlining the connections between STEM related subjects and the Ontario Curriculum at both the elementary and secondary levels.

At that the June 2 , 2020 meeting a motion was passed to further this work by establishing a Steering Committee consisting of but not limited to HCDSB staff, Trustee representatives and community partners to enhance the promotion of STEM-related extra and intra curricular activities at both the elementary and secondary levels.

There are a number of areas where STEM activities may be promoted within our Board including but not limited to

- Increased partnership and promotion of activities developed by outside agencies i.e. BASEF, Hour of Code, Invention Convention (The Learning Partnership), Coding Quest (The Learning Partnership), FIRST Robotics, etc.
- Designated and dedicated program champions in Senior Administration and Curriculum to promote, program and market STEM projects and initiatives.
- Development of board level activities i.e. local science fairs, STEM clubs, interschool outreach programs etc.



Comments

Curriculum Services staff have developed draft terms of reference for the Committee (Appendix A) and are now seeking representation to host our initial meeting. The Committee will provide an update to Trustees at the October 20, 2020 Board meeting with regards to initial plans.

Conclusion

All of these initiatives and others will require dedicated and committed staff, both centrally and at the school level, to organize, develop partnerships, and obtain appropriate resources for successful implementation of these programs. We look forward to furthering this work through the establishment of the Steering Committee

Report Prepared &
Submitted by:

Jeff Crowell
Superintendent of Education, Curriculum Services

Report Approved by:

Pat Daly
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board



STEM or Math/Science Extra Curricular Engagement Steering Committee

Terms of Reference (DRAFT)

1. Vision Statement

The Halton Catholic District School Board is a model learning community, widely recognized as distinctively Catholic, providing exceptional education, while nurturing the call to love and to serve as a people of faith, living out God's plan.

2. Mission Statement

The Halton Catholic District School Board, in partnership with home and Church, is dedicated to providing excellence in Catholic education by developing Christ-centred individuals enabled to transform society.

3. Purpose

The STEM Steering Committee is established to guide the Board's vision for promoting and increasing engagement in STEM-related extra-curricular activities at both the elementary and secondary levels

4. Membership

The Committee will comprise of members representing staff, Trustees and community partners. The Director of Education will be a member of the Committee. Other members may include:

- Superintendent of Education – Curriculum
- Trustee (s)
- Community Representative (s) (including industry, educational institutions)
- Curriculum Co-ordinator
- Curriculum Consultant(s)
- Elementary Administrator
- Secondary Administrator
- Elementary Teacher
- Secondary Teacher
- OECTA Elementary Executive Representative
- OECTA Secondary Executive Representative
- Key competencies for membership include:
 - contributing to the generation of ideas around the initiative.
 - ensuring the project is relevant and applicable to Halton Catholic District School Board.



- offering support and guidance to those involved in managing STEM activities.
 - advocating for STEM activities in the Halton Catholic District School Board.
- The committee should reflect a cross section of individuals who understand the aim of the project, appreciate the significance of promoting STEM activities in the board, have a genuine interest in STEM and are willing to advocate for the project and the outcomes that are intended.
- Members drawn should be directly responsible for providing leadership in promoting and increasing engagement in STEM-related extra-curricular activities.

5. Meetings

The Committee shall meet 3-4 times a year.

6. Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members

The STEM Steering Committee members will:

- i. contribute their professional expertise at meetings.
- ii. discuss ways to promote STEM-related extra-curricular activities at both the elementary and secondary levels.
- iii. outline budgetary considerations and funding options available to support extra-curricular STEM activities.
- iv. evaluate and make recommendations around staffing and training requirements needed to support the project and initiatives.

7. Designation and Role of the Chairperson

The roles and responsibilities of the Chair shall include:

- i. establishing the agenda in consultation with committee members.
- ii. scheduling meetings as required to meet timelines.
- iii. attending and facilitating committee meetings.
- iv. following up with members not in attendance.
- v. establishing workgroups/subcommittees as required.



Summer 2020 – School Facilities Update	Item 10.3
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to our strategic priority of **Belonging: Embracing relationships & sustaining safe, welcoming schools.**

Purpose

To inform the Board of school statuses for the start of the 2020-21 school year and the maintenance and construction projects completed during the summer of 2020.

Background Information

The Facility Management Services department had an extremely busy summer of 2020, with cleaning the Board’s 58 school facilities and completing numerous maintenance and construction projects. Over \$15 million in renewal projects were undertaken, with an aim to improve school conditions and enhance the learning environment for students, staff and community user groups. Furthermore, over \$24 million in new construction projects were undertaken. Lastly, extensive work was completed to create healthy and safe learning environments in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The following sections summarize some of the work that was completed during the summer of 2020.

Comments

Summer Cleaning

All schools throughout the Board underwent a thorough cleaning and disinfection over the summer and were ready for students and staff on September 9, 2020. Over 350,000 m² of school space was cleaned in the months of June and July, with life safety system checks and maintenance repairs executed on items requiring attention.

School & Classroom Setup

Custodial staff were busy throughout the month of August setting up schools and classrooms based on provincial recommendations in light of the current pandemic. Hand hygiene and disinfection stations



were created throughout all schools, including in every classroom. Classrooms were also decluttered, and signage was installed in schools.

Portable Classrooms

To accommodate enrolment pressures across the Board, portable classrooms were re-allocated across the Board’s 58 school sites. No new portable classrooms were added for the 2020-21 school year, since many newly constructed classroom spaces were opened to accommodate enrolment growth. Still, 35 portable classrooms were relocated to accommodate enrolment changes. All relocated portable classrooms are now installed and ready for students and staff.

Bishop P.F. Reding Catholic Secondary School Building Addition

The classroom addition at Bishop P.F. Reding CSS opened for students and staff on September 9, 2020. The new addition contains 28 classrooms, including 7 science laboratories, washrooms and workrooms. The main office and guidance area were also renovated in the existing portion of the facility, as well as the conversion of the old science rooms into new technology rooms.

Construction continues on the new cafeteria and child care centre. The addition of a fourth gymnasium will commence upon the opening of the new child care centre. The conversion of the former cafeteria to an auditorium will commence upon the opening of the new cafeteria.



Bishop P.F. Reding CSS Classroom Addition



Assumption Catholic Secondary School Building Addition & Renovation

The classroom, library and cafeteria addition at Assumption CSS opened to students and staff on September 9, 2020. The new addition also includes a large student forum, washrooms and an elevator. New terraces at the front and rear of the school were also added as part of the project.



View from Library Addition at Assumption CSS



Completed Landscaping at the Front of Assumption CSS



Thomas Merton Centre (Oakville) Renovation

The former St. James School was retrofitted to be the new home for the Thomas Merton Centre in Oakville. The interior space was reconfigured to accommodate the various programs at the centre. All new mechanical and lighting systems were also installed as part of the project.



Rooftop Unit Installation at Thomas Merton Centre (Oakville)

St. Michael Catholic Elementary School Retrofit

The former library at St. Michael CES was converted to the new main office, and the former main office was converted into a kindergarten classroom. The new office provides more space for school administration and includes a new health room and accessible washroom.

Construction continues on the new library for the school, as well as the 3-room child care centre building addition.



Main Office at St. Michael CES

Holy Trinity Catholic Secondary School Lighting Retrofit

A major lighting retrofit was undertaken at Holy Trinity CSS in July and August of 2020. Most existing fixtures were re-lamped with LED bulbs, creating a cost-effective solution that yielded excellent energy performance. The new lighting has dramatically brightened the school's learning environments for students and staff.

Roofing Replacements

Two major roof replacements were undertaken in the summer of 2020. St. Christopher CES and Corpus Christi CSS both completed full roof replacements. The new roof is expected to protect critical building infrastructure for many years to come.

Conclusion

The Facility Management Services department had an extremely busy summer of 2020, with cleaning the Board's 58 school facilities and completing several construction projects. All operations, maintenance and construction work has now been completed and schools were ready for students and staff on September 9, 2020.



Item 10.3 | Summer 2020 – School Facilities Update

Report Prepared by: R. MERRICK
SUPERINTENDENT, FACILITY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Report Submitted by: R. MERRICK
SUPERINTENDENT, FACILITY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Report Approved by: P. DALY
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

Construction Report - September 2020



Construction Update

- The pictures above were taken on September 9, 2020. The top-left picture shows the cafeteria. The top-right picture shows the library. The bottom-left picture shows a classroom. The bottom-right picture shows completed landscaping at the front of the school.
- Work completed included flooring, landscaping and paving.

Schedule Update

- Aluminum composite paneling
- Deficiency clean up

If you have any comments or questions about the new school, please contact Stephany Balogh, Superintendent of Education, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 120 or e-mail baloghs@hcdsb.org. For school construction information contact Ryan Merrick, Superintendent, Facility Management Services, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 171 or e-mail merrickr@hcdsb.org.

Construction Report - September 2020



Construction Update

- The pictures above were taken on September 9, 2020. The top-left picture shows completed paving and landscaping in the southwest corner of the site. The top-right picture shows a completed science room. The bottom-left picture shows the completed main office. The bottom-right picture shows ceramic tile installation in the childcare.
- Work completed included childcare painting, office, guidance and new tech classrooms.

Schedule Update

- Complete childcare flooring
- Existing cafeteria demolition

If you have any comments or questions about the new school, please contact Lorrie Naar, Superintendent of Education, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 135 or e-mail naarl@hcdsb.org. For school construction information contact Ryan Merrick, Superintendent, Facility Management Services, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 171 or e-mail merrickr@hcdsb.org.

Construction Report - September 2020



Construction Update

- The pictures above were taken on September 9, 2020. The top picture shows the new office area. The bottom picture shows the new classroom.
- Work completed included renovation of existing office and library into the new office and classroom, addition load bearing walls and structural steel.

Schedule Update

- Curtain wall installation
- Spray foam insulation and brick veneer
- Completion of site services

If you have any comments or questions about the new school, please contact Toni Pinelli, Superintendent of Education, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 181 or e-mail pinellit@hcdsb.org. For school construction information contact Ryan Merrick, Superintendent, Facility Management Services, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 171 or e-mail merrickr@hcdsb.org.

Construction Report - September 2020



Construction Update

- The pictures above were taken on September 9, 2020. The top picture shows the resurfaced area above the new sanitary line. The bottom picture shows the ongoing installation of the storm sewer lines.
- Work completed included interior plumbing piping, installation of sanitary line and some storm sewer lines.

Schedule Update

- Footing installation
- Load bearing walls
- Underground services

If you have any comments or questions about the new school, please contact Lorrie Naar, Superintendent of Education, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 135 or e-mail naarl@hcdsb.org. For school construction information contact Ryan Merrick, Superintendent, Facility Management Services, at (905) 632-6300 ext. 171 or e-mail merrickr@hcdsb.org.



Return to School Update	Item 10.5
September 15, 2020	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to the strategic priorities:

Achieving: Meeting the needs of all learners

Believing: Celebrating our Catholic faith & aspiring to be models of Christ

Belonging: Embracing relationships & sustaining safe, welcoming schools

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Trustees on the reopening of school in September 2020.

Background Information

Gradual Return to School

Elementary students gradually returned to school in smaller groups from September 9-11, 2020 with full school attendance commencing Monday September 14, 2020. After their traditional staggered entry process, Kindergarten Students began their full classes Monday September 14, 2020.

At the secondary school level, the first day of school was delayed by one day to Wednesday September 9, 2020.

The choice for students to access their schooling remotely was an option at both the elementary and secondary level.

School Organizations

At the Sept 1, 2020 Board meeting Trustees passed a motion directing staff to access available federal and provincial funding as well as the Board operating reserve to lower class sizes at the elementary level to an average of approximately 22.18 with a cap of 25 students. Since then school administration and senior staff have undertaken the job of reorganizing schools, where needed as well as developing classes for the virtual elementary school.



Virtual School – Elementary

Over 4,600 elementary students are returning to school in an online format. Establishing an online learning environment for all elementary grades has proved to be a complex task, involving different areas across our entire organization. Throughout the course of this week, students will be participating in a variety of online learning activities designed to engage students in their learning and prepare them for remote instruction. The lessons will be focused on helping students become accustomed to the online Learning Management System so they can learn in a virtual environment safely and effectively. There will also be various activities connected to literacy and mathematics, as well as a series of short pre-recorded video activities to engage students and enhance their physical, emotional, and mental well-being. In addition to the online orientation activities, we will have virtual teachers available throughout the day to provide synchronous (live) support for students. We continue to hire additional staff to support our students in our virtual school.

Students with Special education needs will be supported by their online teacher who will work together with the student’s school of origin special education resource teacher (SERT), as well as support staff, as per their IEPs. Students will continue to access SEA equipment/assistive technology and staff will continue to be supported with SEA equipment training to enhance student access to learning.

Secondary Schools

Secondary school classes have been divided into two (Cohort A, B,) of up to 15 students attending in-class instruction on alternating days.

Cohort C is comprised of students who have chosen learning remotely from home. All 3 cohorts participate in synchronous learning together for some parts of each day. Secondary classrooms have been supported with in class technology to facilitate both synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

In all 3 cohorts remote learning will be delivered both synchronously and asynchronously.

Each cohort will take two courses at a time, attending school 2-3 days per week. Over a 10-week module. Students will complete 2 modules (4 credits) per semester; 4 modules (8 credits) per school year. This scheduling approach does limit transitions within the school building and provides time for cleaning at the building at the end of the school day

Health and Safety

A number of measures have been put in to place which staff and students were able to begin to practice during the gradual return to school period.to help ensure a safe return to school for our students and staff. These measures include physical self-assessment screening, adapted school environments, cohorting, hand hygiene, enhanced cleaning and masking



COVID-19 Advisory Board

Our COVID-19 Advisory Board found at <https://learnathome.hcdsb.org/covid-19-advisory-board/> provides the number of active confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in connection to HCDSB schools and is updated daily. For all confirmed cases, families and staff at the school will be notified by letter. Halton Public Health will contact any close contacts directly. It should be noted that a positive case at a school does not mean the individual was exposed to COVID-19 at the school. They may have been exposed somewhere else in the community.

Transportation

Boards throughout the province have faced extreme driver shortages and route cancellations. Halton Student Transportation Services (HSTS) have faced these challenges as well with some open routes remaining. These routes will be covered by part time time drivers and may result in delays on some routes. The bus companies continue to work to fill these routes.

Conclusion

As always, our goal for our return to school will continue to be focused on:

- Ensuring **protocols are in place** so that students and staff are **healthy and safe**.
- Provide an **enhanced online/distance learning** experience for students who continue to learn from home.
- Maintain a focus on **mental health supports for students and staff** returning to school and those who will continue to learn and work from home.

Report Prepared &
Submitted by:

Pat Daly
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board

Sent: September 14, 2020 8:33 AM

To: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; o'briant@hcdsb.org; czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Masks in the classroom

Dear Director Daly, Chair Iantomasi, Board Trustees, and Superintendents,

My name is Dave Bodnar and I am writing to you today regarding the motion that was passed by the Board that mandates masks are to be worn by students in Junior Kindergarten through to Grade 3 while at school. It appears that there is a group of parents who would like to have this decision reversed and this makes me incredibly nervous and worried both as a father, husband, and educator.

My wife Michela is a graduate of and a secondary school teacher with the Halton Catholic District School Board. Unfortunately, she is immune-compromised and we had to make the difficult decision for her to continue working due to the fact that the HCDSB does not have a virtual secondary school as almost all other school boards in Ontario do. If she were to stay home, she would be unpaid.

Our girls attend St. Elizabeth Seton, in grade 8 and grade 4. Michela and I wanted the girls to stay home due to her medical issues, however when we learned that the HCDSB had passed a motion that all students from JK-12 would be masked, we decided to make the decision to allow them to attend school in-person. I am a teacher in the Peel District School Board and knowing that the four of us would be attending our respective schools protected as much as we could be with all students wearing masks has given us a degree of comfort the same as when we are out in public.

I am greatly concerned about this motion coming back to the board table. It is disheartening to know that a) a motion that has already been passed can be revisited and b) this motion was the basis of many parental decisions to send their children to school or not. This additional mandate allowed us to make the decision to send our girls back to the classroom and school hallways, and it is in alignment with the safety measures put in place by the City of Burlington. Many medical practitioners and organizations support the use of masks in children who are attending school, and considering we all know the provincial standard of two metres for social distancing will not happen in our schools, masking is essential.

Masking for all students contributes to the common good, and many of us know someone who is immune-compromised in some capacity, whether it be due to age, medications, or medical conditions. If taught properly, children ages 4 or 5 and up have no issues wearing masks; we had my nephews with us for a few days the week before Labour Day and they both wore their masks at ages 2 and 4 with no issues or complaints. As we all know, children who are in the primary division will have a harder time physically distancing themselves and therefore a mask is that precaution that provides many with peace of mind.

If this motion is reversed we will need to re-visit our decision for the girls to attend school. We cannot chance them coming in contact with an unmasked student who may be carrying Covid-19 as that would mean it could easily be transferred to Michela. Our youngest daughter would not be able to independently do her online work, and one of us would need to stay home with her.

We all know that wearing a mask doesn't protect you as much as it protects those around you. Reversing this motion when parents have already made their decision for in-class or online is not only short-sighted but unfair to anyone who agrees with the masks being mandatory from JK through to Grade 3. Upholding a motion that has already passed is the moral and ethical thing to do.

Sincerely,

Dave Bodnar

Sent: September 14, 2020 4:08 PM

To: Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>

Cc: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Mandatory Masking K-12

Please include this email in the correspondence read at the Board Meeting.

Mr. Iantomasi,

Can you please explain why we are debating masking again? Allowing certain trustees to disrespect a democratic process and bring back a motion that has been passed is a waste of time and resources.

Can we also please ensure that ONLY HCDSB parents letters and delegations are being considered. They are the families that count in THIS board.

I am concerned that we are continuing to visit the mask debate. Parents have made their return to school decisions based on the previous decisions on this Board. To reverse a decision now is irresponsible and unfair. All students must have some type of face covering. Our students are all capable of wearing masks (medical conditions excepted). Please put the health and safety of all staff and students first and continue the mandatory masking of all students K-12. I urge you all to put this matter to rest once and for all and put all our safety first. If you want to try and keep schools open and staffed you need to make the right decision and make masks mandatory.

Sincerely,

Michelle Bonk

Sent: September 12, 2020 11:22 PM

To: lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>

Cc: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; duaretm@hcdsb.org <duaretm@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Mandatory Masks for K-4

I believe that HCDSB should continue with the mandatory mask for K-6 and I resent the fact that a "trustee" (Karabela) feels she is beyond democracy and is allowed to revisit a motion that has already been passed! As Chair, why are you allowing duplicate delegations and bringing this motion back to the table. I'm certainly questioning your conduct. I feel this is a horrible manipulation of the system.

Parents made their decision to send kids to school based on the mandatory mask wearing. There are going to be repercussions from parents based on this "trustee" being able to try and reverse this. You will have parents pulling their kids out and you will have more problems on your hands which will lead to a logistical nightmare. Staffing and classes will have to be all redone. You are also confusing the poor children even more. Look out for the safety of your staff and students and as a Catholic Board, I'm ashamed that we are not looking out for our most vulnerable! We've already wasted enough time getting the school year under way!

I want this to be included in the correspondence.

Jennifer Botelho

Milton

Dear Trustee,

I am writing to you in the hopes of gaining your support in maintaining the Board's mask policy for k-12 students. I am aware that there will be a discussion and decision made on possibly revoking the currently mandatory mask policy.

As a parent and community member I am aware that some people may not agree with this policy. Importantly, decisions regarding masking and other protective measures should be informed by empirical evidence and direction from Public Health, health experts and governing bodies. The following groups and institutions clearly state how important wearing masks is for children 2 years and older:

1) Government of Ontario: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/face-coverings-and-face-masks#section-0>

“It is recommended that you use a face covering (non-medical mask such as a cloth mask) to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 when physical distancing and keeping two-metres' distance from others may be challenging or not possible...”

2) Government of Canada/Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html>

“Wearing a homemade non-medical mask/facial covering in the community is recommended for periods of time when it is not possible to consistently maintain a 2-metre physical distance from others, particularly in crowded public settings...”

3) Halton Region: <https://www.halton.ca/The-Region/News/2020/Halton-Regional-Council-adopts-mandatory-mask-by-#:~:text=On%20July%2015%2C%202020%2C%20Halton,unless%20extended%20by%20Regional%20Council.>

“Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering in certain enclosed public places is an additional measure we can all take to keep each other safe,” said Dr. Hamidah Meghani, Medical Officer of Health. “I also encourage everyone to wear a mask in all scenarios where physical distancing is a challenge...”

A decision that contravenes suggestions and recommendations from public health institutions, regional, provincial and federal bodies and health experts is objectively wrong. It is important to note the difference between a “suggestion” and “requirement” of mask wearing. If masks are simply a suggestion it allows students to put their peers, families of other students and educators at risk. Although it certainly is a challenge to mask younger students it is a challenge that parents, children and educators can be successful in if the Board provides this leadership and direction.

> Sent: September 12, 2020 10:46 PM
> To: Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda
> <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>
> Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Discussions about masks again
>
> Good evening!
>
> I've learned that the trustees will again discuss the use of masks at school.
>
> This shouldn't be back on the table at all. I made the decision to send my son back to school in Burlington (Grade 2) based on the fact that masks would be mandatory. My husband and I are unemployed but we purchased many masks to allow my son to be safe at school.
>
> The kids have been trained. When social distance is inevitable a mask is mandatory. And this is the case at school. Please let's move on and don't waste time in discussions that don't make sense. The schools, staff, teachers have already been in so much stress to start school in the new normal. This will make another disruption and increase stress in teachers, staff and parents.
>
> Please read my email at the meeting tomorrow [REDACTED]
>
> Thank you so much!
>
> Christiana

Sent: September 11, 2020 3:19 PM

To: angewb@hcdsb.org; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please INCLUDE & READ as correspondence for Sept 15th meeting

Dear Elected Trustees

I am writing to you again about my concern with regard to how the Board continues to handle the decision to mandate non-medical masks for JK - GR 3 students in HDCSB schools.

First of all, I am extremely disappointed with a treatment of parent delegates at the last Board Meeting on September 1st. We've delivered the well researched submissions to remind the Board, and convince Trustees, to remain on a side of the Provincial Ministries guidelines, the advice of the Halton's Public Health and SickKids, thus refrain from taking on a role of public health and infectious disease experts and exceed the recommended measure.

We saw that the delegates at this meeting were dismissed by a quick vote. Also dismissed were over 2000 parents who signed a petition to this Board to reverse the decision.

Second, I took notice of your vote to exceed the mandatory masking requirement being unsupported by the publicly announced advice from Halton's Public Health Officer.

There are health risks from incorrect handling of masks, as well as mental, psychological and developmental implications from wearing masks. It is not my duty to educate you about personal health risks vs. public health benefits. Your vote to exceed the recommended masking requirement in my view makes you responsible for taking away my parental choice, creating a scenario for adverse implications to my child due to a prolonged wearing of a mask just so that he/she can have access to in-class education.

For your reference and information, please check the website attached below:

<https://childrenshealthdefense.org/news/editorial/schools-must-go-back-to-normal-in-the-fall-a-scientists-perspective/?fbclid=IwAR2pIMe3K3x7uQabmxFhX5wppqo4k1Jk7JRQIsQPDaueJFMbe99xpUGiLHE&cn-reloaded=1>

I ask that you rescind your vote to mandate masks for JK - GR3! Thereby, I ask that you act within boundaries of your duty as Trustee, and stop the controversy and division in the parents community.

Elena Day

Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 10:05 AM

To: [lantomasi, Vincent](#); [Agnew, Brenda](#); [O'Brien, Timothy](#)

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] K-3 Mandatory Masking

Dear Trustees,

I hope I'm not late in the game but I just found out, to my dismay, that masks are back on the agenda for today's meeting so I hope my voice will be heard and my email will be taken into account in the correspondence.

Sending my son back to school was not an easy decision to make but knowing that masks were mandatory for all students and staff played a big part in my decision. I made the decision to send my son back to school based on the fact that masks were mandatory as with masks on for all I know that he would be somewhat safe in a school setting.

Masks have been proved to be the best way to prevent the spread of COVID19 along with good hand hygiene and, where possible, physical distancing.

Masks are mandatory, for the safety of all of us, in all enclosed spaces in Ontario. It shouldn't be otherwise in schools. On the contrary, knowing that kids can be asymptomatic for COVID19 and spread it everywhere unknowingly, they should definitely be wearing masks as they already do in all other public enclosed spaces they go to.

Many of us parents have made the decision to send our kids back to school because mandatory masking was in place. This can't possibly be changed now that kids are back and settled in their new routine. That would be a real stab in the back and it would make it very hard to trust our board afterwards.

Please, take my email into consideration and have it included in the correspondence.

Best regards,
Fanny Deval

Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 11:33 AM

To: iantomasiv@hcdsb.org; agnewb@hcdsb.org; o'brient@hcdsb.org

Subject: RE: K-3 Mandatory Masking

Hello,

I'm Fanny's husband.

I fully agree with my wife's comments with respect to the utmost importance of wearing a mask. I'm actually surprised to see that masks are nor mandatory during recess and that parents are not obligated to have one to bring their kids to school or pick them up from school. If there is a discussion over the masks at the board, I would suggest to add these 2 topics on the agenda.

The global trend, with most newly infected people being of the young generation, seems to indicate that they have been infected while socializing and not wearing a mask.

Today's outbreak at the University of Western Ontario is deemed to be most likely due to teenagers socializing outside the campus without mask, rather than inside the campus wearing masks.

I understand that masks are not comfortable to have all day long. But it still seems to be the only solution we have until a vaccine be ready.

With best regards,

Sebastien

Sebastien Deval

Sent: September 13, 2020 11:32 AM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Include this in your correspondence - masks for K-3

Good morning,

Please Include this in your correspondence, for the Tuesday Board Meeting.

In favour of masks for children in K-3

I am hearing that there is a meeting to potentially overturn the decision to have students (K-3) wear masks in school.... Are you seriously even considering this thought?

If we are being told that we have to wear a mask in ALL indoor places and anywhere that physical distancing cannot take place, in order to help decrease the spread of Covid-19; then how are we considering the idea of not having ALL children in a SCHOOL setting, where DISTANCING is NOT possible NOT wear a mask?!

This is completely ridiculous!

We might as well just tell everyone to stop wearing masks and just go back to 'normal' and just hope people don't get sick and potentially die.

Are you comfortable going into places for 5-8 hours a day, with people not wearing a mask? Being close to you? Touching you? Sneezing on you? And spreading their germs on you? Because we all know that a high number of people (not just children) still have no idea how to sneeze in their elbow and turn away from others or even wash their hands after anything they do; let alone stay at home if they are sick!

Are you comfortable knowing that going somewhere without any protection (masks) could potentially cause your death? Your parents death? Your child's death? I certainly am not.

Not everyone has the option to stay home and have their child(ren) remote learn or homeschool to avoid this disaster. Think of society as a whole.

My child has gone back to school, wearing a mask. No complaints, no issues. My child knows it's to protect him, his peers, his teachers, as well as his family at home. He knows that by wearing his mask, he is helping to slow the spread of the virus, and helping to protect others. He is also in Kindergarten.

We are talking about a large number of people potentially affected by your ridiculous (potential) decision of no masks.

If all other businesses and people working have to wear them, then the school system needs to also. This is protection of society as a whole.

The fact that this is even being considered, makes me scared, and shows me that you have no care, concern and/or consideration for my children, my family or anyone else.

Do you want your decision to cause a spike in the virus? A spike in death tolls?

Will you be able to sleep peacefully at night knowing your decision could cause families to be torn apart? The loss of loved ones? Would you want this for your own family?

I suggest you think very long and hard before you overturn this mask decision.

As part of the Catholic school system we're supposed to be looking out for each other; and by allowing there to be no masks and no protection - we are in turn putting each other in danger.

I am putting my child's life in your hands; make the right choice. Wear A Mask.

Thank you,
Shauna Dussiaume

To: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; duartem@hcdsg.org <duartem@hcdsg.org>; iantomasiv@hcdsg.org <iantomasiv@hcdsg.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>

Subject: Please keep masks in schools

I write to you as a parent with a child in the HCDSB and a staff member teaching kindergarten with the HDSB.

I was so impressed and thankful for the decision to have masks mandatory. I know that there is no 100% way to make this return to school year safe but having masks in the classroom was something that made me have some faith.

It is something that helps me and my child know that steps are being taken that help him and our family stay safe.

If you take away making masks mandatory you will create a slippery slope towards classroom void of masks. This will ensure school closures with sick children and families.

We cannot make this back to school 100% safe but why in the world would there be discussion on taking away safety measures?

My son has asthma and as a single mom, his grandparents help a lot and are a big part of his life. You will take away my sense of security for my son and create a situation where I am not comfortable having him see his grandparents.

Please do not take away masks in schools. I was so thankful you took this proactive, responsible measure in order to keep our families safe.

(From professional experience with this, while for only a few days; the kids are great with it! Even my kindies have worn them all day. It's myself who I find playing with it the most in the class, not them. They have adapted to this new routine and see it as part of their daily lives)

Please continue to make the responsible choice for our children by keeping masks in our schools,

Alexis Ewaschuk

Good evening,

I am writing to express my concern over the motion being presented this week to reverse the decision made to make masks mandatory for students in K-3.

My decision to place my children back into school this year was not taken lightly. One of the deciding factors was that HCDSB had made masks mandatory for all ages. Reversing this decision would be completely unfair to all parents who chose to put their children in school based partly or solely on that decision! I find it irresponsible of this board of trustees to be changing the rules once the school year has started. You have already voted on this issue!

Your focus should be on making classes smaller before you ever consider making masks optional. Social distancing is not possible in our crowded elementary classrooms, therefore masks should be worn. If you can make the classes smaller, only then should we be entertaining the idea of optional masks.

In addition, the students in K-3 represent a significant portion of the student body. In fact, in most schools they represent HALF of the student population. HALF!!! Nowhere in Ontario do we allow half of the people in a building take off their masks. There would be outrage. Schools should be no different. Why are we allowing the schools to follow a different set of guidelines than the rest of the province?

I am disappointed that this board wasn't able to reduce the number of students in any of my children's classes. I'm further disappointed that you are now considering making the environment even more dangerous for them by removing masks from HALF of the students in the schools.

I am saddened and disheartened by what is happening in our education system this year. I realize that many of the decisions being made are out of your hands and that you are working as best you can within ministry guidelines. But this...this masking issue... this decision is solely yours. Please make the right choice. Masks for all students is the safest way.

Please include this in your correspondence at the next meeting.

Yours in faith,
Erin Gilmore

To: Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; O%27Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>
Cc: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Mandatory Masks K-3

Good evening,

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My decision to place my children back into school this year was not taken lightly. One of the deciding factors was that HCDSB had made masks mandatory for all ages. Reversing this decision would be completely unfair to all parents who chose to put their children in school based partly or solely on that decision! I find it irresponsible of this board of trustees to be changing the rules once the school year has started. You have already voted on this issue!

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I am saddened and disheartened by what is happening in our education system this year. I realize that many of the decisions being made are out of your hands and that you are working as best you can within ministry guidelines. But this...this masking issue... this decision is solely yours. Please make the right choice. Masks for all students is the safest way.

Please include this in your correspondence at the next meeting.

Yours in faith,
Rob Gilmore

Date: September 14, 2020 at 9:45:56 AM EDT

To: "Daly, Patrick" <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: **Keep Masks Mandatory k to 3**

Dear Mr. Daly,

I hope this email finds you safe and well.

I am writing this email to voice my concern about the students in kindergarten to grade 3 **NOT** wearing masks. As we all know, "masks are recommended as a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from travelling into the air and onto other people, when the person wearing the mask coughs, sneezes, talks or raises their voice" (CDC Centers for Disease Control and Preventions).

As an educator working in a kindergarten classroom, I feel it is imperative for students to wear masks for their own protection, the protection of their peers, their educators, their parents and family members.

In my experience on Thursday and Friday of last week, students were very good about wearing their masks in the classroom, as they did not complain or take their masks off.

Safe Return to School includes everyone wearing masks no exceptions.

If the government has mandated wearing masks in public and in all indoor public spaces, this should also apply to high traffic areas such as classrooms and schools, where germs and bacteria are always present and can be easily transmitted, especially when our ability to implement proper social distancing is limited.

Please include this in the correspondence.

Sincerely,

Liliane Hazineh

The claim that masks “protect us” has yet to be determined-and has far more negative consequences:

My name is Caroline Homann and I am a parent of two young children attending St Matthew Catholic School. Based on the significant amount of evidence from the World health Organization, UNICEF, our family doctor and pediatricians we very comfortably chose to send our two children back to school this year. I was especially happy with the alignment of the school board and public health Ontario as there is more evidence to show that masks cause reduced oxygen intake, increased bacterial flow to the wearer and studies have either been inconclusive or supported the fact that the mask played little to no part in the reduction of the virus. Given this factual global evidence I happily sent my children to school under the assumption they would not have to wear masks. Only to have that decision overturned weeks before school. The following is only a minor excerpt of factual documentation that we as parents used as our assurance.

Last but certainly not least-I wish to share that we obtained an exemption for our Grade 3 daughter (age 8) which was fully supported by her doctor. This exemption was provided to the school which they accepted respectfully. She attended school on September 9th for her only day that week and would be returning full time the following week. On September 11th I received a call from the principal who stated that she had received a call from a parent who expressed their concern over my daughter not wearing a mask. The schools solution was to FURTHER separate my daughter from the OTHER students physically and to limit her “group” activities moving forward. I listened but did not respond. According to the guidelines establish by the HDCSB:

Physical distancing strategies that will be incorporated in school include:

- Increased physical distance of chairs and tables/desks in all rooms (including cafeteria, library, staff areas)

Are we as Catholics, leaders and examples of Christ ok with Further separating an 8 year old child who has a medical exemption? If the other children are wearing masks-and they are already socially distancing and lathering in sanitizer do we need to treat her as if she has leprosy? Is that what God has asked us to do? I will take up this issue with the school and

others this week-and have solicited the advice of a human rights lawyer-but I assure this is so beyond what we need to do-especially given the evidence.

Exhibit 1:

Excerpt from: Ontario public health

("what we know about masks" July 2020)

Attached at the bottom for further reference

Page: 4

- Protective Effects to the Mask Wearer in Non-Healthcare Settings - Non-COVID-19 Viral Respiratory Infections Randomized Trials There have been several cluster randomized studies on the use of medical masks outside of the hospital setting. These studies have evaluated the effectiveness of masking household members and individuals in other confined spaces (e.g. university residences, airplanes) to prevent acquisition of respiratory infections. **In the majority of studies, no significant benefit from wearing masks was identified.** Studies that demonstrated a benefit were associated with enhanced hand hygiene measures. No randomized controlled trials evaluating the effectiveness of mask use by the public to decrease COVID-19 infections have been completed, however there is a trial in Denmark under way (NCT04337541).¹
- Homemade and Cloth Masks Given the challenges in maintaining personal protective equipment supply during the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of homemade and/or cloth masks is the recommended mask type for use in non-healthcare settings. Broadly speaking, there are two types of studies on effectiveness of cloth masks: ones that evaluate filter efficiency in a laboratory setting, and ones that evaluate infection risk to the wearer and those around them. There are more of the former studies which generally agree that at least some filtration occurs under certain conditions; the latter have not proven such masks effective in real-world settings. Overall, the evidence suggests there is variability in the effectiveness of cotton masks and that they are generally inferior to medical masks. One study in a healthcare setting demonstrated that cloth masks were associated with an increased risk of infection and they should not be used to protect healthcare workers.³⁴ However, the

body of evidence supports that certain cloth materials provide sufficient filtration to be a suitable option for source control in non-healthcare settings.

- Mask use by the general public could be associated with a theoretical elevated risk of COVID-19 through decreased physical distancing and self-contamination. The external surface of the mask may become contaminated and touching one's face is a common practice. Continuous mask use may be associated with facial skin lesions, irritant dermatitis or worsening acne.⁴ It is important to incorporate hand hygiene with appropriate mask use to reduce the risk of self-contamination
- Public mask wearing is likely beneficial as source control when worn by persons shedding infectious SARS-CoV-2 virus when physical distancing is not possible in public spaces (e.g. public transit, visiting grocery store)
- Studies to date have found that the use of medical masks may reduce the amount of aerosol shedding of some bacteria and viruses from symptomatic individuals, but have inconsistently demonstrated a reduction in secondary cases in household or other close contact studies.

Aug 2020 Ontario Public Health report:

The report cites seven randomized trials designed to evaluate how mask use in the general public might reduce influenza-like illnesses. Surprisingly, all seven studies determined that the masking of one with a surgical mask resulted in no significant reduction in influenza-like illnesses. Here's a quick summary:

1. A randomized controlled trial by the University of Michigan-School of Public Health found hand washing reduced influenza-like illnesses; while mask wearing made no difference whatsoever.
2. A German randomized controlled trial found "there was no statistically significant effect" when it came to wearing masks "on secondary infections."

3. A 2010 randomized study in the The Journal of Infectious Diseases found that neither “face mask use and hand hygiene nor face mask use alone was associated with a significant reduction in the rate of influenza-like illnesses cumulatively.”
4. A randomized controlled trial conducted in Thailand during the H1N1 pandemic found “Influenza transmission was not reduced by interventions to promote hand washing and face mask use.”
5. A 19-month randomized controlled trial of crowded urban households found a significant reduction in upper respiratory infection through educational interventions; but no reduction when adding hand sanitizers or masks.
6. A randomized controlled trial of people sleeping together in tents during an Islamic pilgrimage was reported in Infectious Disorders. Researchers found no difference in laboratory confirmed influenza cases among those wearing masks and those who were not.
7. A randomized trial in France found that mask wearing only produced a 0.4% reduction in secondary infection and “did not identify any trend in the results suggesting effectiveness of facemasks.”

Several countries guided by the WHO and UNICEF Declared in August of 2020-that **children under the age of 5 should not be required to wear masks**. Further to that, they stated that children ages 6-11 only wear masks if **“there is widespread transmission in the area where the child resides”**. **Oakville to date has a minimal number of cases.**

An international and multidisciplinary expert group brought together by WHO reviewed evidence on COVID-19 disease and transmission in children ***and the limited available evidence on the use of masks by children.***

Based on this and other factors such as children's psychosocial needs and developmental milestones, and overall interest of the child and the capacity to appropriately use a mask with minimal assistance WHO and UNICEF advise the following:

Children aged 6-11 should be based on the following factors:

- **Whether there is widespread transmission in the area where the child resides**
- The ability of the child to safely and appropriately use a mask
- Access to masks, as well as laundering and replacement of masks in certain settings (such as schools and childcare services)
- Adequate adult supervision and instructions to the child on how to put on, take off and safely wear masks
- Potential impact of wearing a mask on learning and **psychosocial development, in consultation with teachers, parents/caregivers and/or medical providers**
- Specific settings and interactions the child has with other people who are at high risk of developing serious illness, such as the elderly and those with other underlying health conditions

WHO and UNICEF advise that children aged 12 and over should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, in particular **when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area**

Reduced Oxygen levels:

Studies have shown that a drop in oxygen levels (hypoxia) is associated with an impairment in immunity. Studies have shown that hypoxia can inhibit the type of main immune cells used to fight viral infections called the CD4+ T-lymphocyte. This occurs because the hypoxia increases the level of a compound called hypoxia inducible factor-1 (HIF-1), which inhibits T-lymphocytes and stimulates a powerful immune inhibitor cell called the Tregs. This sets the stage for contracting any infection, including COVID-19 and making the consequences of that infection much graver. In essence, your mask may very well put you at an increased risk of infections and if so, having a much worse outcome

There is another danger to wearing these masks on a daily basis, especially if worn for several hours. When a person is infected with a respiratory virus, they will expel some of the virus with each breath. If they are wearing a mask, especially an N95 mask or other tightly fitting mask, **they will be constantly rebreathing the viruses, raising the concentration of the virus in the lungs and the nasal passages. We know that people who have the worst reactions to the coronavirus have the highest concentrations of the virus early on. And this leads to the deadly cytokine storm in a selected number.**

It gets even more frightening. Newer evidence suggests that in some cases the virus can enter the brain. In most instances it enters the brain by way of the olfactory nerves (smell nerves), which connect directly with the area of the brain dealing with recent memory and memory consolidation. By wearing a mask, the exhaled viruses will not be able to escape and will concentrate in the nasal passages, enter the olfactory nerves and travel into the brain.”

Internationally:

Denmark boasts one of the lowest COVID-19 death rates in the world. As of August 4, the Danes have suffered 616 COVID-19 deaths, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University.

That's less than one-third of the number of Danes who die from pneumonia or influenza in a given year.

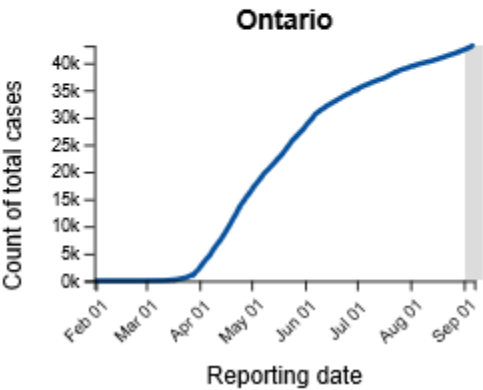
Danish health officials stated: **“there is little conclusive evidence that face masks are an effective way to limit the spread of respiratory viruses”**

Denmark is not alone. Despite a global stampede of mask-wearing, data show that 80-90 percent of people in Finland and Holland say they “never” wear masks when they go out, a sharp contrast to the 80-90 percent of people in Spain and Italy who say they “always” wear masks when they go out. You can see the stark results in spread.

Dutch public health officials recently explained why they're not recommending masks.

“From a medical point of view, there is no evidence of a medical effect of wearing face masks, so we decided not to impose a national obligation,” said Medical Care Minister **Tamara van Ark**.

The count of total cases of COVID-19 in **Ontario** was **43,161** as of September 7, 2020.



These are Ontario cases since Feb 2020. Please note the province made masks mandatory June 20th and Oakville followed suit July 2



Internationally:

The countries that least supported mask wearing: Sweden, Switzerland, Norway-had the lowest number of cases

In France, some 12.4 million students returned Tuesday, with masks required for all teachers as well as students over 11. Teachers were not in support of masks “ "How can we connect with children when half your face is hidden behind a mask?" said Julie Siata, who teaches English at another Marseille school.

'No zero risk'

Pupils also returned Tuesday in Belgium, which has suffered one of the highest rates of coronavirus deaths in Europe.

Masks are required for those aged 12 and older, and must be kept in a protective case or pouch.

German schools reopened last month, as did many in Scotland which has control of its school system.

Masks will also be compulsory in Greece, where children are expected to return to school on Monday, while Spain will require all students 6 and older to wear masks when classes resume next week and they had one of the highest cases globally.

Children in Spain should also maintain a distance of 1.5 metres (5 feet) from each other, and are being urged to wash their hands at least five times a day.

"I believe fathers, mothers, and the education community can be sure that their sons and daughters, that school employees, will be much safer in schools than in other places," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez told Cadena Ser radio.

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/covid-wwksf/what-we-know-public-masks-apr-7-2020.pdf?la=en>

<https://www.eurekaselect.com/125489/article>

Sent: September 9, 2020 8:22 PM

To: lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] In support of masks K-12

Dear Trustees, Mr. Director, and Mr. Chair,

First off, thank you for all of your efforts in getting us through these first few days of returning to school.

I would like to share my perspective on the mask policy, which I understand is to be discussed once more in the next board meeting on September 15th. Please include the following in the official correspondence, and consider this my request and approval to read it aloud in the meeting.

I am a parent of a student entering Senior Kindergarten this year, who will be back in his classroom tomorrow. I am **fully supportive** of mandatory masks for K-12.

Will my newly-5-year-old wear his mask perfectly, 100% of the time? No, probably not. That said, we have been practicing all summer, and he's getting pretty good at it. If mask wearing is part of the new school routine, students are much more likely to be successful wearing them than if it's optional - especially in the younger grades. I planned to send my son with masks even if it wasn't required, but know that if much of the class was not masked, he would quickly abandon them. If it's normalized, everyone is safer.

While the commitment in the last board meeting will help lower class sizes, which is much appreciated, there will still be many classrooms where the recommended 2 metre (or even 1 metre) distancing is impossible. Given that reality - why wouldn't we use every tool we have available to keep our students, teachers and staff safe?

Let's put some faith in the teachers and administrators. Of course there will be a learning curve here for everyone. I have every expectation grace will be extended when kids don't get it right. There will also be room for those who require exemptions to receive them.

More importantly - let's put some faith in our kids. They're smart and empathetic, and even the youngest among them can grasp that wearing masks is something tangible they can do to help others. Our framing makes all the difference, and I know all of our wonderful teachers will impart this as well. Trust our kids - they can do this.

Sincerely,

Allison Kolch

Dear trustees

I am writing to ask you to support Helena Karabela' s motion to amend the August 19, 2020 motion making non-medical masks mandatory for children in kindergarten to grade 3.

The process for passing this motion was unfair to parents and children, as there was no proper consultation with the community beforehand.

In the "Intent to Return to School Survey" sent out Aug. 26, parents who chose the virtual learning option were asked about the reasons for their choice. One of the choices asked whether parents were concerned about wearing a mask. However, that choice was not presented to parents who chose the option to send children back to school. Why was that question not asked of parents who chose to return their children to school? Would it not have been more relevant to ask *those* parents' opinions on mandatory masks, since *their* children would be the ones actually wearing masks all day?

Parents are regularly consulted on other matters. For example, parents are able to vote on whether they want their children to wear uniforms. Why weren't they able to vote on whether they want their children to wear masks? Masks are much more difficult to wear than uniforms. Uniforms do not affect a person's breathing. Masks do. Why was this not important enough to warrant a question to parents who chose to send their kids back to school?

Finally, a point was made in the Sept. 1 meeting that 85% of HCDSB parents chose to send their kids back to school. It was suggested that since most parents opted for in-class instruction, they surely must have approved of mandatory masks since that was communicated at the time of the survey. I believe that is an oversimplification of the matter, and it is intended to blindly justify the mandatory mask policy. One board member even admitted during the Sept. 1 board meeting that many parents are "under duress". In other words, many parents have no choice but to send their children back to school regardless of the circumstances, due to work responsibilities. Creating such an impossible scenario for parents is not fair to the citizens whose taxes fund the HCDSB.

Will the HCDSB re-consider sending out another survey to the 85% of parents who chose to send their kids back to school, asking them whether they agree students in grades K-3 should wear masks for up to 30 hours a week?

Also, has the board asked a single child in grade grades K-3 if they want to wear masks all day? If not, please do immediately.

Only then can your board say the process to implement the mandatory mask rule was completely fair.

Thank you

Roula Kosilos

I would like Director Daly to read this letter of correspondence out loud during the September 15th Board Meeting.

Evening Trustees

I would like to express my disbelief and shock concerning the behavior of some trustees during the September 1st delegation portion of the Board Meeting. The personal attacks, demeaning, condescending and hostile behavior towards some of the delegates was appalling. The delegation process is a way for rate payers in the HCDSB to voice their concerns or their position and it is supposed to be done in a safe and inclusive environment. The delegations during the September 1st Board meeting resembled more to a criminal court room setting than a safe environment for rate payers to express their thoughts. Two of the delegates have since received harassing communication from external sources. In my opinion this is the direct result due to the unprofessional behaviour that was on display for everyone to witness and which was recorded. I would like to take this moment and review with the Trustee Policy No. I-36.

Section 3-Integrity and Dignity of Office

- Trustees are expected to discharge their duties and responsibilities in a professional and ethical manner, consistent with Gospel Values, the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Education Act and Regulations, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act and Regulations, the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, the Board's By-Laws and Policies, and any other Act or Regulation that may be applicable to the Trustee's duties.
- Trustees will act, and be seen to act, in the best interest of the public they serve. Trustees are elected to represent **all stakeholders** in the HCDSB by articulating and supporting a shared commitment to excellence in Catholic education that promotes student achievement and well-being through the delivery of effective and appropriate education programs and effective stewardship of the Board's resources.
-

Section 4-Civil Behaviour

- As stewards of the system, Trustees are held to a high standard of conduct and should serve as role models of exemplary behaviour reflective of the values articulated in the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.
 - **Trustees shall respect differences in people, their ideas and their opinions.**
 - **Trustees shall respect the rights of others.**
 - **Trustees shall treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement.**

I would like to remind all Trustees of

Section 11-Enforcement of Code of Conduct and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

- **A trustee who has reasonable grounds to believe that another Trustee has breached this code of Conduct may bring the alleged breach to the attention of the board.**

In closing during the September 1st board meeting the delegates were attacked for their personal views and their position on an important matter by certain Board members. This Board of Trustees has ensured that all future delegates should be concerned and fearful, if their personal position does not align with the personal position of a Trustee. I am requesting that the recordings of delegate questions be reviewed in a closed door session and that a formal response be issued by the Board to this letter of correspondence.

If the Board finds that a Trustee was in conflict with Policy I-36 I am requesting that section 11 be enforced in order to protect the integrity, ethics and morals of this Board.

Thank you,

John Krmencik

September 13, 2020

Good Afternoon Director Daly, Chair Iantomasi and Trustees,

My name is Nadia Lo Greco and I am a parent of two young children in grades 2 and 5 in St Elizabeth Seton elementary school. I am writing to you today in support of the motion that was passed during the August 19th Board meeting for mandatory masking for all HCDSB students. I ask that this letter be included in correspondence for the upcoming meeting on September 15 2020.

It is my understanding that there is a motion on the table to repeal this policy and I would like to have my voice heard to respectfully request that Trustees do not make any changes to the policies in place at this time.

Covid-19 is an evolving situation. I appreciate that we are all doing the best we can with information that seems to be changing all the time. Parents, teachers, principals and board staff are all working together to bring our kids back into school safely this September. My girls had their first day last week, went into school in their masks, and had a wonderful day. It was different. There was no hugging of friends or holding hands in the school yard. Only 1/3 of their class was there and their classrooms are not set up in the usual manners to which they have grown accustomed to. That being said, they still had a wonderful day. Because children are resilient and essentially rule-followers and if you tell them what is expected of them, they will act accordingly.

The virus science and back to school recommendations from Sick Kids, CHEO, and other Canadian pediatric hospitals are evolving constantly. The longer we live with Covid-19 and the more information we can pull globally, the better informed we can be when we make decisions. For families that chose to send their children back to school in person, they made this decision based on the safety protocol that was put in place by the Board – which included mandatory masking for all students. Our family has an immunocompromised family member who is currently undergoing chemotherapy treatments so if the masking was not in place, we would have had to make a different decision on sending our children back to school.

Can we please err on the side of caution and keep the protocols that are in place currently as we attempt to navigate cold & flu season as well as the projected second wave of the virus? Can we please do everything we can as a community to keep not only our children safe, but the educators and the families that the kids go home to every day? Please, do not overturn this policy and can the Board please move forward with other pressing business such as technology and ensuring that the families who have chosen virtual learning are properly supported.

Thank you and God Bless,

Nadia Lo Greco

Sent: September 11, 2020 6:31 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>

Cc: Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>

Subject: Re: [<EXTERNAL>] Fwd: Questions for Open Question Period

I am resubmitting my questions below as they were not answered; I am also providing clarification in this correspondence which I ask to be included in the board report for September 15th and also read aloud at that meeting.

With respect to correspondence the main question was "**What is the policy / criteria for including correspondence in the board report**". The response was "*If correspondence is received in a timely fashion we try to include in the Board agenda*". This is very subjective and unclear. What is considered timely? What is meant by "we try"?

Recently I submitted correspondence which was not included as the report had been posted, literally minutes prior. However, on September 1st, correspondence was read aloud that was not even included in the board report. Please explain to me these two apparently conflicting approaches, as this would appear to me to demonstrate bias.

Also, I specifically asked "Why some correspondence to individual trustees is included, but not all such correspondence, and not even all correspondence that is addressed to all trustees". This question was not addressed. In the September 1st board report there were a couple of pieces of correspondence addressed to an individual trustee only, that were published. Surely you do not publish every piece of correspondence addressed to individual trustees or even to the group of trustees. If you choose to publish specific pieces of correspondence with no pre-established criteria or policy, and without any clear rationale, there would appear to be a bias.

While my question preceded the reading aloud of certain pieces of correspondence and was therefore not in reference to that, I would say that that practice of reading aloud certain correspondence would itself demonstrate bias. As you well know, most correspondence in the board reports are barely given a mention and, in my and many other's experience, do not even get a response. However apparently if someone asks to read it aloud you will do so? This is not something that has ever been shared with stakeholders so how did these individuals know that this was even an option? If you don't continue to do this for all others who ask in the future, you are again demonstrating bias, or favouritism, or whatever term you prefer, however, it is not fair or equitable to all stakeholders.

With respect to Ministry letters; I appreciate your position that they are not normally part of the Board package, although I believe they have been in the past. I guess I'm wondering why this important correspondence wouldn't be included as it is a matter of public record and the information would of interest to many stakeholders. The response below indicates that the *"information is shared with parents and also shared on social media"*, however the Ministry issued a letter on August 26th ("Communication to Parents and the Sector") which they asked boards to "distribute to your parent and family communities"; I do not recall receiving this communication from the board. Furthermore, I have made multiple requests to both the Director and Chair as to where these Ministry communications could be found and asked specifically for a particular one (dated on or around August 18th), but have received no response. So I will ask a little differently this time, why is the board not more forthcoming with communications from the Ministry, particularly those that they are specifically asked to share with parents?

Finally, my question about correspondence from some organizations being shared but not others was not addressed. Of course, I am not familiar with all correspondence received by the board from different organizations but I will provide an example that I am personally familiar with to give some background to the question. In November 2018, the President of ABC Ontario issued correspondence to the Director and the Chair, copying all trustees, to share some concerns which were not permitted to be recorded in the SEAC minutes and which the then Chair of the Board, staff and SEAC Chair indicated could only be addressed if issued via correspondence to the Board by the President of ABC Ontario. Besides the fact that there was never any response to the correspondence and the concerns were not addressed, the correspondence was not published until a request to do so was specifically made, by me, a couple of months later. On the other hand, recent correspondence from VOICE, addressed "To Whom It May Concern" and not signed by any specific individual, but rather "Your SEAC rep", correspondence that was never shared at SEAC, was published in the board report. Please explain this inconsistency in dealing with correspondence with these organizations, and what criteria is considered when deciding whether or not to publish correspondence from outside organizations.

With a lack of formal policy or any clearly outlined criteria for handling correspondence, and vastly inconsistent practices, one can only conclude that there is bias, which may very well be unintentional, in the practice of publishing, or not publishing correspondence.

I trust that with this further information and specific examples provided, you will be able to provide a more fulsome response to the questions below.

Thanks
Maria

From: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Sent: September 11, 2020 1:27 PM

Subject: RE: [<EXTERNAL>] Fwd: Questions for Open Question Period

Responses from the September 1st meeting below.

Rosie

Sent: September 2, 2020 1:26 AM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Cc: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Swinden, Andrea <SwindenA@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fwd: Questions for Open Question Period

FYI...please ensure my questions are answered.....

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

Date: September 1, 2020 at 7:02:56 PM EDT

To: "DiPietro, Rosie" <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Cc: "Iantomasi, Vincent" <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>, "Daly, Patrick" <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: Questions for Open Question Period

Question 1

What is the policy / criteria for including correspondence in the board report? In particular, please address:

- Why correspondence from some organizations is included but not others;
- Why correspondence from the Ministry of Education to the Director and/or Trustees is not included;
- Why some correspondence to individual trustees is included, but not all such correspondence, and not even all correspondence that is addressed to all trustees; and
- Why the board allows bias by sharing some correspondence, but not others.

If correspondence is received in a timely fashion we try to include in the Board agenda. Exception made in this case because of the level of correspondence and requests to have read into the record.

Ministry letters are not typically part of Board package. Information is shared with parents and also shared on social media.

There is no bias and try to include correspondence received in a timely fashion.

Question 2

How will secondary students develop exam writing skills which are crucial for post-secondary pathways if they won't be writing exams this year? What if the adapted/hybrid model and/or remote learning continues past this current school year?

Students may not be writing a traditional 2 hour exam but will have opportunities for test taking. Exams not required for final evaluation.

Question 3

Why haven't the school level "return to school committees" been established yet? What is their purpose if they are not established until after the return to school is complete, and the school year is well underway?

Return to school committees have not started up as councils have not been established. Committee to return throughout the fall as circumstances change.

Sent: September 14, 2020 6:10 PM

To: Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pro Mask For All Grades In HCDSB

To Whom It May Concern,

It has been brought to my attention that there is a motion on the table to revert the mandatory mask protocol back to only grades 4-12. I find this highly irresponsible. It has been proven over and over again that masks DO work in helping to curb the spread of Covid-19, ESPECIALLY when social distancing is NOT an option. I understand that Sick Kids has published that masks on younger kids (those in JK-grade 3) is not entirely necessary, however, the SAME publication also recommends a minimum of 1 metre distance between students with 2 metres being the most ideal. Since the board is not able to secure the proper funding to lower class sizes to enable the adequate space required for the recommended social distancing, the next best option to keep everyone SAFE is to have all staff/students in masks. As you have seen in the news, the number of cases are already creeping up in some regions of Ontario - the same regions that were slow to mandate mask usage, and do not enforce the necessary social distancing measures.

I also find the motion a complete disregard of valuable resources and not to mention everyone's time. The original back to school plan included mask usage for grades 4-12. I motion was put forth, voted on, and approved to have all students (jk-grade 12) wear masks. The return to school plan was sent out to parents/guardians with this information and they made decisions based on this plan. To have a Trustee motion to revert back to the original plan AFTER a democratic decision was made is, in my opinion, a misuse of power. As mentioned, parents/guardians made the decision to opt in/out of in-class learning based on the information provided in the surveys that were sent out at the end of August. If the decision is made to revert back to masks for only grade 4-12, I can guarantee you will see an influx in movement from in-class to online. Online learning is already delayed a week (this week is only orientation with no teacher led instruction) due to all of the restructuring, lack of staff, and technical issues. If further restructuring is required when parents/guardians pull their kids from in-class to online, this will cause further delays in starting the school year. It will obviously also disrupt in-class learning as classes are further collapsed and students/teachers are moved around. This is unfair to EVERYONE involved! Staff have worked tirelessly for the past several weeks to get both in-class and online up and running, kids are already nervous to come to school in a "new normal", parents/guardians have likely taken time off work for the staggered entry and delay in online, only to have everything changed AGAIN over mask usage.

I ask all of the Trustees and Director of Education, to please consider all of the implications reverting back to masks for grade 4-12 only will cause. Teachers and students already do not have the required and/or recommended social distance measures in place, and now you want to take away the usage of masks as well. It does NOT make sense for half of the school to have masks and the other half not. This in turn protects NO ONE!

Thank you for your time!
Jessica Macias

To: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>

Subject: Tuesday Board Meeting - Masks

I understand that k-3 students wearing masks is again being brought up for consideration at this week's board meeting.

I would like my email to be read at the meeting, in favour of mandatory masks for all students.

As a teacher in this board, it is my experience that students are doing well with wearing masks. They are following the rules as best they can, and even wearing them at recess when they are not mandatory. I believe that going back on the decision to wear masks will send mixed messages to kids about the importance of wearing them. These students are required to wear them in all other public areas and I believe consistency is important in both messaging as well as practice. We are teaching our students to be collaborative contributors, caring family members and responsible citizens. What does it tell them if we say that they no longer have to worry about spreading their germs to others?

As a parent in this board, knowing that my SK son and his classmates would be masked played an important part in my decision to send him to school. I believe this is true for many parents. If the decision is reversed, there may be many parents who would then like their students to be in a virtual classroom. As the next date to switch between in-school instruction and remote learning is not until Thanksgiving, are you prepared to allow an earlier switch due to such an important change in classroom protocols?

Thank you,
Ashley

September 13, 2020

HCDSB Trustees
Pat Daly, Director of Education
802 Drury Lane
Burlington ON L7R 2Y2

Dear HCDSB Trustees;

Please accept this letter in submission regarding the debate on the board's mask policy in schools.

As parents of a grade 3 student, this decision directly involves the safety and well being of our child. These are perilous and faith testing times. Luckily enough, the actions we can take to increase the safety of our children is very simple. The answer is: Wear a mask.

We are supportive of the board's mandatory mask policy. It is simple and effective. Our daughter as well as our three year old son, are quite familiar with wearing masks. We have bought multiple types of masks for them to wear as we go out and about our daily errands. The week before school began we all had a wonderful family outing to an apple orchard. While we all wore our masks, we enjoyed picking apples, playing on haylofts and taking a ride on a tractor pulled wagon. All socially distanced of course.

The point we are trying to make through this example, is that we were able to have fun and be a family all while wearing our masks. Our freedoms were not impaired, our mental well being was not compromised, nor was our safety in jeopardy. It was a simple additional garment we added to our wardrobe to keep each other, as well as the other patrons of the orchard, safe. Also, on that note, every other family there maintained socially distancing measures and wore masks. No one made an issue about it.

Our daughter attended her first day of school this past week. She proudly wore her mask to meet her new classmates and her teacher. The teacher has developed a system for when masks are not required, such as eating or playing outside. As well she'll be encouraging mask breaks throughout the day as possible while maintaining the safety protocols of the board.

Our children have learned through reinforcement and sound parenting choices, that masks are now just an added garment for them to wear outside. No different than putting on a hat on a hot summer day, or a scarf on a winter's day. We have all opted to attend a school system where clothing choices are already mandated

through policy. School uniforms are part and parcel of the Halton Catholic School experience. Mandatory masks are not a far stretch for us to adapt to.

As parents and educators, we know that when a good habit is taught early it stays with us for life. This pandemic is going to be with us for a long time to come it looks like. Encouraging good mask behaviour is a good thing. It does not harm our children. They are not scarred or irreparably damaged in any way.

We are Catholics. Our faith commands that we help our neighbour in time of trouble. Well ladies and gentlemen, times have never been more troublesome. We all need to be in each other's corner. We all need to help protect each other. Luckily, the easiest way to do that is simple:

Wear a mask.

Allow us to finish off this letter by sharing a quote which is quite appropriate for the times we live in:

“These things are temporary, this too will pass, put on a mask and live a little.”

Thank you,

Joel MacLeod and Amanda Downs

From: Anna-Marie Plessl

Sent: September 14, 2020 11:48 AM

To: derosap@hcdsb.org; guzzon@hcdsb.org; derosap@hcdsb.org

Cc: comments@hcdsb.org; Jeremy Marsh

Subject: A request for reading at the board meeting September 15th - please read aloud

Dear Trustees, Director Daly and Mr. Chair,

We want to take a moment to thank you for your diligence in preparing schools for a safe reopening last week. We understand this is uncharted territory and appreciate your efforts in keeping all of our students safe.

We are writing today specifically regarding the motion for mandatory masking in grades JK-3 and would like our letter to be read aloud at the meeting September 15th, 2020 .

We made the decision to send our children back to in class learning based heavily on the policy of mandatory masking. This has become their new normal and this assists greatly in keeping them safe. To change the policy and reverse the decision seems like a bait and switch and greatly endangers our children.

The numbers today are alarming. We have 313 new cases in Ontario. The highest level in 14 weeks. Now is not the time to reverse a decision on mandatory masking.

While we entirely understand young children will find it difficult to be masked all day all of the time (the kindies may need breaks), there is very much a 'pack' mentality with these young ones. They are resilient and they look to their peers and the adults around them and very often follow suit more easily than we could imagine. When all of their friends are wearing them, it is easier to view this as normal. We fear that if you make masking optional, it will be much more difficult for the young children to understand why they must wear them if their friends are not.

The initial decision from the Board to make masks mandatory for all students gave us great confidence. We were proud of our Board to make it a blanket policy to keep all of our students safe.

We are asking that you kindly respect the decision so many families made based on the mandatory masks for all policy. Please do not make this optional for grades JK-3.

Keeping our children safe is of paramount importance for all of us and we truly appreciate all of your efforts.

Sincerely

Anna-Marie & Jeremy Marsh

Sent: September 9, 2020 10:20 PM

To: Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Comments <Comments@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Re: Masks for all grades

Hello,

I originally sent this email yesterday but realized I made some critical errors in the trustees that voted for or against the motion. I have updated my email with the correct information.

I give permission for this email to be used as part of the correspondence package in the September 15th Board meeting package. Also, if possible, I'd like for it to be read out loud.

I'm a concerned Halton Catholic School Board parent as I feel like my voice and others whom have the same concerns are not being heard in regards to the mandatory masks for all grades.

Firstly, I want to say thank you to Helena Karabela and Tim O'Brien who voted against masks for all grades! To the trustees who voted in favour of this motion, I'm disappointed in your position despite the strong presentation from the parent delegates whom I fully support!

My daughter attends Lumen Christi in Milton and is going into grade 1 this year. We were so excited to finally be heading back to school. We love our school, the Principal & Vice Principal are amazing as well as all of the teachers and other staff. Up until the announcement was made on August 19th that masks would be mandatory for all grades, my husband and I intended on sending our daughter to school for in-class learning. Our hearts sank when the news was released that masks were now required for all grades. My husband and I both feel very strongly against children wearing masks, we knew the best thing to do would be to keep our daughter home. While we had toyed with the idea of fully removing her and Homeschooling, we decided to give virtual learning a try. It doesn't work very well for either of our work schedules but because we love her school dearly we did not want to completely withdraw her.

We are hoping the mask mandates will be returned to grade 4 and above.

I have attached a link to the World Health Organization's most recent report, dated June 5th regarding the use of masks for Covid 19, for your review. There are many negative points I'd like to point out for your consideration.

On page 5, it states "The use of cloth masks as an alternative to medical masks is not considered appropriate for protection of health workers due to limited available evidence. **One study that evaluated the use of cloth masks in a health care facility found that health care workers using cloth masks were at an increased risk of influenza like viruses.**"

While I do understand healthcare workers are working long hours, I'd consider a child wearing a mask for 4+ hours to be quite lengthy. How is it healthy for a child to be wearing a mask that has the potential to cause influenza like illnesses? Cloth masks have become extremely popular, I see many local entrepreneurs making beautiful masks and many parents buying them for their children not realizing there are health risks associated with wearing them. Mandating a child to wear a mask that may cause other health concerns is unacceptable. That is a risk that should be owned by the parent not the school board. While I understand this risk is based on cloth masks, I've had an extremely hard time finding evidence that mask wearing by any individual let alone children for lengthy periods of time does not cause any health concerns. Not only that, but children learn communication through analyzing the faces of those they're communicating with. What effects will this have on my daughter? Both on her physical health and her mental health.

On pg 6 the report states "At present, there is no direct evidence (from studies on Covid 19 and in healthy people in the community) on the effectiveness of universal masking of healthy people in the community to prevent infection with respiratory viruses including Covid 19.

As well as "At the present time, the widespread use of of masks by healthy people in the community setting is not yet supported by high quality or direct scientific evidence and there are potential health benefits and **harms to consider.**"

Again, if the WHO is stating there is no evidence, why are young children expected to wear masks?

Pg 8 **potential harms/disadvantages**

The likely disadvantages of the use of mask by healthy people in the general public include:

- potential increased risk of self-contamination due to the manipulation of a face mask and subsequently touching eyes with contaminated hands;(48, 49)
- potential self-contamination that can occur if non- medical masks are not changed when wet or soiled. This can create favourable conditions for microorganism to amplify;
- potential headache and/or breathing difficulties, depending on type of mask used;
- potential development of facial skin lesions, irritant dermatitis or worsening acne, when used frequently for long hours;(50)
- difficulty with communicating clearly;
- potential discomfort;(41, 51)
- a false sense of security, leading to potentially lower adherence to other critical preventive measures such as physical distancing and hand hygiene;
- poor compliance with mask wearing, in particular by young children;
- waste management issues; improper mask disposal leading to increased litter in public places, risk of contamination to street cleaners and environment hazard;
- difficulty communicating for deaf persons who rely on lip reading;
- disadvantages for or difficulty wearing them, especially for children, developmentally challenged persons, those with mental illness, elderly persons with cognitive impairment, those with asthma or chronic respiratory or breathing problems, those who have had facial trauma or recent oral maxillofacial surgery, and those living in hot and humid environments.

With all of those potential harms/disadvantages, how can masks be mandated for all grades? It just does not make any sense.

I give permission for this email to be shared at the meeting.

Thank you so much,

Dena Mason

WHO advice on the use of masks.

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/332293/WHO-2019-nCov-IPC_Masks-2020.4-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Dear Director Daly, Chair Iantomasi and Trustees,

I am writing this letter on behalf of myself, my wife and our son who is currently enrolled in Grade 3 at an Oakville HCDSB school. Our family is strongly in favour of the decision which was made to expand mandatory masking to all students attending in-person education at HCDSB and I would like to explain some of the reasons why we believe this policy should remain in effect.

In July of this year, we welcomed a newborn son into our home. Given the fact that his immune system is still very much developing, we have been taking as many precautions as were reasonable. We have been closely monitoring changes in the understanding of how COVID-19 is spread, the current conditions in Halton and Ontario, and the recommendations put forth by a variety of stakeholders. All of this information informed our decision to send our eldest son back to in person learning which began last week. The mask mandate, which was already in place when we confirmed our intent to return, was one such piece of information.

To begin, I feel it is very important to state that those who are characterizing the decision to require masks for all children as “ignoring advice of medical professionals” to be extremely disingenuous. At best, it could be stated that there is no consensus on the best path forward. Medical professionals have clearly expressed opinions on both sides of this mask debate, debating the pros and cons of each argument. For example, in the much cited Sick Kids Guidance for School Reopening, a full 1/3 of participating contributors suggested that they “supported the use of NMMs (non-medical masks) when physical distancing was not possible”.¹ Nearly all of the remaining contributors prefaced their recommendation with the phrase “Given the current epidemiology...” which leads one to believe that this recommendation itself may change as conditions change.

This brings me to my second point: the understanding of COVID-19 and the way it spreads, as well as the current state of the Province of Ontario, are not the same as they were when the Ministry of Education released its initial guidelines. The weeks that have passed since the Ministry of Education released the “Guide to reopening Ontario’s schools” have seen a dramatic increase in the number of newly diagnosed cases. Ontario is now showing more than 200 new cases per day, with a recent peak of 313 new cases on September 13, more than times higher than the 76 which were reported on the day the Sick Kids guidelines were released.² Ontario’s Premier, Health Minister and many top doctors have noted that this is a time for increased caution, not lessening. Minister of Health Christine Elliott has stated, “We do need to ensure that the progress we’ve made is not lost. On this, the first day of school for many young Ontarians across the province, we need to do everything we can to limit the spread of

¹ Sick Kids, *Recommendations for School Reopening*, July 29, 2020, <http://www.sickkids.ca/PDFs/About-SickKids/81407-COVID19-Recommendations-for-School-Reopening-SickKids.pdf> [Accessed September 12, 2020]

² Government of Ontario, COVID-19 case data: All Ontario, September 13, 2020, <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/data> [Accessed September 14, 2020]

COVID-19."³ Further, due to the nature of the novel coronavirus, new research is constantly being released which should be used to further inform these guidelines. Earlier in the summer, the common understanding was that young children were not efficient spreaders of the disease, that they were often asymptomatic, and that children who did test positive acquired the disease at home rather than from other children; these assumptions almost certainly informed the initial Government masking policy. At the time, researchers agreed that there was little understanding about the effects of the corona virus on these youngest children due to the limited research available at the time. Schools had closed early in the pandemic and with almost all social events cancelled children were seldomly in contact with each other at all.⁴ The WHO advice stops short of making any concrete suggestion, instead suggesting that local epidemiology should inform the decision while acknowledging that masking in children 6-11 may be necessary. As previously noted, within Ontario the rising case COVID-19 case count indicates that we are again in a wave of increasing infectivity, another factor which to me would suggest this is not the correct time to loosen restrictions intended to stop the spread.

Finally, studies have been released since the Ontario guidelines were first made public which should affect how the current epidemiology is viewed. Several outbreaks around the world have led researchers to believe that children are much more efficient carriers and spreaders than previously theorized.⁵ One such study published in *The Journal of Pediatrics* by researchers from the Massachusetts General Hospital and Mass General Hospital for Children goes even further to state that children are in fact very efficient spreaders of the virus. "The authors say that although younger children have lower numbers of the virus receptor than older children and adults, this does not correlate with a decreased viral load. According to the authors, this finding suggests that children can carry a high viral load, meaning they are more contagious, regardless of their susceptibility to developing a COVID-19 infection."⁶ The study goes on to explicitly recommend mask use for all ages: "Limiting the spread of SARS-CoV-2 infections in children is of particular concern as schools plan for re-opening. Our findings suggest that it would be ineffective to rely on symptoms or temperature monitoring to identify SARS-CoV-2 infection. Instead, infection control measures should minimize the possibility of

³ Ontario Minister of Health Christine Elliott, <https://www.baytoday.ca/local-news/ontario-will-not-loosen-public-health-rules-for-another-month-as-schools-reopen-elliott-2698089>

⁴ World Health Organization, *Advice on the use of masks for children in the community in the context of Covid-19*, August 21, 2020

⁵ Caitlin McCabe, Wall Street Journal, *Latest Research Points to Children Carrying, Transmitting Coronavirus*, August 9, 2020, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/latest-research-points-to-children-carrying-transmitting-coronavirus-11596978001> [Accessed September 12, 2020]

⁶ Health Europa, *Breakthrough finding shows children are silent spreaders of COVID-19*, August 21, 2020, <https://www.healtheuropa.eu/breakthrough-finding-shows-children-are-silent-spreaders-of-covid-19/102285/>

viral spread, with focus on strategies including social distancing precautions, mask use, and/or remote learning.”⁷

In closing, I believe that all trustees and the Board have the best interest of students, families and the community at heart when they make decisions such as these. The ongoing debate regarding mandatory masking is one such issue where there is no clear solution; a variety of points have been raised on both sides. However, in this circumstance I believe the best course of action is to err on the side of caution as the Board had previously acted. If the policy is rescinded, there is a substantial increase to the risk of viral transmission among all students, staff and teachers in the classroom environment. Our eldest son has already stated that he is hesitant to continue in-school education due to the virus, but we have calmed those fears by assuring him that the school and its occupants are taking every precaution possible. We, as a family, decided that appropriate precautions were taken in reopening schools and any change to this policy would affect that conclusion. If the proposed changes are approved, parents must have the opportunity to withdraw from school and enter online education without delay.

Sincerely,

Ian & Erin McCombe

⁷ Lael M Yonker, MD, et al, *Pediatric SARS-CoV-2: Clinical Presentation, Infectivity, and Immune Responses*, August 19, 2020, [https://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476\(20\)31023-4/fulltext#secsectitle0070](https://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476(20)31023-4/fulltext#secsectitle0070) [Accessed Sept 12, 2020]

Date: September 13, 2020 at 11:02:59 PM EDT

To: "Duarte, Marvin" <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>

Subject: Thank You/Masks

Dear Mr. Duarte:

I hope you and your family are doing well during these challenging times.

First of all, I just want to thank you for the work that you do and for most recently, being a voice to keep our schools safe. I have watched the last few Board Meetings and I want to say that I appreciate the professional and kind way that you contribute information and interact with other trustees. You have stood out in this positive way and I had meant to relate these sentiments to you earlier.

I also wanted to speak to the mandatory wearing of masks as it is my understanding that this topic will be discussed and looked at again at the next Board Meeting. You are free to share my sentiments if it is helpful in any way.

Presently, all students from K-12 are required to wear Masks in the Halton Catholic District School Board and for that, myself and my colleagues are thankful. While I understand the many reasons some parents feel that the wearing of masks, especially in Kindergarten and the Primary Grades is unfair or cruel and as well have presented some reasoning that I understand and sympathize with, at the end of the day it all comes down to what is safe. It comes down to valuing the health and life of others and their families in our community.

We live in a community. Everywhere outside the walls of the school, masks must be worn, recommended from 2 years of age on. Everywhere we go and on the door of our school, it reiterates, "Physical Distancing- 2 meters". But inside the school walls, we are distancing desks, "the best that we can". ..and now we want to consider not making masks mandatory?

Wearing a mask is the kindness that we do for another, so that we do not pass on the virus if we have it to someone else. I wear my mask to not spread any germs to my colleagues, parents I may interact with and the children in my class. We still do not know enough about how Covid-19 affects children but we seem to have an understanding that they seem to be carriers. I wear my mask to protect the children in my care because we do not know how susceptible they are to contracting the virus....why would we want to take that chance? I wear my mask to ensure that I also do not pass on the virus to family members at home. Parents, siblings, grandparents... I and my colleagues and all adults in our schools would like to have the same care extended.

Sometimes we do not give our children enough credit. As an educator, time and time again I see children at very young ages meet many challenges and "hit the bar" when it is raised for

them. For the last 8 years, I have taught Grade One and seen how my students love to make a difference. When they know they are part of a community, such as our classroom and they understand that what they say and do affects others, they "step up to the plate". When I have had a student in my room who is Anaphylactic for Nuts, the children are constantly policing and on the look out for nuts and checking one another up to make sure their peers are safe.

When children are told and understand why they are doing something, such as wearing masks, we empower them. When they are told that they need to wear a mask to keep others safe, they feel they are part of something important and they feel proud for doing good. I know this because I saw this last week at school. They have reminded me with their effort to wear their mask that this is our new normal presently and that we are going to get through because we are all working together. I am able to breathe deeply and focus on my work only because I know we are ALL safe when are wearing our masks. I do know that if my students were not wearing masks that I would feel very unsafe and concerned for my colleagues and my family members.

Not making masks mandatory for all students puts us in a gambling situation with the well being of our little ones and all students and adults in our learning community. It makes teachers feel unsafe which will make it very difficult for them to be fully present and deliver quality education.

I would like to thank the Board of Education for their decision to make masks mandatory. I can tell you that your decision has made a difference already. It has made all staff in our schools feel safer and cared for. It has made us feel that the children in our care are safe, freeing us up from that worry, so that we can focus on planning and implementing exciting learning opportunities for the students in our care.

Thank you for your representation as Trustee and the H.C.D.S.B for all that you have done already.

Kindest Regards,

Joanne McKay

Dear Director Daly, Chair Iantomasi, Trustees and Superintendents

First, thank you all for your leadership and service, and for meeting the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The decisions made by the board in preparation for school re-opening have been difficult. Although I have not agreed with all decisions made by the Board, overall I have been confident that these decisions will create a safe and healthy environment within which children can return to school.

I am writing in support of the masking motion passed August 19 by the Board that makes wearing a mask within School property mandatory for all students, and to urge you not to succumb to the pressures of the vocal anti-masking minority. I am a parent with two children who attend Holy Rosary School in Burlington, one of whom will be directly impacted by this decision. My wife and I have decided to send our children back into the school setting based in part because we felt the decision by this Board to require masks and social distancing for all students, per global, federal, provincial and municipal health recommendations, would create an environment within which the risk of virus transmission would be sufficiently mitigated. Reversal of the masking mandate will shake my confidence in this Board and may make me reconsider my support. If the Board chooses to rescind the masking mandate, I may have to send my children, and my funding, to the Halton District School Board.

I remind you of your service to all HCDSB constituents. This includes students and parents, teachers and other employees, as well as members of the broader community, including parish members and neighbours. While the current understanding of the COVID-19 virus is that children are not as seriously impacted when they fall ill, they are nonetheless able to carry and transmit the virus. Protection of the vulnerable extends beyond the school setting.

Paul Muir,
Parent, Holy Rosary School in Burlington

Dear Director Daly, Chair Iantomasi, Board trustees and superintendents,

I am writing to you in support of the masking motion that was passed by our Board and to ask that you do not reverse this decision tonight in light of a small albeit vocal anti-masking minority.

I am a graduate of Assumption highschool (class of 1995) and a teacher with our Board for 15 years, currently at Corpus Christi highschool and both of my daughters (aged 6 and 12) attend Holy Rosary Elementary school in Burlington.

As a mother, teacher, and ratepayer, the decision to reverse masking in students in Kindergarten to Grades 3 comes as a surprise to me and has both my husband and I greatly concerned as we based our decision on whether or not to send our children (specifically my 6-year old) back to school on the motion passed August 19th to ensure masking. This additional safeguard gave us the peace of mind and assurance of an added precautionary measure in line with provincial safety measures within public buildings. As recommended by top health professionals, masking is the best defense in keeping schools open and mitigating outbreaks where social distancing of the provincial standard of 2 metres is a challenge to ensure.

After week one, I am encouraged by all the positive success stories I have seen and heard of our children abiding by the masking rule. They are easily sporting their own personalized masks and are proud to be contributing to a community effort to keep the spread of Covid-19 at bay in our schools. My own children are happily and easily donning their masks to do their part to protect their peers and families with immunocompromised members including their grandparents, in addition to their teachers whom they care deeply about.

I would hate to have to make the tough decision to pull my youngest out of school should the motion be reversed. I would hate to have to tell her to go online instead when the majority of students, including my own classes in the highschool setting, have easily made the safe transition back to school in masks as it means so much to their personal and academic welfare. I would be very disheartened to know that our Catholic values of protecting the flock, of giving unto others, and of following Christ's example of discipleship and leadership be abandoned in favour of those who seek to assert their own personal "rights". We have all learned in quarantine that it takes the collective responsibility of our neighbours to safeguard health and security and this motion to reverse masking in K-3 flies in the face of scientific evidence and expertise. It means instead that many children beyond my own would need to sacrifice in person attendance of school and also signal a disregard for the health of others. Those who are in opposition to masking have been given alternative options and accommodations and it is unclear why these options are not being exercised and instead insist on threatening the welfare of the wider school community. I feel that following the advice offered by top health officials, both globally, provincially, and on a municipal level is prudent and has secured the low transmission rates we have achieved and for schools to ensure and prevent outbreaks of Covid-19, we must heed their lead.

I implore you to follow the lead of experts in health, pediatrics, and Government and uphold the masking policy that you have in place.

Sincerely,

Laura Pugliese-Muir

Sent: September 11, 2020 4:02 PM

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Issue for September 15th Board Meeting - Mandatory Masks

Good Afternoon

I kindly request that my letter be read at the upcoming HCDSB meeting on September 15th, 2020.

Like many others, I'm a concerned Halton Catholic District School Board parent as I feel like our voices are not being heard regarding the mandatory masks for all grades.

Firstly, I want to say thank you to those of you, who voted in favor to review the decision made regarding masks for all grades! To the trustees who voted in favor of masks, I'm disappointed in your position despite the strong presentation from the parent delegates whom I fully support!

When the announcement was made that masks would be mandatory for all grades, I hung my head and cried as I feel very strongly against children wearing masks. My daughter is a bright young girl and does very well in school, but those last few months of the last school year were just awful... I'm a stay at home mom (I also have a 2-year-old son); I have the luxury of being able to keep her home and I absolutely would have if I thought her education wouldn't suffer. Even more significant than that is her mental health as I truly believe in the importance of the in-person socialization that school brings. We are catholic, but we seriously considered the option to transfer her to the public board until of course, their mask policy changed as well to include grades 1 and up. When that option was lost, I presented both the at school with a mask or the online options to my daughter and weighed the pros and cons of both. Although she had concerns with wearing a mask for the whole day (particularly after learning her friend had an anxious episode and got sick IN her mask), she chose to go to school.... She chose to go because schooling at home proved mentally challenging for her and she truly wanted to be amongst a class of friends/peers. As a citizen, I have and continue to follow guidelines/laws re: wearing masks, keeping distance, sanitizing and washing hands when I come home. As a parent, I have taught my daughter to do the same for the few occasions that she has been in public amongst others. If we continue to do this and she does this in school, I have no reason to think that I nor she will bring covid home or pass it along to anyone else. As well, numerous health experts have indicated that children under the age of 10 are at a very low risk of contracting/transmitting covid. If you add this to the distancing, washing and sanitizing, these children ARE already doing enough to keep themselves and others safe without requiring masks.... Also, parks have been opened for some time now, kids have been sharing the use of the equipment, some have been playing with a small circle of

close friends and I have not heard of any concerns. My children haven't so much as gotten a cold in months ...because she respected the guidelines of washing, sanitizing etc... all without wearing a mask.

On my daughter's first day of junior kindergarten while I cried both happy and sad tears, my daughter, with a huge smile on her face said, "Bye mommy" and happily and with absolutely zero fear, practically ran toward the school.

However today.... Today was a different experience. We arrived at the school for her first day of grade 2 at a new school...she was hesitant but still excited. Then we put on our masks and walked to the door... it was time to say goodbye. I, with my usually teary eyes (proud of my girl and thinking how I will miss her) expected my girl to give me a big hug, kiss and happily walk into the school. Instead, she full on cried.... IN her mask. My daughter, (who suffers from nosebleeds in drier months) CRIED with her mask on. I wiped away her tears, hugged her (as no one else is allowed to physically comfort my child anymore) and along with 4 staff members (including the very kind principal) and a fellow student in her class, tried to convince her that it would be ok and she will have a great day.... We were the last parent/child to be at the school and it took a while, but she went in. Now I get to have that experience in my mind all day, worried until I see her again.

We are hoping the mask mandates will be reconsidered.

I have included below a link to the World Health Organization's most recent report, dated June 5th regarding the use of masks for COVID 19, for your review. There are many negative points I'd like to point out for your consideration....

On page 5, it states "The use of cloth masks as an alternative to medical masks is not considered appropriate for the protection of health workers due to limited available evidence. One study that evaluated the use of cloth masks in a health care facility found that health care workers using cloth masks were at an increased risk of influenza-like viruses."

While I do understand healthcare workers are working long hours (wearing a medical-grade mask), I consider a child wearing a mask for 4+ hours to be quite lengthy. How is it healthy for a child to be wearing a mask that has the potential to cause influenza-like illnesses?

Cloth masks have become extremely popular, I see many local entrepreneurs making beautiful masks and many parents buying them for their children not realizing there are health risks associated with wearing them. There are also no guidelines of the materials that are used for those masks, the source of the fabric (many of those masks contain a color dye or/and glue that is harmful to breathing in).

Mandating a child to wear a mask that may cause other health concerns is unacceptable. That is a risk that should be owned by the parent, not the school board!

While I understand this risk is based on cloth masks, I've had an extremely hard time finding evidence that mask-wearing by any individual let alone children for lengthy periods of time does not cause any health concerns. Not only that, but children learn communication by analyzing the faces of those they're communicating with. What long-term effects will this have on our children? Both on their physical health and mental health.

On pg 6 the report states "At present, there is no direct evidence (from studies on COVID 19 and in healthy people in the community) on the effectiveness of universal masking of healthy people in the community to prevent infection with respiratory viruses including COVID 19.

As well as "At the present time, the widespread use of masks by healthy people in the community setting is not yet supported by high quality or direct scientific evidence and there are potential health benefits and harms to consider."

Again, if the WHO is stating there is no evidence, why are young children expected to wear masks?

Pg 8 potential harms/disadvantages

The likely disadvantages of the use of a mask by healthy people in the general public include:

- potential increased risk of self-contamination due to the manipulation of a face mask and subsequently touching eyes with contaminated hands;(48, 49)
- potential self-contamination that can occur if non- medical masks are not changed when wet or soiled. This can create favorable conditions for microorganism to amplify;
- potential headache and/or breathing difficulties, depending on the type of mask used;
- potential development of facial skin lesions, irritant dermatitis or worsening acne, when used frequently for long hours;(50)
- difficulty with communicating clearly;
- potential discomfort;(41, 51)
- a false sense of security, leading to potentially lower adherence to other critical preventive measures such a physical distancing and hand hygiene;
- poor compliance with mask-wearing, particularly by young children;
- waste management issues; improper mask disposal leading to increased litter in public places, risk of contamination to street cleaners and environment hazard;

- difficulty communicating for deaf persons who rely on lip-reading;
- disadvantages for or difficulty wearing them, especially for children, developmentally challenged persons, those with mental illness, elderly persons with cognitive impairment, those with asthma or chronic respiratory or breathing problems, those who have had facial trauma or recent oral maxillofacial surgery, and those living in hot and humid environments.

With all of those potential harms/disadvantages, how can masks be mandated for all grades? It just does not make any sense. I am reaching out to you today asking to advocate on our behalf and do what is best for our children, the future of this community, and this country!

Thank you for your time,

Sabrina Ruggiero

WHO advice on the use of masks....

https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/332293/WHO-2019-nCov-IPC_Masks-2020.4-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Sent: September 12, 2020 5:54 PM

To: lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; O'BrienT@hcdsb.org; czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>

Cc: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Mandatory masks

Good afternoon Trustees

I understand that a motion has been made to amend the original motion that requires students from K-3 to wear masks in the HCDSB. **I am in support of mandatory masks in all HCDSB schools.** I live in Milton and have two children with the HCDSB; a son at Guardian Angels and a daughter at St FX. Schools in our area are so overcrowded that there is no possible way to maintain social distancing. As COVID cases begin to rise again, wearing masks, along with handwashing/sanitizing are our best line of defence, particularly in schools that are overcrowded.

We need to do our part to keep our teachers and students as safe as possible and we need to put the constant debate of this issue to rest. Families have chosen whether or not to send their children to school based in part on the mandatory mask policy. Please do not make any changes to the original motion requiring all students to wear masks.

Please include my email in board correspondence.

Thank you
Jennifer Santos

Sent: September 14, 2020 11:46 AM

To: Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Masks for students JK-Grade 3

Good evening Director and Trustees,

I am writing to you regarding the mandatory mask rule for students JK to Grade 3. I would like my email to be read at the next Board meeting, Tuesday, September 15.

As a mother of two students in these age groups, and as someone whose senior parents live with her, I highly encourage the use of masks for all students in our board.

I understand Halton Region - specifically residents of Burlington - have done a stellar job at keeping the spread of COVID to a minimum in our community. However, considering some teachers and other school staff live outside Halton Region, the risk of them contracting COVID and potentially bringing the virus to our schools is one of the most important reasons as to why masks must be mandatory.

I know my living situation is unique; not every family lives in a multi-generational home. However, there are many parents who rely on grandparents to pick up their children from school. While I am able to pick up my children most days, we do reside under the same roof as my parents. I do not want to expose them to the virus anymore than they need to be. Not only that, but my husband, my children and I do not want to contract the disease ourselves.

Speaking in general terms, many are growing tired of wearing masks and staying physically distant from one another. But it is these very things that are causing the number of COVID cases to increase in Ontario. As of today (Monday, September 14), there are 313 new cases in the province - the highest level since June. And school has just started for many of us. Imagine how much higher that number could - and likely will - grow as in person schooling continues.

Again, I know the numbers for Halton Region remain low and I pray it stays that way. **However, we must remain proactive.** There is a reason why our numbers have remained low and it's because we as adults and children have been following the rules set out by our health experts.

Please do not reverse the mandatory mask rule. Our children are doing a great job at wearing their masks, sanitizing/washing their hands, and remaining distant from others. And our teachers and school staff are doing a fantastic job in caring for their students - please remember, this is about keeping them safe, too.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nicole Seixeiro

Sent: September 13, 2020 10:24 AM

To: Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [~~EXTERNAL~~] Correspondence for Trustee meeting Tuesday September 15

To the Board of Trustees

I am a mother of 2 children who attend elementary school in this board (grades 3 and 6).

Please include this email in the correspondence to be considered during any discussion and any further voting on the question of masks in K-3.

1. Reliance on Board Decisions

Firstly, I want the board to be clear that I (and many other parents) relied upon the decision that was made by this board to require masks for all grades when we decided to send our children back to in-class learning. This played a major role in our decision.

2. Chair acting without authority

Secondly, I cannot begin to express my extreme disappointment as I continue to watch this board try to make decisions during a world crisis. Chair Iantomasi's constant belittling of some of the female board members is shocking and embarrassing to listen to, as is his inability to steer a meeting fairly and respectfully.

I have listened in on the numerous recent meetings and every time I have been appalled at the unprofessional, and often childish, squabbles that take place between the trustees and the Chair. This is in clear contradiction with the role of the Chair of the Board under Section **218.4(h)** of the Education Act which states that the Chair should "provide leadership to the board in maintaining the board's focus on the board's mission and vision".

The Chair now allowing this motion to "re-vote" on the mask issues to appear on the agenda is yet another example of how he is failing in his role to lead and guide the board meetings.

3. Trustees acting outside their authority

I also believe that the board of trustees would all be acting outside their authority if another vote is taken on the masking of grades K-3.

I do not believe that voting on a matter that has already been passed by a majority vote is permitted if there has not been any new scientific discovery since the last vote. Furthermore, any suggestion that this new motion is somehow not a vote on the same issue but an amendment is incorrect when you will clearly be voting on the exact same subject matter and exactly reversing what was previously passed. On this issue alone, I strongly suggest that the board obtain a clear and categorical clarification by way of a legal opinion that this is permitted under the laws governing the operation of this board and prior to this board meeting.

I would remind the entire board and specifically Trustee Karabela that it is their responsibility as trustees under the Education Act at section **218.1(e)** to “uphold the implementation of any board resolution after it is passed by the board” rather than undermine it because they are concerned to please a few parents who have been vocal in their disagreement with that decision.

4. Public Confidence & Lack of any New Evidence

If there is no compelling NEW evidence, facts or discoveries since the matter was last voted on (“new” meaning actually new - not just new to the trustees or newly presented as otherwise we would be in stuck in loop which would never end because someone will always have more to say), then there cannot be any valid reason for the matter to be up for a vote again.

For the sake of keeping the public’s confidence in this board of trustees I ask that you ensure that the previous decisions which was fairly and clearly voted upon is now upheld.

How can we as parents continue to trust this board if decisions they make at one meeting can be overturned within weeks without any valid reason?

If the board is truly concerned that there has been a mishandling of this matter then perhaps the next logical step is further investigation into the science and a clear unequivocal opinion from public health confirming whether there is fundamentally any health risk associated with younger children wearing masks which cannot be mitigated against - I suggest this would clearly not be forthcoming since children aged over 2 years old are mandated to wear masks in other indoor public spaces.

So if there is not any strong health reason to overturn the previous decision, then the fact that some members of the public are standing behind “anti-mask” rhetoric and presenting cherry picked statements from scientific articles is not a good enough reason to vote again on a matter that has already been settled and upon which thousands of parents made their decisions to return their children to school this year.

Thank you

Sawsan Selwyn

-----Original Message-----

Sent: September 13, 2020 12:25 AM

To: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Cc: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; o'hearnczanotaj@hcdsb.org; o'btient@hcdsb.org

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Support for Mandated Masks For All Students

Good evening,

I am writing to you as a parent with young children that are students with the HCDSB.

I was extremely disappointed to hear that the ruling of mandatory masks for all students will be discussed once again at the next Board meeting and possibly overturned. My support for the motion is to remain as is.

The initial ruling was made for a reason, to ensure the safety of our students and staff. We do not have the financial capabilities to ensure proper physical distancing within our classrooms and wearing masks is the next best preventative measure to keep everyone protected and avoid another wave of outbreaks. Over 40% of our students are in the JK- Grade 3 range. That is a lot of students not protecting themselves or those around them. There are many students who, due to medical and health reasons, cannot attend in class instruction if classmates are not wearing masks. That is not providing an inclusive environment for all children, something that I know our Board consistently strives to do.

Both my daughter and son are fortunately healthy children. But if I had known at the time that the Parent Surveys were sent out and due back, that not all students would be mandated to wear masks, I would have made the decision to keep them at home for online learning. I would not have faith that my children's health was being treated as a top priority. So many parents made their decisions based on the board mandating masks for all students. If this ruling gets overturned, what options will parents be given? Will we then be allowed to change our decision before Thanksgiving? To pull them out of in class instruction immediately? As an office assistant at one of our schools, I don't think I have to explain to anyone what a nightmare that would be to re organize and re structure classes yet again within the first month of school. In which the students, parents, admin and staff have all already dealt with so much uncertainty and disruption.

As a single mother, will the near \$400 I spent on new uniform items be reimbursed? If I had known at the time I was requested to make my decision that there was a possibility that not all students would be wearing masks, I would not have had a need to purchase any uniform pieces.

If I pull them out of in-school instruction, they will not be requiring a uniform any longer, making it an unnecessary and expensive purchase I had to make.

Please include my correspondence as support for the motion to NOT be reversed and included at the Board meeting.

Thank you for your time,

Marijana Shannon

Sent: September 14, 2020 1:44 PM

To: Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Maintain Mandatory Masking for JK - Grade 3 Students - Please read my note at the September 15 Board Meeting

Dear Trustees, Mr. Director and Mr. Chair,

I am writing in regard to the motion on mandatory masking for JK to Grade 3 students. I am requesting that this note be read aloud during the September 15th meeting.

I am in favour of mandatory masking for all students, including those in junior kindergarten to grade 3. I was really pleased with the board's decision to make masking mandatory for all students. It gave us confidence in sending our children back to school. As we know, physical distancing in kindergarten classrooms and grade school classrooms is very difficult. I believe it is important to take every step we can to protect the health of our teachers and students.

I believe our children are very resilient and adaptable and will adjust to wearing masks. I have a son in senior kindergarten and a daughter in grade 2. They both started school last week and both of them barely even mentioned having to wear a mask. They said it was not a big deal and they had no issues wearing the mask. My 5 year old son has asthma and he wears glasses (that can fog up with a mask on) and he did amazingly well wearing his mask when indoors. Children are given breaks at school where they can go outside and take off their masks.

If masking is no longer mandatory, it will be very hard to encourage children to wear their masks. If they see their peers not wearing masks at school or taking off their masks part way through the day, they will be far less motivated to wear a mask themselves.

With the number of Covid-19 on the rise in Ontario and Halton, I think it is important that we put faith in our kids and do everything we can to protect the health and safety of teachers and students. Please keep masks mandatory for all students in school.

Thank you,
Stephanie Smith

Date: September 11, 2020 at 10:19:21 AM EDT

To: "Iantomasi, Vincent" <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>, "Duarte, Marvin" <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>, "Agnew, Brenda" <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>, "O'Brien, Timothy" <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>, "O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet" <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>, "Murphy, Patrick" <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>, "DeRosa, Peter" <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>, "Guzzo, Nancy" <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>, "Karabela, Helena" <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>, "Daly, Patrick" <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Cc: "Gubert, Nicholas" <GubertN@hcdsb.org>, "Kelly, Kirsten" <KellyK@hcdsb.org>, "Roshdy, Joseph" <RoshdyJ@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] **Mandatory Masks - to be read at the Sept.15 board meeting**

Dear Director Daly and Trustees,

I kindly ask that the following letter be read aloud during the September 15, 2020 Board Meeting.

I am the parent of four children who attend HCDSB schools (one at Loyola and three at St. Matthew). We love our schools and have much appreciation for the wonderful teachers and staff who work tirelessly to make them a place where our children can learn and develop as God created them to. I am also an elementary teacher, with 19 years' experience teaching children from Kindergarten to Grade 5. I am writing to you today to express my deep concerns with the Board's revised masking policy, making masks mandatory for students in Kindergarten to Grade 3. It is my hope that the Board will reverse this decision and follow the recommendations of Health Canada and Halton Region Public Health, namely that masks be **optional** for children in Kindergarten to Grade 3.

As an educator, the safety of my students will always be my primary concern, and as such, I understand the incredible role the Board plays in helping to keep students and staff safe at school. I recognize, however, that us teachers, Board staff and trustees are **not** medical experts. To honour my commitment to my students, then, I turn to medical experts for advice on how to keep my students healthy and safe. I fail to understand why trustees are permitted to vote on such critical health-related issues as masking. You are not medical experts and are therefore not qualified to make decisions that can impact the health of students. Further, you failed to obtain sufficient input from key stakeholders (us parents!) when making such a momentous decision. The emails of a handful of parents expressing their personal opinions on the matter does not qualify as adequate stakeholder input. The change.org petition that was referenced during the September 1, 2020 Board Meeting ("HCDSB No Mandatory Masks for Children in JK-Grade 3") now has over 2180 signatures! Why have you chosen to ignore these parents who clearly do not agree with your decision?

We have all heard the Sick Kids report and its guidance regarding masks for elementary students. The report clearly indicates that the majority of the report's contributors (namely medical experts from CHEO, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Kingston Health Sciences Centre, McMaster Children's Hospital, Unity Health Toronto, along with epidemiologists and public health physicians) **do not recommend the use of NMMs for elementary school students**, and further state that "when transmission in the community is low" [as it currently is in Halton], "the use of NMMs throughout the entire school day should not

be mandatory for elementary, middle or high school students returning to school.” These guidelines are echoed by Health Canada in the Government of Canada’s COVID-19 Guidance for Schools Kindergarten to Grade 12 document, which states that “based on the current evidence of COVID-19 transmission, NMMs are recommended in children/youth **over 10 years**”). This is further reflected by Halton Region Public Health in their Recommendations for School Reopening 2020-2021, under PPE: “to the extent that physical distancing may not be possible, the use of non-medical masks for students in Grades 4-12”. Halton Region’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Hamidah Meghan, also recommends “having **older** children wear face coverings” in her list of measures schools can take to protect students. Why are you ignoring the advice of medical experts?

Many argue that children are resilient, and that they can learn how to wear masks. I find such statements highly disturbing. This isn’t about what children CAN learn to do, but what is BEST for our children’s health and development. The use of masks in young children may hinder a child’s speech and language development (e.g., phonemic awareness; proper pronunciation of letter sounds), can lead to emotional and intellectual delays (e.g., delays in developing empathy), and can have a negative impact on a child’s mental health (e.g., anxiety). Children are also likely to self-contaminate their masks and wear them inappropriately, thus creating a breeding ground for harmful bacteria. One further point that many have not considered is with regards to lunch. Children will be sitting at their desks (or tables), within 2m of each other, with masks removed, during the lunch period (approx., 20-30 minutes). They will be eating and socializing with their peers, mask free! If it is safe to sit, eat and talk without a mask for this prolonged period of time, then why wouldn’t it be safe during other times in the school day? Does COVID-19 not spread during lunch time?

Several school boards in Ontario are encouraging, but not requiring, the use of face masks in Kindergarten to Grade 3. York Region District School Board, York Catholic District School Board, and Durham Catholic District School Board are three in the GTA that are encouraging, but not mandating, NMMs for their youngest students.

Trustees, I am asking you to follow the recommendations of our trusted health authorities and reverse your decision to make masks mandatory for students in Kindergarten to Grade 3. Please allow parents to make this decision for their children! Amending the language in the policy to reflect that **students in K-3 are encouraged to wear a mask** would be a suitable compromise.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Titsa Starogiannis, M.Sc.Ed., OCT

Sent: September 13, 2020 9:40 PM

To: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Masks for K-gr 3 debate revisited again

Good Evening Director Daly, Mr. Chair lantomasi, Trustees Agnew, and Trustee O'Brien, please include this in the correspondence at the meeting.

I have listened to all of the recent board meetings and heard all of the back and forth about the mandatory masks debates for the K to threes. I would like to give my reasons for why I am grateful for the HCDSB for making mask wearing mandatory for all students and wish for you to keep it that way.

My daughter is a grade one at St. Anne Elementary in Burlington. I am a secondary teacher in Burlington in this board and my husband is a secondary teacher in Milton in the public board. We also have a young daughter, under the age of two, who is at a home daycare with four other children who all have a teacher parent in a variety of schools across both levels and both Halton boards. My mother is a principal in a large Peel elementary school, and we rely on my dad who works from home for PD day child care. I list all this to show that my family, who is not particularly unique, has a very large network of contact. We are fully in it and we cannot keep our bubble small because of our circumstances and professions.

My family is committed to mask wearing because we know that on any given day we all come into contact with well over the recommended number as family. We recognize that if one of us got sick, the implications for contact tracing would be huge. We recognize that we are not the only family in this situation and because of that we urge you to keep your mask policy in place for all students. As a parent and teacher and community member I urge you all to remember that not everyone can keep their bubble small despite best efforts, and that our youngest students are the most resilient and adaptable to change. My grade one student is happy to pick out two masks to wear each day, they are fun colours and patterns and she knows she is doing her part to prevent the spread of Covid-19. At six, she understands what it means if numbers go back up and does what she can to be apart of the solution; washing her hands, physical distancing and wearing her mask in public indoor places, which includes her classroom.

Making the hard decisions are not always the popular choice, but I commend you for doing it and urge you to stay the course. If we don't commit to giving it a chance just because it is hard, what are we teaching our students?

Thank you for your commitment to our students during this difficult time.

Sincerely,
Ms. ErinTolan-Hume

Sent: September 14, 2020 11:50 PM

To: lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; duartem@hcdab.org; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; o'hearnczarnotaj@hcdsb.org; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>

Cc: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] "Return to School" Masks

This is an open letter to the elected trustees of the Halton Catholic District School Board and to the Director of Education, Mr. Pat Daly. It is being sent in anticipation of the subject matter receiving further consideration at the board of trustee meeting on Tuesday, September 15th.

As a father of three (3) boys I have been looking forward to the 2020/21 school year for several years as it represented the only year that the boys would be in the same school, at the same time. The boys are part of the Saint John Paul II community in Oakville and had we been living in a "normal" world they would be in class today in grades 8, 5 and junior kindergarten (JK) at SJP II. However, with the state of the world as it is, the pleasant thoughts I had of my boys walking to and from school together have been wiped away and replaced with a computer monitor and "virtual education". I will not use this forum as an opportunity to go in depth on the Covid-19 virus other than to say that we as humans live in a world of constant risk, it is a fact that if the speed limit on the highways was 10km/h in lieu of 100km/h and automobiles were made to only go a maximum of 10km/h then there would be no fatalities on highways, zero ; and annually thousands of lives would be saved. However, we do not, can not and should not live like that, we can't be bound by fear.

With that in mind, Covid 19 does carry a level a certain level of risk into our world and ultimately our school environment, however subjecting children to the physical and mental trauma of wearing masks all day in school carries even greater risk. We decided to keep our boys home from school to start the year, not due to fear of the virus but due to the potential harmful effects of them wearing a mask all day long at school. The reality is that we are not thrilled with them having all the "screen time" either as a result of the virtual school, it is not a great option either. The best case scenario for all children is to be in school and without a mask. Obviously the government has decided against this, but did leave the door open for children from grades 3 and below to be in school without a mask. I urge you to reconsider your board decision to mask these, the most innocent children in the board and allow them to be in school without a mask. My youngest son should not be stuck in front of a computer monitor nor should he be forced to wear a mask to go to school....he is 4 years old....4! Let children be children, let them be in school without masks, let them have some innocence in a world that is so keen to take it away from them. The right thing for the board to do is to reverse it's decision and allow these young children to be in school without masks.

Regards,
Darnell Vrban

Dear Trustees, Director Daly, and Mr Chair,

First, we would like to thank you all for the many hours you have put into preparing our schools for a safe reopening. This is new territory for everyone.

We are writing to you today in regard to the upcoming motion on the mandatory mask policy for JK to Grade 3 students. We are requesting that this note be included in the official agenda, and for this note to be read aloud during the September 15th meeting.

We have a daughter entering Senior Kindergarten this coming September. We have watched every board meeting this summer, and we are very much in favour of mandatory masking for all students.

The board's decision to make masks mandatory gave us a lot of confidence in our decision to send our daughter back to school. We have no expectation that every 4- and 5-year-old will wear their masks perfectly all day, including our daughter, but we have been practicing with her, encouraging her, and explaining to her the reason why we are all wearing masks - to keep ourselves and everyone else safe so that we can keep schools open and everyone healthy. She understands the reasoning, and she's mostly gotten the hang of it. However, I also know that most children, our daughter included, will be far less motivated to wear their masks if the masking policy is optional and other families choose to send their child without a mask. The bottom line is that the more normal wearing a mask is, the more likely the class as a whole will find success in wearing masks. They are all in it together and will find great support in their peers.

It worries us greatly that the decision to make masks mandatory may be reversed *after* parents made decisions about whether or not to send their children back to school. It is simply not fair to essentially bait-and-switch families for whom the policy weighed greatly into their decisions. Children are amazingly resilient, and take their cues from the adults around them, parents and teachers alike. The more normal we make masks, the more our children will be comfortable wearing them. We can trust that our children will adjust and thrive in this new environment, with the support, guidance, and love from those around them.

With this in mind, we ask the board to please respect the choices that families made around sending their children to school with the policies in place when they were asked for a decision.

All of us together, with the support of a mandatory mask policy for all students, can keep our schools safe and healthy; we all can and should do our part to prevent the spread.

Sincerely,
Lauren & George Wallis

Sent: September 15, 2020 1:17 PM

To: Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] RE: Masks in schools

Hello,

Please include this in the correspondence in the upcoming meeting.

I hear that certain parent groups are still trying to reverse the decision, that currently all kids are required to wear masks in school. Please do not change that decision. There is a lot of confusion about COVID-19, masks and schools and some groups are trying to boost their position with either non-scientific evidence, poorly interpreted data or with outdated/poorly conducted studies.

Even Hospital For Sick Children (SickKids) recently (September 14th) provided an update to their initial (and already quite dated – as initial study was conducted at the end of July) study – you can see the update here: <https://safeschoolcovid19.ca/updates/>

The gist of the study is that with current overcrowded classrooms, it is simply not possible to provide proper social distancing.

In addition, both: researchers and clinicians agree that teachers know best what should be happening in the classrooms, and I quote it here:

Teachers played a critical role in the set-up and design of the school days. Their intimate knowledge of classrooms and procedures, combined with their active involvement in the planning process, allowed for smooth and creative implementation of the health and safety measures.

Without proper social distancing, teachers, ECEs, EAs, janitors and all other support staff simply have no protection from any child that may be sick and/or spreading the virus in the classrooms (including potentially asymptomatic cases). If we remove the masks requirement, we remove any protection for all these people. We should be thankful to all educators who go every day to schools and potentially risk their lives. We should provide them with all support necessary and the very minimum we can do is to ensure that they have the most basic protection currently available – that all students simply wear masks in class.

Without possibility for social distancing, masks are our best option if we want to keep total number of infections down. We can clearly see what is already happening as in the beginning of September we already have triple number of daily COVID-19 cases out there. It is only going to get worse going further down this road.

Thank you for your continuous support,

Derek Zasiewski

Date: September 13, 2020 at 4:59:36 PM EDT

To: "DeRosa, Peter" <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>, "Guzzo, Nancy" <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>, "Karabela, Helena" <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>

Cc: "Daly, Patrick" <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: masks must stay mandatory

To HCDSB trustees and Director...

Please Include this in the correspondence for the next board meeting!

As an employee of the board I am saddened and scared once again that it is once again up for debate the "mandatory mask wearing" policy for students... How can it be that in every other indoor space in Ontario there are mandatory masks required? You go to the grocery store.. wear a mask.. you go in to pay for gas.. wear a mask! It makes sense to take this precaution!

To not enforce mandatory mask wearing by all students you are putting all of us at risk of infection and contact with covid -19

Why should we continue to worry about exposure in our workplace? When we already have been put into Overcrowded classrooms and there is NOT A CHANCE of a two metre space between you and students already!! How can we possibly even attempt to connect with our students if we do not have the protection of a mask? Children sneeze, touch their faces, wipe their noses in their hands and cough without a thought! They are children- they are learning, and this is not a time for them to "learn" those social habits without a mask on!!!!!!!!!!

Keep masks mandatory and let us at least have a fighting chance of not contracting this virus whilst we try to do our jobs with safety and dignity:)

Thank you
Alison Zidner



September 14, 2020

Dear Chair Iantomasi and Trustees,

I once again find myself emailing you to speak on behalf of all Halton Elementary Permanent and Occasional Teachers. Teachers are entitled to a safe work environment and the employer has a duty to take "all reasonable precautions" under the OHSA. **If you rescind this motion you will not be taking all reasonable precautions and will be violating your duty to do so under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.**

First of all the current motion that is up for debate on masking appears out of line. Trustees already passed a motion to make masks mandatory from k-12. The current motion directly contradicts the motion that was passed and is currently in practice. This motion should be seen as out of order and not even be considered as written.

Masks need to remain mandatory for all students k-12 in our schools. We know masking helps stop the spread so why would you even consider reversing a motion that directly helps to protect students and staff?

In case you are not aware, we have already had a teacher test positive for COVID. As of Friday we were one of 9 boards in Ontario who already have a case in the schools. Luckily the individual was only present in the school with other staff and no students were at risk. But that just further demonstrates that COVID is in our communities and will be in our schools. Ontario's Chief Medical Officer even stated COVID will be in the schools. What we need to do is take every precaution to ensure it is not spread and leads to an outbreak. We already have multiple teachers who are still in isolation while you read this due to their contact with the positive case. This emphasizes the need to take all precautions in our schools.

Many opposed to mandatory masks for k-3 say that Halton has a low COVID rate. Out of the 9 schools with reported positive cases in Ontario on Friday 2 were in Oakville. One at an HCDSB school and the other at a public school a few kilometers away from it. This should tell you that COVID is in our communities and the rate is increasing in Halton. When municipalities were given the green light to move to stage 2 and 3, Halton was not in the first group, we were classified with Toronto as we had more cases than other communities. Halton is an area that could be at greater risk and see greater cases due to our demographics. Many of our staff members are not from Halton but rather are from surrounding communities like Hamilton, Niagara, Mississauga and Toronto so you also need to take into consideration the COVID cases of those areas as they will impact our schools.

I am asking Trustees to do the right thing for all staff and students and keep masks mandatory for all students k-12 in the HCDSB.

Trustees need to even go further with the current practice and make masks mandatory at all times when students are in the building, except to eat and drink. At many schools the current practice is for

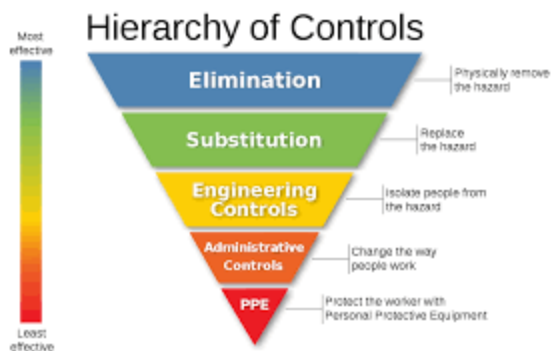
students to leave their masks on their desks and then line up and go out for recess. They go through the halls in large groups with no masks. At this time students and staff can be exposed. In one school last week a student was sent home due to COVID like symptoms. The teachers in that school were especially concerned because that student went in and out of the building for recess unmasked and was coughing and sneezing while in the halls close to many other contacts. It may only be a short period of time but due to close proximity could lead to exposure of other individuals.

Teachers are very concerned over this period of time when students are moving around the building with no masks. I have already received multiple calls and emails on this very concern. Some schools have taken measures to address this issue and have provided fanny packs to students, or made them available, so that they can wear their mask in the building at all times and put it away once they get outside. There needs to be a board wide plan to ensure safety in the halls of all schools when entering and exiting the building.

On top of that you need to take further measures to ensure the safety and well being of staff and students. At the last meeting Student Trustee Roshdy raised an important issue, that many teachers taught between multiple schools and had more than 100 direct and indirect contacts. He was absolutely correct in that many teachers are between multiple schools and have many contacts. We also have some teachers who teach every single class in a school. These teachers are at higher risk due to the number of contacts they have over the course of a week. (I actually would like to see a chart for those teachers similar to one shared at the last board meeting by a delegate for secondary contacts based on the different course models.) I would estimate that they can have a few hundred, up to a thousand direct and indirect contacts over a week. This could potentially lead to full school closures if they test positive for COVID. The board needs to take immediate action to reduce the number of classes a teacher is in direct contact with. The current model does not take safety into consideration.

Our occasional teachers are also at greater risk. Some are able to teach at all schools in the board and some even go between a few different school boards. There is no limit to their contacts. The board should be taking measures to reduce their contacts while ensuring adequate access to work.

When looking at reducing hazards in the workplace we need to look at the Hierarchy of Controls.



In the case of COVID we currently cannot Eliminate COVID so to be removed from the hazard schools were closed in March until recently. Substitution control would be allowing individuals to work or attend school from home. It is important that those individuals who are at greater risk and have medical conditions have a substitution to their workplace, and work from home when necessary, to ensure their safety.

The next 3 levels of controls are what the board needs to consider since schools are open to in class learning. The higher up the hierarchy the more effective the controls so the HCDSB needs to put in place engineering and administrative controls. Those controls would be ensuring physical distancing such as reducing class sizes, isolating students who are symptomatic and ensure the board protocol for returning after illness is followed and then controls such as handwashing, sanitizer, frequent cleaning, signs, training and awareness need to be put in place. The last control is PPE. This is last because it is least effective but often required to help ensure safety.

In the case of our schools the highest control of social distancing is not happening and there is no limit to the number contacts for staff so PPE is required to help further reduce the risk. In the case of COVID masks are most effective when wore by the individual who is carrying the virus. That is why it is so important that everyone in the school is masked to help reduce the spread. The more controls in place the higher the chance to stop the spread.

Please end this mask debate, keep it as it currently is and start looking for more ways to ensure safety in the schools. Too much time is being spent on the lowest hierarchy of control that the more effective controls have been ignored and over looked. The HCDSB needs to look at more engineering and administrative controls to be put in place to effectively reduce the hazard of COVID in the schools.

The Sick Kids Hospital recently provided an update to their safe schools study. You can find the update here which stresses the importance and need for more controls to be put in place in the schools:
<https://safeschoolcovid19.ca/updates/>

Since school has started I have read and heard from teachers just what a great job their students are doing with masking. Students are learning to wear them and care for them properly at all ages. Is the current school environment ideal? Absolutely not! As teachers we want the students to be able to socialize, play with their friends and experience school without restrictions. Teachers want to be able to take small groups or individuals and work with them as needed. Teachers want to sing, dance, play sports and go back to what was our “normal”. But the reality is COVID is here and could be here for a long period of time so we need to adapt and put in place all precautions to reduce the transmission.

This week I am also hearing from many teachers who are concerned with class restructuring. You passed a motion to have k and 4-8 have an average class size of 22.18 and cap them at 25. It appears that this week many classes are just being capped at 25. Many schools have collapsed straight classes that were around 22 -23 students to make splits of 25. It actually appears that in many cases class sizes are going up, not down which increases the potential risk to all students and staff. This also increases the amount of contacts teachers and students have been in direct contact with this past week as many classes changed. It also raises the question as to what will happen when parents can change their child to in school or remote in October. Given the new numbers a complete re-organization will be required again if there are any changes to the numbers.

I ask that you as Trustees work to ensure the safety and well being of all teachers and students and ensure that proper measures are put in place.

Tara Hambly
President, OECTA

Halton Elementary

September 15, 2020

Re: HCDSB – Use of Cameras in Secondary Classrooms

Secretary of the Board (Pat Daly):

I reach out to you today as the chief spokesperson for approximately 1000 secondary teachers employed in the HCDSB to discuss the deployment of cameras in our classrooms. Over my 13 years as local OECTA president I have never before requested or made an official delegation to the Board but the overwhelming feedback rooted in anxiety, common sense and good pedagogy led me to make the request over this single school reopening issue.

The pandemic changed things, everyone recognizes and accepts this, our teachers of course are naturally anxious about this school year and what may or may happen with the virus. I have heard from dozens of teachers who question the Board's decision to deploy cameras as the central component of its synchronous learning strategy. Chief among the concerns are: pedagogical classroom issues, privacy of both staff and students, issues arising the management of our classrooms, loss of control over how live streaming is recorded, manipulated, used to disrupt our classrooms, humiliate staff and students or worse, discipline teachers when snippets of recordings are used out of context.

On pedagogy, cameras will change how our teachers deliver curriculum, interact with their classes, there will be limited development of relationships for fear of things being misconstrued, students may feel uncomfortable in the class, class dynamic/rapport will change and not for the better. Students, fearful of mockery from their on-line peers, will be less likely to engage in classroom discussions. None of this is conducive to a positive learning environment.

On privacy, audio and video technology are evolving at light speed. How will we safeguard the voices and images of staff and students today so that they cannot/will not be used for the benefit of others or for malicious intent in the future. Will this data be 'mined' in future for the purpose of identity theft? Will this data be used in future for marketing purposes? Will this data be used in future court proceedings against those who wished to remain anonymous today? Deploying cameras in our classrooms today literally opens Pandora's Box!

On the management of our classrooms we will see students reluctant to ask questions for fear of looking 'dumb' among their peers or they do not know and cannot see. A new, artificial and moderated tone will now be rooted in our classrooms. Gone will be the vitality and security we find in our traditional classrooms. Compounding this will be the notion that parents or other uninvited guests will now have access to our classrooms. Already we have seen parents question the judgement of our teachers regarding how to employ a mix of differentiated instruction and varying modalities of curriculum delivery to our students. Who among us would want others looking over our shoulders and questioning every move? Public speaking is already difficult enough without the added burden of now addressing additional participants, in this case, parents! How will teachers manage students in two different places and still manage to deliver a robust program?

What safeguards are in place to protect staff and students when it comes to the use and manipulation of audio and video live feeds. Will we seek our teachers on YouTube? If so, will computer software be used to mock and ridicule them? Will short pieces of video be used out of context to meet a larger political

agenda? How will video be used in discipline hearings or in front of the Ontario College of Teachers? Does the Board even have the expertise to track down computer savvy students who partake in such nefarious activities?

On behalf of the secondary Catholic teachers of Halton, I respectfully ask you to reconsider the use of cameras in our classrooms. The virtual school model used by most Boards in Ontario meets Ministry expectations and staff and students CHOOSE to engage in this format it is not imposed on them.

Sincerely,

Keith Boyd
President - Halton Secondary OECTA