

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD AGENDA

Date: Monday, April 26, 2021
Time: 7:30 pm
Location: Catholic Education Centre - Board Room
802 Drury Lane
Burlington, Ontario

	Pages
1. Call to Order	
1.1. Opening Prayer, National Anthem, and Oath of Citizenship (J. Roshdy)	
2. Approval of the Agenda	
3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest	
4. Action Items	
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4.3. School Naming - Milton No. 3 Catholic Secondary School (E. Bakaic)	3 - 5
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6. In-Camera

7. Resolution re Absentees
8. Adjournment and Closing Prayer (J. O'Hearn-Czarnota)



Special Board Meeting

Action Report

Supporting Our Diverse School Community	Item 4.2
Monday, April 26, 2021	

The following Notice of Motion was presented at the April 6, 2021 Regular Board Meeting:

Moved by: B. Agnew

Seconded by:

WHEREAS, our schools should be safe spaces for anyone that walks through our doors.

WHEREAS, many of our students, parents, caregivers, staff and community members identify as LGBTQ+.

WHEREAS, our strategic plan emphasizes that the well-being for all of our students and staff are met through a focus on equity and inclusion.

WHEREAS, raising the Pride flag demonstrates this commitment to our students, staff, parents, caregivers and community members.

WHEREAS, Pope Francis has told parents of LGBTQ+ children that “God loves your children as they are” and “the church loves your children as they are because they are children of God.”

WHEREAS, Mark 10:13-16 states “People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.”

WHEREAS, there are students and staff within our Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) community who identify with the LGBTQ2+ and

WHEREAS, we as a Board wish to ensure all the students and staff attending our schools and their families, know that we support and are welcoming of all students, staff and community members,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Director of Education and the Secretary of the Board direct all HCDSB schools including the Catholic Education Centre to fly the Pride flag during the month of June

starting with 2021 and to work with Student Senate and Staff in organizing events throughout the month that focus on equity and inclusion for all.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each class in each HCDSB school be mandated to have a safe space poster, to ensure that students in the 2SLGBT community are supported throughout the entire school year.



Special Board Meeting

Action Report

Recommended Names for Milton No. 3 Catholic Secondary School	Item 4.3
Monday, April 26, 2021	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

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

Purpose

To provide Trustees with an update on the process of naming the new Milton No. 3 Catholic Secondary School as per Board Policy I-15 School Name Selection.

Background Information

In consultation with the Milton No. 3 School Name Selection Committee, which consisted of Chair Patrick Murphy, Vice Chair Marvin Duarte, Father James S. Petrie of St. Benedict Parish, Claudia Brena-Ianiro, (parent), Jennifer Santos (parent), Student Trustee, Nicholas Gubert, Superintendent Emi Bakaic and Principal Kevin Wong, four (4) names were submitted for consideration to members of the broader community.

Comments

Stakeholder Consultation – Request for Potential Names

On Wednesday, February 24, 2021, an invitation to submit potential school names was sent to the Our Lady of Fatima and Guardian Angels (Milton) school communities. The results of the feedback received is provided in [Appendix A](#).

Shortlist of School Names Selected

On Wednesday, March 17, 2021, the Milton No. 3 School Name Selection Committee reconvened to review the names submitted by community members. The Committee developed a short list of names in accordance with the Diocesan criteria outlined in Policy I-15. They considered all the names and rationale provided by community members and created a shortlist of four (4) names:

- Blessed Carlo Acutis
- St. Josephine Bakhita
- St. John Bosco
- St. Kateri Tekakwitha



Stakeholder Consultation –Vote for Preferred Name(s)

A voluntary, anonymous online feedback form was made available between March 19 and March 29, 2021 (inclusive). The link to the online forms was sent via email on March 19th to all parents with children currently attending Guardian Angels Catholic Elementary School and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary School, inviting them to select their top two (2) preferences from the shortlist of potential school names. The survey was also promoted on the two school websites, as well as, through St. Benedict Parish for parishioner input.

The rationale for the name selection and a brief biography of each saint were provided and are provided in [Appendix B](#). The feedback received is provided in [Appendix C](#).

As illustrated in the chart and table in Appendix C, there were a total of 1075 votes among the four suggested school names.

The name 'St. Kateri Tekakwitha' had the highest number of 1st choice votes (n = 445, 42%), followed by 'St. John Bosco' (373 votes, 35%), 'St. Josephine Bakhita' (132 votes, 12%), and 'Blessed Carlo Acutis' (115, 11%).

The preference of the community, as outlined above, is in favour of naming the new Milton No. 3 Catholic Secondary School, 'St. Kateri Tekakwitha'.

Conclusion

In accordance with Policy I-15, Trustees are invited to consider two (2) recommended names for the new Milton No. 3 Catholic Secondary School, and subject to Board approval, forward the two (2) names to His Excellency, Bishop Douglas Crosby for consideration and response.

Recommendation

Resolution#:

Moved by:

Seconded by:

RESOLVED, that the Halton Catholic District School Board approve the following two (2) school names, ordered in priority, as possible names for the new Milton No. 3 Catholic Secondary School:

1st Choice: St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Secondary School (preferred)

2nd Choice: St. John Bosco Catholic Secondary School (alternate)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board approved list of possible school names be submitted to Bishop Douglas Crosby for his consideration and response.



Report Prepared and Submitted by:

Emi Bakaic
Superintendent of Education, School Services

Report Approved by:

Pat Daly
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board



Special Board Meeting

Action Report

2021-2022 School Year Calendar	Item 4.4
Monday, April 26, 2021	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

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

Purpose

The *Education Act* requires each school Board to establish a School Year Calendar, identifying instructional days, professional activity days and holidays for each school year. The Ministry of Education establishes the number of days for the schools in the Province and in accordance with Regulation 304, each Board is required to submit a Board-approved calendar to the Ministry of Education by May 28, 2021.

Background Information

The School Year Calendar Committee takes into account several considerations:

1. School communities have generally advised that, when selecting a Professional Activity (PA) Day, a Friday or Monday is preferred. Some employers appear more willing to permit parents to have occasional holidays on those days (or just before statutory holidays).
2. An essential factor in the establishment of the 2021 - 2022 calendar is the integration of transportation services with our co-terminous Board. Consultation, which complies with Ministry direction, has occurred with the Halton District School Board.
3. The Ministry of Education has asked school boards to consider having the 3 Provincial Priority PA Days before the start of classroom instruction for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Comments

The 2021 - 2022 School Year Calendar Committee is comprised of a parent representative of the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC), OECTA Unit Presidents (Elementary and Secondary), CUPE 3166 and 5200 representatives, the Principals' Association representatives and one (1) trustee. The Committee met on March 18, 2021 for the purpose of preparing a draft calendar.



The 2021 - 2022 School Year Calendar consists of one hundred and eighty-seven (187) instructional days, of which ten (10) days (five (5) per semester) are classified as secondary school examination days as per Regulation 304.

Two (2) PA days will be used for assessment and completion of report cards at the elementary level. An additional PA day will be used for elementary parent /teacher interviews.

The three (3) mandatory Provincial Priority PA Days that will occur next year will be devoted to criteria established by the Ministry. At the time of this report, we have not received the Provincial Priority focus from the Ministry of Education.

All seven (7) Professional Activity days align with the Halton District School Board, and both boards will have the same secondary school examination days. *(Please refer to Appendix A).*

Conclusion

The proposed 2021-2022 School Year Calendar was provided to trustees as a Staff Report at the April 6, 2021 Board Meeting and is now being presented as an Action Item. Once approved, the proposed School Year Calendar will be forwarded to the Ministry of Education for final approval.

Recommendation

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

Resolution#:

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Resolved, that the Halton Catholic District School Board approve the 2021-2022 School Year Calendar as presented.

Report Prepared by: Nancy Dinolfo
Superintendent of Education

Report Submitted by: Nancy Dinolfo
Superintendent of Education

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

Appendix A

HCDSB 2021-2022 Proposed School Year Calendar Elementary

Date	Reason
Wednesday, September 1, 2021	Provincial Priorities PA Day
Thursday, September 2, 2021	Provincial Priorities PA Day
Friday, September 3, 2021	Board Designated Holiday
Monday, September 6, 2021	Labour Day
Friday, October 8, 2021	Faith Day – PA Day
Monday, October 11, 2021	Thanksgiving Day
Friday, November 26, 2021	Elementary Parent-Teacher Interviews
Monday, December 20, 2021 – Friday, December 31, 2021	Christmas Break
Friday, January 28, 2022	Elementary Report Card Writing - PA Day
Monday, February 21, 2022	Family Day
Monday, March 14, 2022 – Friday, March 18, 2022	March Break
Friday, April 15, 2022	Good Friday
Monday, April 18, 2022	Easter Monday
Monday, April 25, 2022	Provincial Priorities PA Day
Monday, May 23, 2022	Victoria Day
Monday, June 6, 2022	PA Day (Elementary only)
Thursday, June 30, 2022	Board Designated Holiday

Report Card Distribution Days:

Elementary Schools:

- Progress Reports: Tuesday, November 23, 2021
- Term 1 Report Cards: Thursday, February 17, 2022
- Term 2 Report Cards: Tuesday, June 28, 2022

HCDSB 2021-2022 Proposed School Year Calendar Secondary

Date		Reason
Wednesday, September 1, 2021		Provincial Priorities PA Day
Thursday, September 2, 2021		Provincial Priorities PA Day
Friday, September 3, 2021		Board Designated Holiday
Monday, September 6, 2021		Labour Day
Friday, October 8, 2021		Faith Day – PA Day
Monday, October 11, 2021		Thanksgiving Day
Friday, November 26, 2021		PA Day
Monday, December 20, 2021 – Friday, December 31, 2021		Christmas Break
Thursday, January 27, 2022 – Wednesday, February 2, 2022		Secondary Exam Period (5 days)
Friday, February 4, 2022		PA Day (Professional Development)
Monday, February 21, 2022		Family Day
Monday, March 14, 2022 – Friday, March 18, 2022		March Break
Friday, April 15, 2022		Good Friday
Monday, April 18, 2022		Easter Monday
Monday, April 25, 2022		Provincial Priorities PA Day
Monday, May 23, 2022		Victoria Day
Tuesday, June 21, 2022 – Monday, June 27, 2022		Secondary Exam Period (5 days)
Wednesday, June 29, 2022		PA Day
Thursday, June 30, 2022		Board Designated Holiday

Secondary School Examination Dates

- Semester 1: Thursday, January 27, 2022 to Wednesday, February 2, 2022 (5 days)
 - Thursday, February 3, 2022 (Instructional Day – Examination Review)
- Semester 2: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 to Monday, June 27, 2022 (5 days)
 - Tuesday, June 28, 2022 (Instructional Day – Examination Review)



Special Board Meeting

Action Report

Bishop P.F. Reding Catholic Secondary School Renewal Funding	Item 4.5
Monday, April 26, 2021	

Alignment to Strategic Plan

This report is linked to our strategic priority of **Achieving: Meeting the needs of all learners.**

Purpose

To obtain Board authorization to proceed with additional renewal funds required for the completion of necessary renewal components at Bishop P.F. Reding Catholic Secondary School.

Background Information

1. Action Report Item 8.6 Proposed 2019 Facility Renewal Projects, from the January 15, 2019 Regular Board Meeting.
2. Action Report Item 8.2 Proposed 2018 Facility Renewal Projects, from the January 16, 2018 Regular Board Meeting.
3. Action Report Item 8.5 Bishop P.F. Reding Catholic Secondary School Addition Approval to Proceed with School Capital Planning, from the March 20, 2018 Regular Board Meeting.

Comments

In March 2018, Bishop P.F. Reding Catholic Secondary School was approved for a building addition by the Ministry of Education. The approval allocated funds to add 609 pupil places to accommodate the long-term enrollment for secondary school students in Northeast Milton. The building addition was comprised of four components: a 27 classroom addition on the northwest corner of the building, a new cafeteria space on the northeast corner of the building, a new childcare centre located on the southeast corner of the building and the addition of a 4th gymnasium and exercise room. Subsequently, renewal works on the existing building were also approved to modernize the facility, such as HVAC improvements, lighting upgrades and space conversions. The renewal works and building additions are now nearing completion after nearly two years of work.

As the project has progressed, staff have identified additional funding requirements that were unforeseen at the commencement of the project. Milton Hydro has stipulated that an electrical upgrade is required to meet current design standards. Furthermore, additional temporary asphalt



installations have been required to ensure safety of staff and students on site. Lastly, additional costs associated with the Covid-19 pandemic have been realized to account for bonding, site security and rentals during the intermittent shutdowns. As such, additional funding is required to complete the project, in the amount of \$550,000 (see Appendix A). The electrical service upgrade, additional asphalt installations and the pandemic related costs would be funded through the Board's available capital funding allocations and capital reserves.

Conclusion

It is recommended that staff be authorized to proceed with the additional renewal funding allocation for the completion of required components associated with the new Bishop P.F. Reding School addition.

Recommendation

The following resolution is respectfully submitted for Trustee consideration and approval:

Resolution#:

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Resolved, that the Halton Catholic District School Board authorize staff to expense funds from available capital funding and the capital reserve, for the proposed additional renewal requirements at Bishop P.F. Reding Catholic Secondary School, and that the expenditures will not exceed \$550,000.

Report Prepared by:

C. Abrahams
Senior Manager, Capital Projects

Report Submitted by:

R. Merrick
Superintendent, Facility Management Services

Report Approved by:

P. Daly
Director of Education and Secretary of the Board



APPENDIX "A"

Halton Catholic District School Board			
Bishop P.F. Reding Catholic Secondary School Additional Renewal Funding			
Preliminary Budget Estimate			
School Location	April 6, 2021 Budget Estimate		
Electrical Service Upgrade	\$350,000		
Additional Asphalt	\$75,000		
COVID-19 Expenses	\$125,000		
Total Expenses	\$550,000		

Special Board Meeting

Action Report

Multi-Year Strategic Plan – Mission, Vision, Values	Item 4.6
Monday, April 26, 2021	

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 bring forward suggested revisions to the Board's Mission, Vision and Values statements.

Background Information

Under the Education Act each school board must create a multi year plan that spans a minimum of three years. The purpose of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) is to help Boards set long term strategic goals and priorities. The plan is evidence based and developed in a collaborative process.

Between February 11th and February 18th, 2021, Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) stakeholders were asked to provide feedback on suggested changes to each of the Mission, Vision, and Values statements to help inform the next HCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan. Where revisions were suggested, respondents were asked to indicate a preference between the original text and the revised option. Respondents also had the opportunity to provide comments.

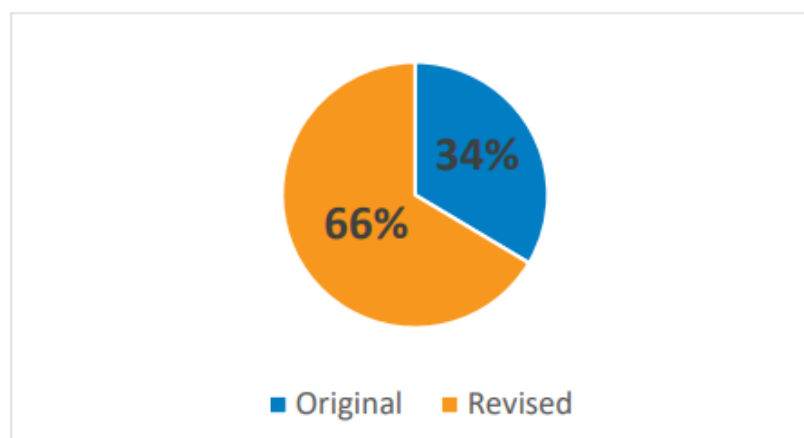
The report contains the data from 2159 survey responses, was considered at the April 8, 2021 meeting of the MYSP Committee and can be found [here](#).

Q2: Please select the Mission Statement you prefer:

Mission – Who Are We?	
Original:	Revised:
The Halton Catholic District School Board, in partnership with home and Church, dedicated to providing excellence in Catholic education by developing Christ-centred individuals enabled to transform society.	The Halton Catholic District School Board, in partnership with home and Church, is an inclusive and equitable learning community , dedicated to providing excellence in Catholic education by developing Christ-centred individuals enabled to transform society.

Overall, 2154 respondents completed this question. As illustrated in *Figure 1*, more respondents preferred the *Revised* Mission Statement (n = 1431; 66%)

Figure 1. Respondents' Preference – Mission Statement

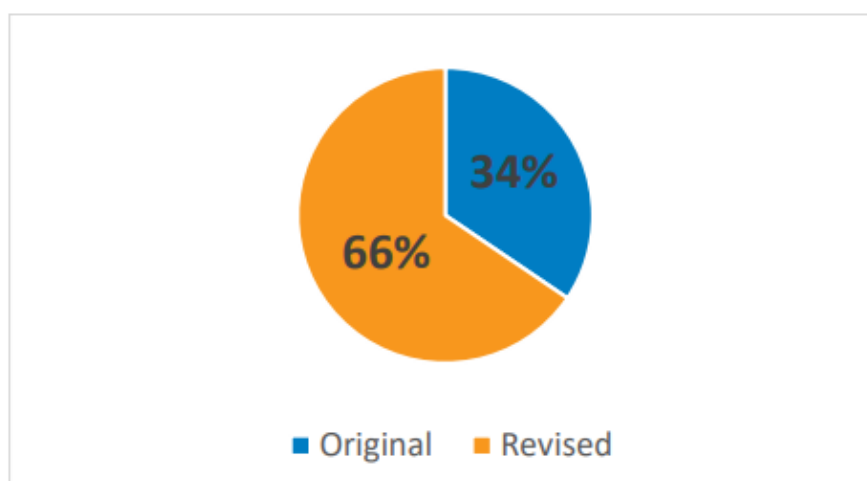


Q4: Please select the Vision Statement you prefer:

Vision – Where Do We Want To Be?	
Original:	Revised:
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.	The Halton Catholic District School Board is an inclusive and equitable 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.

Overall, 2112 respondents completed this question. As illustrated in *Figure 2*, more respondents preferred the *Revised* Vision Statement (n = 1384; 66%)

Figure 2. Respondents' Preference – Vision Statement

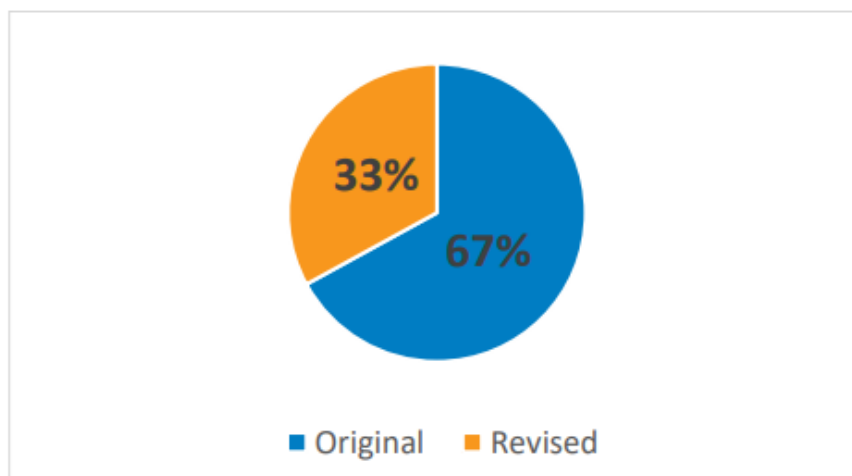


Q6: Please select the Values Statement #1 (“Our Catholic Faith”) you prefer:

Our Values Statement	
Original:	Revised:
At the Halton Catholic District School Board, we value: Our Catholic Faith and aspire to be models of Christ through our actions of love, forgiveness, compassion, and acceptance.	At the Halton Catholic District School Board, we value: Our Catholic Faith and aspire to be models of Christ through our actions of love, forgiveness, compassion, and acceptance, fostering a culture of life.

Overall, 2108 respondents completed this question. As illustrated in *Figure 3*, more respondents preferred the *Original* Values Statement #1 (n = 1413; 67%)

Figure 3. Respondents' Preference – Values Statement #1

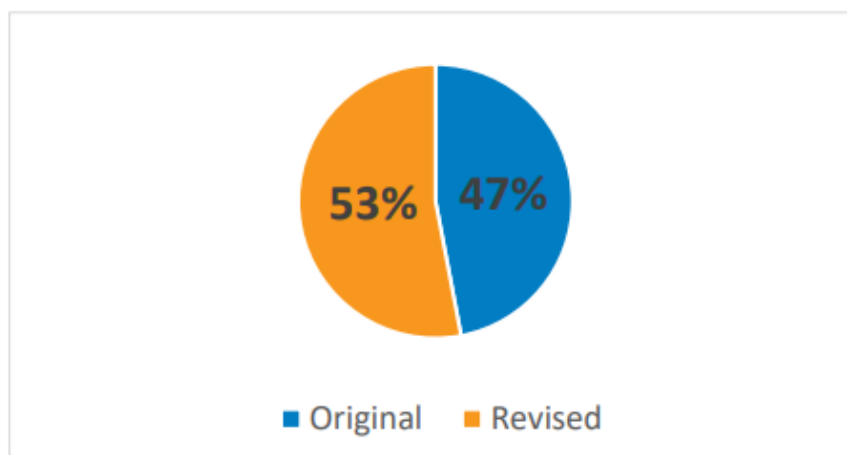


Q8: Please select the Values Statement #5 (“The Importance of Contributing to Our Communities”) you prefer:

Our Values Statement	
Original:	Revised:
At the Halton Catholic District School Board, we value: The Importance of Contributing to Our Communities and respect diversity, celebrate multiculturalism, honour individual rights, and embrace the social values of collective responsibility and the common good.	At the Halton Catholic District School Board, we value: The Importance of Contributing to Our Communities and celebrate diversity, honour individual rights, and embrace the social values of collective responsibility and the common good.

Overall, 2070 respondents completed this question. As illustrated in *Figure 4*, more respondents preferred the *Revised* Values Statement #5 (n = 1097; 53%)

Figure 3. Respondents' Preference – Values Statement #5



Comments

At the April 8, 2021 meeting the committee recommended that the results of the report be forwarded to the April 20, 2021 Regular Board meeting for acceptance and approval.

Recommendation

The following recommendation is presented for the consideration of the Board

Resolution#:

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Resolved, that the Halton Catholic District School Board accept the recommendation of the Multi-Year Strategic Planning Committee that based on stakeholder feedback, that the Board accept results and make changes to the HCDSB Mission, Vision and Values.

Report Submitted and

Approved by:

M. Duarte

Chair of the Multi-Year Strategic Planning Committee

Ana Clarridge

April 23, 2021

Dear Mr. Daly, Director of the Board of Education,

Re: **Motion before the Board regarding the flying of the Gay Pride flag and posting “safe space posters” in our schools.**

We can affirm there is equity and inclusiveness in our schools because as Catholics we are part of the family of God:

- We belong to the Mystical Body of Christ
- We are partakers in the Divinity of Christ.
- We have been redeemed at the cost of the very Blood of Jesus Christ Our Lord..
- We can be nourished by Christ Himself, if in a state of Grace, by sharing the Eucharistic meal.
- We belong to the community of believers under One Holy God Who has given us 10 commandments to follow to live under His Will.

How does flying an LGBTQ flag enhance or complements our Christian values? It does not. The opposite is true.

- A gay pride flag represents a political movement that seeks to destroy the Catholic moral teaching on family life and sexuality, attempting to use our schools to accomplish it.
- It teaches students to exclude themselves from moral Catholic beliefs, labelling themselves as LGBTQs and not as children of God. It promotes division not inclusion. Even children who do not object to same sex attraction in others, may find themselves wanting to stay away from this group because they do not want to be thought as being one of “them”.
- As the concept of chastity is not at all part of this political movement, they are seeking to change our Catholic moral values to suit their political agenda. No one has the right to do that.
- All students enjoy a level of safety in the schools. Bullying has always existed and no matter how many flags we fly and how many posters we post, this will not change, it has to be addressed according to the Board's protocol. On the contrary, we may end up with a backlash of sorts that will hurt our schools. Christian charity is the response that will build community and change attitudes. Peace and safety can only be found in Christ.
- There is no safety in division only unrest.
- The LGBTQ political movement has a plan to infiltrate our schools calling flying the flag and posting “safe place” posters as a first step. We all know that they have an agenda to accomplish a lot more than this. If we had any doubts about it, it has been stated in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] presentations.

The concept on flying the gay pride flag and placing “safe place” posters because it provides safety, equity and inclusiveness is either naive or worse, an insult to our intelligence.

How can this motion be entertained when it is in open violation of what you, the trustees, should be protecting and promoting as stated in the HCDSB mission and ratepayers rights!

Sincerely,

Ana Clarridge

From: Doyle, Áine

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:41 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Raising The Pride flag

HCDSB,

Please raise the pride flag in support of our LGBTQ+ children. We wear orange shirts to teach our children that residential schools are wrong, we wear pink shirts to teach our children that bullying is wrong and to support those kids that have been bullied. Let's do the right thing and fly the pride flag, another symbol to support a community of kids in our schools that deserve our support.

I am a HCDSB student. Please include this email as correspondence at the next meeting.

Aine

From: Alexandra Gonzalez <

Date: April 21, 2021 at 1:46:52 PM EDT

To: Vincent Iantomasi <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>, Marvin Duarte <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>, agnewb@hcdsb.org, Timothy O'Brien <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>, o'hearn-czarntaj@hcdsb.org, murphyp@hcdsb.org, derosap@hcdsb.org, guzzon@hcdsb.org, Helena Karabela <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>, Patrick Daly <DalyP@hcdsb.org>, Gerard Bergin

[REDACTED]

Subject: Follow up to Board meeting

Trustee Patrick Murphy, Chair of the Board and Trustees of the HCDSB:

Last night's Board meeting was a very much expected, viewed and charged meeting. First of all I want to thank the Chair for being able to maintain the order and give us an example of how to provide a safe space for everyone to talk, adhering to the norms established for this kind of meetings. It made a huge difference in the way the information presented impacted the viewers online. Thank you Mr. Chair. I also want to acknowledge the relevance of all the delegations chosen to present, and how well they all represented our community.

I have to say I feel very proud of the way the discussion was handled yesterday and the way in which each delegation was honoured, listened at and engaged in a cordial conversation. It brought tears into my eyes to see the honesty, courtesy and openness of the trustees and the effort made to understand each position, being equanimous and fair. Lots of good questions were laid for us to reflect on the answers.

I hope I have an opportunity to reach out to some of you by phone in the next week. I myself felt a bit hesitant to reach out Monday and Tuesday (before the Board meeting) to some of you, as I knew the tremendous pressure that was put into this meeting.

I pray that this becomes a time of quiet reflection and prayer, pondering what has been brought to the table and coming up with an informed decision to support the Catholic Principles we profess. I hope all of you can have some rest being assured of the great job you all did. Please remember how important it continues to be the tone set on Social Media as to have respectful conversations that promote understanding and also build our community rather than disintegrate it.

✠ Alex Gonzalez

From: Allison Kolch

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:32 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; obrient@hcdsb.org; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Re: In support of the 'Supporting Our Diverse School Community' motion

Please include in the correspondence package for the special meeting on Monday, April 26.

I would like to reiterate my strong support for flying the Pride flag at HCDSB schools, to create a safe, inclusive environment for 2SLGBTQ+ students. You've heard from numerous brave 2SLGBTQ+ members of the HCDSB community about their traumatic experiences at school and how much flying the flag would mean to them - please really take in their stories.

I would urge you to set aside your personal opinions on the matter and keep student safety at the forefront. Please vote in favour of this important motion.

Thank you,

Allison Kolch
HCDSB Parent

-----Original Message-----

From: Andrea Louca

Sent: April 22, 2021 8:49 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Survey: Pride Flag and Safe Space Posters

Dear Director Daly and Secretary of the Board,

I support the motion to raise the pride flag each June and posting safe space posters in each classroom at HCDSB. I am concerned that not all the Trustees truly represent the majority of their constituents' position on this. They are voting based on their own beliefs, and not based on what the majority of the people in the HCDSB school system want.

I'm asking that the HCDSB survey students, parents, and staff to ask if they support the motion. A simple yes or no answer. I've been advised that a similar system as the Tell Them From Me Survey could be a good option, or like the system used for Union voting, to ensure only the intended audience is answering the question, and they answer only once.

Is this something that Board administration can do in support of our LGBTQ2+ students, staff, family and allies, prior to the Trustee vote? This data should inform the Trustee votes. Without it, how are they truly representing us?

Please include this in the official board meeting correspondence.

Thank you for your consideration.

Andrea Louca-Ricci

St. Patrick Parent

-----Original Message-----

From: Andrea Louca

Sent: April 23, 2021 8:02 AM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pride Flag and Safe Space Posters

Dear Trustees and Secretary of the Board,

I was disgusted by the comments made against the motion during the delegations and Q&A period during the last Board meeting. Peter DeRosa, Vincent Iantomasi, Tim O'Brien and Helena Karabela, please put your own personal beliefs aside and think about the students and what the majority of the HCDSB community wants. It is your duty to represent what the majority of your constituents want, not just the people you surround yourself with that hold your same beliefs. Marvin Duarte, you were quiet during the last meeting - I hope that you have reflected on this and will support the motion.

I suggest you survey the HCDSB community to ask what they want, not what you as Trustees want, or what your personal groups want. Ask the students, parents of students and staff. Not Life News And CLC followers that have no association with our Board.

Please include this in your official Board meeting package.

Thank you,
Andrea Louca-Ricci
St. Patrick Parent

From: Alexandria Munk

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:45 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Supporting Our Diverse School Community Motion - Vote yes!

Dear Board of Trustees,

I am a grade 12 student currently attending a high school in the Halton District School Board. I have many friends who attend schools in the Halton Catholic District School Board and I feel obligated to write to you today and ask you to support the motion to fly the flag during the month of June.

I have many queer and trans friends who attend your schools and do not feel safe. They wish they could attend my public high school where the rainbow flag and trans flag are full YEAR ROUND in our front hall. These students consistently tell me how they are thinking about transferring from your schools because of your inaction and refusal to fly the flag during Pride month. I do not think you grasp the importance of your decision regarding the flag. This will impact your school board adversely as well as send a hurtful message to the 2SLGBTQ+ students and allies who walk the halls of HCDSB schools.

Do the right thing and support your students. Fly the flag.

Please include this message in the official correspondence pertaining to the motion.

Regards,
Alex Munk

From: Chris Watson, [REDACTED]
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:30 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Cc: Ciotti, Cassandra [REDACTED]
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Flying the flag

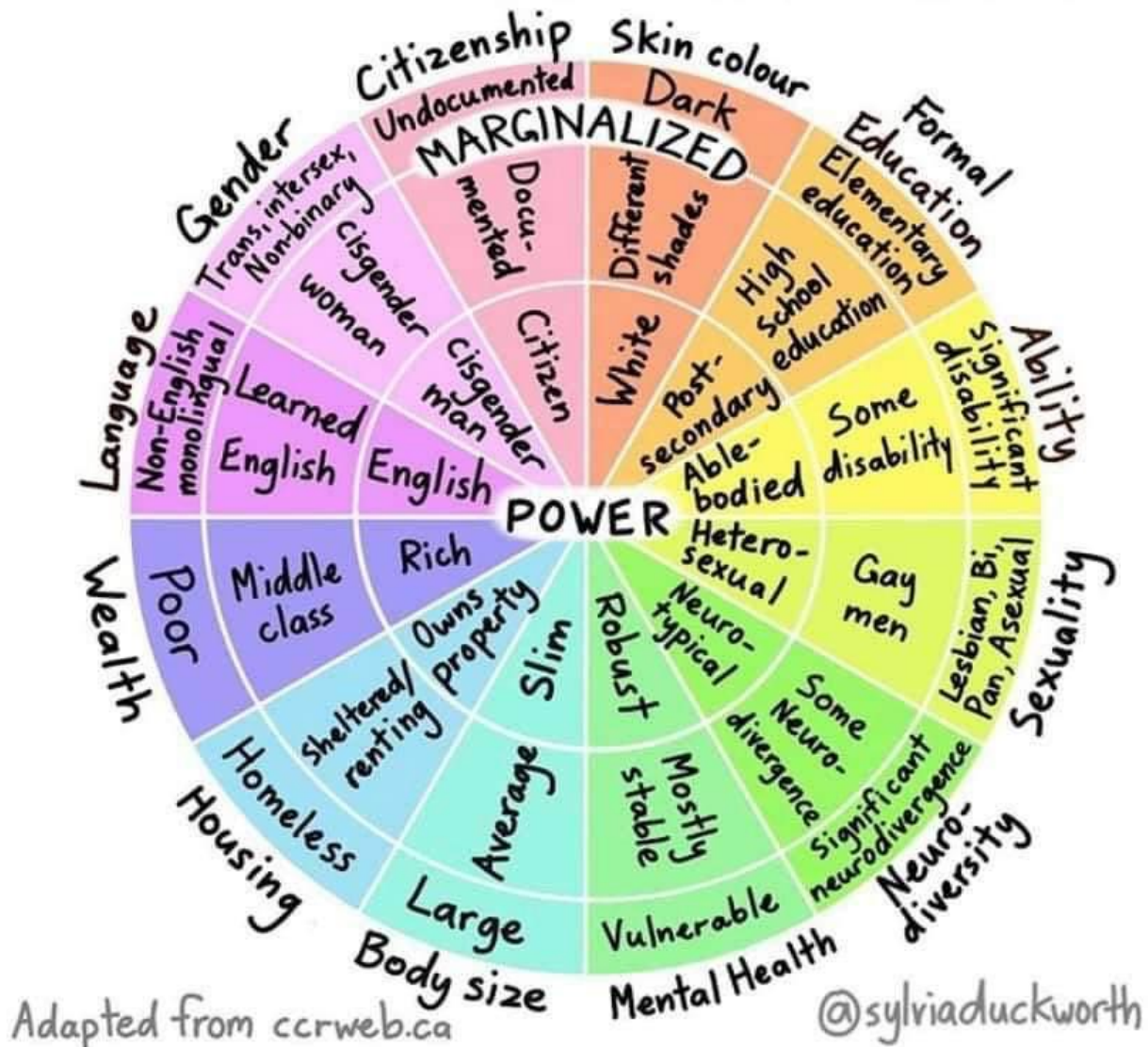
Good Afternoon Ms. Di Pietro & Trustees,

As parents of three children in the HCDSB, and one more joining in 2022, we support the Flying of the Flag. My wife, Cassandra, is also a graduate of the HCDSB. Please include this letter in the correspondence for the special meeting on April 26th.

Warm Regards,

Chris & Cassandra Watson

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



Your identity is composed of many elements, and you can have power in some elements and be marginalized in others. By focusing on supporting and celebrating only one element of our students' identity, we are doing a disservice to all our students who may be marginalized in many other ways, some in more than one

The picture above is from "Youth Mental Health Canada", original created by Sylvia Duckworth and represents the intersectionality of these different elements of our identity. "Intersectional lens" just means not focusing on one part of identity but rather on identity as components that make up a diverse and unique individual.

If we truly want to support inclusion and equity, we need to focus on the needs of ALL our students in their diverse identities. We need support for our female & female identifying students amidst the rape culture that is prevalent today, support for our Asian students who are facing racism & discrimination and being blamed for the coronavirus, and for our Black students who as a community are dealing with the weight of police brutality and the sensationalization of Black trauma. And yes, we do need to support our LGBTQ2S+ students, but raising a flag for the whole month of June does not support these students or their diverse identities in a way that originates from, and is congruent with, our Catholic faith and identity as daughters and sons of Christ.

Our students' identities as Catholic students are important too, and by raising this flag we are sending the message to our community and the broader Halton community that students' sexual orientations and gender identities are MORE important than our Catholic identities and the teachings we follow.

Instead of raising the flag, if we want all of our students to be supported in their diverse, multifaceted identities, this conversation needs to be centred not around what we can do to support ONE component of students' identities for a month, but how we can support all students through creating an inclusive, loving, and kind community consistent with our Catholic faith.

Students and staff have come to us with their thoughts and ideas but do not feel comfortable sharing publicly for fear that their reputations would be destroyed for wanting to uphold their Catholic faith. If you have a different opinion then you are labelled as homophobic and bigoted and that is a form of bullying.

When one of our student trustees asked a question to the delegations about supporting racialized students, he was ridiculed and asked by a grown woman, "have you really ever been bullied or felt different because of your background?"

That's not okay ; how can we claim to support our students and want equity and diversity when our own students who speak up about needing support for other parts of their identities are questioned and dismissed?? And yet when the other delegate said that we cannot just go off students' anecdotes, he was accused of dismissing LGBTQ students. Double standards !!!

As a Catholic school board, we cannot ignore our identity as Catholics - so when we discuss inclusion and equity, we need to be aware of what the Catholic Church teaches and let that guide our discussion. The church does not teach us to celebrate our sexual or gender identities, but to celebrate our identity as God's children. The church does teach us to love all human beings, and that each one of us is created in the image and likeness of God and deserves dignity and respect. However, the church also teaches us that the act of sex is sacred and reserved for the sacrament of marriage, so to celebrate a component of our identity that is rooted in who we are sexually attracted to is not in line with our Catholic faith. Instead of "Pride", in which a human being puts themselves ahead of God and what he teaches, let's celebrate diverse identities including our identity as Catholics. Let's celebrate our diversity using an intersectional lens, and have these conversations about inclusion and love, while remembering that our students are not a homogenous population and yet, cannot be divided into categories based on who they are. We are all daughters and sons in Christ, and THAT is the most important element of our identity in this CATHOLIC school board.

I would like to refresh the constitutional mandate of a separate school which is to provide education in a school that the separate school board considers reflective of **Roman Catholic theology, doctrine and practices**. This mandate manifests itself in the Program of Studies and the curriculum, exercises, practises and staffing. The right to have a publicly funded separate denominational school system continues to be guaranteed to Roman Catholics in Ontario by Section 93 of the 1982 Constitution Act. The limits of this mandate are determined of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and judicial decisions. Also the trustees are legally accountable to their electorate (composed of the members of the minority faith). If our theology is not being practiced as stated in the constitution lets make a decision to be removed from the status of "Separate Schools" and our tax dollars can be redirected elsewhere.

The pride flag does not represent "all" of the community. It would be a much better symbol to raise a 'Catholic" flag in June. For example, June is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Perhaps we can have a flag of the Sacred Heart so that it stands for the love of God as given to us in His Son Jesus who died for the love of us so that we can all hope to go to heaven by His sacrifice. We could have other Catholic flags such as one in May for Our Lady who stood by her Son at the foot of the Cross. We could raise more "Catholic Faith" awareness by the symbolism of the flag and also with service options to the students in line with the symbolism. A flag depicting our faith would embrace all the community and will not divide the community as the pride flag would.

We can also look to the Catechism of the Catholic Church for guidance on what the Catholic faith teaches on the subject of homosexual /lesbian attractions and since we are a Catholic faith community, we can and should not become promoters of a symbol that goes against Catholic teaching on the topic. (See CCC 2357-2359)

As Trustees, you have a great responsibility to God first, and then to the community, for being faithful Catholics. Children are young and impressionable and they are in school to be taught what our faith teaches. What if another student comes forward with a motion in favour of euthanasia? Or abortion? Will the pride flag open the floodgates for secularism invading our Catholic faith being lived out in the schools?

We have enough coming from the pride lobby with funding, fundamental laws being rewritten etc., and as long as we call ourselves "Catholic", lets try to be just that, "Catholic" because the word "Catholic School" becomes a misnomer.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity of expressing our thoughts we really appreciate it and we are praying that you all will make the right decision guided by the Holy Spirit.

Sincerely
In Jesus Mary & Joseph (The Holy Family)
Christopher & Penelope Hurst

From: Celine de Souza

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:18 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Obrient@hcdsb.org; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Motion to fly the Pride Flag at HCDSB schools in June

As parents of a child in the HCDSB school system, we support the motion put forth by Trustees Agnew and Guzzo to raise the pride flag in June at HCDSB. Love thy neighbour is the fundamental teaching of all Christian churches. This gesture goes a long way towards living our faith because it shows that we accept all of God's children, as Jesus taught.

This would show that we are safe space for LGBTQ2S+ students and that they are welcomed and loved by their school community. I would urge you to vote in a way that advocates for these students.

Please include this email in the official package/meeting minutes for the meeting on April 26, 2021.

Sincerely,
Celine and Russell de Souza

From: Claudia Ascuña

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:44 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pls include this email in the board meeting

I fully support flying the Pride flag at schools; and the fact that this is even a debate, has led me to sign my child to another board.

Thanks,
Claudia Ascuna

From: Candace Atherton

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:02 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pride and Diversity Motion Approval

Hello Trustees and Board Secretary,

I canNOT believe I have to re-send my letter of support for Pride and Diversity Motion. This should be a "no-brainer" motion for a catholic board, that promotes faith and love. I have 2 daughters at Holy Trinity right now and unfortunately, **we will have to withdraw them from the HCDSB if this motion does not pass.** No survey needs to be completed, no further discussions. This needs to be approved, or the board will lose a number of students - PUBLICLY - because trust me, if you think the publicity is overwhelming now, just wait until the board dares to vote down a show of love and support for the LGBTQ+ community. We - the students, teachers, parents and community will not allow this to happen. This is not meant to be a threat, it is meant to show you how much the catholic community supports LGBTQ+ students.

Please include this letter in the Board Correspondence.

Thank you,
Candace Atherton
Parent of 2 Holy Trinity Students

From: Chris bertrand

Sent: April 13, 2021 6:54 AM

To: lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pride flag raising

Dear elected Trustees,

The notion that we are having to send letters in support of raising the pride flag is preposterous. The board wants to include words like inclusiveness and support in their missions and values statements, but some members, seemingly forget they actually have to abide by these statements. They can't be included in these documents if only because they are buzz words, while you turn your backs on your students and staff who actually need that support and inclusion in their lives.

Regardless of your personal interpretation of certain biblical verses and their relevance, the idea that you would deny basic supports to your LGBTQ+ students and staff is wrong and dangerous. People in these groups, particularly young people, are at much higher risk of suicide and homelessness. Sadly, they are abandoned by their families because of who they love or how they identify themselves. We can not, as a school community, also turn our collective backs on them. Raising a flag in support is not only clearly the right thing to do, it is unquestionably necessary. Be progressive and accepting. Be supportive and inclusive. This is an easy choice. Make the right one.

Sincerely,

Chris Bertrand, father of four

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: Christine Marshall

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:15 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Notice of Motion re: supporting our diverse school

Dear Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, Halton District School Board, Director and Trustees

Please add this correspondence to the next board agenda package.

My name is Christine Cardwell, I am a Practicing Catholic who currently resides in Halton and have lived here for the past 34 yrs. My faith is very strong and I give primacy to Our Lord Jesus and Our Mother Mary in my life. This is the first time I have ever written a letter to this board but the holy spirit has compelled me to address and counter this propose suggesting a new path forward in regards to the flying of flags on Catholic schools or their properties.

I was very disturbed by the fact that the Halton Catholic District School Board would propose flying a "pride flag" during the month of June which has always been dedicated to the "Sacred Heart of Jesus" considering we are in the midst of a pandemic, we now more then ever need to call on heaven for protection and help. What better way to know that we are all under Heaven's protection but to fly a flag that gives us all comfort and hope for God's victory and triumph over the world and this pandemic.

I have attached a copy of a flag I have created with the help of Heaven, to be flown in all Catholic schools as a act of trust in the plan of Jesus and Mary.

How wonderful it would be that all of God's children can united and all stand together under one banner which is Christ our Lord.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; Have mercy on us!
Immaculate Heart of Mary; Pray for us!
St. Joseph pray for us.

In the unity of Christ in one mystical body let us come together.

Regards,

Christine Cardwell

-----Original Message-----

From: Claudia Gardiman

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:52 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fly the flag!!!

Attention HCDSB trustees,

I am writing to express that my family is in favour of flying the pride flag at all our Catholic schools.

Both my sons currently attend st. Christopher Catholic elementary school.

As a mother and educator I have always taught my child to be kind to all people, regardless of skin colour, race, sexual orientation or any other differences. The bible preaches love to all of Gods creatures. Who are the trustees to judge what is considered right or wrong ?? The HDSB already flies the pride flag and I'm sure many children, like mine (attending a catholic school or not) have asked their parents what the rainbow flag represents.

We preach about love and acceptance and in the next breath we are looking at doing the complete opposite! Pope Francis has already expressed "who am I to judge gay people?" And unless trustees consider themselves more important than the Pope himself, it would be a disgusting failure on your part to turn down this opportunity to be inclusive!

Please include my email in the special board meeting on April 26.

Claudia Gardiman

From: Christine Bruno

Sent: April 22, 2021 10:04 AM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Motion to Fly Pride Flag / Post Safe Space Posters

Trustees,

My name is Christine McCloskey-Bruno and I attended HCDSB schools from 1987 through to 1995 at both Ascension and Notre Dame in Burlington. My own two boys attended St. Anne in Burlington for several years before I moved them to the public board in Oakville in 2018. I continue to support the Catholic board through my tax direction on my Burlington property, and feel compelled to share my thoughts on the motion that has been put forward to fly the Pride flag during the month of June at all HCDSB schools.

I watched the April 20th, 2021 Board meeting and was thrilled to see a former Notre Dame classmate, Michela Bodnar and her daughter Teia Bodnar so eloquently champion the flying of the Pride flag and the use of safe space posters in all HCDSB schools. What a breath of fresh air! I was also heartened to hear the first-hand experience of former student, Niamh Shallow, who bravely shared her personal experiences while attending an HCDSB school. It was heartbreaking to hear of her experience, one that certainly didn't speak to a climate of inclusion and support in the school setting. While Niamh was brave enough to share her personal story, we must acknowledge that there are many students in the HCDSB who are struggling in silence.

I also watched and listened to unfortunate references to "homosexual tendencies", "fornication" and the sin of "same sex marriage" and "same sex adoption", and the promotion of Courage International, a group with known links to conversion therapy, does anyone vet the content delegates are sharing?! The other thing that struck me as unfortunate was the continued discussion of treating all students "equally". I would encourage all Trustees to perhaps review the difference between equality and equity, there is a very important distinction. Equality has to do with giving everyone the exact same resources, whereas equity involves distributing resources based on the needs of the recipients.

Our 2SLGBTQ+ students need additional resources and support, this is very clear, they are telling you this, we do not require further "data" to support this need. We need to act now, especially knowing that 2SLGBTQ+ youth are especially vulnerable to mental health concerns, and face increased risk of physical and sexual exploitation, substance use and suicide. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people ages 10-24. LGBTQ2S youth are 14 times more at risk of suicide than straight cisgender youth. This is fact that is supported by data.

I had a long-standing belief that the Catholic Board was somehow “better than” or “superior” to the public Board. I can tell you from firsthand experience that this is not the case. Since my boys have moved to the public Board, they have attended a school that flies the Pride flag each June, is truly a safe space, and has visual reminders of this throughout the school building. They have friends from many different cultural and religious backgrounds and as a result have a deep appreciation and respect that is shaping them into strong Catholic men.

I actively encourage all of you to vote in favour of this motion. The time has come for the HCDSB to “walk the walk” and not just “talk the talk”. If you really believe that the HCDSB should be providing a caring and inclusive learning environment, then this is your opportunity to support this belief with a strong visual commitment.

I would respectfully ask that my letter be included in the agenda package for the next scheduled Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Christine McCloskey-Bruno

From: Clare Newman

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:49 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated. That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

As a Catholic, I will not tolerate any more antiquated hate in the name of religion. Our god is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Sincerely,
Clare Newman

From: Caitlin Norton

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:09 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Letter of Support in favour the Motion Supporting Our Diverse School Community

Hello Rosie,

I would like this email to be included in the correspondence for this Motion at Monday's Special Board Meeting. Many thanks!

My name is Caitlin Norton. I am an HCDSB parent. I am deeply saddened and disgusted by some of the hate propaganda that was permitted at the HCDSB's Board of Trustees meeting on April 20th. You failed to stand up for our kids and end the hate speech as soon as it started. You failed to do your jobs that night.

Further, I am still utterly confused as to why the request to fly the Pride flag during the month of June at our schools is still being discussed. This is not a hard request! I hope the Board has taken the time to notice and understand the outcrying of support that has been distributed by the media and people both inside and outside of our immediate community over the last several days, and the weeks leading up to the April 20th meeting. I could go on and on here, but I am positive you have all heard or seen the numerous reasons why flying the flag would be both beneficial and crucial for our HCDSB kids, staff and teachers. Do the right thing! It's easy! Don't overtly or even passively condone the bigotry you've already allowed into our community during the discussions around this initiative. Show us that the HCDSB is worth keeping around. If not, I will sadly have to consider my family's departure from this community. It's just not worth the risk of my childrens' future mental health. I know so many other HCDSB families are feeling the same. I am trusting you all to set aside your personal beliefs and act solely in the best interests of this community.

I will be watching on Monday night. I hope to see the Board of Trustees that our community needs and deserves.

Caitlin Norton

Catherine O'Brien

Burlington, ON

April 23, 2021

Dear Trustees:

Please include this letter in the board package for the Special April 26th, 2021 Board Meeting.

I am writing to let you know I am not in favour of the motion that you will be discussing at the Special Board Meeting on April 26, 2021. This motion is called "Supporting a Diverse School Community."

If we fly the flag which celebrates the 2SLGBT community, we are letting Halton ratepayers know that we do not uphold the values of the Catholic Church. I would also like to call attention to the second part of the motion. **"Be it further resolved that each class in each HCDSB school be mandated to have a safe space poster, to ensure that students in the 2SLGBT community are supported throughout the entire school year."** This part of the motion ensures that values which are contrary to Catholic teachings are presented each day of the year to the student community. Posters are usually created on the computer which makes their messages easy to communicate to larger numbers of students and to reach out to more remote geographical areas.

The flag, the posters, and the online messages which are being suggested by this motion can only lead people to question the logic of having two systems of education. It might appear to people that there is not much difference between the Catholic Board and the Public Board.

Sincerely,

Catherine O'Brien

HCDSB Community Member.

From: Christina Pirpamer
Sent: April 23, 2021 4:48 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pride Flag Motion - April 26th Meeting

Please include this email in the special board meeting on April 26

I am writing this letter as a current parent of 3 children who attend school in the Halton Catholic District School Board.

If I may be frank, I am absolutely in disbelief that we are even having to write letters to support something that shouldn't even be an issue. As Catholics, we believe that God loves everyone equally. Why are we not practicing what we preach and allow the pride flag to be raised during the month of June? There are numerous students, staff and allies who would love this to become a reality- I am one of them (so are my children).

I was raised Catholic and also raised by parents who believed in equality for all. My god father is gay. I knew what this meant from a very early age and it never even occurred to me that this was something that was considered "wrong" by anyone else.

The fact that this matter has become so controversial makes me embarrassed to be Catholic and I am seriously considering pulling my children (and my tax dollars) out of the system here in Halton. Why is this such a debated topic? Everyone should be made to feel included and heard in our schools, and by the mere notion that people are AGAINST flying the Pride flag, makes me re think my entire decision to send my children to catholic school.

If this pandemic has taught us anything, it is that we need to be kind and inclusive to everyone. Representation matters and we need to see Pride Flags being flown at Halton Catholic schools- no exceptions!

Thank you,

Christina Pirpamer and Ian Calvert

-----Original Message-----

From: Alexandra Power

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:30 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Raise the Flag

Our names are Declan and Finlay and we go to a Catholic School in Oakville and we want to raise the pride flag in front of our school. We want to do it because we want to include people and be nice to everyone.

Thank you for listening to our email.

Declan & Finlay

(Please include this letter in the official correspondence.)

On Apr 23, 2021, at 5:42 PM, David [REDACTED] wrote:

ATTN: HCDSB Board of Trustees

I am writing to you today as a concerned member of the Milton community. I do not personally identify as LGBT, but I strongly believe that the actions of our public institutions affect the experiences of the entire community that it serves.

Religion has a notable and treasured place in our society. Canada is home to a variety of faiths, and it is our acceptance of this diversity of faith that is a part of what makes us a resilient and attractive place that is respected around the world.

I think I speak for most Canadians when I say that we strongly support the right of all of us to practice our faith as we see fit. An important part of that right is the ability of various faith groups to provide an education grounded in their beliefs. The right to educate your children consistent with your values and upbringing is not something to be lightly set aside.

That said, the catholic system is fundamentally different than the educational systems set up by other faith groups. The catholic system is funded not exclusively by Catholics, but by all of Ontario. No other faith group has access to public funds to operate their schools. As is the case with many rights though, public funding comes with obligations. A critical part of that obligation is a commitment to serve the entire community. This must not only be true, but it must be seen to be true.

Unfortunately, the catholic system has a history of discrimination against the LGBT community. While great strides have been made in recent years, the catholic system has to do more. To reiterate my previous point: The catholic system is publicly funded, therefore it must not only do good, it must be seen to flagrantly and unapologetically do good.

Flying the pride flag is a symbolic declaration that the catholic education system is not only willing to embrace every member of the community but is deliberately and loudly committing itself to doing so. If anything, the strong opposition to flying the flag is in itself a strong argument that the flag must be flown, since the intolerance of many members of the catholic system has been laid bare for everyone to see.

I believe that the catholic school system has a choice. On one hand, it can choose to join other faith groups and run the catholic system privately, without taking public funding. Alternatively, it can act like a public institution, and ensure that it serves everyone in Ontario. The catholic education system has already been dismantled in Quebec, and I suspect that if the catholic system in Ontario continues to serve its narrow community instead of the public from which it receives its funding, that it will inevitably face the same existential threat.

I would hope that this closing line would not be unnecessary, but in the event that it is, I would like this message to be included in the official correspondence related to motion.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.

David Hertzman
Milton, Ontario

-----Original Message-----

From: Dinorah McCash

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:21 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Re: Pride Flag,

Please include in records...

To all Trustees and Director of Education;

Below is my email prior to the Trustee meeting from this past Apr 20th. Which I would like to continue to reiterate as my thoughts and approach about the issue have not changed.

I would like to add, that if my email was not clear enough about compassion and inclusivity of All and everyone, I would like to make sure it is understood that Jesus salvation is for ALL we are to respect and love each human being made in the image and likeness of God... our dignity can only come from him.. is what makes us different from anything else in creation.

We are loved and accepted by Jesus, but HE calls us to follow him, he was very clear in his teachings and how we can get to heaven to be happy with Him for all eternity, and certain behaviours... will not get us there, pride, lies, sexual impurity or lack of chastity in our personal state of life (married or single) we are all to strive daily against our fallen nature and self serving tendencies.

Our school should be a Welcoming and respectful space for EVERYONE! No questions asked.. no matter the country of origin, skin colour, sexual orientation, social or economic status... etc etc etc... raising a flag for this group or that group can ONLY LEAVE OUT ANOTHER GROUP!!! We as a Catholic community are for ALL GROUPS, not one in particular!! Where inevitably another group will feel left out, excluded and /or bullied.

If we were all doing a good job and knowing and upholding Jesus teachings in our schools... this conversation would make absolutely NO SENSE!! Let's focus ALL our energy and efforts and funding to make our CATHOLIC BOARD AND SCHOOL SYSTEM a really Catholic one!! A loving and welcoming space for everyone learning how to become Saints in the world, be filled by His grace and found real joy and fulfillment in our lives no matter what our own personal struggles or sexual attractions can be.

Thanks for your time!
Dinorah McCash
Oakville residente.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 16, 2021, at 1:21 PM, Dinorah McCash [REDACTED] wrote:

>

> Please Include my email in the correspondence for the next meeting.

>

> To all our Halton Catholic Trustees and director of Education,
>
>
> I came across a beautifully written and explained letter of why raising the pride flag would not be appropriate in our Catholic board and I would like to echo in the same sentiment (apart from not have been feeling well for the past week). But I would like to state the following first:
>
> I would like to add that it will be wonderful to celebrate the pride month with the pride of being Catholic! That our Lord has Risen!!!
>
> We could use the month of June to create beautiful messages and presentations that share the teachings left by our Lord Jesus, He always loved the sinner but die on the cross so we would be "Saved".. we can't be saved, if we have no sin or anything else to be saved from?!!!!
>
> The incredible loving message that St JP II presented in his amazing writings of theology of the body will be a beautiful way to celebrate the pride of our Catholic faith! We are ALL call to live striving to be holy, and one of the best ways is by understanding the purpose of the original design that God had when He made us male and female, when he created us sexual and with great desires in our hearts to love and be loved with dignity and generosity.
>
> The call to sanctity includes living a pure and chaste life (in body, mind and soul) and that call is for EVERYONE, single, married, or anyone suffering from other sexual identities, orientations or attractions. Our real joy and love can be fulfilled when we really understand the plan and purpose of the "DESIGNER/CREATOR" anything outside his plan will soon fail to satisfy.

Dear Trustees and Secretary of the Board,

I am a parent of two children in the Halton Catholic District School Board. My daughter is in Grade 7 at St. Catherine of Alexandria and my son is in Grade 9 at Christ The King.

My family is in full support of the Pride Flag flying high at our schools and greatly appreciate Trustees, like Trustee Agnew who fully support inclusion and love for all of God's children; and have the strength and courage to table motions that matter deeply to our youth and families.

There is nothing I can add to the conversation that hasn't already been poignantly, eloquently and courageously shared by members of our community in support of flying the Pride Flag at our schools. I feel compelled to write however because I was shocked by the level of exclusion and hate I felt in the delegations against the motion at the last Board meeting and, even more so, disgusted by the comments made by members of our Board against the motion.

We encourage our youth to disagree respectfully; to practice active listening, seek to understand, walk a mile in someone else's shoes, don't make it personal and to watch your words. The abrupt end to the last Board meeting was the opposite of what we are trying to teach our youth. We don't stop a conversation because we don't like the direction a conversation is going or don't agree. I request the Trustees to do better at Monday night's meeting. Our youth are watching. Set the example, lead with love.

My family is in full support of the Pride Flag flying high at our schools.

Sincerely,

Diana Sanita-Vitorino

From: Whibley, Deborah [REDACTED]

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:33 [REDACTED]

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

Cc: Laura Skelton <[REDACTED]>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated. That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

As a Catholic, I will not tolerate any more antiquated hate in the name of religion. Our god is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Regards, Deb

From: Adam Hart [REDACTED]

Sent: April 22, 2021 9:19 AM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Letter to the trustees of HCDSB

I would like the following letter included in official correspondence.

Trustees of Halton District Catholic School Board,

I am a parent of students in your school board and a ratepayer.

I had the misfortune to watch portions of the most recent trustee meeting on Tuesday and the subsequent CHCH interview.

This proposal to raise the pride flag is not about politics. This issue is about safeguarding marginalized children.

Leave all the other garbage out of this.

Witnessing trustee's frequently questioning the origin of statistics was appalling. This is at best misguided. At worst it is a disingenuous attempt to engage the least important component of an argument in an attempt to discredit the whole. Clearly, at a macro level, helping prevent ANY mental health crisis and suicides is a far more important than what the exact statistically increased risk of this is for children self-attributing to 2SLGBTQ gender identity or sexual orientation or where the statistic came from.

Quit the smoke and mirrors. Do the job to which you were elected.

Those against this motion are a clear minority at odds with your own students and teachers. Voting against this motion rings a clear bell as to where your values stand rather than what these students need.

It is clear which of these 2 is more important to properly executing the job to which you were elected.

It is also clear to the ratepayers of Halton. Prove that you care about these children or plant your flag elsewhere and find out how well that is received with parents and ratepayers already asking why Catholic District school boards are publicly funded.

You have a chance to do the right thing,

Dr. Adam Hart MD FRCPC

-----Original Message-----

From: ALEXANDRA POWER

Sent: April 21, 2021 8:04 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Support of Motion to Raise the Pride Flag

Please include in official correspondence for the next meeting.

Dear Trustees,

After my delegation this week, it goes without saying that I am in full support of the motion presented by Trustee Agnew. I am incredibly disappointed that this motion was not completed at the meeting of April 20th, 2021. This matter is of the utmost importance. Please put your own politics aside and remember why you became Trustee - to put the best interest of students first. The students and educators are asking you for this. Please make it happen.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Power

April 23, 2021

Dear Halton Catholic District School Board Trustees,

My name is Jane Dobson and I am a Catholic family physician. I am writing to you to present my grave concerns regarding the motion before you now about whether Halton Catholic schools should fly the rainbow flag during the month of June.

You are being told that the reason to fly the rainbow flag is to “support our diverse school community”. The wording is brilliantly deceptive. It encourages everyone to “just get along” and fly the flag in the mistaken belief that this shows loving support to friends and students who are in a lifestyle that is positive for them and for those around them. How could a caring Catholic possibly oppose this? What possible harms could flow to students by seeing that their school supports the rainbow ideology?

In order to understand why a Catholic would oppose this motion the following questions need to be asked and answered to elucidate what **actually** is being asked of the board.

1. What does “support” entail? Support entails endorsing the rainbow ideology. Neutrality is not an option in our current cultural climate.
2. What ideology does the rainbow flag represent? The rainbow flag represents an ideology that sees someone's core identity as merely their sexual attractions and sexual self concept.
3. Does the rainbow ideology foster Catholic teaching on sexuality and the Catholic anthropology on what it means to be made in the image of God? No. A major focus of the Catholic sexual ethic is chastity and this is not a part of the rainbow ideology. The Catechism's specific teaching on homosexuality being “intrinsically disordered” is directly in opposition to it. The Catholic anthropology that man is made in the image and likeness of God-- “male and female he created them” is directly in opposition to the gender ideology where there is a multiplicity of genders that can transmute at will.
4. How can Catholic schools show love to its many diverse students? Love, according to St Thomas, is to will the good of the other. Loving in this context would be sharing the beautiful Catholic teachings on sexuality which bring life, help, hope and healing at this time of great sexual and moral confusion. We should be a beacon of hope to our students, not a place of conformity to our culture. We are to be salt and light to our world who so desperately needs brave voices proclaiming Jesus's love and truth.
5. Are there actual harms to Catholic students who live out the rainbow ideology? Yes. Specifically where chastity is not promoted one is seeing an epidemic of sexually transmitted infections. There is also major harm being done to our children in the promotion of gender ideology. There has been an exponential growth in transgender identification in our children. This is thought partially due to social contagion and also because excellent therapies for gender dysphoria and the treatment of co-occurring mental illnesses are now no longer being offered at our gender clinics. Prior to 2015, before Bill C-77 was passed, 80-95% of gender confused children identified with their natal gender by puberty when given watchful waiting therapy. They were allowed to become comfortable and accepting of their own bodies. So many were spared the harmful effects of puberty blockers, a lifetime of cross sex hormones and mutilating surgeries. Now when a child is sent to a gender clinic only affirmation therapy is given which quickly results in medical transition and possible surgeries. Many parents and concerned relatives are now speaking out against this rush to medicalize our children. De-transitioners are asking why no one tried to stop them or at least give them time to think it through.
6. What is the purpose of a Catholic school? Why would someone choose to place their child in a

Catholic school when there are so many excellent secular public schools? The reason for the existence of Catholic schools must be that they teach Catholic morals and doctrine throughout all subjects while providing excellent primary and secondary education. Catholics are looked to as bastions of sanity in our confused world. We promote the counter-cultural concepts of life rather than abortion or euthanasia. We promote the counter-cultural concept that our genitals were made for generating human life in the context of marriage. That our sexed bodies are not mistakes that need to be altered but have real meaning.

7. Can Catholic schools still be allowed to exist if they do not conform to what is currently being promoted in secular culture? Yes. Catholic schools are in a very unique position in Ontario. They have been given special powers to teach Catholic doctrine and morals while being publicly funded. What a privilege. What a responsibility.

I hope this brief letter is helpful to your deliberations.

I pray that God may guide your discussion and that he may give you the courage you need to stand for truth and love and against the tremendous cultural pressures to submit and conform.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jane Dobson

From: Elizabeth Molinaro
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:24 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] FLY THE PRIDE FLAG

Dear HCDSB Trustee,

I am writing to present my unwavering support for the motion of flying the Pride flag in all the schools during the month of June. It pains me that such a small act needs to be even discussed or voted on. I am disappointed that the Catholic schools, which have "belonging" as one of their pillars have any doubt about doing everything possible to create a more safe and inclusive space for all.

Please include this email in the special Board meeting of April 26th.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Molinaro

From: Nolan Family

Sent: April 22, 2021 3:34 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Raising the Pride flag

Dear Mr. Daly, Mr. Chair and all HCDSB Trustees,

I am not sure I can adequately express how disappointed I was in the decision to not extend the meeting on April 20 and thus avoid voting on this very important issue. However, I will take this opportunity to express how important it is to vote yes to flying the Pride flag during the month of June, and how much I hope each of you will take the time between now and the next meeting to reflect on the impact your vote has on the children, youth and staff of the HCDSB- they are who is important in this decision and they are overwhelmingly asking you to vote yes.

In response to a delegation- the decision to create a flag in KW has been met with considerable backlash from the community, not only the 2SLGBTQ+ community, but the community as a whole. The rainbow flag is the flag of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. It is their symbol. Theirs. It is not for anyone to change or recreate. Creating your own flag does not send the message of inclusion and safety that we are requiring of the Board. This is not a colouring contest- this is about respect and love and honouring other people; it is about acceptance and belonging and showing our children and youth that no matter what; they are loved, they belong and we will protect them.

In another delegation, the gentleman asked for more data so that you may know the true scope of the impact the lack of inclusivity is having on the students and staff prior to making a decision to raise the flag. Respectfully- who do you think would be willing to out themselves in a survey? How can we expect the students to have the courage to come forward, when the Board will not even make a commitment to fly a symbol of acceptance, belonging and love for 30 days to show these same students they are cared for?

The other person in that delegation was harmful and I am appalled that he was given a voice in this conversation. He spoke of division; not inclusion. He spouted hate; not love.

This is from your own website- At HCDSB, the health and well-being of all students is our highest priority. Our Catholic values instill a strong belief to care for one another and ensure that our schools are safe, engaging, welcoming and inclusive places to learn. If this statement is true, then your only option is to vote yes; if it's not the truth then vote no and take this off your website.

Some Scripture to consider:

Romans 2: 1-2 Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgement, for in that which you judge one another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

Romans 2:11 There is no partiality with God.

Romans 15:7 Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Colossians 3:12-14 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

I would like this included in the official correspondence.

Sincerely,

Erin Nolan

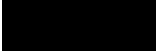
EJ Sephton



Friday, April 23rd, 2021

Re: Supporting Our Diverse School Community

Dear HCDSB Trustees and Staff,

My name is EJ and I am a grade 8 student at  Catholic Elementary School. I am a proud ally of the LGBTQ2S+ community and a member of Free Mom Hugs Southern Ontario's Youth Advisory Committee. After watching the last school board meeting with my parents, I asked if I could delegate at the next one to share my thoughts on what I heard. Thank you for including this letter in your meeting agenda instead of my delegation presentation.

Through my volunteer work with Free Mom Hugs Southern Ontario, I have learned that although we live in Canada, there is still a lot of discrimination towards the LGBTQ2S+ community. So much so that our group offers hugs as allies (pre-Covid) because sometimes when LGBTQ2S+ people come out to their families, they are not supported or even hugged by them anymore. I have been to Pride events in Hamilton with my family and have never seen anything that the Catholic Church would say is sinful or wrong.

I think flying the flag every June, like Halton Public District School Board already does, does not go against what we are taught in our faith. Even if the Catholic Church doesn't support gay marriage or unwanted children being adopted by someone who is gay, neither of those things affect kids in school because you have to be an adult to get married or adopt. What DOES affect kids is feeling loved and accepted as a child of a gay couple and kids feeling loved and accepted when they realize they are a part of the LGBTQ2S+ community. We learn in Religion and Family Life, that sex is saved for after marriage. So, this motion isn't about that, it's about supporting kids that are LGBTQ2S+ and a reminder to all staff and students that everyone is loved in our schools.

I know some people in our school board think LGBTQ2S+ kids should go to a public school if they don't feel accepted at their Catholic school, but often, they don't have a choice about what school they go to. Their parents decide for them. They obviously don't know they are part of the LGBTQ2S+ community when they start in kindergarten, so even if their parents let them switch schools, I don't think it's fair that they have to leave all their friends and not have a faith-based education because of who they are. In my school, I have heard hateful language and slurs against LGBTQ2S+ people by other students. I think there's a lot of this kind of thing going on without the staff knowing, just because our LGBTQ2S+ friends have asked us to not "out them". Flying a flag and putting up Safe Space posters is a first step towards our board being truly inclusive. Hopefully when people see the flag, they will be encouraged to act more inclusively and not bully LGBTQ2S+ people anymore.

I know the cost of large flags is expensive, but I think we could ask parents to organize an online fundraiser at each school or we could have a Spirit/Civvies Day and ask families to donate a loonie or toonie towards the cost of the flag at their school. Or I would be willing to create a GoFundMe page for this important cause to share on Free Mom Hugs Southern Ontario's social media, which I know will get attention and support.

If this motion is approved, I think it will not only be a good thing for the LGBTQ2S+ kids to feel seen, heard and more included, but for everyone in our school board to recognize that we are inclusive and will not stand for bullying the LGBTQ2S+ community anymore. We have an opportunity for our school board to be leaders here, putting into action what our Pope, Bishop and many priests believe...that we are to love everyone, just as they are.

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts on this very important subject. I appreciate that you are giving HCDSB students a voice in this, as it impacts us and our friends the most.

Sincerely,

EJ Sephton
she/her

From: Frana Barry
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:33 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fwd: Motion for Diversity in our Schools

Hello,

Please include this correspondence in the agenda package for Monday's special meeting.

Dear Trustees,

I'm extremely disappointed in the hateful rhetoric that was accepted at the previous board meeting. The delegates against the motion mentioned many things that were harmful to the LGBTQ2S+ community in Halton Catholic, and should have either not been included, or stopped. I'm unable to write a lengthy letter today, however, I do want to make it very clear that many churches, pastors, school boards, teachers and other people of faith find it possible to believe that you can be both a person of faith, and LGBTQ2S+. These things are not mutually exclusive. For my daughter to find out our church's stance on these matters through such a hateful letter from our parish priest was devastating to her, and as such, it is unlikely she will be confirmed, as is her choice. I truly hope you realize how you are alienating the younger generation of Catholics who want to believe in a loving, accepting God the way they are taught in school. Not a vengeful, petty God as He is portrayed when people cherry-pick passages from the Bible to use as justification for their thinly veiled homophobic stance. This is bigger than a flag. This is more important than votes. Many of our wonderful HCDSB teachers already support our kids as best they can. We need our trustees to stand up for our kids, and support our teachers.

Sincerely,

Frana Barry

HCDSB Parent and Halton Ratepayer, Burlington.

From: Greg Powell

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:14 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated. That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

As a Catholic, I will not tolerate any more antiquated hate in the name of religion. Our god is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Sincerely,

Greg Powell

From: Heather Kosterman

Date: 2021-04-23 11:26 (GMT-05:00)

To: duartem@hcdsb.org, murphyp@hcdsb.org, agnewb@hcdsb.org, derosap@hcdsb.org, guzzon@hcdsb.org, iantomasiv@hcdsb.org, karabelah@hcdsb.org, obrient@hcdsb.org, ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org, director@hcdsb.org, DiPietroR@hcdsb.org

Subject: My Experience with Anti-LGTBQ Bullying in HCDSB

Open letter to the HCDSB Trustees,

I wanted to send in a letter regarding the motion of flying the Pride flag in June at all HCDSB schools.

I'm hoping this gives you some insight into my experience as an LGBTQ youth within the HCDSB that I'm not sure you are grasping.

I attended St. Joseph's and St. Thomas Aquinas from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12.

I am a lesbian. It took me a long time to be able to say that out loud. I knew I was "different" in high school but I never had the strength to come out. I never felt comfortable enough to be my true self.

I was bullied starting in Grade 5. It went from being teased about my weight to the fact that I wore glasses, had buck teeth and later braces. In high school, it escalated. I didn't pay much attention to the boys and rarely wore the school kilt. The homophobic slurs started. I was called a [REDACTED], to name a few.

The bullying took its toll on my mental health. I was scared to talk to the teachers about this because I worried I would out myself so I suffered in silence. I was quiet and never tried to draw any attention to myself. I hid. I cried in the bathroom countless times. It took such a toll that although very hard to admit, I considered a number of times to end my life.

The struggle for young people is real and even more so for those in the Catholic boards in Halton and across the province and everywhere for that matter. As said by a peer, I survived my time within the walls of the HCDSB. Survived should not be the word used for a student's career in Elementary and High School.

I relied heavily on my faith and that is how I made it through. I had faith that God would not put anything in my path that I could not handle. I had faith that it would get better. I knew suicide was a sin. I made it through and it did get better.

I have a strong support system at home. A lot of students cannot say that as evident in

many of the letters against this motion. These students NEED this step forward. We shouldn't have children just survive in your schools. They should THRIVE. Those students that don't have the support at home need to have the support at school or they may not survive.

This IS a matter of life and death and I hope this letter will help you see that.

Sincerely,
Heather Kosterman

From: Ian

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:37 PM

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

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Supporting Our Diverse School Communities

Please include this letter in the correspondence for the April 26 special board meeting.

Director Daly, Chair Murphy, and Trustees,

We are writing once again as HCDSB parents, alumni and ratepayers to encourage you to vote in favour of the Supporting Our Diverse School Community motion. As trustees, you have an obligation to ensure that the students and staff of the board feel that school is a safe and accepting space. During the last board meeting, I heard several trustees asking why the flag is necessary and asking to do a survey and a complete review of the Board's policies instead. Why are the two options mutually exclusive? Approve this motion as a first step on a larger journey.

Teachers, students and parents have all voiced overwhelming support of the motion. I would wager the "silent majority" Trustee DeRosa referred to is in fact an extremely vocal minority, many from other regions (Trustee DeRosa even specifically said out of province...) who have no vested interest in what is best for our community. We have heard firsthand accounts from current and former students that this is a very real issue now that we have the opportunity to begin addressing.

A few stats to remind you of the urgency of the motion:

- One third of sexual minority Canadians consider their mental health poor or fair, three times higher than heterosexual Canadians. They are also three times more likely to have seriously contemplated suicide in their lives. (StatsCan)
- Sexual minority individuals were three times more likely to have been physically assaulted (StatsCan)
- 74% of trans students and 55% of sexual minority students have reported being verbally harassed at school, compared to 26% of non-LGBTQ students (Egale)
- Nearly two thirds (63%) of LGBTQ students felt that their schools were not safe (Egale)
- 53% of LGBTQ educators in Ontario Catholic schools felt that discussing LGBTQ issues would jeopardize their jobs (Egale)
- Only 57% of teachers from Catholic schools reported they would be comfortable discussing LGBTQ topics with students (Egale)

The value of the motion was further underscored by several of the letters and even elements of the delegations which were presented to the board. It is an understatement that they should not have been included in the official package as several crossed a line.

Please stand up for what is needed. Make a statement that we are going to protect marginalized individuals. Let Halton Catholic be a leader in doing what is right.

Thank you,

Ian & Erin McCombe

Sent: April 23, 2021 6:00 PM

To: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondence to add to the Board Agenda Package

Dear Trustees,

I am currently a grade 9 student at the HCDSB. I do not support the motion of "Flying the Pride Flag".

From: Jacqueline Angileri
Sent: April 22, 2021 3:43 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pride Flag

Hi,

My children both attend HCDSB elementary schools and we believe that any place publicly funded by tax dollars must be inclusive of all students. The flag is an important symbol of acceptance and is representative of the support we want students in the LGBTQ+ community to feel from their teachers, peers, administration, and school board.

For your records, please include this as official correspondence.

Respectfully,
Jacqueline Angileri

-----Original Message-----

From: Jennifer Doyle

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:30 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Obrient@hcdsb.org; Ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Raising the Pride flag

HCDSB,

Please raise the pride flag in support of our LGBTQ+ children. We wear orange shirts to teach our children that residential schools were wrong, we wear pink shirts to teach our children that bullying is wrong and to support those kids that have been bullied. Let's do the right thing and fly the pride flag, another symbol to support a community of kids in our schools that deserve our support.

I am a HCDSB parent. Please include this email as correspondence at the next meeting.

Thank you
Jennifer Doyle

April 23, 2021

RE: A letter in Support of the raising the Pride Flag in June

Dear. Mr. Daly, Superintendents, and Trustees,

I am a parent of three children in HCDSB as well as a graduate of HCDSB, who is a teacher in a neighbouring Catholic Board who holds a Religious Education Specialist. This is a letter of reiteration of my support for raising the Pride Flag in June, amongst other positive actions for inclusivity and diversity.

I was delayed watching our delegation at the meeting this week and, when I was able to watch it, I was absolutely disheartened at much of the commentary and actions of some of the Trustees and delegates—as well as the abrupt end to the meeting without a vote. For a trustee to apologize to a mother for their child being “confused” about their sexuality, or for a delegate to say that students were “suffering from same sex attraction” just shocked me. I heard mention of not agreeing with same-sex partners adopting a child, as if two loving adults could not raise a child together. Even if they don’t agree with the lifestyle, or even if they can’t believe that God made someone the way that they are, at least they could learn to choose their words and speak mindfully. This was such disappointing talk from adults.

The Catholic Church has historically been known to be against same-sex genital relations (as it was worded in one of the Religious Ed. AQ courses that I took). Raising the flag does not connote that the HCDSB is saying “go have sex” as one of the April 20th delegates insinuated. Raising the flag is a symbolic gesture of support, and a symbol that, as an institution, the HCDSB values this community of people for the individuals that they are.

At the meeting, it was suggested that we “recreate” or “redesign” the flag, however we simply cannot do that. It is not our symbol to redesign. As was also suggested, we cannot push this action off to the Province, to wait for them to develop more inclusive curriculum (as another Trustee suggested). In the principle of subsidiarity, as taught by Pope John Paul II, we must first work locally to support and aid those who are vulnerable and who are close to us. These are the students in our own communities. This action needs to start locally. For those people who have mentioned or calculated the cost of the flags, please remind them that the school board has saved tens of thousands of dollars this year in photocopies alone, with the onset of virtual schools and the secondary hybrid model of learning. Perhaps that number would be a good one to have handy, Mr. Daly, at the upcoming meeting, although I realize that it is now April and that funding may have been reallocated by now.

As education professionals, we know from the Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity training that we have had, that there is so much more to be done to ensure that **all** of our students feel safe, included, and equitably treated within our schools. We know that climate surveys provide great data to help plan for action—when they are answered honestly, without fear. We know that for some students, often our most vulnerable, their safe haven lies at school, where they feel most loved and supported. We know from the delegations that there are several HCDSB grads who didn’t feel comfortable in our schools. Let’s change that, moving forward.

By raising the flag, we are showing support for the LGBTQ2S+ community. We are showing that we love all people of all kinds, in a action of inclusivity. It is a fact of life that people are diverse beings. It is a choice of institutions, embedded with their own legacies, to choose to be equitable and to instigate change through positive action to include everyone. The outcome of this action, in this case, raising the flag, is that all people feel like they belong.

Yours Truly,

Jennifer Healey

From: Julie Perkins

Sent: April 23, 2021 8:10 AM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Supporting Raising the pride flag

Dear Trustees,

I am a parent within Halton region.

I am in full support of the motion put forth by Trustee Agnew. Her motion to raise the Pride Flag and post supportive signage in our schools is well past overdue.

The HCDSB mandate is 'Achieving. Believing. Belonging.' All our students deserve to feel as if they belong.

Do the right thing and vote 'YES'.

Please include this letter in the official correspondence of the next Board meeting

Sincerely,
Julie Perkins

From: Jennifer Smith
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:12 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Letter of Support- April 26th meeting

Hello,

I would like to express my support, as a HCDSB parent, for the flying of the Pride Flag for the month of June outside Halton's Catholic School. I feel this manner of expression shows valuable and sincere support for those in our community who find peace and acceptance through this symbol.

Please include this email in the special board meeting on April 26th.

Hoping to see the beautiful rainbows flying high outside our schools this June!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Smith

To: HCDSB

Please include this email in the special board meeting on April 26, 2021.

RE: A vote of YES to fly the Pride Flag

I am writing as a parent of two former HCDSB students. I am deeply saddened that I need to write this letter. I am saddened that a group of appointed people who are charged with supporting youth, have failed to rise to the challenge of doing what is in the best interest of every student (not to mention every human being).

Our youth need us to stand alongside them and be the change. I am recommending each board member needs sensitivity training and in-depth Diversity, Equity and Inclusion “conversion therapy” given that we are even having to vote on this issue.

I am angry, I am passionate about this and most of all, I am saddened that the board members lacked the courage to stand up for the youth that they were appointed to support. We are all accountable to stand up and have a voice for change.

For any board member who may not know what either of my recommended training is about, you are part of the problem. And it needs to end. You have the opportunity to be a change leader, you have the position to be a voice for the youth who fear to speak for themselves.

What is your fear? Is it a fear of reprisal from your peers that keeps you from finding your voice? This is not about you. Imagine the anguish your lack of support is having on our children.

STAND UP and vote YES. And I challenge each of you to voice your support of change. You have the opportunity to change and enrich lives. You have the opportunity to oppose decades of ignorance and create a safe space for our children. What are you waiting for?

Sincerely,

Jeanette White

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:59 PM

To: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondance to add to the board agenda package

Dear Trustees

I am currently a student in the HCDSB and I do not support the motion to fly the pride flag.

From: Kelly Stahl

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:41 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Flying the Flag with Pride

Please include my correspondence on the upcoming agenda.

Dear Trustees, Mr Chair and Director Daly,

Pride Month, with its rainbow flags flying, is an outward display of our support for human rights. The LGBTQ community has endured profound emotional and physical pains, bullying, violence, intimidation, shaming and death.

As many HCDSB students, parents, caregivers, staff and community members identify as LGBTQ I am writing today, and asking that my letter be included as part of the official correspondence, to confirm that our family fully supports the motion put forward by Trustees Agnew and Guzzo to raise the Pride Flag and requests the board approve the motion and direct staff to proceed with implementation.

HCDSB has a responsibility to ensure that the well-being for all students and staff are met through a focus on equity and inclusion. Raising the Pride flag demonstrates this commitment to not only our students and staff, but to the parents, caregivers and community members as well. This motion should be considered, approved and implemented without hesitation.

With regards,

Kelly & Jason Stahl HCDSB Parents & Members of the [REDACTED]

From: Bull, Kevin

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:37 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

Importance: High

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever **the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated.** That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

Tolerating hate in the name religion is simply not the Christian way to behave. Our God is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Bull (he/him)

From: K.Carson
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:28 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fwd: Please raise the Pride Flag

Please add my email to the submissions for April 26th meeting.

Please support this motion. We must raise the flag!
The Catholic board must progress, and support all our students! Our loving God did not make mistakes. We humans make mistakes, and it's time to correct the errors of the institution and and incorrect interpretations.

Katherine Carson
Catholic Parent

Please, include the following as correspondence for April 26th package:

Dear Mr. Daly, Director of the Board of Education Trustees,

I would like to present a strong argument against exhibiting the pride flag as well as other pride initiatives. This ideology and propaganda has no place in a Catholic school setting, in which Christ's teachings shall be the primary set of rules we, as Catholics, must abide by. No delegation, lobby group or trustee has the authority to alter the Church's teachings, go against The Catechism of The Holy Catholic Church and in the name of charity and tolerance, promote sinful lifestyle as "Catholic".

Any posters focusing on such highly divisive topic don't have a place in the schools either. There are already other programs in place that deal with bullying and inclusiveness in our school system.

Opportunistic motion like this, in the midst of the pandemic, is highly political and does not serve the children it would supposedly help.

As a father of three girls attending the school system, I stand strongly against twisting the set of moral values our children are taught. When enrolling them in this Catholic school system, I fully believed that "Catholic" wasn't just in the name. As a parent, I should not have to explain what the rainbow flag represents to my 5 year old daughter, especially when enrolled in a school system with the following 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."

I speak as a voice of numerous parents, who are very disappointed and are against such motion, however are less vocal than the lobbying minority promoting this action.

I also represent many teachers, who remain silenced at their workplace, because to promote true Catholic teaching would mean severe repercussions leading to a possible dismissal in today's politically correct climate.

This motion should not even be up for discussion, given that the teaching of the Church is clear and the HCDSB considers itself valuing the Catholic Faith, as per "Our Values" listed on the board's website. To promote teaching which differs from that of the Catholic Church's Magisterium is frankly defined by Canon Law as a Heretical Teaching with possible excommunication. Is this the route the Board wishes to pursue and give an example to our children ?

If the trustees take it upon themselves the tremendous weight of indoctrinating our children, pretending to be Catholics, then I would petition against such motion in protest and propose a new motion to remove the term "Catholic" from the School Board's name.

I trust that you recognize the severe repercussions of this motion, that it is in conflict with the set of values outlined in the Vision, Mission Statement, and Values of the HCDSB and more importantly, the true teaching of the Catholic Church.

I am looking forward to speaking at the meeting and allowing my voice to represent many parents in our community.

Sincerely,

Konrad Czystowski

-----Original Message-----

From: Kerry Delaney

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:15 PM

To: DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Re: Pride flag

Please include this email in the special board meeting on April 26th.

Thanks,
Kerry Delaney

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 23, 2021, at 1:17 PM, Kerry Delaney [REDACTED] > wrote:

>

> Hello,

>

> I am not one to write letters or protest, but I am so disturbed by what I am hearing in the community about this issue that I had to take this opportunity to voice my opinion.

>

> I'm shocked that debating the necessity of flying the Pride Flag at HCDSB schools is even on the table. For all everyone talks about love, inclusion, and youth mental health, why is the Pride Flag a topic for debate? Every student should be made to feel safe and a part of their school community.

>

> If the HCDSB does not support this motion, I will be changing my funding support to the HDSB. My grade 9 daughter has already been asking to transfer from STA to Blakelock, and I have been reluctant to move her because we've been happy with her schools within HCDSB up until this point. However, seeing that there is still resistance to including all students by flying the Pride Flag does give me pause for thought.

>

> For the record, I do not have a child who identifies as LGBTQ, nor do any of their friends (as far as I am aware). However, it is 2021, and I am a firm believer that every student needs to feel safe and supported. If flying the Pride Flag provided them with this assurance, then it should not even be a debate.

>

> I urge you and your fellow trustees from the other regions to support this initiative.

>

> Regards,

> Kerry Delaney

From: Flynn, Ken

Sent: April 22, 2021 8:09 PM

To: DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: LGBTQ+ motion

Hello,

Please find below a letter I would like read in the official correspondence during the board meeting. Thanks in advance.

Dear Trustees,

I am writing in response to the motion to have the Pride Flag flown in solidarity of the LGBTQ+ community and the posting of Safe Space signs in classrooms. I am a parent and a teacher in the board. I have worked with students who identify as members of this community. I have seen the pain it causes them firsthand when those in positions of authority make decisions that are direct affronts to their very existence. It does not have to be this way, though.

Raising the flag would be an outward acknowledgement of love and acceptance of people who identify as LGBTQ+. It will also serve as some measure of relief to our students (our children) who are ashamed of who they are, often to the point where their mental health suffers or worse, they consider suicide.

On Friday, April 23rd, our staff participated in Equity and Inclusion Training. What better way to show that we practice what we preach than to stand in solidarity with our family members and students and allow a small, but symbolic act of kindness and love? A small gesture to say, "We see you. We hear you. What you say matters."

As a Catholic Board, we are constantly under attack from taxpayers who see no value in a separate school system governed by religious values. How can we argue against the eradication of our Catholic School system if we so hypocritically act without love? If we do not provide "options for the vulnerable?" If we do not love all of God's creations? God does not belong to us, after all. We belong to God. We do not make God who He is. God makes us who we are. And He loves us all. Let's follow His example and raise the flag.

Ken Flynn

Religion and Visual Arts Teacher

Halton Catholic District School Board

From: Kelsey Lancaster

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:58 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated. That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

As a Catholic, I will not tolerate any more antiquated hate in the name of religion. Our god is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Lancaster

From: Shea, Krista

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:56 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>

Cc: Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: Flying the Pride flag

April 23, 2021

Dear Chair Murphy and Trustees of the Board,

Please include this email in the board package from April 20th.

I am writing to you today as an educator of 15 years, a former student and soon to be a parent of children who attend the Halton Catholic District School Board. Please support the motion to fly the pride flag in June. Our students, staff and community need this sign of acceptance and safety to achieve their fullest potential in all that they do. Flying the flag, along with the placement of safe space posters in classrooms, creates an environment where the 2SLGBTQ+ community can begin to feel that they are respected and loved just as much as everyone else who enters the building. This is crucial, especially to our students, because too often they feel scared or ashamed to be who they are. We need to remember that all humans are justified and loved through Christ and a religion thrives when we include diversity and all members of society.

Sincerely,

Krista Shea

From: Kristin Wood

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:23 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include my email in Monday April 26 meeting!!

To whom it may concern,

Is a flag really just a flag? How is it that such a simple piece of rectangular fabric can hold such meaning and create such a divide? A flag by nature is used as a symbol. One can observe many symbols within our faith and within our schools. Why would we want to segregate a population of people? WE teach our kids to be inclusive, I would like to draw attention to the following:

1. Students are encouraged to wear pink as a symbol of solidarity for anti bullying.
2. Students are encouraged to wear orange to acknowledge the legacy of residential schools
3. Students are encouraged to wear blue for autism awareness
4. Students are encouraged to wear mismatched socks in support of those with down syndrome.
5. Students are taught about the poppy for those that lost their lives in war
6. Students are FINALLY taught about our black heros and tribulations during Black history month
7. Students are encouraged to wear red for Valentines Day.

How is it that we can recognize those that have a different ability and yet our schools can not proudly wear a flag to recognize that love is love? How do we explain this disconnect to our young people?

I would like to draw attention to my young son, in SK here within the HCDSB. He was the most adorable ring bearer we had ever seen at 2.5. Propositioned with a balloon, he dropped the pillow with the rings and ran down the aisle to meet his dad who was standing proudly with his bride sister. Aunt Titi took it in stride. Something she has been doing all her life. Growing up in the catholic church, she, and her siblings (my husband) were alter servers and attended mass regularly. However, standing with Aunt Titi at the end of aisle is the love of her life, Aunt Lauren. Our son has learned from an early age that God gave us Jesus and in doing so gave us freedom. Freedom to love and be loved. I would be ashamed and disappointed that my son would target another human being because they loved differently.

I would also like to point out that on a weekly basis my job as a mental health nurse on the child and adolescent unit at Oakville Trafalgar includes supporting kids through crisis. All too often they are humiliated, disgraced and rejected for loving someone of the same sex. How in 2021 are not more open minded. We have kids in our schools that are considering suicide because they do not feel accepted and embraced for their choices. ONE child is ONE child too

many to be in such a tug of war. Children need a safe space to express and process their emotions. The raising of the flag will open the door for these conversations.

The school walls should be a place of safety, where students, our children feel comfortable to learn, grow and develop. Living in shame and ignorance will only breed shame and ignorance, that is systemic bullying.

I would like for those who oppose this motion to stop and reflect on the reasons why. Ask yourself:

- 1.) am I opposed to this because I am uncomfortable?
- 2.) am I opposed to this because I don't understand the struggles?
- 3.) what would you do or say if your loved one expressed that they love "differently than the mainstream way"
- 4.) why do I feel this way, what drives my limited understanding?
- 5.) what would say to a young person who is sitting across from you crying expressing that they would be better off dead than live with the shame of being different.
- 6.) What would you do if you have to dress the wounds of a young person who self harms because they would rather feel the physical pain than the emotional pain that comes with living in secrecy.

In closing if the school board is content with perpetuating such disgraceful actions consistent with bullying then keep the flag lowered. If living through a global pandemic as taught us nothing else it is that we are resilient and that we need each other. Now is the time to reset.

Jesus walked with those that others would not.

Sincerely,
K.W

-----Original Message-----

From: A. Cascade

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:47 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fly the flag

Please include this in the next Meeting on April 26,

A child spends a major portion of their time growing up at school. It is a place where they should feel welcome and safe. School

Is where you make life long friends. A child should not feel excluded for any reason. All people should feel included and flying the flag indicates that the school is a safe place when their own home may not be

Please consider flying the flag this June and every June

Thank you

Linda

From: Liz Daher

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:12 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Raising the Pride Flag *please include in official correspondence*

Hello,

I am writing with regard to the motion put forward by trustees Agnew and Guzzo, in support of raising the pride flag.

I would like this email included in the official correspondence for the associated meeting.

I was disappointed to see so much hateful rhetoric opposing this motion at the recent board meeting. To some, raising a flag may seem like a small action. But it is a symbolic gesture that can speak volumes. Please consider the idea that this may not be an issue that affects you personally, and as such you may not fully understand its importance. It's ok to not understand. In cases like these, where I might not have firsthand experience of an issue, I listen to the community that is affected. I listen to, and believe and honour, lived experience, and I implore you to do the same. When people from the 2SLGBTQIA community tell you they are hurting and feel unsafe, please believe them.

As I wrote last week: I fully support this motion and urge the trustees to please do the same. As someone who was bullied relentlessly as a child, I know all too well the feelings of hopelessness and despair that come with being excluded. The fact that in 2021, there is any debate at all about fostering a more welcoming and inclusive community, is deeply concerning. A Catholic community need look no further than Jesus' example of supporting and caring for the most marginalized of society. He would be the first to stand up and share a seat at the table. God loves ALL of His creation, and He makes no mistakes. Please use your vote to show kids, families, and teachers in the 2SLGBTQIA community that they are welcome. It should be clear by now, from the volumes of correspondence that have come in, that this is about so much more than a flag.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Daher
HCDSB Parent

-----Original Message-----

From: Liz Delvecchio

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:13 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fly the Pride Flag

Hi there,

Please include this email in the special board meeting on April 26th

To be honest I am shocked we are even having to debate this as we are in 2021 Whether people agree or disagree the flag needs to be there.

We are a community of understanding & acceptance I have 3 children currently in school with HCDSB I want them to always feel accepted & to be accepting.

My vote is to fly the pride flag

Thank you

Liz

From: Leslie Hickey
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:59 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] #flytheflag

Hello:

I want to respectfully submit my support for this motion that will be decided on Monday in a special vote. Please include this email in the special board meeting on April 26th.

I have been following this issue closely and feel strongly that the HCDSB needs to show their support of students who are part of the LGBTQ community by flying this flag. Why the flag, you ask? Because this is a symbol of solidarity with them. It is a meaningful symbol of their community.

I watched the recording of the Board Meeting which had delegations speaking about this motion. I was ashamed by some of the things I heard. I was disgusted by the closed minded views of some people. To say that all people are loved equally by God but not their actions are not, was meant to say that if they choose to live their life as a member of the LGBTQ community, God won't love them. It was also said that we are all called to live a chaste life. The fact that someone would have sex outside of wedlock was what was called into question. A simple solution to this problem might be accepting same-sex marriage, but that is another story! This statement is so hypocritical! People of all sexual preferences have sex before marriage these days. This is a very common practice, no matter your gender, sexual preference or age. To say that this is why a person who loves someone of the same sex is not loved by God, is hypocritical because many (almost all) heterosexual couples have sex before marriage. Are they unloved too?

I am strongly in support of this important first step in showing the growth and inclusiveness of the HCDSB by flying the flag for the month of June. It's not a lot to ask.

Sincerely,

Leslie Hickey

From: Lydia Rett

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:37 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Notice of Motion: Supporting Our Diverse School Community

Dear HCDSB Trustees and Mr. Daly, Director of Education,

Please include this correspondence in the board agenda package for the April 26, 2021 board meeting.

I am a Catholic parent of four children who have all attended Catholic elementary and secondary schools in Oakville. Currently, my younger two children attend [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I would like to share with you my deep concern with what I see happening in the Halton Catholic District School Board, namely the erosion of authentic Catholic teaching in the school system.

On April 20, 2021 I watched the virtual proceedings of HCDSB board meeting and I was quite distressed at what transpired with regards to the motion ***"Supporting Our Diverse School Community."*** This motion, if passed, would require every elementary and secondary school in HCDSB to fly the Pride Flag. As well, every classroom in the school board would be mandated to have an *LGBTQ Safe Space* poster displayed. The presentations by several of the delegations that supported this motion and the subsequent questions posed by some of the school trustees illustrated a clear lack of knowledge and understanding of true Catholic teaching and doctrine. However, I was quite relieved by one delegation in particular that featured a Catholic parent and a Catholic priest and spoke against the motion. This priest, Fr Janusz Roginski, provided sound and accurate information on Catholic teaching and doctrine, and he did this with kindness, clarity and charity.

I have spoken with many faithful Catholic parents who share the same concerns that I have on this very issue, that the flying of the Pride Flag is not compatible with true Catholic teaching. The Pride Flag is a symbol of acceptance, approval and celebration of LGBTQ belief systems, behaviours and lifestyles, which are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Faith. The passing of this motion will not only sow further confusion on what constitutes authentic Catholic teaching but will also create discord and division in our Catholic school community.

Our Catholic faith teaches us to love, respect and value every person and to recognize that each and every human being possesses an inherent dignity by virtue of being a child of God. If the HCDSB, as a Catholic education community, is already demonstrating these teachings, as it should be, then what is the purpose of singling out one particular group of people for special recognition and treatment? What message would that send to other vulnerable groups, such as those with disabilities, mental health issues, visible minorities, ethnic minorities, the economically disadvantaged? Would it not foster a sense of exclusion and inequity if these groups do not receive the same level of recognition and special treatment? If anything, what we

should be striving for is a focus on common ground and that which unites us, which without question is our shared identity as beloved children of God.

I strongly urge each school trustee to vote against this very divisive motion. Instead, I encourage trustees to focus on initiatives that demonstrate true Catholic teaching and foster a sense of harmony and unity in our schools.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Respectfully Yours In Christ,

Lydia Rett

From: Laura Skelton

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:15 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include in the April 26 board meeting package

Hi Rosie,

Please include this email in the package for the special board meeting on April 26 - I am a parent of a two former students, a former HCDSB student myself (St. Vincent / St. Thomas) and a member of St. Matthews parish.

Dear HCDSB Trustees,

It has been brought to my attention that there will be a vote [on April 20th](#) on the motion to fly the Pride Flag at HCDSB during Pride month.

It goes without saying that the fact that this motion is being debated (in 2021) is absolutely abhorrent. The fact that elected trustees are split 50/50 on whether or not to be inclusive; whether or not to accept all children in the community, is beyond revolting. This is your job. You have been elected to represent **all students** in the community regardless of gender or sexual orientation. You don't get to discriminate, further perpetuating the belief that they aren't loved or accepted for who they are. Put your own bias in check, and remember that refusing to accept and acknowledge these children will do nothing but further divide the community and people's trust in the Catholic board.

Because trustees, you can't pray the gay away. So do your job and vote to support a wonderful initiative that will demonstrate love and inclusivity for the entire community.

Looking forward to a 9-0 vote approving the motion on the 20th.

Sincerely,

Laura Skelton

From: **Lauren Wallis**

Date: Fri., Apr. 23, 2021, 15:10

Subject: Re: "Supporting our Diverse School Community"

To: <murphyp@hcdsb.org>, <duartem@hcdsb.org>, <agnewb@hcdsb.org>, <derosap@hcdsb.org>, Guzzo, Nancy <guzzon@hcdsb.org>, Iantomasi, Vincent <iantomasiv@hcdsb.org>, <karabelah@hcdsb.org>, <obrient@hcdsb.org>, <ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org>, <director@hcdsb.org>, DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Hello Trustees,

I am a current HCDSB parent and former HCDSB student. Please include this note in the agenda correspondence.

You have an opportunity to stand up for your students, to promote safety, inclusion, equity, and safety. You know this. Do it.

Fly the flag.

Sincerely,
Lauren Wallis

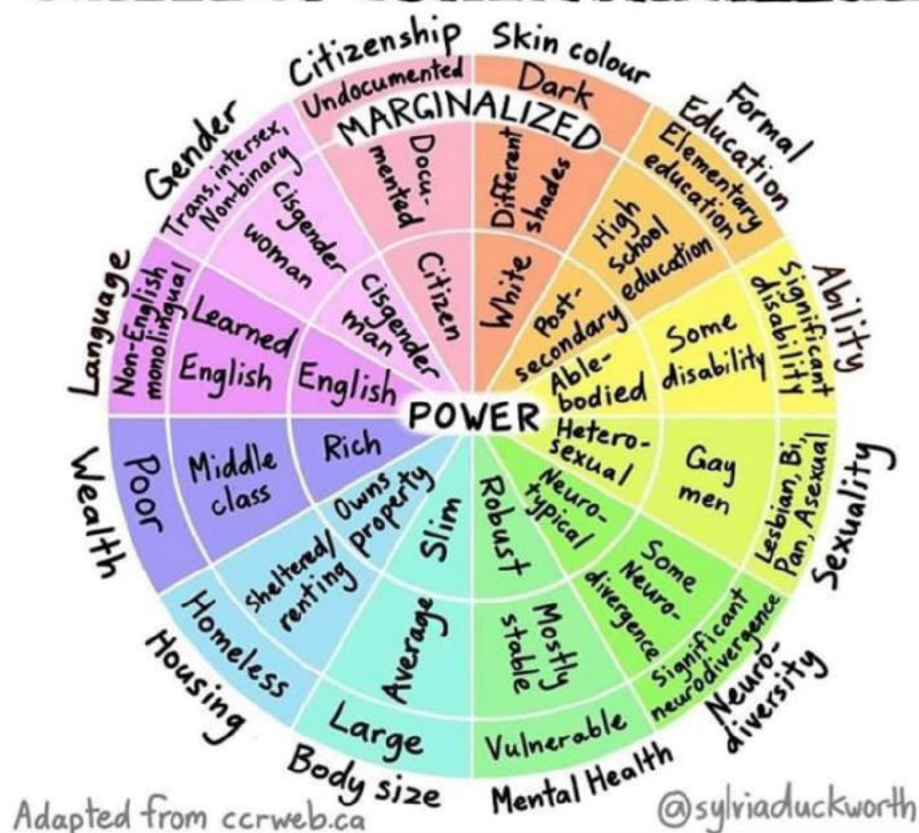
Hello trustees,

I am writing today as a queer, racialized, and Catholic alumni, ratepayer, and parent in the HCDSB. I wasn't going to write a letter, but after seeing what happened at the Board meeting this past week, I am appalled and urge you all to vote AGAINST the motion to fly the Pride flag at our Catholic schools.

At this meeting, one of our own student trustees raised a concern to [REDACTED] about racialized students, bravely sharing his own experience as a student from a racialized background - I was horrified to hear [REDACTED] an adult and White woman, patronize, belittle, and question him, asking him if he really has experienced discrimination or bullying due to his background, even sarcastically saying "IF you have, I'll be there to fly your flag". This was not okay. In the same way that trustees asked one of the other delegations to take into account the anecdotal experiences of even just ONE student from the LGBTQ2S+ community [REDACTED] I believe you have to account for ALL students in our board and not just one group of students and parents.

I am writing because I believe this issue must be viewed through an intersectional lens - that is, in the context that our identities are not singular and defined by one label or element, but rather, through many elements that intersect and make us who we are. Your own identity is composed of many elements, and you can have power in some elements and be marginalized in others. Please see this image below, created by Sylvia Duckworth and shared by Youth Mental Health Canada, and reflect on where you have power due to your identity and where you may be marginalized. The image, if not included in the package, can be found by googling "intersectionality wheel of power/privilege".

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



As a school board, by focusing on supporting and celebrating only one element of our students' identity, we are doing a disservice to all our students who may be marginalized in many other ways, some in more than one. If we truly want to support inclusion and equity, we need to focus on the needs of ALL our students in their diverse identities. We need support for our female & female-identifying students amidst the rape culture that is prevalent today, support for our Asian students who are facing racism & discrimination and being blamed for the coronavirus, and for our Black students who as a community are dealing with the weight of police brutality and the sensationalization of Black trauma. And yes, we absolutely do need to support our LGBTQ2S+ students, but raising a flag for the month of June does not support these students or their diverse identities in a way that originates from, and is congruent with, our Catholic faith and identity as daughters and sons of Christ.

Our students' identities as Catholic students are important too, and by raising this flag we are sending the message to our community and the broader Halton community that students' sexual orientations and gender identities are MORE important than our Catholic identities and the teachings we follow. Instead of raising the flag, if we want all of our students to be supported in their diverse, multifaceted identities, this conversation needs to be centred not around what we can do to support ONE component of students' identities for a month, but how we can continuously support all students through creating an inclusive, loving, and kind community consistent with our Catholic faith.

As a Catholic school board, we cannot ignore our identity as Catholics - so when we discuss inclusion and equity, we need to be aware of what the Catholic Church teaches and let that guide our discussion. The church does not teach us to celebrate our sexual or gender identities, but to celebrate our identity as God's children. The church does teach us to love all human beings, and that each one of us is created in the image and likeness of God and deserves dignity and respect. However, the church also teaches us that the act of sex is sacred and reserved for the sacrament of marriage, so to celebrate a component of our identity that is rooted in who we are sexually attracted to is not in line with our Catholic faith. Instead of celebrating "Pride", let's celebrate diverse identities including our identity as Catholics. Let's celebrate our diversity using an intersectional lens, and have these conversations about inclusion and love, while remembering that our students are not a homogenous population and yet, cannot be divided into categories based on who they are. We are all daughters and sons in Christ, and THAT is the most important element of our identity in this CATHOLIC school board.

I also want to mention that voting against this motion is not homophobic, nor bigoted; flying the pride flag simply does not align with our Catholic faith and there are other ways to support our diverse community of students, that do align with our faith and Church teachings. I urge you to continue this discussion on diversity, inclusion, and equity for ALL students including our LGBTQ2S+ students, racialized students, minority or underprivileged students, all through a Catholic and intersectional lens.

Please include this correspondence in the package for Monday's upcoming board meeting.

Thank you,

-LS

April 23, 2021

Dear Chair Murphy, Vicechair Duarte and Trustees of the Halton Catholic District School Board,

St. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:16, “If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!”.

My name is Michael Aguiar, and I come before you as a genuinely concerned young adult, youth minister, social worker, and future parent. I am a product of the Halton Catholic District School Board, a graduate of Bishop P.F. Reding Secondary School and awarded Student of Excellence in 2011. I speak on behalf of the faithful and practicing Catholics of our community and Halton Region.

I look forward to sending my future children to a Catholic school with the expectation they will be taught the truths of our faith that I have learned, and that I will be supported in the values and morals we uphold as a family. Supporting the raising of a Pride flag takes that away.

For the sake of inclusion, you are excluding the faithful Catholics. You are excluding the freedom to practice and uphold the Catholic values this Board claims to live by. If this issue, raising the Pride flag, is not about “faith” then the presentation of motion *Supporting Our Diverse School Community* should not be quoting scripture or using Jesus’ words to find validation in their support.

In flying the Pride flag, you as trustees are making a statement much larger than the Halton Catholic District School Board itself. It is a direct, visible and public statement for the entire Catholic Church, which as a trustee, is not stated anywhere in your Policies and Procedures giving you the authority to do so. You have been made aware and presented before you that the Pride flag stands behind actions and behaviours that go against Catholic teaching and morality, that being chastity.

Flying the Pride flag for 30 days will NOT fix the root of the problem of students being bullied or feeling unsafe in classrooms, nor does NOT flying the flag condemn the LGBTQ+ community. We are ALL called to live a chaste life, not to lead our children astray. Since the presentation of this motion, parties in support have used scripture to justify encouraging our children to sin. Jesus never did that. In fact, Jesus admonished the sinner and when he forgave them said, “Go and sin no more” (John 8:11). He did not expect them to continue living in sin.

The real issue is that the flag is a ruse. If this issue was really about acceptance, respect of human dignity and love for all God's children, we don't need a new flag for that, we already have one, our Canadian flag. That should be what we all strive for as Canadians, as Catholics. The flag makes the issue about encouraging and “celebrating” acts against chastity and actually reduces the dignity of the human person to who they have sex with, who they are attracted to and which gender they identify with.

Instead, our dignity is found in the fact that we are created in the image and likeness of God, with intellect, free will and the capacity to love and create. As Catholics, we are called to be set apart, not to follow the narrative of the culture. While we may know that not everyone is being chaste, yes we love them anyway. However, we do not just give up and encourage them to continue sinning, we strive always to be better versions of ourselves, and we build up those around us to discover the best versions of themselves. The Catholic Church exists to direct society not to reflect society.

As children of God, we cannot raise a flag, put up posters or hold events that celebrate choices or a lifestyle that is against the values and morals of our Catholic faith. Furthermore, to use and twist the Pope's and more so, Jesus' words to justify this act is atrocious and irresponsible!

The HCDSB can provide a safe space for all without raising a flag and celebrating sin. What the LGBTQ+ community needs is not a flag, but to see patient, compassionate, empathetic, and charitable dialogue from teachers, social workers, priests, ministers, and other well-formed educators who can explain the truth of our identity as children of God. Formators who are able to live by the equity, dignity and respect the HCDSB upholds, without erring from emotional intelligence, Catholic morality, ethics, and theology. That begins with the formation and careful attention to the administrators and teachers you allow into our schools.

An authentic Catholic is someone who lives by the truths and love of Jesus Christ. I would like to quote Kim Zember, a faithful Catholic who struggles with same-sex attraction, from a Youtube video by Ascension Press entitled: "Can I be Gay and Catholic?":

"Be real. Be truthful, don't change the truth of Jesus Christ. His word does not change, His truth does not change. God was, is and always will be. If His truth comes without His love, you've separated who Jesus is. You've created a new Jesus. If you love without His truth, you made him a hippie, which he is not."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct8stB59jiM>

We also cannot just be truthful without the love of Christ. Truth and love cannot be separated, it is the fullness of Christ. That is what truly sets us free, no matter what we are struggling with. John 8:32 states - "and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free".

The issue at hand here is not a flag, but the bullying that has been continued within our schools and the inability of HCDSB administrators and teachers to prevent, and properly address these issues based on Catholic morality and ethics.

I myself was bullied for being "gay" in elementary and high school when I did not even identify as such. It was a label that was painted on me and continued into high school simply because I had the talent to sing and was the only boy in the choir. I cannot hide and say that did

not damage my youth or experiences in school. It did. However, through it I found resilience because of my faith that was being taught to me in my Catholic school.

Flying this flag may only encourage more hate speech and crude behaviour because of its visibility. To paraphrase a student in a previous delegation presented on April 20th, “children are not born discriminating”. No one wakes up one day and decides to bully someone for their religion, sexual identity, race, etc. That is an attitude that is developed from somewhere in their life experiences that must be addressed by proper professionals who can support them, while in a Catholic school, should be assessed by a PRACTICING Catholic professional.

My proposal before you is to make the presence of such professionals more prominent. The concern this motion has brought forth is evidence in itself that the HCDSB is not doing enough in regards to Bullying Intervention as mentioned in Policy No. II-40. I would like to make it aware to the Board that there are resources and ministries out there our schools should be encouraged to promote such as Overcome Ministries or EnCourage International, which exist primarily for the LGBTQ+ community within Catholic circles.

That being said, let me be clear in my following statement. People change people. Not programs, curriculums, symbols or flags.

Throughout my extensive religious studies, I have learned how to communicate and transform the perception and lives of many young men and women, including those within the LGBTQ+ community. I myself have encountered several members of the LGBTQ+ community who voiced their concerns with me and the lack of respect and dignity they feel from religious groups or even their own parents. Today those persons no longer feel unloved, unwanted or unsafe because I have learned how to help them come to the understanding of who they are as a beloved child of God. If I have learned how to communicate to them with love, with equity and building within them the dignity each person deserves, why can no one else? Are feelings now more important than the faith we as Catholics are called to live by?

Yes, the struggles within our students are real. However, there are people who have found the resilience to move forward WITHOUT a flag. The HCDSB must be willing to invest in finding these testimonies, speakers, and professionals that can help and that will not change who each individual is. We must not identify ourselves with our attractions or our feelings. Why is a term like “gay” coming before one’s Christian identity? We are all sons and daughters of Christ, we should let HIM define who we are. Let Him be God and not us.

Please, for the sake of our children, our Catholic identity and the souls of those responsible for the education of our children, vote against this motion.

Respectfully,
Michael Aguiar

From: Maria Bassi

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:07 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; O'Hearn-Czarnota, Janet <O'Hearn-CzarnotaJ@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; [REDACTED]

Cc: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Motion to fly the Pride flag - please include this correspondence in your agenda for the April 26 meeting

Dear HCDSB Trustees and Director Daly:

After watching the April 20 board meeting, it is apparent that the motion to fly the Pride flag in HCDSB schools is divisive. There is a lot of mudslinging and meanness taking place on social media in parent chat groups. It's embarrassing to be witness to such egregiously puerile behaviour from HCDSB parents. This motion is driving the community apart.

I watched the City TV interview with [REDACTED] just prior to the board meeting and she confirmed a positive, accepting school experience at Loyola. Having taught at Loyola myself for over 20 years, I can attest to the same. A compassionate, caring, supportive school community. As both a regular classroom teacher who consistently integrated life skills students into my classes and later as a special education teacher working with marginalized students in regular classes on a daily basis, it's unclear to me what on earth has changed in our schools that now necessitates flying the Pride flag.

Attempts to choose a flag that will suit everyone is unlikely. Some want the Pride flag or nothing. Others would like a specifically Catholic-centered flag. Others suggest the Courage flag. Others still suggest creating something new.

We already have a flag that represents and unites us all. It's called the Canadian flag.

Approving this motion, will alienate and exclude parents, students, ratepayers who have expressed that the Pride flag is not compatible with their lived Catholic faith and for trustees to disregard these

members of the Halton Catholic community would be to violate their own inclusivity policy.

Kind regards,

Maria Bassi

Retired HCDSB Teacher and Ratepayer

From: Michaela Coleman

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:46 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated. That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

As a Catholic, I will not tolerate any more antiquated hate in the name of religion. Our god is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Sincerely,

Michaela Coleman

From: Five BelowTen

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:52 PM

To: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Comments <Comments@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondence to add to the Board agenda package

Please add this correspondence to the upcoming Board agenda package

Dear valued trustees,

This motion - *Supporting Our Diverse School Community* - has naturally generated much interest from others not directly related to our Catholic school Board. If you are considering the several letters submitted by concerned individuals and families, it may serve our purpose better to put this matter to vote within our own school system for a more accurate representation by our students, parents, staff, stakeholders and ratepayers.

This issue at heart is about so much more than flying the pride flag. It is about singling out students and staff based on their sexual and gender identities and preferences.

This is wrong.

We cannot celebrate one aspect of the individual's identity without accepting the whole person. We cannot pick one part of a person to use as their identity. As human beings we have so many little pieces of our identity that come together to make a whole person. **Our sexual preferences and genders do not describe us completely.**

The colour of our skin, the families we live in, the places we were born, the people we have encountered, all of these and many many more innumerable things that make us so beautifully unique are just parts of a whole person.

In fact, the only thing we, at the HCDSB, ALL have in common is **our shared Catholic Faith.**

At the Halton Catholic District School Board we - families, staff, and trustees - **value the whole person** and we work hard to create conditions that support the spiritual,

intellectual, physical and emotional well-being of everyone so that they may fulfill their God-given potential. We know this to be true.

Our Catholic faith inspires us to be models of Christ through our actions of love, forgiveness, compassion, and acceptance. Our Catholic faith is the only real difference between our Catholic Board and other school boards in our region. Let us hold firmly to our Catholic faith then, as we decide our future.

Please do not fly the flag

Please do not promote pride month

M Farrell

-----Original Message-----

From: Maria Filice

Sent: April 23, 2021 6:02 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pride Flag Issue

Hello Trustees.

I am a mother of two daughters who are alumni of the Halton Catholic District School Board. I want to submit my opinion on this issue.

Basically I am so happy that my children are now out of the school system because should this pride flag have been approved when they were in school, I would have removed them from there.

It is not right to be promoting a lifestyle that is opposed to Catholic teaching. This is a very easy and simple thing to understand. Do you see this flag flying at Muslim or Jewish schools? I would say not.

Now I also believe that no child should be bullied so the policies around that appear to be detailed and thorough and able to handle any child who is having this issue no matter the reason. Nobody should be bullied.

In my humble opinion, please keep Catholic schools Catholic and following the teachings of the magisterium. It's as simple as that.

Maria Filice

From: Mark Huschilt

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:57 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Catholic School Board, Catholic Solution-Vote No

Dear Chair Murphy and trustees,

After attending the recent HCDSB virtual meeting I would like to reiterate a few thoughts. You have an opportunity here to vote against the motion promoting flying the pride flag and posting of the proposed safe-space poster. This motion is counter to many Catholic teachings and values and actually discriminates based on sexual orientation. I suggest as a Catholic ratepayer living in Burlington that a more inclusive solution be considered. As a Catholic school board you have an opportunity to preach the Gospel. Our Faith is all-inclusive, use June as the month to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus remind all students that their "safe space" is at the foot of the cross with Mary.

Please include this correspondence as part of the agenda package for the upcoming meeting.

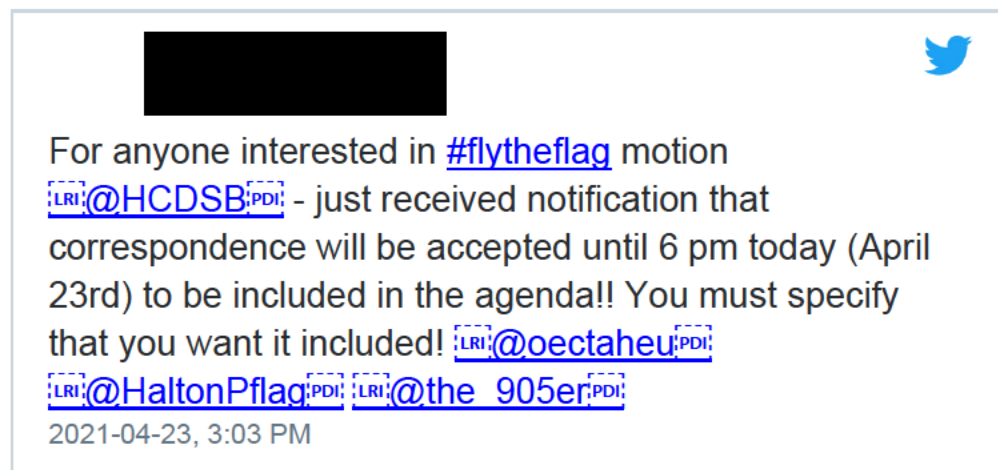
Thank You

Sincerely,
Mark Huschilt

From: Maria Lourenco [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 23, 2021 3:36 PM
To: Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>
Cc: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Swinden, Andrea <SwindenA@hcdsb.org>; info@ombudsman.on.ca; Alexandra Terrana <[REDACTED]>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Tweet by Alex Power on Twitter

Please confirm if this is true. If it is, please advise when this change in policy was decided and how it was communicated to the public. Do stakeholders have to follow some random person on Twitter now to find out about board policy changes? With less than three hours notice? How does this ensure equity amongst stakeholders who may wish to submit correspondence? I was very recently told, in response to declined correspondence, as I understand some others have been as well, that correspondence had to be received before the board report is posted in order to be included. The board report was posted yesterday. Do the rules just depend on who is asking or is there another reason for constantly flip flopping back and forth? If the information in this tweet is incorrect, please disregard this e-mail and I apologize for the inconvenience. If this is correct then I have one more question - does this board have any integrity whatsoever?

If you are indeed going to publish correspondence received before 6:00 pm, please publish this one.



From: Maria Lourenco [REDACTED]
Sent: April 23, 2021 5:59 PM
To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>
Cc: Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Alexandra Terrana [REDACTED] info@ombudsman.on.ca; Swinden, Andrea <SwindenA@hcdsb.org>
Subject: Re: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondence Policy

I have still not received any answers to my questions, which were originally submitted March 2nd, almost two months ago.

As most of you know, I am a highly engaged stakeholder and parent who has contributed to this board in many ways, and currently as co-chair of my Catholic School Council, Vice-Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee, and member at large on the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. I don't think it's too much to ask for the courtesy of an appropriate and respectful response when I raise questions and concerns.

Not only have my questions not been addressed about the ever changing rules about publishing correspondence, it seems in the meantime they have changed AGAIN....but only a few select stakeholders have been advised? I consider this to be a discriminatory practice with stakeholders not being treated equitably and I myself have been treated unfairly a number of times. Why is that?

Please provide a response to all of my questions and include this correspondence in the board report of April 26th, and actually every board report after until ALL of the questions have been answered and addressed.

Sincerely,
Maria Lourenco

From: Maria Lourenco [REDACTED]
Sent: April 12, 2021 4:52 PM
To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; 'Duarte, Marvin' <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>
Cc: 'Karabela, Helena' <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; 'Agnew, Brenda' <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org <Ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Alexandra Terrana [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondence Policy

Good afternoon,

I am following up on the email below, from a month ago today. I'm disappointed to say that I have never received even an acknowledgement of my concerns, much less an actual response to my questions. I have highlighted them below. As a reminder, the Principles in the draft policy state that "The HCDSB believes that effective communication is **reciprocal** and that **all correspondence** to individual Trustees or to the Board of Trustees as a whole, **shall be addressed.**"

Also, I asked for this correspondence to be included "on the Policy Committee agenda when the draft Correspondence Policy is also on the agenda". I see that the Correspondence Policy is on the agenda for tomorrow night's Policy Committee meeting, however the request to include my correspondence has not been honoured. Please amend the Policy Committee report to include the correspondence from March 12th below.

Thank you.

Maria

From: Maria Lourenco [REDACTED]
Sent: March 12, 2021 4:21 PM
To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>; 'Duarte, Marvin' <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>
Cc: 'Karabela, Helena' <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; 'Agnew, Brenda' <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; O'Brien, Timothy <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; 'Guzzo, Nancy' <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org <ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Alexandra Terrana <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Fw: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondence Policy

Dear Director Daly and Chair Murphy,

I am following up as I have still not received answers to the questions from my correspondence dated March 2nd (see below).

In particular, what was the rationale for publishing the "Dying with Dignity" letter in the February 16th board report? - a letter that had nothing to do with education, did not request to be published, and was from an organization whose very mandate is antithetical to the Catholic faith?

I received your message below that my correspondence of March 2nd was not published because it was received after the agenda package was posted and that "this year" you are "committed to be consistent and not add any correspondence after the agenda package is posted". This response raises many questions.... First of all, as I have shared many times, I have been told this in the past.....only to later find other pieces of correspondence published that were received after the package was posted, sometimes well after the package was posted including the day of the meeting. So it seems to me that your rules change on a whim. What is the rationale for suddenly going back to only publishing correspondence received before the report is posted? When was this decided and how and when was this shared with the community to ensure transparency and fair and equitable treatment of all stakeholders? Also, what is your definition of "this year"? In September of this school year, you were publishing letters received in the afternoon of scheduled board meetings - and reading them aloud upon request....

Not allowing correspondence to be published after a board report is posted severely restricts stakeholders from providing feedback on issues that are on the agenda that they might not be aware of until the report is publicly available. This is not being accountable, open or transparent.

A Policy would certainly eliminate any "confusion" in the future. More accurately, it would ensure fair and consistent treatment of all stakeholders. Your reference to the draft Correspondence Policy would suggest it is going ahead....but you haven't actually stated that, and the future of the policy is otherwise unclear, as I also referenced. Some trustees felt the current process - of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Director just making a decision - was working well. I hope these latest inconsistencies make it clear why a Policy is needed.

If the board is indeed committing to moving forward with the draft Policy, why not start to follow the provisions laid out in that draft policy? I didn't hear any objections from trustees to any of the provisions in the draft policy, just whether or not it was actually needed (I assure you, it very much is). The draft Policy allows for correspondence received up to 11:59 pm the day before the board meeting to be published in the report. Why then are you suddenly, after the draft policy has been presented, operating under such a starkly contrasting rule that has not been in place since....at least November? Again, when exactly did the rule change?

The draft Policy states that correspondence received after the deadline for publication in the immediately next board meeting, would appear on the next scheduled Regular Board Meeting agenda. While it was not confirmed to me, I would assume that my correspondence of March 2nd is scheduled to be published in the March 16th board report. I would instead ask that you publish this correspondence instead - the full thread which includes the March 2nd correspondence. Also please include this correspondence in full on the Policy Committee agenda when the draft Correspondence Policy is also on the agenda.

In closing, I would like to draw your attention to the Principles in the draft Correspondence Policy. In particular, the third bullet which states that:

"HCDSB believes that communication is reciprocal and that all correspondence to individual Trustees or to the Board of Trustees as a whole, shall be addressed".

I assume the Policy does not have to be in force for the board to honour this Principle and as such, I look forward to receiving answers to the questions raised both in this correspondence and that of March 2nd, attached below.

Sincerely,

Maria Lourenco

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

Sent: March 2, 2021 11:36 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Daly, Patrick <DalyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: RE: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondence Policy

Good morning,

This will acknowledge receipt of your request to have your correspondence included in our Regular Board Meeting package for March 2, 2021.

Your correspondence was received after the agenda package was posted and therefore will not be included. This year we have committed to be consistent and not add any correspondence after the agenda package is posted.

The draft Correspondence Policy before the Policy Committee for review should eliminate any confusion in the future.

Thank you for your understanding.

Rosie

Rosie Di Pietro

Executive Assistant to the Director of Education
Halton Catholic District School Board

802 Drury Lane, Burlington, ON L7R 2Y2
(905) 632-6314, ext. 115 | dipietror@hcdsb.org

From: Maria Lourenco <[REDACTED]>
Date: March 2, 2021 at 7:06:36 AM EST
To: "Murphy, Patrick" <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>, "Daly, Patrick" <DalyP@hcdsb.org>
Cc: "Duarte, Marvin" <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>, "Agnew, Brenda" <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>, "Karabela, Helena" <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>, "Iantomasi, Vincent" <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>, "O'Brien, Timothy" <O'BrienT@hcdsb.org>, "DeRosa, Peter" <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>, "Guzzo, Nancy" <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>, ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Correspondence Policy

Dear Trustees and Secretary of the Board,

I would like to first of all thank Trustees Agnew and Karabela for their work on developing and presenting the Draft Correspondence Policy at the February 9th Policy Committee meeting. The draft policy is thorough and I believe lays out a very clear framework as to how correspondence received by the board would be dealt with, including reasonable and fair criteria for deciding when correspondence should be published in board reports. Having such a policy would ensure a consistent and fair approach and effectively manage stakeholders' expectations.

However, the discussion that followed the presentation of the policy was confusing and it is unclear what the next steps are. In particular, there was discussion amongst several trustees that the current approach of the Chair, Vice Chair and Director deciding which correspond to publish and not publish was working well and that that should be codified. It seems to me that at that point, the conversation had gone full circle.....

The point of having a correspondence policy is, at least in part, to establish objective criteria to be used consistently to make those determinations. Leaving it up to three people, who could very well change from one year to the next, or, even amongst the same three people may have a difference of opinion from time to time essentially defeats the point of the policy in the first place. It was stated by Chair Murphy that the intention is to be "open" and that currently, all correspondence that "meets the criteria" is in fact published.....but the question remains - *what exactly is the criteria??* I have asked this question repeatedly over the years and received conflicting information and more recently - have not been provided any answer at all. So, in light of the conversation at the February 9th Policy Committee; I ask again, and I would appreciate an answer this time - ***what is the criteria that is used to determine whether or not an item of correspondence will be published in the board report?*** Since the system is working so well.....

It would seem to me, as I have articulated in the past, that without a clearly outlined policy, the decision is subject to inconsistency and potential for bias, manipulation and censorship. In fact, we didn't have to go too far into the future to see this in action once again. In the February 16th board report, there were three pieces of correspondence from stakeholders, and one from the organization "Dying with Dignity", (who I would not define as a stakeholder of the Halton Catholic District School Board in any way, shape or form), in opposition to Trustee Karabela's motion "Opposing the Euthanasia Bill C-7". There were no letters published in support of the motion. Only one of the stakeholders actually asked to have their letter published, the others did not, and neither did the organization. So please tell me, **what was the criteria used to determine that these pieces of correspondence should be published by the Halton CATHOLIC DSB?** Fast forward another two weeks and we learn that there were several pieces of correspondence in support of the motion that were in fact denied publication in the February 16th board report. One of them mentions that their correspondence was inadvertently sent in too late. Back in September, the board published and read aloud correspondence received on the day of the meeting. Just how late were these items of correspondence for the February 16th report that they could not be published? **What exactly is the deadline for submitting an item of correspondence and having it published in the report?**

I was particularly dismayed to see the board publish the letter from "Dying with Dignity". I have repeatedly asked, what is the criteria for organizations to have their letters published. I've given an example of an organization with concerns about the *education of students*, an organization that was in fact directed to send a letter to the Chair and the Director to have their concerns addressed (they never were), whose correspondence was not published, yet a letter from an organization that has nothing to do with education, that is not a stakeholder of the board, and that did not request to have their letter published, was published? Not to mention that the organization's very purpose and mission is in direct conflict with the tenets of the Catholic faith. For that reason it was quite disappointing when a majority of trustees voting *against* removal of the letter from the board's report. One trustee mentioned that they were in favour of "freedom of speech" and of stakeholders making up their own minds and decisions. None of that is relevant whatsoever. For one thing, while stakeholders can certainly have their own opinions on any number of issues, those who support the Halton Catholic DSB, either as ratepayers and/or parents sending their children to its schools, do so knowing that the institution defines itself as being "distinctively Catholic", and that it has an obligation to carry out its mission through a Catholic lens and remaining true at all times to the Catholic faith. (What otherwise is the point of having a Catholic board?) It is not up to a Catholic school board to present the different sides of any debate in order for its stakeholders to make a decision on anything in their personal lives - certainly not an issue on which the Church's position is pretty clear. As you may be aware, there are many social media platforms that censor users in various ways - including deleting their accounts - when they don't agree with their position on any number of issues. *So why on God's Earth would a Catholic school board provide a platform for an institution whose very existence is diametrically opposed to the Catholic faith?* Do you think "Dying with Dignity" would publish a letter from the Halton

Catholic board? or the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops? Or any letter with an opposing position? Why would the Halton Catholic Board publish their letter?

In reviewing the way correspondence was handled in the February 16th and March 2nd board meetings, it is difficult not to reach a conclusion that the Halton Catholic board is in fact in favour of Bill C-7 and Euthanasia. If the board wants to avoid the appearance of bias, manipulation and censorship, it needs to establish a policy which clearly outlines the criteria for publishing correspondence in board reports, and it needs to actually follow the policy - consistently. I would further suggest that the board's correspondence policy prohibit the board from publishing correspondence from organizations whose mission and purpose runs contrary to the Catholic faith and Church.

Please include this correspondence in the March 2nd Board Report.

Sincerely,

Maria Lourenco

-----Original Message-----

From: M McCloskey

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:44 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Special Meeting April 26

Hello,

Please include the following email as part of the Special Meeting of the Halton Catholic District School Board on April 26.

It stresses me greatly that I need to reach out to a publicly funded organization and request that they not be homophobic and fly the Pride Flag. This is the absolute minimum that could be asked of your organization and the fact that it continues to be an issue up for discussion, is simply appalling. If your organization can't do the bare minimum for students who are gay, then maybe you should be defunded.

Warm regards,
Michelle McCloskey

Mr. Chairman and Trustee's,

Please include this submission in the agenda for the meeting held on Monday April 26, 2021.

I am a concerned Halton Catholic District parent of four children who attend HCDSB schools in Oakville.

I believe you would be doing harm to students by approving the motion to allow the pride flag to be flown or any material representing it to be distributed in our schools.

Raising that flag suggests approval of sexual relationships that the church disapproves of, and which run contrary to the Catholic moral teaching of chastity. In Theme 3 of Fully Alive in grade 8, it is taught that the homosexual acts are sinful, however the homosexual person should be treated with respect. How are students expected to reconcile the difference between sinful acts and flying a flag that seeks to celebrate them?

The Vatican recently stated that priests cannot bless same sex unions, that God "cannot bless sin".

In 2010, as the head of the Catholic Church in Argentina, the Pope, then Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio said "gay marriage was a strategy to destroy God's plan". He also expressed concern about a bill allowing same sex couples to adopt, he stated "it was important to ensure that children had "both a father and mother" as role models. He also said that gay people should not be discriminated against but reaffirmed Catholic teaching that same sex acts are sinful. This is Catholic teaching, yet many LGBT activists and many of their "allies" contend that repeating these teachings is homophobic, racist and discriminatory. I consider this a personal attack on me and my Catholic faith. It is nothing other than anti-Catholic bigotry.

The Church's teaching on the dignity of each person made in the image and likeness of God is the correct foundation for teaching anti bullying and creating safe spaces. This applies to all people, be it homosexual, ethnic, black, white, the list goes on.

Recently, Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto defended a father who also asked the Toronto Catholic School Board not to fly the "pride" flag. He stated that the father "correctly" stated Catholic teaching when it comes to homosexuality. How can referring to the Bible be considered hate speech. If that's what Catholic trustees think, then why send your children or support the Catholic school system if you find the Bible a form of hate speech? "A false interpretation of Scripture causes that the gospel of the Lord becomes the gospel of man, or, which is worse, of the devil". - St Jerome

A board decision to move ahead and approve the flying of the Pride flag would betray your duty to have our schools guided by the clear teachings of the Catholic faith. It would also **negate the parental choice we made to send our children to Catholic schools with the expectation they would adhere to Catholic moral teaching.**

I implore you to stand with the Catholic church and its teachings and vote NO to this motion. I request that in place of the Pride flag, you choose instead to fly the Sacred Heart of Jesus Flag as Father Janusz Roginski suggested. JESUS' HEART IS OPEN AND LOVES EVERYONE.

Yours in Christ,
Mary Renic

From: Stacy Kennedy

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:34 PM

To: Kelly, Kirsten <KellyK@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Obrient@hcdsb.org; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] We fully support flying the Pride flag in June

Good evening,

We fully support the motion brought forward by Trustees Agnew and Guzzo to fly the Pride flag in June.

We are an HCDSB family & ratepayer that stands beside and behind the amazing people in the HCDSB and greater community of Halton who are a part of the LGBTQ community and their families. That includes students, staff and administrators in our schools and board and extends to our family, friends and neighbours. Our journey of learning is one of faith, spirituality, empathy and compassion and has opened our eyes to the lived experience of others and the importance of supporting ALL members of the Catholic faith and their families.

Please include this email in the official package.

Sincerely,

The Marambio Family
Oakville

Dear Director Daly, Chair Murphy, Vice-Chair Duarte, Trustees, and Superintendents,

My name is Nikki Borge Scott, my pronouns are she/her. I am a mother to what I thought were 3 sons, but it turns out I made a mistake and have 2 sons and a DAUGHTER. One of my beautiful children is living life as her true self. I couldn't be more proud of my beautiful girl, my strong and brave daughter. My other children understand that they have gone from having a brother to a sister. Kids are pretty impressive and adaptive when we give them the opportunity and education to help them understand. She is the happiest child who is liked and respected by her whole class and is currently unaware of the hate that people feel towards children like her, and as her mother I would very much like to keep it that way. I know life won't be particularly easy for her, our home will always be a safe and positive space. It will be the walls that protect her from the ugly that lurks out there. I hope that with this motion that her school and the entire Halton Catholic School Board can be an additional safe space for her.

Two of my children currently attend [REDACTED] and my youngest will join them in September. The school is run by an amazing group of staff and admin. We absolutely love our school. No parent wants to see their child suffer because of bigotry and hate. No adult wants to see any child become a victim of anti trans hate, I choose not to use the word transphobic because there's no fear of the community, just hate.

When I realized my daughter was transgender, I began to read and learn as much as I could about trans people. One thing that shocked me was the mental health issues these children face due to lack of representation, discrimination, rejection, harassment and bullying. The statistics around transgender suicide and attempted suicide are very concerning and I do not want any child to become a victim of them.

All children deserve to feel welcome in their own school, and flying the 2SLGBTQIA is a great way to do that.

The 2SLGBTQIA flag represents safety and welcoming spaces. It signifies to someone who identifies as 2SLGBTQIA, when you enter this establishment, home or school, you are welcome. You are safe and you are accepted, respected and loved. You are among friends and allies here.

Before staff, students and visitors walk into a HCDSB school, they should see a symbol of that. This flag also represents more than transgender, gay, lesbian and bisexual people. It represents intersex people, who are genetically born with characteristics of both males and females in some form. They are biologically both. According to [amnesty.org](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/06/intersex-people/) 1.7% of the population are born with intersex traits, that's the same percentage as people born with red hair.

It represents asexual, people who have no sexual or romantic attraction to anyone. It represents 2 Spirit people who are honoured in the indigenous communities. I don't think flying a flag for 30 days in June would set the Catholic Church or the school board back, or condone any sin. It would show the entire community that the Catholic Church and school board is choosing to welcome and love a marginalized group of people, the way Jesus called us to do.

The HCDSB acknowledges significant faith days of other religions, Ramadan being the most recent. Muslim students are welcome to wear their hijabs and at events where food is served there are halal options.

When we acknowledge those days of faith we are not condoning idolatry or encouraging people to convert. We are saying to the other religions “we see you, we value you, we celebrate with you”

The same goes for the pride flag.

Idolatry is a sin, we’re not to worship any other God before our God, but no one seems to care about the other religious groups that are welcomed in our schools that may follow “other gods” and what the Catholic church considers is a sin. So why are we picking and choosing which “sins” we have a problem with?

In regards to the concerns of the flag promoting sex and sexual acts. Although the flag once depicted a pink stripe that represented sex, the flag has evolved and the pink is no longer on the flag. This shows that it is possible for things to change and evolve, much like many things in the Catholic Church and society as a whole.

Pope Francis is very vocal about the 2SLGBTQIA community and their rights to be in a family or have a family. He said “Homosexual people have a right to be in a family. They are children of God and have a right to a family. Nobody should be thrown out or be made miserable over it.” The lack of visibility and representation within our school board which is like family to a lot of students and staff and students, absolutely contributes to 2SLGBTQIA members being miserable, oppressed, and unseen.

As a family unit along with my two other children we have gotten used to saying “sister” and not “brother” when we talk about their sister. It’s a pretty big accomplishment for a 4 and 5-year-old. It just goes to show that if a 4 and 5-year-old can learn things like new pronouns, it should be super simple for an adult!

We have an opportunity now to make a change to show the world that our 2SLGBTQIA kids are being seen. Flying a flag is a small step to make these individuals feel safe, validated and recognized. I think about how easy this is to do and how much of an impact it will have. As Nelson Mandela once said. “No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

Let do the right thing and let's show the love and support that our 2SLGBTQIA community needs. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to speak today.

Sincerely

Nikki Borge Scott

(She/her)

From: Nicola Harrington

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:47 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated. That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

As a Catholic, I will not tolerate any more antiquated hate in the name of religion. Our god is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Sincerely,

Nicola Harrington

From: Nicole Lancaster

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:35 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated. That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

As a Catholic, I will not tolerate any more antiquated hate in the name of religion. Our god is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Sincerely,
Nicole

-----Original Message-----

From: Nathalie Penz

Sent: April 14, 2021 12:27 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Pride Flag

Good afternoon Mr. Duarte,

I am writing to you regarding the motion to fly the pride flag at Catholic schools across Halton. In my opinion, I do not see any harm in flying a flag. If anything, it will make the LGBTQ kids in our schools (yes we do have them) feel included and loved. Pope Francis keeps saying we need to accept and love all people in the Catholic faith regardless of their sexual orientation. LGBTQ kids are no different so why not show them a little kindness by raising a flag. It's such a simple gesture.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and please include it in the correspondance in the next meeting.

Nathalie Penz

Sent from my iPhone

From: Neal Skelton

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:52 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include the following correspondence in the April 26 board meeting package

Please accept this letter as my support for the motion to fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic schools during pride month and include in the April 26 board meeting package.

It is very important every child in the catholic school board community feels loved and accepted for who they are regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Based on the events at the meeting held on April 20, now more than ever **the board must make a stand to embrace all students and show them that hate will not be tolerated.** That bigotry and homophobia has no place in our school community.

We urge everyone involved in this very important decision to think about what this decision will mean for the LGBT2+ members in the catholic community, and on the flip side what it will mean if its rejected.

Tolerating hate in the name religion is simply not the Christian way to behave. Our God is full of love and light, and accepts everyone for who they are, who they were born to be.

Make the right choice. Choose love.

Neal Skelton

My name is N.F. [REDACTED] and I am a Grade 10 student in the HCDSB.

I have been going to a Catholic School in Halton since Kindergarten, first [REDACTED] for elementary, and now [REDACTED]. Although a great deal of my spiritual education happened at home, I was also able to learn about my faith at school. One of the things that was never discussed at school though, was the Church's teaching on Homosexuality, Transgender, and the LGBTQ+ community. What I understand of these teachings, I learned at home, from priests in our diocese, or through my own research. Why is this? Is it because this teaching is too complicated for elementary and high school students to understand? But I can tell you from personal experience that it is not. After all, I have been able to understand and find value in these teachings since elementary school, and even have discussions about them with my peers. Additionally, we already acknowledge that people at our schools do identify as LGBTQ+. So surely if students in our board are able to identify their place in this community, they would also be able to understand Catholic Teaching on this matter. So why then is it not discussed? Is it because this teaching is "politically incorrect"? Because Society views it as homophobic and hateful? That is just the problem. Most people do not understand the teaching of the Catholic Church on this issue, let alone on sexuality in general and the sanctity of our bodies (which is theology of the body). So how are we supposed to be promoting Pride and the equity and inclusion of people in this community if we do not even understand **our** faith's teaching on it? We are a Catholic Board after all. The truth is, that if we were to actually examine the Church's teaching on sexuality - both homosexuality and heterosexuality, we would discover that it is not hateful and exclusive, but beautiful and inclusive. This teaching actually promotes equity and inclusion. The Catechism does not only teach that "Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that 'homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.' ", but also that the people who identify as LGBTQ+ "must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided." A lot of people do not realise this. The Catholic Church tells us we must be loving and compassionate, not hateful. But we can do this without promoting something that does not align with Catholic Values.

The elementary school that I went to did not fly a pride flag, even in June. And we did not have special events to promote pride, even in June. And yet, my school was still an equitable and inclusive school. My peers and I were not worse off because of it, we did not grow up feeling excluded or hated. I had caring teachers and supportive students all around me. We did not need a poster to tell us that our school was a safe place, because our teachers and the other members of our community ensured it always was. From the time I was a little girl, my parents have taught me that Jesus loved everyone, and that because of it we should love everyone too. They taught me to value human life and human dignity. Because of this, I am able to understand extremely well why exactly we need to create an environment at our schools that is inclusive, supportive, and welcoming for everyone, and have tried to do my part in creating it.

But I was also taught that Jesus was persecuted and crucified because he would not deny his values, values that his society did not like. I was also taught about the first saints, the martyrs who did not give up their values to the point of death, values that their society did not like, just like Jesus. And my parents taught me to do the same. To hold strongly to my beliefs, to the teachings of my faith, even if I am ridiculed or scorned by Society because they do not like them.

Because at the end of the day, it's not Society that is judging us. It's not Society that is glorifying us, It's not their praise or approval that we are seeking. It is Jesus'. And he will be asking us, did you defend your faith, did you hold strongly to your values, or did you bend to Society. **Who is your God?** Whose love do you seek, do you value more? Society or Jesus? Jesus who died on the cross for you and the immense weight of your sins? Jesus who loves you despite all your shortcomings? Or Society who scorns you because of them?

I am not saying that I am a saint, far from it. I do everything I do not because I am perfect, but because I am imperfect, and because I need to do everything I can to make up for it. And that is why I refuse to condemn Jesus because his teachings are unacceptable in the eyes of the secular and material world. I will stand by him and what he teaches, even if it means I am ridiculed and hated.

This year, I have had the privilege to be a member of the Student Senate. I applied to become a senator, because I wanted to be able to contribute to the catholic perspective in our Senate. As a Student Senator, I can say that I would love to help with these initiatives, as long as they are in line with the teachings of our faith. In fact, our constitution states that "Members of Senate are called to live out Gospel values" (Art. II s. 5), and the Bible many times calls out [the act of homosexual intercourse as sinful](#). At the last meeting, one of the delegations said that Jesus never said "I love you but..." The truth is though, that is not true. Jesus does not only say I love you. He says "I love you - sin no more" or "I love you, which is why you have free will. You are able to sin, even though it hurts me, and I still love you". Although Jesus loves everyone, he never says that they are right in sinning. He loves the sinner and not the sin*. This is how we must consider this motion. The flag represents something our faith teaches is wrong. And yet we have heard that there isn't enough inclusion in our schools when it comes to those who identify as LGBTQ+. So what we really need to do, is work on creating more inclusive environments at our school, to support the members of our community, without supporting something our faith teaches is sinful, which is represented in the flag.

Society is asking us to fly this flag. Jesus is asking us to love everyone. We do not need the flag to support the members of our community who identify as LGBTQ+. All the flag does is send a message that we condone something that our faith does not support. At the end of the day, when making a decision, there are a few things you must consider. First, before we promote Society's values and understanding of this issue, we need to focus on our faith's values and understanding of it. We cannot expect our students to support something unless they understand our Faith's teaching on it. Second, we must ensure that every decision our board makes reflects Catholic teaching. We must refuse to cave in to Society's demands to make ourselves look better. In fact, Jesus never forced his values on others, so why should we let Society

force theirs on us? And Finally, we are able to support an equitable and inclusive environment without celebrating values that conflict with those of our faith. In the end, it's not about flying a piece of cloth to make those in our community feel welcome. It's about making them feel welcome, and being so sure that our schools are welcoming open and inclusive environments, that we don't need a flag to tell people that.

Thank you

From: Cichon, Olivia

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:27 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] RAISING THE PRIDE FLACE

HCDSB,

Please raise the pride flag in support of our LGBTQ+ children. We wear orange shirts to teach our children that residential schools are wrong, we wear pink shirts to teach our children that bullying is wrong and to support those kids that have been bullied. Let's do the right thing and fly the pride flag, another symbol to support a community of kids in our schools that deserve our support.

Please include this email as correspondence at the next meeting.

Olivia.



We are writing today because we feel obligated to be a voice for all the staff, students, and faculty who feel silenced in your school board.

Pflag Halton stands in full support of Trustee Agnew and the countless students whom we serve in the community who attend your schools. We are urging you to vote yes in favour of the 'Supporting Our Diverse School Community' motion.

Flying the Pride flag during the month of June and having safe space posters within your classrooms is an important first step toward inclusion. The flag is a symbol of inclusion for our community - flying it at your schools sends a message that 2SLGBTQ+ youth are welcome to be who they are in your schools. Let us be clear: no other substitute flag communicates the same message for our community. Symbols are very important for communities, especially equity-denied ones. In the same way that the cross is a visible marker for Catholics and Christians around the world and lets them know that they are welcome in a specific space so too is the rainbow flag for our community, especially in the month of June. Our community looks for this flag as a signal that we belong here and are welcome here. 2SLGBTQ+ students in your schools will look for the Pride flag in June and your vote on Monday sends a very clear message to them: either they belong or they do not within your schools.

We have many 2SLGBTQ+ HCDSB students who attend our Pflag programs and services. We hear about the bullying they encounter, the transphobic slurs that are directed towards them, and the persistent culture of homophobia that is a part of their daily life at school. The impact of seeing a rainbow flag at their schools cannot be discounted. These youth need to know that they are wanted and that they belong. We acknowledge that flying a Pride flag is a symbolic gesture but it is a necessary first step on the path toward equity and inclusion within your school board.

Your inaction and allowance of hateful rhetoric during board meetings has garnered national attention. There is a national spotlight on the Halton Catholic District School Board as we await your decision. Do the right thing and fly the flag. Vote yes.

Please include this message in the official correspondence pertaining to Monday's agenda items.

Signed,
Pflag Halton Leadership Team

From: Jim and Rocio Farrell
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:11 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] FLY THE PRIDE FLAG

Dear HCDSB Trustee,

I am writing to present my unwavering support for the motion of flying the Pride flag in all the schools during the month of June. It pains me that such a small act needs to be even discussed or voted on. I am disappointed that the Catholic schools, which have "belonging" as one of their pillars have any doubt about doing everything possible to create a more safe and inclusive space for all.

Please include this email in the special Board meeting of April 26th.

Thank you,

Rocio Farrell



Rainbow Collective of Thunder Bay

April 23, 2021

Delivered by Email

Chair, Trustee Patrick Murphy
Halton Catholic District School Board
Catholic Education Centre
802 Drury Lane,
Burlington, Ontario, L7R 2Y2

RE: Supporting our Diverse School Community – Pride Flags, Posters and Acceptance of 2SLGBTQIA Students, Staff and community

Dear Chair, Trustee Patrick Murphy, Halton Catholic District School Board Trustees, Director and Students, Staff and Families

I write to you today from Thunder Bay, Ontario to express my unequivocal support for “*Supporting our Diverse School Community*” motion and for raising the Pride (Rainbow) Flag for the month of June at all HCDSB schools to show support and acceptance for “Pride Month” an international recognized month to celebrate the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

I do not need to tell you how this “debate” is hurtful, discriminatory, bias and hateful and it goes against everything that the Catholic faith teaches. As a person who went to Catholic School all my life, my schooling and upbringing by strong catholic grandparents taught me to be accepting of all people, no matter race, gender, sexual orientation, religious background or where someone lived, their own upbringing or their socioeconomic background.

In 2019, we made history at the Thunder Bay District Catholic School Board (TBDCSB) by working together with the Director, administration, trustees, Gay-Straight Alliances (GSA), students and staff to raise the Pride Flag at the Board Office. This was a truly historic feat, the 1st known Catholic School Board in Ontario to officially raise the flag and recognize Pride. This began to heal the pain that so many in the school community had endured leading up to this moment.

Not only was this an historic moment but as the person who lead that change in my community, I can tell you that it was not as difficult as you are all making it out to be. This change started with an honest and open conversation with the Director of Education. This conversation continued over a few months until the decision was made, without political interference or public backlash to raise the Pride flag and acknowledge that 2SLGBTQIA+ people exist, that they are welcomed and that they are loved unconditionally in the TBDCSB.

I will not lie, progress is hard and progress takes strong conviction and incredible will, even for those who have struggled to accept Queer, Transgender, Two-Spirit people. Canada is a progressive country; it provided protection under law since July 20, 2005 for Same-Sex



Rainbow Collective of Thunder Bay

marriage. Since then the sky has not fallen, the world has not crumbled and if anything it has made the world more tolerant and accepting to the 2SLGBTQIA community. Doing the right thing is not hard if you have the will to see a better, more inclusive world.

I want to stress to Trustees you were elected to support **ALL PEOPLE**, not selecting who is granted acceptance or quoting random bible verses written thousands of years ago, trying interpreting what Jesus was or wasn't in support of. There is no way to know what Jesus meant or did not, what we know is that we are taught to accept everyone for who they are and love each other equally. I also must remind you, you are a publicly funded school system in Ontario and as such, you must abide by the Human Rights Code. The code is clear about its protection and prohibits actions to discriminate against people based on protected ground. Your work also must include breaking down systemic barriers, systemic discrimination and racism in your school system.

We strongly and unreservedly call for you to vote YES for the motion brought forward by Trustee Agnew and immediately begin the healing to the school community who have been deeply impacted by this very troubling and hurtful discussion on the merits and validity of 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff and communities in the Catholic School System. What you do today will be remembered and you either stand on the right side of history or you risk further alienation from your community, electors and those trying to do better in our communities by breaking down barriers and building safer, more inclusive schools.

Now is the time to do the right thing, it is time for a progressive and forward thinking school system, leave the bible alone and understand how the world has changed and evolved. We do not want to go back in time, let's set the future on a path of great change and acceptance. Nobody should feel less than, unloved, not accepted or that they are living in sin.

Do what's right, Trustees, our students deserve to feel accepted and loved.

Respectfully,

Jason Veltri
President
Rainbow Collective of Thunder Bay
info@rainbowcollectiveofthunderbay.com
807.358-3007



Rainbow Collective of Thunder Bay

CC:

Vice-Chair, Trustee Marvin Duarte
Trustee Brenda Agnew
Trustee Peter DeRosa
Trustee Nancy Guzzo
Trustee Vincent Iantomasi
Trustee Helena Karabela
Trustee Tim O'Brien
Trustee Janet O'Hearn-Czarnota
Student Trustee Nicholas Gubert
Student Trustee Kirsten Kelly
Student Trustee Joseph Roshdy



To our community, to the youth at HCDSB, we see you.

On April 20th 2021, the board of Trustees within the HCDSB met to hear delegations regarding a motion, "Supporting Our Diverse School Communities."

This motion was brought forth by Trustee Agnew that was originally proposed by a student of HCDSB. This included raising the Pride flag and providing resources and posters to students. This request was fueled by a project study they led, finding that 75.2% of their schoolmates felt unsafe.

We acknowledge that, through the student survey and through personal stories that we have heard from our own youth, that school can be a place that feels unsafe, exclusionary, and extra challenging for 2SLGBTQ+ youth. We understand that feeling unsafe and excluded can affect our mental health.

We are saddened by the actions within the HCDSB to continue to allow a rhetoric and narrative that prevents equal access to representation, resources and an affirming space for all 2SLGBTQ+ youth and families within the system. This is a human right. It is an obligation to hold these publicly funded systems accountable and support Bill C-16.

Failure to do so continues to fuel homophobia, biphobia and transphobia within these systems. Directly correlating to the marginalization, trauma and violence faced by members within our community.

Whatever the board of trustees decides, their decision will not be what determines the success of the "Supporting our Diverse Schools" initiative. The success comes from everyone who participated by researching, writing, advocating and/or witnessing this process.

We hope that you are so proud of yourselves for sharing your stories, we stand in solidarity with you. We know that everyone in the school environment will be affected by the decision, one way or another. The decision itself however, is not what defines you. PSN is here to support you. We admire your persistence and courage.

Sincerely,

The PSN Team

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-----Original Message-----

From: Suzette Arruda

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:42 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org

Cc: Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Re: Support of Raising the Pride Flag

>

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

>

> I support the motion put forward by Trustees Brenda Agnew and Nancy Guzzo in raising the Pride Flag.

>

> Please include my email in the official correspondence package.

>

> Thank you,

> Suzette Arruda (HCDSB Parent)

>

> Sent from my iPhone

From: Sarah Dale

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:20 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Email to be included in upcoming Board Meeting - Re: Raising of Pride Flag

Hello,

Please be advised that as a parent of two children in the HCDSB and resident of Oakville, I fully support the motion put forward by Trustee's Agnew and Guzzo to raise the Pride flag to promote inclusivity, kindness and ensure ALL our children know that their school is a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

***Please include my email in the official correspondence.**

Thank you,

Sarah Dale

Dear Mr. Murphy and Trustees,

As a resident of Oakville, a tax payer to the Catholic school system, member of the Catholic schools and mother of students in the Catholic school board, I kindly request to postpone the vote that will take place on Monday April the 26th.

The motion to fly the pride flag in our schools needs further discussion, I request that the vote is postponed until the delegations that have requested an opportunity to make public their concerns are heard.

A decision that involves all the Halton Catholic Schools must not be considered on a haste.

We as members of the community, we need to ensure that this motion is going to bring unity and not favouritism of one single group or further more cause a serious division in the community in general not only in our schools.

If you Trustees are truly committed to equity and inclusion for everyone, you must give yourselves the opportunity to listen to the parties involved and not only favour the group that is requesting this motion to be approved. There are many other minorities that are not include and do not even want to be included under this motion because it does not represent themselves.

Mr. Murphy and Trustees you owe me this in good of conscience to not proceed with the vote this Monday.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

Sandra Galvis

From: S Johnson

Sent: April 22, 2021 12:58 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Obrient@hcdsb.org; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; o'hearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Flag Motion

Hi my name is Stephanie Johnson. I am writing to show my support in fly the pride flag at Halton Catholic School Board. My husband and I are both practising Catholics as well our children attend a Halton Catholic School. Both my husband and I are Catholic school educated. I am also a educator for another school board. The school board I work for welcomes the flying of the flag. I was absolutely ashamed of the behaviour that was allowed and shown from some of the trustees as the last meeting.

As parents we always encourage our children to lead with love and kindness. Saint Theresa of Lisieux has been quoted as saying "let us love, since that is what our hearts were made for". Saint Fancis de Sales stated " you learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working, and just so, you learn to love by loving. All those who think to learn in any other way deceive themselves". You learn to love by loving it is clearly stated in this quote. By flying the flag we are teaching our children how to love and acceptance. Flying the flag is a very important and overdue step that HCDSB needs to take.

My husband and I have both decided we need to draw a line in the sand for our children. It has not been an easy decision to make but through prayers and discussions with our family members one that we feel compelled to make unfortunately. If the motion to fly the flag is not approved we will be removing our children from the Catholic school board. We feel a need to set an example to our children of love and acceptance, not one of outdated beliefs that our own Pope does not believe in.

I would like this to be added to the official package for the meeting if allowed.

Thank you for your time

Stephanie Johnson

From: Susan McLachlan

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:31 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Raising the Pride Flag vote (please include this letter in the official board meeting correspondence)

Dear Director Daly and Secretary of the Board,

I support the motion to raise the pride flag each June and posting safe space posters in each classroom at HCDSB. I find it deeply concerning that trustees are voting based on their personal feelings which don't reflect the feelings of the voters that they were elected to represent. This is a gross misuse of their power and position.

In contemplating the board's position, I had to ponder the simple question that we as Catholics often consider, "What would Jesus do?" While a simple question, I truly believe that it informs our demeanour and actions as Catholics. Wouldn't Jesus demonstrate love and acceptance for all? Wouldn't Jesus want everyone to feel safe, loved and included? I firmly believe for us to do as Jesus would do, that the board must fly the Pride flag and demonstrate non-judgmental inclusivity. Simply put, students and staff have a right to feel safe, included and loved.

I'm asking that the Board act in consideration of the well-being of all students and from the love and inclusivity that we know Jesus would demonstrate and vote yes to the loving act of flying the pride flag.

Please include this in the official board meeting correspondence.

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan McLachlan

From: Susanne Rodgers

Sent: April 23, 2021 5:44 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Agnew, Brenda <AgnewB@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; Guzzo, Nancy <GuzzoN@hcdsb.org>; Iantomasi, Vincent <IantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; obrient@hcdsb.org; ohearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Support for Trustees Agnew and Guzzo's motion

Hello,

I am resending my email to be included in the official correspondence of the new meeting to vote on the motion to raise the pride flag in June. I want to reiterate my support for this, and I also wanted to express my dismay at watching the board meeting last week. Many of the trustees acted like children throughout the meeting and to be quite honest, it was embarrassing to watch. I was horrified at the hateful speech of the delegates who were opposed to the flag, and feel that as a Catholic organization, we can do so much better than this. Do you really feel that if Jesus was sitting in this virtual meeting, He would be nodding his head in agreement about some of the things suggested - that gay parents shouldn't adopt for instance?

I sincerely hope that you will vote in support of this. Trustee Darosa - I can tell you want to. Please follow your heart on this.

Thanks for your time

Susanne Rodgers

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Susanne Rodgers

Date: Tue., Apr. 13, 2021, 9:41 p.m.

Subject: Support for Trustees Agnew and Guzzo's motion

To: <dipietror@hcdsb.org>

Cc: <karabelah@hcdsb.org>, <derosap@hcdsb.org>, <guzzon@hcdsb.org>, <iantomasiv@hcdsb.org>, <agnewb@hcdsb.org>, <duartem@hcdsb.org>, <murphyp@hcdsb.org>, <o'hearn-czarnotaj@hcdsb.org>, <Obrient@hcdsb.org>

To the trustees of the Halton Catholic District School Board,

I am writing as a parent (and a teacher - however I teach for a different school board) of a child currently enrolled in HCDSB (and I am also a product of this board). **I want to express my deep support for the motion put forth by Trustees Agnew and Guzzo to fly the pride flag for the**

month of June at all schools in the board (and board offices) as well as hanging posters in all classrooms promoting inclusiveness and acceptance - because last time I checked, THAT was the true essence of what being a good Catholic is all about.

If you are thinking of NOT voting in favour of this, which sadly I see that many of you are planning to vote this way, I IMPLORE you to consider how you might feel if it was YOUR child who was made to feel unloved, excluded and outcasted in what is supposed to be the safest space of all - their school. I don't need to tell you, as I am sure you are all very much aware, that for many students, school is their only place of refuge. Imagine being excluded simply because of who you choose to love. It is ABSURD that I am writing this email in 2021. Make no mistake, the pride flag will absolutely let all students know that regardless of who they are, God loves them and so do their teachers and the school system. And if you disagree with this, then shame on you.

PLEASE be sure to include this email in your official correspondence.

Thank you for your time,

Susanne Rodgers

From: Shelley Spivak

Sent: April 23, 2021 3:33 PM

To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fly the Flag

Dear Trustees,

I am parent of a student at an HCDSB school. I am writing to urge you to please do the morally right thing and vote YES in support of the motion put forth by Trustee Agnew.

Now more than ever we must ensure that we support the fragile mental health of our students. All students deserve to feel visibly supported In our communities and schools. To refuse this motion would be a very harmful mistake and the reaction by the majority of the community would be devastating. I will not personally gain or lose from this decision but I would be mortified to know that my children are being brought up in a community that refuses to raise the flag or post supporting and inclusive signage in schools.

The HCDSB mandate is 'Achieving. Believing. Belonging.' All our students deserve to feel as if they belong.

Please include this letter in the official correspondence of the next Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Shelley Spivak

Trustees,

I am writing today to formally lend my support to raising the Pride Flag this June and every June in solidarity with our **LGBTQ2S+** HCDSB staff, students and families.

It is disappointing that in 2021 it is necessary for a ratepayer and parent to write their school board asking elected officials to recognize the importance of ensuring all individuals be treated equally and fairly. It saddens me that a Board built on value-based learning is reluctant, at times defiant, in providing a welcoming, safe and loving space for **LGBTQ2S+** staff, students and families.

Mostly, I am disappointed in myself for choosing a Catholic education for my children that discriminates against some of our most vulnerable children. In our family, we have two golden rules:

1. There's always space for one more at the table
2. Treat others how you want to be treated

In its simplest form, raising the Pride Flag reminds the HCDSB community, and my own children, that there is always room, that we are equal. More importantly, the flag celebrates diversity, that God loves all of us exactly the way we are and that HCDSB is a safe and welcoming space for our **LGBTQ2S+** staff, students and families.

Trustees, please bring the Board into the 21st century and make parents feel confident about choosing Catholic education by voting to support the motion to raise the Pride Flag.

Thank you,
Stacey Vlasic Dewsnap

From: Tianna Gerrior

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:00 PM

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

Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Please include this email in the board meeting April 26'21

Dear Mr.Patrick Daly and the Halton Catholic District School Board,

I am the parent of a graduate from St.Thomas Aquinas in Oakville. I hope to have my 9 year old child also attend the same high school in the future.

My oldest was embraced, supported and thrived. In spite of her regular high school stress and some extremely negative experiences with one educator, to which I felt was handled well by the principal, counsellors and staff of STA.

My family supports flying the pride flag, showing love ,compassion and support to those who may be feeling excluded and letting the world know judgment is not ours to make. Passing judgment for any reason is wrong. Creating safe spaces for children to be educated is the primary focus.

I hope you make the right decision.

Sincerely,
Tianna Gerrior
#flytheflag

From: tricia langenberg
Sent: April 23, 2021 4:42 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Fly the flag - April 26th meeting

Please include my letter to be considered when voting on the motion to fly the flag. And please be read and included on April 26th special meeting.

What is the meaning of a Rainbow?

Rainbows are a symbol of hope in many cultures. They appear as perfect arcs, often during a rainstorm when the sun shines onto water droplets, shattering its white light into an array of brilliant colours.

We as a Catholic school community should be uniting our staff and students to celebrate equity and inclusion for all.
I believe by having safe posters and flying the Pride flag in June will bring awareness and happiness, but also show love and compassion for those in our 2SLGBTQ+ community.

I would ask for you to pass the motion to allow the flag and posters to be in all our schools.

God created everyone..no matter their colour, their gender, their beliefs, he made everyone to be loved and feel love.

Be that arc and make a difference, shed your white light to see the beauty in colours. It may be a rainbow to you but a safe haven for others.

Thank you,
Tricia Langenberg-Kealy

From: Thao-Nguyen Nguyen
Sent: April 23, 2021 3:21 PM
To: DiPietro, Rosie <DiPietroR@hcdsb.org>
Subject: [<EXTERNAL>] Voting on Pride Flag

****Please include this email in the special board meeting on April 26th*****

Dear Board of Trustees,

I hope you are doing well in this pandemic.

I am writing to you as a current parent with a child in a HCDSB elementary school. When I heard that they are considering being progressive and inclusive and would discuss the idea of hanging the pride flag during the month of June, I was excited. As a teacher in an independent school which has affiliations with the Anglican church, I have first-hand seen the impact on students when they feel included. In an ever-changing world, students are exposed and hear about the world and know the injustices that can happen when people are not open-minded to other people in the world. I know the church's old stance on the 2LGBTQ+ community, but if we do not teach our students and children how to be inclusive, then we are not helping to create the positive and just world of tomorrow. I believe the Catholic Church under the leadership of Pope Francis will see this viewpoint too over time. The church has made strides to become more inclusive and open to the world, for if we do not, we will lose many followers by being closed-minded.

Therefore I am imploring you to vote in favor of this motion so that we can see the Catholic Church and our community move into a brighter, more inclusive school community. A community where I would like my children to be aware and inclusive of others.

Thank you for hearing me out.

Best regards,
Thao-Nguyen

April 23, 2021

Dear Trustee,

I am a parent of two children currently enrolled in an HCDSB school and I am whole heartedly in support of the Supporting Our Diverse School Community motion. I would like my email to be included in the official correspondence.

As a parent, the Pride flag symbolizes to myself and my children that it is okay to be whoever you choose to be. It symbolizes love, acceptance and belonging. It shows that students (and staff) are valued no matter what. I want my children to always know that they are accepted and that they belong in their school community. HCDSB needs to show that we are a school community that embraces diversity, inclusion, respect and love for ALL people.

During the month of June, I drive by other schools and I tell my children about the pride flag. They comment on the beautiful rainbow colours as I explain all that it represents: diversity, inclusivity, life, healing, sunlight, nature, serenity and spirit. I always tell them that it means you can be yourself and that you will be safe and accepted by all the people in the school. They ask me why the flag is not flying outside of their school. I have no answers for them.

Please consider this motion and all that it represents for the students and staff who attend or work within HCDSB schools. The school community is rallying in support of flying the Pride flag. Please listen. It would fill me with so much hope and optimism for the future if HCDSB schools embrace the diversity of our students and our families.

Thank you,

Venetta Miranda
Parent of 2 children attending an HCDSB school

From: Riddell, Victoria

Sent: April 23, 2021 4:58 PM

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

Cc: DeRosa, Peter <DeRosaP@hcdsb.org>; lantomasi, Vincent <lantomasiV@hcdsb.org>; Duarte, Marvin <DuarteM@hcdsb.org>; Karabela, Helena <KarabelaH@hcdsb.org>; Murphy, Patrick <MurphyP@hcdsb.org>

Subject: Motion by Trustees Agnew and Guzzo

Good evening!

As a teacher in Halton Catholic, I would like to put forward my support for Trustees Agnew and Guzzo's motion for raising the Pride flag in June and recognizing Pride month as a board.

During today's Equity and Inclusion PA Day we had time to watch and reflect on Pope Francis' third encyclical, Fratelli Tutti. Father Dias spoke on the dignity and fundamental equality of all human persons. We are called to put humans and humanity at the centre of all decision making - and to especially put the poor, the outcast, and the marginalized at the centre of decision making. The message really resonated with me that no baptized person is more Catholic than any other another, even the Pope, so why would we want to neglect a show of support for our 2SLGBTQI+ students and staff? Those who have been made to feel marginalized and outcast, within our Board and the Catholic Church - this is who we are called to centre in our decision making.

One of the first parables we learn in school is The Good Samaritan. Reflecting on this today, we are called to ask "Who is my neighbour?" - how can we call ourselves neighbours of our 2SLGBTQI+ students and staff if we, as a board, choose not to embrace them with love, as Jesus does. God has made each and every one of us in His image, He does not make mistakes.

If you have not had a chance to hear Father Dias speak on Fratelli Tutti, I highly recommend it. It was incredibly illuminating, and such a valuable resource for our board as we move forward in serving Equity and Inclusion within HCDSB and the greater community.

I hope you will consider voting in favour of raising the Pride flag this coming June.

Please include my email in the official package.

Thank you,
Victoria Riddell

To the Board of Trustee of HCDSB,

My name is Denise Tidwell, a mother of a beautiful transmale that attends HCDSB. This email is to express my disappointment and to fight for my child to raise the LGBTQ2+ flag at HCDSB schools.

First and foremost, I am VERY disappointed with the outcome and the decisions made on April 20, 2021 by the most influential members of the HCDSB. As a Catholic mother of a transmale, I am disgusted with what transpired during the event of the meeting. The comments made by some of the members, have questioned my faith and beliefs in our HCDSB community. Sexuality of an individual should not be questioned by our faith nevertheless the Trustee. You, the Trustee, had the power to raise awareness and to support diversity in all ways of life whether it is gender and sexual orientation, culture and/or religion.

Secondly, I would like to mention how neglecting this request to raise the LGBTQ2+ flag in HCDSB schools is a form of bullying and discrimination of the minority and their rights. We as Canadian citizens, live in a diverse community and we teach our kids in schools and at home to welcome all kind of life for that is what a good Catholic member will do. By neglecting to raise the flag for the month of June, you the trustee have discriminated my child and his beliefs. We are living in a very difficult and unprecedented time and to give hope to our youth by welcoming them to their beliefs and/or sexual orientation will shed a light to this difficult endeavour.

Lastly, I plead for the Board of Trustee to make the right decision and to reconsider the effects they can cause to those in the LGBTQ2+ and to the youth who are fighting for their rights. I urge you to let their voices be heard and to be a good Catholic member by welcoming all kinds of life because that is what our Catholic faith has taught us. This is not for what you believe in, it is for the members who deliberately want to be heard. Do the right thing, give them HOPE!

I would like to conclude by requesting this email to be part of the official correspondence related to the 'Supporting Our Diverse School Community motion'

Regards,

Yna Denise Tidwell

