

# Shaping the Standards

## A Commitment to Effective Communications

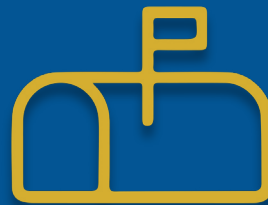
2023 NSPRA National School Communication Award  
Gold Medallion Award Entry

Comprehensive, Strategic,  
Year-Round Communication Program

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Communications and Community Engagement (12 Members)

[www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)



# HWDSB

## SYNOPSIS

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) has a vision in which Curiosity, Creativity, and Possibility empower students to learn and grow to their full potential in a diverse world. With 50,000 students and 93 schools, HWDSB embraces Effective Communication as one of its five strategic priorities.

In support of Effective Communication, an NSPRA Communication Audit was completed and a strategic communications plan was created highlighting an area of digital engagement. The global pandemic accelerated this area as HWDSB, like other districts, relied on technology and engaged families in a virtual experience.

Family communication during this time was marked with challenge as described in Thoughtexchange research. Perceptions of ineffective or inconsistent communication was the experience for the majority of 1,250 participants. It was clear that HWDSB needed to standardize practices and support staff to be effective communicators.

HWDSB believes that effective communication builds positive relationships with school communities. In August 2022, HWDSB developed and introduced Communication Standards, which is the first of its kind in Ontario.

The [Communication Standards](#) were designed to help families be well informed and knowing what to expect. The Communication Standards also provides guidance to staff to know how, what, and when to communicate.

Communication Standards builds on the strategy that promotes standardized digital platforms (see Digital Tools for [Students](#), [Parents](#), and [Staff](#)) and offers a positive customer service experience.

Through the standards, HWDSB has defined what *expected topics* will be shared via *direct communication* with parents. Staff have clarified the ways that employees communicate with families by using *essential channels* such as by phone, email, and mail, or *supportive channels* such as websites, Parent Portal, or social media, for example. Staff have also outlined what additional communications may look like beyond the minimum expected standards.

Communications is an individual experience and for staff, a practice. The implementation of the comprehensive and strategic program celebrates Communication Standards and supports an effort that communication is improving. Through evaluation efforts, the defined publics welcomed the positive change.

HWDSB's value towards communication is at the heart of this work. The Communication Standards is the district's commitment to families.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY | RESEARCH

### Secondary Research

Across North America, there was minimal research available on the topic of district Communication Standards. In the secondary research, staff found communication satisfaction surveys, standards of information technology infrastructure, and policies/procedures related to communication procedures (e.g. crisis management or school emergency closures). Districts also produced guidance documents about how parents can address concerns. The development of the HWDSB Communication Standards, however, is unique and can act as secondary sources of research for other districts.

Research into other organizations 'standards of practice' became helpful to create communication standards. Examples include: Accessibility Directorate of Ontario: [Accessibility Standards](#); Ontario College of Teachers: [The Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession](#); Public Relations Society of America: [Ethical Standards](#); and US Army: [Communication Guidebook](#).

### Primary Research

**NSPRA Communication Audit:** The [audit](#) was complete in 2017 and became the foundation for renewal in HWDSB's Effective Communication priority within its strategic directions. The Communications & Engagement Plan was created to implement the recommendations of the audit, which included the consolidation of platforms and advocated for consistent communications.

A digital engagement strategy was then adopted to standardize platforms and provide clarity in district communications. As an example, HWDSB transitioned from Google to Microsoft. In addition, HWDSB confirmed a catalogue of 13 platforms and a structure to approve new ones for the district.

**Thoughtexchange:** HWDSB initiated a Thoughtexchange in 2021 to ask parents about their communication experience during the pandemic. The Thoughtexchange welcomed 1,251 participants who were primarily parents, and generated 1,016 thoughts with 19,245 ratings. HWDSB heard: Duplication and overload (144 respondents); Difficulty in receiving and finding information (101); School staff and school board communications was sparse (94); Emails and texts were irrelevant (85); Robocall timing, frequency and usefulness (50); Platform referrals lacked detail (52); Frequency, usefulness, and low urgency of content (50); Accessing on social media and applications was difficult (14); and lack of translation services was not equitable (8).

### Problem Statement and Situation Analysis

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HWDSB learned many lessons reported by its diverse communities about its communication practices. The pandemic exposed HWDSB's barriers, even when Effective Communications was identified as a strategic priority in its multi-year strategic plan.

Parents informed district staff that they experienced communication differently from school to school and class to class. Their perception of communications was complex, being effective, but also inconsistent and repetitive. Some parents felt they did not always receive information that affected

their child/ren in a timely manner or at all. There was also an opportunity to educate more about HWDSB's digital platforms.

As public health measures were starting to ease, principals and vice principals were also needing support in their leadership to renew their communication knowledge, skills, and abilities. There was a need to transition back to school-based communication from the perceived district, top-down approach that was experienced during the pandemic.

A collective and comprehensive effort was needed to deliver high communication standards.

## Goal

In a culture of effective communication at HWDSB, parents will have trust and confidence in their child/ren's educational experience as staff deliver high communication service and standards.

## Objectives

### Senior administration (director of education and superintendents)

1. By August 2022, 100 per cent of the senior team will be aware, endorse and support staff in time for the Communication Standards to be implemented in the 2022-23 school year.

### Principals/vice-principals and managers

2. By February 2023, 15 per cent of principals and vice-principals will model their commitment for their colleagues by participating in a Communication Standards engagement activity.
3. By March 2023, 75 per cent of principals and vice-principals will report through a pre- and post survey that they feel more supported in their ability as effective leaders/communicators because of the Communication Standards.
4. By October 2022, two learning sessions will take place for managers to understand the standards.

### Parents

5. By March 2023, 50 per cent of parents surveyed will report an enhanced attitude or perception of communications at HWDSB.
6. By June 2022, parents consulted will identify at least 25 topics for which they consider expected and important to them.
7. In the 2022-23 school year, five communication opportunities will emerge that are in direct response to feedback shared by parents to enhance communication operations at HWDSB.

### Employee group leadership

8. By October 2022, 100 per cent of leaders of HWDSB's employee groups will be aware of the Communication Standards.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY: ANALYSIS / PLANNING

**Strengths and Opportunities:** Effective communications was already a priority within HWDSB’s strategic direction. With digital platforms standardized, HWDSB was well positioned to standardize responses and develop communication standards.

During spring 2022, HWDSB was in transition from intense public health measures. There was an opportunity to return to basics. Educators were expressing a sense of learning recovery to support students; the communications and community engagement team was calling for a communications recovery to support leaders in their ability to communicate.

**Weaknesses and Threats:** During the development of the Communication Standards, it became evident that a parent’s perception of communication is individual and may differ from what the standards suggest. Parents have also gone to the media during a concern and reported that “no one” contacted them, which is often untrue and a threat to customer service and reputation.

Educators support classroom-home communication. The communications team relied on principals to communicate with their school teams, which was a challenge among their priorities. Also, there was labour disruption in the fall 2022 as education workers were without employee contracts.

The communication of the Communication Standards was contingent on awareness and perception. Families experience expected topics at various times and ways. The success of this work is dependent on the perception that communication is being strengthened and not based on the volume of communication outputs.

### **Audience Identification, Profile and Analysis**

**Primary Publics:** Parents representing the Parent Involvement Committee, school council members and Home & School Association, senior administration, principals/vice principals, and managers

**Secondary Publics:** Employee group leadership, all staff, all parents, and the board of trustees

### **Key Messages**

- Effective communication at HWDSB starts with standards; a commitment to families!
- HWDSB wants families to be well informed and knowing what to expect. At the same time, staff are supported to know how, what, and when to communicate.
- Communication Standards: Build **confidence** and **trust**; Demonstrate **leadership** and **care**; Honour all voices through **feedback**; Show **responsiveness** to **mitigate issue**; and Accelerate **engagement**.

**Budget:** The communication effort was low-cost at \$4,600 CAD. Costs for research, such as appreciation items to participants, the purchase of cookies/baked goods, prize to the winners of the engagement activity, poster printouts, and event launch. Refreshments and mileage for staff were considered for public sessions. All design and video work was done in house.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY: COMMUNICATION / IMPLEMENTATION

### **Strategy No. 1: Development**

The Communication Standards were developed, trialed, and approved by senior administration between January and June 2022. The project was supported and co-created by the interim director of education with final approval in June.

Activities and tactics used to develop the standards include preparing materials and presentations. Approximately 20 one-on-one sessions or focus groups were held with key publics to consult, create, learn, and receive feedback about communication expectations and standards.

- Parents were asked what they wanted to include in the standards influencing the final product.
- Staff engagement included managers, members from Risk Management, Health & Safety, Safe Schools, Equity, Specialized Services, employee group leaders, and K-12 program.
- The Hamilton-Wentworth Principal Council (HWPC) represents all principals and vice-principals in the district. HWPC met three times and validated the Communication Standards.
- NSPRA mentors were engaged, as Communication Standards were unique and challenging.

A visual representation of the Communication Standards was created upon its approval. A nine-page internal guidance document was developed for all staff and a public information post on the [website](#).

The Communication Standards were celebrated at the launch event in August 2022 to kick-off the 2022-23 school year. Event logistics, videos, blog posts, social media, and system messaging were used during the opportunity that included the Communication Standards.

### **Strategy No. 2: Leadership**

Communications is an essential skill in building strong leaders and navigating changing environments. Leaders build trust within the district and in school communities. Principals, vice principals, managers, union partners, and support staff were identified within this strategy. A key tactic/resource created was a digital Communication Guide for Service Leaders and Principals. Within the guide was digital library of templates created to support leaders on how to communicate and deliver standards.

The *Shaping the Standards* memo series was published each month producing seven in total. Each edition provided key highlights of the Communication Standards and offered best practices for Service Leaders and Principals to communicate effectively. Each memo was published before a monthly principal learning session where more than 200 administrators gathered to discuss school operation matters. Posters were printed. The Communication Standards was highlighted at various times during these sessions and a booth was set up with staff from the Communications and Community Engagement team to provide support during breaks and lunchtime.

### **Strategy No. 3: Engagement**

An engagement strategy emerged to raise awareness about the Communication Standards to change perceptions among parents and support for principals.

- **PIC Connects:** Together, with the chairs of the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), the Manager of Communications and Community Engagement took the Communication Standards on the road in a series called *PIC Connects*. These sessions totaled five in the 2022-23 school year. The in-person opportunity allowed the leaders from the district-level parent involvement committee to support school-based parent committees.
- **Principals' Pledge:** Engagement among principals, vice-principal and service leaders was done with an engaging baked-goods theme at learning sessions and system events as the team was "shaping the standards" like cookies being shaped from dough. A bake sale was held as a culminating engagement activity. Principals were asked to submit a baked item to represent their commitment, their pledge and call to action, to the Communication Standards. Flyers, direct email messages, incentives/prizes, memos, and promotion on HWDSB's employee intranet rounded the tactics for this engagement strategy.

#### Strategy No. 4: Content

External communications and broad awareness of the Communication Standards was needed. A content strategy was used to share information about the Communication Standards, as well as the topics and events at HWDSB. Videos, all-staff messages, website blog posts, and social media were used to execute information and demonstrate effective communication.

- **Expected Communication Topics/Tactics:** A feature of the Communication Standards differentiates between *expected* and *additional* communication. Template letters were written for *expected topics* such as bus accident, coyotes on property, new teacher/principals etc.
- **Additional Communication Topics/Tactics:** A series of newsletters were created for the 2022-23 school year including a district-level newsletter called *Now @ HWDSB*, a Trustees newsletter for local school/ward news, a monthly newsletter from the Parent Involvement Committee to parents called *The PIC Connection*, and a weekly newsletter from the Director to Board members called *Trustees' Weekly*.

#### PROGRAM SUMMARY: EVALUATION

##### Evaluation for senior administration (Objective 1)

- All members (11 in total) were directly supported with a learning session in June ready for the start of the school year. In particular, the five superintendents who lead HWDSB's 93 schools and 201 principals and vice principals were given additional training.

##### Evaluation for principals, vice-principals, and managers (Objectives 2-4)

- 18 per cent of principals/vice-principals took action/made a pledge and modeled their commitment to the Communication Standards. This is a three per cent objective increase.
- \$802 was raised from the engagement activity (bake sale) with proceeds donated to the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success and helped four students facing education barriers.
- 84 per cent of principals/vice-principals surveyed said they felt more supported in their ability as an effective leader because of the Communication Standards. Even though 93 per cent said



in the pre-survey, seven months prior, they already had what they needed to be effective leaders.

- Two learning sessions were completed by October where managers reported they understood their role in supporting superintendents when communication was required.
- 52 templates were written for principals/vice principals on *expected topics*.
- 11,300 views on the Communications Standards page on HWDSB's intranet.

### Evaluation for Parents (Objectives 5- 7)

- 63 per cent of respondents who knew about the Communication Standards said that HWDSB is more effective in their communication.
- 30 parents were directly consulted within the development strategy.
- 42 expected topics were recorded from the consultation; 64 topics were in the final guidance.
- Nine communication opportunities, from the five stated in the objective, emerged because of the direct feedback shared by parents to enhance HWDSB communication operations.
  1. **Board newsletter** (*Now @ HWDSB*): 8,823 website hits on the HWDSB newsletter
  2. **Trustee newsletters** (11 individual newsletter to Ward schools): 65 per cent compliance of newsletters shared by principal to schools as of this submission.
  3. **Trustees Weekly**: 28 newsletters to date have been shared to the Board of Trustees reflecting content that appears on social media or on the HWDSB website.
  4. **Police relations**: HWDSB's communication team and Hamilton Police Service media relations office confirmed communications process involving police matters.
  5. **COVID-19 response**: Consolidation of COVID-19 communication and promoted updated public health measures using Communication Standards guidance.
  6. **Digital Platform preferences**: Promotion of *Digital Tools for Families* was shared during Back to School and Kindergarten Registration communication.
  7. **Director's Twitter**: New account was created with 613 followers since September 2022
  8. **The HWDSB App**: 7,796 downloads of the new App since August 2022.
  9. **Engage HWDSB** (*Bang the Table/Engagement HQ*): 4,006 site visits and 243 site registrations were submitted since the platform was launched in October 2022.

### Evaluation for Employee Group leadership (Objective 8)

- All employee group leaders attended a roundtable discussion. This highly valued group represents teachers, office administrators, education workers, caretakers, educational assistants, early childhood educators, and occasional staff. Changes were made as a result of suggestions and conversations to enhance the final Communication Standards.

**Next steps/reflections:** The Communication Standards will continue to be practiced and evaluated over time and with each scenario. As staff experience different aspects of school life and measure them against the standards, parents will inform their satisfaction about communication over time based on district performance. HWDSB can easily modify their practices while following the structure of the Communication Standards.

Staff will continuously learn and build from expected and additional communications. School audits and more training will be done in the future for quality control and consistency. Stories of exemplar communication will also be shared as stories. Overall, the communication effort of the Communication Standards was a success. While more work is needed to support communication, HWDSB has shown its value in Effective Communication.



# HWDSB Communication Standards

Communication builds positive relationships with parents, guardians, and caregivers.  
We want you to be well informed and knowing what to expect.  
We want staff to know how, what and when to communicate.

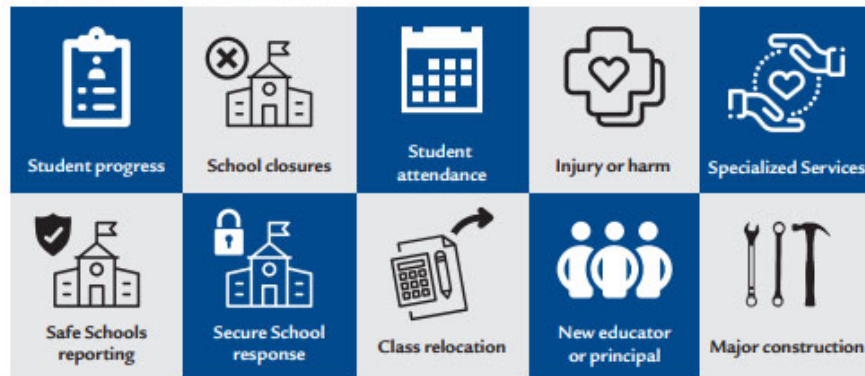
## HWDSB's Communication Standards Apply to all Schools

HWDSB is committed to fostering a culture of human rights, equity and inclusion. We offer learning and working environments that are welcoming, respectful, and free from discrimination and harassment.

### Expected Topics and Examples

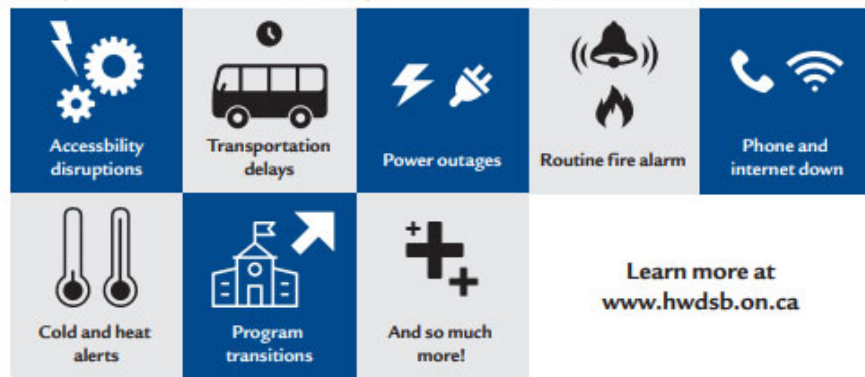
You will receive communication on **expected topics**. How? Telephone, email, or mail.

Emergency communications may occur after hours.



### Additional Topics and Examples

You may receive communication on **additional topics**. Where? Websites, Parent Portal, MS Teams, or on social media.



### HWDSB's Response to Inquiries

- Responses will be communicated within 2 business days during working hours
- Staff follow the Right to Disconnect procedure to maintain healthy work life boundaries
- HWDSB is committed to listening and establishing clear, fair, and effective processes to build an environment where human rights are upheld

### How you can support Communication Standards:

- Ensure phone number and email is current at your school
- Secure passwords for HWDSB Platforms
- Frequently visit platforms to learn what is new
- Provide feedback at the class, school or board levels
- Navigate general and Human Rights concerns using Addressing Concerns @HWDSB resources

Communication Standards: <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/media/communication-standards/>



# HWDSB

## Communication Standards – Internal Version

### Introduction

Communication Standards is a strategy within Effective Communications priority of the 2017 Strategic Directions and the 2018 Strategic Communications and Engagement Plan. Communication Standards builds on the strategy that promotes standardized digital platforms.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) accelerated digital engagement by confirming the standardized platforms used in the district. With the approved platforms, and a process to approve new platforms through Executive Council, the Communications and Community Engagement department moved to confirm standardized communication topics to communicate to families.

### Why Communication Standards?

Communication builds positive relationships among our communities. HWDSB is committed to keeping parents, guardians, and caregivers well informed and knowing what to expect. Used effectively, communication builds trust and confidence, while supporting leaders in their role to demonstrate responsiveness, mitigate developing issues, and show care.

Communication Standards help staff communicate effectively. Staff will know how, what, and when to communicate.

Standards create a consistent experience for families from school to school and remove duplication of messaging that may add unnecessary noise, which can be a barrier to those who receive messages from the sender. Clear communication also provides space for feedback, which is a priority in HWDSB communications as we honour all voices.

Communication standards in practice will also open opportunities to accelerate engagement with our communities.

### Who are Communications Standards for?

Communications Standards are for parents, guardians, and caregivers who entrust HWDSB staff with their child/ren. In addition, Communication Standards is a supportive resource for staff members who are in positions where they communicate with parents, guardians, and caregivers.

### When do you refer to Communications Standards?

Communications Standards are a guide to use when determining when communication is required and when effective practices of communication can contribute to a positive school environment. Standards promote effective communication.

### **Communication Standards for Staff (Internal)**

- HWDSB communicates through essential and supportive channels, which includes digital platforms
- Direct communication is shared with parents, guardians and caregivers on expected topics using essential channels
- Effective practices are used to communicate with parents, guardians, and caregivers on additional topics using supportive channels
- Staff from the classroom, the school, and the district know their responsibility to effectively communicate with a parent, guardian, or caregiver
- Staff will communicate in a timely manner and adhere to the Right to Disconnect Procedure

### **Communication Standards for Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers (External/public facing)**

Parents, guardians, and caregivers will receive communication on expected topics

- In-person, telephone, email, or mail
- Emergency communications may occur after hours

Parents, guardians, and caregivers may receive communication on additional topics

- Websites, Parent Portal, MS Teams, and social media

### **Guiding Principles**

Use these guiding principles to support effective communications at HWDSB.  
Communications should be:

- *Accessible* – to ensure information is available to all
- *Consistent* – to align with mission, values, policies, and practices
- *Clear* – to provide clarity about the purpose of the message delivered
- *Culturally Responsive* – to be aware and accommodate cultural differences
- *Honest* – to express the truth without misleading
- *Reciprocal* – to evaluate the effectiveness of messages through feedback
- *Respectful of Privacy* – to protect individuals' identities and behaviours
- *Promotes Safety* – to ensure a healthy and safe environment
- *Timely* – to occur sufficiently, early, and promptly
- *Transparent* – to act on good and bad information with rationale



## **Communication Standards Terms**

**Essential Channels:** A parent, guardian, or caregiver is required to provide contact information to HWDSB, which includes telephone number and mailing address. Email addresses are essential and strongly encouraged as a preferred method of communication between families and HWDSB. Staff should be aware of families who do not have an email address.

**Supportive Channels:** At HWDSB, we value the importance of timely and ongoing communication with families. All digital platforms approved by HWDSB enhance communication with families are encouraged. All digital platforms approved by HWDSB enhance communication with families are encouraged but are not required or mandated. All platforms are supportive channels of communication, including Parent Portal, MS Teams, and websites. Schools can also use different mediums such as a student agenda, newsletter, social media, school announcements, or school signage, for example.

**Digital Platforms:** Digital platform is any electronic tool for communication and approved by HWDSB Executive Council. All HWDSB platforms that parents, guardians, and caregivers need are available on the Parent tab on the Board website ([www.hwdsb.on.ca/parents](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/parents)), and the Parent Portal. Families can also visit the HWDSB App.

**Direct Communication:** Parents, guardians, and caregivers will receive direct communication in the form of an in-person conversation, telephone, email, or mail when events or situations occur that meet the criteria for an expected topic.

**Expected Topics:** Expected communication topics always meet the criteria for direct communication with parents, guardians, and caregivers because the topics uphold a mutual value shared between families and staff.

**Additional Communication:** From a place of expected topics and direct communications – a baseline of minimum standards – everything else is a benefit to those who wish to receive communications. Additional Communications can range from information that is available to a parent, guardian, or caregiver but not always shared directly with them. Such examples include a notification on a website, information on a platform, a courtesy message, or campaigns.

**Customer Service:** Customer service is the support staff offer new and enrolled families who belong to the HWDSB family. Communication Standards is part of a larger approach to customer service that helps students and families have a smooth and enjoyable experience.

**Effective Practice:** Schools communicate in a variety of ways based on the needs of the community. An individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests in a communication tool or approach support effective practices. Effective practices promote effective communication and start with research, identifying an audience, and clearly communicating a message.



**Classification:** Parents, guardians and caregivers receive communication from many sources in HWDSB. Regardless of who is sending the information, they are the recipient. A classification is an internal term that means the communication to parents, guardians, and caregivers comes from the class, school, or system. From there, the Communication Standards establishes who is responsible for the communication (educator, principal, superintendent, or director).

### Roles in Supporting Communication Standards

- **Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers:** As partners in education, parents, guardians, and caregivers can support Communication Standards. They can:
  - Ensure their phone number, email and home address is current at your school
  - Secure passwords for HWDSB Platforms
  - Frequently visit platforms to learn what is new
  - Provide feedback at the class, school, or district levels
  - Navigate general and Human Rights concerns using Addressing Concerns @HWDSB resources.
- **Educators:** Educators communicate most often with parents, guardians, and caregivers and has the most direct relationship with the home. As always, educators will use their professional judgement to communicate effectively. Communication Standards support classroom communications. The classroom educator will directly communicate with parents, guardians, and caregivers on behalf of an Educational Assistant.
- **Education Workers:** Includes members of the Professional Student Services Personnel such as occupational therapists and kinesiologists, psychologists, social workers, speech/language pathologists and psychoeducational consultants. Education workers in this category support individual students and may work with students in small groups. They will often use direct communication with families.
- **Vice-Principals/Principals:** School leaders communicate with families to build relationships, community, and reputation. Effective leaders deliver effective communication. Communication Standards become a guide for decision-making and communication.
- **Office Administrators:** These roles are supportive to the vice principal/principal and the school's needs. They are frontline staff working directly with families. Scripts, talking points, and access to templates for educators and vice-principal/principal is encouraged.
- **Superintendents:** Superintendent's work with service departments to offer support vice-principals/principals related to effective leadership practices and to support school operations. Executive Assistants act in a coordinating and supportive role.
- **Communication Officers:** Provide strategic communications to support priorities, governance, system programs, emergency, and crisis response. Communication Officers (including Manager) provide support to school communications on defined topics.

### HWDSB's Response to Inquiries



- Responses will occur within two business days during working hours. For more resources, visit [Email Guidelines](#)
- Reference: [Right to Disconnect Procedure](#)
- HWDSB is committed to listening and establishing clear, fair, and effective processes to build an environment where human rights are upheld

### Guidance on Direct Communications on Expected Topics

<b>Educators (Class)</b>	<b>Education Workers (Class/School)</b>	<b>Vice-Principals/Principals (School)</b>	<b>Superintendent Coordination** (School)</b>	<b>Call a Communication Officer (School/System)</b>
<p>Student learning and progress (Report Cards signed by Principal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connection with families in advance, esp. progress with difficulty</li> <li>- Reference: Growing Success*</li> </ul> <p>Essential program notification (E.g., Health and Physical Education curriculum; signed by Principal)</p> <p>Injury (medical non-urgent or reported to central reporting injury system) *All staff witnessing and/or directly involved should contribute to the information reported. Educators should be aware of injuries in their space and with their students.</p> <p>Parent-teacher interviews</p>	Specialized Services	<p>School hours and schedule</p> <p>Student attendance</p> <p>September Start-up message</p> <p>Early Intake Meetings, IPRC and IEP, Transition to school, Prevalent medical condition, and Calming room access (frequent use over time)</p> <p>School Council recruitment</p> <p>Extra-curricular involvement (school inclusion)</p> <p>Safe Schools reporting, school safety</p> <p>Activities requiring participation (school participation: pink shirt day)</p> <p>Program: Transitions and</p>	<p>Facilities and maintenance disruptions or issues</p> <p>School renovation that impacts relocation of students from their classroom</p> <p>Equity concerns in curriculum causing harm to others</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety concerns</p> <p>Safe schools (non-police: Bullying, Gateway, Suspension/Expulsion, Code of Conduct, Dress Code, Student Behaviour, etc.)</p> <p>Social work conversations initiated by local events seeking parent awareness (i.e., death, CIRT)</p>	<p>Police response</p> <p>Secure Schools (Shelter in Place; Hold &amp; Secure; Lockdown; Bomb Threats) Evacuation (moved off-site)</p> <p>Emergency closures</p> <p>New schools</p> <p>Boundary changes</p> <p>Major construction project</p> <p>Bus accidents (injury)</p> <p>Positive/proactive media</p> <p>Negative/reactive media</p> <p>Labour updates (Work-to-rule/strike)</p> <p>Death of a student or a staff member</p> <p>Weather alerts</p>





<p>Student conduct *Following Safe Schools Policies and Procedures and Privacy legislation</p> <p>Excursions</p>		<p>Kindergarten Orientation Staff re-organization</p> <p>Temporary replacement New Vice-Principal/Principal</p> <p>Evacuation (non-urgent): Fire Alarm, Suspicious Odour</p> <p>Bus accidents (no-injury) Minor health concerns</p>		<p>Outages (Phone, internet, or power outage)</p> <p>Approved school-year calendar</p>
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**\*Growing Success, page 53:** *“Although there are three formal reporting periods, communication with parents and students about student achievement should be continuous throughout the year, by means such as parent-teacher or parent-student-teacher conferences, portfolios of student work, student-led conferences, interviews, phone calls, checklists, and informal reports. Communication about student achievement should be designed to provide detailed information that will encourage students to set goals for learning, help teachers to establish plans for teaching, and assist parents in supporting learning at home.”*

**\*\*When coordination is required by the Superintendent’s Office to support Vice-Principal/Principal Communication:**

- Service departments provide descriptions of events to superintendents, Executive Assistants or directly to the Vice-Principal/Principal
- Executive Assistants may help draft communication, compile detail, refer to a template, or give to Vice-Principal/Principal/Office Administrator to draft
- Communication Officer can edit and provide templates
- Communication comes from school and signed by Vice-Principal/Principal

**Templates for Vice-Principals/Principals:** In the Communications and Community Engagement section of the Intranet, there is a Principals’ Communication Guide folder that includes a library of templates. These samples include many expected and additional topics that can be used by principals/vice-principals, Superintendents and Executive Assistants. If a topic is not uploaded as a template or for any questions, please email [communications@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:communications@hwdsb.on.ca).

**Minimize duplication:** Where possible, parents, guardians, and caregivers should receive direct communication from one source. Additional communication often includes voluntary platforms where the parents, guardians, and caregivers would expect to receive the same message in multiple channels.



**No email from a parent, guardian, or caregiver:** Vice-Principal/Principal and Office Administrator should be aware of families who do not have an email address or who have opted out of School Messenger notifications. This population requires attention to ensure they receive important communication

### **Support to Educators and Vice-Principals/Principals**

Educators: Vice-Principal/Principal support educators with communication standards

Vice-Principal/Principal:

- Increased training opportunities with IIT to build capacity for Vice-Principals/Principals/Office Administrators on platforms
- Superintendent's office support
- Communication Officers provide Principal Communications Guide, including templates, and other areas of support

### **Decision Tool: Determining who is affected and who gets the communication**

Ask the following questions:

- Does this meet an expected topic to communicate?
- Have parents, guardians, and caregivers of the child/ren involved been contacted?
- Was the incident witnessed by others?
- Do parents, guardians, and caregivers need to support at home conversations with their child?
- Has harm been caused that requires support or reporting?
- Who does communication affect most?
- Are there privacy or safety considerations?
- Is there a broader conversation or misinformation about a given topic happening where communication might support?

**Notification to Community Members:** When there is a communication that affects the school, the Vice-Principal/Principal and Communication Officers supporting schools should consider contacting child care partners, neighbours if impacted by site-related matters, and transportation. Superintendents will notify Trustees that meet the threshold. The Communications and Community Engagement team or the Director's Officer will contact the Ministry of Education, if applicable.

**Risk Management:** All correspondence to families involving incident or injury must be forwarded to [risk@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:risk@hwdsb.on.ca) for risk management purposes. Staff can ask risk-related questions and share confidential incident reports using this email.

**Privacy Office:** Contact the Privacy and Information Management Officer at [privacy@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:privacy@hwdsb.on.ca) with any questions related to privacy or if unsure what can be shared.

**Communications and Community Engagement:** For more information or questions, contact [communications@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:communications@hwdsb.on.ca). For urgent matters, please contact your immediate supervisor.

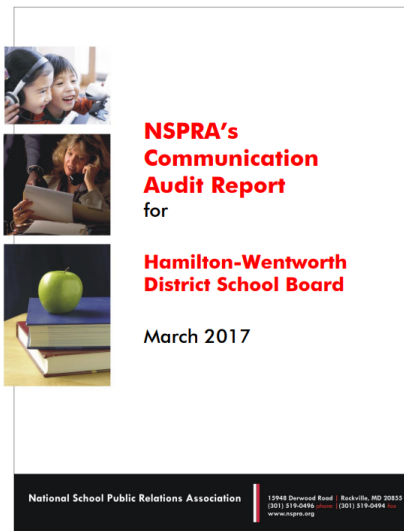
## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS | RESEARCH

### Overview

HWDSB's Strategic Directions. Effective Communications is a priority.



### NSPRA Communication Audit and Strategic Communications and Engagement Plan



# Thoughtexchange



HWDSB @HWDSB · Jul 19, 2021

What aspects of our communication helped and what didn't help during the 2020-2021 school year?

We want to go into September prepared to meet your needs in ways that are effective and meaningful.

Participate in our **Communications ThoughtExchange** survey: [tejoin.com/scroll/3179970...](https://tejoin.com/scroll/3179970...)



## HWDSB



Topics All thoughts My activity

1251 participants

1016 thoughts

19245 ratings

Highest rated

#1

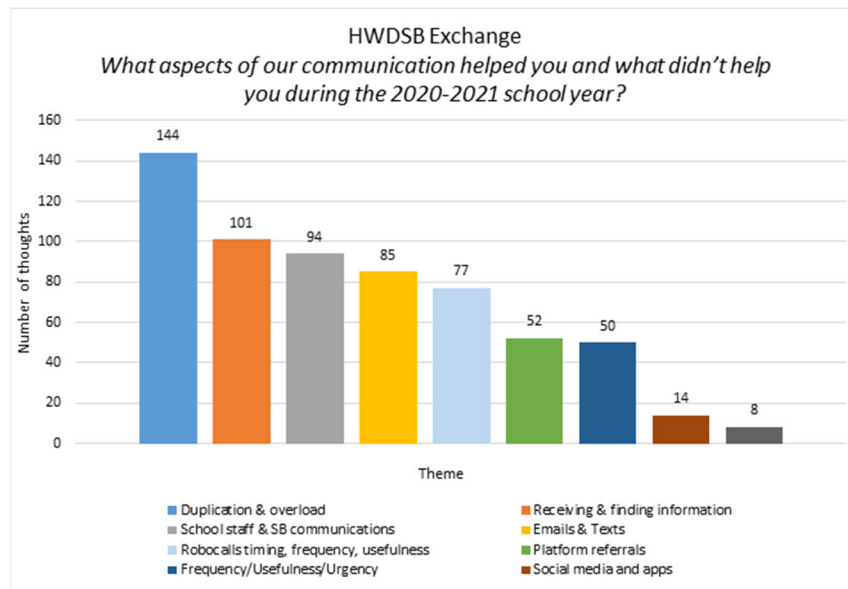
We don't understand when we are supposed to check school messenger, the parent portal vs. The school or board website. Knowing where to look to get the necessary information or to fill out the appropriate form is important so we don't spend so much time searching.

★ 4.5 stars  
👤 23 ratings

#2

Automated phone communications are more intrusive and best used for more urgent messages that require some recipient action. It increases the perceived urgency of actually urgent messages if the more intrusive communication methods are used sparingly

★ 4.4 stars  
👤 25 ratings



SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS | RESEARCH  
Strategy No. 1: Development



Refer to page to pages 9-16 for Communication Standards or access this link:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/media/communication-standards/>



# Shaping the Standard

## Communications and Community Engagement

Learn the recipe for success at myHWDSB  
Visit [hwdsb.info/CEmyHWDSB](https://www.hwdsb.info/CEmyHWDSB)



**HWDSB**      Translate    Contact    Search

Kindergarten • Elementary • Secondary • Adult Learning • Community • About • Staff Student Parent Careers

**Communication Standards at HWDSB**

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to keeping parents, guardians, and caregivers well informed and knowing what to expect.

As part of HWDSB's Effective Communication priority, staff have prepared **Communication Standards**.

These standards represent HWDSB's communications commitments with families. They act as one more way staff can support a positive experience for parents, guardians and caregivers while their children and/or youth receive educational services at HWDSB.

**Communication Standards:**

- Define what expected topics will be shared directly with parents, guardians, and caregivers
- Clarify the ways that staff communicate with families such as by phone, email or mail (essential channels), or via website, Parent Portal, or social media, for example (supportive channels)
- Create a consistent experience for families from school to school on expected topics and recognize when communication might be different as schools respond to various needs
- Strive to remove message duplication for parents, guardians, or caregivers
- Outline communication that may come from classrooms, school, and district levels
- Provide guidance related to response times with considerations to [Anti-Discrimination Opportunity \(aDO\)](#), [Accessibility Concerns \(aAC\)](#), [aDO/Accessibility a Theme Rights Cases](#), and other policies, procedures, or guidelines

Communication Standards are guidelines to promote and use as effective practices in HWDSB. As we establish these communication expectations, staff can then support and accelerate engagement efforts with its communities.



# Strategy No. 2: Leadership



Shawn McKillop, APR  
 Manager of Communications and Community Engagement  
 Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
 20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558  
 Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1  
 smckillo@hwdsb.on.ca

## INTERNAL MEMO

DATE: December 13, 2022  
 TO: Principals, Vice-Principals, Executive Council, Manager  
 FROM: Shawn McKillop, APR  
 SUBJECT: Shaping the Standards (Communication Standards, Et

As our commitment to school and service leaders, we are sharing HWDSB's [Communication Standards](#).

### Three things you need to know this month about Communication

- Sharing is Caring:** As you know, there is a [Letter Template](#) Communication Guide in the Communications and Community Engagement. You will find many examples of templates that are authorized to use when you find yourself in a situation. If anyone has a template that you wish to add in this folder [communications@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:communications@hwdsb.on.ca). The more we collect, save, and share with each other, the another school who needs that same communication! All template, please reach out to us; it could mean that the responsible to draft that communication.
- Push vs. Pull:** We differentiate between direct and indirect communication standards. Direct communication is used when experiencing an expected topic. Many schools are using when communicating with families – and that's OKAY! TI Messenger as much or more than your school website.



Shawn McKillop, APR  
 Manager of Communications and Community Engagement  
 Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
 20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558  
 Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1  
 smckillo@hwdsb.on.ca  
 (905) 527-5092 ext. 2941

## INTERNAL MEMO

DATE: September 13, 2022  
 TO: Principals and Vice Principals  
 FROM: Shawn McKillop, APR  
 SUBJECT: Shaping the Standards (Communication Standards, E

### MESSAGE:

As leaders begin to practice [Communication Standards](#), we are sharing our hope is to provide the tools you need to support your skills at three highlights and areas of guidance: |

- Become familiar with the terms *Expected Communication*
  - Expected Communications** include topics that a communication with parents, guardians, and a mutual value shared between families and staff. the Communications Standards document.
  - Direct communication** is in the form of an in-person or mail. Educators often engage in direct communication with caregivers. Learn what the educators' role in the document.



Shawn McKillop, APR  
 Manager of Communications and Community Engagement  
 Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
 20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558  
 Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1  
 smckillo@hwdsb.on.ca  
 (905) 527-5092 ext. 2941

## INTERNAL MEMO

DATE: March 2, 2023  
 TO: Principals/Vice-Principals, Managers, Executive Council, Executive Assistants  
 FROM: Shawn McKillop, APR  
 SUBJECT: Shaping the Standards (Communication Standards, Edition No. 6)

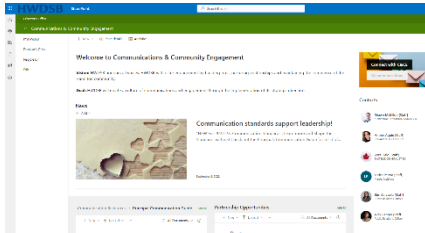
As a communication to school and service leaders, we are sharing updates to support you as practice HWDSB's [Communication Standards](#).

- Thank You/Feedback:** Thank you for participating/attending the Bake Sale on February 22. The event was an engaging opportunity to celebrate the Communication Standards. Four students will be the recipient of the Student Barrier Fund supported by the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success!

**Reminder/ACTION:** For those who have not completed this short 3-question form about the [Communication Standards](#), please do so by clicking: <https://forms.office.com/1/vbtd4m9u8>

- Consistency:** As a school leader, building strong relationships with families is key. Being consistent in your communications and following a cadence in your communication is important.

The team has been conducting a series of focus groups with School Council members and we are hearing that there is inconsistency from school to school – not on expected topics, but on additional/supportive communication. Some are getting communications regularly, while others are not. Communications is a balance, but essential to building school communities.



**HWDSB**  
**Principal Communications Guide**

HWDSB Corporate Communications wants to help you tell your story. We have a number of reminders and resources available. This guide outlines topics that principals may find useful as they prepare for the school year.

**What's Inside**

- Working with Corporate Communications
- Media Relations & Issues Management
- Sharing Positive Stories and Events
- School Websites
- Website Subscribers
- Social Media
- Visual Identity
- Synovoice Phone Messaging

**curiosity • creativity • possibility**

### Documents > Principal Communication Guide

- Letter Templates
- Posters and Signage
- School Council Support
- Trustee Introduction
- Trustee Newsletters
- Communication Standards url
- Digital Platforms Overview.pdf
- Guidelines for the Use of Electronic School Signs.p...
- Media and Spokesperson Protocol.pdf
- Memo\_Digital Storytelling at HWDSB1.pdf
- School Emergency Response.pdf
- School Letterheads url
- School Logos url
- School Website Support.pdf
- Social Media Guidelines.pdf
- Special Events Communications Protocol.pdf

**Strategy No. 3: Engagement (PIC Connects Sessions and Bake Sale Engagement)**

**HWDSB**  
Parent Involvement Committee

The Hamilton-Wentworth Parent Involvement Committee invites Schools Council and Home & School Association Chairs and Members to

# PIC CONNECTS

We're Bringing The PIC Connection to you!

Join any session to be heard and supported.

Hosted by:

- Mike Palma, Chair of the Parent Involvement Committee
- Amanda Lloyd, Vice-Chair of the Parent Involvement Committee
- Shawn McKillop, Manager of Communications and Community Engagement

Attend a session of your choice. This is a great opportunity for feedback and conversation.

All sessions will be 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**Dates and Locations:**

<b>Tuesday, December 6, 2022</b> Waterdown District High School 215 Parkside Drive, Waterdown	<b>Tuesday, January 17, 2023</b> A.M. Cunningham Elementary School 100 Wexford Avenue South, Hamilton
<b>Tuesday, February 28, 2023</b> Lawfield Elementary School 45 Berko Avenue, Hamilton	<b>Tuesday, April 4, 2023</b> Cootes Paradise Elementary School 900 King Street West, Hamilton
<b>Tuesday, May 23, 2023</b> Viola Desmond Elementary School 50 Second Drive, Hamilton	



**Shawn McKillop, APR**  
@ShawnMcKillop

Great conversation with parents of @HWDSB School Councils during this evening's Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Connects session!

Fundraising, Communication Standards, and Parent Reaching Out grant ideas were some of the topics discussed.

... and 🍩💙🍩 !!



8:53 PM · Jan 17, 2023 · 2,771 Views

Communications and Community Engagement presents

# SHAPING THE COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

# BAKE SALE

**Wednesday, February 22, 2023**

**12:00 pm to 2:00 p.m.**  
**At the bottom of the main stairs, on the 1st floor of the Education Centre.**

Cookies, Cultural Sweets, Treats and Treasures, Brownies, Cupcakes, Donuts, and MORE!

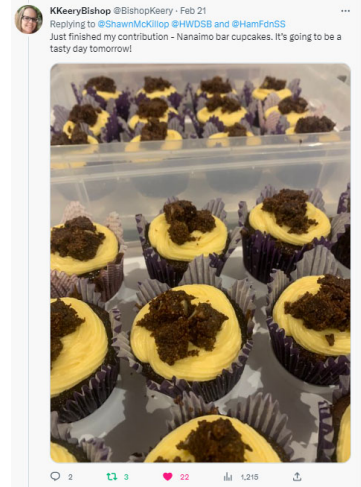
Funds will support the Student Barrier Fund through the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success.

**Calling all Principal/Vice-Principal Bakers!**

This is your chance to show off your baking skills! Email Zora Field [zfield@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:zfield@hwdsb.on.ca) to indicate that you will be contributing an item. Every item donated shows a commitment to the Communication Standards!







Pictured left: Superintendent Jane Macpherson's family of school 5 presented with a prize by the Manager of Communications and Community Engagement. FOS 5 has the most principals make a pledge and submit baked items.



## Strategy No. 4: Content Twitter

**HWDSB** @HWDSB · Feb 24

In October, HWDSB introduced Communications Standards to represent our commitment to keeping families informed.

Today, we'll be quizzing families on these guidelines to help you determine how, what, and when to communicate.

Follow the thread below to participate 📌



**HWDSB**  
**Communications**  
**Standards**

**HWDSB** @HWDSB · Feb 24

Do you know the difference between Direct Communication for Expected Topics and Additional Communication?

Yes	30.3%
No	69.7%

33 votes · Final results

1 comment 1 retweet 1 like 822 views

**HWDSB** @HWDSB · Feb 24

Which of the following are examples of Direct Communication? Select all that apply:

School closures	78.4%
Safe Schools reporting	13.5%
Specialized Services	5.4%
Major construction	2.7%

37 votes · Final results

1 comment 1 retweet 1 like 1,150 views

**HWDSB** @HWDSB

True or false? Families can support Communication Standards by: Ensuring your contact info and home address is current, having secure passwords for HWDSB Platforms, frequently visiting platforms to learn what is new and providing feedback at the class, school, or district levels.

True	86.4%
False	13.6%

44 votes · Final results

9:29 AM · Feb 24, 2023 · 2,036 Views

**HWDSB** @HWDSB · Feb 24

Additional Communications can range from information that is available to a parent, guardian, or caregiver but not always shared directly with you.

Which of the following are examples of Additional Communication? Select all that apply:

Power outages	28.9%
Routine fire alarm	23.7%
Transportation delays	34.2%
Cold and heat alerts	13.2%

38 votes · Final results

1 comment 1 retweet 1 like 1,349 views

**HWDSB** @HWDSB · Feb 24

True or false? Families will receive Direct Communication for Expected Topics through telephone, email or mail.

True	88.6%
False	11.4%

35 votes · Final results

## Instagram

**HWDSB Communication Standards**

Communication builds positive relationships with parents, guardians, and caregivers. We want you to be well informed and knowing what to expect. We want staff to know how, what and when to communicate.

**HWDSB's Communication Standards Apply to all Schools**

HWDSB is committed to fostering a culture of human rights, equity and inclusion. We offer learning and working environments that are welcoming, respectful, and free from discrimination and harassment.

**Expected Topics and Examples**

You will receive communication on expected topics. Hear! Telephone, email, or mail. Emergency communication may occur after hours.

Student progress	School closures	Student attendance	Injury or harm	Specialized Services
Safe Schools reporting	Secure School Re-entry	Class relocation	New educator or principal	Major construction

**Additional Topics and Examples**

You may receive communication on additional topics. Hear! Website, Parent Portal, MS Teams, or on social media.

Accessibility disruptions	Transportation delays	Power outages	Routine fire alarm	Phone and internet down
Cold and heat alerts	Program disruptions	And so much more!		

Learn more at [www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)

hwdsb In October, HWDSB introduced Communications Standards to represent our commitment to keeping families informed.

Communications Standards act as a reference to determine when communication is required and how these guidelines can contribute to a positive school environment.

This week, we'll be quizzing families on these guidelines across our social media channels to help you determine how, what, and when to communicate.

Click the link in our bio to learn more about Communications Standards at HWDSB.

4w

Liked by yfol0 and others

FEBRUARY 21

Add a comment...

February 24 10:05 AM

Do you know the difference between Direct Communication for Expected Topics and Additional Communication?

ANSWER YES OR NO

Yes	33%
No	67%

# Facebook

**HWDSB Communication Standards**

Communication builds positive relationships with parents, guardians, and caregivers. We want you to have fun, relax and enjoy being what you do.

**HWDSB's Communication Standards Apply to all Schools**

HWDSB is committed to ensuring a culture of respect, equity and inclusion. We offer learning and working environments that are welcoming, respectful and free from discrimination and harassment.

**Expected Topics and Examples**

- Board programs
- School closures
- Student cancellations
- Signs on buses
- Residential facilities
- Safety threats reporting
- Parent/teacher conferences
- Class cancellations
- News releases or press kits
- Major construction

**Additional Topics and Examples**

- Emergency disruptions
- Transportation delays
- Power outages
- Reserve fire alarm
- Phone and internet down
- Cold and heat alerts
- Program cancellations
- And so much more!

Learn more at [www.hwdsb.on.ca](http://www.hwdsb.on.ca)

**HWDSB's Response to Inquiries**

- Respond to all inquiries within 24 hours during working hours.
- Respond to all inquiries received outside of working hours by the next business day.
- HWDSB is not liable for timing or accuracy of, for, or of these processes to build or maintain trust between organizations.

**How you can support Communication Standards:**

- Share this content with your family and friends.
- Report any issues to: [info@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:info@hwdsb.on.ca)
- Follow us on social media: <https://www.facebook.com/hwdsb>
- Please contact us if you have any questions.
- Manage your privacy and data rights: <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/privacy>

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
Published by Sofia Gligoric  
February 21

In October, HWDSB introduced Communications Standards to represent our commitment to keeping families informed.

Communications Standards act as a reference to determine when communication is required and how these guidelines can contribute to a positive school environment.

This week, we'll be quizzing families on these guidelines across our social media channels to help you determine how, what, and when to communicate.

Communications Standards:  
<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about> See more

# HWDSB Newsletter: <https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/blog/now-hwdsb-winter-2023/>

NOW @ HWDSB – Winter 2023



Proud to be HWDSB!

Thank you for reading the first-ever NOW @ HWDSB, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's official newsletter. In this update, you can click the following images and links to read about:


[Find mental health supports](#) | [Learn about health measures](#) | [Explore Black History Month at HWDSB](#)  
[Details about Winter/parent cooperation](#) | [Course selection for your February 14](#) | [Discover important dates at HWDSB](#)

We value effective communication with families. This newsletter is one more way keeping you informed. This communication will be published four times within the school year. What is shared in NOW @ HWDSB is a commitment of HWDSB's Communication Standards.

Questions or comments? Please email: [info@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:info@hwdsb.on.ca)

### Message from the Chair and Director @ HWDSB

In a video message, Dawn Davis, Chair of the Board, and Sheryl Robinson Petrasick, Director of Education, introduce NOW @ HWDSB to the community. Topics shared in the video are outlined in the newsletter below.

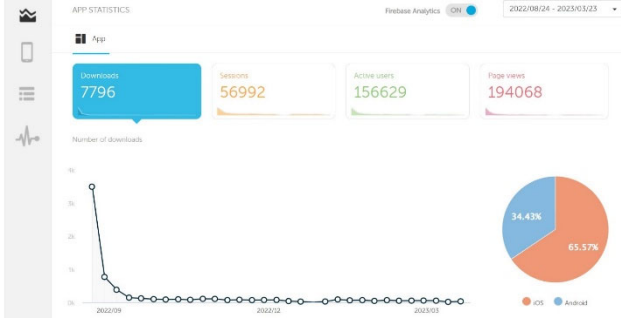


Copyrights are honored for across the Board. This information is intended to be used only for use as a member of our school communities. We also invite you to read recent media

# HWDSB App



**HWDSB**  
Get Connected.  
Download Today!



## Trustee Dawn Danko Ward 7 Newsletter



**Dawn Danko**  
Ward 7 Trustee  
ddanko@hwdsb.on.ca  
289.775.0269

**ENGAGE  
HWDSB**

Register at [engagehwdsb.ca](http://engagehwdsb.ca)  
to learn about projects and  
consultations in your  
school community.

Hello Ward 7 students, families and staff!

We've had a great year about the difference

I'm excited to share some key updates:

As our grade 8-10 year, I had the opportunity to see some of the amazing

I've also spent time working well when environments.

I was very happy to be passed by the Board of Trustees to this important

You may have noticed blacktopped school trustees last year times as much as can be a challenging ferent areas at school that needs attention

I look forward to see how our students

Please reach out to comments. Have

Sincerely,  
Trustee Dawn Danko

## Trustee Maria Felix Miller Ward 3 Newsletter



**Maria Felix Miller**  
Ward 3 Trustee  
mfMiller@hwdsb.on.ca  
289.775.0859

**ENGAGE  
HWDSB**

Register at [engagehwdsb.ca](http://engagehwdsb.ca)  
to learn about projects and  
consultations in your  
school community.

Hi Ward 3,

I'm excited to share my first Trustee Newsletter with you! It is an honour to represent this ward and I am also proud to be serving as Vice Chair for this year.

I visited Bernie Cullen at an Egg-Drop led by a worked really hard to get his eggs from main floor! I am an elementary school amazing staff and I attended the Joh cheer on 3 BCSS Cynthia Oyogo, a

Congratulations to approval of the Board members of our committee make our organization

In March, we will HWDSB and what part of our Strategic details because we come after March

Sincerely,  
Maria Felix Miller

**School Renewal Updates**  
Dundas Valley Secondary - A building replacement in the back wing is planned for summer 2023.

**March Break in the Wild**  
**Admission to the Valley Search Beach Camp**  
 March 13 - 17, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Dundas Valley Conservation Area  
 830 Cameron Road, Dundas  
**Registration:** \$100 (includes lunch)  
 March 8 - April 7, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Woodfield Heritage Village  
 1609 Kitchener Road, Rockton

**Board Highlights**  
**Working more about Board of Trustees work and activities is important to keeping you informed!**  
**Meeting on March 8th:**  
 At HWDSB, we believe that all students need to be safe, supported, and successful in school. We discussed a collection of policies that support the Board's Policy approved for the 2022-2023 School Year.  
**Trustee Updates:**  
 Board of Trustees approved the 2022-2023 School Year.  
**School Environments:**  
 Trustee and staff are committed to student learning and well-being. Trustees have approved a plan that will support students during winter weather.  
**Board Chairing:**  
 In response to feedback from families and staff, the Board of Trustees approved the 2022-2023 School Year.  
**High School Renovation:**  
 Trustees approved the renovation of the new secondary school. The renovation of the school will ensure that there is a safe and healthy learning environment for all students.  
**Strategic Direction:**  
 Trustees are committed to the strategic direction of HWDSB. We will be working on the strategic direction of HWDSB in the coming months. We will be working on the strategic direction of HWDSB in the coming months. We will be working on the strategic direction of HWDSB in the coming months.

**HWDSB**

## Trustee Paul Tut Ward 13 Newsletter



**Paul Tut**  
Ward 13 Trustee  
ptut@hwdsb.on.ca  
905.515.2473

**ENGAGE  
HWDSB**

Register at [engagehwdsb.ca](http://engagehwdsb.ca)  
to learn about projects and  
consultations in your  
school community.

Hi Ward 13,

It's been a busy time at HWDSB and I'm excited to share with you my first newsletter.

As a member and Chair of the Finance & Facilities and Audit Committees, I've been working on the Budget Development Process and defining Budget Priorities.

Also, the Board asked staff to research how to measure high heat/humidity in classrooms as there is a need to understand actual classroom climates.

This was done to align with the Board's School Cancellation of Operations Policy for both extreme cold and hot temperatures with high humidity.

We approved monitoring units to assess extreme hot weather with high humidity for learning spaces.

In March, we will start to consult about the future of HWDSB and what priorities we need to focus on.

This is part of our strategic directions. I'm excited to share more details because we want to hear from you.

Details should come after March Break.

Sincerely,

Trustee Paul Tut



## Director's Annual Report 2021-2022

Director's Annual Report, published in December, 2022, highlights Communication Standards within its Effective Communication priority.

Read more:

<https://www.hwdsb.on.ca/about/seeing/niorteam/directors-annual-report-2021-22/>





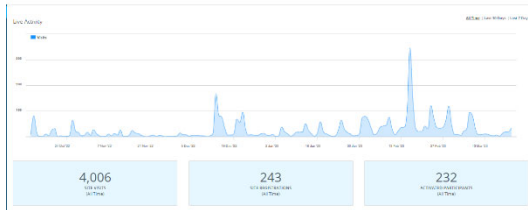
**Parent Portal** is a login-protected space that collects useful tools and information for HWDSB families including your child's grades, attendance and schedule.

**The Hub** is Ontario's online learning centre where HWDSB educators teach content, assign work and receive submissions in a secure setting. Families can view their child's assignments.

**Microsoft Teams** is a unified communications and collaboration tool that is used by staff, students and families.

- [Hardware requirements](#)

**Digital Tools for Families (Above)**  
**Director's Twitter Account (shown right)**  
**Engage HWDSB (Engagement HQ platform)**



Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini @Director\_HWDSB · Sep 2, 2022  
 Hello, @HWDSB community! I'm excited to begin the school year as your new Director.

September is one of my favourite times of the year as it's filled with the promise of great things to come. I look forward to using this platform to share the wonderful things happening at HWDSB!

6 27 237

Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini @Director\_HWDSB

To start, I figured it would be important for students, staff, families, and community members to get to know me better.

I was recently surprised with some hard-hitting (and light-hearted) questions from students! Watch the Director's Corner video below:

youtube.com  
 Director's Corner: Get to Know HWDSB's New Director of ... Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's new Director of Education is Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini! The HWDSB ...

2:42 PM · Sep 2, 2022

View Tweet analytics

4 Retweets 2 Quotes 30 Likes 1 Bookmark

Tweet your reply Reply

Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini @Director\_HWDSB · Sep 2, 2022  
 Replying to @Director\_HWDSB  
 I hope you all have a joy-filled weekend ahead of the first day of school! I look forward to welcoming everyone on Tuesday, September 6.

4 32

Add another Tweet

Jeanette Wilkinson @nettesingstunes · Sep 2, 2022  
 Replying to @Director\_HWDSB  
 Welcome to HWDSB! My son had the pleasure of meeting you last week as he helped set up your office.

1

**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS | EVALUATION**

ENGAGE HWDSB

Home / Communication Standards

**Communication Standards**

HWDSB wants to keep parents, guardians, and caregivers well informed and knowing what to expect. That is why in August 2022, the Communication Standards were introduced as part of our commitment to Effective Communication.

The standards, prepared in collaboration with parents and staff, represent our commitment to communications with families. This way, staff can support a positive experience for you while your children receive educational services at HWDSB.

The Communication Standards:

- Define expected topics shared directly with parents, guardians, and caregivers
- Clarify how staff communicate with families (essential ways are phone, email or mail. Supportive ways are websites, Parent Portal, or social media, for example)
- Create a consistent experience for families on expected topics and explain when communication is different
- Remove duplication as families get a lot of messages
- Consider classrooms, school, and board level roles in sharing communication
- Keep in mind Right to Disconnect procedure, Addressing Concerns @HWDSB, Addressing a Human Rights Concern, and other policies, procedures, or guidelines

Communication standards build on the strategy that promotes standardized digital platforms, builds positive relationships among our communities, and connects with a positive customer service experience for families.

Communication builds trust, confidence and leads to engagement. Use effectively, leaders can demonstrate responsiveness, mitigate developing issues, and show care.

Thank you for your time reviewing this HWDSB Engage project.

Who's Listening

Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini  
 Director of Education  
 HWDSB  
 Email: director@hwb.on.ca

Shawn Matthews, ABE  
 Manager of Communications and Community Engagement  
 HWDSB  
 Phone: 905-271-6227  
 Email: smm@hwb.on.ca

Key Dates

Engage HWDSB Project Opens  
 March 17 2022

Evaluation/Feedback Closes  
 March 24 2022

Important Links

Communication Standards Survey  
 TAKE SURVEY

Project Report  
 12 October 2022 - 25 March 2023

**Engage HWDSB**  
 Communication Standards

BEING THE TABLE engagementHQ

Visitors Summary

Highlights

TOTAL VISITS	152	MAX VISITORS PER DAY	49
NEW REGISTRATIONS	25		
ENGAGED VISITORS	37	INFORMED VISITORS	71
		AWAKE VISITORS	133