

Naming of Schools Procedure

RATIONALE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) recognizes that naming schools, or sections of the school, provides a unique opportunity to further develop an identity for the school, its students, its community, its staff, and the Board.

School names, or sections of school names represent HWDSB's mission vision and values, and this procedure is committed to the principles of equity and human rights, in accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act and Ministry of Education PPM 119, the recommendations by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action of Canada and the Hamilton Urban Indigenous Strategy (City of Hamilton).

TERMINOLOGY

Anti-racism: A proactive and consistent process of acknowledging racism; and of seeking to identify, challenge, disrupt and eliminate racism in all its forms (individual, institutional, systemic racism).

Anti-oppression: A proactive and consistent process of acknowledging different forms of oppression (colonialism, racism, ableism, classism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, classism, islamophobia, antisemitism, and other forms); and of seeking to identify, challenge, disrupt and eliminate oppressive ideologies, practices, and outcomes.

Closure of one or more schools and consolidation into an existing school: When the Board closes one or more schools because of an accommodation decision and moves the students into an already established school.

Closure of two or more schools and consolidation into a new build on an existing or new site: When the Board closes two or more schools because of an accommodation decision and builds a new school to accommodate all students from the closing schools.

Colonialism: The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with 'unsettlers' and exploiting it economically. In Canada, this historically and currently means that Western European-derived ways of being, believing, knowing, and doing are implicitly or explicitly imposed as the standard or norm. Colonialism remains embedded in the legal, political, and economic context of Eurocentric Canada today and in the lived experience of marginalized Indigenous people. For example, the Indian Act and the

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Canadian institutions known as Indian Residential “Schools”, historic provincial child welfare misapplications, and non-Indigenous peoples’ refusal to acknowledge the land and treaty rights of Indigenous people continues to contribute to this legacy.

Consensus: We arrive at consensus by listening to the opinions and concerns of others - everyone works towards a suitable decision. Not everyone may be pleased with the outcome, but they accept it is the best decision for the community.

Decolonization: In Canada, decolonization is related to Indigenous people reclaiming and restoring their culture, land, language, laws, relationships, knowledge, and a reaffirmation of traditional governance. Decolonization is also associated with other relationships between groups of people within Canada and in other countries and contexts around the world and can be linked to broader principles of inclusion and equity. Canada’s identity as an ‘unsettler’, colonial state complicates the task of decolonization, since the original colonizers are still here, and acts of colonization continue to the present.

Indigenous Educational Wellness: We untangle education from trauma and understand that education can now be part of total wellness and that Indigenous Knowledges will be celebrated.

New build due to growth: A new school construction to alleviate accommodation pressures in growth areas.

Ontario Human Rights Code: A provincial law that gives everyone equal rights and opportunities, without discrimination, in devoted areas such as education, jobs, housing and services. The goal of the Code is to address and prevent discrimination and harassment. (Available at www.ohrc.on.ca)

Reconciliation: In Canada, the term was used by the federal government when it was required to establish the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. It has come to describe attempts made by individuals and institutions to raise awareness about colonization and its ongoing effects on Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation also refers to efforts made to address the harms caused by various policies and programs of colonization. For some, the word represents an opportunity to reflect on the past, to heal and to make right. For others, however, current gestures of reconciliation are merely performative and lack meaningful action to address the harms done by colonization.

Replacement school built on an existing or new site: When the Board moves students from an existing school into a newly built school.

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Restorative Indigenous Education: In 2014, the mention of residential school was removed from the Indian Act. We participate in the restorative journey toward inherent educational wellness through the re-emergence of Indigenous Knowledge by actively seeking and celebrating accurate and authentic Indigenous Knowledges, pedagogies and ways of knowing, being and doing.

School in part: A section of a school which could involve areas such as, but not limited to, the learning commons, auditorium, gymnasium, track, or theatre.

School in whole: The naming/renaming of the entire school.

PROCEDURES:

The following procedures outline the naming of schools process, in whole or in part. These procedures are divided into five key steps:

1. Initiation
2. Consultation
3. Establishment of a School Naming Advisory Committee
4. Development of name recommendation(s)
5. Board of Trustee approval

1.0 Initiation

1.1 A naming of schools process shall begin under the following circumstances:

- 1.1.1 A new build due to growth.
- 1.1.2 Closure of two or more schools and consolidation into a new build on an existing or new site.
- 1.1.3 Board approved motion.

1.2 A naming of schools process may begin under the following circumstances only if the affected schools would like to proceed and with a Board motion:

- 1.2.1 Closure of one or more schools and consolidation into an existing school.
- 1.2.2 Replacement school built on an existing or new site.
- 1.2.3 Naming a school in part.

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- 1.3 Schools considering naming of the school or a part of the school must be discussed with the Superintendent of Student Achievement, to discuss the process.
- 1.4 Naming of the school or a part of the school will begin after discussion with the affected School Councils and school community at large. This is to determine whether the school community would like to proceed with renaming the school or a part of the school.
- 1.5 The Principal, in discussion with the Chair of School Council, will add this as a discussion item to a future School Council meeting and will provide sufficient notice to the school community about when the item will be discussed.
- 1.6 Feedback will be collected from the student body of the affected schools through student voice opportunities (e.g. voice forums, surveys).
- 1.7 Feedback will be collected from the staff of the affected schools through staff voice opportunities (e.g. voice forums, surveys).
- 1.8 When considering naming a school in part there needs to be clear rational and purpose for considering this process. The rational must have student, staff and community support.
- 1.9 The Principal will inform their Superintendent of Student Achievement of the desire of the committee to proceed or not proceed with either naming/renaming the school in whole or in part.
- 1.10 The Superintendent of Student Achievement will bring a report to the Board of Trustees, summarizing the information collected from the student body, greater school community and discussions held at the School Council meetings, for a final decision whether to proceed or not with the renaming of the school.

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2.0 Establishment of a School Naming Advisory Committee

2.1 The affected school(s) Superintendent of Student Achievement will establish a School Naming Advisory Committee. The Ward Trustee will co-facilitate the process with the Superintendent of Student Achievement, who will also act as a co-facilitator.

2.2 The School Naming Advisory Committee will ensure all HWDSB policies, and their guiding principles of human rights, equity, anti-racism, anti-oppression, and anti-colonialism are foundational when selecting the school in whole or school in part names.

2.2.1 A culturally relevant and responsive approach must be taken when selecting the School Naming Advisory Committee.

2.3 Membership of the School Naming Advisory Committee:

2.3.1 The School Naming Advisory Committee should consist of the following persons:

- Facilitating Members
 - Ward Trustee who will act as co-facilitator of the committee.
 - Superintendent of Student Achievement who will act as co-facilitator of the committee.
- Committee Supports:
 - One trustees that is not the Ward Trustee of the school.
 - Manager of Corporate Communications or Designate.
 - Local Indigenous Community Representative.
 - HWDSB Educational Archives & Heritage Centre through the Associate Director of Business Services Office.
 - Representative from Hamilton Public Library and/or local historical society.
- Consensus Building Members
 - Principal(s) of the affected school(s).
 - Two school community representatives from any school in whole or in part affected by a name change or new school construction.

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- One School Council representatives from any school in whole or in part affected by a name change or new school construction.
- One Home and School Association representatives, where they may exist.
- One staff representative.
- Up to six student representatives, from current and associated schools.
- At least two Community Representative(s).

2.3.2 Adjustments to membership of the School Naming Advisory committee may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent of Student Achievement to balance the needs of the community.

2.4 Operation of the School Naming Advisory Committee

2.4.1 Quorum, for the purpose of convening an official meeting, shall be defined as the majority of Consensus Building Members.

2.4.2 The consensus making process will be considered and determined by members who are present, using the Guiding Principles of the policy.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 If it is determined to proceed with naming of the school in whole or in part, staff will undertake a consultation period. Throughout this consultation period, feedback will be collected from the student body, the school community, school staff, School Councils, and Home and School Associations, where they may exist, of the affected schools.

3.2 A public consultation will be initiated for a period of 30 days to gather potential school names.

3.2.1 Corporate Communications will create, initiate and promote the consultation to the public.

3.2.2 Research and Analytics will consolidate and develop a report of the consultation process to guide the School Naming Advisory Committee.

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3.3 The School Naming Advisory Committee will gather an understanding of how the land has shaped human and natural activity and the significance of where the school, in whole or in part, being named is located. They will also engage local Indigenous communities to share traditional ecological knowledge and place-based education approaches to inform potential names.

3.4 The School Naming Advisory Committee will seek associated land and community histories that will guide the School Naming Advisory Committee.

4.0 Development of name recommendation(s)

4.1 The School Naming Advisory Committee is to meet, review and share their knowledge of the potential names submitted through the consultation(s).

4.2 The committee will review the current names of schools within HWDSB.

4.3 The co-facilitators will support the committee to reach consensus upon the recommended name or names, for consideration of the Board of Trustees.

4.3.1 Facilitated conversation will occur where every member of the naming panel has the opportunity to listen and share.

4.3.2 Process of elimination of school names through that conversation and debate until the panel arrives at a consensus decision.

4.4 All individuals on the School Naming Advisory Committee agree that the proposed school name for Board of Trustees approval is a YES to these questions:

- a. Does the name reflect and honour the land, and associated history, if the recommended name is after the land ?
- b. Has an anti-racism, anti- oppression and anti-colonial approach been used throughout the process.
- c. Does the name reflect the priorities and values of HWDSB?
- d. Is there broadly based support for the potential name?

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4.5 Names of individuals and their associated histories will not be considered. School names, in whole or part, will be inclusive of the larger community and its values and attributes.

5.0 Board of Trustee approval

5.1 The committee will provide a report to the appropriate meeting of Trustees outlining the consensus building process and the recommended name or names for either the whole school and/or a part of the school. The report will include the summary report from the Research and Analytics department providing the rationale that reflects the Guiding Principles within the Naming of Schools Policy 2.3.

