



July 16, 2020

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Ministry of Education
5th Floor
438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

To the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education,

The Trustees of the Halton District School Board (HDSB) request that the part-time 15-student hybrid/adaptive model be withdrawn as an option for the 2020-2021 school year for students in kindergarten to grade 6. Instead, Trustees request appropriate funding for a 15-student daily attendance in-person model or, at the very least, the adjustment of the model's cohort size parameters to allow for daily attendance.

The hybrid model that boards have been directed to develop relies heavily on accessible and affordable childcare so that working parents may participate in the workforce. In Halton, that means a childcare need for up to 36,000 students in kindergarten to grade 6. This volume of childcare space does not currently exist in Halton Region and established daytime childcare within the region focuses on preschool aged children. Therefore, temporary, casual, and unlicensed care may make up the majority of a potential new childcare market. This market has no formal obligation to learn about or adhere to strict Public Health protocols to stop the transmission of the virus.

A model that relies on alternating a student's time between the classroom and out-of-school childcare creates opportunities for mixing students from different settings (e.g. classrooms, schools, school boards) and as a result increases their exposures and elevates students' risk of infection. This model, which disrupts the classroom "bubble", will be counterproductive to limiting widespread community infection and poses great challenges to contact tracing efforts.

If childcare is unavailable or unaffordable, parents (mostly women, as noted by a number of experts and advocates) may have to leave the labour force to care for their children on out-of-school days. In some situations, young children may be left home alone or in the care of young siblings.

Street Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, Ontario L7P 5A8

Mailing Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • P.O. Box 5005, Stn. LCD 1, Burlington, Ontario L7R 3Z2

Phone: 905-335-3663 | 1-877-618-3456 Fax: 905-335-9802

www.hdsb.ca

Finally, the Trustees of the HDSB find the messaging about who the decision making body is for determining which plan will move forward in September confusing. We respectfully request that you clarify whether the decision is to be made by the Ministry of Education or by local school boards in conjunction with local public health officers.

Additional information to support this letter has been included in the form of appendices:

- A. [Further Hybrid/Adaptive Model Analysis](#)
- B. [Motion M20-0089 from the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees - July 15, 2020](#)

Minister Lecce, the Trustees of the HDSB, like you, understand how critical it is for students to have the safest environments for in-person learning and well-being. We encourage you to continue to work with internationally recognized healthcare experts, including those at SickKids Hospital and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, to meet the goal of a daily-attendance model for kindergarten to grade 6 students.

Sincerely,



Andréa Grebenc
Chair of the Board of Trustees, Halton District School Board

Enclosure: Further Hybrid/Adaptive Model Analysis
Motion M20-0089 from the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees - July 15, 2020

Cc: MPP Ted Arnott,
MPP Stephen Crawford,
MPP Parm Gill,
MPP Jane McKenna,
MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos,
Ontario School Board Chairs (English Public, English Catholic, French Public, French Catholic)
President Cathy Abraham, Ontario Public School Board Association