

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, December 9 2019

Hamilton-Wentworth Unions United Against Violence

During Anti-Bullying Week, union leaders representing education workers in both the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board came together to share and discuss mutual concerns regarding the impact, and increase, of violence and violent incidents within our classrooms and community. As the conversations continued, one point became clear: violence in the schools of both Hamilton-Wentworth boards is not being addressed in as effective, transparent and timely a manner as necessary.

As representatives from across all local education unions, we see the devastating and long-lasting impact violence and bullying have on students, education workers, and their families. We strongly maintain that the input of front-line education workers, parents, students, and community representatives is imperative to successfully identify and address barriers to prevention, and factors contributing to the increase of ongoing violence and bullying throughout this region.

Collectively, we recognize the need to examine, explore, and review the underlying issues and data directly impacting the safety, and education of all staff and students. Unfortunately, our requests to be more meaningfully involved in these processes have often been ignored or discounted.

As such, in an effort to address this urgent need, we have come together to form our own independent Task Force on School Violence. The issue of violence transcends school boards. Thus, violence must be addressed without concern for where it occurs. This worker-led Task Force will conduct its mission free of bias. In its efforts to make all schools safe, this Task Force will delve more deeply into the data (captured and anecdotal) and will seek input from all stakeholders.

Ultimately, we want to find practical solutions, demand accountability, and take action to protect the rights and safety of all students and staff within our community's public-school systems. It is our hope that lasting changes will result in safe, welcoming learning communities.



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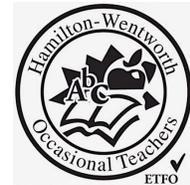
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