



JUNE 2021

# **OCD Student Trustee Bi-Annual Report**

Prepared by Student Trustees Charles Chen and Joy Liu

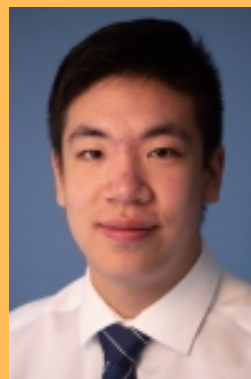
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# Introduction

*At the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, there are two Student Trustees each year who both serve a one year term. Student Trustees, who are official members of the OCDSB Board of Trustees, are responsible for representing the voices of all students in our district at the school board level. Student Trustees advocate for students, and are also elected by students. Our Student Trustees this year are Charles Chen and Joy Liu. Charles is a Grade 11 student at Earl of March Secondary School and Joy is a Grade 12 student at Colonel By Secondary School. For more information regarding the role of Student Trustees, please refer to [Policy P.017.GOV: Student Trustees](#).*

*This report aims to update the OCDSB Board of Trustees, senior staff and any other interested parties on the Student Trustees' work completed in the latter half of their term from January to June 2021 (to read about their work completed from August to December 2020, please refer to their [first bi-annual report presented in January 2021](#)). The report will also contain information about the work led at the Student Senate and their work on the provincial level by the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO).*



Student Trustee  
Charles Chen

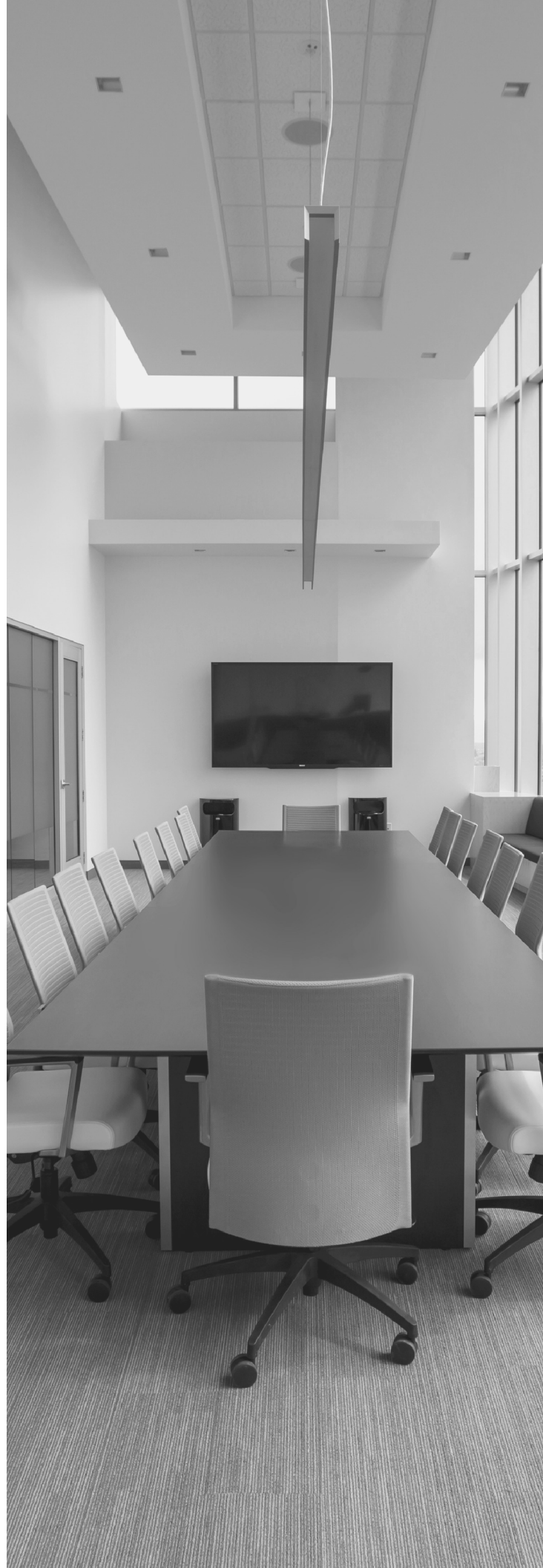


Student Trustee  
Joy Liu

# Student Senate

The Student Trustees implemented several structural changes at the Senate this year. They extended meeting times from 90 minutes to two hours, and added an additional working meeting to each month. The addition of meeting time was crucial to support the Senate's ability to initiate and implement its own projects as opposed to primarily serving as a group for consultation at the District.

Additionally, the student trustees successfully advocated adding new senators from Ottawa Technical Secondary School and Urban Aboriginal High School to improve student representation on the Senate.





# Student Spirit Working Committee

The Senate Student Spirit Working Committee aims to promote school spirit within the District's high schools and boost students' morale during this difficult time. They were led by Student Trustee Charles Chen this year.

The committee's main achievement this school year was working with the OCDSB Presidents' Council in order to successfully implement Battle of the Schools (BOTS), which is a district-wide school spirit competition for OCDSB high school students. BOTS took place during the week of April 26-30, 2021 and Friday, April 30 had the most participants with 2506 students from all across the District participating. Over the week, BOTS was participated in 8245 times (added the number of participants from each day for Monday-Friday).

BOTS was a groundbreaking event for many reasons. To the knowledge of the student trustees, it was the first time the Student Senate has worked with Presidents' Council in order to plan an event, and was the first district-wide school spirit competition ever held.

Many students were drawn in by the uniqueness of BOTS and it was able to bring a sense of community and school spirit in a difficult time where the vast majority of students were learning 100% remotely, as mandated by the provincial government. Since the event was run by Student Senate and Presidents' Council, BOTS provided more exposure to these roles and mechanisms for student voice. BOTS also substantially increased the number of followers on the Student Senate Instagram account. Photos from the event and other promotional materials can be found on the Student Senate Instagram (@ocdsbstudentsenate).

# Student Spirit Working Committee (continued)

Student Trustees Charles Chen and Joy Liu are pleased to announce after overwhelmingly positive feedback from students, Student Senate, and Presidents' Council, that they intend for BOTS to be a yearly tradition for the OCDSB. They would also like to extend their thanks to all those who helped make the event happen and those who participated.

## Mental Health Working Committee

The Student Senate Mental Health Working Committee, led by Student Trustee Joy Liu, initiated a variety of projects with the goal of directly and indirectly supporting students' mental health in the short and long term.

Student Senators Brooke Colman (Carine Wilson SS) and Laura Wang (Bell HS) wrote and distributed a school mental wellness representative and committee framework titled *Mental Health in Schools: Framework*. It thoroughly outlines how to establish mental health representatives on student councils and a student committee for mental health within schools. This framework is a critical resource for schools to structurally build in student voice in decision making on mental health and is attached to the end of this report.

# Mental Health Working Committee (continued)

Additionally, the committee has initiated a discussion with the Mental Health and Critical Services Department about linking new student council mental health representatives to the District's youth advisory on mental health being established in fall 2021 (the establishment of the youth advisory is a commitment within the 2019-2022 OCDSB Mental Health Strategy).

The committee, following planning and discussions with the Mental Health and Critical Services Department, has initiated safeTALK training pilots within secondary schools for the 2021-2022 academic year. safeTALK is a four hour suicide prevention course; multiple staff within the Mental Health and Critical Services Department are certified safeTALK trainers and available to teach safeTALK to students.

Senators belonging to the committee have approached their school staff about piloting safeTALK training within their school in the upcoming academic year. The goal is for suicide intervention training to eventually be provided system-wide for all students to receive.

Finally, the committee has initiated discussions with Superintendent Baker and System Principal Anderson to advocate for the District supporting bystander intervention training sessions for students. Specifically, the Ottawa Hollaback! Chapter provides free training sessions which can also be hosted virtually. Many OCDSB students are invested in combating harassment in its various forms (e.g. racist harassment, sexual harassment) and the senate anticipates high demand should the District host sessions specifically for OCDSB students.



# Peer Tutoring Numeracy Framework

The OCDSB Peer Tutoring Numeracy Framework is a framework written by Student Trustee Charles Chen which outlines how to implement a peer tutoring system at high schools where students are able to help other students with math in order to address the numeracy issues in the school board.

After meeting with interested student senators to receive feedback on the draft framework, Student Trustee Charles Chen finished writing the framework in February 2021. Afterwards, student senators took the framework to their schools in hopes of implementing it.

Unfortunately, the framework was unsuccessful because many students did not wish to seek help with math. This is because of a variety of reasons. One reason is that in the hybrid quadmester system, students taking math would sit through the same course for 4 hours, and would simply be too tired to seek extra help. Another reason is that virtual learning makes students less motivated and more tired, thus making them less likely to seek extra help with math.

The original intention for the framework was to implement an in-person support model; the framework was adapted to include instructions on how to implement both an in-person support system and a fully virtual support system due to COVID-19. The virtual support system, however, has proven to be unsuccessful within the quadmester system. Currently, Student Trustee Charles Chen believes that the in-person support model outlined in the framework has the most potential for success.

# Peer Tutoring Numeracy Framework (continued)

Moving forward, Student Trustee Charles Chen plans to distribute the framework to Math department heads from high schools across the District in fall 2021. Once it is possible to implement the in-person support model, Math department heads can choose to implement the plan themselves or choose interested students to implement it if they wish. Although the framework is written to be read by a student, Math department heads will also have no problems implementing the framework.

The OCDSB Peer Tutoring Numeracy Framework is attached to the end of this report.

## Student Senate Page on OCDSB Website

Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen were able to update the [Student Senate page](#) on the OCDSB website to make the information more relevant to students interested in learning more about Student Senate. They were also able to make the Student Senate page more visible by moving it under "Board of Trustees," which can be found on the main page of the OCDSB website.

Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen would like to thank the OCDSB Communications Department for listening to their feedback and helping to make these changes happen.

# Student Senate Closing Remarks

To close the Student Senate section, Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen would like to thank all the Student Senators for their hard work and dedication to their schools and to the District. They would also like to thank Vice-Principal Unsworth and Superintendent Hardie for their support and guidance with Student Senate, Trustee Justine Bell for representing the Board at meetings and supporting the Senators, as well as all the trustees who have taken the time to attend a meeting to listen to students. Finally, they would also like to thank all the OCDSB staff who have taken the time to reach out to Student Senate in order to gain student input on various topics within the District.





# The District's Need to Center Student Voice

Student voice is crucial to District decision making processes. The OCDSB must deliberately seek out student voice from diverse lived experiences and identities in order to continue improving education for all students.

It is important to note that the Student Trustees, Student Senate, and Presidents' Council are not fully representative of the student population. Trustees and senior staff must actively seek out feedback and host conversations with other student groups such as the Original Voices Youth Council, Black Student Unions, and Rainbow Alliances. Importantly, student feedback should not be sought out merely in response to an ongoing topic of interest or concern (e.g. consultation on curriculum change), but rather proactively sought out to invite general and free feedback on any topic. It is in these open conversations (e.g. roundtables) that the District is able to learn about less visible problems that would otherwise likely not be addressed. Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen challenge every trustee and member of the senior team to attend at minimum five roundtables with students or student groups annually.

The Student Trustees applaud the District's innovative efforts to capture student and community voice in new forms such as community discussions. The OCDSB must continue to work creatively to find methods to engage student voice, and particularly seek out the voices from students less traditionally engaged with school.

A black and white photograph of a stack of period packs, likely from the brand 'Period Packs Ottawa' as mentioned in the text. A single tampon is placed on top of the stack. The packs are wrapped in patterned paper, and the tampon is a standard cotton-tipped type.

# The ME Project

On January 26th 2021, the Board of Trustee unanimously approved the ME (Menstrual Equity) Project motion written by Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen. The Student Trustees owe thanks to students who supported and delegated on the ME Project, Student Senate, CFO Carson, the Advisory Committee on Equity, the trustees, and Period Packs Ottawa for contributing feedback to the process. They would especially like to thank Trustee Lyra for supporting them by moving the motion on their behalf and providing initial guidance in October 2020.

Moving forward, the Student Trustees continue to advocate for the inclusion of additional student voice (e.g. go to Student Senate for feedback) and community input (e.g. from Advisory Committee on Equity members) during the implementation of the ME Project, such as the installation of menstrual product dispensers and education on the usage of menstrual products.

# The ME Project (continued)

*Below are the Student Trustees' comments on the ME Project which were posted on the OCDSB news bulletin ([https://ocdsb.ca/news/student-led\\_me\\_project](https://ocdsb.ca/news/student-led_me_project)):*

"Menstrual equity is an invisible issue affecting thousands of students in OCDSB schools and billions of people globally.

Because of the millenniums-old stigma surrounding menstruation, we don't tend to think of period products as an essential good like toilet paper. But we should, because students can't participate in school without period products. Students have had to leave school, miss class, be late to class, or use toilet paper as an inadequate substitute when they didn't have access to period products.

***"Because of the millenniums-old stigma surrounding menstruation, we don't tend to think of period products as an essential good like toilet paper. But we should, because students can't participate in school without period products."***

It was with these common and widespread experiences in mind that we set about creating the ME Project: a motion for the OCDSB to provide free menstrual hygiene products in all school washrooms.

The "ME" in the ME Project stands for menstrual equity, and the 2019-20 student trustees Ganaabouté Gagné and Prasith Wijeweera first began discussing this topic with students and followed the pilot started at Featherston Drive Public School with the intention of advocating for free period products in OCDSB school washrooms.

# The ME Project (continued)

*The Student Trustees' news bulletin continues below:*

We took on their advocacy work by creating a draft motion, then circulating our draft among stakeholders in order to receive their input and make revisions. The Student Senate endorsed our motion and gave us rich feedback from which we created entire new clauses. The Senators also distributed our anonymous feedback form to their school's 2SLGBTQ+ student groups, so that gender diverse students gave us feedback on the level of inclusivity in our motion. We also sought feedback from OCDSB Chief Financial Officer Michael Carson, the Advisory Committee on Equity, and trustees, while student trustees from other boards supported us by providing advice on how they implemented similar motions.

Finally, we created a letter of support for the motion on behalf of students, of which over 1400 signed and disclosed their own experiences, opinions and feedback, while students made delegations to the Committee of the Whole meeting where the ME Project motion was moved. We are proud to say it was then finally approved by the Board of Trustees on January 26th.

As a result of student voice and leadership at the heart of the ME Project, our collective vision of students being able to access free period products in school washrooms will be made a reality by 2022."



# Police Involvement in Schools

Following the review of police involvement in schools, it is clear that the District must end its participation in the School Resource Officer program and minimize police presence in schools to the greatest extent permitted by provincial legislation.

Further, students (especially students belonging to demographics disproportionately affected by police presence, e.g. BIPOC, 2SLGBTQ+) must be consulted in the creation of accountability and transparency mechanisms recommended by the review of police involvement in schools. Following the implementation of such mechanisms, students should be consulted for feedback on the effectiveness.

Finally, as policy reviews and revisions continue, it is crucial that policy and procedure changes be explicitly communicated to students and staff so that the former are informed on their rights and that the latter are informed on what practices are appropriate and equitable.





# Student Future Voter Registration



A culture of social responsibility necessitates civic engagement. However, youth under 25 consistently and historically turn out to vote at the lowest rates of all age groups. During the 2019 federal election for example, voter participation for youth decreased by 3.2 percentage points to 53.9%. Schools can help fix this lack of youth voter engagement as crucial sites committed to fostering social responsibility.

In Ontario, 16 and 17 year olds can add their names to the Ontario Register of Future Voters which automatically adds registrants to the voters list once they turn 18. eRegistration for the Register is incredibly accessible, requiring only an upload of ID (e.g. report card) and input of personal information on the online portal.

Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen recommend that a) the District require eligible students in the Civics and Careers course to register on the Ontario Register of Future Voters, b) the District support future voter registration drives for 16 and 17 year olds.



# OCDSB Communications

A concern that Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen had was the initial lack of direct communication from the school board to students. This was especially apparent in the weeks leading up to the 2020-2021 school year, where some students were left in the dark about school reopening plans.

Although the school board does a fantastic job of communicating to parents, some parents do not regularly check their emails or may forget to inform their children about updates from the OCDSB. Consequently, without direct communication to students, some students are completely unaware of recent decisions and updates.

When the student trustees talked with the OCDSB Communications Department about these concerns, they were very open to listening to concerns from students. Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen are very pleased to share that staff from the Communications Department are now doing exemplary work communicating directly with students. They communicate in a timely and regular manner and are able to efficiently and clearly communicate relevant information to students. From information about COVID-19 restrictions and vaccines to school board decisions and updates to interesting opportunities for students, they are able to share a wide variety of relevant information to students. Many students noticed the increase in the amount of OCDSB Communications emails to students, and they greatly appreciate the updates.

Student Trustees Joy Liu and Charles Chen strongly encourage the Communications Department to continue communicating with students directly and regularly, even after the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes emails leading up to the 2021-2022 school year regarding updates to school reopening plans. These regular updates ensure that more students are aware of what's happening in the school board and help students feel more connected to the OCDSB. Keep up the amazing work OCDSB Communications!

# OSTA-AECO Update

This year, Student Trustee Joy Liu led the research and writing of OSTA-AECO's advocacy project *The Volume of Our Voices*, a three-part series featuring student stories and policy recommendations. OSTA-AECO is also currently exploring the possibility of releasing French versions of the series publications.

*Volume One: Learning and Living During a Pandemic* and *Volume Two: Negative Space* have been published as of June 11th, 2021, and are viewable at [osta-aeco.org/our-work/the-volume-of-our-voices/](https://osta-aeco.org/our-work/the-volume-of-our-voices/)

*Volume One* features student experiences with learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The four major themes discussed are mental health, anti-Asian racism, remote learning, and the quadmester and octomester experience.

*Volume Two* features stories submitted by Ontario students on how their race, ethnicity, nationality, or cultural identity shaped their experience in school.

*Volume Three* features students' reflections on how their gender identity or sexual orientation shaped their experience in school.

Each volume contains policy recommendations for all school boards, including the OCDSB, to act on. Student Trustee Joy Liu is looking forward to hearing the thoughts and seeing the actions of staff and trustees on the contents of this project.

Student Trustee Joy Liu is also working with OSTA-AECO to release the Student Representation Across Canada report, which assesses the status of student representation on school boards and provides recommendations to improve student voice and representation.

# OSTA-AECO Update (continued)

Student Trustee Joy Liu is also working with OSTA-AECO to release the *Student Representation Across Canada* report, which assesses the status of student representation on school boards and provides recommendations to improve student voice and representation.

Student Trustee Charles Chen served as a Communications Working Group Co-Chair for OSTA-AECO this school year. He led the working group to accomplish a variety of initiatives, including updating the *OSTA-AECO Student Trustee Handbook*. The *Student Trustee Handbook* is given to incoming Student Trustees across Ontario in order to help them better understand their role as a Student Trustee and to help prepare them for their term.

Since January this year, the student trustees have also attended the Board Council Conferences and the Annual General Meeting where they received additional professional development training and opportunities to collaborate with student trustees across the province.

It should also be happily noted that this June following the Annual General Meeting, both 2021-2022 student trustees were appointed to serve on OSTA-AECO's Executive Council for the upcoming term! Student Trustee Charles Chen was appointed Operations Coordinator and incoming Student Trustee AmaturRaheem Salam-Alada was appointed Professional Development Coordinator.



# Closing Remarks from Student Trustee Charles Chen

*"Over my term as a Student Trustee, I've been able to meet so many people as well as learn and experience so many new things and I am incredibly thankful for these opportunities. I would like to thank Superintendent Hardie, Vice-Principal Unsworth, the Board of Trustees, Nicole Guthrie, Myra Wells, Student Senate, Presidents' Council, and all OCDSB students for supporting us in our roles. This year has definitely been a very challenging one, however staff from all across the District have undertaken exemplary work in order to support our students.*

*I am hopeful that students will be able to return to in-person learning in the 2021-2022 school year and that we will be able to gradually move to a model that more closely resembles the model from before the pandemic. This year has been difficult for students just as much as it has been for staff, and I would like to congratulate all students for their resilience and accomplishments. I am extremely grateful to be re-elected to serve a second year as a Student Trustee and I will continue to put in my best efforts in order to support and advocate for the students of our District."*

# Closing Remarks from Student Trustee Joy Liu

*"The challenge of this Student Trustee role is a true privilege to experience. My term has flown by and there is still so much I have yet to learn. In these past jam-packed eleven months, I have made mistakes that I've learnt from, but I have also had the opportunity to implement exciting new initiatives for students and engage in and analyze different issues every day. A year does not feel like enough time and there is so much more I want to work on, but I know that much of my work is also foundational for the District and students to continue building upon. If anything, this term has taught me that advocacy, education and equity work is not discrete but continuous in nature; work that is forever ongoing and evolving, complex and always unfinished.*

*We must continue believing in education as the great equalizer, and schools as incubators for nurturing students into empathetic, capable, and socially responsible adults. Schools should be sites that actively produce positive social change despite the vastly powerful, negative systems that exist in the world at-large. To transform schools into such positive forces, we must be constantly innovating, re-evaluating our practices, and questioning our assumptions about how the OCDSB is serving its students. The District has so much more work to do until it truly produces equal outcomes for all students while forces outside of its control will also continue to hamper its work. To sustain progress despite the sheer enormity of complex work left to undergo, it is necessary to employ Mariame Kaba's understanding of hope as a discipline: hope is not a fleeting emotion or feeling, but a discipline to practice every day.*

*That said, lives move more quickly than systems do. Where systems are not changing quickly enough, it is crucial to do all that we can in our individual roles to help the individual students we work with, using what resources and power we do have at the moment. In Samantha Power's words, 'People who care, act, and refuse to give up may not change the world, but they can change many individual worlds.' Our work rightly centers around the improving of **systems**, but our efforts cannot neglect the **individuals** who are living **within** these systems right here and now.*

# Closing Remarks from Student Trustee Joy Liu (continued)

*I leave this role immensely grateful for everyone who has supported and guided me this past year. In particular:*

*I am grateful to all the students who I've gotten to interact with and whom have, in many instances, taken time out of their day to send me a message with their feedback or thoughts, talk with me, or work with me on an issue. Their trust is what I work hardest to build.*

*Having now spent two years working on Student Senate, I am grateful to all of this year's Student Senators for the incredible work they have put into their roles and the group as well as the countless instances they have supported myself and Charles in our own work and leadership. I am writing this note on the same evening following our final meeting as a Senate and I will miss seeing their faces in the little Google Meet rectangles so, so much.*

*Charles, thank you for being an incredible 'co.' We've accomplished so much together this year and I will miss our Facetimes and Google docs. This past year, I've always felt a little burst of pride mentioning your name as my co whenever I talk about student trustee work. I am so excited to watch you do even better work in your next term; take care of yourself too next year since we both know this job is a demanding one.*

*Thank you Trustee Lyra for the many phone calls and questions you have entertained from me. I would not be at where I am in this role without your mentorship, and our conversations always teach me something new and compel me to re-evaluate my perspectives. Your true conviction in supporting student voice is something I have gotten to experience myself, such as the many instances during board meetings where you've spoken up for me and actively included myself and Charles.*

*Thank you Trustee Bell for both the professional and personal guidance you've proactively offered me in many instances. I've left every one of our conversations surprised and grateful for the extra guidance you provide after I asked just a few questions. Your support and encouragement both inside and outside this job has helped me grow and sustain myself this year.*



# Closing Remarks from Student Trustee Joy Liu (continued)

*Thank you Mr. Unsworth for all your support, advice and encouragement. I've truly enjoyed all the Google Meets we've been on inside and outside of Senate hours where I also get to hear your jokes that sometimes fly over my head for the first few seconds. I am going to miss getting to work with you every week.*

*Thank you Mr. Hardie for your enduring patience, helpfulness, and receptiveness to any and all feedback and ideas I've lobbed your way these past two years, first as a Senator and then as a Trustee. I am so grateful that students in our District have someone like you who truly listens and responds in the way I've gotten to experience from you.*

*Finally, thank you Nicole and Myra. I couldn't do my job without your support at board services! I am so very grateful for all your help and I will especially miss the friendly words we get to exchange over email (as things are in pandemic life, LOL).*

*My work this year would not have been possible without this exhaustive net of students and staff who had my back. I leave hoping that I have done them and their work justice."*



# MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS: FRAMEWORK

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OCDSB Student Senate

*Mental Health  
Working Committee*

**Brooke Colman, Laura Wang**  
**April 2021**

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## **About Us**

**The Student Senate** is a team of representatives from across the OCDSB, each OCDSB school having one senator. We meet once a month to discuss board matters and how they uniquely affect our schools, hear from guest speakers and collaborate to create change for all students. Due to the pandemic, we have pivoted to an online meeting model. Also due to the pandemic, we have noticed an increase in the need for change within our schools. Because of this, we have added an extra senate meeting every month and split our group into two working groups. Our working group is focused on improving and promoting mental well-being in schools across the board.

**Hi, I'm Brooke Colman**, I'm a grade 11 student and the student senator for Cairine Wilson Secondary School. I am a passionate advocate for mental health-- dismantling the stigma and myths surrounding it. I have organized many mental health initiatives throughout high school and elementary school as it is a topic I hold close to my heart. Outside of Student Senate, I am the co-president of my school's Key Club, a volunteer in my community and a high-achieving student.

**Hello! I'm Laura Wang** in grade 11, currently attending Bell High School. As one with high standards and a number of leadership roles, I am no stranger to stress and burnout; so by working with my fellow Senators in developing this framework, I hope to help build an atmosphere for other students where they are able to prioritize their well-being above all else.

**Our mission** is to provide an opportunity for students to create a space to provide support for students. Through this framework, we will provide a step-by-step process for students to implement a mental health representative on Student Council. Their responsibilities will be to act as a voice for student mental health concerns in their schools. This position will be referred to as the Student Wellness Representative.

This framework is in the hopes of working with the **OCDSB Mental Health Strategy** in order to achieve their goal of “[Establishing] a youth advisory on mental health to help identify areas of focus, and co-create mental health awareness activities and programs for youth”

To take it further, we are also hopeful to develop partnerships with feeder elementary schools to promote another point in the Mental Health Strategy: “ **Explore ways to engage elementary students in mental health awareness and promotion initiatives**” This is explored further on page eight under, “Taking it Further”.

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## Wellness Representative

### Overview

Advocacy and accessibility are crucial factors to consider when looking to improve student mental health; we can build on both by introducing the role of a wellness representative in schools across the board. The following section includes information on roles and responsibilities, suggestions on implementing this new position in your Student Council, advice in regards to working in a virtual environment, as well as tips for transitioning into the next school year.

### Introduction, Roles and Responsibilities

The wellness position, much like that of a grade representative, would be taken by two students. Given that there are only a couple of months remaining until the end of the 2020-2021 school year, we ask that candidates be in grades 9-11 (or grade 12 if returning for a victory lap) so that they may continue their work or help start and lead a committee in the upcoming fall (refer to page 6 for more details). Primary responsibilities are outlined in the chart below.

2020-2021 School Year: Student Wellness Representatives		
Responsibility	Tasks (tailored to suit virtual environment)	Notes
Build a platform	Use it to share information that can help others learn about their mental health and how to take care of it.	The reps may choose to use their personal platforms, start new accounts dedicated to the role, or use existing Studco logins.
Make resources accessible to students and	Design or share tip sheets and posters through social media; make appropriate links available online (be it through Instagram, school websites, emails, etc.).	Creating a <a href="#">Linktree</a> would be a great start! See <a href="#">here</a> for an example (put together by a pair of Studco members at Bell High School).
Act as a liaison between the student body and council in all wellness-related aspects	Check in regularly with students; provide opportunities for them to send thoughts/feedback; voice concerns to Studco; discuss and carry out solutions (host activities/events, etc.).	Important: wellness reps are responsible for advocacy and resource-provision. <b>Not to be confused with licensed professional therapists!</b>
Communicate with staff	Make sure that staff (especially the teacher supervisor for your Student Council) are aware of what you do, and that you have approval before hosting any events or activities.	Remember that it is important to stay in touch with teachers even when in a virtual environment! They can often help with administrative tasks.
Optional: set up a	Run the application process for, and	Please read the next section of

committee for the 2021-2022 school year	lead, a committee in the upcoming academic year. Run events and campaigns to continue advocating for mental wellness within the school.	the framework: “Starting a Committee” on page 6 for more information and detailed instructions.
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## Implementation Process

When choosing candidates for a position on the Student Council, there are typically a few different processes to pick from: namely, elections, applications, and interviews. In this subsection, you will find the suggested instructions to get started with your implementation, covering all three selection methods as well as templates you may find useful for each. Important: please do not make direct edits to any of the form templates shared; make a copy before you change anything so that others can use it too.

### Election

1. Introducing the Election:
  - a. Create a poster to be published on your school Instagram account; make sure it is also accessible to students that are not on social media (tip: get an announcement or email out through administration).
    - i. Make sure it includes the following information: description of the role and responsibilities, an election schedule outlining important dates/deadlines, as well as what forms need to be filled in order to run.
  - b. Release an interest form to gather basic information about your candidates. Feel free to duplicate [this template](#), then make some tweaks and use it for yourself.
  - c. Optional: create a teacher endorsement form. Candidates will need to reach out to a staff member and have them complete the form on their behalf, indicating whether they think the student would be able to take on the job. View and copy a template we made for you [here](#).
2. Voting Days
  - a. Ideally, leave about two weeks for candidates to submit their two forms and campaign on social media (if you are choosing to allow campaigning).
  - b. When time is up, give a day or two for votes to come in! Once again, you may use this template to gather ballots (the form also includes other Studco positions in case you are running them all simultaneously).
  - c. Announce final results and begin work with the wellness reps!

### Application

1. Introducing the Election:
  - a. The process for this will be very similar to the election process; start by sharing a poster with initial information, then create forms for candidates to fill out.
    - i. Tip: communicate what the deadlines are very clearly, and give adequate time (1-2 weeks) for submissions. If a candidate is unable to hand everything in



before then, consider that they may not have the time management skills or commitment required for the role.

- ii. Click [here](#) for a teacher endorsement form template, and [here](#) for an application form template that includes questions. Make a copy and edit as needed.
2. As organizers, you will be responsible for reading the applications after the deadline, and determining which candidates are most suited to the position of Student Wellness Representative.
  - a. Alternatively, you may also have all of the Student Council decide together if you are worried about having a biased opinion. Ultimately, it is up to you to maintain integrity when making decisions that will affect the school.

### Interview

1. The recommended starting process for interviews is—yup, again—to create an informative poster, release an interest form (template attached [here](#)), as well as a teacher endorsement form (template attached [here](#)).
  - a. After the form deadline, contact all candidates with an interview date and time.
    - i. You may choose to work out a time with each individual based on their availability, or schedule and communicate a specific range beforehand (for example: “all interviews will take place between 3-5PM on Monday), using the information post.
    - ii. Whether you limit the interviewers to just yourselves or include all of Student Council is entirely up to you. Just note that getting larger numbers of people to join will make scheduling more difficult, but it may be worth the extra opinion.
    - iii. It is important to sort out how interviews will be held. If you are using Google Meet, ask the Student Council teacher supervisor to set one up (they will either need to be with you to start the meeting, or create one that doesn’t require teacher supervision to run).
2. Interviews can be questions-only, or you may get the candidates to prepare a short presentation (i.e. a slideshow) explaining their experiences and qualifications for the position. Below is a list of questions you can ask during the interview.
  - a. Standard questions:
    - i. Why did you choose to apply for this position?
    - ii. What makes you think you are a good candidate for the Student Wellness Rep (experiences, skills, personality, etc.)
    - iii. What ideas/initiatives do you have in mind that you would like to work on if chosen for this position?
  - b. Curveballs:
    - i. If you were a breakfast cereal, which one would you be and why?
    - ii. What do you consider to be your greatest weakness?
    - iii. When was the last time you had disagreed with someone, and how did you handle the situation?

**Working in a Virtual Environment: Tips for the Wellness Reps**

Use school communication channels to your advantage:

- Promoting events or activities may be difficult in a virtual environment. Remember that you can use your morning announcements system, mailing lists (oftentimes school administration or teachers will be willing to help by sending out messages to students), and word of mouth (ask grade representatives to help you share with their classmates) to get the information out.

Social media is your friend:

- Build a following and begin to post regularly with informative updates, self-care tips, interactive polls, etc., so that students are aware of your platform. Being active on social media will attract people to your account, making promotion much easier.

**Transitioning to the 2021-2022 School Year**

- Please ensure that elections for this position are only open to students returning to school in the fall (grades 9-11, or 12 if they are returning for a victory lap).
  - The remainder of the 2020-2021 school year can be spent planning for what's to come next. Once elected, representatives can begin building their virtual platform and brainstorming initiatives that they would like to take on; it may also be a good idea to start preparing materials for committee applications if they are choosing to start one.
-

## **Starting a Committee**

If there is a large amount of interest in a singular mental health representative position, then starting a committee for mental health at your school may be the best way to go.

### **Importance and benefits:**

Starting a committee is no easy feat. It will take dedication and student-power. There are many benefits, however, to starting one.

#### **Benefits:**

- Greater outreach and changemaking within the school and beyond
- Wider range of opinions from the student body
- Collaboration with other students
- Delegation of tasks
- More opportunities for student leadership experience

### **Steps in implementation:**

#### **1. Determine interest**

It is imperative that there be enough interest before taking the next step of starting a committee. Keeping representatives on the student council for the first year or more would be the first step, then upgrading to a committee for the reasons listed above.

#### **2. Receive approval from administration**

Proposing a new committee to the administration is a very important step. Without school support, this project cannot continue. Every school is different, so make sure the exact processes in your school are followed.

Things to include in a proposal:

- Have a detailed plan
- Find a way to communicate student engagement
- Communicate how this committee will improve your school

#### **3. Find a teacher advisor**

Reach out to a teacher who you think would be interested in supporting your committee. Make the necessary commitments clear. This framework can be shared with any potential teacher advisor(s) if they are looking for more information.

#### **4. Creation and receipt of applications**

The application description listed under implementation can be adapted to fit a committee format. The application is important to ensure everyone understands what their role in the committee would be, and to give an opportunity for them to communicate that understanding and their passion for student well-being with committee heads. Application can be changed to fit your individual school's needs and policies.

An application process is optional for general members, but highly encouraged to determine executive members. The committee can follow the similar formula of a club where people can join whenever they wish, if that works best for your school.

[Here is an application template](#)

## 5. Running the committee

**Meetings:** The amount of impact you wish to create in your school will reflect how often your team meets. Meeting once a week will optimize productivity. It is important to take the schedule of members and teacher advisors into account. Google Meet, or other virtual meeting platforms supervised by a teacher advisor, can be used if extracurriculars remain online.

**Executive positions:** It is important to have clear leadership. Having two co-presidents would be the best way to go. Ideally, these leaders would have held the position before. Other positions on the committee would be:

- Secretary: takes minutes during meetings
- Public Relations: running any social media platforms or websites
- General members: to help with outreach and planning of events

### - Roles and responsibilities within the school

Students who are members of the committee would have the same responsibilities within the school as the two student council representatives. They must act as an advocate for student mental wellness, while understanding that their position does not involve helping students through mental illness.

The committee would be responsible for observing the needs of their school. From there, they can decide what events and resources to create in order to meet those needs.

#### **Ideas for initiatives:**

- Mental Wellness Weeks
- Workshops (for students, teachers or event parents)
- Websites and social media platforms
- Exam and summative season stress-management
- How to Help a Friend workshop
- And much more!

### - In -person vs virtual meetings

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to be unpredictable, in the coming years we are hopeful to be able to have in-person meetings, but virtual platforms are still a possibility. With that being said, the capacity to **pivot** continues to be an asset for all clubs. In virtual platforms, communication and connection have been a struggle for students, a lack thereof has had detrimental effects on student mental well-being. If a committee is implemented in an online format, having facets of connections are vital for mental health support.

In contrast, in-person meetings and initiatives present more opportunities for direct connections and hands-on change. In-person workshops, events and resources do make it easier for students to learn and become more responsible for their own mental well-being. One can hope for the opportunity for more in-person events next year, with the implementation of this committee, but preparing for an online model is also important to ensure the greatest change is implemented.

- **Ensuring member engagement and commitment**

When it comes to the mental well-being of your student body, keeping a solid team is very important to create effective change. Here are some general tips for ensuring an engaged team:

1. Make sure everyone is clear on the tasks they are to complete. No one wants to be a part of a team where they don't have a clear purpose, so make sure everyone is included!
2. Use incentives to generate members. Things like a free cookie for joining a meeting, or having guest speakers are great ways to build your team.
3. Make time commitments clear from the beginning. If someone wants to take on a larger role, make sure they truly understand what that would entail so they can make sure they can handle it.
4. Create plans and execute them. No one wants to spend a meeting sitting around chatting and getting nothing done. Create a plan, decide on roles and responsibilities, then get to work!
5. Finally, try and make meetings fun. This can be starting with an icebreaker or playing games throughout the meeting, but make sure there is an opportunity for friendship and camaraderie .

**6. Taking it further (feeder schools and partnerships)**

You're doing great! You've started a committee in your school, and now you want to expand your outreach. Working with the feeder schools for your high school is a great place to start. The first step to achieve this partnership is contacting the guidance department in your school.

Depending on your school's relationship with feeder schools, there are different opportunities for partnerships.

**Working with feeder schools could mean:**

- Promoting student mental well-being as they transition to high school. The main difference between high school and elementary schools is the workload and expectations from teachers. This tends to be a huge stressor for students transitioning to high school. The mental health committee could make that transition easier by providing support, resources and personal experiences to new students.
- Working with teachers and parents to share resources on mental wellness. Opening up opportunities for discussions in elementary school will make it much easier down the line.
- Working with LINK Crew to provide tools upon entry to high school

**Working with the OCDSB**

One of the OCDSB's top priorities is the wellbeing of students. Hearing directly from students is a great way for the board to know the best ways to help us. The OCDSB Mental Health Strategy outlines the need for “[Establishing] a youth advisory on mental health to help identify areas of focus, and co-create mental health awareness activities and programs for youth”. This is a great opportunity for Student Wellbeing Committees to become a partnership with the school board.

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## **Ensuring Longevity**

Given that the idea of a mental health committee is still relatively young, it's important that we put in extra effort in ensuring it becomes a long-term implementation. A big step in that direction is finding and fully preparing the next "generation" of student leaders to take on the responsibilities!

### **Finding New Committee Heads**

The following suggestions are for committee heads at the end of their term:

1. Consider using a "shadowing" method to give interested members a taste of what committee head responsibilities would look like.
  - a. A good way to approach this is by inviting regular club members to committee head meetings. Have those that are interested sign up—whether alone or in pairs—to join you and your co-head when you work together outside of regular group meetings. Allow the opportunity to go around so that anyone that wants to, will be able to attend.
  - b. Remain transparent where it is suitable to do so. For example, if you have a google drive folder with planning documents, give view access to the rest of your team. They'll get to know your role better, and hopefully feel inspired to apply for next committee head!
2. As with any other club in school, make sure to select committee heads the year before (preferably around June). This will give enough time for the previous heads to pass on any information, materials, tips, etc., and for the newly chosen ones to begin planning together.

### **Recruiting Committee Members**

The following suggestions are for committee heads at the start of their term:

1. Keep your applications open to grade 9's! Make a note not to push away any members based on age or lack of experience in clubs—they will be the people leading the committee once you and other seniors have graduated.
2. In order for the first point to work, you will need to select your committee members in the fall rather than the summer before. In other words, feel free to do the planning ahead of time, but we highly recommend only starting the recruitment process in September.
3. Encourage participation from all members, whether they are younger or older, executive or general. Create opportunities for group work and communication so that the team can form a bond and build a stronger foundation for future years.

### **Final Note: Connecting with the Board**

The board may be implementing a mental health youth advisory in the future, where each school would have a representative attending meetings and working together on board-wide initiatives (much like the Student Senate, but instead for wellness-focused projects).

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## **Closing Remarks**

To wrap it all up, student mental well-being continues to be one of the most important, yet at risk, things in our high schools. Having a pair of students to advocate for student mental well-being is a great way to ensure the voice of the student body is heard and well-represented. It is also an important opportunity for empathetic student leadership. As previously acknowledged, this position does not mean the student believes themselves to be, or is required to act as, a mental health professional. It is an advocacy and action role by students for students.

It is also important to remember that this framework is simply a guideline. Please do not hesitate to adjust any components of it to fit your school. As well, what works for some schools may not work for others. While there may be enough interest to start a committee at certain schools, other schools may not, or it may take longer for students to want to join, and that's okay. What is most important is that conversations about student mental health are happening, and that students themselves are involved in the conversations.

We would like to thank you very much for taking the time to read through this framework. We hope that you are able to implement a student wellness representative and/or committee in some capacity within your schools. Please feel free to ask any questions you have

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# OCDSB Peer Tutoring Numeracy Framework

*Version: February 7, 2021*

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# About Me

My name is Charles Chen and I am currently a Grade 11 student at Earl of March Secondary School. I am also currently serving as one of the two Student Trustees for the 2020-2021 school year. I have always enjoyed the subject of math and found it to be very interesting. However, not all students feel the same way about math. I've noticed that a lot of students dislike and struggle with math for a variety of reasons. After noticing this, I decided to volunteer my time during lunch breaks in Grade 9 to help other Grade 9 students with the Grade 9 math course, MPM1D. In Grade 10, I established a peer tutoring system at my school that focuses on allowing other students to volunteer their lunch breaks to tutor fellow students in math. Although it was a good idea, I ran into many challenges during my implementation and have learned many lessons to improve the system. Despite these challenges, I strongly believe that with adjustments to the plan, we will be able to deliver math support effectively and in ways that haven't been explored thoroughly in the past.

Just when I was about to relaunch my peer tutoring system with a new plan and implementation, the entire world went under lockdown because of COVID-19. My math help system idea was also part of my campaign at the February 2020 Student Trustee election and I was happy to see how many student leaders were also very excited about this idea. I hope this plan will help support you in implementing a peer tutoring program at your school and that we will be able to learn and work together to improve this plan.

# Why math?

It's time for math class. For some, this is their favourite part of the school day. For others, this is their most dreaded part of the day. Elementary school math was already difficult enough for many students, but when you reach high school there is a requirement of understanding mathematical concepts on a deeper level than ever before.

Although some students may learn the quadratic formula and never use it again in their lives, mathematics is more than just getting good grades on math tests. It's about being able to connect concepts to problems, it's about being able to solve problems efficiently and quickly and it's also about being able to communicate and justify your solution to a problem effectively. These skills are all invaluable in the 21st century. Furthermore, not only is 3 years of mathematics a requirement for obtaining the Ontario Secondary School Diploma and graduating, but many post-secondary programs also require taking Grade 12 math courses, many requiring Calculus and Vectors.

## Is peer tutoring effective?

Not only is there a substantial amount of evidence from research that shows the benefits of peer tutoring, the benefits of peer tutoring can also be seen through extensive anecdotal evidence.

I have peer tutored math during my Grade 9 and 10 years in high school during lunch breaks at school. Throughout this experience, I have personally witnessed the immense benefits that peer tutoring can provide to students. Peer tutoring is incredibly personalized to the student that is seeking help, something that is impossible to achieve in a classroom setting through class lessons. Personalized support helps students to better understand concepts, as concepts are being taught in a variety of different ways. From my experience, students are also much more likely to seek help from fellow peers than from teachers as peers are often easier to approach. Peer tutoring is also able to create meaningful connections between students and contributes to the overall collaborative and supportive culture of the school. Since peer tutors are constantly challenged to explain concepts in intuitive ways and look at mathematical concepts from different perspectives, this is a very rewarding experience for peer tutors as well. Peer tutors are able to gain the satisfaction that they helped a fellow peer better understand something that they didn't understand before and at the same time, they are able to sharpen their own math skills and gain volunteer hours.

Laura Wang (Bell High School Student Senator 2020-2021): "Back in middle school, a teacher asked if I would be interested in tutoring other students around my age; at the time, I had no idea what I was signing up for, whether I would do a good job, and whether my tutees would find my help useful. I said yes only because it seemed like a great way to acquire "working experience", but quickly learned that there was so much more to gain from it. Currently, I tutor four high school students, all with different strengths and learning styles. They have each taught me as much as I have them, and I like to think that a big part of who I am today is a result of my experience as their tutor. Algebra and calculus aside, it has brought a plethora of growth opportunities and valuable lessons for both them and myself, and is something I would highly recommend for others as well."

## Why is this important?

Equity in education has always been a top priority for the OCDSB. This framework has also been designed with the 2019-2023 OCDSB Strategic Plan in mind. It advances the OCDSB's goals of fostering a Culture of Innovation, a Culture of Caring and a Culture of Social Responsibility.

This framework has the ability to improve student achievement and increase graduation success and a sense of relevance and motivation for students by providing students with the support they need to succeed, all goals that are part of the Culture of Innovation. This plan improves equity of access, opportunities and outcomes as well as student well-being by providing equitable access to free and effective math support and allowing students to rest assured that they have access to a consistent and reliable source of support, all goals that are part of the Culture of Caring. Finally, this framework improves social and emotional skills, student voice and student behaviour in both tutors and tutees by encouraging students to seek support with math when required and fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment where students are encouraged to advocate for themselves and challenge themselves, all goals part of the Culture of Social Responsibility.

We, as student leaders within our school board, should be working towards providing students with the support and resources they need to succeed. This framework aims to help eliminate barriers to success in high school math in our school board by providing accessible, effective and free support to students.

## **How is this different?**

I know that a lot of schools already have existing math support systems. If so, we will be taking advantage of that in this framework by providing ways to build off of existing systems in order to implement this plan more easily. If your school doesn't currently have a system in place, don't worry because this plan will also provide ways to start one from scratch.

This plan is different from existing support systems for many reasons. To begin, many of the existing systems are run by math teachers, whereas this plan focuses on students helping students. Although this is a subtle difference, this is extremely important as can be seen from the anecdotal evidence above. Most importantly, students are much more likely to seek help from fellow peers as they are often easier to approach and students seeking help may already personally know the tutors. Furthermore, after consulting with my school's math department head, many schools do not currently have a centralized math help system. Oftentimes, individual teachers offer to occasionally help students during lunch breaks and thus math help is not always available to all students on a consistent basis.

This framework is largely inspired by my high school's math help program. At my high school, a room was open 4 days a week during lunch breaks and any student who



needed extra support would be able to pop in and receive it. All the math department teachers would follow a rotating schedule that indicates the days that they are responsible to help in the math help room so that there would always be teachers that are available to help. Students loved this “drop-in” environment where they could stay for as long as they wanted to. Some students would come to the math help room with their friends and appreciated the opportunity to work on their math homework together and ask questions whenever they needed. Other students came alone and would leave after they had their questions cleared up. The system was so flexible and was able to support each student’s unique needs. Most importantly, there was no sense of stigma or shame surrounding seeking help with math. In our supportive school environment, students helped each other out and encouraged each other to seek help with math whenever needed.

Obviously, due to current restrictions from COVID-19, this vision isn’t possible to achieve right now. In this framework, I will be providing instructions on how to create a similar environment virtually, as well as how to implement the in-person system for when the pandemic is over. I am hopeful that when the pandemic is over, we will be able to recreate this supportive environment at various high schools across the district.

## **Using This Plan**

This plan is intended to serve as a reference to support you in the implementation of the peer tutoring program at your school. You can use as little or as much of the plan as you would like, and feel free to adapt this plan in order for it to be better suited for your school. I hope that with this plan, you will be able to get a general idea of how you can implement this initiative at your school. Get creative and share what you found worked well!

## **Getting Started**

### **Contacting Your Math Department**

The first step in implementing this program is to make sure that your math department is aware of this initiative that you plan to implement and that they support it. I would recommend contacting the head of the math department to start off. Chances are that the head of the math department would be willing to support you during the implementation of this initiative. If not, ask the head if they can think of other teachers in the department that may be willing to help you.

The head of the math department is the ideal person to help support the implementation because not only are they very familiar with all levels of the math curriculum and current math support systems that are in place, but they can also help recruit other teachers from the department that will also help join in. Furthermore, communication is easier as the head can directly contact all teachers in the department so that they are aware of this initiative and can help out wherever needed.

Emailing your math department head is probably the easiest way to contact them. It's important to explain the initiative in a clear and concise manner so that the email you send is easy to read and understand. In your email, explain how this initiative is different from any systems that may currently be in place and how this program will benefit the students in your school's community.

## **Having a Team**

Although this is something that I have never personally tried, this is something to consider. You can weigh the pros and cons of tackling this initiative with a team. There can definitely be quite a bit of work behind this so you may find it beneficial to delegate tasks to team members.

## **Volunteer Hours**

Peer tutors will receive volunteer hours for the time that they volunteered in order to tutor other students. I would recommend discussing the specifics of this with your math department head. Things to discuss include how many hours they will receive and how these hours will be given. In order to keep a record of how many hours each peer tutor has, I would recommend making a Google Form that peer tutors are expected to fill out at the end of each tutoring shift. This form would ask for their name, the date, the start and end times of when they tutored, number of hours as well as the name of the teacher that was supervising during their shift in order to validate the volunteer hours. It's important to share this Google Form with your teacher supervisor and they will be responsible for making sure that peer tutors get their volunteer hours.

## **Recruiting Peer Tutors**

### **How Many?**

The number of peer tutors you need will depend on how many students attend your math help initiative. I would recommend making a best estimate and depending on how well it works, feel free to adjust the number of peer tutors for each day. For example, if

you see that not many people usually attend on Mondays, but there are a lot of people that attend on Wednesdays, you may want to move some peer tutors from Monday to Wednesday. You may also have to make adjustments if there are generally more or less students attending than anticipated.

I would recommend having a Google Doc with a schedule (example below) that is shared with the entire math department as well as the peer tutors so that everyone knows which peer tutors are responsible for attending on each day. **I would recommend sticking to a simple, one week schedule.** When I first did this initiative, I had a two week schedule where peer tutors would tutor every other week. That was extremely confusing for both the math teachers as well as the peer tutors. Peer tutors would often forget which days they are responsible for attending as they only show up once every two weeks and eventually stop showing up altogether. Once again, I would recommend following a simple one week schedule. Depending on which days you are open for math help, clearly indicate which peer tutors are responsible for helping that day. An example is shown below for a math help program that is available Monday to Thursday.

### Sample Peer Tutoring Schedule

*I would recommend including last names as well in your actual schedule.*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Bob (Gr. 10) John (Gr. 11) Olivia (Gr. 12) Emma (Gr. 12)	Liam (Gr. 11) Noah (Gr. 11) Ava (Gr. 12) Sophia (Gr. 12)	Oliver (Gr. 11) Isabella (Gr. 11) William (Gr. 12) Charlotte (Gr. 12)	James (Gr. 11) Benjamin (Gr. 11) Amelia (Gr. 12) Evelyn (Gr. 12)

### Choosing Peer Tutors

Depending on the number of people that are interested in volunteering, you may want to consider different ways of how you will be selecting peer tutors. Choosing the right peer tutors is extremely important, as these students are the ones that will be directly interacting with and helping the students that need extra support and if the tutees aren't happy with the help that they received, they are unlikely to return. *I will be explaining how to make sure students are aware of this volunteering opportunity in the "Publicizing This Initiative" section of the framework.*

If you receive a lot of students that are interested in helping, **do not feel obligated** to use a two week schedule in order to allow everyone to peer tutor. As I previously mentioned, **I strongly discourage** a two week schedule. If you have a lot of people that are interested, consider putting more peer tutors on each day or implement a more rigorous selection process. I will now be explaining some processes you can follow in order to select peer tutors. Feel free to modify the process you are using or switch methods as you see fit. No matter which method you choose, do not ghost candidates who are not recruited. Not only is that inconsiderate, you lose these potential candidates for when you may need to recruit more peer tutors in the future for whatever reason.

## Open Application Process

I would recommend starting with this one. In short, students who are interested in peer tutoring will fill out a Google Form that indicates which days they will be available to peer tutor and which grades they are comfortable peer tutoring as well as general contact information such as name, grade, email, social media, etc. As long as there aren't any major concerns from yourself or the math teachers that taught the student, they are accepted as a peer tutor. A sample set of questions is below (you will need to convert the questions into a Google Form).

Question	Answer Format	Required?
Name	Short answer	Yes
Grade	Choose 1: - 9 - 10 - 11 - 12	Yes
Email (Make sure you check this often!)	Short answer Data validation: contains email	Yes
Instagram username (We will have a group chat on Instagram. It is preferred if you get Instagram if you don't already have it, but it is not required as long as you check your email often.)	Short answer	No
Which grade(s) are you comfortable peer tutoring?	Choose as many as applicable: - 9 - 10 - 11	Yes

	- 12	
Which day(s) are you available to peer tutor?	Choose as many as applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monday</li> <li>- Tuesday</li> <li>- Wednesday</li> <li>- Thursday</li> <li>- Friday</li> </ul>	Yes
Is there anything else you would like us to know? (Optional)	Paragraph (long answer)	No

## Restricted Application Process

This process is quite similar to the Open Application Process however, as the name implies, it is more restrictive than the open process. This process also involves a Google Form, however they are not guaranteed a spot. On the Google Form, you can ask some open ended questions such as why they are interested in peer tutoring, past experiences that can help them succeed in the role and why they feel that they are a good candidate for the position. The math department head or a set of teachers will go through the applications and, depending on the number of peer tutors you need, will select the peer tutors based on the applications. A sample set of questions is below (you will need to convert the questions into a Google Form).

Question	Answer Format	Required?
Name	Short answer	Yes
Grade	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9</li> <li>- 10</li> <li>- 11</li> <li>- 12</li> </ul>	Yes
Email (Make sure you check this often!)	Short answer Data validation: contains email	Yes
Instagram username (We will have a group chat on Instagram. It is preferred if you get Instagram if you don't already have it, but it is not required as long as you check your email often.)	Short answer	No



Which grade(s) are you comfortable peer tutoring?	Choose as many as applicable: - 9 - 10 - 11 - 12	Yes
Which day(s) are you available to peer tutor?	Choose as many as applicable: - Monday - Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday - Friday	Yes
Why are you interested in peer tutoring math?	Paragraph (long answer)	Yes
What are some past experiences that you have that you feel will help you succeed in your role as a peer tutor?	Paragraph (long answer)	Yes
Why do you feel that you are a good candidate for the position?	Paragraph (long answer)	Yes
Is there anything else you would like us to know? (Optional)	Paragraph (long answer)	No

## Interview Process

This process is another option that is more rigorous than the open application process. To begin, interested candidates will fill out a Google Form (example below, you will need to convert the questions into a Google Form) indicating that they are interested in having an interview. All applicants will receive an interview. In the interview, the candidate will be asked some open ended questions, similar to the questions in the restricted application process, but will also be required to demonstrate their skills as a peer tutor. After the interviewer has asked the open ended questions, the interviewer will give the candidate some math questions, one at a time, depending on the grades that the candidate indicated that they are comfortable peer tutoring math in. The interviewer will pretend to be a student seeking help with these problems and the candidate is expected to explain the questions to the interviewer. The interviewer is welcome to ask follow-up questions whenever they want as they see fit. After all of the candidates have been interviewed, the interviewer will select the peer tutors based on their performance. The interviewer is encouraged to take notes during each interview in order to help them make their final decision.

Question	Answer Format	Required?
Name	Short answer	Yes
Grade	Choose 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9</li> <li>- 10</li> <li>- 11</li> <li>- 12</li> </ul>	Yes
Email (Make sure you check this often!)	Short answer Data validation: contains email	Yes
Instagram username (We will have a group chat on Instagram. It is preferred if you get Instagram if you don't already have it, but it is not required as long as you check your email often.)	Short answer	No
Which grade(s) are you comfortable peer tutoring?	Choose as many as applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9</li> <li>- 10</li> <li>- 11</li> <li>- 12</li> </ul>	Yes
Which day(s) are you available to peer tutor?	Choose as many as applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monday</li> <li>- Tuesday</li> <li>- Wednesday</li> <li>- Thursday</li> <li>- Friday</li> </ul>	Yes
Please type CONFIRM below to confirm that you are interested in peer tutoring math and would like to receive an interview.	Short answer Data validation: Answer contains CONFIRM	Yes
Is there anything else you would like us to know? (Optional)	Paragraph (long answer)	No

## Creating a Peer Tutoring Schedule

When creating your peer tutoring schedule and selecting your peer tutors, there are a variety of factors to consider. It is likely that the majority of your peer tutor applicants are

going to be in either Grade 11 or 12. This is good because they can probably peer tutor their grade and all grades below them, which makes them a more versatile candidate. You probably want to stay away from recruiting too many Grade 9 or 10 peer tutors as they are unlikely to be able to help with higher grades. When placing peer tutors in your schedule, try to evenly distribute the grades and make sure that there is someone who can peer tutor all grades on each day while respecting each peer tutor's indicated availability.

## **Holding Peer Tutors Accountable**

It is very important for peer tutors to be held accountable and that they fulfill their responsibilities. A way to make sure that students are aware of their responsibilities is by making them sign a document that outlines all of their responsibilities and makes sure that they agree to fulfill their tasks (example below). By signing, they indicate that they are aware of their responsibilities and that they will be held accountable.

Another way to keep peer tutors engaged is by making them attend regular meetings. When all the peer tutors are selected, it is important to host an introductory meeting that outlines all of their responsibilities and to also distribute the agreement documents. They must hand in their agreement documents before they are allowed to peer tutor math. After the introductory meeting, it is important to host meetings on a regular basis in order to keep peer tutors engaged. A good time interval would be to host a quick check-in meeting once every 2 weeks. At each meeting, ask each peer tutor to share their experience over the past 2 weeks. They are welcome to share insightful stories, lessons they learned or anything else that they feel would be beneficial to the other peer tutors.

## **Sample Agreement Document**

*Adjust this document wherever necessary in order to make it applicable for your school.*

### **[Your School] Peer Tutoring Agreement Document**

**Name:**

**Due Date: [Insert Due Date]**

This document is used in order to ensure that peer tutors:

- a) Are fully aware of their responsibilities and commitments
- b) Demonstrate compliance with their responsibilities
- c) Are held accountable

Peer tutor responsibilities:

- Attend all check-in meetings
- Attend all assigned peer tutoring shifts
- Peer tutor math to the best of their ability
- Notify teacher supervisors and director(s) (← insert position title for peer tutoring system head) at least 48 hours in advance whenever they cannot attend a shift
- Maintain good communication and check emails regularly
- Maintain a good academic standing

Failure to comply with the above requirements will result in a meeting with the teacher supervisors. If noncompliance continues, a replacement will be found.

By signing below, you agree that you have read and fully understand the requirements associated with being a peer tutor and you agree to carry out your responsibilities to the best of your ability. (Please insert an image of your signature below)

## **Maintaining Good Communication**

Communication is always a challenge, regardless of whether or not you are pursuing an initiative fully virtually. When things move online, communication will only get harder. It is extremely important to maintain a reliable line of communication with your team members.

Depending on your school, there may already be a preferred platform for communication. Generally, a group chat on Instagram is easy to pursue as there are already a lot of students on that platform and students tend to check their social media regularly. If all peer tutors already have Instagram accounts and check them frequently, then you can stick to sending communications out just on the group chat. If you have to use more than one platform, I would recommend using email as one of the platforms.

For example let's say you are using Instagram and email as your platforms for communication. Each time you need to communicate with everyone, you would send out the message through email to everyone and also send a message on the Instagram group chat telling people to check their emails. If you are having trouble staying in touch with students who exclusively use email, you should have a talk with them and explain the importance of regularly checking emails.

# Supporting Students in a Virtual Environment

## Using Existing Systems

If your school already has systems in place to support students with math, you should see if it's possible to take advantage of these existing systems when implementing your peer tutoring program. If your school has a centralized system to support students where all students, regardless of what class they're in, attend the same support system, then it is very likely that you will be able to take advantage of this. If your school's support system consists mainly of individual teachers offering support, it will be difficult to implement this program with individual teachers.

It is important to ask your math department head or another teacher in the department for clarification on how your school offers math help to students. If they use a centralized Google Meet, it will be very easy to implement this system. You can skip the "Starting From Scratch" portion of this framework if your school already uses a centralized Google Meet and go straight to the "Implementation" portion. Otherwise, continue reading.

## Starting From Scratch

If your school doesn't have a centralized Google Meet for supporting students, then you will have to establish a system. After you have decided which days you will be offering math help, you should communicate these days to your teacher supervisor. Ask them which days they will be able to supervise and if they are able to help you find other teachers that will supervise on the days that they are unavailable. It is important to be respectful of the teacher's time; you probably shouldn't have them supervise for more than 2 days each week. Preferably, you would find a different teacher for each day. This is when having the math department head as your teacher supervisor becomes very useful as it is very likely that the head will be able to find other teachers that would be willing to help out.

## Implementation

After you have decided which days you will be offering math help (this decision is already made for you if your school has a centralized system), you should ask your teacher supervisor to create a supervision schedule for the Google Meets if they don't already have one. It is important to confirm with your teacher supervisor that teachers are aware of this schedule and which day they must supervise so that there will always be at least one teacher there to supervise.



A teacher will have to start the Google Meet in order to have access to the breakout rooms feature on Google Meet. It is a good idea to ask your teacher supervisor to create a “permanent” link for the math help Google Meet if your school does not already use one so that the link will not change. This will also make it easier to add this Meet link on the school website and ask math teachers to put the link on their Google Classroom (more on this in “Publicizing This Initiative”).

Your teacher supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that there will always be staff supervision in order for the Google Meet to run. It is your responsibility to make sure that peer tutors are aware of what days they are responsible for peer tutoring and to hold the peer tutors accountable to their responsibilities.

You will be using the breakout rooms feature on Google Meet in order for peer tutors to support students with math. It is very likely that your teacher supervisor and teachers who will be supervising the Google Meet are already very familiar with using this feature. Ask your teacher supervisor to make sure that all teachers are comfortable with using breakout rooms in order to prevent technical difficulties.

Whenever a student joins the math help Google Meet, the teacher supervisor will pair the student with an appropriate peer tutor who will support them with math. Then, the teacher supervisor will add these two students to the same breakout room so that the peer tutor can support this student individually.

The peer tutor will open a Google Jamboard, which is a whiteboard application that is built into Google Drive, and share their screen in order for the tutee to see. The peer tutor is able to draw on the whiteboard and also invite the tutee to draw on the whiteboard if necessary. I am mentioning Google Jamboard because it is easy for students to use, it's built into Google Drive and tutors are able to share the Jamboard with the tutee if necessary. If there is another whiteboard application that you know that you believe would be beneficial, you can present multiple whiteboard application options to your peer tutors at your introductory meeting where you will be explaining how they will be peer tutoring students. If one of your tutors prefers to use a different whiteboard application, you should encourage them to do so as long as that does not create any problems.

# **Supporting Students In-Person**

## **Using Existing Systems**

If your school already has systems in place to support students with math, you should see if it's possible to take advantage of these existing systems when implementing your peer tutoring program. If your school has a centralized system to support students where all students, regardless of what class they're in, attend the same support system, then it is very likely that you will be able to take advantage of this. If your school's support system consists mainly of individual teachers offering support, it will be difficult to implement this program with individual teachers.

It is important to ask your math department head or another teacher in the department for clarification on how your school offers math help to students. If your math department uses a centralized system where a room is open to all students for drop-in math help during lunch breaks, it will be very easy to implement this program. You can skip the "Starting From Scratch" portion of this framework if your school already uses a centralized drop-in math support system and go straight to the "Implementation" portion. Otherwise, continue reading.

## **Starting From Scratch**

If your school doesn't have a centralized drop-in room for supporting students, then you will have to establish a system. After you have decided which days you will be offering math help, you should communicate these days to your teacher supervisor and ask them if they can help you find a room for math help. Preferably, it will be the same room each day you offer math help so that students know where to go. Ask them which days they will be able to supervise and if they are able to help you find other teachers that will supervise on the days that they are unavailable. It is important to be respectful of the teacher's time; you probably shouldn't have them supervise for more than 2 days each week. Preferably, you would find a different teacher for each day. This is when having the math department head as your teacher supervisor becomes very useful as it is very likely that the head will be able to find other teachers that would be willing to help out.

## **Implementation**

After you have decided which days you will be offering math help and you have found a room for your math help (these decisions are already made for you if your school has a centralized system), you should ask your teacher supervisor to create a supervision schedule if they don't already have one. It is important to confirm with your teacher

supervisor that teachers are aware of this schedule and which day they must supervise so that there will always be at least one teacher there to supervise.

Your teacher supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that there will always be staff supervision in the math help room. It is your responsibility to make sure that peer tutors are aware of what days they are responsible for peer tutoring and to hold the peer tutors accountable to their responsibilities.

As the name suggests, the drop-in math support program allows students who require extra support with math to drop-in anytime at the math help room during lunch breaks whenever the extra support room is open. Students can come by themselves or bring their friends and can stay for as long as they want (within the lunch period). At Earl of March SS, students are allowed to bring their lunch to the room as long as they clean up after themselves so that they don't miss eating their lunch.

When supporting students in-person, you should have the peer tutors circulate around the room and answer any questions that are asked. Encourage the peer tutors to observe the room and if they notice that some students haven't asked any questions in a while, the peer tutor should approach them and check in with them to make sure that they don't have any questions. Sometimes, students may initially be hesitant to ask questions and by checking in, this makes it easier for the student to ask questions.

## **Publicizing This Initiative**

In order to ensure that students are aware of this initiative and also aware of the opportunity to volunteer as a peer tutor, publicity is very important. I will outline many different ways to publicize this initiative in this section. Feel free to use as many as you want in order to reach as many students as possible. I would recommend doing two rounds of advertising. The first would be to recruit peer tutors and the second would be to inform students about this program.

If your school has an announcement system, that is a great place to start. You should find out how to submit an announcement if you do not know how to already. Then write an announcement that describes your school's peer tutoring program and submit it. You should probably repeat the announcement over a few days in order to ensure that everyone knows about it.

Another great way to publicize this initiative is by using the math department. Ask each math teacher, through the department head, to tell each of their math classes about this initiative during class time and to make a post on their Google Classroom which also

contains the link to the Google Meet (if applicable). This will provide a direct line of communication to math students and ensure that they are aware of this program.

Your school's Student Council Instagram account is another great place to advertise this program. By making a post and asking Student Council members to share the post on their story, you are able to reach a large percentage of the school population.

You should also add the Google Meet link (if applicable) to your school's website in a location that is easy to find. This will help students find the link easily in order to make it more accessible.

If possible, ask your school's administration if they would be willing to send out an email publicizing this program using the school mailing list to all students and parents.

When publicizing the program, it is important to focus on how this program is different from existing systems and how this program is led by students. The peer-focused nature of this program often makes students less hesitant to seek math help as students are usually more comfortable seeking help from fellow peers, some they may already know, than teachers.

## **Ensuring Longevity**

If you believe that the peer tutoring program was successful at your school and students really benefited from it, you should explore how to ensure the longevity of the program at your school so that it will be carried forward for future years.

A very important step to ensuring longevity is to make sure that you have a functioning team. Team members may need to be replaced for a variety of reasons. Some team members may graduate, others may decide that doing this simply isn't right for them. Whether you are pursuing this initiative individually or with a team, at the end of each school year, you will have to ensure that you have a team that is ready for the next school year. You may perform your selection process in whatever way you see fit. For example if you, the director/head, are graduating this year, you will need to find someone else to lead this initiative. You could explore the possibility of choosing a peer tutor to lead the initiative next year if you notice an outstanding peer tutor that goes above and beyond their expected responsibilities. No matter how you choose your team or director/head, it is important that they are well prepared for their future responsibilities. Make sure they know how to perform their roles and you can also give them a copy of this framework (or even a school-specific framework that you made) as a reference if you believe that will be useful.

When choosing peer tutors for the next school year, I would recommend leaving this responsibility up to the new team and to ask them to choose the new peer tutors in September. Students are often much more likely to pursue new extracurriculars at the start of a new school year and this also helps to make sure that they don't forget their expected responsibilities over the summer break. You should give the new team a list of the current peer tutors and ask them to start recruiting from this list in the new school year as these peer tutors already have past experience.

## **Thank You**

Thank you for taking the time to read my OCDSB Peer Tutoring Numeracy Framework. I hope that this implementation guide has helped you during the implementation process at your school. By implementing a peer tutoring system, you are helping to make your school and learning environment more equitable and making academic support more accessible for all. Thank you for everything that you do.