

Halton District School Board (HDSB) Parents Group Calls for Accountability Measures



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[Students First Ontario](#)

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Over 91% of survey respondents are concerned that controversial and media exposed teacher, K. Lemieux may return to the classroom in the future.

OAKVILLE, April 12, 2023 - For over 7 months, the HDSB allowed students to be subjected to excessive levels of classroom disruption, uncertainty and endangerment, including but not limited to, 12 disclosed threats of violence. During this time, the HDSB failed to develop or implement any existing or new policies or practices to mitigate the situation. Instead, many HDSB personnel went out of their way to celebrate and support the unprofessional behaviour and attire of the internationally viral and vape-permitting Oakville Trafalgar High School shop teacher. Further, they insisted that minors also celebrate and support this behaviour and attire - often, against their own judgment, intuition and consent. The teacher has recently been placed on full paid leave, despite journalistic discoveries that lend serious credibility to numerous breaches of ethical and professional standards. Parents are now insisting on accountability measures for education administrators and personnel who allowed the situation to unfold and escalate from September 2022 onwards. The situation remains, as yet, unresolved and further action is required.

Results of a March 2023 [survey](#) conducted by **Students First Ontario** (SFO) indicate that 98.6% of survey respondents are not satisfied that the “teacher issue” has been resolved. Survey respondents agreed unanimously that the HDSB had not taken the steps necessary to ensure they could manage a similar situation if it occurred in the future. Respondents agreed that those officials and administrators responsible for managing the situation should be held accountable for their action and inaction.

“It’s understandable that parents want to see those in charge be held to account. HDSB families have been forced to endure constant threats to the safety of their children while having their voices silenced and their concerns ignored”, explained an OTHS Parent and Students First Ontario supporter. “In what other field can you mismanage a situation so egregiously and then expect to walk away without acknowledging your failure and instituting a change-plan to prevent a future recurrence?”

Acknowledging Failures and Learning from Mistakes

When asked to name those viewed as responsible for allowing the teacher situation to escalate and remain unresolved, 79.7% of respondents identified the **HDSB Director of Education**, 59.4% identified the **HDSB Trustees** and 47.8% identified the **School Principals**. The appropriate accountability measures expected by respondents were:

- **78.3%** want those accountable to acknowledge their failures
- **72.5%** want to see apologies issued to the school community
- **69.6%** want those responsible to voluntarily resign from their role
- **71%** want to see involuntary terminations /replacement of those accountable

Regaining the Trust and Confidence of the Community

The HDSB’s relationship with the parent community has been damaged. While families are understandably still upset, they recognize that their children are best served through a positive relationship with the Board. The steps outlined below are considered to be critical in facilitating a path forward.

- **Professionalism Policy:** immediate implementation of a valid Professionalism Policy for Staff that effectively prevents sexually inappropriate attire and behaviour.
- **Foundational Training:** mandatory enrollment of HDSB Director, SuperIntendents and Trustees in foundational training in Democratic Principles and Parent Engagement, to be completed by September 2023.

- **Accountability Statement:** publicly acknowledge and apologize to HDSB families for failing to manage the teacher situation and for the damage inflicted on students. Commit to surveying HDSB parents to understand how the Board can build better relationships with families. Results, recommendations and implementation plan to be shared publicly and fully implemented by June 2024.
- **Disclosure of “DEI” Initiatives:** through the delivery of a detailed annual “DEI” plan to parents. The Board must commit to full transparency on all initiatives presented under the “diversity, equity & inclusion” (DEI) banner.
- **Leadership Review:** under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, conduct a leadership review at the Director and Superintendent level.
- **Teacher Suspension:** suspend the teaching license of K. Lemieux for a minimum period of two years. Reinstatement of teaching license to be conditional on passing a clinical assessment of mental health and adhering to a Professionalism Policy.
- **OCT Investigation:** make public the status and findings from the Ontario College of Teacher’s investigation into the conduct of K. Lemieux, including the OTHS Vaping incident that was reported. This should include, but not be limited to, the number of parent complaints received along with a full accounting of the action OCT has taken on these complaints, including any referrals to the College’s Disciplinary Committee.

About Students First Ontario

Students First Ontario is a group of over 300 Halton District School Board (HDSB) parents, students and other concerned members of the community. We believe Ontario's public education administrators are failing in their core mission of "**Placing students’ interests and well-being first.**" We aim to provide a principled, strategic and effective voice for liberal democratic principles in support of student and parental rights.

For further information contact: Students.1st.Ontario@gmail.com