



2021-2024 School Mental Health and Wellness Strategy

At the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, we are committed to promoting and enhancing the mental health and well-being of students.

The 2021-2024 School Mental Health and Wellness Strategy aligns with the HPEDSB strategic plan.

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Our beliefs



All students can succeed.

Well-being is the foundation of student success.

School communities play a vital role in promoting student mental health and well-being.

Our mission



To enhance and promote inclusivity, positive mental health and well-being in school communities.

Our vision



Create a sense of belonging, school engagement, access to resources and caring relationships that enhance student mental health, well-being and safety.

The need

Ontario is dedicated to supporting the mental health of students. Promoting positive mental health, identifying students at risk, and helping students to get the support they need are all roles that the education system can play.¹

¹Canadian Mental Health Association: Mental Health Resources in Schools, <https://ontario.cmha.ca/documents/mental-health-resources-in-schools>

Values and commitments



1. Student growth in learning, mental health and well-being are interconnected and create positive school climates.
2. Collaboration with community partners and stakeholders for positive and valuable relationships to meet the needs of students and families.
3. A multi-disciplinary approach and the implementation of evidence-based programming supports mental health capacity building for school teams.
4. Collaboration and confidence build mental health understanding and leadership to support mental health services planning and implementation in school communities.

Strategic priorities

Organizational Conditions and Leadership

Promote organizational conditions and leadership to create conditions and structures that are foundational to excellence in school mental health and well-being practices.

School Mental Health Capacity Building

Enhance school mental health capacity at HPEDSB by building knowledge, skills and confidence to improve mental health awareness, literacy and expertise.

System Coordination and Pathways to Care

Create cohesive, responsive care and service systems for students with complex mental health needs through effective coordination and pathway design.

Mental Health Promotion and Prevention Programs

Utilize high-yield, evidence-based practices to support mentally healthy classrooms and school communities, and provide support for mental health promotion, prevention and intervention.

Youth Voice and Family Engagement

Value and empower student voice and action by encouraging youth engagement to build confidence, academic success and leadership skills.

Equity, Inclusion and Safety for Specific Populations

Enhance equity, inclusion and safety for specific populations through differentiated and unique supports and/or services.

PRIORITY

Organizational conditions and leadership

At HPEDSB, evidence-based supports, leadership and resources foster and sustain high-quality practices in student well-being and school mental health practices.

Focus

- Commit to student mental health and well-being at the board and school levels with a clear and focused vision and shared language.
- Work with the Mental Health Leadership Team to implement this School Mental Health and Wellness Strategy² that reflects the voice and priorities of HPEDSB school communities.
- Develop standard processes, and provide ongoing monitoring to determine progress in mental health and well-being in schools.
- Embrace strong partnerships and enhance relationships with schools, families and community partners.



² Image from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/WBstrategy.jpg>

PRIORITY

School mental health capacity building

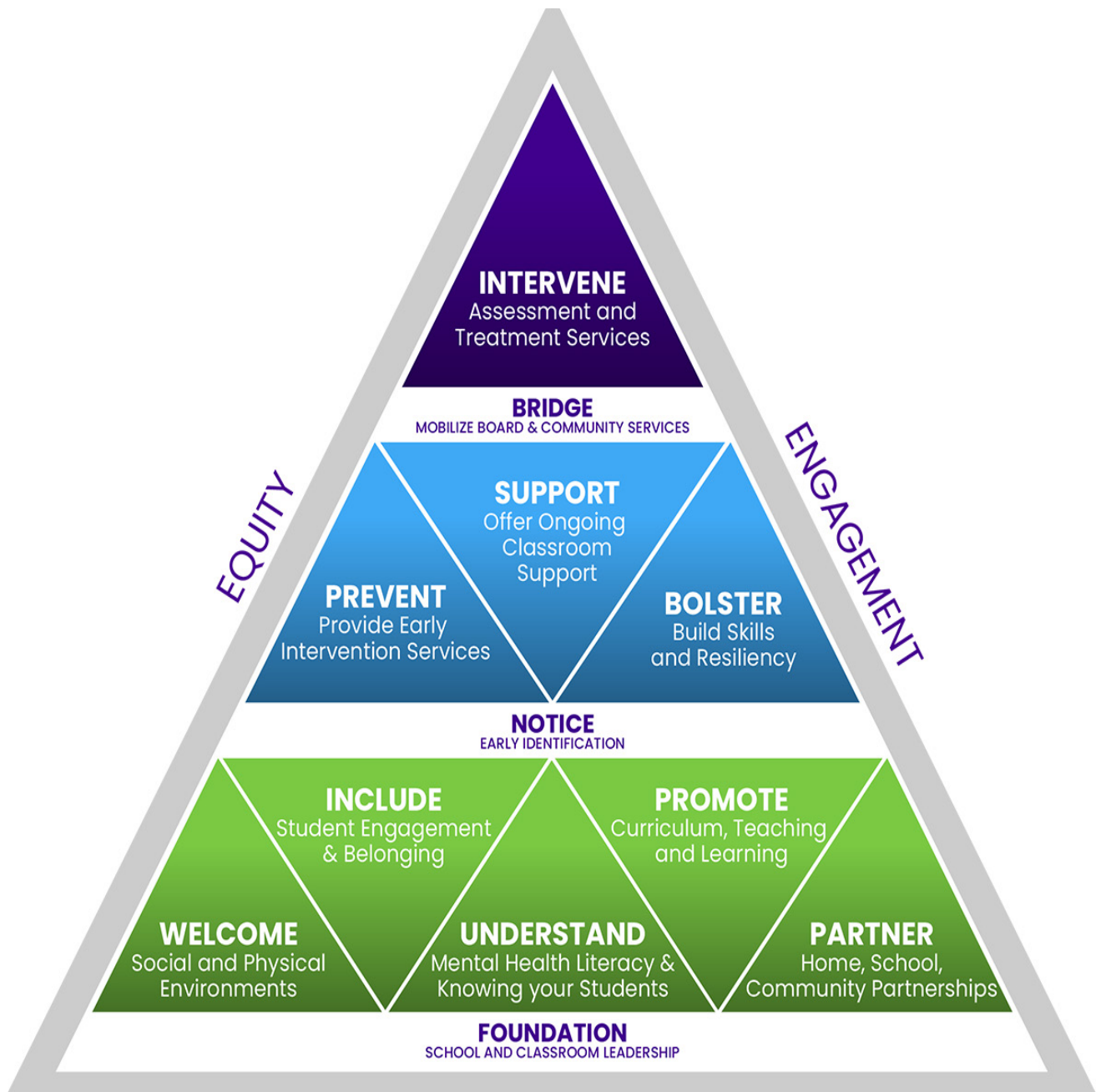


A positive learning and teaching environment is essential if students are to succeed in school. Employee mental health awareness is a key support factor that contributes to student well-being.

Focus

- Establish a solid foundation within schools to support mental health efforts using the tiered Aligned and Integrated Model³ (see next page) of intervention.
- Build capacity in all HPEDSB stakeholders (e.g., school administrators, educators, support staff, students, families and community partners) by increasing the understanding and importance of mental health in the classroom and the skills that promote well-being and resiliency.
- Build capacity through targeted trainings and professional learning opportunities.

Aligned and Integrated Model (AIM)

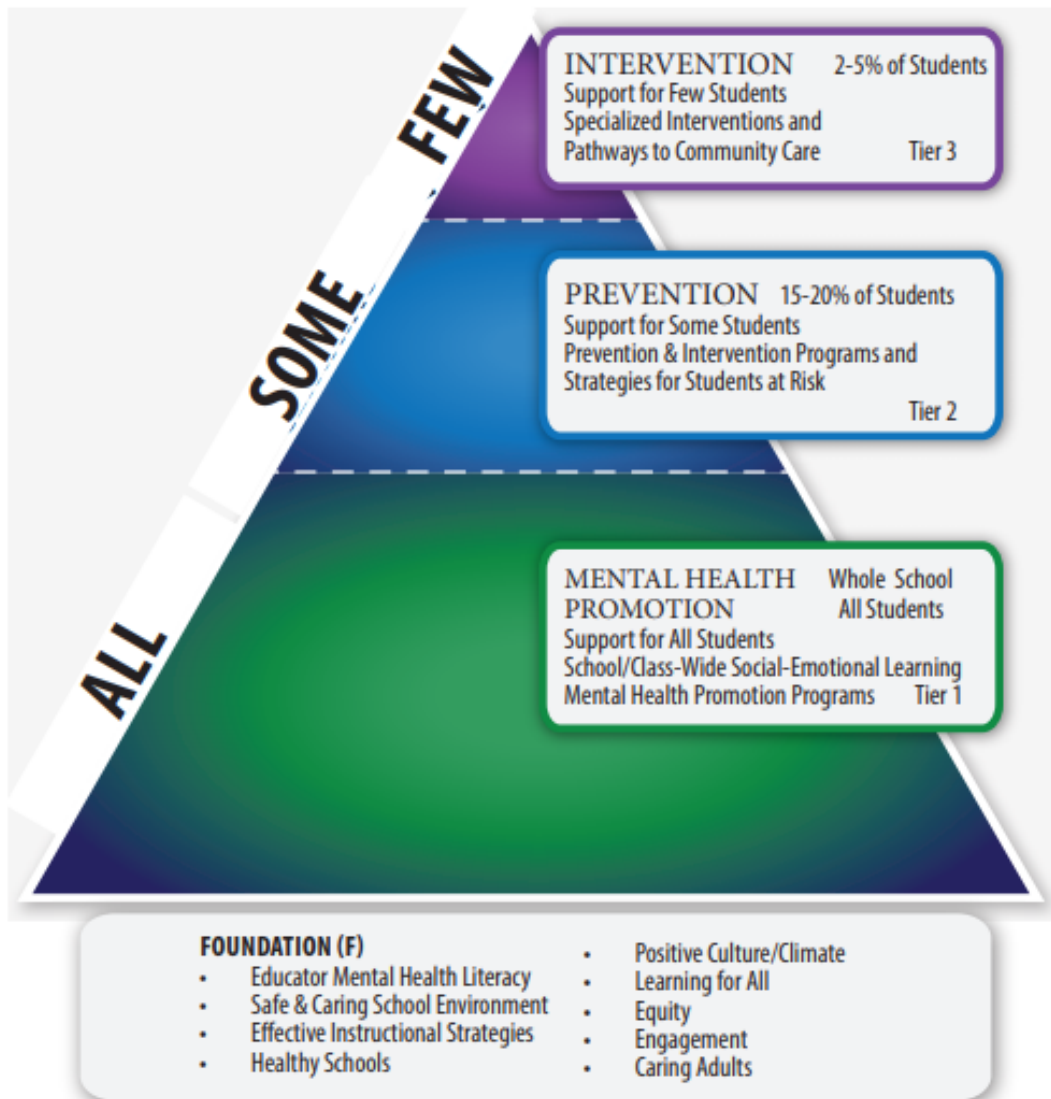


³ Image from <https://smho-smso.ca/school-and-system-leaders/learn-more/mental-health-leadership-strategies/think-in-tiers-and-focus-on-the-positive>

Tiered approach

As outlined in "Learning for All (2013)", the tiered approach⁴ can:

- promote mental health and well-being for **all** students;
- help to identify **some** students with or at risk of developing mental health problems; and
- access clinical support for the **few** students who require more specialized and intensive intervention.



⁴ Image from <https://smho-smsc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Flipchart.pdf>

Think in tiers



Tier 1: Mental health promotion

- Mental health **promotion**.
- Universal class-wide mental health promotion initiatives (good for all).
- Foundation (school and classroom leadership): welcome, include, understand, promote and partner.
- Resources and supports that reinforce every day mental health practices in the classroom.

Tier 2: Mental health prevention

- Mental health **prevention**.
- Supports for students who might be at greater risk for mental health problems (good for some).
- Notice (early identification): support and bolster.

Tier 3: Mental health intervention

- Mental health **intervention**.
- Services for students experiencing mental health challenges (good for few).
- Bridge (mobilize board and community services): intervene.

PRIORITY

System coordination and pathways to care



Mental health services are aligned and coordinated to enhance the system of care for students, including those individuals with complex mental health needs.

Focus

- Build strong, positive relationships and partnerships with external agencies to promote positive mental health in schools. Better serve students with Tier 2 and Tier 3 needs through systematic coordination of service.
- Develop and maintain clear protocols for internal and external pathways to care for timely and consistent mental health services and other specialized supports for students.

Mental health promotion and prevention



Creating mentally healthy classrooms and schools through ongoing implementation of best practices is at the core of the work. Together with School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO)⁵, HPEDSB staff use integrated practices of evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and resources.

Focus

- Implement evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and practices to build resiliency and social skills in all students (Tier 1).
- Build capacity in all school stakeholders regarding evidence-based strategies to foster healthy coping skills in students.
- Provide Tier 1 resources and supports that reinforce every day mental health practices in the classroom (e.g., Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs).



⁵Image from <https://smho-smsso.ca>

Youth voice and family engagement



Youth voice and family engagement is embedded in HPEDSB procedures, decision-making and staff interactions. Staff are committed to establishing meaningful student and family engagement to support mental health awareness and engagement efforts.

Focus

- Support all staff to understand the value of student voice and family engagement.
- Collaborate and explore opportunities to enhance student voice and family engagement.
- Encourage inclusivity of youth and families.
- Improve help-seeking behaviour.

PRIORITY

Equity, inclusion and safety for specific populations



Collaboration among the Mental Health Leadership Team, school staff and community partners is an important part of creating welcoming, safe inclusive and equitable learning environments. It is through these interactions that student achievement and well-being can be enhanced for all students, while differentiated supports and services enacted for others.

Focus

- Learn about the strengths and needs of specific populations.
- Enhance the safety and well-being of specific populations in various aspects of school life, including classroom learning and extracurricular activities.
- Increase knowledge about internal and external supports and resources to enhance the safety and well-being of specific populations.

This 2021-2024 School Mental Health and Wellness Strategy reflects a clear vision and strategic direction based on the HPEDSB goals of commitment, shared language and school culture to promote inclusion, student achievement, leadership and mental health and well-being for all.



#HPEDSB_BeWell