

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

Status:	Active
Effective:	September 2000
Revision Date:	September 2025
Review Date:	September 2029
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education, School Operations

PURPOSE:

The External Presentations in Schools Procedure establishes a system-wide approach for a third-party speaker or group (e.g., external guest speakers, live performances) organized by a Halton District School Board (HDSB) school, a department, a teacher or other staff member, school council, or a student group and details the requirements for schools when considering guest speaker engagements. It also establishes board expectations for processes, timelines, and notifications. HDSB staff seeking to arrange external presentations as appropriate teaching/learning strategies for their students should support the implementation of the Ministry of Education's memorandum of May 13, 2024, *Strengthening Academic Achievement and Transparency*, outlining communication and advance notice requirements for guest speaker engagements. Presentations should connect with the Ontario curriculum and align with the HDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

SCOPE:

This Procedure applies to HDSB External Presentations in schools for students only and does not apply to external speakers engaged to speak to HDSB staff (business/operations units) regarding topics that are purely technical and operational in nature.

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

PROCEDURES:

1. The principal is responsible for deciding whether to arrange an external presentation. This decision will be based on the unique needs and circumstances of the school community.
 - 1.1. If required, consult with staff in the Indigenous Rights & Education Department if seeking an external speaker on Indigenous-related matters who will vet the proposed speaker and/or proposed pre-approved speakers.
2. **General Expectations and Requirements by the Principal:**
 - 2.1 Review the presentation to ensure it connects with the Ontario curriculum and aligns with the HDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
 - 2.2 Consult the Family of Schools Superintendent, if appropriate;
 - 2.3 Inform School Council of the nature and purpose of the presentation;
 - 2.4 Ensure the intended audience for the presentation is clearly defined including but not limited to their appropriateness (e.g. students enrolled in a particular course, grade, club, whole school, etc.) as well as consistency with equity, anti-racism, anti-oppression and human rights perspectives;
 - 2.5 In accordance with the Ministry of Education's memorandum dated May 13, 2024, all HDSB schools are required to provide specific information to parents/guardians/caregivers whenever external speakers or groups are invited to speak to students in kindergarten to Grade 12 at school-based events. The notice must be provided at least 14 calendar days in advance of the presentation date through existing communication tools. Schools are expected to use the Notice of Guest Speaker template in Appendix D: Notice of Guest Speaker.

Methods of notice (i.e., email, handout sent home with students, posting on website, etc.) may vary depending on the size and scope of the event.

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

This communication should include:

- Date/time of the activity
- Name of the guest speaker(s) and the organization that they represent
- Title and location of the activity
- Topic or focus of the activity
- Connections to the curriculum and/or the purpose of the activity
- Details of any handout materials, giveaways or literature to be provided.

If, at any time, there is a change to a planned event or should arrangements at the school level not allow for 14 calendar days advance notice (i.e., change in speakers, limited planning time), the school will be required to provide this information to parents/guardians as soon as final arrangements are confirmed.

Note: Schools are permitted to exclude certain information (such as the date and time of activity) where it is determined that posting this information would pose a safety risk to students and/or staff. Please connect with your FOS Superintendent if this is a concern.

- 2.6 Ensure that any literature associated with a presentation is distributed through school staff and is in alignment with the Administrative Procedure for Selection of Instructional and Library Resources.
- 2.7 Ensure all staff are aware of the school's rationale for having the external presentation to enable staff to answer questions which may arise in the community.
- 2.8 Inform the external presenter of the HDSB Discriminatory & Harmful Language protocol and relevant school or board protocols prior to delivering their presentation.
- 2.9 Consult with staff in the Indigenous Rights & Education Department if seeking an external speaker on Indigenous-related matters who will vet the proposed speaker and/or proposed pre-approved speakers.

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

3. Vetting and Approval Process:

The following process, including recommended minimum timelines (see Appendix A: Process and Recommended Timelines Infographic), will be used to engage an external speaker at an HDSB school-based event involving students:

- 3.1.1. Staff/student group/department seeking to retain an external speaker ("Proposer") will conduct research and identify a proposed speaker and topic.
- 3.1.2. The Proposer will fill out a Proposal Package (see Appendix C: Proposal Package).
- 3.1.3. The Proposer of either a classroom speaker or school-wide speaker will send the completed Proposal Package to the school Principal at least 2 weeks prior to the required 14 day notification period to the parents/guardians.
- 3.1.4. Vetting materials must be thoroughly reviewed and may include, but are not limited to, the following: presenter notes, presentation materials, social media presence and platforms, and criminal background check information.
- 3.1.5. If the Proposal Package is not approved, the Proposer may speak with the Approver (Principal) to determine why the proposal was not approved and identify potential ways to modify the proposal for reconsideration.

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

Speaking Engagement Audience	Vetting Members	Designated/Approved by:
Classroom	School Staff, Principal, Vice Principal(s)	Principal
School Wide	School Staff, Principal, Vice Principal(s)	Superintendent
Indigenous Education	Indigenous Rights & Education Department	Principal

3.1.6. After the Vetting Members complete their review, the Proposal Package will be returned to the Proposer, who will forward it to the relevant “Approver” listed below for review and approval.

3.1.7. If the Approver authorizes the proposed external speaker engagement, the approver will sign the approval form included within the Proposal Package and will forward it to the Proposer and to the individual to whom the Approver reports, as set out below:

Approval and Notification Process Chart

Type of Event (Proposer)	Approver	Notified of Approval of Event
Classroom speaker (staff/student)	Principal	Principal
School-wide speaker (staff/student)	Principal	Superintendent

4. Exemptions

4.1 The following are exempt from the vetting and approval process as outlined in section 3:

- Educational and Business Partnerships (Year Book Company/Software Company (Ministry of Education Staff, Staff from other boards))
- Governance and Board Services
- Elected Officials, Regional Councillor Members, MPs, MPPs

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

The exempt departments and offices must adhere to their respective processes.

5. Speaking Event Evaluation (Optional)

The HDSB strongly encourages schools to gather feedback from participants following any external presentation. This feedback is valuable in evaluating whether the speaker met the intended objectives and aligned with HDSB's expectations. To support this process, schools are advised to complete the Speaker Evaluation Form (see *Appendix E*) and submit it to the Approver in aggregate form.

All collected speaker evaluations will be housed within the School Operations Department, where they will be accessible to all administrators as a reference tool for future planning.

Note: While feedback from other schools can be a helpful reference, principals are encouraged to use their professional judgment when considering external presenters. Each school community is unique, and it's important to ensure that presentations are age-appropriate, responsive to the needs of students and families, and aligned with the Ontario curriculum and HDSB priorities. A presenter's prior experience in another school does not automatically guarantee a fit for all contexts.

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

APPENDIX A - [VETTING EXTERNAL PRESENTATIONS Process and Recommended Timelines](#)

APPENDIX B - [Sample Vetting/Research Chart](#)

APPENDIX C - [PROPOSAL PACKAGE](#)

APPENDIX D - [Notice of Guest Speaker Form](#) To Parents/Guardians

APPENDIX E - [SPEAKER EVALUATION FORM](#) (Google Form is embedded within this appendix)

External Presentations in Schools

Administrative Procedure

Cross-Reference:

HDSB Support Documents:

- [HDSB Parent/Guardian Support for Mental Health and Well-Being](#)
- [HDSB Student Support for Mental Health and Well-Being](#)

Legislation

Ministry Policy & Program Memoranda

[Ministry of Education Memorandum, *Strengthening Academic Achievement and Transparency*, May 13, 2024](#)

Board Policies, Procedures & Protocols

Appendix A: Proposed Speaker/Presentation/Campaign Form

[HDSB Indigenous Education Policy](#)

[Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)

[Day Field Trips](#)

[Selection of Instructional and Library Resources](#)

[External Service Providers, Guest Speakers and In School Presentation](#)

[Guidelines for School Staff](#)

[Student Excursions AP](#)

Revision History

- September 2025 - Updated to support the implementation of the Ministry of Education's memorandum, *Strengthening Academic Achievement and Transparency*. Added a new vetting and approval process, included appendices A-E, clarified principal responsibilities, and streamlined sections on one-time presentations, videos, social media campaigns, and written/web materials related to mental health, directing schools to existing HDSB Mental Health and Well-Being resources (Parent/Guardian and Student support pages).
- September 2017