

Mental Health and Substance Use Leadership Committee –

October 7, 2025, 3:30 – 5 PM.

Private Meeting

Roll Call: *Laura Conboy, Scot Gillam, Wendy Fisher, Ellyn Clost-Lambert, Shawn Quigley, Amanda Posadowski, Rae McDonald, Kristy Luffman, Adam Andrecyk, Chelsie Boucher, Megan Brunet, Melissa West, Cheryl Snider, and Maggie Farmer*

Regrets: *Gillian Gunn, Valerie Arsenault, and Shawn Lowe*

Minutes: *Wendy Fisher*

1. WELCOME

Laura Conboy welcomed committee members. Laura delivered the land acknowledgment and noted that LDSB has updated our land acknowledgement to use “Anishinaabek” rather than “Anishinaabe” to recognize the nation as a whole. This change reflects our commitment to honouring the collective identity, strength, and sovereignty of the Anishinaabek Nation, and to ensuring our language remains respectful and accurate.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda by Chelsie Boucher. Motion seconded by Maggie Farmer.

3. REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Laura advised of updated language changes to the TOR to reflect the new 3-year Mental Health, Substance Use, and Addiction Strategy. A full review of the TOR will occur in the fall of the 2026-2027 school year.

4. COMMUNITY PARTNER UPDATES

Amanda Posadowski will remain in her position as Manager, Healthy Schools for Southeast Public Health.

Amanda presented an overview of the LDSB School Climate Survey Data report from Spring 2024. A copy of the report was shared with committee members. Substance use was found to increase among students in secondary grades, with alcohol being the most used substance. Schools located in northern areas reported higher rates of substance use, attributed to fewer activities available to keep students engaged.

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Data from the report was shared with students at the September Youth Mental Health and Wellness Symposiums.

Committee members recommended that the report be shared with Educational Services affinity groups to support service delivery and professional development needs.

Shawn Quigley shared information from the spring Unnamed Youth Project Youth Symposium. Over 150 students from over 20 schools participated. Efforts are underway to work directly with students to collect data, in collaboration with I-CREAtE.

There are plans in place to apply for funding from the Sisters of Providence to support ongoing work associated with the Unnamed Youth Project.

Shawn reported that The ActivPass program has been converted into an app to enable more effective tracking and management of activities.

During the summer, Youth Diversion hired an intern to conduct research into gambling and gaming addictions. A report was created and will be shared with committee members. The information collected in this report will support grant writing efforts by Youth Diversion.

On behalf of Maltby Centre, Laura shared that there is a waitlist for ongoing services. Walk-in clinics continue to run. The Nexus classrooms at Truedell PS and Bayridge Secondary School has openings. Space is also available in the Explore and Lakers programs.

5. STUDENT CENSUS UPDATE

Ellyn Clost-Lambert provided the committee with an update on the 2025 Student Census. A decision was made to present a K-12 Family Engagement and Climate Survey to all families, as opposed to having families complete the survey on behalf of students in kindergarten to grade 3.

The Student Census will target students in grades 4-6 and grades 7-12. It is scheduled to be released during the week of November 24-28, 2025. Ellyn noted that all feedback received was incorporated into the survey questions.

6. 2025-2026 ACTION PLAN REVIEW

The [2025-2028 Mental Health, Substance Use, and Addiction Strategy](#) is available on the LDSB website.

Laura provided an overview of the [2025-2026 Mental Health, Substance Use, and Addiction Action Plan](#), also available on the website. Key activities from each of the areas of focus were highlighted.

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7. YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLENSS SYMPOSIUMS

Melissa West shared that two LDSB Youth Mental Health and Wellness Symposiums were held in September. Roughly 80 students, representing all secondary school sites, were in attendance across both days. In addition to students, South East Health nurses and LDSB Social Workers and Adolescent Care Workers from each site attended. The symposiums focused on building students' mental health literacy and planning and delivering student-led mental health promotion initiatives at their schools.

Each student received a swag bag, which included a fidget, designed and produced by an LDSB student. Additionally, every school was provided with a kit containing various materials intended to foster creativity and support student-led mental health promotion initiatives for the upcoming school year.

8. BALANCED DEVICE USE

The Balanced Device Use Program is a tier one, three-session media literacy program developed by School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) and MediaSmarts. It was field tested in 2024-2025 with LDSB as a participating board. The Student Support Counsellor (SSC) at RHPS delivered the curriculum to grade 7/8 classes, completed training, and provided feedback. After successful field testing, the program has advanced to the pilot stage, with SSCs at James R. Henderson PS and JG Simcoe PS delivering the program during the month of October.

9. PREPARE/PREVENT/RESPOND

Agenda item deferred to next meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Laura informed the committee that the LDSB Suicide Response Protocol is scheduled for an update this year. She invited members who are interested in contributing to the process to contact her regarding participation in a working group.

Laura adjourned the meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for December 4, 2025 from 3:30 – 5 PM on MS Teams.

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