

Delivered via E-Mail

Date: July 16, 2025

**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

Catherine Kronas  
School Council Member  
Ancaster Secondary School

**RE: Review of conduct following the school council meeting held on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Dear Catherine Kronas,

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, you received a letter from Lindsay Snell, Superintendent of Ancaster Secondary School, advising you that HWDSB was reviewing your conduct following the school council meeting held on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The Board received allegations of hate and harm from parents and community members concerning your conduct. As a result, HWDSB's Human Rights Office (HRO) conducted a threshold assessment in accordance with its [Human Rights Complaints Resolution Procedure](#) and the [Code of Conduct Policy](#).

**Summary of Concerns and Process**

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at Ancaster Secondary School's school council meeting, during the *Welcome to All Members* item on the agenda, you made a speech objecting to the reading of the Land Acknowledgement. Discussion of the Land Acknowledgement was not an item on the agenda. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, you posted a video recording of your speech on the social media platform 'X' and tagged HWDSB in the post.

Following your actions, the Board received complaints and concerns from parents and community members that your conduct had caused harm, was disrespectful to Indigenous communities, and undermines HWDSB's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

The Board has an obligation to ensure that school environments, including school councils, are welcoming, positive and inclusive environments for everyone. Therefore, it must take complaints of this nature seriously. As such, while the Board reviewed the concerns, the interim measure to pause your engagement with the school council was taken to prevent further harm (*as per the Human Rights Complaints Procedure Section 2.0.v*). In accordance with the Board's commitment to Reinforcing Indigenous Educational Wellness and Reconciliation ([Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#)) and its [Indigenous Education Policy](#), the Board acknowledged the complaints and concerns received and followed up appropriately.

## **Threshold Assessment Outcome**

The threshold assessment indicates your conduct does not amount to a Code of Conduct or Human Rights Policy violation, however, the parents and community members who brought forward their concerns shared that they have experienced significant harm, which continues to create a concern around the school council climate.

At the council meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup>, the topic of Land Acknowledgements was not on the agenda for discussion. While you have the right to express your opinion, the Board has a responsibility to interrupt behavior that may be contrary to the Code of Conduct.

Your engagement with Ancaster Secondary School's school council is no longer paused.

## **Land Acknowledgement**

The Board does not compel or force anyone to read or participate in the Land Acknowledgement. At a minimum, the Land Acknowledgement is an expression of recognition of the traditional territories on which we learn and work. The Board has an [Indigenous Education Policy](#) that guides its commitments to Truth, Reconciliation, and respect for Indigenous rights and educational wellness.

While you are free to express your opinion, HWDSB will continue the practice of opening meetings with the Land Acknowledgement as this aligns with the Board's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

If you have any questions regarding the threshold assessment, contact the Human Rights Office at [humanrights@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:humanrights@hwdsb.on.ca). Other questions concerning Ancaster Secondary School and school council can be directed to Superintendent Lindsay Snell's office at [vaguirre@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:vaguirre@hwdsb.on.ca).

Best regards,



Yohana Otite  
Human Rights and Equity Advisor  
Human Rights Office, HWDSB