



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
Health Living Division

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members Board of Health
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	December 5, 2016
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Informed Decisions Empowering Adolescents (IDEA's) (BOH16059) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
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**RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) That the Board of Health endorse the renewal of the Informed Decisions Empowering Adolescents (IDEAs) Program funding from Impact Education Consulting beginning January 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2017 with no option for future renewal; and,
- (b) That the Board of Health approve the transfer of \$27,115 to the City Manager's Office to offset the cost of the Web Redevelopment positions.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Informed Decisions Empowering Adolescents (IDEAs) Program has been funded since 1998 as per a Council approved recommendation to pilot this program as one of the initiatives to promote the healthy sexuality of youth in Hamilton (attached as

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Appendix A). In 2009, the program was reviewed and brought to the Board of Health. The Board of Health approved the continued purchase of this program as long as it remained consistent with best practices and continued to meet operational needs (BOH09007). The IDEAs program, a peer to peer delivered curriculum, targeting grade 8 students, is currently comprised of three sessions focused on high school culture; taking risks and, substance use and misuse; and sexuality.

Public Health Services has recently reviewed this program as part of continuous quality improvement and recommends discontinuation of the program after the 2016-2017 school year for the following reasons:

- School Boards as delivery settings must agree to any services provided in their schools. The IDEAs program is not supported to continue in the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), nor commence in the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSB), as it does not align with current priorities or strategic directions, and does not meet operational needs.
- The IDEAs program has limited reach, reaching an average of 13% of all grade 8 students in the City of Hamilton annually over the past five years.
- Although never formally evaluated from a behaviour change perspective, feedback gathered from mentors, teachers and grade 8 students reveal the most valuable component of the IDEAs program is the session focused on high school culture, and supporting the positive transition to high school for students and not the promotion of sexual health.
- In alignment with significant changes in provincial mandates supporting school health over the last several years, operationally, many schools have implemented school wide transition to high school initiatives that have a much broader reach of grade 8 students, align with the broader goals of student well-being, focus on building capacity of school staff, sustainability and equity of reach of programs, and, are specifically linked to other initiatives delivered when students then enter high school.
- A newly revised (2015) *Health & Physical Education Curriculum* provides a more comprehensive content as well as increased opportunity for children and youth to build skills and practice healthy decision making in comparison to the previous curriculum, reducing the need for programs such as IDEAs.
- The IDEAs program specifically is not mandated under the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). No other public health units in Ontario deliver this program. The OPHS specifically state the BOH shall work with school boards and/or staff of elementary, secondary and post-secondary educational settings, using a

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comprehensive health promotion approach (also known as the *Foundations for a Healthy School*), to influence the development and implementation of healthy policies, and the creation or enhancement of supportive environments to address a number of health topics. This mandate is being fulfilled through the work of the School Program and the Public Health Nurses (PHNs) in schools.

***Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 9***

**FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: Renewal of funding of the IDEAs Program from Impact Education Consulting at a cost of \$27,115 for 2017 to complete programming for the current school year; discontinue funding effective June 30 2017. The savings of \$27,115 would be reallocated to the City Manager's Office (CMO) to address a funding shortfall related to the transfer of a web redevelopment position from PHS to CMO in 2015.

Staffing: Continued allotment of 0.3 FTE PHN to support the program until June 2017. After June, this 0.3 FTE will transition to support collaborative work with school boards on our mutual priority areas.

Legal: There are no legal implications associated with Report BOH16059.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In 1998, Council directed a recommendation to begin funding a portion of the IDEAs Program as part of a comprehensive plan to promote youth sexual health. The IDEAs Program was piloted in a few schools within the HWDSB from 1998 to 2001 and then became fully operational, providing service to approximately 10-15 schools annually.

In 2009, the IDEAs Program was brought forward to the Board of Health in BOH09007, with an approved recommendation to continue funding the program as long as it remained consistent with best practices and continued to meet operational needs.

Also in 2009, the IDEAs Program was reviewed but did not receive final approvals to commence within the HWCDSB. Impact Consulting and PHS engaged in several consultations with staff from the HWCDSB and the Catholic Diocese to explore implementation of this program within their board. In 2010 – 2011, the IDEAs Program was approved in the two French school boards and the program was translated and initiated during the 2011 - 2012 school year.

Participation in the IDEAs program has varied over the years; on average, approximately 13% of grade 8 students in Hamilton have received the program each year.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

There are no legislated requirements related to the IDEAs Program.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

### *Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)*

PHS met with senior leaders from the HWDSB. IDEAs Program materials and supportive documents were shared with these leads and follow-up meetings occurred to discuss these materials and alignment with HWDSB strategic directions and priorities. It was the opinion and recommendation of these leads that we maintain the IDEAs program until June 2017, and then discontinue the program. These leads recommended collaborative work to identify the 'value added' components of the IDEAs program from past participatory schools. This feedback can support HWDSB and PHS collaborative work to meet the needs of the school communities.

It was also identified by these leads that the IDEAs program does not meet their school board's priorities of building the capacity and sustainability of programming in individual schools when programming is delivered by an outside party. It was also recognized that the structure of the IDEAs program provided inequitable access to programming as it could only be run in a limited number of schools. The HWDSB wishes to continue partnering with PHS to explore how we can support all schools in their board to build this capacity to support staff and students in delivering similar programming.

### *Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSB)*

PHS met with leaders from the HWCDSB to introduce and explore interest in introduction of the IDEAs Program within this school board. The leaders received the IDEAs Program materials and supportive documents to review with other relevant school board staff. The HWCDSB expressed interest in continuing to build a partnership with PHS to work collaboratively towards shared goals rather than implement the IDEAs program.

### *French Public School Board (Conseil scolaire Viamonde) (CSViamonde) and French Catholic School Board (Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud) (CSDCCS)*

The partnership relationship between PHS School Program and the French School Boards is quite different, by virtue of the fact that each of these School Boards has a governance structure that is geographically much broader than the City of Hamilton alone. PHS does not meet regularly with these senior leaders to engage in the same level of strategic collaboration. At the time of writing this report, consultation with the two

local Liaison staff at each of these two boards, had not yet occurred. A bilingual School Program PHN is assigned to all of the local French schools and provides services within the *Foundations for a Healthy School* framework, including support to Health Action Teams. The structure of the French schools is also unique. Both high schools have students from grades 7 – 12, so the transition to a new school environment occurs earlier for most students.

### *Legal Services*

PHS consulted with legal services in regards to the IDEAs funding agreement, to ensure alignment with current best practice language and requirements for such agreements. As a result of this consult, the agreement was updated to the most recent corporate contract required for such agreements. This update then necessitated the update of various components of the agreement, such as the accountability requirements and deliverables of both PHS and the grant recipient.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The PHS review of the IDEAs program consisted of consultation with the two major school boards in Hamilton; review of the IDEAs program history, deliverables, literature and best practice evidence; review of PHS mandates, priorities, and strategic directions; review of provincial legislative and curriculum changes in the education sector as it relates to public health, as well as a review of the IDEAs funding agreement.

### School boards as settings:

- School Boards as delivery settings must agree to any services provided in their schools:
  - The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), the only School Board that has received this program since the start, has indicated that the IDEAs Program no longer aligns with their mandates and strategic priorities.
  - IDEAs has not run in the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSB) and has not received approval to commence in this board.
  - IDEAs program has been delivered in some of the Hamilton area French Public and Catholic Schools during some of the school years since the materials were translated in the 2011-2012 school year.

### Program Reach and Impact:

- The IDEAs program, which has targeted grade 8 students as they prepare for a positive and healthy transition to high school, has limited reach. The program has reached approximately 760 or an average of 13% of all grade 8 students in the City of Hamilton annually over the past five years.

- Since 2011, feedback has been gathered annually from peer mentors, twice from grade 8 student program recipients, and three times from grade 8 teachers of those classes. The session on high school culture has been, by far, identified as the most interesting and helpful topic by all three audiences. The second strongest theme identified is the leadership, public speaking and communication skills that mentors felt they developed through delivering the program.

Changing Landscape:

- There have been significant changes in provincial mandates supporting school health over the last several years that have eliminated the need for the IDEAs program. In response to evidence that focusing efforts on key transitions of child and youth development, such as when children start kindergarten and when they enter high school, other programs have been implemented across most schools that focus on transitioning well to high school and supporting healthy decision making for youth. While IDEAs was innovative best practice in its early days, similar sustainable programs have been implemented school wide over the years, and have a far greater reach for both grade 8 students and peer mentors. The goal would be to have all students have this opportunity and this be sustained within the school system, without additional third party costs.
- Schools have been implementing approaches where high school peers meet with grade 8 students and their feeder elementary schools to provide information about high school, and provide some tips and strategies to make this a positive transition. In the HWCDSB for example, the *Prefects Program* under the Student Success Initiative, has been increasing the breadth of this implementation over the past decade. It is further layered with supports once the students enter grade 9 with components such as ongoing student and teacher mentorship. Supports are built into the school improvement planning to provide sustainability to this initiative.
- The HWDSB has had a similar transition to high school approach that has been increasing incrementally over the past decade. High schools have at least one assigned staff member identified as the transition lead. The transition lead is responsible for planning and implementing transition programming with feeder schools. Some of the French Schools have similar programming.
- The reach of these programs far surpasses the reach of the IDEAs program and have greater sustainability within the school board systems and schools. The approaches have been built into how student well-being is supported through the transition years, with the skills and knowledge of the senior students at the school, and school staff.

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- The *Achieving Excellence: Promoting Well-Being* (2014), part of Ontario's Well-Being Strategy for Education specifically cites HWDSB's partnership work with City of Hamilton PHNs, through Health Action Teams, as a key strategy and promising practice to help support the physical, mental and emotional well-being of its students. The main components of this strategy include positive mental health, safe and accepting schools, developing healthy schools (which includes recommendations for engagement in comprehensive school health strategies), and, supporting equity and inclusive education. The existing and expanding transition to high school programs in schools strongly support this Ontario wide strategy and local school board strategic priorities.
- A newly revised (2015) *Health & Physical Education Curriculum* provides more comprehensive content as well as increased opportunity for children and youth to build skills and practice healthy decision making in comparison to the previous curriculum. This reduces the need for programs such as IDEAs since much of the content is already being covered through mandatory curriculum.

Now, all students are required to have a base level understanding of what contributes to healthy development, and be able to demonstrate both the knowledge and ability to apply healthy decision making skills to their lives. Additionally they must also be able to demonstrate an understanding of how their decision making affects both their lives, the lives of those around them, as well as the greater community at large. The previous curriculum did not have these over-arching expectations articulated as comprehensively as the current version, as they were included in reference to specific health topics such as substance use and misuse as well as healthy sexuality.

Furthermore, the specific health topic areas as previously mentioned, as well as other important well-being topics, such as mental health and well-being, are much more detailed and comprehensive than in the previous curriculum. For instance, the current curriculum now requires that students be able to "explain how stress affects mental health and emotional well-being, and demonstrate an understanding of how to use a variety of strategies for relieving stress and caring for their mental health", as well as requires students to "analyse the attractions and benefits associated with being in a relationship as well as the benefits, risks, and drawbacks, for themselves and others, for relationships involving different degrees of sexual intimacy". These are two examples of new curriculum components that provide further support for children and youth in developing their healthy decision making knowledge, skills and abilities.

The renewed role of Public Health in working collaboratively with the school boards to support the full implementation of the new curriculum will be planned in 2017. This renewed role has been in a transition phase throughout 2016 to complete a literature

review exploring best-practice evidence on how health professionals can best support schools and school boards with the *Health & Physical Education Curriculum*, as well as to allow the full scope of supportive resources to be released by the Ministry of Education as well as supportive organizations such as Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA).

**Best Practice Evidence:**

- The IDEAs program has never been evaluated to show that it is effective in changing behaviour over the long term. A Public Health Research, Education and Development (PHRED) review done in 2003 was focused on whether the intended messages in the program delivery were the messages received by the participants. The 2009 BOH report and review highlighted the reach of the IDEAs program, the benefits to the peer mentors and the students receiving the program, the alignment with the Ministry of Education curriculum and the status of the collaboration with the school boards in delivering the program.
- There is mixed research evidence related to peer-to-peer program models in schools, as there have been identified benefits and draw-backs. Additionally, it has been noted that more longitudinal research is needed to determine long-term outcomes.
- Summary of feedback of IDEAs peer mentors, teachers and grade 8 program recipients revealed the most valuable component was the session that focused on transitioning to high school and high school culture. Many schools have implemented transition to high school programs over the past 15 years to varying degrees with positive feedback, and continue to expand these approaches within their existing school system structures. PHNs provide support to some of these programs through the work with school based Health Action Teams.
- The best practice approach that has been adopted by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to achieve overall child and youth mental well-being and academic success is through the *Foundations for a Healthy School* approach. This comprehensive approach works from the premise that healthy students are better prepared to learn, that education is a key determinant of health, and, that there is a need to focus not just on academic success, but also on the whole child and student. PHNs have been strong partners with schools in this comprehensive approach that focuses on curriculum, teaching and learning; school and classroom leadership; student engagement; social and physical environments; and, home, school and community partnerships. Health Action Teams are one way that PHNs work with schools to support this mandate.

**Meeting Operational Needs:**



- Operational needs of both the school boards and public health are no longer being met with the IDEAs program. The IDEAs program no longer remains in full alignment with strategic priorities or guiding frameworks of PHS, or Senior Leadership at both the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) and the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSB). The HWDSB and HWCDSB are committed to continued partnership with PHS to further enhance comprehensive school health programs, provide optimally effective services, and use existing resources to meet health promotion goals. Their focus is on building capacity of school staff, sustainability and equity of reach of programs across all schools using resources within the school.
- One of the key guiding frameworks used by PHS to support strategic planning and decision making is the Health Impact Pyramid (HIP). PHS is focusing on providing programs and services that are not just informed by evidence, but also those which have the greatest impact on the populations we serve. Programs and services that address socioeconomic factors and create healthy environments will have a greater impact on a larger portion of the population.

Upon discontinuation of the IDEAs program, PHS will continue to partner with school boards to promote health within the best practice *Foundations for a Healthy School* approach.

### **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

The BOH could discontinue funding the IDEAs program upon completion of 2016 contract, with no period of renewal in 2017.

**Financial:** Funding of \$27,115 would be transitioned to implement mutual priority initiatives with the school boards beginning in January 2017.

**Staffing:** 0.3 FTE PHN that currently provides support to the IDEAs program will work on joint collaborative priorities with the school boards beginning in January 2017.

**Legal:** There are no legal implications related to not renewing the contract that terminates on December 31, 2016.

**Policy implications:** There are no policy implications.

**Pros:** Efforts could be realigned sooner to work with the school board on mutual priorities.

Cons: Not renewing the contract beginning January 1, 2017 and ending June 30, 2017 would create an inability to complete programming started in schools for the current school year. This would impact the peer mentors who committed to receive training and deliver the program to elementary schools. Discontinuing at the end of 2016 would not be in good faith and provide less than one month notice to a long standing grant recipient.

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Community Engagement & Participation**

*Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.*

### **Economic Prosperity and Growth**

*Hamilton has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.*

### **Healthy and Safe Communities**

*Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.*

### **Culture and Diversity**

*Hamilton is a thriving, vibrant place for arts, culture, and heritage where diversity and inclusivity are embraced and celebrated.*

## **APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

Appendix A to Report BOH16059	1998 Community Partnerships-Sexual Health Services in Hamilton-Wentworth (HEA98005(b)) Region of Hamilton-Wentworth Recommendation Report
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