Beliefs and Guiding Principles

HWDSB is committed to meeting the needs of all learners. We do this by providing programs that
• promote excellence
• engage all learners
• are available to all learners (equity of access, opportunity and outcome)

The learning experience must demonstrate and promote*
• creativity and innovation
• communication and collaboration
• research and information fluency
• critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills
• good citizenship with digital technology (Digital Citizenship)
• Technology Operations and Concepts

*ISTE NETS (http://www.iste.org/standards.aspx)

Commitments

All HWDSB students will have equitable access to learning experiences that
• are engaging, real-world and authentic
• develop their skills in critical and creative thinking, problem solving, collaboration and communication

HWDSB will
• ensure that all students and staff use technology ethically, competently and effectively
• use technology to enhance the learning experience and allow students to learn in various ways

Today’s learners choose to learn, live, collaborate and network in a digital world. We must give learners the skills they need to use technology to support their life and learning.

We must
• create learning conditions that mirror the real world by integrating and using technology
• know our learners in order to ensure our programs meet their needs now and in the future
• focus on programs that allow learners to explore learning options that best suit their interests and capabilities
• help parents and the community recognize that they are partners in learning

HWDSB will
• promote teaching that integrates technology with active learning (i.e. teaching math through problem solving, comprehensive literacy and rich learning tasks)
• advocate for equitable access to digital tools and resources to promote 21st Century learning conditions through Blended Learning, eLearning, physical and virtual learning environments (i.e. Learning Commons, HWDSB Commons)
• promote a better understanding of Digital Citizenship (i.e. Positive Participation, Privacy, Identity, Credibility and Authorship and Ownership)
**Strategies**

**Blended Learning**
HWDSB will:

- advocate and support Blended Learning for all students and staff
- support the professional learning and capacity of staff to use blended learning – knowing when to use online experiences versus face-to-face interaction
- help staff understand how, when and where students learn
- support the creation of learning environments that use technology in ways that are engaging, meaningful and connected to the skills needed (ISTE NETS)
- support staff to use technology in the classroom to provide learning options to meet individual needs
- support the use of tools provided by the board to blend learning in different environments (i.e. cloud computing, social media and online networking (HWDSB Commons), Web 2.0, and the MoE Learning Management System
- support the Leadership & Learning Department in developing a comprehensive understanding of the digital resources, tools and devices that are available to create blended learning conditions in the classroom

**eLearning**
E-Learning is a key option for our students in today’s world of education. HWDSB will:

- provide all students with the option to access eLearning to earn credits as part of their secondary career
- develop a plan that is more proactive in offering eLearning options during option time (new & credit recovery)
- facilitate web-based learning because it is authentic, flexible, offers choice, and is connected to the real world

**Learning Environments**
HWDSB will:

- support the professional learning and capacity of staff to integrate and use technology and tools when teaching
- support steps to ensure administrators know how best to set up the learning environment when considering the use of technology (i.e. learning commons, flexible grouping, 1:1 learning, lap tops etc.)
- encourage staff to be role models in the effective use of technology by using technology to handle operational functions, professional development and collaboration with colleagues
- encourage the Learning Commons model in every school library allowing for collaborative learning, equitable access, virtual and physical spaces for learning and technology
- support flexible learning for staff and students
  - within physical and virtual spaces
  - which allows for personal choice, co-construction, self-learning
  - which allows learners to become digital content creators (i.e. Learning Commons, HWDSB Commons, Cloud Computing, learning management systems, eLearning, social media, Mobile Devices, BYOD)
- encourage the use of technology for
  - knowledge creation
  - practice of critical and creative thought
  - exploration of issues around plagiarism
  - privacy and copyright
  - research skills
  - analysis of bias, stereotype and gender in source material
- promote an understanding of how the conditions created in our learning environments allow for rich and diverse learning