



Annual Mental Health & Well-Being Action Plan (2024-2025)

At the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, we understand that mental health and well-being are fundamental to the success and achievement of each individual learner within the District. Schools play a critical role in safeguarding and promoting student mental health. Ensuring schools and classrooms are places of inclusion, compassion, connection, and belonging is key to creating the conditions so that all students can thrive. Prioritizing student mental health is accomplished by ensuring staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to purposefully cultivate nurturing and empowering school communities where there is safety for students to learn and grow.

Our mission is to create partnerships with students, staff, families/caregivers and communities to ensure that every student feels they **belong** in their schools and classrooms, where we **build** skills to foster positive mental health and well-being and where we **bridge** to identity-affirming clinical mental health services when required.

The 2024-2025 Action Plan provides key activities which serve as building blocks for the successful implementation of the Mental Health & Well-Being Strategy. This plan was developed in consultation with the mental health advisory committee which includes staff, families, mental health leadership, equity leads, and administrators as well as various student advisory groups, community partners, and staff from the Learning Support Services Department. The Mental Health Strategy & Annual Action Plan are in alignment with the Ministry requirements outlined in PPM 169.



Belonging

Goal: To improve **belonging** in our schools and classrooms where every student feels, seen, heard and valued and where mental health is woven into every day conversations and practices.



Focus on strength-based **mental health promotion** rooted in an understanding of the impact of creating and sustaining the conditions for mentally healthy and inclusive school and classroom environments

Key Actions	Anticipated Outcomes/ Indicators of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand staff training through interdepartmental collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced understanding and implementation of practices to support student mental health and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide resource kits and coaching support around the implementation of Tier one strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitated access to resources and information through dissemination of resources, consultation and coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify, train and support staff well-being champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced leadership opportunities for staff to strengthen wellness as a part of everyday practices in classrooms and schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focused professional development on restorative practices & Roots of Empathy, in partnership with Safe & Caring Schools Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased access to ready-to-use information that can deepen the learning and support staff in moving theory into practice• Improved empathy, understanding, prosocial behaviors, and decreased bullying in classrooms



Deepen understanding of **mental health literacy** and stigma reduction

Key Actions	Anticipated Outcomes/ Indicators of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the implementation of the Grade 10 Careers mental health literacy modules in partnership with Program, Learning and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased comfort and capacity of educators to deliver the mental health modules and increased student engagement in conversations around mental health in the classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued delivery of workshops and social emotional learning programs for students in partnership with Equity & Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased student awareness of coping strategies, pathways to care and culturally relevant and responsive resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and deliver staff presentations on various mental health topics including board protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased capacity for staff to support student well-being and clarity of OCDSB's protocols and procedures related to student mental health



Parent/caregiver, community collaboration and partnership

Key Actions	Anticipated Outcomes/ Indicators of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide parent/caregiver presentations through Parent Conference, Speaker Series, and Parent Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased alignment in language and understanding on topics relating to children's mental health and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Run parent/caregiver support groups in partnership with community agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased ability for parent/caregiver participants to provide identity-affirming support for their child

Building

Goal: To **build** and strengthen staff, parents/caregivers and students' skills and understanding of emerging or escalating mental health problems while centering on students' strengths and unique abilities.



Elevate authentic **student leadership**, participation and agency

Key Actions	Anticipated Outcomes/ Indicators of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify student well-being champions to work alongside staff champions to plan mental health initiatives throughout the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhanced opportunities for authentic student voice and leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work to develop a repository of student-facing mental health resources by students for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved student awareness of mental health supports and resources



Focus on **prevention** and **early intervention**

Key Actions	Anticipated Outcomes/ Indicators of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide staff training to recognize signs of mental health concerns and respond effectively using culturally relevant and evidence-informed practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased knowledge and skill in identifying mental health needs and facilitating access to care
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitate targeted groups, run by mental health professionals, for students which reinforce skill development specifically targeting underserved populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhanced identity-affirming and differentiated mental health care
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide both classwide and school wide workshops to students on topics related to mental health and well-being including safety and healthy relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved understanding of the resources to support students as required



Intensive supports and clear service pathways

Key Actions	Anticipated Outcomes/ Indicators of Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance the process for the development of partnership agreements with community-based mental health providers in support of the vision of <u>Right Time, Right Care</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthened partnerships, enhanced role clarity, improved knowledge of board protocols and procedures and coordinated care pathways for students and families
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and distribute material on best-practices for engaging chronically non-attending students.• Partner with surrounding school boards and community agencies on attendance protocols, processes and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deepened learning and understanding of best practices to support students displaying significant school avoidance and increased collaboration with community on ensuring wrap around services for these students and families