



## *Mandate Letter*

September 2024

Dear Prime Minister Emrys Brown,

Congratulations on being appointed head of the 2024-2025 Student Government. The purpose of this letter is to outline the expectations for you as Prime Minister of Waterdown's Student Parliament.

It is important that you are familiar with the 2017 Student Parliament Constitution which is available on the Waterdown Civics website ([www.waterdowncivics.org](http://www.waterdowncivics.org)). The key section that constitutes the Office of Prime Minister is Article II, Section Two:

### *Section Two*

- i) *The Prime Minister shall be the Chairperson of the Executive Council (or Cabinet), and thus the head of Student Government at Waterdown District High School. He or she is responsible to fulfill the duties and expectations outlined in this Constitution.*
  
- ii) *The Prime Minister is responsible for keeping the Principal and Staff Advisor[s] fully up-to-date on the proceedings of the Student Parliament.<sup>1</sup>*

Priorities for the upcoming Student Government:

- Establishing a clear *vision* for the school year that will guide your government – this vision should include issues within the school you want to address, as well as ideas for the school you want to pursue. As well as a clear vision, Student Government need to establish an *action plan* based on your vision statement. These are the actions you – and your collaborators – plan to take in order to accomplish your vision. Both vision and action plans are to be negotiated within Parliament *and* with the input of non-government parties, the latter to be determined by consensus within Parliament.

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<sup>1</sup> Following the Canadian tradition, it is expected that the Student Prime Minister have regular (weekly or bi-weekly) meetings with the Principal.

It is advisable that a rough *timeline* for the action plan also be developed. Vision and action plan statements are all to be made public by the end of September 2024.

- Part of this should answer the question: What is the role of a Member of Student Parliament?
- Integrating our Student Parliament into the day-to-day life and conversations going on in the school. Developing and implementing ways (identified in the action plan) to engage students with their government so that Government can foster and support student-led initiatives, concerns, and celebrations coming from the school community. Student Parliament should be a leader in the life of the school - a focus for conversation and representing the student body to the staff and wider community.
  - Having a meeting, within the first 2-3 weeks of school, with the 2023-2024 iThink students to learn from them what they think is important for the school, and how they gathered that information, will be critical to the success of the first two points. How can Student Parliament develop a similar culture that best reflects the entire student body and school community?
  - The new HWDSB Cellphone policy for secondary schools is being implemented for the 2024-2025 school year. This could provide an excellent opportunity for the formation of “citizen assemblies” over the course of the first semester within the school to discuss student’s thoughts around the new policy and the impact of social media on their lives. These gatherings could culminate in a student report (designed, written and approved by students) or a series of recommendations concerning the impact of this policy on the school community.
- Establishing a progress-reporting mechanism (something that allows you to monitor your progress), with a timetable of meetings over the course of the school year, which will help support and sustain Government as it works to fulfill its vision and meet the requirements and milestones of its action plan. The progress reporting mechanism needs to be formal, and set up as a parliamentary committee, chaired by one or more members of the minority party (or parties), and should include non-government student representatives, drawn from student groups at Waterdown (such as SOLID, Muslim Students Association, Athletic Council, etc.).
- Continue to develop a student-centred funding model from money generated from events run by this body. The development of this funding model, as well as the final policy, must be transparent and focused on student-driven initiatives. This funding model needs to be in place before the first dance of the year, and must be made public (see action plan timeline).
- Early in the summer, Mr. Schinkel (former vice principal), sent the following email:

*As part of our efforts to listen to student voice, our iTHINK team this year provided a number of recommendations.*

*In their proposal for the Cafeteria as an improved social space, students said they would love to see the Warrior's Den reimaged (specifically to sell a few school items like pencils, chargers, and maybe some snack items that aren't offered by the Caf), act as a HUB for student club lunch sales (rather than atrium table), and also be a gatekeeper for cafeteria game equipment. One of the proposals for the Cafeteria is a space for games. We're in the process of ordering a small ping pong table, foosball table, and Pacman 1v1 game for September. Another thought was to have cards and board games donated for student use. To structure the use/loan of these, students thought the Warrior's Den would be a great holding space. This would require, however, a lot of student volunteer time to keep the Den open during lunches. Looking forward to your thoughts and how StuPar may be able to play a role here. Many years ago, Student Council was able to open the Warrior's Den over lunches M-F, with each member volunteering ½ lunch once a week.*

Expanding this further, how can the Warrior's Den become a hub for the vision and priorities of Student Parliament – transforming it into a vehicle for student voice & student government?

- Finally, Student Parliament must be responsible for its self-education and professional development over the course of the school year. Supports from the school and community must be an integral part of Student Parliament's own education and professional development. Learning events will be built into Student Parliament's action plan.

As the teacher advisor, it is my role to support you and the other members of the WDHS Student Parliament. In this effort I am joined by Sam Gardner, a special advisor to the Student Parliament.

Key dates in the coming weeks:

September 3 <sup>rd</sup>	FIRST DAY OF THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR
September 5 <sup>th</sup>	Official Opening of the 2024-2025 Student Parliament (please see Mr. Tidridge for details)
September 9 <sup>th</sup>	First Student Parliament Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Speaker</li> <li>• Beginning of vision and action plan process. Sam Gardiner to introduce leadership activities.</li> </ul>
September 19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup>	WDHS Leadership Camp at Canterbury Hills

Sincerely,



Nathan Tidridge  
Teacher Advisor to the WDHS Student Parliament