

June 30, 2026

The Honourable Lena Metlege Diab
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

Subject: IRCC Funding for Newcomer LINC and Settlement Services

The following motion received unanimous support from the Board of Trustees at our meeting on June 2, 2026 after receiving a presentation from staff regarding the work the Halton District School Board (HDSB) has been engaged in to assist newcomers to Halton.

Be it resolved that the Chair of the Board write a letter to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship regarding the need for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) funding to enable and assist with Welcome Centre programming and initiatives; and that a copy be forwarded to Halton area MPs and the Ontario Public School Board Association.

Further to a letter sent by HDSB CEO (Director) Ennis on January 31, 2025, I am writing to express the HDSB's profound concern regarding the funding reduction for LINC and Settlement Services currently delivered through our school board.

The HDSB serves more than 67,000 Kindergarten - Grade 12 students across 110 schools, as newcomer families continue to choose Halton as an attractive place to build their new life in Canada. [Halton's population](#) has increased at an incredible pace during the past 15 years, and according to [DemoStats Trends Environics](#) (2023), the newcomer population in Halton is projected to increase by an additional 3.28% between 2023 and 2028. Our settlement program highlights for 2025-2026 show that services were delivered to 892 students and 1125 parents and guardians.

The funding partnership we have with IRCC strengthens the HDSB's efforts to ensure all newcomer families feel welcomed and supported by their communities, and in our schools. The current four year funding allocation levels, a reduction of 30 % year over year, will progressively dismantle the support thousands of newcomer families receive from our service team as they transition into Canadian society. As a direct result of this reduction, interpretation and translation services, along with much needed program resources, such as our Community Connections programming provided to families will be impacted.

Furthermore, the reduction in services over the next three years would create substantial barriers to access for more than 500 *current* LINC clients who will be left out of accessing language training that is

needed to access employment, education, healthcare and advocate for their children.

A portion of our newcomer students arrive from areas in the world where they have faced trauma and gaps in schooling, and as a result they are reliant on mental health and settlement services to support their successful integration into the school system. Our youth settlement specialists (YSS) facilitate critical communication regarding parent-teacher conferences, guidance meetings, mental health support services within the school board and various community partners. A substantive reduction in funding would translate in loss of support in these critical areas.

I urge IRCC to revisit the short and long-term impacts of the funding decision directed towards the newcomers, in particular women, who have only recently been welcomed to the country.

Sincerely,

Amy Collard
Chair, Halton District School Board
Trustee, Burlington Ward 5

CC:
Halton Area MPs
Ontario Public School Boards' Association Member Boards