

**Report to Committee of the Whole
November 17, 2014**



**Waterloo Region
District School Board**

Inspired Learners – Tomorrow's Leaders

SUBJECT: Motion - Trustees J. Hendry, K. Smith and C. Watson re Reporting of Trustee Expenses

ORIGINATOR: This report was prepared by Jayne Herring, Manager of Corporate Services, on behalf of Trustees J. Hendry, K. Smith and C. Watson and in consultation with Executive Committee.

PURPOSE/STRATEGIC PLAN:

The purpose of the report is to provide the wording of a motion that trustees intend to introduce at the November 17, 2014, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

This motion, if approved by the Board, would relate specifically to the Waterloo Region District School Board's strategic directions, particularly in the areas of engaging students, families, staff and communities, promoting forward-thinking and championing quality public education.

BACKGROUND:

At the October 20, 2014, Board Meeting, Trustee J. Hendry served the following motion as supported by Trustees A. Mitchell and M. Ramsay:

Whereas the Waterloo Region District School Board promotes accountability and transparency; and

Whereas the attendance at meetings and professional development seminars are critical components of Trustee engagement and their ability to be fully informed, and

Whereas the public have the right to know the topic and actual level of participation in all seminars by elected Trustees;

Therefore, be it resolved that attendance at every seminar and professional development activity be reported in public session on a quarterly basis, and

This information be posted on the Board website immediately following the event.

Also at the October 20, 2014, Board Meeting, Trustee K. Smith served a similar motion as supported by Chairperson T. Martin and Vice-Chairperson E. Fung:

Given that transparency and accountability is important in the public sector and with elected officials, the WRDSB Trustees will, from this point:

- a) *Explain the value of attendance at PD sessions to the trustee as well as to the WRDSB*
- b) *Provide accounting on trustee expenses that is broken into mileage; meals; parking; conference; other for all entries*

- c) *Have their expenses audited separately and reported separately through the annual external audit*
- d) *Have their expenses (unaudited) posted quarterly on the WRDSB website*
- e) *Complete a written report that will be posted on the website within one month of attendance of participation in the PD session. Failure to do so will mean that a Trustee will not be eligible for PD funds for two years*
- f) *Have attendance at all committees, meetings and seminars recorded and posted on the website on a quarterly basis.*

These practices will be instituted immediately following passage of this motion by the Board of Trustees.

In addition, Trustee C. Watson served a similar motion as supported by Trustees C. Harrington and M. Johnston:

Whereas the Waterloo Region District School Board promotes transparency and accountability,

Whereas trustee expenses are public information,

Whereas this information supports our communication strategy

Therefore be it resolved that the Waterloo Region District School Board provide a detailed breakdown of trustee expenses such as mileage, meals, conference location, air transportation, parking etc. to the public; and

That in the future this information be provided on the Board website.

STATUS:

As all three motions deal with the reporting of trustee expenses, members of the Agenda Development Committee recommended that Trustees J. Hendry, K. Smith and C. Watson meet to develop and provide an amalgamated motion which would be scheduled for consideration at the November 17, 2014, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Trustees J. Hendry, K. Smith and C. Watson met on November 10, 2014, and provided an amalgamated motion around the reporting of trustee expenses.

COMMUNICATIONS:

No further communication is required at this time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Financial implications have not been identified at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended:

That as a Learning organization, we value learning opportunities not only for students but also those in Leadership positions. We believe that Trustees should participate in a wide variety of professional development opportunities that better their ability to work on behalf of the community.

We also believe that there should be transparency and accountability about the learning opportunities that Trustees participate in both from a financial and learning outcomes perspective.

Whereas the Waterloo Region District School board promotes accountability and transparency,

Whereas trustee expenses should be audited separately and reported separately through the annual external audit process; and

As such, trustee expenses (unaudited) should be posted quarterly on the WRDSB website along with reporting on activities which generated those expenses; and

Therefore be it resolved that the WRDSB amend the current expense policy to include a detailed breakdown of trustee expenses such as meals, mileage, parking, hotel accommodations, conference location, transportation and other; and

That the expenses and any required explanation be posted quarterly on the WRDSB website; and

That trustees who attend conferences must complete a written report as attached to the expense report for chair approval. And that the conference report be posted on the WRDSB website quarterly providing information about their conference experience and how it has contributed to their job as Trustee as well as to education in the WRDSB while supporting the strategic plan; and

That trustee attendance at WRDSB seminars and workshops be recorded on a quarterly basis and posted on the WRDSB website.

 **Director of Education**