

AUGUST 29, 2018
SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Special Committee of the Whole Meeting this evening at 6:00 p.m. in the Education Centre Boardroom, with the following members in attendance: S. McMillan (Chairperson), J. Hendry, T. Martin, C. Millar, M. Ramsay, K. Smith, N. Waddell, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Trustees C. Harrington and C. Waterfall were unable to attend this evening's meeting.

Student Trustee B. Wahl was in attendance. Student Trustee O. Judelson-Kelly was not in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: J. Bryant (Director of Education and Secretary), R. DeBoer, M. Gerard, E. Giannopoulos, S. Lomax, A. Mercier, S. Miller, E. Ranney, L. Read, P. Rubenschuh, A. Russell, G. Shantz and M. Weinert.

Other staff in attendance: K. Penticost and S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson S. McMillan called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by J. Hendry, seconded by N. Waddell:

That the agenda of the August 29, 2018, Special Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson S. McMillan welcomed Student Trustee Benjamin Wahl to his first meeting.

Chairperson S. McMillan welcomed the new Chief Communications Officer, Alana Russell.

Due to technical difficulties at the Education Centre, Trustee C. Waterfall was unable to join by teleconference.

DELEGATIONS

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

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- Samantha Estoesta, Plan B Co-op KW
- Husayn Jamal
- Lauren Weinberg
- Stacey Jacobs, SHORE Centre
- Sofia Marcuzzi-Lindo
- TK Pritchard, Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region
- Greg Weiler, ETFO
- Steph Chandler Burns, Youth Sexual Health Action Group

Trustee K. Woodcock joined the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

DISCUSSIONS

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Director J. Bryant provided trustees with an update. The Ministry of Education formally announced the implementation of the full 2010 Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Health and Physical Education Interim Edition. The Waterloo Region District School Board Learning Services staff are currently reviewing the interim curriculum to compare it with previous versions and to determine what resources, updates or training will be required in order to best support teachers in providing the approved curriculum.

Trustees received a package of information that includes a timeline of key developments and communication, messaging from Ministry, from the Chairperson and the Director of Education and FAQ for administrators, parents and staff which was released earlier today.

Director J. Bryant reiterated staff's collective commitment that school communities reflect students' lived experiences and provide a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Superintendent E. Ranney explained that a resource is being developed to guide educators and training will be provided if deemed appropriate. OPHEA's Health & Physical Education Elementary Curriculum Resources will also be updated for teacher use. Staff have been notified, via an All Staff Notice, regarding the curriculum changes.

Superintendent P. Rubenschuh assured trustees that staff will continue their ongoing commitment to Board Policy 1008 - Equity and Inclusion as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code. Staff continue to have obligations around safe and accepting schools and the Accepting Schools Act, 2012. Disciplinary processes remain in place for discrimination and harassment.

Some trustees expressed concern around the Premier's proposed teacher reporting line and how it may affect the positive atmosphere in schools.

Staff will continue to support students without placing teachers in direct violation of Ministry of Education direction.

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Some trustees were concerned regarding the lack of parent consultation when the 2015 Health and Physical Education curriculum was developed and felt all parents views should be heard.

2. Moved by K. Smith:

That the WRDSB send letters to the Premier and Minister of Education informing why elementary students should receive the 2015 curriculum.

-Motion Failed - No Second-

3. Moved by K. Smith, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustee make a formal request to the Minister of Education to allow the Waterloo Region District School Board to fulfill our strategic plan by continuing to teach the 2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum; and

That the Waterloo Region District School Board make a statement formally and forcefully denouncing the use of the teacher reporting line; and

That OPSBA and Ontario public school boards be informed of the request.

Trustee N. Waddell moved to amend the motion based on Ontario Human Rights Code adherence.

4. Amendment moved by N. Waddell, seconded by K. Woodcock

That the motion be amended to include “continue to adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code and” so that it reads as:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustee make a formal request to the Minister of Education to allow the Waterloo Region District School Board to continue to adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code and fulfill our strategic plan by continuing to teach the 2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum; and

That the Waterloo Region District School Board make a statement formally and forcefully denouncing the use of the teacher reporting line; and

That OPSBA and Ontario public school boards be informed of the request.

-Amendment carried-

Abstained:
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

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Trustees debated the implications for including or not including the amendment.

Trustees decided to split the amended motion into two parts. The motion now read as:

3.a Moved by K. Smith, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees make a formal request to the Ministry of Education to allow the Waterloo Region District School Board to continue to adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code and fulfill our strategic plan by continuing to teach the 2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum; and

That OPSBA and Ontario public school boards be informed of the request.

3.b Moved by K. Smith, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board make a statement formally and forcefully denouncing the use of the teacher reporting line; and

That OPSBA and Ontario public school boards be informed of the statement

Trustees debated the impacts of the amendment.

Trustee C. Millar called a Point of Order. Trustee M. Ramsay referred to the motion as “silly” and Trustee C. Millar found this to be disrespectful. Chairperson S. McMillan ruled in favour of the Point of Order and asked that trustees use respectful language.

Trustees inquired about past requests for curriculum changes. Coordinating Superintendent S. Lomax shared the Fast Forward Program as an example of a curriculum change request which was approved. This curriculum change requires annual reapplication.

5. Motion to amend moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by C. Millar:

That the motion be amended to include “until such time as the planned consultation is completed” so that it reads as:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees make a formal request to the Ministry of Education to allow the Waterloo Region District School Board to continue to adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code and fulfill our strategic plan by continuing to teach the 2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum until such time as the planned consultation is completed; and

that OPSBA and Ontario public school boards be informed of the request.

-Amendment Defeated-

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Opposed:
T. Martin
C. Millar
K. Smith
N. Waddell
K. Woodcock

Abstained:
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

At the September 10, 2018, Special Board Meeting the related motion was pulled and a new vote took place. A recorded vote was requested by Trustee M. Ramsay.

3.a Moved by T. Martin, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees make a formal request to the Ministry of Education to allow the Waterloo Region District School Board to continue to adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code and fulfill our strategic plan by continuing to teach the 2015 Health and Physical Education Curriculum; and

That OPSBA and Ontario public school boards be informed of the request.

-Carried-

In Favour
J. Hendry
T. Martin
C. Millar
K. Smith
N. Waddell
C. Waterfall
K. Woodcock
O. Judelson-Kelly*
B. Wahl*

Opposed
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

*A student trustee will have their vote recorded for the purpose of public record and for accountability to the student body; however, it is recognized that a student trustee is not a member of the Board or any of its committees in accordance with the Education Act.

Trustees moved into discussion on the teacher reporting line.

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3.b Moved by K. Smith, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board make a statement formally and forcefully denouncing the use of the teacher reporting line; and

that OPSBA and ontario public school boards be informed of the statement.

6. Motion to lay the pending motion on the table moved by J. Hendry, seconded by T. Martin:

That the pending motion be laid on the table.

-Motion to lay on the table carried-

Trustees continued to discuss the teacher reporting line, expressing concerns for front line educators.

Staff have not received information on the teacher reporting line and how it will be implemented.

7. Moved by J. Hendry, seconded by K. Woodcock:

Whereas the “snitch line” may create a negative atmosphere within our school system and has the potential to threaten and diminish the positive critical relationship between teachers, student and parents/caregivers:

It be moved that the Waterloo Region District School Board send a letter to the Premier expressing our concerns with the recent establishment of the “snitch line” and respectfully request the appropriate legislation regarding this initiative be repealed in order to maintain a safe learning environment for all our staff and students free from threats of all kinds.

Trustees discussed whether the addition of a public statement be included in order to send a strong message. An amendment was put forth.

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8. Amendment moved by T. Martin, seconded by J. Hendry:

That the motion be amended to include “and that the Waterloo Region District School Board make a public statement as such.” so the motion would read:

Whereas the “snitch line” may create a negative atmosphere within our school system and has the potential to threaten and diminish the positive critical relationship between teachers, students and parents/caregivers:

It be moved that the Waterloo Region District School Board send a letter to the Premier expressing our concerns with the recent establishment of the “snitch line” and respectfully request the appropriate legislation regarding this initiative be repealed in order to maintain a safe learning environment for all our staff and students free from threats of all kinds; and

That the Waterloo Region District School Board make a public statement as such.

Trustees continued to debate the amendment.

9. Motion to call the question on the amendment moved by K. Woodcock:

That the amendment in question be called to a vote.

-Carried-

8. Amendment moved by T. Martin, seconded by J. Hendry:

That the motion be amended to include “and that the Waterloo Region District School Board make a public statement as such.” so the motion would read:

Whereas the “snitch line” may create a negative atmosphere within our school system and has the potential to threaten and diminish the positive critical relationship between teachers, student and parents/caregivers:

It be moved that the Waterloo Region District School Board send a letter to the Premier expressing our concerns with the recent establishment of the “snitch line” and respectfully request the appropriate legislation regarding this initiative be repealed in order to maintain a safe learning environment for all our staff and students free from threats of all kinds; and

that the Waterloo Region District School Board make a public statement as such.

-Amendment Carried-

Abstained:
M. Ramsay

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Trustees continued to debate the newly amended motion. Some trustees expressed concern about appearing hostile or rude to the Premier while others felt it was important to use strong language.

10. Amendment moved by M. Ramsay, seconded by K. Smith:

That the motion be amended to strike out the words “in order to maintain a safe learning environment for all our staff and students free from threats of all kinds” so the motion would read:

Whereas the “snitch line” may create a negative atmosphere within our school system and has the potential to threaten and diminish the positive critical relationship between teachers, students and parents/caregivers:

It be moved that the Waterloo Region District School Board send a letter to the Premier expressing our concerns with the recent establishment of the “snitch line” and respectfully request the appropriate legislation regarding this initiative be repealed; and

that the Waterloo Region District School Board make a public statement as such.

-Amendment defeated-

Opposed:
J. Hendry
T. Martin
C. Millar
N. Waddell
C. Watson
K. Woodcock
B. Wahl**

**A student trustee will have their vote recorded for the purpose of public record and for accountability to the student body; however, it is recognized that a student trustee is not a member of the Board or any of its committees in accordance with the Education Act.

11. Motion to call the question on the main motion by J. Hendry:

That the motion in question be called to a vote.

-Carried-

Opposed:
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

At the September 10, 2018, Special Board Meeting the related motion was pulled and a new vote took place. A recorded vote was requested by Trustee M. Ramsay.

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7. Moved by T. Martin, seconded by C. Millar:

Whereas the “snitch line” may create a negative atmosphere within our school system and has the potential to threaten and diminish the positive critical relationship between teachers, students and parents/caregivers:

It be moved that the Waterloo Region District School Board send a letter to the Premier expressing our concerns with the recent establishment of the “snitch line” and respectfully request the appropriate legislation regarding this initiative be repealed in order to maintain a safe learning environment for all our staff and students free from threats of all kinds; and

That the Waterloo Region District School Board make a public statement as such.

-Carried-

In Favour

J. Hendry
T. Martin
C. Millar
K. Smith
N. Waddell
C. Waterfall
C. Watson
K. Woodcock
O. Judelson-Kelly*
B. Wahl*

Abstained

M. Ramsay

*A student trustee will have their vote recorded for the purpose of public record and for accountability to the student body; however, it is recognized that a student trustee is not a member of the Board or any of its committees in accordance with the Education Act.

ADJOURNMENT

12. Moved by J. Hendry, seconded by K. Smith:

That the Special Committee of the Whole Meeting of August 29, 2018, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.