

**DECEMBER 10, 2018**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Committee of the Whole Meeting this evening at 7:00 p.m. in the Education Centre Boardroom, with the following members in attendance: J. Herring (Chairperson), K. Meissner, C. Millar, S. Piatkowski, M. Ramsay, K. Smith, N. Waddell, C. Watson, J. Weston, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Student Trustees O. Judelson-Kelly and B. Wahl were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: J. Bryant (Director of Education and Secretary), M. Gerard, S. Lomax, L. Read, A. Russell and M. Weinert.

Other staff in attendance: S. Galliher, N. Hercanuk, S. Reidel and L. Slupeiks.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson J. Herring called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m.

Trustees, staff and visitors went out to the Atrium to enjoy a performance from the Centennial Public School Chamber Ensemble.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by N. Waddell:

**That the agenda of the December 10, 2018, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved with the addition of the OPSBA Board of Directors Report.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Trustees K. Woodcock and N. Waddell attended a parent information night at Groh Public School. Students provided a demo of the Project Based Learning Projects.

Vice-Chairperson J. Weston attended the #Art4WEFI launch where student's showcased their selected art pieces. The art has been used for a collection of winter greeting cards to fundraise for Waterloo Education Foundation Inc (WEFI). As a registered charity, WEFI provides resources and equal learning opportunities across the system.

Trustee K. Smith was notified that a student from Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute provided a speech at the City of Kitchener Inaugural Council Meeting.

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Trustee S. Piatkowski was in attendance when Suddaby Public School was recognized on National Housing Day for the Outstanding Community Partner award.

Chairperson J. Herring asked that any trustees with Board Room seating requests contact her.

Chairperson J. Herring reminded trustees that a number of trustees have not submitted their profile for the corporate website.

Trustee K. Smith invited trustees and senior staff to attend a potluck seasonal celebration after the December 17, 2018, Board Meeting.

**DELEGATIONS**

The following delegation spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Shaelie Mendes, Destiny Hopkins & Paige Wahl – Southwest Kitchener Secondary School Boundary Study

2. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by M. Ramsay:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer the delegation to the appropriate staff for information purposes.**

-Carried-

**POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 2007 - BOARD ADVERTISING EXPENSE**

3. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by C. Watson:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board Refer Board Policy 2007 - Board Advertising Expense back to staff to add equity and inclusion wording to the policy.**

-Carried-

**REPORTS**

**ANNUAL SCHOOL COUNCILS' REPORT**

This report was provided for information.

Chief Communications Officer A. Russell presented the report. It contained school council membership & recruitment information, fundraising data, challenges and future goals. This report is completed annually in compliance with Ontario Regulation 612/00.

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Trustees discussed various issues facing school councils including fundraising inequities, fundraising purchases and retaining and increasing volunteers. The Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group currently has a subcommittee focused on fundraising equity. The Parent Involvement Committee currently has an Outreach subcommittee which works closely with the Communications Department to look at membership, branding and communicating with potential volunteers.

**PAST CHAIRPERSON POSITION**

Chairperson J. Herring sought direction from trustees regarding the Past Chairperson position. With Scott McMillan no longer a trustee, there is no Past Chairperson. Section 5.5.1 of the Bylaws states that a past chairperson sits on Agenda Development Committee and Committee Selection (if applicable). Chairperson J. Herring approached Trustee Kathleen Woodcock as the most recent Past Chairperson as her experience would be an asset. Trustee K. Woodcock agreed to serve in this capacity if approved by the Board.

4. Moved by M. Ramsay, seconded by N. Waddell:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the position of Past Chairperson, as outlined in the Board Bylaws, be filled by Trustee Kathleen Woodcock.**

-Carried-

**GENERATIVE DISCUSSION: COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Chairperson J. Herring asked trustees to rank their committee preferences. This would allow the selection committee to take preferences into consideration and where trustees may be vying from the same committee as a first priority, lots would be drawn by the Manager of Corporate Services, who will serve as scrutineer.

Trustees were encouraged to add the French Immersion Committee to their list if available as there were not enough members interested.

In the event a trustee needs to change committees mid-term due to scheduling, this can be brought to the chair.

**STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS**

Student Trustee O. Judelson-Kelly and B. Wahl provided an update from Student Senate and their meeting last week. The meeting included an update from the Equity and Inclusion Committee student representative, a Question and Answer session with Controller, Facility Services, I. Gaudet, and a presentation from Superintendent P. Rubenschuh on substance abuse and prevention.

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Trustee K. Woodcock provided an update from the OPSBA Board of Directors meeting last week. The meeting included a visit with the Minister of Education. A written summary of the meeting will be distributed next week. Trustee K. Woodcock provided trustees with the following upcoming OPSBA events:

- January 24-26, 2019, Public Education Symposium
- April 4-5, 2019, Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium
- April 13, 2019, OPSBA Central West Regional Meeting, hosted by WRDSB
- July 4-7, 2018 OPSBA Annual General Meeting

**QUESTION PERIOD**

Trustee K. Smith inquired about upcoming trustee seminars. Chairperson J. Herring noted that the Agenda Development Committee will need to discuss seminar topics once the committee membership is complete. A list will be sent out to trustees once finalized.

Trustee K. Woodcock inquired about the Better Beginnings program. Staff are in conversations with Better Beginnings to ensure an ongoing positive relationship and to work through some operational challenges.

Trustee C. Watson inquired into the WRDSB's requirements for rugby players to wear helmets as she has heard reports of students wearing various types of equipment. Staff confirmed that all sports are guided by Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) and the requirements can be found on the OPHEA website. Staff will provide an update.

Trustee K. Woodcock asked if WRDSB has submitted a response to the provincial consultations. Staff confirmed that both the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) and the Council of Senior Business Officials (COSBO) will be submitting feedback on behalf of school boards which includes WRDSB input. She asked that staff consider providing feedback to capture local priorities. Staff agreed to take the request under advisement and to update trustees next week.

It was the will of the Board to send a congratulatory letter to Nobel Prize Winner, Professor Strickland.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Trustee S. Piatkowski served the following notice of motion with support from Trustees C. Millar and K. Meissner:

Whereas, the purpose of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007 is to allow the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, as an independent officer of the Legislature to:

- (a) provide an independent voice for children and youth, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth and children with special needs, by partnering with them to bring issues forward;
- (b) encourage communication and understanding between children and families and those who provide them with services;

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(c) educate children, youth and their caregivers regarding the rights of children and youth; and  
(d) conduct investigations and make recommendations to improve children's aid society services and services provided by residential licensees where a children's aid society is the placing agency. 2007, c. 9, s. 1; 2014, c. 13, Sched. 10, s. 1; 2017, c. 14, Sched. 4, s. 31 (1); and

Whereas, reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the Advocate's Office provides an independent voice for children and youth, including children and youth with disabilities and Indigenous children and youth; and

Whereas, the Advocate's review and investigations have exposed gaps and failures in the system that have put children and youth at "significant risk"; and

Whereas, on November 15, 2018, the provincial government announced that the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007 would be repealed and that the Ontario Ombudsman will assume the duties of the child advocate, in essence "monitoring itself and advocating for the thousands of children in its care"; and

Whereas, when interviewed by Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Irwin Elman, Ontario's Chief Advocate since 2008, is reported as saying "When children have no voice, they are rendered invisible, and when they're invisible, bad things can happen..."; and

Whereas, he went on to say that "They're going to say that children can phone the ombudsman, who is not an advocate, who will not go out and see them, whose staff have no special expertise in how to work with children or young people. An ombudsman tries, frankly, tries to make sure that government does what it says it's going to do. It doesn't stand with the young person.... An ombudsman's job is to try and listen to both sides and be impartial. A child's advocate's job is to stand with children. In Ontario, there will no longer be somebody"; and

Whereas, this means that the largest province in Canada has now become one of the only provinces without an independent child advocate; and

Whereas, the Waterloo Region District School Board is very concerned about the ramifications of this decision for the province's most vulnerable children and youth;

**Therefore, be it resolved:**

**That the Chair write and ask staff to publicize an open letter to the Premier of Ontario to request that the decision to repeal the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007 be rescinded and the independence of the position of Ontario's Child Advocate remain in place to provide a voice for Ontario's children and youth; and**

**That the Chair send a letter to all Public School Boards and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association requesting that they advocate for the retracting of the decision to repeal the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007.**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

5. Moved by K. Smith, seconded by C. Whetham:

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of December 10, 2018, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.