

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular monthly **Board Meeting** of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held in the Board Room, Floor 1, Building 2, Education Centre, 51 Ardelet Avenue, Kitchener, on **Monday, December 17, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

Call to Order/ Territorial Acknowledgement

Nutcracker Suite musical performance by Ayr Public School Grades 3 to 5

O Canada

Invocation (To be recited by trustees)

“In preparation for this evening’s meeting, let us pause for thirty seconds of silent reflection – to commit our hearts and our heads, and help one another to make the careful and thoughtful decisions that will further the education of all our students.”

Approval of Agenda

Consent Agenda**

Receipt/Approval of Minutes:

- Approve Minutes – Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of October 30, 2018
- Approve Minutes – Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of November 14, 2018
- Receive Minutes – Board Meeting of November 26, 2018
- Receive Minutes – Inaugural Board Meeting of December 3, 2018
- Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of December 10, 2018

Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:

- | | | |
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| 26 | Staffing Information – Retirements and Resignations | M. Weinert |
| 28 | Staffing Recommendations – Appointments | M. Weinert |
| 30 | Suspension/Expulsion Report as of November 30, 2018 | P. Rubenschuh |
| 32 | Student Aggression Report (September 1, 2018 - November 15, 2018) | M. Weinert |

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Communications Department Good News Update

A. Russell

Delegations

Reports

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| 34 | Board Committee Membership | Chairperson |
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Board Reports

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| 37 | OPSBA December Board of Directors Meeting Summary | Trustee K. Woodcock |
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Board Communications

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| 41 | Ministry of Education – Response Re: Health and Physical Education Requests |
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Other Business

**All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered not to require debate by the Board of Trustees and should be approved in one motion in accordance with the recommendation contained in each report.

Question Period (10 minutes)

Future Agenda Items (Notices of motion to be referred to Agenda Development Committee)

Adjournment



Report to Board of Trustees

December 17, 2018

**Subject: Staffing Information –
Retirements and Resignations**

Recommendation

This report is provided for information of the Board.

Status

The employees listed in Appendix A of this report have received acknowledgement of their retirement or resignation.

Background

The board's practice is to receive information regarding staff retirements and resignations at regular monthly board meetings.

Financial implications

Expenses are within the existing approved budget.

Communications

Employees listed in this report have communicated through Human Resource Services.

Prepared by: Michael Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resource Services, in consultation with Coordinating Council.

Staffing Statistics – Retirements & Resignations
Current at December 17, 2018

Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Lori	McKim-Lang	Teacher, Stanley Park PS	February 15, 2019	31
Leanne	Winteron	Teacher, J. W. Gerth PS	January 31, 2019	30

2 / Subtotal

Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Nil Report				

0 / Subtotal

Retirements: Administrative & Support Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Jeff	Lovell	Elementary Principal, Sunnyside PS	February 28, 2019	29
Nancy	Sinden	Elementary Head Secretary, Edna Staebler PS	December 31, 2018	29
Dusanka	Sintic	Custodian, W.T. Townshend PS	January 31, 2019	18

3 / Total = 5

Permanent Staff Resignations:			
First	Last	Position/Location	Effective Date
Gina	Alderman	Communications Assistant, Communication Department, EdC	December 14, 2018
Carlos	Medeiros	Certified Tradesperson, Facility Services, EdC	November 30, 2018
Laurie	Molnar	Child & Youth Worker (CYW), Smithson PS	December 7, 2018
Christine	Sun	Accounting Analyst, Financial Services, EdC	December 31, 2018



Report to Board of Trustees

December 17, 2018

Subject: Staffing Recommendations – Appointments

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the appointments to staff as outlined in the report titled "Staffing Recommendations – Appointments, dated December 17, 2018.

Status

The staff appointments as noted on Appendix A of this report are effective the dates indicated.

Background

The board's practice has been to have appointments presented for information at regular monthly board meetings.

Financial implications

Expenses are within the existing approved budget.

Communications

Employees listed in this report have, or will be advised of the appointments.

Prepared by: Michael Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resource Services, in consultation with Coordinating Council.

Appendix A

Staffing Information – New Appointments**Current at December 17, 2018**

New Appointments: Elementary Teaching Staff			
First	Last	School ID / Education Centre	Effective Date
Peter	Koropatwa	Teacher, Floradale PS	December 3, 2018

New Appointments: Secondary Teaching Staff			
First	Last	School ID / Education Centre	Effective Date
Nil Report			

New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff			
First	Last	School ID / Education Centre	Effective Date
Brittany	Barfoot	DECE Supervisor, (Temp), Early Childhood Education, Learning Services, EdC	January 2, 2019
Radmila	Dabic	Custodian, Grand River CI	November 26, 2018
James	Doadt	Custodian, Waterloo-Oxford District SS	October 31, 2018
Gordon	Flett	Custodian, Highland PS	November 1, 2018
Michelle	Griffin	Custodian, Chicopee Hills PS	November 5, 2018
Ross	Howey	Communications Officer, Communication Department, EdC	December 10, 2018
Benjamin	Jaklic	Creative Specialist, Communication Department, EdC	November 28, 2018
Deborah	Krebs	Custodian, Preston HS	December 18, 2018
Tricia	Makcrow	DECE Supervisor, (Temp), Early Childhood Education, Learning Services, EdC	January 2, 2019
John	Morin	Heat Technician/Tradesperson, Facility Services, EdC	November 19, 2018
Dusanka	Rajsic	Custodian, Sir John A. Macdonald SS	November 27, 2018
Christian	Soaca	Electrician/Tradesperson, Facility Services, EdC	November 19, 2018

The above new hires to our Board are due to retirements, resignations or leaves and are to replace full or part time vacancies.

*Human Resource Services
December 17, 2018*



Report to Board of Trustees

December 17, 2018

Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report November, 2018

Recommendation

This report is provided for the Waterloo Region District School Board with information regarding monthly and year-to-date suspension/expulsion data.

Status

Comparing year to date from November 2017 and November 2018, elementary suspensions have decreased by 1 and secondary suspensions have increased by 91.

Comparing year to date from November 2017 and November 2018, school expulsions have remained the same and board expulsions have remained the same.

The most recent month's suspension and expulsion data is included below. The data is accurate up to, and including, the date of collection.

Suspensions

- Total elementary school suspensions in November 2017 - 192, year to date - 392
- Total elementary school suspensions in November 2018 - 170, year to date - 391
- Total secondary school suspensions in November 2017 - 286, year to date - 684
- Total secondary school suspensions in November 2018 - 340, year to date - 775

Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in November 2017 - 0, Year to Date 0
- Total school expulsions in November 2018 - 0, Year to Date 0
- Total board expulsions in November 2017 - 3, Year to Date 7
- Total board expulsions in November 2018 - 6, Year to Date 7

Violent Incidents

The term violent incident is defined as the occurrence of any of the following or the occurrence of a combination of any of the following; possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm, physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention, sexual assault, robbery, using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person, extortion, hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences.

- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in November 2017 - 5, year to date 15
- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in November 2018 - 5, year to date 17

Background

As requested by the Board, suspension/expulsion data will be presented at the Board meeting each month.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications.

Communications

Upon request, suspension/expulsion data is communicated to the Ministry of Education for statistical purposes.

Prepared by: Peter Rubenschuh, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, James Bond, System Administrator, Learning Services, and in consultation with Coordinating Council.



Report to Board of Trustees

December 17, 2018

Subject: Reported Student Aggression Quarterly Data December 17, 2018

Recommendation:

This report is provided for the Waterloo Region District School Board with information regarding reported incidences of student aggression for the quarter (Sept 1 – Nov 15, 2018).

Status:

Student Aggression is recorded under four (4) categories:

No Injury: No injury to the worker was sustained during the incident.

First aid: Applying minor first aid measures like cleaning minor cuts, scrapes or scratches; applying a band aid, cold compress or ice pack.

Health care (or medical aid): Worker sustained an injury requiring the professional skills of a health care practitioner (i.e. a doctor, nurse, chiropractor or physiotherapist); services provided at a hospital and/or health facility and/or require prescription drugs. Reporting to the WSIB required.

Lost Time: Worker sustains injury that requires time away from work after the day of incident. Reporting to the WSIB required.

Previous Year Quarterly Report Comparison:

Quarterly student aggression data as reported by WRDSB staff for the period of September 1 – November 15, 2018 compared to the data from the same period of September 1 – November 15, 2017 last school year:

- Elementary incidents have increased by 5.84% (29 incidents) from the same period last year.
- Secondary incidents have decreased by 53.66% (22 incidents) from the same period last year.

Reported Student Aggression Incidents For Current School Year (September 1 – November 15, 2018):

- Total Elementary aggression incidents from September 1 – November 15, 2018: **526**
 - No injury – 386
 - First Aid – 106
 - Health Care – 24
 - Lost Time – 10

- Total Secondary aggression incidents from September 1 – November 15, 2018: **19**
 - No injury – 11
 - First Aid – 4
 - Health Care – 3
 - Lost Time – 1
- Total aggression incidents per employee group from September 1 – November 15, 2018:
 - Educational Assistant (EA) / Child and Youth Worker (CYW) – 378
 - Early Child Educator (ECE) – 50
 - Elementary Teacher – 111
 - Secondary Teacher – 6

**Reported Student Aggression Incidents From Previous School Year for Same Time Period
(September 1 – November 15, 2017):**

- Total Elementary aggression incidents from September 1 – November 15, 2017: **497**
 - No injury – 357
 - First Aid – 128
 - Health Care – 7
 - Lost Time – 5
- Total Secondary aggression incidents from September 1 – November 15, 2017: **41**
 - No injury – 29
 - First Aid – 8
 - Health Care – 1
 - Lost Time – 3
- Total aggression incidents per employee group from September 1 – November 15, 2017:
 - Educational Assistant (EA) / Child and Youth Worker (CYW) – 347
 - Early Child Educator (ECE) – 46
 - Elementary Teacher – 135
 - Secondary Teacher – 10

Background:

As requested by the Board, student aggression data is to be provided on a quarterly basis.

Financial implications:

The financial impacts are covered within existing Board approved budget lines.

Communications:

A report of all workplace incidences, including student aggression is provided every two weeks to the Board's Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

Prepared by: Michael Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resource Services, Shannon-Melissa Dunlop, Manager, Health, Safety & Security and in consultation with Coordinating Council.



Report to Board

December 17, 2018

Subject: 2019 Board Committee Memberships

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approves the 2019 Board Committee Membership Structure as outlined in Appendix A of the report titled "2019 Board Committee Memberships" dated December 17, 2018.

Status

On December 13, 2018, the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Acting Past Chairperson, along with the Manager of Corporate Services, met to review the responses and provide the recommendations as attached. (Appendix A)

Background

On November 15, 2018, trustees received a link to the 2019 Trustee Committee Membership Preference Survey and were asked to submit their committee preferences to the Manager of Corporate Services by November 30, 2018. At the December 10, 2018, Committee of the Whole meeting, Chairperson J. Herring had trustees rank their selections by priority in order to better assist the Selection Committee. Lots were drawn when their were matching rankings competing for membership.

Financial implications

No financial implications.

Communications

The new committee membership structure will be communicated to staff responsible for these committees through the Office of the Chairperson.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services
on behalf of Chairperson J. Herring

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

2019 - BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

<p>Special Education Advisory Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed for 4 Years 2 Trustees & 2 Alternates Meets Monthly 2nd Wednesday</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● N. Waddell ● C. Watson ● K. Smith (Alt) ● J. Weston (Alt) 	<p>Student Program Review and SAL</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually At least 4 Trustees Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● C. Millar ● K. Smith ● N. Waddell ● K. Woodcock 	<p>Discipline Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually Chairperson & Trustees Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● J. Herring (M & T) ● C. Millar (M) ● S. Piatkowski (M) ● M. Ramsay (T) ● K. Smith (M & T) ● C. Watson (M) ● J. Weston (M & T) ● C. Whetham (M & T) ● K. Woodcock (T)
<p>Board Audit Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed for 4 Years 3 Trustees Meets 3 times per year</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● K. Smith ● C. Whetham ● K. Woodcock 	<p>Parent Involvement Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 1 Trustee Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● K. Smith ● K. Meissner (Alt) 	<p>Agenda Development Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Past Chair & 2 Trustees Meets Monthly- 1st Monday</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● J. Herring (Chair) ● J. Weston (Vice-Chair) ● K. Woodcock (Past Chair) ● C. Whetham (Jan to May) ● S. Piatkowski (Jun to Dec) ● PLUS: One trustee rotating alphabetically

<p>Student Trustee & Student Senate Mentor</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 1 Trustee Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K. Meissner • (C. Millar will continue until new students are elected) 	<p>Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 2 Trustees Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K. Meissner • C. Millar 	<p>School Year Calendar Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 1 Trustee Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Herring
<p>Accessibility Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 2 Trustees Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K. Meissner • K. Smith 	<p>Ad Hoc Nutrition Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 2 Trustees Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Weston • K. Smith 	<p>Fiscal Task Force</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 2 Trustees Meets monthly</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N. Waddell • K. Woodcock
<p>Internet Content Filtering Working Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C. Whetham • Student Trustees 	<p>Code of Conduct Review (Use of a Third Party)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Piatkowski • M. Ramsay • C. Watson • K. Woodcock 	<p>Bylaw Review Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Herring • K. Smith • N. Waddell • K. Woodcock
<p>Trustee Self Evaluation Tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C. Millar • M. Ramsay • K. Smith 	<p>French Immersion Review Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Piatkowski • C. Watson • J. Weston 	<p>Mental Health and Addiction Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C. Millar
<p>Huron Natural Area Advisory Committee</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually Vice-Chairperson Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Weston 	<p>Waterloo Education Foundation Inc.</p> <p><i>Appointed for 4 Years 2 Trustees Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Herring (Chair) • J. Weston (Vice-Chair) 	<p>Early Years Advisory Group</p> <p><i>Appointed Annually 1 Trustee Meets as required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C. Whetham



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

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Cathy Abraham
President

W.R. (Rusty) Hick
Executive Director

OPSBA Board of Directors Meeting – Dec. 7 and 8, 2018

Please note – the deadline for securing a hotel room at the Sheraton Centre for the [Public Education Symposium](#) is Jan. 7, 2019.

The OPSBA Board of Directors held a meeting on Dec. 7 and 8, 2018, in Toronto. Elaine Johnston, Chair of OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council (ITC) and OPSBA's First Nations Director, gave an acknowledgement that the meeting was being held on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and the Métis Nation.

Ontario's Minister of Education Lisa Thompson joined the Board of Directors on the evening of Dec. 7. The Minister delivered remarks and participated in a Q&A session.

Education policy and program issues that were discussed in public session at the meeting are summarized below.

Legislative and Government Relations

MPPs rose for Winter Recess on Dec. 6, 2018, and will return after Family Day on Feb. 19, 2019. Members received updates on several pieces of legislation including:

[Bill 36, Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act](#)

[Bill 47, Making Ontario Open for Business Act](#)

[Bill 48, Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act](#)

[Bill 56, Keeping Students Safe on School Buses Act](#)

[Bill 57, Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability Act](#)

[Bill 66, Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act](#)

Finance

Updates were provided on the followings issues related to education funding:

2019-20 Education Funding Consultation

OPSBA is preparing a document for submission to the Ministry of Education outlining current funding pressures being experienced by school boards. Board of Director members were consulted during the meeting. Consultation responses are due by mid-December.

Education Development Charges

On Oct. 15, 2018, the government announced its intention to undertake a review of the Education Development Charges (EDC) policy framework, as well as recent amendments to [O. Reg. 20/98](#): Education Development Charges – General. The amendments include four key elements:

- Maintain EDC rates at the levels in existing by-laws as of Aug. 31, 2018
- Limit the ability of school boards to change areas in their by-laws that are subject to EDCs
- Restrict additional school boards from becoming eligible to pass a new EDC by-law
- Streamline some of the requirements to be included in the required background study.

OPSBA staff are working with senior business officials to identify and collect specific data regarding the impact of the EDC freeze.

Benefits Technical Advisory Committee

OPSBA staff have been informed that the work of this group has been discontinued.

A summary of B and SB memoranda is available on [the OPSBA website](#).

Indigenous Education

Elaine Johnston, Chair of OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council (ITC), delivered an update on Indigenous Education. The ITC has not met since the last OPSBA Board of Directors meeting but will meet at the OPSBA Public Education Symposium in January 2019. The [National Trustees' Gathering on Indigenous Education](#) will be happening in Toronto on July 3. A brief discussion regarding the creation of Indigenous Student Trustees occurred.

Communications and Media Relations

Updates on recent OPSBA communications issues were provided. There has been some media activity involving OPSBA since the September Board of Directors meeting, which can be found [on the OPSBA website](#).

OPSBA released a [media statement regarding seat belts](#) on school buses on Oct. 15:

Communications support was also provided for issues and projects including:

- The 2018 Provincial [Fall Economic Statement](#)
- Completion of OPSBA's [2018-2019 Key Work document](#)
- The launch of Education Today's Fall [2018 online issue](#) on Nov. 6
- Planning for Prosperity – the Government's September 2018 online public consultation
- [The 2019 Public Education Symposium](#)
- [The Auditor General's 2018 Annual Report](#)

2018 Municipal and School Board Elections Overview

Initiatives and analysis that took place related to the 2018 Municipal and School Board Elections included:

- Collection of data regarding the 317 elected and acclaimed public school trustee positions
- On behalf of the four school board/trustee associations, the Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) partnered with the Ministry of Education to produce [a series of bilingual election resources](#) to support trustee candidates and communities, to promote the role of school board trustee and encourage voter interest and participation in the 2018 school board elections.
- [Why I Run – Trustee Video](#)
- Election resources media outreach and Twitter campaign

- 2018-2022 Term of Office – OPSBA's Guide to Good Governance 2018-2022, school trustee exit interview survey

Program Policy Update

A summary of Ministry meetings, workgroups and program-related announcements was provided. Information shared included updates on the following:

EQAO

The first meeting of the EQAO Advisory Committee was held on Nov. 15, 2018. A number of the recommended changes to the accommodation and assessment practices have previously been identified at varying times by OPSBA through consultation processes and also contained in the OPSBA [EQAO and Large Scale Testing Discussion Paper](#). One notable suggestion by EQAO is to adjust the number of students included in assessment reports by subtracting from the denominator those students who are unable to engage with the curriculum for a variety of reasons. This “denominator” in the EQAO formula calculation represents the total number of students who have taken the assessment. School boards have been asking for this for some time.

Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health

The Coalition met on Sept. 25 and Nov. 20, 2018, to discuss government engagement strategies and the necessity to reintroduce the group to the new government. Many members reported on the transfer of mental health supports and services being transferred to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care as of April 2019. It is anticipated that there will be significant changes and efficiencies as a result of this transfer.

The Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health has been confirmed for April 16 & 17, 2020 at the Beanfield Centre. A new format will provide more opportunities for networking and delving deeper into topics that are evidence-based.

OACAS Public Engagement, Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement Strategic Council

In our continuing partnership discussions with the Ontario Association of Children's Aids Societies (OACAS), OPSBA has been asked to join the OACAS Public Engagement, Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement Strategic Council. The first meeting was held on Oct. 29, 2018. The child welfare sector is experiencing the same challenges with government engagement and a significant portion of the meeting explored strategies and ways of reframing priorities.

FSL Labour Market Partnership Project (FSL-LMPC)

OPSBA is leading a labour market partnership project, [Meeting Labour Market Needs for French as a Second Language Instruction in Ontario](#), for English and Catholic public school boards. This is a three year initiative and the ultimate goal of this project is to uncover workable solutions to the current worsening imbalance between the growing demand province-wide for qualified French language teachers and support staff and the related supply pipeline.

French as a Second Language

The bilateral agreement discussions that determine the amount of federal Department of Canadian Heritage funding to support FSL programs in schools are still in process. After 10 years, there has been no increase in dollar levels and every effort is being made to increase these levels. These monies flow through the Grants for Student Needs to school boards.

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Given the national concern regarding attracting and retaining language proficient FSL teachers, the Department of Canadian Heritage will be providing supplemental funding to support applications for initiatives and research to increase the supply pipeline. OPSBA and the FSL-LMPC are working with the Ministry of Education to leverage the labour market research to expand pilot and high leverage strategies regarding recruitment and retention.

Consultation: Education in Ontario

The consultation process for this review of curriculum, which has involved town hall call-ins, online and other forms of engagement, concludes on Dec. 15, 2018. OPSBA will be making a full submission.

Based on previous OPSBA positions and a consultation process with the Education Program and Policy Development Work Teams, OPSBA developed a [consultation resource document](#).

Fwd: Reply from the Minister of Education

Stephanie Reidel <stephanie_reidel@wrdsb.ca>
Draft To: Jayne Herring <jayne_herring@wrdsb.ca>

Thu, Dec 13, 2018 at 12:51 PM

From: **Minister (EDU)** <Minister.edu@ontario.ca>
Date: Thu, Dec 13, 2018 at 10:26 AM
Subject: Reply from the Minister of Education
To: jayne_herring@wrdsb.ca <jayne_herring@wrdsb.ca>

Ms. Jayne Herring
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board
jayne_herring@wrdsb.ca

Dear Ms. Herring,

I am writing in response to correspondence received by your predecessor, Scott McMillan, on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Waterloo Region District School Board, about the elementary Health and Physical Education curriculum. I apologize for the delay in responding.

I would also like to congratulate you on your election as chair of the Board of Trustees. I am confident you will demonstrate leadership and integrity in your work as chair of the board, and I want to extend my best wishes for a successful term as you begin your important work.

During the election, our government promised to deliver an education system that put the rights of parents first while getting back to the basics when it comes to teaching fundamental subjects like math. We are committed to keeping this promise, and doing better when it comes to children's academic achievements.

This is why this Fall, we launched a comprehensive consultation focused on a number of areas. We want to hear from you on subjects like mental health, health and physical education, and legalization of cannabis; how to improve student performance in the STEM disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math; what measures can be taken to improve standardized testing; and what steps schools should take to ban cellphone use in the classroom.

These province-wide public consultations include an online survey and a submission platform that allow interested individuals and groups to present detailed proposals to the Ministry. They were also comprised of 37 province-wide telephone town halls which concluded on December 6th.

We welcome your perspective and that of representatives of the Board of Trustees of the Waterloo Region District School Board, and if you haven't already done so, I encourage you to visit fortheparents.ca for information about the remainder of the consultations as well as next steps. The consultations are scheduled to close on December 15, 2018.

I look forward to working with you, and getting our students on the right track to success, and once again, my best wishes for a successful term.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Lisa Thompson
Minister of Education