MARCH 18, 2019

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE AND AGENDA

A Committee of the Whole meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held in the Board Room, Building 2, 1st Floor, 51 Ardeit Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario, on Monday, March 18, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

Call to Order

O Canada

Approval of Agenda

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Celebrating Board Activities/Announcements

Delegations

Policy and Governance

01 Review of Board Policy 4009 – Student Transportation M. Gerard

Reports

05 School Year Calendars 2019-2020 E. Giannopoulos

09 French Immersion Enrolment for 2018-19 and Projected Enrolment for 2019-20 B. Lemon

16 Long Term Accommodation Plan M. Gerard

20 North West Waterloo and Hespeler Development Area Designation M. Gerard

25 Long Term Fiscal Sustainability and Stability Task Force Quarterly Update M. Gerard

27 Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre Assessment M. Gerard

49 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Funding – Verbal Update S. Miller

Motion: Support for Continuation of Full-Day Kindergarten Trustee S. Piatkowski

Board Reports

51 OPSBA Board of Directors Meeting – February 22 and 23, 2019 Trustee K. Woodcock

Question Period (10 minutes)

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

Adjournment

Questions relating to this agenda should be directed to
Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services
519-570-0003, ext. 4336, or Stephanie_Reidel@wrdsb.ca
1. Preamble

1.1 The Education Act, Section 190 (1) states that a School Board may provide transportation for:

1.1.1 a resident pupil of the Board who is enrolled in a school that the Board operates, or in a school operated by another Board to which the Board pays fees in respect of such pupil;

1.1.2 a pupil in respect of whom the Minister pays the cost of education under the regulations; and

1.1.3 a child over two years of age who may, under the regulations, be admitted to a programme for hearing-handicapped children, transportation to and from the school that the pupil attends.

1.2 The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) recognizes that although the Education Act places no mandatory responsibility on a Board to provide transportation for students, there may be existing conditions which warrant transportation for certain pupils.

2. General Transportation Policy

2.1 The following distance guidelines shall be used to determine eligibility:

2.1.1 For students living in urban municipalities and established settlement areas, transportation may be provided to students living beyond the following distance to their assigned school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Distance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Junior and Senior Kindergarten</td>
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<td>1.6 km</td>
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<tr>
<td>9- 12</td>
<td>3.2 km</td>
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</table>

2.1.2 For students living in rural areas outside urban municipalities and established settlement areas, transportation will be provided to all students in a manner deemed safe and appropriate by Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR).
2.1.3 In some cases, transportation outside the guidelines may be granted for exceptional circumstances (medical needs, safety hazards). The process to request transportation under these circumstances is outlined in AP4260 Student Transportation.

2.2 Transportation may be withdrawn for violations of the student code of conduct.

2.3 Student transportation for WRDSB is planned and overseen by STSWR. All transportation measurements will be determined by STSWR and be based on the shortest distance by road, path or walkway from home to school or bus stop, and are subject to a reasonable flexibility beyond the guidelines.

2.4 This policy will be implemented in accordance with Administrative Procedure 4260-Student Transportation.
Board Policy 4009

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Legal References:  
Education Act: Section 190 (1)

Related References:  
Board Policy 6008 – Student Discipline
Board Policy 6009 – Student Bullying Prevention and Intervention
Administrative Procedure 1260 – Student Discipline Procedures
Administrative Procedure 1620 – Alternative Suspension Program
Administrative Procedure 4070 – Responsible Use Procedure for Information, Communication and Collaboration Technologies
Administrative Procedure 4260 – Student Transportation

Effective Date:  
February 1998

Revisions:  
June 2010

Reviewed:  
February 9, 2015, November 9, 2015, January 16, 2017

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2.4 This policy will be implemented in accordance with Administrative Procedure 4260-Student Transportation.
Subject: School Year Calendars – 2019 - 2020

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the 2019-2020 School Year Calendars containing 194 school days, as outlined in Appendices A and B of the Report titled “School Year Calendars – 2019-2020.”

Status

In preparation of the 2019-2020 School Year Calendars, a consultation process was established with representatives from stakeholder groups within the Waterloo Region District School Board, which included the Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils (WRAPSC)/Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), employee federations, associations and administrators. Members of this year’s School Year Calendar Committee are:

- Jodi Albrecht, Waterloo Region Elementary Administrators (WREA);
- Cindy Benedetti, System Administrator;
- Susan Fabers, President, Supervision Monitors and Cafeteria Assistants (SMACA);
- Sherry Freund, President, OSSTF/FEESO;
- Evelyn Giannopoulos, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being (Committee Chair);
- Jayne Herring, Chairperson of the Board;
- Shawn Hibbs, Vice-President, OSSTF/FEESO, ESS;
- Melissa Hilton, Manager Extended Day;
- Ross Howey, Communications Officer;
- Nick Landry, Controller, Financial Services;
- Kathy Mason, Supervisor of Client Support, ITS;
- Scott R. Miller, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being;
- Elaine Ranney, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being;
- Beth Robson, Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) / WRAPSC;
- Lynsey Slupeiks, Communications Officer;
- Joanne Threndyle, Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario;
- Deborah Tyrrell, President, Secondary School Principals Association (SSPA);
- Jenn Wallage, President, Waterloo Region DECE;
- Siobhan Watters, Secondary School Vice-Principal Association;
- Michael Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resource Services; and
- Lynn Wilson, Educational Assistants Association (EAA).
In addition, discussions related to the alignment of School Year Calendars have occurred with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) and neighbouring school boards. As in past years, it is our committee’s goal to ensure that the calendar is aligned as closely as possible with the calendar proposed by the WCDSB.

The 2019-20 school year will begin on Tuesday, September 3, 2019 and end on Friday, June 26, 2020.

Background

In accordance with Regulation 304, district school boards are required to prepare, adopt, and submit to the Minister of Education, on or before the 1st day of May, a School Year Calendar. The Regulation also states that the school year calendar shall include a minimum of 194 school days of which 7 days may be designated by the board as professional activity days. Three of these days must be devoted to specific provincial education priorities. Furthermore, a board may designate up to 10 instructional days as examination days [Section 3. (3.1)].

Financial implications

The school year calendar committee continues to make every effort to align our school year calendar with that of the WCDSB. However, there remain a number of unaligned days and this represents an additional cost to the Board in terms of providing student transportation.

The additional costs that will be incurred for unaligned days during the 2019/20 school year are estimated to be $245,000; the Waterloo Region District School Board’s share of this cost is estimated to be $179,000, with the remainder being charged to the WCDSB.

Communications

Subsequent to Board approval of the above recommendation, school year calendars will be submitted to the Ministry of Education and will be shared with students, staff and members of the public following receipt of Ministry approval. As per Ministry direction, schools must communicate the date and purpose of the Professional Activity (PA) Day ten days before each PA day.

Prepared by: John Bryant, Director of Education, Evelyn Giannopoulos, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, and in consultation with Coordinating Council
## School Year Calendar 2019 - 2020

### WRDSB – Secondary School

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of Instructional Days</th>
<th>Number of Professional Activity Days</th>
<th>1st Week</th>
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**TOTAL** 187 7 10

**Note:** The 2019-2020 calendars provide for 194 possible school days between September 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. The school year shall include a minimum of 194 school days of which three days must be designated as professional activity days with respect to specific provincial education priorities as outlined in the Policy/Program Memoranda 151 and up to four extra days may be designated by the board as professional activity days. The remaining school days shall be instructional days. The boards may designate up to ten instructional days as examination days.
**WRDSB – Elementary School**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Number of Professional Activity Days</th>
<th>Number of Scheduled Examination Days</th>
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Subject: French Immersion Elementary and Secondary Enrolment for 2018-2019 and Projected Grade 1 Enrolment for 2019-2020

Recommendation
This report is offered for the information of the Board of Trustees.

Status
At present, the number of elementary schools offering the program is 41. We will add one new site offering French Immersion in 2019 - 2020; Janet Metcalfe P. S. will offer one class of Grade 1 French, bringing the total to 42.

Elementary Enrolment
There are presently 7410 students enrolled in the elementary French Immersion program (Appendix A). Since 2008, enrolment in the elementary French Immersion program has increased from 3861 to 7410, an increase of 52%.

Secondary Enrolment
At the secondary level, there are 1207 students currently enrolled in the Extended French and French Immersion programs (Appendix B). This figure represents a 9% year-over-year growth in the program. The French Immersion/Extended French program represents 6% of our secondary enrolment.

Projected Grade 1 Enrolment
As of January 31, 2019, a total of 1,357 requests for the French Immersion program have been registered for the 2019-2020 school year. To date, 1,275 students have been accommodated.

At present, there are a total of 82 French Immersion home-school and out-of-area students on waiting lists, as well as approximately 35 who have registered during Phase 2.

If all designated sites open with full grade 1 classes, 82 student spaces will be available across the district for families interested in transporting their child to a French Immersion site. These spaces will be offered to families on waiting lists, based on position established by lottery.

Background
Appendix C lists the sites selected to offer grade 1 of the French Immersion program in September 2019. Students may continue to register for the program until October 4, 2019.

The French Immersion program began in the Waterloo Region District School Board in 1977 and since then the program has continued to expand.
It is the practice of the Waterloo Region District School Board to consider implementing the French Immersion program in school communities when a sufficient demand exists as defined in Administrative Procedure 1000.

The Grade 1 component of the French Immersion program represents approximately 27% of the total grade 1 enrolment. French Immersion Grade 1 classes are organized to accommodate the greatest number of students in the program.

**Financial implications**
No financial implications.

**Communications**
Schools will notify the families of the accepted students once Human Resources Services completes the process to allocate classes. Learning Services staff will facilitate communication between waiting list registrants and the approved schools.

Prepared by:    John Bryant, Director of Education
                Bill Lemon, Superintendent, Student Achievement &Well-Being
                in consultation with Coordinating Council
## THE WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD FRENCH IMMERSION ENROLMENT FOR SEPTEMBER 2018

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<th>GR 4/5</th>
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* These sites accepted only home-school applicants.
THE WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
EXTENDED FRENCH/IMMERSION ENROLMENT
FOR JANUARY 31, 2019

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TOTAL ENROLMENT SECONDARY: 1207
TOTAL ENROLMENT ELEMENTARY: 6425
TOTAL ENROLMENT: 7632

NOTE:
- Small classes are combined for instruction.
Grade 1 French Immersion Classes for September 2019

When selecting sites for grade 1 classes of the French Immersion program, the following procedural guidelines have been followed:

- Due to the enrollment cap of 23 on grade 1 French Immersion classes, a minimum of 18 students is required to open a class in any site with an existing French Immersion program, contingent on the availability of physical space at the school site. A minimum of 36 students is required to open two classes at any given site where space allows, unless overflow space is required to provide space for out-of-area applicants in a particular region.

- A minimum of 20 students is required to open a class at a school site that currently does not have an existing French Immersion program, contingent on the availability of physical space and a number of other factors at the school site.

- Siblings of students presently enrolled in French Immersion classes are considered home school students upon application to the program.

- When forming class lists, a lottery system is used with those who registered between January 8 and 31, 2019. During the lottery those students who live within the boundary with siblings are entered into the classes first, then those without siblings who live within the boundary and finally those that live outside of the boundary. After January 31, 2019 all registrants are added to the class list on a first-come, first-served basis.

- Every effort is made to accommodate students with their first-choice site selection. If the first-choice site has already been filled to a maximum of 23 students, students are placed in the lottery at their second and/or third choice site (space permitting). Should no space be available in the applicant’s selected sites, the applicant is placed on a waiting list at one of their choice sites.

- Some sites are considered overcrowded and require 18 home school applicants and are not able to accommodate out of area students. These sites are marked with an asterisk.
## Grade 1 French Immersion Classes for September 2019

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Subject: Long Term Accommodation Plan

Recommendation

This report is for the information of the Board.

Status

Planning staff would like to present to the Board of Trustees (Trustees) the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP).

The initial Draft LTAP was first presented to the previous Board on January 22, 2018, and the final version presented on March 19, 2018 (Appendix A).

Background

This LTAP identifies short-term (one to five year) and medium-term (six to ten year) recommendations where student accommodation needs have been identified. Recommendations include new classroom additions, boundary studies, partnership opportunities and pupil accommodation reviews. Trustees will be involved in future decisions regarding these recommendations in accordance with Administrative Procedure 4991 – Boundary Studies and Administrative Procedure 4860 – Pupil Accommodation Review and other applicable procedures.

Financial Implications

No financial implications.

Communications

N/A

Prepared by: Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board
Nathan Hercanuck, Manager of Planning
in consultation with Coordinating Council
Subject: Final Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP)

Recommendation

*That the Waterloo Region District School Board approves the Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP); and*

*That staff be directed to submit the LTAP to the Ministry of Education and all entities outlined in the notification list in [Administrative Procedure 4990 - Community Planning and Facility Partnerships](#)*

Status

Planning staff are pleased to provide the final Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) to the Board of Trustees (Trustees). The initial draft was presented to Committee of the Whole on January 22, 2018.

This plan identifies short-term (one to five year) and medium-term (six to ten year) recommendations where student accommodation needs have been identified. Recommendations include new classroom additions, boundary studies, partnership opportunities and pupil accommodation reviews. Trustees will be involved in future decisions regarding these recommendations in accordance with [Administrative Procedure 4991 – Boundary Studies](#) and [Administrative Procedure 4860 – Pupil Accommodation Review](#) and other applicable procedures.

A summary table of proposed actions for consideration is provided in on page 7 of the attached LTAP. The recommendations outlined in the document allow for flexibility of timing. Future updates to the LTAP may reflect changing timelines for projects.

To assist in understanding how to read the LTAP, please refer to the Glossary of Terms on Appendix B of the LTAP.

Since the release of the draft plan in January, staff have undertaken several promontional activities to support consultation and encourage feedback. Actions undertaken include;

- Stakeholders were emailed and advised the draft plan was available and provided public meeting details
- January 25, 2018 – A Public Meeting Open House was held at the Education Centre
- January 30, 2018 – a poster was distributed to all schools detailing how parents may access a hard copy of the LTAP if needed as well as how to provide feedback on the draft plan
January 30, 2018 – Staff attended a System Leadership Team meeting to participate in a carousel activity focusing on the recommendations in the LTAP

February 6, 2018 - Staff attended Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils (WRAPSC) meeting to share the status of the LTAP and invite feedback as well as answer any questions

Information about the LTAP was shared at various meetings in a presentation about the budget

Deadline to submit feedback extended to February 16, 2018 to allow for review of the document

Most of the feedback received about the LTAP was positive. Some parents identified a need for future boundary studies and stakeholders were supportive about partnership opportunities. Stakeholders indicated this plan would be a useful tool for their respective long-range planning work.

Most of the changes between the draft and final version were minor, however, two new appendices have been added – Secondary Specialist High Skills Major Programs and Additional Properties. A map was added to Appendix A – Child Care Locations.

The LTAP will be revisited and revised in alignment with the Education Development Charges Background Study. Based on that schedule, work on an update to the LTAP will be initiated in late 2020 with a final version anticipated for spring of 2021.

Background

On January 22, 2018 a draft version of the LTAP was presented to Trustees for information and shared online.

The May 15, 2017 Committee of the Whole report “Accommodation Planning 2017-2018” indicated that a long-term capital and accommodation plan was in development with a 2017 release date. As indicated in the October 23, 2017 Committee of the Whole report, Planning staff revised this date to early 2018 to allow for thorough consultation and collaboration with Communications.

On February 9, 2018 the Ministry released Memo 2018:B02 “Draft Revised Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline and Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline Updates”. Feedback on the draft revisions is being accepted until March 23, 2018. A final document is expected in spring of 2018 at which time boards will be expected to amend their existing Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) policies. No new PARs may be undertaken until such time as a new policy is in place and an LTAP is approved.

Financial implications

No financial implications.
Communications

Planning and Communications staff collaborated to ensure the final LTAP included input from a variety of stakeholders as detailed above. The final LTAP is online and available at www.wrdsb.ca/planning/ltap as well as in the Board agenda package.

Those who provided feedback will receive a link to the final plan. Additionally, the LTAP will be submitted to the Ministry of Education and local municipality clerk’s departments as well as the co-terminus school boards.

Prepared by: Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board
Lauren Agar, Manager of Planning
Sarah Galliher, Senior Planner
In consultation with Coordinating Council
Report to Committee of the Whole
March 18, 2019

Subject: North West Waterloo and Hespeler Development Area Designation

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the creation of Development Areas for the elementary panel for those portions of plans 30T-05403, 30T-97024, 30T-11402, and 30T-05402 in North West Waterloo shown on Appendix A;

And that the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the creation of a Development Area for the elementary panel for the area known as 151 & 171 Guelph Avenue (30T-18103), City of Cambridge, as shown on Appendix B;

And that Waterloo Region District School Board approve the creation of a Development Area for the elementary panel for the area known as 4045 Maple Grove Rd. (30T-16101), City of Cambridge, as shown on Appendix B.

Status

The Planning Department regularly reviews residential development plans to estimate projected enrolment growth and assess the capacity of nearby schools to accommodate anticipated growth.

Where space is insufficient, Board Policy 4012 – School Attendance Areas and Administrative Procedure 4992 – Temporary Student Accommodation for Development Areas provide a process for creating and assigning Development Areas (DAs) to holding schools until a more permanent long-term accommodation is available. A permanent and long term solution refers a new school, a classroom addition or a boundary change resulting from a boundary study.

In response to current and future enrolment pressure being experienced at Vista Hills Public School, DAs are proposed to be established around two phases of a residential subdivision near the school.

In response to current and future enrolment pressure being experienced at Silverheights Public School, DAs are proposed to be established around proposed plans of subdivision.

Appendix A details the location of the north west Waterloo DAs, and Appendix B details the location of the Hespeler DAs.

Background

The West Waterloo Elementary Schools Boundary Study, completed in 2015, recommended a second phase be implemented between December 2018 and 2020 through the completion of a new boundary study. This phase would consider redirecting
Abraham Erb Public School area Grade 7 and 8 students to Laurelwood Public School, to reduce enrolment pressures at Vista Hills Public School. It was recommended that a boundary study take place after there was greater certainty around funding to construct permanent accommodation at Laurelwood Public School and/or Vista Hills Public School could no longer accommodate the enrolment from the Abraham Erb Public School area (in permanent or temporary accommodation).

On November 12, 2018 the Board approved a motion initiating the West Waterloo Elementary Schools Boundary Study Phase 2. The Boundary Study Working Group has evaluated multiple accommodation options and has held one public meeting to consult on their preferred solution. This solution involves the establishment of the above mentioned DAs which represent approximately 445 proposed residential units.

A report to the Committee of the Whole is forthcoming detailing the recommendations to implement the preferred solution. A recommendation to establish the DAs is preceding the Boundary Study recommendations to ensure that they are established prior to the sale/occupation of residential units.

In the City of Cambridge a new infill development (151 & 171 Guelph Avenue) has been proposed within the attendance area for Silverheights Public School. This development is expected to contain approximately 210 single detached and townhome units.

Also within the Silverheights Public School attendance area, a new mixed-use development is proposed at the corner of Hespeler and Maple Grove Roads. This development is expected to contain between 296 and 951 residential units (mostly apartment units).

Silverheights Public School has a current enrolment of 740 students, and a school capacity of 637 pupil places. The school currently utilizes 10 portables. Projections indicate that should these developments be accommodated at Silverheights Public School enrolment could increase to over 800 students by 2028.

**Financial Implications**

There are no immediate financial implications, however additional transportation costs may be incurred should the DAs be assigned to holding schools beyond the student transportation distance threshold.

**Communications**

Information about DA assignments is available on the Planning Department website. Letters will be sent to the KW Real Estate Board and new home sales centres, where possible, to advise them of Development Area holding school assignments. Maps indicating school assignments will be posted on the Board’s website for the public to view. Additionally, the “School Finder” application on the Board’s website will be updated to display the school assignments and transportation eligibility once municipal addressing has been assigned. Further, in the case of the Hespeler DAs, the Board has asked that the Region impose conditions of approval that will require the developer to post signage and include clauses in Agreements of Purchase and Sale indicating that
students from the development may need to be accommodated at schools outside the area.

Prior to assigning development areas to holding schools, school administrators, Superintendents of Student Achievement & Well-Being, Facilities Services and Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region will be consulted.

Prepared by: Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board
Nathan Hercanuck, Manager of Planning
in consultation with Coordinating Council
North West Waterloo Development Area Map
APPENDIX B

Hespeler Development Area Map

Legend
- Secondary School
- Jr. Elementary School
- Composite Elementary School
- Sr. Elementary School
- Proposed Development Area

Hespeler Development Areas

Silverheights P.S. JK-8

30T-18103

30T-16101

Centennial P.S. (C) JK-8

Hespeler P.S. JK-8
Subject: Long Term Fiscal Sustainability and Stability
Task Force Quarterly Update

Recommendation

This report is for the information of the Board.

Status

The Long Term Fiscal Sustainability and Stability Task Force (known as Fiscal Task Force) consists of the following members:

- Natalie Waddell, Trustee
- Kathi Smith, Trustee (Sept – Nov)
- Kathleen Woodcock (Dec – Present)
- Sharlene McHolm, WREA Representative
- Cathy Vollmer-Ashley, SSPA Representative
- Siobhan Watters, SSVPA Representative
- Scott Lomax, Coordinating Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being
- Lila Read, Coordinating Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being
- Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board

The members in attendance at each meeting are as follows:

Members

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Others in Attendance

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<td>Duru Uluk, Student</td>
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X – Present

The committee met in October, January and February to discuss cost pressures identified in the previous school year and identify strategies to address them.

As part of the committee’s work in preparing the Board’s budget for the 2019-20 school year, the Fiscal Task Force worked on a survey which was posted to the Board’s public website for the purpose of soliciting public feedback. The survey will be available from February 22, 2019 to March 15, 2019. The feedback gained from the survey will be analyzed by the Fiscal Task Force and integrated into the budget process for the 2019-20 school year as applicable.

Background

By way of a Board motion passed on June 23, 2014, the Fiscal Task Force was formed. The Fiscal Task Force was mandated to undertake discussions and consider options and solutions to ensure the long term sustainability and stability of the Board. The Fiscal Task Force’s Terms of Reference require quarterly updates to the Board of Trustees.

Financial implications

No financial implications.

Communications

The budget survey was posted on the Board’s website in February 2019. Communication Services will assist in raising awareness of the survey.

Prepared by: Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board in consultation with Coordinating Council
Subject: Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre Assessment

Recommendation

This report is for the information of the Board.

Status

As reported in the January 21, 2019 Major Capital Projects Quarterly Update, Annex A – Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre, increased issues related to needle, drug, and homeless activities in the community of Galt have become a significant health and safety concern.

The Amphitheatre, program viability, community use, and facility rejuvenation have become a topic of significant interest of late by concerned stakeholders in the media. The Board of Trustees and stakeholders have requested access to the architect study, financial status, and an engagement process so that the community can have input regarding the Amphitheatre.

The Schematic Design Report for Outdoor Amphitheatre Revitalization, completed by Cornerstone Architecture is contained in Appendix A.

Background

In 2017, the Waterloo Region District School Board engaged an architect to review the potential redevelopment of the Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre.

The findings of the study indicate that even if the Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre were to be reconstructed, there is very little salvage value to the condition of the existing structures.

The Waterloo Region District School Board does not own and operate any other amphitheatres within its inventory of assets.

The Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre was constructed in 1978 at a cost of $86,000.

While users of the Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre have fond memories, former principals struggled with issues of ongoing vandalism, loitering and lack of visibility. These issues were further compounded by a lack of maintenance and deterioration of the facilities. Vandalism destroyed the electrical system and constant cleanup of broken beer bottles was required.

The Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre was condemned from public access almost a decade ago due to health and safety issues associated with the
deterioration of steps, handrails, seating and wood boards and nails. Furthermore, the lack of accessibility had come to light with rental requests for usage of the space. Because of this, the area was fenced off and has been shut down since 2009.

**Financial implications**

The original construction cost was $86,000 in 1978 and was funded by several stakeholders. Results of fundraising efforts during the 150th celebration generated funds for the school. Approximately $9,000 of those funds remain but are not specifically earmarked for the Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute Amphitheatre.

Costs to complete the demolition of the existing stage, stairs and ramps are estimated to cost approximately $30,000.

The cost to renew the Amphitheatre is estimated today at almost $570,000 based on conceptual designs. Other more cost effective options aligning with system standards, such as outdoor education classroom, could be considered as an alternative. This would cost less and could be located in a different location that may mitigate many of the operational issues associated with the lack of visibility.

**Communications**

An engagement and feedback strategy has been developed by the Communications Department working with staff at Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute that gains input from school council and the broader school community.

The Communications Department has been working with the Research Department to establish best practices and is recommending an in-person consultation meeting held at Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute with the support of school council, and an online survey component available to the broader community through the Waterloo Region District School Board website and Galt Collegiate and Vocational Institute homepage.

Prepared by: Matthew Gerard, Coordinating Superintendent, Business Services & Treasurer of the Board
Ian Gaudet, Controller, Facility Services
Nick Landry, Controller, Financial Services
Alana Russell, Chief Information Officer
in consultation with Coordinating Council
GALT COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE
200 WATER STREET NORTH
CAMBRIDGE ONTARIO

SCHEMATIC DESIGN REPORT FOR OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATRE REVITALIZATION

11 FEBRUARY 2019

Prepared by:
CORNERSTONE ARCHITECTURE INCORPORATED
110-700 RICHMOND STREET
LONDON ONTARIO N6A 5C7
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has engaged Cornerstone Architecture Incorporated to prepare a schematic design report to assess the existing condition of the outdoor amphitheatre and to propose solutions for the restoration of the outdoor amphitheatre at Galt Collegiate Institute, located at 200 Water Street North in Cambridge Ontario.

As noted in the report, the existing outdoor amphitheatre is located to the west of the main school building, on the bank of the Grand River. It was constructed in 1978, from funds raised by the community and provincial lottery proceeds, and has been closed to the public since 2009. Over the past ten years, further decay of the components of the seating and walkways has occurred, and the area has become an ongoing safety concern for the school.

The objectives of this report are as follows:

- Review the existing outdoor amphitheatre and record existing conditions;
- Develop schematic design options that provide an approach to the scope of work identified by the Waterloo Region District School Board;
- Develop the design parameters and a budget for the construction of each option.

The report and costing for the work identified for the restoration of the outdoor amphitheatre at Galt Collegiate Institute identifies the scope of work required for options to replace the existing amphitheatre in two different configurations, as well as an alternative design to create an outdoor learning classroom at the top of the bank.

The projected cost for the work required to for each option has been identified as follows:

Option 1 - Restore Amphitheatre in Existing Configuration: $569,250.00 + HST.
Option 2 - Reconfigured Amphitheatre with Reduced Seating Area: $552,000.00 + HST.
Option 3 - Development of New Outdoor Learning Classroom at Top of Bank: $257,600.00 + HST.

Costs are based on current market conditions, to the end of the fourth quarter of 2018. Escalation in costs should be factored into future budgeting exercises if this project does not proceed in the next six months.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has engaged Cornerstone Architecture Incorporated to prepare a schematic design report to review the existing condition of the outdoor amphitheatre at Galt Collegiate Institute in Cambridge Ontario, and to propose a number of solutions to address the future inclusion of an outdoor performance/learning space. The design has been developed based on direction provided at meetings with WRDSB staff.

Galt Collegiate Institute is located at 200 Water Street North, in Cambridge, Ontario. An existing outdoor amphitheatre is located to the west of the main school building, on the bank of the Grand River. It was constructed in 1978, from funds raised by the community and provincial lottery proceeds, and has been closed to the public since 2009.

The amphitheatre is accessed from a driveway at the rear of the school, via a series of pressure treated lumber walkways and stairs that descend the riverbank. The amphitheatre consists of tiered seating constructed of pressure treated lumber with a view over the Grand River, and seats between 250 and 300 spectators. A raised concrete block/precast concrete stage area with storage below is located at the base of the seating, and is approximately 23m² (250ft²) in area. The stage is raised approximately one metre above grade, and is accessed by a set of stairs on either side of the performance area. There is a flat area between the seating and the stage, that is constructed of concrete pavers. It appears that an electrical service was originally provided to the site.

1.1 Project Description

This report:
- Reviews the existing condition of the outdoor amphitheatre;
- Develops schematic design options complete with budgets.

1.2 Report Objectives

The objectives of this report are as follows:
- Review the existing outdoor amphitheatre and record existing conditions;
- Develop schematic design options that provide an approach to the scope of work identified by the Waterloo Region District School Board;
- Develop the design parameters and a budget for the construction of each option.
2.0 SITE VISIT & DESIGN REVIEW MEETINGS

Site Visits were conducted as follows:

3 October 2017

Alison Hannay (Cornerstone Architecture) and Mel Lavoie (WRDSB Project Coordinator) attended the site to review the existing amphitheatre and to discuss the scope of the Schematic Design Report. Input was also received from the school custodian, who noted the issues regarding broken glass and used syringes that are found on a regular basis. It was also noted that the police were called on a weekly basis to remove trespassers. The school indicated that the last production to be held at the amphitheatre was in 2005, and that it has been closed since 2009.

Design Review Meetings were held as follows:

22 November 2017

Alison Hannay (Cornerstone) presented two options to Mel Lavoie (WRDSB Project Coordinator), including a re-build of the existing amphitheatre and access (Option 1), and an option that completely re-imagined the space as an outdoor classroom, located at the top of the bank, in the southwest corner of the existing parking lot. The following comments were noted:

• Requested that another option be developed in the current location, but with a smaller seating area (capacity for 30-40).
• Noted that the outdoor classroom concept required review by the school regarding usability for this kind of space, but that the link to Tassie Hall was interesting.

23 October 2018

Alison Hannay (Cornerstone) presented the three options developed to Beverly Wood and Craig McLeman, GCI Administration, and Mel Lavoie, WRDSB Facilities to review the options developed for the project. The following comments were noted:

**Option 1** - Repair existing stairs/ ramps/ renovate to make accessible and attractive/ create accessible stage area
• Doesn’t address issues with maintenance and monitoring
• The area remains a risk for student use.

**Option 2** - Repair existing stairs/ ramps/ create “outdoor classroom” with seating for 30/ ensure accessibility
• There is still an issue with maintenance and monitoring with this option
• The area remains a risk for student use
• There was discussion about whether this option should be considered further; it was agreed that it should be kept as a possibility.
**Option 3** - Create “outdoor classroom” in southeast corner of parking lot adjacent to Tassie Hall, accessible, easier to monitor

- Concern about location due to noise from the train – there are also risks in this location, as the fence between the school property and the train is constantly being vandalized, and there is a lot of activity under the train bridge
- If an outdoor classroom were to be considered, should it be near the Library?

Other comments were noted as follows:

- School administration noted that unless additional funding is available for maintenance, repairs and supervision, that re-building the amphitheatre in its current location may not be sustainable;
- Currently 4-5 daytime arrests are made in a weekly basis; it is a time commitment for custodial staff to deal with the ongoing issues and risks; the main concern is the current safety and security risks posed by the amphitheatre, the time required by custodial staff to contact police, and remove security hazards, and ensuring that students do not access the space.
- The alternate outdoor learning classroom should be reviewed with staff with regard to location and usefulness (RE: curriculum purposes); typically, outdoor learning classrooms are associated with the elementary panel.
- GCI Administration noted that there has not been demand for an outdoor performance/learning space.
- GCI Administration asked what the process would be for consultation with community and staff.

A Draft Report was presented on:

28 November 2018

Alison Hannay (Cornerstone) presented the options developed to Beverly Wood and Craig McLeman, GCI Administration, and Ian Gaudet, Ron Dallan and Mel Lavoie, WRDSB Facilities to review the options developed for the project. The following comments were noted:

- Composite wood products should be basis of design for budget purposes for the options proposing the replacement of the amphitheatre in its current location;
- School administration noted that alternative outdoor learning spaces should be reviewed with the school and school community;
3.0 EXISTING CONDITION OF AMPHITHEATRE

As noted in the Introduction, access to the amphitheatre has been closed since 2009. The following issues were evident in the closure:

- decaying and missing planks in walkways and seating;
- vandalism of stage structure; doors to storage area have been welded closed;
- plant overgrowth between seating levels and between the seating area and the stage;
- broken light fixtures;
- school administration noted extreme concern with the misuse of the space, as broken glass and used syringes have been found by custodial staff; police are regularly called to remove trespassers, and it is generally acknowledged that the area is unsafe for student use;
- school administration also noted that the area is extremely difficult to supervise, as it is not visible from the main school property, and that limited maintenance funding has been available;
- school administration indicated that there has not been an expressed desire to utilize the space (or a similar space) for teaching or performances.

As well, while the ramps appear to be reasonably close to the slopes required to provide barrier free access to the top of the seating area, access is currently not provided to the lowest level of seating, and the stage structure itself is not accessible.

Refer to Site Photographs, attached as Appendix A.

4.0 BASIS OF SCHEMATIC DESIGN

The Schematic Design solutions developed for this report propose a variety of options for restoring and/ or redeveloping the outdoor amphitheatre, both in its existing location, and in an alternate location.

4.1 Option 1 – Restore Amphitheatre in Existing Configuration

Option 1 proposes to restore the amphitheatre in its original configuration, while providing barrier free access to the lowest level of seating and to a new stage area. The scope of work includes the following:

1. Demolition
   - Removal of all pressure treated lumber walkways, stairs and seating areas
   - Removal of existing stage structure in its entirety.
2. Construction
   - Reconstruction of walkways, stairs and seating areas using a composite wood product, and providing barrier free access to the lowest level of seating
   - Construction of new stage area at the same grade as the lowest level of seating to provide accessibility and an unobstructed view to the river
   - Re-instatement of electrical service to stage area.
4.2 Option 2 – Reconfigured Amphitheatre with Reduced Seating Area

Option 2 proposes to reconfigure the amphitheatre in its original location, but based on proposed usage patterns, reduces the seating area to accommodate 30 - 40 spectators. The intended use in this configuration would be more as an outdoor learning classroom, rather than as a performance space for a larger audience. Barrier free access to the lowest level of seating and to a new demonstration/ stage area. The scope of work includes the following:

1. Demolition
   - Removal of all pressure treated lumber walkways, stairs and seating areas
   - Removal of existing stage structure in its entirety.
2. Construction
   - Reconstruction of walkways and stairs and extension of walkways to new reconfigured seating area, using a composite wood product, and providing barrier free access to the lowest level of seating
   - Construction of a reduced seating area accommodating 30 – 40 spectators using armor stone boulders for seating
   - Construction of new stage area at the same grade as the lowest level of seating to provide accessibility and an unobstructed view to the river
   - Re-instatement of electrical service to stage area
   - Rehabilitation of the river bank where existing seating is removed.

4.3 Option 3 – Development of New Outdoor Learning Classroom at Top of Bank

Option 3 proposes to completely reconsider the location and nature of the concept of an outdoor learning space. This response is based on comments received regarding the ability to supervise an outdoor learning space, as well as comments about what kind of outdoor learning space could be useful to students and staff at Galt Collegiate Institute.

The proposed outdoor learning space is located at the same level as the existing building, in the southwest corner of the parking lot, with an adjacency to Tassie Hall. This location provides a visible and easily accessible outdoor learning classroom, with a view over the Grand River, and a seating area to accommodate 30 - 40 spectators. The scope of work includes the following:

1. Demolition
   - Removal of all pressure treated lumber walkways, stairs and seating areas
   - Removal of existing stage structure in its entirety.
2. Construction
   - Construction of an outdoor learning classroom in the southwest corner of the site, accommodating 30 – 40 spectators using armor stone boulders for seating
   - New landscaping in the parking area and at outdoor learning classroom
   - New access/ ramp at exit from Tassie Hall
   - Provision of electrical service to the demonstration area of the outdoor learning classroom.
   - Rehabilitation of the river bank.
Refer to Drawings, attached as Appendix B.

All information included on the drawings in Appendix B has been taken from drawings provided by the Waterloo District School Board, as well as site photographs taken by Cornerstone Architecture. A topographic survey was not available and detailed site measuring has not been completed for this Schematic Design Report.

5.0 COST ESTIMATE

The Cost Estimate, attached as Appendix C, identifies the costs for the construction of each option described in Section 4.0.

The total construction cost for all work identified is as follows:

Option 1: $569,250.00 + HST.
Option 2: $552,000.00 + HST.
Option 3: $257,600.00 + HST.

The Cost Estimate is a Class ‘D’ Cost Estimate.

The Cost Estimate is based on current market conditions, to the end of the fourth quarter of 2018, and is exclusive of HST.

6.0 CONCLUSION/ SUMMARY

In conclusion, this report identifies the existing condition of the outdoor amphitheatre at Galt Collegiate Institute, and proposes solutions for the restoration of the amphitheatre in its existing location, as well as an option to create an outdoor learning classroom on the upper bank level of the site, adjacent to Tassie Hall.

The total budget for the construction work ranges from $257,600.00 to $569,250.00 + HST.
APPENDIX A

Site Photographs
EXISTING EXTERIOR
AMPHITHEATRE
EXISTING EXTERIOR
AMPHITHEATRE RAMP & STAIRS
APPENDIX B

Drawings
EXISTING EXTERIOR AMPHITHEATRE

Galt Collegiate Institute

Existing Exterior Amphitheatre
AMPHITHEATRE RENOVATION
OPTION 1 – REBUILD EXISTING

Replace existing ramp & stair access
Replace existing amphitheatre seating
Remove existing stage with a flat surface to ensure barrier-free accessibility

Anticipated Construction Cost: $500,000
AMPHITHEATRE RENOVATION
OPTION 2 – REBUILD EXISTING & REDUCE SIZE

- Replace existing ramp and stair access
- Extend new ramp and stair to amphitheatre
- New retaining wall
- Replace existing amphitheatre seating to accommodate 25-30 people
- Remove existing stage with a flat surface to ensure barrier-free accessibility

Anticipated Construction Cost: $555,000
AMPHITHEATRE RENOVATION
OPTION 3 – NEW OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT TOP OF BANK

Remove Existing Exterior Amphitheatre

Construct New Outdoor Classroom at Top of Bank
AMPHITHEATRE RENOVATION
OPTION 3 – NEW OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT TOP OF BANK

- New armor stone wall to hold up amphitheatre or drop grade
- New island
- New painted connection
- New outdoor classroom
- New stairs & ramp

Construction Cost: $224,000
APPENDIX C

Cost Estimate
## Construction Estimate - Option 1 - Rebuild Existing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>remove existing pressure treated wood stairs/ ramps/ seating</td>
<td>$80,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>remove existing stage structure</td>
<td>$30,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>replace existing pressure treated wood stairs/ ramps/ seating with composite wood</td>
<td>$330,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>re- &amp; paving stone</td>
<td>$30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new paving stone at lowest level (stage area)</td>
<td>$15,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>electrical</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
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<td><strong>subtotal</strong></td>
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<td>Contractor’s OH&amp;P</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$569,250.00</strong></td>
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Costs are based on current market conditions for the 4th quarter of 2018, not including HST.

## Construction Estimate - Option 2 - Rebuild Existing - Reduced Size

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<th>Item</th>
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<tr>
<td>re- &amp; paving stone</td>
<td>$30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new paving stone at lowest level (stage area)</td>
<td>$15,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>electrical</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$480,000.00</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contractor’s OH&amp;P</td>
<td><strong>$74,250.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$552,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Construction Estimate - Option 3 - New Outdoor Classroom at Top of Bank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>remove existing pressure treated wood stairs/ ramps/ seating</td>
<td>$80,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>remove existing stage structure</td>
<td>$30,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>remediate bank</td>
<td>$45,000.00</td>
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<td>new armor stone</td>
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<td>Contractor’s OH&amp;P</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$257,600.00</strong></td>
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Subject: Motion Re: Support for Continuation of Full-Day Kindergarten

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board Chairperson write an open letter to the Minister of Education (copied to the five MPPs representing Waterloo Region) indicating that the WRDSB supports the current model for funding and delivering Full-Day Kindergarten and calling on the Provincial Government to continue funding that model throughout Ontario beyond the 2019/2020 school year; and

That the Chair send a letter (with a copy of this motion) to all other public school boards in the province and the Ontario Public School Boards Association for their information and any action that they deem appropriate.

Status

This report contains a Notice of Motion served by Trustee S. Piatkowski at the February 4, 2019, Board Meeting and was supported by Trustees N. Waddell and K. Woodcock.

Background

The following “whereas statements” were included as part of the notice of motion to provide additional information:

“Whereas, the Premier and the Minister of Education have given confusing and sometimes contradictory signals regarding the future of Full-Day Kindergarten in this province (guaranteeing its continuation for only the next school year and referring to “full-day learning” when pressed to specifically commit to Full-Day Kindergarten); and

Whereas, independent studies of the current model for delivering Full-Day Kindergarten have shown numerous positive outcomes (including better results in reading, writing, numeracy, and “self-regulation” among students who have attended Full-Day Kindergarten).”

Financial implications

No financial implications.
Communications
Copies of letters will be shared as part of the Board Communications on an upcoming Board Meeting agenda.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services for Trustee S. Piatkowski in consultation with Coordinating Council
OPSBA Board of Directors Meeting – February 22 and 23, 2019

The OPSBA Board of Directors held a meeting on February 22 and 23, 2019, in Toronto. Elaine Johnston, Chair of OPSBA’s Indigenous Trustees’ Council (ITC) and OPSBA’s First Nations Board of Director member, 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.

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

**Legislative Update**

MPPs returned from Winter Recess on February 19, 2019. Board of Director members received updates on several pieces of legislation including:

- **Bill 48, Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act**
- **Bill 56, Keeping Students Safe on School Buses Act**
- **Bill 66, Restoring Ontario’s Competitiveness Act**

**Special Advisors Appointed to Begin Governmental Review**

Municipal Affairs Minister Steve Clark has enlisted Michael Fenn and Ken Seiling to lead a review of regional governments. The special advisers are tasked with providing expert feedback on local decision-making and service delivery, and will zero in on Halton, York, Durham, Waterloo, Niagara, Peel, Muskoka District, Oxford County and Simcoe.

**Current Party Standings – 124 seats**

- Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario - 73
- New Democratic Party of Ontario - 40
- Ontario Liberal Party - 7
- Green Party of Ontario - 1
- Independent - 3

**Federal Legislation**

- **Bill C-369, An Act to amend the Bills of Exchange Act, the Interpretation Act and the Canada Labour Code (National Indigenous Peoples Day)**

This federal bill was first introduced on October 16, 2017. It proposed to amend certain Acts to make
National Indigenous Peoples Day a holiday. Debate has included which date to choose: the summer solstice of June 21 or September 30. The former is already observed as Indigenous Peoples’ Day in the Northwest Territories, where it’s a territorial statutory holiday. The September date is already Orange Shirt Day, which commemorates the victims and survivors of residential schools. The legislation was referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage on September 26, 2018. On February 5, 2019, the Committee amended the bill recommending the federal holiday be called The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and be observed on September 30.

Bill C-91, An Act respecting Indigenous Languages
This federal bill was first introduced on February 5, 2019. Included in its summary of proposed changes is that the Government of Canada recognizes that the rights of Indigenous peoples include rights related to Indigenous languages. The enactment also establishes the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages and sets out its composition.

Finance
Updates were provided on the following issues related to education funding:

2019-20 Education Funding Consultation
OPSBA sent a submission outlining current funding pressures, informed by feedback from member school boards, to the Ministry of Education in 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.

The Ministry has asked the Council of Senior Business Officials (COSBO) to form a working group to work with the ministry to review the EDC issue. OPSBA staff continue to work with senior business officials to identify and collect specific data regarding the impact of the EDC freeze.

A summary of B and SB memoranda is available on the OPSBA website.

Indigenous Education
Elaine Johnston delivered an update on Indigenous Education. The Indigenous Trustees’ Council (ITC) last met at the Public Education Symposium in January with a number of new members and many "non-Indigenous" trustees in attendance. ITC Member Lucille Kyle of Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board was appointed Alternate Chair and representative to the OPSBA Board.

Cancellation of TRC curriculum writing sessions was noted in discussion. Many relevant provincial advisory committees have been halted so little progress is being made at the moment. It was also noted that one committee, the Education/Reciprocal Education Service Agreements Committee, has begun work again. Discussion about tuition and reverse tuition agreements is occurring with a sense of urgency.
Communications and Media Relations
Updates on recent OPSBA communications issues were provided. There has been some media activity involving OPSBA since the December Board of Directors meeting, including on the issues of class sizes, Regulation 274 and Ontario’s autism policy changes:

Ontario's New Autism Policy Will Overwhelm Schools, Advocate Says
Canadian Press, February 11, 2019

Ontario's education minister won't commit to keeping class sizes capped
CBC News, January 24, 2019

OPSBA released a media statement regarding rumoured school board mergers on February 15.

Communications support was also provided for issues and projects including:

- Production of Education Today’s Winter 2019 issue
- Collective bargaining preparations
- The 2019 Public Education Symposium

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

Ministry Initiatives Committee
The Ministry has announced that the first 2018-2019 meeting of the Ministry Initiatives Committee will be held on March 6.

EQAO
EQAO has sent an orientation Frequently Asked Questions document to all trustees, which was followed up with an invitation to attend an online/teleconference information session in March to learn more about EQAO and to ask any questions of clarification. OPSBA’s Education Program Work Team is supportive of this opportunity.

Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health
The Coalition met on January 22, 2019, to finalize the format for the Summit on April 16 and 17, 2020, and discuss strategies for government engagement. This was the Ontario Provincial Advocate’s final meeting with the Coalition and discussion regarding next steps and how to support continued proactive advocacy was discussed.

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 second meeting was held on December 10, 2019.

FSL Labour Market Partnership Project
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 provincewide for qualified French
language teachers and support staff and the related supply pipeline. The FSL Labour Market
Partnership Committee has held two meetings this school year, focusing on finalizing action plans,
reviewing research and education worker/HR survey plans and reviewing pilot project proposal
submissions.

French as a Second Language
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 funding despite much advocacy. Funding flows through the Grants for Student
Needs to school boards. Given the national concern regarding attracting and retaining language
proficient French as a Second Language teachers, the Department of Canadian Heritage will be
providing supplemental funding to support applications for initiatives and research to increase the
supply pipeline.

New Ontario Autism Program
On February 7, 2019, the provincial government announced a change in the way that autism
supports and services would be funded. The stated government intent is to clear the current 18-
month wait list of 23,000 children in order to provide more timely access to support. Parents will
receive the funding directly for children up to the age of six and then be able to purchase the autism
support of their choice to a lifetime maximum of $140,000. The total funding remains at $321 million.
There is significant concern by parent groups regarding the efficacy of this approach, the age cut-
off, the total funding provided and the ability to provide sufficient access to professional autism
supports.