

**MARCH 22, 2021**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

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

Trustee K. Smith was not in attendance.

Student Trustees T. John-Jandles and R. McDonald were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: J. Bryant (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, R. DeBoer, M. Gerard, E. Giannopoulos, N. Landry, B. Lemon, D. Liebermann, S. Miller, C. Newton, L. Read, P. Rubenschuh, G. Shantz, J. Veit and M. Weinert.

Other staff in attendance: B. Jaklic and S. Reidel.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by C. Millar:

**That the agenda of the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

Trustee C. Watson had a declaration of pecuniary interest in the previous in camera meeting.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairperson J. Weston shared regrets from Trustee K. Smith.

Trustee L. Tremble attended the OPSBA Speaker Series and the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) Indigenous Leaders Panel on March 11, 2021. She also announced the upcoming Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) free annual Family Engagement Series running from April 7-10, 2021.

Yesterday, Trustees S. Piatkowski and J. Weston attended the International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination event where Human Rights and Equity Advisor D. Ahluwalia accepted a new award recognizing community leaders for addressing racial inequities in Waterloo region.

Trustee M. Ramsay joined the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

**POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1013 - FIRST NATION, METIS AND INUIT  
VOLUNTARY SELF-IDENTIFICATION**

The revised policy included an important change in language.

Trustees asked about the connection between this policy and the upcoming Student Census.

2. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by J. Herring:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1013 - First Nation, Metis and Inuit Voluntary Self-Identification as presented at the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Carried-

**APPROVAL OF NEW BOARD POLICY - HUMAN RIGHTS**

Superintendent P. Rubenshuh introduced this new draft policy. Human Rights and Equity Advisor D. Ahluwalia provided trustees with a presentation sharing the policy. She reviewed the policy preamble, commitments, application and concepts and roles and responsibilities.

Trustees moved the motion and discussed amendments to the policy.

3. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by C. Millar:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve New Board Policy - Human Rights as presented at the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

4. Amendment to the policy moved by L. Tremble, seconded by J. Herring:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board amend New Board Policy - Human Rights to include reference to the role of trustees in section 7.**

-Amendment Carried-

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5. Amendment to the policy moved by L. Tremble, seconded by C. Watson:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board amend New Board Policy - Human Rights to include “Board of Trustees” in section 2.3**

-Amendment Carried-

Opposed: K. Woodcock

Discussion continued regarding the policy and the reference of WRDSB in the policy. It was noted that the last paragraph in section 3 should have consistent language and use of the words “discrimination and harassment.” It was also suggested a reference to Procedure 1235 - Accommodation for Persons Who Identify as Transgender be added. Trustees asked clarifying questions regarding the complaint process and consultation.

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer New Board Policy - Human Rights back to staff to make the amendments discussed at the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Carried-

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 4003 - TRESPASSING**

7. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by K. Meissner:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 4003 - Trespassing as presented at the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Carried-

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 4011 - SCHOOL PARKING LOT SAFETY**

As trustees discussed the policy, an amendment to the title was moved to clarify the content further.

8. Amendment to the policy moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by C. Watson:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board amend Board Policy 4011 - School Parking Lot Safety to be titled “School Parking Lot Safety and Students”.**

-Amendment Carried-

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9. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by C. Whetham:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 4011 - School Parking Lot Safety as amended at the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Amended Motion Carried-

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 5000 - EMPLOYMENT (FAIR, EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE HIRING)**

Superintendent M. Weinert shared that the policy was updated to meet the requirements of Policy/Program Memorandum No. 165 - School Board Teacher Hiring Practices. A small correction required in the Legal References was noted.

10. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by J. Herring:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 5000 - Employment (Fair, Equitable and Inclusive Hiring) as presented at the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Carried-

Abstained: S. Piatkowski

**REPORTS**

**FISCAL TASK FORCE QUARTERLY REPORT**

This report was provided for information.

The report reviewed the membership and attendance at a recent meeting where the committee met to discuss the annual budget survey. As the WRDSB responds to the pandemic, it has little flexibility in the use of its financial resources. Given stakeholders have been given other opportunities to provide feedback into the WRDSB's operations through various surveys during the 2020-2021 school year, the committee determined that the Fiscal Task Force 2021-2022 budget survey will not proceed. The Fiscal Task Force intends to resume administration of the budget survey during the next school year, which will inform the 2022/2023 school year budget.

**2020-21 INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT AND FORECAST**

This report was provided for information.

The Controller of Financial Services, N. Landry, reviewed the Interim Financial Report and Forecast. The report highlighted the forecast of the year-end financial position which is an in-year deficit of \$10.0M. Subsequent to the Q1 report, the Provincial and Federal Governments announced additional funding for school boards, but as these investments are "targeted" towards

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specific priorities identified by the respective government bodies, staff do not anticipate that they will have a material impact on our year-end operating budget. Staff expects to report material changes in Q3 expenditures in professional development, supply costs and utility costs as a result of the January-February system closure, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff well-being and the inability to expend budgeted funds in certain areas.

Trustees asked questions regarding the anticipated material changes for Q3, enrolment and enrolment stabilization funding received.

### **MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS QUARTERLY UPDATE**

This report was provided for information.

Superintendent M. Gerard introduced the new Controller of Facility Services, John Veit. J. Veit shared the report with trustees highlighting the two new approvals for childcare additions at Saginaw Public School and Lackner Woods Public School.

### **COVID-19 PANDEMIC - VERBAL UPDATE**

This report was provided for information.

Director J. Bryant introduced the presentation, highlighting the focus on the Let's Connect Survey results and Planning for 2021-2022. Dr. D. Liebermann, Senior Manager of Research and Evidence-Based Practice, reviewed the responses and key themes for both Staff and Families/Students from the most recent Let's Connect Survey. She shared the next steps including two more surveys this year. Associate Director L. Read reviewed the focus on Human Rights and Equity, the beliefs grounding the decisions and the assumptions being made about the upcoming year. She reviewed the plans for next year including key considerations for virtual learning. Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard reviewed the budget realities and current Ministry of Education direction for the upcoming year.

Trustees asked questions regarding the survey results, transitions between modes of learning, secondary semestering and communications to families regarding decisions for next year. Staff agreed to speak with Public Health regarding vaccines for special education staff and plans for student vaccinations and to bring any new information to trustees at the March 29, 2021, Board Meeting.

### **MOTION: POLICY WORKING GROUP**

The report contained a Notice of Motion served by Trustee J. Herring at the December 14, 2020, Board Meeting and was supported by Trustees C. Millar and K. Woodcock. Trustee J. Herring circulated the Terms of Reference to trustees for feedback in advance of the meeting. She spoke to the motion and noted that the motion was a recommendation from the most recent Bylaw Review. Additional amendments were received to update Sections 3.3 and 6.4 to indicate that only Trustees will be voting members of the working group.

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Trustees discussed the motion including the use of the equity policy review tool. It was noted that Section 6.1 should be updated to reflect meetings occurring between September and June. The committee will review the Terms of Reference and develop a consultation process.

11. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by C. Millar:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees strike a Policy Working Group, in order to maintain, revise and create Board Policy; and**

**That the Policy Working Group review the process currently in place in order to encourage and ensure ongoing input from the Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, Student Senate and the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group and other members of the community prior to final approval by Trustees; and**

**That the Terms of Reference be amended to update Sections 3.3 and 6.4 to indicate that only Trustees will be voting members of the working group and that Section 6.1 be updated to reflect meetings occurring between September and June.**

-Carried-

**STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS**

**AD HOC SCHOOL NAMING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Trustee K. Woodcock shared that the committee has met twice and will meet again tomorrow. The committee is in the process of reviewing and clarifying the Terms of Reference with changes to be recommended at a future meeting. It was noted that the committee will be discussing their deliverables in the near future.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Trustee K. Meissner served the following Notice of Motion with support from Trustee C. Millar:

**OPSBA POLICY RESOLUTION SUBMISSION - Mandatory Black Heritage in Social Studies and History Curriculum**

Rationale

*Whereas*, there has been [a Black presence in Canada for over 400 years](#), but the contributions, struggles and lived experiences of Black people in Ontario is not mandated in the Social Studies and History curriculum, which is largely euro-centric;

*Whereas*, “sample questions” and/or teacher prompts in the curriculum are optional. They do not ensure every student is learning about Black Canadian experiences and how these experiences have and continue to impact everyone’s lives, including Black people;

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*Whereas*, the Ontario Human Rights Commission submission regarding the education system recommended (4b) “[Include curricular content on the history and intergenerational impacts of human rights violations in Canada and globally, including specifically the experiences of Indigenous peoples and racialized communities in Canada](#)”;

*Whereas*, [data](#) shows that factors such as pride in one's heritage and knowledge of one's culture contribute to academic success and students share that they do not learn about Black History during February, despite it being Black History Month;

*Whereas*, some teachers (for example, in the [WRDSB](#) and [TDSB](#)) recognize the importance of providing Black-focused curriculum and have created their own resources to support other teachers, however they are not universally accessible;

*Whereas*, including Black curriculum aligns with [Ontario's Anti-Black Racism Strategy](#) initiative to “strengthen inclusive and culturally responsive and relevant teaching, curriculum, assessment and resources”;

*Whereas*, one of the WRDSB strategic priorities is, “Our culture of innovation builds students’ confidence and success as they face the future” includes a focus on “learning environments (which) include all students and their diverse perspectives and ideas”;

*Whereas*, OPSBA advocates for the whole child and student well-being by supporting “[the social, emotional, mental and physical well-being of all children and youth in our increasingly complex world](#)”

*Whereas*, we acknowledge the work of Black educators across Ontario whose advocacy work, lived experience and curriculum development formed the background research for this resolution, we are proudly adding our voices in support to their call for change to the current curriculum;

Resolution

**Be it resolved, that OPSBA advocate to the Ministry of Education to mandate learning expectations that focus on the over 400-year Black presence in Canada within the Ontario Social Studies and History curriculum; that the new learning expectations be created with Black experts and educators; and that during the time this curriculum is being updated, the Ministry of Education promote and make available to all Boards the Black History courses and resources created and currently being used by teachers in individual Boards across the province.**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

12. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by C, Millar:

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 22, 2021, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.