

**APRIL 19, 2021**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Committee of the Whole Meeting this evening at 8:30 p.m. via video conference, with the following members in attendance: J. Weston (Chairperson), J. Herring, K. Meissner, C. Millar, S. Piatkowski, K. Smith, L. Tremble, C. Watson, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Trustee M. Ramsay was unable to attend the meeting.

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, M. Gerard, N. Landry, C. Newton, L. Read, P. Rubenschuh and M. Weinert.

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 9:04 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by K. Meissner:

**That the agenda of the April 19, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

Trustees C. Watson and C. Millar had a declaration of pecuniary interest in the previous in camera meeting.

Trustee K. Woodcock declared a conflict of interest for the OPSBA Report.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairperson J. Weston shared regrets from Trustee M. Ramsay.

Trustee J. Herring was pleased to bring greetings from the Board for the Parent Involvement Committee Parent Engagement Session on April 10, 2021.

Trustee K. Meissner commended the outdoor education staff for their work engaging WRDSB students in the second annual Backyard Bird Count.

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Trustee L. Tremble participated in the Parent Involvement Committee Parent Engagement Session on April 8, 2021. She also expressed appreciation for WRDSB parent volunteers as part of Volunteer Appreciation Week.

Trustee C. Millar was pleased to bring greetings from the Board for the Parent Involvement Committee Parent Engagement Session on April 7, 2021.

**POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

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

The requested changes from the March 22, 2021, Committee of the Whole meeting have been made to the draft policy.

2. Moved by K. Meissner, seconded by L. Tremble:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve new Board Policy - Human Rights as presented at the April 19, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Carried-

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 2003 - EARLY LEARNING AND CARE**

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 2003 - Early Learning and Care as presented at the April 19, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Carried-

**REPORTS**

**EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM FEE FOR NEXT YEAR**

The Extended Day Program (EDP) fee is established annually in accordance with Ministry of Education (Ministry) guidelines outlined in O.Reg 221/11 and a costing template issued by the Ministry is used to calculate the fee. The underlying objective in establishing the fee is to ensure it bears a reasonable relationship to incremental operating costs incurred by the WRDSB, and that the program operates on a cost-recovery basis.

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the Extended Day Program fee of \$27.50 per day, per child, for the 2021-22 school year.**

-Carried-

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

Director J. Bryant reviewed the events of the past week as it related to the pandemic and the WRDSB. He noted that last Monday, Premier Ford announced the move to remote learning, effective today, and that staff had prepared for the situation by asking families to bring home personal belongings and provided devices for learning on April 9th. Students will have heard from their teachers today as they begin remote learning. Students with complex special education needs start in person classes tomorrow. Staff will work with parents to determine other students with complex needs who cannot be accommodated online and plans will be put in place. He expressed appreciation to staff and parents/caregivers.

Chairperson J. Weston thanked staff for their preparation for this change.

Trustees were provided with an opportunity to ask questions. It was shared that staff have not been notified of a date for return to in person learning, but the Ministry of Education has noted that they will try to provide as much notice as possible.

#### **MOTION: OPSBA POLICY RESOLUTION**

Trustee K. Meissner proposed a Policy Resolution for the 2021 OPSBA AGM. Policy resolutions should reflect the corporate position of a member school board and address issues that have provincial implications. She spoke to the importance of the resolution.

Trustees were provided an opportunity to discuss the motion.

5. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by K. Meissner:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve and support the following Policy Resolution submission to OPSBA by Trustee K. Meissner regarding Mandatory Black Heritage in Social Studies and History Curriculum:**

**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; and**

**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.**

-Carried-

## **STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS**

### **AD HOC TRUSTEE SELF-EVALUATION TOOL COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Trustee C. Millar shared some background on the committee to date. The self-evaluation tool is complete and will be provided to trustees in May. The self-evaluation tool should be reviewed each year and adapted as needed. It is important for all trustees to participate in this process. A trustee discussion will follow the completion of the self-evaluation to determine next steps.

Trustee J. Herring left the meeting.

6. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by K. Smith:

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of April 19, 2021, be extended an additional thirty minutes.**

-Carried-

Trustee K. Woodcock left the meeting.

### **OPSBA REPORT**

Trustee L. Tremble provided a couple updates from OPSBA including the Project Compass survey and the OPSBA Central West meeting.

She shared that OPSBA released a statement in regards to post-pandemic online learning and reviewed some of OPSBA's concerns. She then moved a motion with the following recitals:

*Whereas the Waterloo Region District School Board has gathered data on student achievement and well-being during the pandemic which shows a marked increase in mental health concerns and feelings of isolation among students learning remotely during the pandemic;*

*Whereas the proposal put forward by the Ministry of Education as reported in the Globe & Mail is not supported by any data;*

*Whereas the WRDSB already had, pre-pandemic, and continues to have, a functioning online learning program which was utilized by secondary students and supported by the Ontario e-Learning Consortia;*

*Whereas the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) has already made a statement that the government's plan is not in the best interests of students and that there are significant negative implications on school boards including impacts on reduced funding levels, students' ability to attend small, rural and remote schools, and diminished local influence on education;*

*Whereas the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO) also expressed concerns that the proposed plan would present many negative impacts for the student body and does not prioritize the success and wellbeing of students;*

7. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by S. Piatkowski:

**That the Chair of the Waterloo Region District School Board write to the Minister of Education and our five local MPPs to express this board's vehement objection to the rushed and radical changes to remote learning that we understand the government is proposing and that the letter include the following:**

**i. There is no evidence to support that this policy change will improve student achievement or well-being;**

**ii. WRDSB registrations show that students and families prefer local in-person learning – which is the opposite of this proposal;**

**iii. Rushing through these radical changes to remote learning after a year of isolation and instability created by the COVID-19 pandemic risks causing real harm to our students; and**

**iv. The government must immediately stop its consideration of this proposal until the full impacts of remote learning on students during this pandemic are known and until thorough consultation with all education stakeholders including students, parents, trustees, educators and existing e-learning consortia has been conducted; and**

**That the letter be shared with the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and the Ontario Student Trustees Association.**

-Carried-

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Trustee K. Woodcock rejoined the meeting.

**STUDENT SENATE UPDATE**

Student Trustees R. McDonald and T. John-Jandles provided a recap of the most recent Student Senate Meeting and its continued focus on mental health, social justice and connecting distance learners. They provided an update on the Thinking Out Loud survey. They advised the upcoming student trustee elections will be held virtually this week.

Student Trustee R. McDonald shared information about Student Trustee interest and input to the Student Census commencing today.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of April 19, 2021, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.