

**MAY 31, 2021  
BOARD MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Board 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, K. Smith, L. Tremble, C. Watson, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

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, B. Lemon, D. Liebermann, C. Newton, L. Read, P. Rubenschuh, G. Shantz and M. Weinert.

Other staff in attendance: M. Delisle and S. Reidel.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chairperson J. Weston shared the following statement prior to a moment of silence.

*In memory of the 215 children whose remains were recently found at the Kamloops residential school and all the children who are waiting to be found; in memory of all the children who suffered abuse at residential schools across the country; out of respect for the families who were traumatized when their children were forcibly removed from their loving arms, never to be seen again; and for the survivors, and Indigenous communities across this country, whose lives have forever been negatively impacted by the residential school system, I ask everyone to stand, if you are able, and pause for a moment of silence.*

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by K. Meissner:

**That the agenda of the May 31, 2021, Board Meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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

**That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of May 31, 2021, and the actions contained therein, be approved.**

-Carried-

**MOTIONS FROM IN CAMERA MEETING**

*Note: The following motions were approved in the In Camera session held earlier this evening.*

A. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by C. Whetham:

**That the agenda of the May 31, 2021, In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera.**

-Carried-

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

**That the consent agenda of the May 31, 2021, In Camera Board Meeting and the actions contained therein, be approved.**

-Carried-

C. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by S. Piatkowski:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the appointments of:**

- **Crissa Hill, from Coordinating Principal of Indigenous Education and Equity at the Peel District School Board**
- **Pam Kaur, from Principal of Abraham Erb Public School**
- **Della Lataille-Herdsman, from Principal of Brisdale Public School at the Peel District School Board**

**to the positions of Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, effective July 1, 2021.**

-Carried-

D. Moved by C. Whetham, seconded by K. Meissner:

**That we rise and report in public session.**

-Carried-

*Note: This concludes the reporting of In Camera motions.*

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

Trustee C. Watson declared a conflict of interest during the previous in camera meeting.

**COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT GOOD NEWS UPDATE**

Interim Chief Communications Officer C. Newton shared some WRDSB news from the past few months including the Waterloo Education Foundation Inc. (WEFI) donation of \$30,000 to local organizations supporting student nutrition in Waterloo Region, and Deepa Ahluwaila's award for Black Brilliance work.

Trustee M. Ramsay joined the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

The presentation reviewed WRDSB events including the My Canada Project, Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Family Engagement Series and the Waterloo County Secondary School Athletic Association (WCSSAA) Virtual Fitness Series. C. Newton also referenced other work including the promotion of Kindergarten Registration, the WRDSB Student Census and the recognition of both National Indigenous History Month and Pride Month in June. Media highlights, top social media posts, COVID-19 case notifications and top website hits, for the period of March through May, were also shared.

**REPORTS**

**STUDENT SUSPENSION/EXPULSION REPORT, MARCH 2021**

This report was provided for information.

The report compared the year-to-date information for suspensions and expulsions for March 2020 and March 2021. This data was collected during a school year where students were engaged in learning in three modes: in-person, adaptive hybrid and distance learning.

**STUDENT SUSPENSION/EXPULSION REPORT, APRIL 2021**

This report was provided for information.

The report compared the year-to-date information for suspensions and expulsions for April 2020 and April 2021. This data was collected during a school year where students were engaged in learning in three modes: in-person, adaptive hybrid and distance learning.

**STUDENT AGGRESSION REPORT**

This report was provided for information.

The report included the total aggression incidents for February 1 to April 15, 2021, comparing it to February 1 to April 15, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, unplanned disruption continues (pivoting from In-Person to Remote and vice versa) impacting the continuity in delivery for students within our system. These impacts have resulted in a significant reduction to the student aggression numbers.

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC VERBAL UPDATE - SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM & SUMMER SUPPORTS**

This report was provided for information.

Superintendents E. Giannopoulos and R. DeBoer provided an update regarding our Elementary Summer Learning Program and supports for students and families over the summer, the grade 6 through 8 Summer Transition Support and our Secondary Summer School Programming.

Trustees asked questions of clarification regarding the long-term plans for summer support, identifying students in need of support, secondary students remaining for a fifth year of learning, returning to in-person learning and possible vaccine clinics on school sites. Staff agreed to provide trustees with information regarding the regularly scheduled vaccines for Grade 7 and 8 students.

**REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

**AD HOC SCHOOL NAMING REVIEW COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The committee has met several times since January 2021, spending considerable time reviewing, reflecting and revising the Terms of Reference (TOR), included as Appendix A of the report. The original time frame for completion of the work of the committee did not take into consideration that the application of anti-racism, anti-oppression and decolonizing principles demands time for research, personal reflection and consultation, and the impact of the pandemic on our student and staff committee members. The committee is requesting an extension to December 2021.

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve an extension to the timeline, allowing the committee to bring final recommendations including implementation plans to the Board of Trustees by December 2021; and**

**That the revised Terms of Reference be approved as presented at the May 31, 2021 Board Meeting.**

-Carried-

A Point of order was called by Trustee C. Millar as some trustees had their camera off during and their vote could not be seen. Chairperson J. Weston requested that Trustee M. Ramsay indicate his vote.

**OPSBA AGM DIRECTION FOR VOTING DELEGATE**

The report assisted trustees in providing direction for Chairperson J. Weston (or alternate) as voting delegate at the OPSBA AGM. As is the usual practice, OPSBA sent several items slated

for consideration at the OPSBA 2021 AGM, in order that they may be reviewed and discussed as necessary at the board table prior to the General Meeting in June. This review will help prepare the Voting Delegate for the AGM. This year's AGM is being held virtually on June 12, 2021.

All member boards were in favour of the executive council recommendations at the most recent OPSBA Board of Directors meeting.

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

**(1) That the the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (a) COVID Gap Funding; and**

**(2) That the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (b) Anti-Racism Research Funding; and**

**(3) That the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (c) Mandatory Black Heritage in Social Studies and History Curriculum; and**

**(4) That the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (d) Funding for Indigenous Trustee Positions in School Boards; and**

**(5) That the Waterloo Region District School Board empower the voting delegate to use her discretion when voting in the OPSBA Elections at the Annual General Meeting.**

-Carried-

Abstained: M. Ramsay

## **ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION (OPSBA) UPDATE**

Trustee L. Tremble referred to the OPSBA discussion paper: *Transitioning from the COVID 19 School Experience*. It was the Will of the Board to have the Agenda Development Committee facilitate a Trustee Seminar or Discussion on this paper.

## **THINKING OUT LOUD SURVEY**

This report was provided for information.

In February 2021, WRDSB Student Trustees launched "Thinking Out Loud" - a campaign that asked students in Grades 7-12 what they thought the Student Trustees should focus on. The report detailed the feedback received from students. ThoughtExchange was the tool used to gather feedback from students. Students were asked to answer the question: What are the most important things Student Trustees should focus on?

Student Trustees T. John-Jandles and R. McDonald reviewed the results of the survey. Three primary themes emerged: mental health and well-being, human rights and equity and learning. The presentation reviewed the actions currently being taken to address the concerns and proposed two recommendations for trustees.

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees write a letter to the ministry expressing our disapproval of the quadmester system and to designate this system as a last priority.**

-Carried-

6. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Meissner:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees write a letter to the ministry expressing our support of Toronto Youth Cabinet's call for free and accessible menstrual products in all Ontario school boards.**

-Carried-

## **STUDENT SENATE UPDATE**

Student Trustees R McDonald and T. John-Jandles provided trustees with an update from the most recent Student Senate meeting.

## **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS**

The Board received the following communications:

- Durham District School Board to Minister of Education
- Rainbow District School Board to Minister of Education and Premier of Ontario
- District School Board of Ontario North East to Minister of Education
- York Region District School Board to Minister of Education
- Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board to Minister of Education
- Hamilton-Wentworth DSB to Minister of Education - Permanent Online Learning Proposal
- Thames Valley District School Board to Minister of Education
- Waterloo Region District School Board to Minister of Education
- Hamilton-Wentworth DSB to Minister of Education - Special Education Supports
- Halton District School Board to Minister of Education

## **QUESTION PERIOD**

Trustee M. Ramsay asked if WRDSB has plans to teach Critical Race Theory. Director J. Bryant shared that discussions have occurred at the Human Rights And Equity Committee and that it is

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foundational to all curriculum. The WRDSB focus is to address equitable access to opportunities and outcomes for students who have been underserved. Superintendent P. Rubenschuh shared that work has occurred to understand the disparities in opportunities and outcomes for marginalized students. The Student Census will inform the strategies that are used. Human Rights and Equity Advisor D. Ahluwalia shared that the graduation rates, EQAO and Student Census data will be used to measure the outcomes.

Student Trustee T. John-Jandles asked about an error which occurred resulting in students graduating at the end of Quadmester three (3) being locked out of their WRDSB accounts. Superintendent G. Shantz informed trustees that this error was unintended and unexpected but has since been resolved.

Trustee C. Watson asked if schools and parents will be notified of the consultation for the proposed Supervised Consumption Site in Cambridge. Director J. Bryant previously made schools aware of the upcoming consultation. Staff will confirm the information for the consultation, share it with Manchester Public School and Galt Collegiate Institute and will provide an update at the June 14, 2021, Committee of the Whole meeting.

Trustee K. Woodcock asked if there were plans to expand the use of the Grade 11 Indigenous English course to all secondary schools. Superintendent R. DeBoer shared that there are no timelines but that there is a desire to expand in the future.

**ADJOURNMENT**

7. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by K. Smith:

**That the Board Meeting of May 31, 2021, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.