

**FEBRUARY 14, 2022**  
**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:

S. Piatkowski (Chairperson), J. Herring, K. Meissner, C. Millar, M. Ramsay, L. Tremble, C. Watson, J. Weston, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Trustee K. Smith was unable to attend.

Student Trustees K. Soror and N. Vishkin were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, E. Dougan-McKenzie, M. Gerard, C. Hill, P. Kaur, D. Lataille-Herdsman, B. Lemon, L. Read and G. Shantz.

Other staff in attendance: R. Lam and S. Reidel.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson S. Piatkowski called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by J. Weston:

**That the agenda of the February 14, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairperson S. Piatkowski shared regrets from Trustee K. Smith.

**DELEGATIONS**

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

The following delegations were scheduled to speak at this evening's meeting:

- Melissa Ireland and Christina Restoule - Letter from the Indigenous Education Advisory Circle (IEAC)
- Cait Glasson - Ad Hoc School Naming Committee Research Report
- Peter Woolstencroft - Ad Hoc School Naming Committee Research Report

Trustees requested a copy of the recommendations from the IEAC.

**STAFF FOLLOW UP**

**MAPLE SYRUP EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Superintendent D. Lataille-Herdsman acknowledged the passion and commitment of the Outdoor Education Specialists and noted that the program changes are a result of health and safety, cost and accessibility. She acknowledged that there is some disappointment with the decision but believes this is in the best interest of student learning and well-being. Outdoor Education Specialists will partner with and co-deliver the program with White Owl Native Ancestry Association. Collaboration is occurring to develop and shape the program.

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard responded to the costing questions raised. First, the observation window, which is intended to provide viewing from outside the facility as an entire class of students would not all be inside the facility at once. It would also provide seating for students under an awning. The second question was related to the cost of equipment. Equipment would need to be removed, the work completed and the equipment reinstalled and recertified. Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard noted that all capital items are costly but that the estimates provide a starting point. Facilities staff, using their expertise, develop an estimate, go to tender, then engage the appropriate staff for the detailed decision making.

Trustees asked questions regarding the suggested observation window and outdoor education staff involvement. Superintendent D. Lataille-Herdsman agreed to provide a follow up verbal report regarding the facility and programming once details had been finalized.

**POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1006 - PREVALENT MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

Coordinating Superintendent G. Shantz noted he received new information and asked that trustees consider referring the policy back to staff so that the additional information can be considered.

2. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by J. Weston:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board Refer Board Policy 1006 - Prevalent Medical Conditions back to staff to consider additional information received.**

-Carried-

**REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 6003 - SCHOLARSHIPS, BURSARIES AND AWARDS**

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 6003 - Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards as presented at the February 14, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting.**

-Carried-

**REPORTS**

**TRANSPORTATION CONSORTIUM UPDATE**

This report was provided for information.

Benoit Bourgault, General Manager of Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region Inc. (STSWR), shared the 2020-2021 Annual Report with the Board of Trustees. He reviewed performance measurements, a summary of appeals, a 2020-2021 overview, a 2021-2022 outlook and a financial overview.

Trustees asked questions regarding pedestrian training, active transportation, the walking school bus program, special needs transportation and speed cameras in school zones.

**PORTABLE HIGH EFFICIENCY PARTICULATE AIR (HEPA) FILTERS**

This report was provided for information.

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard shared that this report is in response to a motion moved by the Board in January to investigate the feasibility, effectiveness and cost of placing HEPA filters in every classroom and reiterated that HEPA filters are one of many components of ventilation in schools. Highlights of the report include cost considerations, effectiveness and funding sources.

Facility Services, in collaboration with Health and Safety, has developed a process for the deployment of additional HEPA units. School principals, working with Facility Services, can submit a request and accompanying rationale through the WRDSB's work order system. Families are encouraged to bring forward concerns to their school administrators.

Trustees asked questions regarding the Ministry of Education expectations and related funding. Questions were also asked regarding Corsi-Rosenthal boxes and noise from the HEPA filters. Trustees noted that this information was helpful and something to consider when it comes time to make budgetary decisions for next year.

## **FISCAL TASK FORCE UPDATE**

The Fiscal Task Force has worked over the past several years to meet the mandate articulated in the terms of reference approved by the Board of Trustees. The structural deficit which served as the genesis for the Fiscal Task Force has long since been addressed. Further, the WRDSB is able to obtain a significant amount of feedback from stakeholders through other mechanisms (e.g., surveys, focus groups) associated with WRDSB's multi-year strategic plan. These mechanisms provide Trustees and staff with understanding of the value of the WRDSB's programs and services and formed the basis for prioritizing the WRDSB's funding allocation. These mechanisms will continue to be the primary means of obtaining stakeholder feedback.

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

**That the Long Term Fiscal Sustainability and Stability Task Force be disbanded as the work of the committee, per the terms of reference, has been completed.**

-Carried-

Opposed: M. Ramsay

## **SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR 2022-2023**

Superintendent P. Kaur shared that in preparation of the 2022-2023 School Year Calendars, a consultation process was established with representatives from stakeholder groups within the Waterloo Region District School Board, which included employee federations, associations and administrators. 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, the committee's goal was to ensure that the calendar is aligned as closely as possible with the calendar proposed by the WCDSB.

Trustees asked questions regarding the committee membership, secondary mid-term assessment days, costs related to misaligned Professional Development (PD) days and Days of Significance. It was noted that the committee was able to accommodate the municipal election as a PD day.

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the 2022-2023 School Year Calendars containing 194 school days, as outlined in Appendices A and B of the Report titled "School Year Calendars – 2022-2023".**

-Carried-

**NEW SCHOOL NAMING - SOUTHWEST KITCHENER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Superintendent J. Albrecht shared that the New School Naming Ad Hoc Committee (the Committee) reviewed the suggestions received from the public and developed a short-list of three names:

- Silver Maple Public School
- Oak Creek Public School
- Eastern Meadowlark Public School

The Committee is recommending Oak Creek Public School. A full list of suggested names were included in the report.

Trustees asked questions regarding the consultation process and short-listed names. Trustees thanked the community for their engagement and suggestions.

6. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by L. Tremble:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the ad hoc school naming committee recommendation that trustees approve the name, Oak Creek Public School, from the following shortlisted names for the new Southwest Kitchener Elementary School:**

- **Silver Maple Public School**
- **Oak Creek Public School**
- **Eastern Meadowlark Public School**

-Carried-

**MOTION: AD HOC SCHOOL NAMING COMMITTEE RESEARCH REPORT**

Trustee C. Watson spoke to her motion and noted that she has received questions from the public. She referred to both WRDSB Board Bylaws and policies and suggested that trustees need to work together to find balanced decisions.

Trustees discussed the motion. Trustees who were members of the Ad Hoc School Naming Review Committee (the Committee) shared the intent of the research report as a tool for the Committee and that the Committee completed the mandate as set out in the Terms of Reference, which was previously approved by the Board. The Committee members expressed concern that the pieces of the report would be used out of context in media and social media and used to convey misinformation. There were also concerns that this would result in the harassment of committee members. Some trustees expressed concern that they were unable to answer public questions regarding the decisions made. Trustee M. Ramsay indicated that he has seen the Board of Trustees direct staff to disregard the law.

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

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 14, 2022, be extended an additional thirty minutes.**

-Carried-

A number of trustees expressed concerns and disagreement regarding the comment made regarding directing staff to break the law and requested that the statement be retracted. Discussion continued regarding the release of the report and the impact on community volunteers, the content of the report, updates provided to the Board throughout the Committee's work and sending concerns and questions to staff for responses.

Chairperson S. Piatkowski asked Trustee M. Ramsay to refrain from allegations of law-breaking and that should he be aware of any laws being broken that he provide the authorities with such evidence. Trustee M. Ramsay stated that the Chairperson cannot tell him not to respond to Trustees calling him a liar. He proceeded to speak to a decision which occurred in September 2021 to exceed ministry directives for staff vaccination mandates.

Chairperson S. Piatkowski noted that the previous comment made by Trustee M. Ramsay was false and provided clarification. Trustee M. Ramsay proceeded to indicate that staff were directed to break the Ontario Health and Safety Act.

Chairperson S. Piatkowski asked that any further comments be regarding the motion. Trustee M. Ramsay indicated that he was invited to provide this information. Chairperson S. Piatkowski clarified that he was invited to retract his comments.

Trustee K. Woodcock called a Point of Order requesting that Trustee M. Ramsay turn his discussion back to the motion. Chairperson S. Piatkowski agreed and noted that he was trying to return the conversation back to the motion. Chairperson S. Piatkowski told Trustee M. Ramsay that he could continue but only if speaking to the motion.

Discussion on the motion continued.

8. Moved by J. Herring:

**That the Board call the previous question.**

-Carried-

Opposed:  
C. Watson

Abstained:  
\*K. Soror

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\* Student Trustees votes are recorded for the purpose of public record and for accountability to the student body; however, it is recognized that “a student trustee is not a member of the Board” (Education Act, Section 55 (2))

Trustees requested a recorded vote.

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

**That the research report that was presented to the Ad Hoc School Naming Committee be released to the Waterloo Region District School Board Trustees and the general public immediately.**

-Defeated-

In Favour:

M. Ramsay  
C. Watson  
C. Whetham  
\*K. Soror

Opposed:

J. Herring  
K. Meissner  
C. Millar  
S. Piatkowski  
L. Tremble  
J. Weston  
K. Woodcock  
\*N. Vishkin

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**STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS**

**POLICY WORKING GROUP - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Trustee L. Tremble shared that the Policy Working Group (PWG) found the date and time indicated in the Terms of Reference is challenging with other committees and obligations for trustees. This change would allow the PWG more flexibility for their monthly meetings.

10. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by J. Weston:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees approved the following amendments to the Policy Working Group Terms of Reference:**

**The amendment of section 6.1 to read:**

***Policy Working Group Meetings will occur monthly from September to June, on a***

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*date that is mutually agreeable for the working group members. Meetings will be held virtually while COVID-19 restrictions are still in place.*

-Carried-

Abstained: M. Ramsay

**QUESTION PERIOD**

Trustee M. Ramsay asked a question regarding employees and legal counsel. When asked for clarification, he began to read a statement from an employee. Chairperson S. Piatkowski stated that this question should be asked in camera and that he was invited to ask the question at the next In Camera meeting. Trustee M. Ramsay continued to speak on the matter.

Trustee J. Herring called a Point of Order on Trustee M. Ramsay indicating that he is well aware of the situation to which he is speaking and that it is extremely offensive. Chairperson S. Piatkowski ruled that the question being asked was an in camera question.

Trustee M. Ramsay continued to speak and Chairperson S. Piatkowski ruled him Out of Order.

Trustee C. Millar asked if extracurriculars would resume and what that would look like. Superintendent B. Lemon shared that staff are working through the Ministry of Education memo which provides guidance for secondary and senior elementary schools. Staff are hoping to have messaging ready this week but start dates for activities will be dictated by the availability of staff volunteers.

Trustee C. Watson asked for information on Valentine's Day guidance. Director j. chanicka shared that the guidance is the same as the last several years. Superintendent C. Hill shared the guidance provided to school administrators was to reflect on their school communities and make sure all families feel included. Administrators were also asked to consider the pandemic health and safety precautions regarding hand hygiene and not sharing food items. Schools were asked to focus on love, caring and gratitude for others.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 14, 2022, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.