

**MARCH 11, 2022
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Special Board 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 this evening's meeting.

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), E. Dougan-McKenzie, M. Gerard, 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 7:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the March 11, 2022, Special Board Meeting 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 K. Woodcock, seconded by J. Herring:

That the agenda of the March 11, 2022, Special In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera.

-Carried-

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

That the Board of Trustees direct the Chairperson to make a statement at the March 11, 2022, Special Board Meeting outlining the legal advice received at the March 11, 2022 Special In Camera Board Meeting to comply with Ministry of Education directives regarding masks.

-Carried-

C. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by J. Weston:

That we rise and report in public session.

-Carried-

Note: This concludes the reporting of In Camera motions.

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

REPORTS

RESPONSE TO MARCH 9, 2022, ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Chairperson S. Piatkowski shared that the Board of Trustees (the Board) received legal advice to come into compliance with the Ministry of Education (Ministry) directive to no longer require masks in schools, despite any misgivings the Board may have.

Trustees discussed the motion to rescind the August 17, 2020 Trustee Motion to Require Masks. Many trustees shared continued support for the wearing of masks in schools but acknowledged the obligation to follow Ministry directives. Other trustees stated support for the motion and allowing individuals to make the choice to wear a mask or not.

2. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by M. Ramsay:

That the Board of Trustees rescind the August 17, 2020 Trustee Motion to Require Masks, effective March 21, 2022, in accordance with the March 9, 2022 Ministry of Education memorandum to school boards (Appendix A).

-Carried-

In Favour:

M. Ramsay
C. Watson
C. Whetham
K. Woodcock

Opposed:

C. Millar
K. Soror*
N. Vishkin*

Abstained:

J. Herring
K. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
L. Tremble
J. Weston

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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))

Trustee J. Herring moved a motion to write a letter to the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), Dr. Kieran Moore, and the Minister of Education, Mr. Stephen Lecce. Trustees discussed the motion.

Trustee J. Herring requested a recorded vote.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board Trustees direct the Chairperson to write an open letter to the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), Dr. Kieran Moore, and the Minister of Education, Mr. Stephen Lecce:

That a request be made for additional transition time to the removal of the mask mandate in schools for the two (2) weeks following the March Break which would also allow time for school-aged children from 5-11 to increase vaccination rates; and

That the Chief Medical Officer of Health provide additional direction regarding masking to protect students and staff who are immunocompromised or with complex medical needs, including children in congregate settings and students who are under 5 who are unable to be vaccinated; and

That a reply to these requests be received by March 16, 2022.

-Carried-

In Favour:

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

Opposed:

M. Ramsay
C. Watson

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Trustees asked additional questions regarding the impact of the March 9, 2022, Ministry announcement including questions about staff absences and short-term virtual learning for families who may be uncomfortable returning to the classroom.

Trustee K. Woodcock left the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Trustees continued to ask questions regarding classroom and school bus health and safety. Trustees were asked to forward any specific parent concerns they receive to staff, so that staff can address.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Special Board Meeting of March 11, 2022, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.