

APRIL 11, 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, M. Ramsay, K. Smith, L. Tremble, C. Watson, J. Weston, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Trustee C. Millar was unable to attend.

Student Trustee N. Vishkin was in attendance and Student Trustee K. Soror was not in attendance.

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

Other staff in attendance: L. Agar, R. Lam and S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson S. Piatkowski called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Trustee M. Ramsay called a Point of Order during the vote to add the Public Health Evidence Brief to the agenda asking if any motions would be resulting from this addition. Chairperson S. Piatkowski shared that if the item is added, motions could be discussed at that time.

1. Moved by J. Herring:

That Ministry of Education Public Health Evidence Brief be added to the agenda of the April 11, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting for discussion.

-Defeated-

Opposed:
M. Ramsay
K. Smith

Abstained:
C. Whetham

Trustee C. Watson joined the meeting.

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

That the agenda of the April 11, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

Opposed: J. Herring

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson S. Piatkowski shared regrets from Trustee C. Millar.

Trustees K Meissner, L. Tremble and J. Weston all had opportunities to observe de-streamed math classes.

Trustees K. Meissner, K. Smith and J. Weston attended Parent Involvement Committee Parent Engagement Series sessions.

Trustee L. Tremble reminded trustees that registration has opened for the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Annual General Meeting. It will take place June 9-11, 2022, in Ottawa.

Chairperson S. Piatkowski and Vice-Chair K. Woodcock attended OPSBA's Central West Regional meeting.

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 3008 - USE OF BOARD RESOURCES DURING THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Trustees discussed the policy's direction for social media. Director j. chanicka agreed to provide a follow up response regarding incumbent trustees use of the word "Trustee" in their twitter handles.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 3008 - Use of Board Resources During the Election Campaign as presented at the April 11, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 3003 - TRUSTEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Trustees discussed the professional development budget. Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard agreed to provide follow up information on the budget including any caps on expenses.

4. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by K. Meissner:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 3003 - Trustee Professional Development as presented at the April 11, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 4009 - STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Trustees discussed active transportation, language based on related legislation and noted some housekeeping changes including a correction to 1.2.1 and consistent language in 2.1.1. and 2.1.2.

5. Moved by K. Meissner, seconded by J. Weston:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 4009 - Student Transportation as presented at the April 11, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting with housekeeping updates to ensure consistent language in Section 2.

-Carried-

REPORTS

ANNUAL FRENCH IMMERSION ENROLMENT STATUS UPDATE

This report was provided for information.

For the 2021-2022 school year, 42 elementary schools are offering a French Immersion program. All schools currently offering French Immersion will continue in 2022-2023, and no other schools will add French Immersion programs.

Trustees asked questions regarding the enrolment process, the waitlist and future exit surveys.

CO2 SENSOR FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT

This report was provided for information.

This report was provided as a result of a trustee motion approved at the March 21, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting. The report includes information on current mechanical

ventilation, a suggested methodology, financial impact and information on carbon dioxide and COVID-19.

Trustees discussed the motion and asked questions regarding currently available monitoring systems, funding options, the estimated costs, and the purpose of this monitoring. It was acknowledged that moving forward with the project would displace other facility projects.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board Trustees direct staff to proceed with the CO2 monitoring pilot project, as laid out in the motion as presented at the March 21, 2022, Committee of the Whole meeting, scheduled to begin when the building automation system (BAS) returns to pre-COVID levels and to run for a minimum of 3 months, with a report brought to Trustees within two months of the pilot concluding.

-Carried-

Opposed: M. Ramsay

OPSBA POLICY RESOLUTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

In preparation for the upcoming Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Annual General Meeting (AGM), trustees must approve policy resolutions or constitutional amendments and submit them prior to April 13, 2022.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve and support the following Policy Resolution submission to OPSBA regarding Indigenous course requirements for graduation; and

That OPSBA call on the Government of Ontario to announce an Indigenous course requirement for graduation, modelled after the one announced in the Province of British Columbia; and

That OPSBA request that this requirement be implemented so that it is in place for students entering secondary school for the 2024/25 school year.

-Carried-

MOTION: ELEMENTARY LIBRARIES

This Notice of Motion was served by Trustee C. Watson at the January 31, 2022, Board meeting with support from Trustee M. Ramsay.

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Trustee C. Watson spoke to her motion. She read from the Education Act, Board policies and the OPSBA Good Governance Guide referencing the duties of Trustees. She further explained the concerns she heard from parents regarding the content of libraries.

Trustees discussed the motion including the use of the language “age appropriateness”, the purpose of libraries beyond curriculum, processes in place for parental concerns, staff expertise, and harm.

Trustee C. Watson requested a recorded vote.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board direct staff to present a detailed written report to the board of trustees by the end of March 2022, concerning the age discrepancy between the Ministry of Education Curriculum guidelines, Human Development and Sexual Health, and the library resources that would further support K-6 students in WRDSB school libraries and strategies that would ensure that we are in compliance with Ministry curriculum guideline expectations.

-Defeated-

In Favour:

M. Ramsay
C. Watson
C. Whetham

Opposed:

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

Abstained:

K. Smith

* 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)).

MOTION: LETTER REGARDING SUSPENSION / EXPULSION REPORTS

This Notice of Motion was served by Trustee C. Watson at the February 28, 2022, Board meeting with support from Trustee M. Ramsay. Trustee C. Watson spoke to her motion and shared that the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) supported this motion.

Trustees discussed the motion and asked questions of staff. Staff indicated that they did not have privacy concerns as this information is reported in general exceptionalities such as “Behaviour”. Trustees discussed the difference between the trustee requested monthly reports and the annual

reporting which is a result of provincial direction. When asked about adding additional identifying data to the request, Chairperson S. Piatkowski indicated that it would be better suited for a future motion. Trustee discussed letters from other school boards and the content of the letter.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that the Suspension/Expulsion Annual Reports and monthly Suspension/Expulsion Reports be amended to include an in-depth analysis of students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled; and

That this analysis also include the different types of exceptionalities and the number of students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled; and

That this letter will be shared with other SEACs in the province of Ontario and OPSOA.

-Carried-

RESPONSE TO INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ADVISORY CIRCLE (IEAC) RECOMMENDATIONS

Chairperson S. Piatkowski referred to the letter received by delegation from the IEAC. He opened the floor to trustees to make any recommendations.

A number of trustees expressed apologies for the harm caused from discussions at the board table and expressed an interest in further training and education for all trustees. Trustees discussed a motion to action a number of the delegation's recommendations.

10. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by K. Meissner:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board Trustees refer recommendations one (ICCT training) and five (Indigenous trustee position) of the letter from the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) to the Agenda Development Committee to schedule the training and to schedule a discussion on an Indigenous trustee position at the WRDSB; and

That recommendations three (a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action) and four (mission statement based on TRC's Calls to Action) are referred to the strategic planning committee for their consideration; and

That a response is provided to the IEAC outlining the actions taken.

-Carried-

RESPONSE TO BLACK PARENT COUNCIL KW

Chairperson S. Piatkowski acknowledged the open letter received from the Black Parent Council of KW and shared that it is not in the power of the Board to remove a trustee nor do they have any authority related to the action of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB). He opened the floor to trustees to make any recommendations.

Trustee K. Smith provided information on her motion to meet with the WCDSB. Chairperson S. Piatkowski asked her to withdraw a comment where she indicated that a local Black-Caribbean group dissolved as a result of the Black Lives Matters group. She acknowledged the Chair's request.

11. Moved by K. Smith, seconded by M. Ramsay:

That the Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Director of Education arrange a meeting with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board to discuss the concerns expressed in the letter.

-Defeated-

Opposed:
J. Herring
K. Meisser
L. Tremble
J. Weston
K. Woodcock
*N. Vishkin

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Trustees continued discussion regarding the draft anti-racism policy and discussed a motion to refer the letter's recommendations to staff.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer recommendations 1 to 11 from the letter from the Black Parent Council KW to staff to provide a report and recommendations as appropriate; and

That the report be referred to the Agenda Development Committee and return to the board table in a timely fashion.

-Carried-

Opposed: M. Ramsay

13. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by M. Ramsay:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board extend the Committee of the Whole meeting by an additional thirty minutes.

-Carried-

Trustees continued discussion on the letter including statements by both trustees who were named in the letter.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee Watson asked for the names of schools located closest to the Kitchener and Guelph Consumption and Treatment Sites. Associate Director L. Read indicated that staff can provide this information as a staff follow up. When asked about the proposed Cambridge CTS being the closest site to a school in the country, the Chairperson noted that staff would not be able to find this information.

Trustee J. Herring asked about reported school absence rates and steps taken for those over 30%. Superintendent B. Lemon shared that when schools are 30% over their baseline absenteeism rate, staff connect with local Public Health for direction as they can access further local community data. When asked why not all schools are listed on the dashboard it was noted that due to absenteeism and other factors, not all reports are being submitted by the deadline for inclusion on the dashboard. Staff are working to support schools in meeting these daily deadlines.

Trustee M. Ramsay asked if parents can remove themselves from the School Day notifications. Coordinating Superintendent G. Shantz requested families reach out to the school principal to discuss communications.

Trustee M. Ramsay asked about the efficacy of testing and how it conflicts with statements made by Dr. Moore. Superintendent B. Lemon shared that staff continue to complete required testing and that questions about efficacy should be directed to medical professionals.

ADJOURNMENT

14. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by K. Woodcock:

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of April 11, 2022, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.