

JUNE 20, 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, K. Smith, L. Tremble, C. Watson, J. Weston, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Trustee M. Ramsay 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, E. Dougan-McKenzie, M. Gerard, C. Hill, D. Lataille-Herdsman, S. Miller, L. Read and G. Shantz.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson S. Piatkowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chairperson S. Piatkowski provided a statement of clarification regarding Trustee M. Ramsay's breach of the Trustee Code of Conduct and the related sanctions.

Trustee C. Watson called a point of order wanting to ask a question based on the statement. The Chairperson ruled against her point of order indicating that it was not the time for questions.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the June 20, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved with updates to the delegation list.

-Carried-

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee J. Weston attended the Huron Height Secondary School production of Hamlet which was held outdoors.

DELEGATIONS

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Pam Mounsey, Amanda Bripaul & Natalie Robinson - Critical Race Theory Motion
- Kamil Ahmed - Critical Race Theory Motion
- TK Pritchard - Critical Race Theory Motion
- Aashay Dalvi - Critical Race Theory Motion
- Grayson Bass - Critical Race Theory Motion
- Barb Cardow, Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region - Critical Race Theory Motion

Student Trustee N. Vishkin joined the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 6010 - STUDENT DRESS

Superintendent C. Hill shared that the policy revisions are as a result of a ThoughtExchange survey administered by the Student Trustees last year which revealed that rules and enforcement vary between schools. Staff, students and advisory committees engaged in further consultation and an implementation plan has been developed.

Trustees asked questions of clarification regarding the use of word safety, the inequitable enforcement of dress codes, clarification of section 4.1.1 and consultation with school councils. Staff were thanked for the consultative efforts and focus on students. A language clarification was agreed to be a friendly amendment in section 7.5.1.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 6010 - Student Dress as presented at the June 20, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting with additional language in Section 7.5.1., so that it reads:

“Treats the violation, other than those listed in 7.4, as minor on the continuum of school rule violations.”

-Carried-

Opposed: C. Watson

REPORTS

ELEMENTARY FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

The French Immersion Review Committee (the Committee) is currently in Phase 3 of its review. The Committee has representation from Trustees, the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC),

parents of students in French Immersion (FI), parents of students in Core French programs, French Immersion students, Core French students, school administrators and appropriate central staff. The Committee has completed the tasks outlined in Phase 3 of the review and have prepared a report with several recommendations and their financial implications.

3. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by K. Smith:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board suspend Bylaw 9.12, allowing trustees to speak without limit on the topic at hand.

-Carried with a two-thirds majority-

Trustees discussed and asked questions regarding equity of access, retention of students, building educator capacity and changes to the entry grade for the French Immersion program. Trustees acknowledged the limitations affecting the recommendations including financial restrictions and a current freeze on pupil accommodation reviews. Staff assured trustees that the work will continue after the implementation of the recommendations. Questions continued regarding the budget, special education resources, attracting and retaining French teachers, the process for starting new French Immersion classes, ensuring interactions between French Immersion and Core French students, the increase to grade one Core French and communication. Trustees also acknowledge that while the recommendations are not perfect, it is a good starting point. The committee was thanked for their work.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the recommendations contained in the report from the French Immersion Review Committee dated June 17, 2022 specifically to:

- **Adopt the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles for French as a Second Language programming at the WRDSB**
- **Develop an action plan to bring the French Immersion program into alignment with the Vision, Goals and Guiding Principles**
- **Transition to a Grade 2 entry point for French Immersion and increase the daily French instruction time from 8% to 16% in Grade 1 Core French. Starting in September 2023, Grade 1 Core French will be increased to 16% from 8%. In January 2024, Grade 1 students may apply to the Grade 2 French Immersion program which will start September 2024**

-Carried-

Trustees discussed a follow up report and it was decided that an initial report would be requested pertaining to staff capacity building, readiness for implementation and changes made but that staff would not be in a position to report on outcomes until after the program is implemented.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board request staff bring a report to trustees showing the results of the evaluation of the criteria listed in section 8.3 of the French as a Second Language programming review report and any outcomes related to equity; and

That this initial report be presented to trustees in the Spring of 2024.

-Carried-

6. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board extend the Committee of the Whole meeting an additional thirty minutes to 10:00 p.m.

-Carried-

MOTION: CRITICAL RACE THEORY (CRT) & WHITE PRIVILEGE

This Notice of Motion was served at the May 30, 2022, Board meeting by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee M. Ramsay. Trustee C. Watson asked that the motion paragraphs be voted on separately and requested a recorded vote. Trustee C. Watson provided initial remarks regarding her motion.

As a response to a trustee question, Associate Director L. Read confirmed that the framework of Critical Race Theory is only taught as one of many frameworks mentioned as part of the curriculum in two secondary classes and that all Ontario curriculum provides consideration for programming that includes equity and inclusion to ensure all students experience a sense of caring, belonging and safety.

Trustees discussed the motion and thanked the delegations who spoke both at tonight's meeting and at the meeting on June 20, 2022.

In response to a trustee question, Director j. chanicka expressed the negative impacts on staff, students, families/caregivers and the community resulting from this motion being brought forward.

It was noted that the second paragraph of the motion cannot be voted on separately from the first paragraph.

At the June 27, 2022, Board Meeting, Trustee C. Watson requested that the Critical Race Theory and White Privilege motions be voted on again and that it be a recorded vote. All motions were defeated.

7. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Smith:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board request that staff prepare a report and a presentation that explains the working definition of CRT and “White Privilege” as they relate to the development of “anti-racist” lesson plans, as well as the grade levels that the plans are introduced; and

That this report and presentation be presented back to the board no later than the end of September 2022.

-Defeated-

In Favour

K. Smith
C. Watson
C. Whetham

Opposed

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

* 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))

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board extend the Committee of the Whole meeting an additional thirty minutes to 10:30 p.m.

-Carried with two-thirds majority-

9. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Smith:

That staff also provide recommendations that will help support children if they internalize guilt and shame and solutions that will help prevent a possible stigma and or bias that could affect the school climate.

-Defeated-

In Favour

K. Smith

Opposed

J. Herring

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C. Watson
C. Whetham

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

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10. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Smith:

That parents be provided supplemental material on the theory of “White Privilege” before their students are taught White Privilege.

-Defeated-

In Favour
K. Smith
C. Watson
C. Whetham

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

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11. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Smith:

That a letter be written to the Minister of Education about parental concerns regarding CRT and or the theory of “White Privilege” that are being taught to their children.

-Defeated-

In Favour
K. Smith
C. Watson
C. Whetham

Opposed
J. Herring
K. Meissner
C. Millar

S. Piatkowski
L. Tremble
J. Weston
K. Woodcock
*K. Soror
*N. Vishkin

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STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS

POLICY WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

In the development of a Policy Review & Development Process, the Policy Working Group (PWG) has determined changes are required to Governance Policy G300 - Policy Development and Reviews. Changes to the policy include updates to reference the new Policy Review Process and changing the review cycle to four years to provide time for public consultation. The new Policy Review Process prioritizes consultation.

An amendment was moved regarding section 4.1.4 and the role of the Policy Working Group in determining the amount of consultation to occur on a policy review. Discussion occurred on this proposed amendment. It was noted that the Board of Trustees continues to have final approval over policies, and that all trustees can make suggestions both at Committee of the Whole meetings and by attending a PWG meeting. Some trustees felt this was not sufficient.

Trustee C. Millar called a Point of Order on Trustee K. Smith for stating that a block of trustees are making decisions together and wanting to make sure there is diversity on the Policy Working Group. Trustee C. Millar noted a disagreement with the comment made as being disrespectful and not germane to the conversation about consulting. Chairperson S. Paitkowski asked that Trustee K. Smith continue. Trustee K. Smith clarified that she is just looking for a diversity of opinions on the PWG. It was noted that committee members can only be chosen from those who volunteer for the committee.

12. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Smith:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees amend the proposed Governance Policy G300 - Policy Development and Reviews to keep the previous version of Section 4.1.4 which reads:

“In developing a policy or an amendment to an existing policy, the Board of Trustees will define the level of public consultation to be undertaken consistent with the Board’s Consultation Policy.”

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-Defeated-

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

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees approve the amendments to Governance Policy G300 - Policy Development and Reviews as per the Policy Working Group recommendation presented at the June 20, 2022, Committee of the Whole meeting.

-Carried-

Opposed:
K. Smith
C. Watson
C. Whetham

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

At the May 17, 2022, Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) meeting, members presented their responses to questions posed to improve parent engagement at the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB).

It was noted that the operational-related recommendations would still inform the strategic direction, possibly through operational goals. Trustees thanked PIC for their efforts and responses to the questions related to parent engagement.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer the feedback from the Parent Involvement Committee to staff for consideration in the Strategic Planning Process.

-Carried-

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 20, 2022, be adjourned.

-Carried-

Opposed: C. Watson
Abstained: S. Piatkowski

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 p.m.