

OCTOBER 17, 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, L. Tremble, C. Watson, J. Weston, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Trustees C. Millar and K. Smith were unable to attend.

Student Trustees V. Raina and K. Soror were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), J. Albrecht, E. Dougan-McKenzie, M. Gerard, C. Hill, B. Lemon, S. Miller, A. Russell and G. Shantz.

Other staff in attendance: L. Agar, I. Bijl, B. Chatha, R. Lam, L. O'Donoghue and S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the October 17, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Trustee C. Watson declared pecuniary interest at the previous in camera meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Chairperson S. Piatkowski announced that Trustee K. Smith has resigned effective immediately. As per Section 224 of the Education Act, the position will not be filled as this vacancy has occurred within one month of the election.

Trustees said a few words about Trustee K. Smith and her years of service and some trustees indicated that they would be opposing the motion for symbolic reasons.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board accept Trustees K. Smith's resignation and declare the seat vacant for the balance of the term.

-Carried-

Opposed:
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee K. Woodcock provided greetings from the Board at the Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School graduation.

Trustee M. Ramsay provided greetings from the Board at the Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute and Eastwood Collegiate Institute graduations. Trustee L. Tremble was also at the Cameron Heights ceremony.

Trustee J. Weston is looking forward to providing greetings from the Board this week at the Huron Heights Secondary School graduation.

Trustee C. Watson provided greetings from the Board at the Southwood Secondary School graduation.

Trustee J. Herring provided greetings from the Board at the Galt Collegiate Institute graduation. Trustee J. Herring is looking forward to also providing greetings from the Board this week at the Glenview Park Secondary School graduation.

Trustee C. Whetham provided greetings from the Board at the Preston High School graduation.

Trustee L. Tremble provided greetings from the Board at the Forest Heights Collegiate Institute graduation.

STAFF FOLLOW UP

TRUSTEE REFERRAL TO STAFF - ADVOCATING FOR CAPITAL FUNDING

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard shared the letter drafted by staff at the request of trustees.

Trustees asked questions regarding the capital backlog of \$445,479,038 which is consistent with other school boards across the province.

It was noted that the reference to OPSBA should be changed to OPSBA Member Board Chairs.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board send the draft letter to the Minister of Education in solidarity with the Thames Valley District School Board's letter dated August 25, 2022.

-Carried-

SUSPENSION REPORT FOLLOW UP RESPONSE

Superintendent B. Lemon provided trustees with a presentation reviewing the suspension trend by year, explanation for the current trend related to educational and social-psychological effects of the pandemic for students, and the limited professional learning opportunities due to staff shortages during the pandemic. He provided information on continued professional learning opportunities and an update on the Keeping Students in Schools Ministry pilot program.

Trustees asked questions about the Keeping Students in Schools Ministry pilot program, the use of student census data and the most common reasons for discipline.

REPORTS

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND FACILITY PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, REPORT AND ANNUAL MEETING

This report was provided for information.

To satisfy the requirements of Board Policy 1011 – Community Planning and Facility Partnerships, this report presents the annual identification of school buildings and sites suitable and available for community partnership and future capital projects with potential co-building partnership opportunities. For this annual public meeting, proposed new schools and additions identified in the 2020-2030 Long-term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) are the prime candidates for partnership opportunities. Appendix A provides a detailed list of the WRDSB's short- and medium-term needs for additional capacity.

A notice of intention to hold this public meeting was posted on the WRDSB's website. Additional information regarding the WRDSB's facility partnership opportunities has been posted on the Partnerships section of the website and is also detailed within the LTAP. In addition, eligible partners on the notification list identified in Administrative Procedure 4990 – Community Planning and Facility Partnerships have been notified of the potential partnership opportunities outlined in this report and of this public meeting. Community partners are invited to inform the WRDSB of their proposals or plans to build new facilities.

Trustees asked questions about the capital funding submission process.

ACCOMMODATION PLANNING 2022-2023

This report was provided for information.

The report outlines the main areas of focus for accommodation planning for the 2022-2023 school year, including:

- Boundary Reviews - Technical Background Report Preparation
- Cambridge Joint Use Campus - 655 Wesley Boulevard, Cambridge
- Development Areas
- French as a Second Language Program Review - Implementation
- School Eligibility Tool and Interactive Online Maps

Other areas of focus include agreements, enrolment projections and monitoring, temporary accommodation and school travel planning.

Trustees asked questions about West Waterloo and COVID-19's impact on enrolment.

IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Waterloo Region District School Board operates Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRC). These committees are organized within schools, areas of schools, and the district. According to Regulation 181/98 of the Education Act, "Each board shall establish one or more committees for the identification and placement of exceptional pupils, determine the jurisdiction of each committee and establish the manner of selecting the chair of each committee."

When asked about destreaming supports, Superintendent J. Albrecht noted that destreaming supports are put in place without going through the IPRC process.

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

That the jurisdiction of each of these committees as outlined below and the attached Appendix A outlining WRDSB IPRC Committees, is approved:

A) School Committees: A school IPRC is held when a program modification to accommodate an exceptional student with Special Education Needs can be accomplished within the home school environment.

B) Area Committees: An area IPRC is held when program modifications to accommodate an exceptional student with Special Education Needs is necessary for them to access a designated program within their current school environment or if a change in schools is required for the student to access the designated program.

C) District Committees: A district IPRC is held when program modifications to accommodate an exceptional student with Special Education Needs requires placement in

cross-district Special Education Programs (i.e., Provincial School). This occurs when school and district resources have been exhausted or when specialized equipment that is not available in a school setting is being considered.

-Carried-

RIGHT TO READ - WRDSB RESPONSE

This presentation was provided for information.

B. Chatha, System Administrator for Elementary Education, began the presentation noting work of teaching and learning consultants and special education consultants.

I. Bijl, Consultant - Learning Support Services, reviewed the WRDSB North Star. She shared that last spring the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) released a report that outlines the issues in Ontario education surrounding reading instruction, including the systems and structures we use to teach students. It identified current practices as problematic and made many recommendations to the Ministry of Education and to school boards to change these practices. She reviewed evidence from cognitive science and education research and local literacy data. She referenced the Conditions for Learning and how aligning with the recommendations from the OHRC will help to create the equitable conditions for learning, and optimal outcomes in reading, for each and every student within the WRDSB.

L. O'Donoghue, Consultant - Learning Support Services, reviewed the background of the Right to Read Report and reviewed the multi-year plan to support the work of reaching each and every student in reading instruction. She shared that the WRDSB is moving to a focus on scientifically-based reading instruction.

B. Chatha, System Administrator for Elementary Education, reviewed the system supports in place for schools and educators. She shared that the Structured Literacy Steering Committee will provide oversight, leadership and guidance to the Structured Literacy Multi-Year Plan.

The presentation concluded with a quote from Kareem Weaver, an advocate for improving literacy outcomes for racialized students and students with dyslexia.

When asked, staff confirmed that the WRDSB is aligned with both the OHRC and Ministry of Education requirements. Trustees also asked questions regarding the early screening process, students below the provincial standards in Grade 3 reading and the change in reading instruction. The WRDSB will be reporting to the Ministry through the Board Improvement and Equity Plan which will be shared with Trustees. It was noted that there will always be students with complex needs who will be reading below the provincial standard.

STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS

OPSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

This report was provided for information.

Trustee L. Tremble provided trustees with an update from the first Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Board of Directors meeting of the year. The report shared highlights from the meeting and upcoming meetings of interest for trustees.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee L. Tremble asked if we are seeing increased staff absences, fail to fills, etc., with teachers, EAs and other staff as it relates to COVID. Coordinating Superintendent G. Shantz shared that in past years, COVID has been a large contributor to staff absences. We are seeing high levels of staff being away from their assignment, but not nearly the volume due to the COVID. As a system, we have instituted professional development for staff, as well as sports and field trips, that require staff to be away from their regular assignment. We will continue to monitor what direction sick leave absences go in the months ahead. There are strategies in place and additional strategies ready to be implemented if required.

Trustee C. Watson asked if staff could provide trustees with the job descriptions and duties for Student Well-being and Equity Advisors, System Navigators and Equity Officers. Director j. chanicka agreed to bring this back at a future meeting. Chairperson S. Piatkowski suggested that the Agenda Development Committee schedule this for Staff Follow Up.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of October 17, 2022, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.