

**DECEMBER 19, 2022
BOARD MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Board Meeting this evening at 7:00 p.m. in the Education Centre Boardroom, with the following members in attendance: J. Weston (Chairperson), B. Cody, C. Johnson, F. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, M. Ramsay, M. Waseem, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Virtual Attendee: M. Snyder

Student Trustees V. Raina was in attendance and Student Trustee K. Soror attended virtually.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, J. Brown, R. Dallen, R. DeBoer, C. Dey, E. Dougan-McKenzie, E. Giannopoulos, C. Hill, P. Kaur, N. Landry, B. Lemon, D. Liebermann, S. Miller, A. Russell, G. Shantz and J. Veit.

Other staff in attendance: L. Agar, M. Mayer and S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the December 19, 2022, Board Meeting be approved with a change to agenda order to have Delegations occur before the Consent Agenda.

-Carried-

DELEGATIONS

The following delegations spoke at the meeting:

- Michael Teper - IHRA Definition of Antisemitism
- Peter Eglin - IHRA Definition of Antisemitism
- Angela King - Masking in Schools
- Scott Hamilton - Masking in Schools
- Cristina Fernandes - Masking in Schools

Trustees were provided opportunities to ask questions of clarification of each delegation.

Trustee K. Woodcock called a Point of Order on Trustee M. Ramsay and asked that he withdraw the word “inflammatory” from his comments. Chairperson J. Weston agreed with Trustee K. Woodcock and Trustee M. Ramsay agreed to withdraw the word.

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Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Order on Trustee M. Waseem stating that the question asked was not one of clarification of the delegation. Chairperson J. Weston agreed and asked that all trustees restrict their questions to ones of clarification. Trustees were also directed to not make any preamble statements before asking their questions.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of December 19, 2022, and the actions contained therein, be approved with the exception of folios 24 and 32-37.

-Carried-

Folio 24 - December 12, 2023 Committee of the Whole

Trustees discussed the motion passed regarding encouraging all staff, students, and visitors to wear a mask. Some trustees expressed concerns about creating pressure on students.

A recorded vote was requested for the main motion.

Trustees discussed ratifying the decision on folio 24. A motion to table was discussed and withdrawn as WRDSB Bylaws indicate this action should only be used in an emergency.

A motion to defer Motion 11 on Folio 24 was moved and discussed.

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

That Motion 11 on Folio 24, be deferred to the first Committee of the Whole meeting in February 2023.

-Deferral Defeated-

Opposed:
C. Johnson
F. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
M. Radlein
M. Snyder
M. Waseem
J. Weston
K. Woodcock
V. Raina*
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))

Discussion continued on the ratification.

4. Moved by M. Snyder, seconded by K Woodcock:

That Motion 11 on Folio 24, from the consent agenda of the December 19, 2022, Board Meeting, and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

In Favour:

C. Johnson
F. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
M. Radlein
M. Snyder
M. Waseem
J. Weston
K. Woodcock
V. Raina*
K. Soror*

Opposed:

B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

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Trustees moved into a 5 minute recess and resumed the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

5. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by F. Meissner:

That Motion 12 on Folio 24, from the consent agenda of the December 19, 2022, Board Meeting, and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

Opposed:

B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

Folio 32-37 Reported Student Aggression Quarterly Data

Trustees asked questions regarding the increase in student aggression and it was noted that in the previous two years, many students were receiving virtual learning and not in class with staff members. Many students may also need to acclimatize to school settings.

6. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by M. Waseem:

That Folio 32-37, from the consent agenda of the December 19, 2022, Board Meeting, and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

Opposed:
B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

MOTIONS FROM IN CAMERA MEETING

Note: The following motions were approved in the In Camera session held earlier this evening.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by K. Woodcock:

That the agenda of the December 19, 2022, In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

B. Moved by M. Radlein, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the consent agenda of the December 19, 2022, In Camera Board Meeting and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

RISE AND REPORT

C. Moved by M. Radlein, seconded by C. Johnson:

That we rise and report in public session.

-Carried-

Note: This concludes the reporting of In Camera motions.

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Trustee Watson declared a conflict of interest at the previous in camera meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CELEBRATING BOARD ACTIVITIES

Trustee S. Piatkowski shared that he resumed school visits which were postponed due the pandemic.

Trustee C. Watson left the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Trustee C. Johnson shared that she visited Grandview Public School and looks forward to visiting more schools.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT GOOD NEWS UPDATE

Chief Communications Officer A. Russell shared the December Communications Department Good News Update. She reviewed recent events and activities. She also reviewed the WRDSB website statistics and social media impressions. She concluded her presentations with a holiday video of warm wishes.

C. Watson rejoined the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Trustees asked questions regarding holiday greetings and it was noted that many holidays are being observed this time of year and that staff will specifically wish a Merry Christmas on Christmas Day.

STAFF FOLLOW UP

STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

Associate Director G. Shantz shared in order to have data to create a basis for comparison, staff used information from three school years ago, pre-pandemic. He noted there were higher levels of student absenteeism in October and November of 2022 but that November and December rates are moving in the right direction. He cautioned that adding absenteeism rates to the website would result in substantial work for staff and take a number of months to complete. If the Board was to prioritize this work, it would delay ongoing audit and privacy work related to the cyber incident in the summer. Staff suggested not diverting resources from other areas.

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

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

-Carried-

REPORTS

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2022-23 BOARD IMPROVEMENT AND EQUITY PLAN

This report was provided for information.

The Strategic Plan is what guides WRDSB's directions and priorities as a learning organization. The Board Improvement and Equity Plan, formally the Operational Plan, is what supports the implementation and achievement of the WRDSB strategic directions and highlights our work as a learning organization. The 2022-2023 Board Improvement and Equity Plan outlines the desired results, key indicators, strategies and examples of the actions being taken by staff to help "turn the curve" for the identified key indicators. This year's Board Improvement and Equity Plan aligns with the Ministry of Education's direction and focuses on four areas:

- Achievement - Every student will succeed academically.
- Sovereignty, Human Rights & Equity - Every student and staff member has equitable opportunities in an environment free from discrimination.
- Mental Health, Well-being and Engagement - Every student and staff member will learn and work in environments that engage them and support their mental health and well-being.
- Pathways and Transitions - Every student is prepared for the next step in their elementary and secondary education and their post-secondary pathway.

Trustees asked questions regarding future results and updates, the sharing of best practices between schools and available staff resources. Trustees expressed appreciation for the clear report focused on students.

Trustee M. Ramsay left the meeting at 9:58 p.m.

8. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by B. Cody:

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

-Carried with two-thirds-

REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

Trustee M. Radlein updated Trustees on the December 6, 2022, Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) meeting noting that PIC is interested in engaging with the Board regarding the Strategic Plan and is looking forward to the new policy review process.

Trustee M. Ramsay rejoined the meeting at 10:02 p.m.

STUDENT TRUSTEE UPDATE

Student Trustees V. Raina and K. Soror shared information about the December 8, 2022, Student Roundtable on Student Mental Health and Well-Being and changes to the Student Trustee election, which has been reformed to allow the student body to vote for Students Trustees based on two geographical ridings.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION (OPSBA) BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

Trustee S. Piatkowski shared that the Board of Directors met at the end of November and Chairperson J. Weston was in attendance on behalf of WRDSB. He shared that Trustee K. Woodcock attended OPSBA's November 2022 Advocacy Day at Queen's Park. It was suggested that Trustees arrange meetings with all local Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) in the near future.

Trustees were reminded about the upcoming 2023 OPSBA Public Education Symposium (PES), January 26-28, 2023 in Toronto, noting that it is a great opportunity for learning and networking with Trustees from other public school boards in Ontario.

Trustee K. Woodcock provided additional information on Advocacy Day sharing that OPSBA focused on three areas: Capital and Facilities, Student Transportation and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

The Board received the following communications:

- Algoma District School Board to Minister of Education

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following Notice of Motion was moved by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee B. Cody:

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Whereas the WRDSB bylaw 14. Delegation Procedure, does not ensure that voices on both sides of an issue are equally heard and valued before a decision is made by the board of trustees,

Whereas the WRDSB bylaw 4. Trustee Responsibility, states that Trustees shall be expected to model ethical practices which include 4.3.3. a. Making decisions in a manner which is open, accessible and equitable, and b. respecting different points of view.

Whereas the WRDSB bylaw 13.5. Board Meetings, states that trustees are not able to access the Board Agenda until the Friday at 1:00 p.m. prior to the Board meeting and yet delegations are expected to register on the Thursday prior to the board meeting,

Whereas some parents find out at the last minute about a motion and have no opportunity to speak to a motion even if delegations cancel minutes before the meeting,

Whereas the Board Meeting Agendas list the delegations after the minutes are ratified,

Whereas the WRDSB current bylaws or practice will only allow trustees to ask two questions per report, even if time permits and other trustees forgo asking questions,

Whereas the WRDSB current bylaw or practice only allows 10 minutes at “Question Period” for eleven trustees,

Whereas the language around withdrawal of motions is unclear and open to interpretation,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Waterloo Region District School Board refer the following amendments and practices to the Policy Working Group for review and that the Policy Working Group report back to the Board of Trustees by the end of April 2023 with recommendations concerning the WRDSB bylaws or board practices; and

That WRDSB bylaw 14 Delegation Procedures be amended to include a fair delegation process which would allow delegations on both sides of the motion to have an opportunity to present to trustees at the same meeting to ensure fair, informed and balanced decision making; and

That the delegation process remove the penalty for delegations who register after the Thursday prior to the Monday meeting; and

That the delegation process allow members of the audience to speak to items on the agenda if previous delegations cancel and if time permits within the delegations time period; and

That Board Meeting Agendas list delegations before the ratification of the Committee of the Whole minutes; and

That individual trustees be given an opportunity to ask more than two questions per report if other trustees forgo asking questions and time permits; and

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That the chair be given authority to extend question period without a motion to ensure that all trustees are treated fairly and given an equal opportunity to ask questions on behalf of their constituents; and

That the language of WRDSB Bylaw 24. Rules of Order, 24.3.2. be clarified according to Roberts Rules, that the withdrawal of a motion refers only to the original proposer of the motion and the seconder and that it is after the original proposer and seconder have moved the motion and then read by the chair; that it belongs to the board.

This motion will be scheduled by the Agenda Development Committee at their next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

9. Moved by M. Waseem, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the Board Meeting of December 19, 2022, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.