

**JANUARY 30, 2023
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, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Virtual Attendees: M. Snyder and M. Waseem.

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

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

Other staff in attendance: S. Galliher, R. Howey, M. Mayer, S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the January 30, 2023, Board Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

CONSENT AGENDA

Trustees requested procedural advice from the Manager of Corporate Services regarding approval of the consent agenda. She shared that she recalled a past situation where the motion had been defeated and a second motion to approve without exceptions was approved. She noted that as a main motion, decisions would be made by a majority vote. Discussion continued as to whether this was appropriate and/or past practice.

A recorded vote was requested on Calling the Question.

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

That the question be called.

-Carried-

In Favour:
C. Johnson

Opposed:
B. Cody

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F. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
M. Radlein
M. Snyder
M. Waseem
K. Woodcock
V. Raina*
K. Soror*

M. Ramsay
C. Watson

* 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))

A recorded vote was requested on the approval of the consent agenda.

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

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of January 30, 2023, and the actions contained therein, be approved with the exception of Folio 22 and 30.

-Defeated-

In Favour:

B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

Opposed:

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

* 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))

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

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of January 30, 2023, and the actions contained therein, be approved

-Carried-

Opposed:

B. Cody

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M. Ramsay
C. Watson

The parliamentary procedure followed was questioned and additional information was requested from the Manager of Corporate Services.

As discussion continued, Trustee S. Piatkowski called a Point of Order regarding Trustee C. Watson's comment that this is an end run, since the majority of trustees made the decision. Chairperson J. Weston clarified that it has been recalled as happening in the past and the trustees made a decision through a vote.

Note: refer to minutes from the February 13, 2023, meeting for a parliamentary correction.

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 January 30, 2023, In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera with the addition of Secondary School Principal Transfer, Secondary School Principal Appointment, Secondary School Vice-Principal Transfer and Secondary School Vice-Principal Appointment under Employee Relations and Staffing.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

B. Moved by M. Radlein, seconded by F. Meissner:

That the consent agenda of the January 30, 2023, In Camera Board Meeting and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

RISE AND REPORT

C. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by M. Radlein:

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CELEBRATING BOARD ACTIVITIES

Chairperson J. Weston acknowledged that this was the last meeting for retiring Superintendent R. DeBoer and thanked him for his work over the years at the WRDSB.

Chairperson J. Weston and Trustees C. Johnson, F. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, M. Waseem and K. Woodcock attended the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Public Education Symposium. Chairperson J. Weston thanked OPSBA for the informative conference.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT GOOD NEWS UPDATE

R. Howey, Communications Officer, provided the monthly Communications Department Good News Update. He shared a number of school and board activities which occurred in January as well as Senior Team staffing updates. He reviewed coverage of the WRDSB in traditional media and social media and provided social media impressions and popular stories.

When asked about reactions to the recent open letter, Executive Officer E. Dougan-McKenzie shared that some feedback received was in disagreement with the letter, but that there was an overwhelming number of messages of appreciation from teachers, retirees, former students, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and other marginalized groups. OPSBA, the Ministry of Education and other school boards also provided positive commentary.

DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

REPORTS

BACKGROUNDER ON ACCOMMODATION PLANNING

This report was provided for information.

The backgrounder report informed the Board of Trustees of their role in accommodation planning work and the processes leading to decision-making. The report reviewed what accommodation planning is, the school board's responsibilities as laid out in the *Education Act* and the types of reports trustees can expect to receive for information or approval. The report also reviewed the Planning Department structure. The Planning Department plans to present several reports with recommendations for approval in the coming months.

Trustees asked questions regarding the Planning Department processes, which have not changed this year, enrolment projections, development tracing software and determining surplus property. Staff agreed to provide new trustees with a hard copy of the 2020-2030 Long Term Accommodation Plan.

THE WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

This report was provided for information.

Director j. chanicka expressed excitement in sharing this annual report, formerly referred to as the Director's Annual Report. He shared that the work is a team effort and will be referred to as the WRDSB Annual Report going forward. This will continue to fulfill Ministry of Education requirements.

Executive Officer E. Dougan-McKenzie reviewed the areas of the website-based report including the Director's Message, Chairperson's Message, Student Trustee Message, Opportunities and Challenges, and By the Numbers.

Director j. chanicka noted that student achievement and well-being are at the heart of everything being done and acknowledged the leadership present in the Boardroom. He thanked the communications department for creating this report in a way that is accessible for students, staff, families and the community, noting it celebrates the amazing work from the past year.

Chairperson J. Weston thanked Director j. chanicka and staff for the report. Director j. chanicka agreed to provide Trustees access to the report in advance for next year, noting that the report was not finalized until earlier today. It was confirmed that the report will be shared with regional and municipal partners. A number of trustees thanked staff for the work highlighted in this report.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee C. Watson asked what evidence staff have 2SLGBTQIA+ identifying individuals being targeted under the guise of age appropriateness. Director j. chanicka referred her to comments Associate Director G. Shantz made at the previous meeting where he shared that there is an increased focus on books with 2SLGBTQIA+ characters, gender identity and sexual orientation. He shared that statistics collected show that 24% of Grade 7-12 students identify with a 2SLGBTQIA+ identity and that local community partners are noticing a negative impact on our students from these types of conversations including self harm and depression. There is an unequal impact on 2SLGBTQIA+ identifying students. He shared that staff are happy to have conversations but that those conversations should occur without staff being accused of being predators and groomers and that staff have, on more than one occasion, respectfully explained the impact. The WRDSB does not define age appropriateness. Misinformation about WRDSB "conspiracies" and "woke-agenda" inflames fear and panic. Staff are guided by the Ontario

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College of Teachers with legislative responsibilities to follow the Ontario Curriculum as set by the Ministry of Education. There is no conspiracy.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (to be referred to Agenda Development Committee)

Trustee C. Watson served the following Notice of Motion with support from Trustee M. Ramsay:

Whereas elementary students are able to access eBooks that are not age appropriate from the Waterloo Region District School Boards online library,

Whereas some parents state they are not receiving notice or opt out information before sexual health teaching in various forms and surveys,

Whereas the WRDSB staff and trustees are committed to transparency when communicating with parents and the broad public,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Waterloo Region District School Board provide a written report to the Board of Trustees explaining why elementary students are able to access eBooks that are not age appropriate from the WRDSB online library, as well as details about what filtering process is being used to ensure that elementary children are not able to access eBooks that are not age appropriate,

And that the report also include the process by which parents are provided information and opt out notice before surveys and sexual health teaching in its various forms to help ensure parents are informed and included in their child's sexual health education.

And that the written report be presented at a Committee of the Whole in March 2023.

This Motion will be scheduled for discussion by the Agenda Development Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Board Meeting of January 30, 2023, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.