

**OCTOBER 16, 2023**  
**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. in the Education Centre Boardroom, with the following members in attendance: J. Weston (Chairperson), B. Cody, C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, M. Ramsay, M. Waseem, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Trustee S. Estoesta was unable to attend.

Student Trustees A. Awan and C. Dong were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), L. Agar, D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, R. Dallan, E. Dougan-McKenzie, C. Hill, N. Landry, D. Liebermann, S. Miller and G. Shantz.

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

Guest: Njeri Damali Sojourner-Campbell, Associate, Hicks Morley.

**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 M. Ramsay:

**That the agenda of the October 16, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved with the addition of a delegation from Craig Sloss.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

Trustee C. Watson has a declaration of pecuniary interest in the previous in camera meeting.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairperson J. Weston shared regrets from Trustee S. Estoesta.

Student Trustee A. Awan shared that he and Student Trustee C. Dong hosted their first Student Roundtable on the topic of Student Engagement.

Trustees S. Estoesta, S. Piatkowski and M. Radlein attended the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation event downtown Kitchener.

**OCTOBER 16, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

Trustee S. Piatkowski and others attended an Osgoode Hall Law School Human Rights Training module, which was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

Trustees M. Radlein and M. Waseem visited King Edward Public School, Queen Elizabeth Public School and Queensmount Senior Public School. Trustee M. Waseem also visited Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute where she observed a de-streamed math classroom.

Trustees C. Johnson, M. Radlein, J. Weston and K. Woodcock attended Interfaith Grand River's Annual Interfaith Community Breakfast.

Trustees C. Johnson, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, M. Waseem, J. Weston and K. Woodcock attended the first two days of Human Rights @ Waterloo Region District School Board Training. The training will continue in November.

### **DELEGATIONS**

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Cristina Fernandes - Virtual Libraries Policy Motion
- Anita Brooks Kirkland, Canadian School Libraries - Virtual Libraries Motion
- Grayson Bass - Political Activism Putting Students at Risk
- David Todor - Transparent and Accountable Policies
- Sue Senior - Motion Harming 2SLGBTQI Students, Staff and Families
- Justin Buhr - Motion to Change Board Policy 1012 - Religious and Creed Accommodations
- Reverend Marty Molengraaf - Motion to Change Board Policy 1012 - Religious and Creed Accommodations
- Craig Sloss - Motion to Change Board Policy 1012 - Religious and Creed Accommodations

Trustees were provided an opportunity to ask questions of clarification after each delegation.

The public gallery was asked to maintain decorum during the delegations.

### **REPORTS**

#### **IDENTIFICATION PLACEMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Waterloo Region District School Board operates Identification, Placement and Review Committees. 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."

2. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by C. Watson:

**That the jurisdiction of each of these committees as outlined below and the attached Appendix A outlining WRDSB IPRC Committees, be 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-

**MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS QUARTERLY UPDATE**

This report was provided for information.

R. Dallan, Manager of Capital Projects, reviewed current capital projects with budgets greater than \$2.5M, and indicated the project status relative to the schedule, budget, and scope.

Trustees asked questions about site safety of additions and construction projects during the school year.

**ANNUAL COMMUNITY PLANNING AND FACILITIES PARTNERSHIPS REPORT**

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.

Trustees asked questions about joint projects noting an interest in prioritizing the Proposed Waterloo Collegiate Institute Rebuild.

### **2023-24 CAPITAL PRIORITIES PROGRAM**

This report was provided for information.

Recognizing the priorities and criteria of the Ministry of Education (Ministry)'s 2023-24 Capital Priorities Program, the WRDSB will submit business cases for two projects:

- New elementary school, North Cambridge (Equestrian Way); and
- Parkway Public School addition, including child care.

For each project, business cases describing the current situation, the project rationale, scope, funding, and estimated cost will be submitted to the Ministry of Education on/by October 20, 2023, the deadline for submissions. The Capital Priorities list was completed by the Capital Plan Working Group, after examining planning, facilities, finance, program, and accessibility issues. Senior Manager, L. Agar noted the Ministry is currently prioritizing projects which are “shovel ready” and address enrolment pressures.

Trustees asked questions regarding the Potential Future Capital Priorities Program Submissions and the Ministry's schematic design requirements.

### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: EQAO RESULTS**

Associate Director S. Miller shared that on Thursday, October 12, 2023, the 2022-2023 EQAO results were released publicly. A high-level review of the WRDSB results was provided for information. Staff will return in November with a subsequent presentation and report in greater detail once there has been time to analyze the data. He noted that a different EQAO assessment model necessitated that new baselines be established for EQAO assessment results, meaning that new starting points in trend lines were set in 2021–2022.

Dr. D. Liebermann, Executive Manager, Research and Organizational Transformation, shared the achievement results of WRDSB students who wrote the EQAO assessment from last year and compared those to results from the previous year. The results were as follows:

- Grade 3 reading, 73% of WRDSB students who wrote the EQAO achieved the provincial standard, which was 1% above last year's results.
- Grade 3 writing, 65% of WRDSB students achieved the provincial standard, which is 2% above last year's results.
- Grade 3 mathematics, 59% of WRDSB students achieved the provincial standard, which is 1% above last year's results.
- Grade 6 reading, 84% of WRDSB students who wrote the EQAO achieved the provincial standard, which is 1% below last year's results.
- Grade 6 writing, 85% of WRDSB students achieved the provincial standard, which is the same as last year's results.

**OCTOBER 16, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

- Grade 6 mathematics, 51% of WRDSB students achieved the provincial standard, which is 2% above last year's results.
- New Grade 9 mathematics assessment, 55% of WRDSB students achieved the provincial standard, which is 4% above last year's results.
- Grade 10 literacy test, 85% of First Time Eligible (FTE) achieved a level 3 or higher, which is equivalent to last year's results.
- Grade 10 literacy test, 67% of previously eligible (PE) students, achieved a level 3 or higher. This large change compared to last year's results was not unexpected. This is because in the 21-22 school year those students considered previously eligible were Grade 11 students who couldn't write the assessment in their Grade 10 year due to the pause in EQAO during the pandemic. A similar drop was seen across the province. This year's PE scores are best considered a new baseline.

Associate Director S. Miller concluded the presentation with compliments and thanks to the system administrators, learning support services staff, school principals, vice principals, teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants, child and youth workers and the superintendent team for their continued dedication and hard work to support and enhance student achievement and well-being. In addition, he thanked trustees for supporting and leading the implementation of the strategic plan, specifically the strategic directions which have helped in developing the Board Improvement and Equity Plan that is supporting the move forward to better serve all students across the district.

Trustees asked questions regarding supports for schools with lower scores and what results staff were expecting. It was indicated that a more fulsome report would be provided in November.

Student Trustee C. Dong left the meeting.

A trustee requested that the future reporting include information about test exemptions.

### **BOARD REPORTS**

It was the Will of the Board to address Motion: Changes To Board Policy 1012 Religious And Creed Accommodations on the agenda prior to Motion: Virtual Library Policy in order for legal counsel to be present to answer questions about competing human rights.

### **MOTION: CHANGES TO BOARD POLICY 1012 RELIGIOUS AND CREED ACCOMMODATIONS**

Njeri Damali Sojourner-Campbell, Associate at Hicks Morley, was introduced.

This Notice of Motion was served at the June 12, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee M. Ramsay. Trustee C. Watson provided an

**OCTOBER 16, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

introductory statement regarding her motion sharing concerns she has heard from some parents regarding this matter.

Trustees asked questions of legal counsel regarding how competing rights work and previous examples regarding competing rights.

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

**That the Committee of the Whole meeting of October 16, 2023, be extended an additional thirty minutes to 10:00 pm.**

-Carried-

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board call the question.**

-Carried-

Opposed:  
B. Cody  
M. Ramsay  
C. Watson

*At the October 30, 2024, Board Meeting the below motion was re-voted on. A motion to defer the vote was also brought forward and defeated.*

A recorded vote was requested.

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

**That Board Policy 1012 under 1.7 be revised to more accurately reflect 3.4 concerning the exception of “competing rights;” and**

**That Board Policy 1012, 1.6.6. be added to ensure that parents be provided with detailed information concerning dates, times, sexual health teaching, class discussions and presentations outside of curriculum-based health class which would allow parents to make informed decisions about their child’s accommodation.**

-Defeated-

In Favour:  
B. Cody  
M. Ramsay  
C. Watson

Opposed:  
S. Estoesta\*\*  
C. Johnson  
J. Meissner  
S. Piatkowski  
M. Radlein

**OCTOBER 16, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

M. Waseem  
J. Weston  
K. Woodcock  
\*A. Awan  
\*C. Dong\*\*

\* 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)).

\*\*present at the October 30, 2024, Board Meeting

**MOTION: VIRTUAL LIBRARY POLICY**

This Notice of Motion was served at the April 24, 2023, Board meeting by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee B. Cody. Trustee C. Watson provided an opening statement sharing concerns she has heard from parents regarding age appropriateness of virtual library resources.

Trustee discussion commenced regarding the motion. Trustee S. Piatkowski called a Point of Order on Trustee M. Ramsay, indicating that he was not speaking to the motion on the table. Chairperson J. Weston ruled in favour of the Point of Order asking Trustees to speak to the current motion.

Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Order on Trustee M. Radlein when she indicated that these topics have previously been discussed as Trustee C. Watson felt the topic was not being debated. Trustee C. Watson was called to order by Chairperson J. Weston for speaking out of turn while the Chairperson was providing a ruling. The Chair overruled the Point of Order. Trustee M. Radlein completed her comments and called the question.

Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Order objecting to ending debate on the motion. Chairperson J. Weston, in consultation with Manager S. Reidel, confirmed that the Bylaws allow a motion to Call the Question to be moved at any time when a motion is before the Board.

Trustee C. Watson requested a recorded vote on both calling the question and the main motion.

Trustee M. Waseem called a Point of Information asking for confirmation that Trustee C. Watson had spoken on the matter. Chairperson J. Weston confirmed that Trustees C. Watson, M. Ramsay and M. Radlein had spoken on the matter.

Chairperson J. Weston called Trustee C. Watson to order for speaking out of turn.

6. Moved by M. Madlein, seconded by C. Johnson:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board call the question.**

**OCTOBER 16, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

-Carried-

In Favour:

C. Johnson  
J. Meissner  
S. Piatkowski  
M. Radlein  
M. Waseem  
J. Weston  
K. Woodcock  
\*A. Awan

Opposed:

B. Cody  
M. Ramsay  
C. Watson

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*At the October 30, 2024, Board Meeting the related motion was re-voted on.*

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board develop a virtual library policy that would ensure that virtual libraries are age appropriate, with graduated filtering that is consistent with the filtering used for WRDSB chrome books and that this filtering also aligns with the Ministry of Educations Sexual Health Curriculum guidelines.**

-Defeated-

In Favour:

B. Cody  
M. Ramsay  
C. Watson

Opposed:

S. Estoesta\*\*  
C. Johnson  
J. Meissner  
S. Piatkowski  
M. Radlein  
M. Waseem  
J. Weston  
K. Woodcock  
\*A. Awan  
\*C. Dong\*\*

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\*\*present at the October 30, 2024, Board Meeting



**QUESTION PERIOD**

Trustee C. Watson referenced letters received from the Muslim Association of Canada and a group called Empowr and asked if staff would be apologizing for comments. Director j. chanicka asked if trustees received a letter specific to WRDSB. Trustee C. Watson indicated that it was posted on X/Twitter regarding the 1 Million March for Children. Director j. chanicka noted that the WRDSB releases nuanced statements protecting the rights of all students.

Chairperson J. Weston called Trustee C. Watson to order when Trustee C. Watson refused to stop speaking after her turn had ended.

Trustee M. Ramsay asked if staff were going to apologize for a statement where he indicated that the WRDSB referred to the September 20th protests as a “hate march”.

Chairperson J. Weston called the public gallery to order.

Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Order as she could not hear Director j. chanicka’s response. Chairperson J. Weston reminded Director j. chanicka to turn on his microphone.

Director j. chanicka stated that he did not have the statement in front of him and would have to respond at a later date. He noted that if the question had been provided to staff in advance, staff could have been prepared to respond.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no future agenda items.

**ADJOURNMENT**

8. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by J. Meissner:

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of October 16, 2023, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.