

FEBRUARY 12, 2024
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, S. Estoesta, C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, M. Waseem*, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

*Virtual Attendance

Trustee M. Ramsay was unable to attend.

Student Trustee A. Awan was in attendance and Student Trustee C. Dong was unable to attend.

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

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by S. Estoesta, seconded by J. Meissner:

That the agenda of the February 12, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson J. Weston shared regrets from Trustee M. Ramsay.

Chairperson J. Weston thanked staff for their work to reopen Sheppard Public School so quickly after the impact of a water main break.

Trustee K. Woodcock attended the Together We Stand conference at Lackner Woods Public School.

Trustee S. Piatkowski greeted students and families as they arrived at Elizabeth Ziegler Public School on Winter Walk to School Day.

Trustee B. Cody attended the Portrait of Honours at the Preston Scout House.

Chairperson J. Weston greeted students and families as they arrived at J W Gerth Public School on Winter Walk to School Day.

FEBRUARY 12, 2024
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Chairperson J. Weston provided greetings on behalf of the Board at the Black Brilliance event at the Education Centre.

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

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

DELEGATIONS

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Suhaila Salah - Islamophobic and Anti-Palestinian Experiences
- Mira Murra - Anti-Palestinian Discrimination
- Ayah Hamaoui, Palestinian Youth Movement - Anti-Palestinian Racism at Schools
- Janah El-Batroukh - Experience of Anti-Palestinian Racism
- Sarah Shafiq - Addressing Hate Such as Islamophobia and Anti-Arab Racism
- Lauren Weinberg - Anti-Palestinian Racism in the WRDSB

Trustees were provided an opportunity to ask questions of clarification.

2. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by S. Estoesta:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer all February 12, 2024 delegations to staff for information.

-Carried-

STAFF FOLLOW UP

BOARD IMPROVEMENT & EQUITY PLAN UPDATE: SCHOOL-BASED HUMAN RIGHTS

Associate Director S. Miller shared the WRDSB's commitment to learning and growing, ensuring all students feel a sense of belonging and that this work is embedded in the Board Improvement and Equity Plan.

Superintendent C. Hill shared that In the WRDSB, an intersectional human rights approach is the intentional way to ensure that efforts address all code-based protected identities. She shared the work being done as staff learn more about the impacts of multiple forms of oppression and that continual work builds our understanding in support of students and families. She shared a number of examples of this work, in the areas of:

- Building a Human Rights Culture Across the Board
- Combating Anti-Semitism
- Combating Islamophobia
- Combating 2SLGBTQIA Hate

FEBRUARY 12, 2024
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

- Combating Anti-Black Racism
- Combating Anti-Indigenous Racism
- Combating Ableism

Superintendent C. Hill shared that educators make efforts every day to provide students with activities and resources connected to the curriculum that reflect their identities and lived experiences and the ongoing commitment to continue to grow in the capacity to do so.

Trustees asked questions regarding measurement of the effectiveness of training, communications to students regarding reporting Human Rights complaints, the anonymous report tool, supporting requests for staff, capacity building regarding surveillance, guidance provided on cultural clothing, census data, school Indigenous and equity leads and the Human Rights Branch Annual Report.

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 2003 - EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

3. Moved by K. Woodcock , seconded by C. Johnson:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 2003 - Early Learning and Child Care as presented at the February 12, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 4012 - SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS

Trustees discussed the policy language and the reference to exceptions in section 1.3. It was noted that exceptions are further detailed in related procedures and staff expressed a need for the policy to remain flexible on the subject. Trustees discussed a motion to refer the policy back to the Policy Working Group.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer Board Policy 4012 - School Attendance Areas back to the Policy Working Group to amend section 1.3 to include additional information about exceptions.

-Defeated-

Opposed:
S. Estoesta
C. Johnson
J. Meissner
S. Piatkowski

FEBRUARY 12, 2024
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

M. Radlein
M. Waseem
K. Woodcock
*A. Awan

* 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))

5. Moved by S. Estoesta, seconded by M. Radlein:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 4012 - School Attendance Areas as presented at the February 12, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

Opposed:
B. Cody
C. Watson

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 4019 - WATERLOO COUNTY SECONDARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

6. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by S. Estoesta:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board amend Board Policy 4019 - Waterloo County Secondary School Athletic Association section 2.2.8. to read: “Support the strategic directions embedded in the WRDSB MYSP for student engagement and for fostering wellness and well-being.”

-Amendment Carried-

7. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by S. Estoesta:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board amend Board Policy 4019 - Waterloo County Secondary School Athletic Association section 3.2 to read: “To protect the interests of the WRDSB , staff and volunteers who volunteer their time to provide athletic opportunities through WCSSAA, WCSSAA shall institute a mechanism for non-WRDSB secondary schools to join WCSSAA. Participation shall be governed by a letter of agreement signed by both parties.”

-Amendment Carried-

FEBRUARY 12, 2024
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

8. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 4019 - Waterloo County Secondary School Athletic Association as amended at the February 12, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried as amended-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 6011 - FEES FOR LEARNING MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

9. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by S. Estoesta:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 6011 - Fees for Learning Materials and Activities as presented at the February 12, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

Opposed: C. Watson

REPORTS

BOARD REPORTS

MOTION: MINISTER'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION LETTER

This Notice of Motion was served at the January 22, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting by Trustee J. Meissner with support from Trustee S. Estoesta. Both Trustees S. Estoesta and J. Meissner spoke to the motion which was brought forward to them by the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

10. Moved by J. Meissner, seconded by S. Estoesta:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Ministry of Education to inquire about multiple and long-standing vacancies in The Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE) and what is planned to fill these vacancies; and

That copies of the letter be sent to Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), other Ontario public school boards, and local Members of Provincial Parliament; and

That any response received be forwarded to WRDSB SEAC.

-Carried-

MOTION: NATIONAL SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM LETTER

This Notice of Motion was served at the January 22, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting by Trustee K. Woodcock with support from Trustee S. Piatkowski.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board send a letter to The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Finance & Deputy Prime Minister, advocating for a National School Food Program using the template provided by the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA); and

That copies of the letter be provided to all local Members of Provincial Parliament, local Members of Parliament, Regional Council Chair, all local Mayors, OPSBA and OPSBA member Chairs.

-Carried-

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee S. Piatkowski asked for an update on the April 8, 2024 Solar Eclipse and what guidance has been received from the Region of Waterloo Public Health (Public Health). Executive Officer E. Dougan-McKenzie shared that we are still consulting with Public Health to gain a better understanding of how to mitigate risks posed by the solar eclipse. Public Health has advised they have a meeting with the province on February 20, 2024, and will follow up with us after that meeting. Staff will bring forward an update to the Board of Trustees when more information is available.

Trustee C. Watson asked if a decision had been made regarding the overflow room. Chairperson J. Weston confirmed that a staff follow up on this matter is scheduled for the February 26, 2024, Board Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 12, 2024, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.