

**FEBRUARY 26, 2024
BOARD MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Board Meeting this evening at 7:16 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. Ramsay*, M. Waseem, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

*Virtual Attendance

Student Trustees A. Awan and C. Dong were not in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: L. Agar, D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, J. Brown, V. Collis, R. Dallan, E. Dougan-McKenzie, J. Fedosoff, E. Giannopoulos, C. Hill, H. Hughes, P. Kaur, N. Landry, B. Lemon, D. Liebermann, S. Miller, M. Newlands, and G. Shantz (Designate of the Director of Education).

Other staff in attendance: M. Chadwick, B. Chatha, C. Gingerich, M. Gravel, E. Gray, R. Hower, G. Le-Phuong, M. Leggo, M. Mayer, C. McCone, S. McCrae, S. Reidel and J. Shortreed.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by J. Meissner, seconded by M. Waseem:

That the agenda of the February 26, 2024, Board Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CELEBRATING BOARD ACTIVITIES

Trustee M. Radlein visited Hillside Public School and attended the Black Heritage Celebration at Forest Hill Public School.

Trustees M. Radlein and K. Woodcock attended the Black Brilliance conference for elementary students at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Trustee K. Woodcock attended the Drayton Entertainment Youth Academy performance of Footloose.

Trustee K. Woodcock shared that many trustees attended Indigenous Cultural Competency Training hosted by the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres.

Trustee M. Waseem attended a Laurel Heights Student Roundtable.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT GOOD NEWS UPDATE

Senior Manager H. Hughes introduced the Communications Good News Update video sharing highlights from the month and items of traditional media and social media interest.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of February 26, 2024, and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

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 C. Johnson, seconded by J. Meissner:

That the agenda of the February 26, 2024, In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera with the addition of Property Matter Email under Other Business.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

That the consent agenda of the February 26, 2024, 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

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

FOLLOW UP

BOARDROOM

Associate Director G. Shantz shared the background of the piloted use of an overflow room and referenced the element of risk to the board and a lack of safety of a space not presided over to uphold the rules of the Boardroom. He shared that complaints were received both times that the room was used last year and that the rules of the board meeting were not being followed. He confirmed that the WRDSB continues to meet legislative requirements of being open to the public and transparent with 30 seats in the gallery, as well as a live-stream and recordings available online. Individuals who were in the overflow room were watching the livestream, which they can do from anywhere should they choose. For these reasons mentioned, the WRDSB will not be maintaining an overflow room.

Trustees asked questions about the seating limit for the public, members of the public coming to watch from the other parts of the Region of Waterloo, the attendance of ancillary staff which is done to ensure staff are providing trustees answers to questions for decision making. It was noted that there were many empty public chairs at this meeting. Trustees continued to ask questions about delegation seating and possibly implementing pre-registration for seating. It was noted that the seating capacity is listed clearly on the WRDSB website. When asked, Associate Director G. Shantz indicated that individuals requiring accessibility accommodations should reach out in advance of the meeting.

REPORTS

BOARD IMPROVEMENT AND EQUITY PLAN UPDATE: MATH ACHIEVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Trustee M. Ramsay left the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

After an introduction from Associate Director S. Miller, System Administrator J. Shortreed introduced the team presenting and reviewed the Ministry of Education timelines and action plan background. She shared that staff are beginning to gather data and evidence regarding the key performance indicators and the connection to the Strategic Plan. Staff are monitoring implementation at the board, school and classroom level. System Administrator J. Shortreed shared highlights from the recently closed surveys and reviewed other data collected at the board level including the digital math tool, Knowledgehook. Math Consultant R. Hewer reported on school level implementation and monitoring updates including data centering on academic growth in students. She shared that the two areas of focus are students who require more time on grade level material and students who are entering a grade with missed learning opportunities from previous years that need to be addressed. Math Consultant R. Hewer provided data based

on approximately 420 grade 3 students who participated in 5 weeks of a Tiered Approach to Mathematics and data for approximately 325 grade 6 students prior to a 5 - 6 week intervention block focusing on fractions. Staff feedback was also shared with the Board of Trustees. Megan Chadwick,, Math Facilitator, shared specific stories of student success showing the Math Intervention approach has the potential to benefit students by increasing their capacity for mathematical reasoning and ability to perform mathematical operations expected for their grade level and enhancing qualities of independence and self-esteem.

Trustees asked questions regarding the 7 week intervention support in classrooms, the impact of student confidence in other areas of learning, the surveys conducted, expanding the work beyond the funded Ministry identified classrooms, and Knowledgehook.

BOARD IMPROVEMENT AND EQUITY PLAN UPDATE: STUDENT WELL-BEING

Associate Director S. Miller introduced the presentation, indicating it was one of the Board Improvement and Equity Plan updates to be provided to the Board of Trustees this year. Superintendent J. Albrecht shared that this student well-being update focuses on engaging students so they experience a sense of belonging in a welcoming and supportive classroom and school environment so they experience greater mental wellness which, in turn, positively impacts their ability to learn and achieve. She introduced members of the special education leadership team who will be sharing work they are leading in support of student well-being. System Administrator S. McCrae referenced the WRDSB's Vision which focuses on celebrating the gifts of each and every student and creating opportunities for students to become their best selves and creating inclusive learning environments where all students can excel. Mental Health Lead E. Gray shared that educators, the students, and their families and caregivers are the three areas of focus to support student well-being. She reviewed the work done to train and support educators. G. Le-Phuong, Psychology and Social Work Lead, reviewed the work focussed on student learning including a partnership with Waterloo Suicide Prevention Council and the Cannabis and Vaping Initiative with Region of Waterloo Public Health. She reviewed the work focussed on family and caregiver learning such as Lunch and Learn sessions and partnerships with community programs. Speech Language Pathologist Lead M. Gravel reviewed the classroom supports provided by the Speech and Language Services Department including topics such as Building Emotional Language, Storytelling, Language of Play and Vocabulary Matters. She also reviewed the staff development sessions provided. Staff shared how the Applied Behaviour Analysis team provides assistance in the setup of the classroom environment, provides Peer Awareness presentations and professional development opportunities. Staff reviewed the Early Learners Clinic, a group that comes together weekly to have discussions with and provide general recommendations and resource ideas to school teams. They provided information on student behaviour interventions and Administrative Procedure 2330 - Management Process for Student Behaviours Causing a Risk of Injury. The presentation concluded with a short video highlighting the Youth Champion Initiative.

Trustees asked questions regarding measuring success, safety plans and contingencies, secondary student wellness teams, workshops, and ensuring staff and resources are available for students with safety plans.

4. Moved by M. Radlein, seconded by M. Waseem:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve a motion to extend the Board Meeting by thirty minutes to 10:00 p.m.

-Carried-

REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

AD HOC BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE UPDATE

Trustee M. Radlein shared that the committee met on February 8 and 15, 2024 and that all the bylaws referenced above have received an initial review. The committee is now on the second reading to reflect on the comments and suggestions from the first read through. The bylaws of comparator boards, the Ontario Public School Board Association's Good Governance Guide, the Education Act and Ministry Regulations continue to be the references used. It was noted that the organization of the by-laws could be improved. This will be done once changes are finalized.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

The Board received the following communications:

- Toronto District School Board to Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister
- Rainy River District School Board to Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister
- WRDSB SEAC to Minister of Education - Special Incidence Portion Claim Funding
- WRDSB to Minister of Education - Support for TVDSB regarding Ministry Timelines
- WRDSB to Minister of Education - Support for TVDSB regarding Mental Health

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee C. Watson asked for the rationale for not moving a Professional Development (PD) Day to April 8 to account for the eclipse. Associate Director S. Miller shared that there are no available PD Days to move. The WRDSB made a commitment to have a PD Day on Eid and others have contractual obligations. When asked about other solutions, staff confirmed we are evaluating a number of options and we will be prepared to communicate later this week.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following notice of motion was served by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee B. Cody at the February 26, 2024 Board Meeting

Whereas the WRDSB has only 30 seats that are designated for parents/guardians and community members in the board room that has a built capacity of 300.

Whereas the overflow room has been discontinued and parents/guardians and community members will be turned away and told they cannot come into the Education Center.

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Whereas some parents/guardians and community members do not live in Kitchener and drive longer distances to reach the Education Center.

Whereas the WRDSB is a publicly funded school board and is a regional board with seating for only 30 members of the public.

Therefore be it resolved that the WRDSB amends policy 3004 Holding of Public Meetings to include an overflow room that would accommodate parents/ guardians and community members who aren't able to sit in the board room because of the limited seating.

This motion will be scheduled for a future meeting by the Agenda Development Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Board Meeting of February 26, 2024, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.