

JUNE 10, 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. Ramsay, M. Waseem, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Student Trustee A. Awan was in attendance and Student Trustee C. Dong was not in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, E. Dougan-McKenzie, B. Lemon, and S. Miller.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson J. Weston shared regrets from Student Trustee C. Dong.

FAREWELL TO STUDENT TRUSTEES

Trustees M. Radlein and C. Johnson shared information about next steps for both Student Trustee A. Awan and C. Dong, thanking them for their time and work. Chairperson J. Weston added her thanks and best wishes.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee M. Radlein visited Chalmers Street Public School, Clemens Mill Public School, Rockway Public School and Waterloo Collegiate Institute.

Trustee M. Radlein attended Trillium Public School's 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Trustee M. Radlein attended a South Asian staff celebration and the Jill of all Trades event at Conestoga College.

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Trustee M. Radlein attended the Sunnyside Senior Public School Wisdom Project at the Stanley Park Community Center.

Trustees C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein and K. Woodcock attended the WRDSB's 2024 Building Community: Advancing Anti-Ableism in Education Symposium.

Trustee S. Piatkowski visited Wilson Avenue Public School, Centennial Public School (Waterloo) and Prueter Public School.

Trustee S. Piatkowski participated in Ontario Public School Boards' Association's Take Your MPP to School Week, joining MPP Catherine Fife in a visit to Mary Johnston Public School.

Trustees C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, J. Weston and K. Woodcock attended the Education Centre's Pride Flag Raising Ceremony.

Trustee C. Johnson, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, J. Weston and K. Woodcock attended the Waterloo Region Elementary Administrators retirement celebration.

Trustee C. Johnson, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, J. Weston and K. Woodcock attended the Board of Trustees' retirement reception.

Trustee J. Meissner visited Floradale Public School.

Trustee K. Woodcock visited Forest Glen Public School.

Trustees J. Weston and K. Woodcock attended the Country Hills Public School Pride Flag Raising Ceremony.

Trustee M. Ramsay attended the Eastwood Collegiate Institute Music Night.

Trustee C. Johnson attended the Cedar Creek Public School Art Celebration and the Clemens Mill Black Excellence celebration.

Trustee C. Johnson visited Clemens Mill Public School and Manchester Public School.

Trustees C. Johnson and M. Radlein visited St. Andrew's Senior Public School.

Trustees C. Johnson provided greetings from the Board at Jacob Hespeler Secondary School's commencement ceremony.

Trustees J. Weston and K. Woodcock visited Centennial Public School.

Chairperson J. Weston attended the Occasional Teachers' Annual General Meeting.

Trustees J. Weston and M. Radlein attended the WRDSB GSA Conference.

Chairperson J. Weston extended best wishes to all graduating students at the WRDSB.

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Trustees M. Ramsay and K. Woodcock declared pecuniary interest in the previous in camera meeting.

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1001 - HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

Trustee questions regarding referrals were responded to and it was suggested that the policy should be reviewed by the Special Education Advisory Committee.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1001 - Health Support Services as presented at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1002 - OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

It was shared that some language changes were for consistency throughout policies.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1002 - Occupational Health and Safety as presented at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1004 - HARASSMENT

Trustees discussed the decisions to specifically mention identity-based harassment and online harassment.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1004 - Harassment as presented at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1009 - VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1009 - Violence in the Workplace as presented at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1015 - RECORDS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

It was explained that 4.7 is based on best practices regarding privacy and records management. Minutes will continue to be the official record of the meeting.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1015 - Records Information Management as presented at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

Opposed:
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 6000 - SAFE SCHOOLS

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 6000 - Safe Schools as presented at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

Opposed:
B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 6001 - CODE OF CONDUCT

The meaning of Section 3.1.14 was clarified to refer to protected grounds listed in Board Policy 1017 - Human Rights.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 6001 - Code of Conduct as presented at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

REPORTS

2021-2026 MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE (MYAP)

This report was provided for information.

As a designated public sector organization, the WRDSB is required, under section 4 of the Regulation, to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers. The Accessibility Committee has met throughout the 2023-2024 school year to monitor staff's progress to the 2021 - 2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP), which was approved by the Board of Trustees on June 1, 2021.

Human Rights and Equity Advisor D. Ahluwalia introduced the presentation, including the Accessibility Committee membership. Human Rights Officer E. Wainaina reviewed the related legislation and shared some accessibility and disability inclusion work that has been taking place across WRDSB schools and work sites. She provided some highlights of ongoing work in achieving the Board's MYAP objectives under the following accessibility standards:

- Customer Service
- Employment
- Information & Communications
- Physical Environment
- Transportation
- Systemic

Associate Manager R. Howey provided a detailed update on the AODA Web Content Accessibility Compliance Project.

Trustees asked questions regarding the Accessibility Committee.

9. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by M. Waseem:

That the Waterloo District School Board suspend Bylaw 9.12 allowing trustees to speak without limit on the topic at hand.

-Carried-

Trustees asked questions regarding stakeholder engagement, accessibility standards, the accessiBe software, physical accessibility in schools, job fairs and transportation.

BOARD REPORTS

VOTING DIRECTION FOR ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This report is to provide direction for Trustee M. Radlein (or alternate) as voting delegate at the OPSBA AGM. As is the usual practice, OPSBA sent several items slated for consideration at the OPSBA 2024 AGM in order that they may be reviewed and discussed as necessary at the board table prior to the General Meeting in July.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board allow the voting delegate to vote at the 2024 OPSBA Annual General Meeting as they deem appropriate; and

That they take into consideration the discussions occurring at the June 10, 2024, Committee of the Whole meeting.

-Carried-

Abstained:
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee C. Johnson asked if the WRDSB has looked at other more central options now that the Grade 5/6 Congregated Class for Gifted Learners at Blue Heron Public School in Cambridge is being collapsed and combined with the Grade 5/6 class in Waterloo this fall, with busing provided. She also asked what will be done to identify these many gifted students who need special education. Superintendent J. Albrecht shared that staff were supporting all students with special education needs including gifted students. She reviewed the process which includes educators and paraprofessionals working closely with families to find ways to meet the student's needs in the classroom, in the school, including extensions and additional learning opportunities, and finally a tier three congregated classroom when needed.

Trustee K. Woodcock shared that some parents are feeling overloaded with School Day Announcements given the frequency of Days of Significance announcements and asked if there is a way to schedule or space out notices to ensure it is easy to locate school-based announcements. Executive Officer E. Dougan-McKenzie shared that system-wide messages are

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sent by the Communications department and that staff are looking at ways to set up a governance structure to manage messages. Interim Associate Director B. Lemon shared that there is no scheduling function in the system and school-based messages are sent when they are created.

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 10, 2024, be extended an additional 30 minutes to 10:00 p.m.

-Carried-

Trustee C. Watson asked about presentations from Planned Parenthood, whether they are standard for grades 4-8 and in accordance with curriculum guidelines for those age groups. Interim Associate Director B. Lemon noted that he is not intimately familiar with the presentation and would need to take this question back to find out more.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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

Whereas Cambridge's gifted class at Blue Heron PS for grades 5/6 has been eliminated because of low enrollment for the 2024/25 year, and these students will now be bussed to Elizabeth Zeigler in Waterloo;

Whereas cognitive assessment is dependent on the teacher and or parent to identify gifted children without a formalized cognitive screening process e.g. CCAT;

Whereas other school boards routinely test for giftedness at or around grade 3;

Whereas some gifted students may not be easily identified, especially students with disabilities;

Whereas parents were not consulted about the changes to the grade 5/6 gifted class;

Therefore be it resolved

That the Waterloo Region District School Board direct staff to identify a central location in Kitchener for the grade 5/6 gifted class for 2024/25 ensuring that Cambridge students aren't spending long periods of time on a bus; and

That the WRDSB trustees request that staff bring forward a written report on the benefits and challenges of the current WRDSB gifted program and screening process, as well as information about the current number of children identified by year and grade, histograms showing the distribution of giftedness identification rates by numbers of schools, parental concerns, and the possibility of a pilot project for formalized cognitive screening and the advantages of a board wide formalized cognitive screening process; and

That this report be presented to trustees for the first Committee of the Whole in October 2024.

Trustee C. Watson served the following Notice of Motion with support from Trustee B. Cody.

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Whereas the WRDSB projections for 2023/24 were short by 300 students and funding from the Ministry of Education is based on student enrollment;

Whereas some parents are choosing to enroll their non-Catholic JK, SK children in the Catholic Educational system;

Whereas the WRDSB does not record statistical data as to why parents withdraw their children from the WRDSB school board;

Whereas many parents have shared their concerns and believe that identity politics and ideologies are taught in the classroom and have threatened to pull their children out of the WRDSB school board;

Therefore be it resolved

That the Waterloo Region District School Board direct staff to prepare a report with the historical data and trends for the last ten years concerning WRDSB enrolment data for JK and SK, birth rates, immigration rates and regional growth, and that the data collection and analysis be presented to the board of trustees at a committee of the whole in the fall 2024; and

That Waterloo Region District School Board amends policy 4012 School Attendance Area to include an exit interview or survey for all parents who leave the WRDSB to help determine why parents are leaving the WRDSB and that this information be presented to trustees as part of budget deliberations.

Notices of Motion will be scheduled by the Agenda Development Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

12. Moved by S. Estoesta, seconded by C. Watson:

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 10, 2024, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.