

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2024
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, S. Estoesta, C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, M. Ramsay*, M. Waseem, C. Watson* and K. Woodcock.

*Virtual Attendance

Student Trustee F. Luo was in attendance and Student Trustee D. Lakhanpal was not in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), L. Agar, D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, M. Armellini, J. Brown, B. Chatha, V. Collis, C. Dey, E. Dougan-McKenzie, J. Fedosoff, C. Hill, H. Hughes, P. Kaur, N. Landry, D. Lane, B. Lemon, S. Miller, M. Newlands and C. Sagar.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the September 23, 2024, Board Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CELEBRATING BOARD ACTIVITIES

Chairperson J. Weston charred regrets from Student Trustee D. Lakhanpal.

Chairperson J. Weston recognized the start of National Truth and Reconciliation Week and the upcoming National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day on September 30, 2024.

Trustee S. Piatkowski attended the opening of this year's United Way Campaign and March of 1,000 Umbrellas.

Vice-Chairperson M. Radlein and Chairperson J. Weston attended the Awards of Excellence scholarships from the Congress of Black Women of Canada (CBW) – Waterloo Region and the Caribbean Association of Waterloo Region (CCAWR) on September 22, 2024. Eight WRDSB students were recognized and received scholarships.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT GOOD NEWS UPDATE

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

DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations scheduled.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of September 23, 2024, and the actions contained therein, be approved with the exception of folios 11 and 16.

-Carried-

FOLIO 11- JUNE 24, 2024, BOARD MEETING MINUTES CONSENT AGENDA

Chairperson J. Weston provided clarification that the Process for Addressing Concerns for families is not the same as the process Trustees should follow when receiving a concern from parents. Trustees are to include the Director of Education in their inquiries.

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

That Folio 11, from the consent agenda of the September 23, 2024, Board Meeting, and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

FOLIO 16 - SEPTEMBER 16, 2024, COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 2002 - PARTNERSHIPS AND SPONSORSHIPS

Trustees discussed the use of the word “values” in Board Policy 2002 - Partnerships and Sponsorships and its meaning. It was noted that values include the Strategic Plan, Vision and Mission statements.

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

That Folio 16, from the consent agenda of the September 23, 2024, Board Meeting, 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 K. Woodcock, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the agenda of the September 23, 2024, In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

That the consent agenda of the September 23, 2024, In Camera Board Meeting and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

HUMAN RESOURCES MATTER

C. A confidential Human Resources matter was also actioned.

RISE AND REPORT

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

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.

REPORTS

BOARD IMPROVEMENT AND EQUITY PLAN UPDATE: SUMMER LEARNING

System Administrator, K. Moore provided an overview of summer programming in 2024 totalling 4,990 students completing programs. It was noted that minimizing learning loss and maximizing potential for success for more vulnerable students is the primary focus of the Summer Learning Program (SLP). She shared that in 2024 the SLP expanded from SK to Grade 2 to include up to Grade 5 at 29 schools as opposed to 25 schools in 2023. Additional information about the SLP's daily operations was provided.

Speech-Language Pathologist S. Kilian shared some of the supports provided by Speech-Language Pathologist over the summer.

Speech-Language Pathologist V. Edwards-Crawford provided information on Scarborough's Reading Rope, a focus during their classroom visits.

Social Worker A. Ofori-Atta provided information on the 18 Social Emotional Learning Workshops during the summer months.

System Administrator, K. Moore shared feedback from families/caregivers and educators. She provided information on the Grades 6-8 Literacy and Numeracy Summer School including educator feedback. She also provided information on the Secondary Summer School including both in person and eLearning. Administrator P. Miller provided information regarding Co-operative (Co-op) Education credits. Two secondary students provided feedback from their co-op placement at the SLP.

System Administrator, K. Moore concluded the presentation with gratitude for all the summer learning staff.

Trustees asked questions regarding speech-Language pathologist and social-emotional supports, data regarding student confidence, and eligibility for SLP.

REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

There were no Board reports.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

The Board received the following communications:

- Lambton Kent District School Board to Minister of Education
- Conseil Scolaire Catholique to Minister of Education
- Ministry of Education to Waterloo Region District School Board
- Minister of Education to Waterloo Region District School Board
- Ministry of Education to Waterloo Region District School Board
- Ministry of Education to Waterloo Region District School Board
- Toronto District School Board to Ontario College of Teachers
- Toronto Catholic District School Board to Waterloo Region District School Board

OTHER BUSINESS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Executive Officer E. Dougan-McKenzie presented Trustees with the first monthly Community Engagement Update. She reviewed the Strategic Directions and the WRDSB Community Engagement Charter. She shared with Trustees a number of recent partnerships between the WRDSB and community organizations and related activities and events.

Trustees asked questions regarding the initiation of partnerships and receiving quantitative stakeholder engagement data in the future.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee S. Piatkowski asked how the WRDSB responds to extreme heat and if schools are ever closed for heat. Superintendent J. Fedosoff shared that schools cannot close for extreme heat and shared the related legislation regarding school closures and health and safety. He provided a number of ways the WRDSB responds to extreme heat at a site based level including:

- additional breaks;
- ensuring access to water;
- rotating staff and students through areas with air conditioning in schools; and
- rescheduling strenuous activities.

Superintendent J. Fedosoff also provided information on smog days which may also result in cancelled tryouts and strenuous activities.

Trustee M. Ramsay asked, given the recent media attention at Toronto District School Board, if the WRDSB will need to review and update the field trip policy. Director j. chanicka responded that the WRDSB is confident that our field trip policy and procedures allows the WRDSB to be clear and transparent about the opportunities provided to students.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following Notice of Motion was served by Trustee S. Piatkowski with Support from Trustee S. Estoesta:

Advance work in preparation for 2026 Municipal Election – Trustee Determination and Distribution

Whereas Ontario Regulation 412/00 of the Education Act (O. Reg. 412/00) gives each Ontario school board the responsibility for confirming trustee determination and for providing trustee distribution calculations to the Ministry of Education (as part of the Board’s Determination and Distribution Report) and to the election clerks in all municipalities within the Board’s jurisdiction by April in each Municipal Election year; and

Whereas the distribution of Trustees (4 elected from Kitchener, 3 from Waterloo and Wilmot, 3 from Cambridge and North Dumfries, and 1 from Woolwich and Wellesley); in the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has not changed since the 1997 Municipal Election, when the number of Trustees was first set at 11; and

Whereas Regulation 412/00 sets the number of elected trustee positions on a district school board at the number that was determined by the Board for the 2006 school board election (exceptions to this are boards whose area of jurisdiction increased in 2009 because they merged with another board, or boards that experienced a significant demographic growth or a significant change in the size of their geographical areas of jurisdiction); and

Whereas there has been considerable growth and shifts in population in the Region of Waterloo in the 27 years since 1997; and

Whereas the Trustee Determination and Distribution process for the next Municipal Election (October 2026) would normally begin in mid-February 2026, with the receipt of PEG Reports

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(Population of Electoral Group Reports) from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), containing information on the number of eligible voters for each of the four types of boards (English Public, English Catholic, French Public, and French Catholic) within the municipalities of the school board's jurisdiction; and

Whereas a one-month window for decision-making makes consideration of anything but the status-quo very unlikely;

Whereas the WRDSB and the communities that it serves would benefit from a longer discussion of Trustee Determination and Distribution that includes options other than the status quo.

Therefore, be it resolved:

(a) That the Waterloo Region District School Board engage the services of a consultant with expertise in electoral maps and distribution to explore different options for Trustee Determination and Distribution;

(b) That the consultant chosen be asked to seek input and information from Trustees, co-terminus boards, other similar boards (similar size, and covering both urban and rural areas), Clerks in area municipalities, MPAC, and other subject-matter experts; and

(c) That the consultant chosen prepare a report for presentation to Trustees no later than May 31, 2025; and

(d) That Trustees decide on a preferred option for Trustee Determination and Distribution for the 2026 Municipal Election no later than June 30, 2025; and

(e) That Trustees reserve the right to change their final decision regarding Trustee Determination and Distribution in March 2026 if the information contained in the February 2026 PEG Reports changes any of the assumptions on which they initially based their preferred option.

The Notice of Motion will be scheduled by the Agenda Development Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Board Meeting of September 23, 2024, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.