

**JANUARY 27, 2025
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: M. Radlein (Chairperson), B. Cody, S. Estoesta, C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Ramsay, M. Waseem, C. Watson, J. Weston and K. Woodcock.

Student Trustees D. Lakhanpal and F. Luo were not in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: S. Miller (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, J. Brown, B. Chatha, E. Dougan-McKenzie, J. Fedosoff, A. Gaymes-San Vicente, C. Hill, H. Hughes, P. Kaur, N. Landry, D. Lane, B. Lemon, N. Muhammad, M. Newlands and C. Sagar.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson M. Radlein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by K. Woodcock:

That the agenda of the January 27, 2025, Board Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CELEBRATING BOARD ACTIVITIES

Chairperson M. Radlein welcomed Nasir Muhammad, the newly hired Executive Manager of Information Technology Services, to the WRDSB.

Chairperson M. Radlein acknowledged and reflected on that today is Holocaust Remembrance Day and National Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia is on January 29.

Trustees J. Weston and M. Radlein, along with the Chairperson of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, performed the puck drop at the Battle of Waterloo - School Day Game hosted by Wilfred Laurier University. 3,300 local Grade 1 through Grade 8 students were in attendance.

Chairperson M. Radlein visited Groh Public School.

Trustees C. Johnson, J. Meissner, M. Radlein, J. Weston and K. Woodcock attended the Public Education Symposium hosted by the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

Trustee C. Johnson visited Westvale Public School and Coronation Public School.

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.

DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations scheduled.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by S. Estoesta:

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of January 27, 2025, and the actions contained therein, be approved with the exception of folios 21-24.

-Carried-

FOLIOS 21-24 - SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION REPORT, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2024

Trustees inquired as to why when suspensions are decreased, violent incidents were increased in both November and December. Interim Associate Director B. Lemon shared that staff investigated the trend and the increased activity results from reported incidents specified as “hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences”. In both months multiple students were involved in a single incident. He noted that while an occurrence code may need to change as further information comes to light through the investigation process, the definitions of types of occurrences are defined clearly.

3. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by S. Piatkowski:

That folios 21-24, from the consent agenda of the January 27, 2025, 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 M. Waseem, seconded by S. Piatkowski:

That the agenda of the January 27, 2025, In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera with the addition of a Capital Priorities Update.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

B. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the consent agenda of the January 27, 2025, In Camera Board Meeting and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

C. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by B. Cody:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve an unpaid leave of absence for Trustee C. Johnson if an announcement for a provincial election occurs prior to March 24, 2025; and

That the leave be effective immediately following the announcement up to and including the day of the election.

-Carried-

Abstained: C. Johnson

D. Moved by S. Estoesta, 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

Trustee K. Woodcock declared a conflict of interest regarding the motion as it relates to the letter from Near North District School Board.

REPORTS

There were no reports scheduled.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

The Board received the following communications:

- Near North District School Board to Ontario Public School Boards' Association
- Durham District School Board SEAC to Ontario College of Teachers

Trustees discussed a motion to write a letter in support of the letter received from Near North District School Board.

Trustee K. Woodcock declared a conflict of interest with this motion.

4. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association in support of the letter dated January 17, 2025, from the Near North District School Board regarding School Board Efficiencies.

-Carried-

Opposed:

B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson
J. Weston

Abstained:

K. Woodcock

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ANNUAL COMMUNITY REPORT

The report was provided for information.

The report provides families and the wider community with an update on the WRDSB's progress on improving students' learning environment and education experience. This year staff have benchmarked against previous accomplishments and reported on areas that were not tracked in the past. The Annual Community Report shares some of the work WRDSB staff does to ensure all students achieve their goals and feel seen and included. This aligns with WRDSB's North Star that identity and social location no longer predict outcomes, and to ensure success for all.

Trustees asked questions regarding the daycare spaces, the North Star, accessible design standards and the virtual desktop program.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee J. Weston asked what Artificial Intelligence (AI) guidelines have been developed, or are in development, for WRDSB students and staff. Interim Director S. Miller shared staff's excitement of the use of AI and the efficiencies and support it can provide staff and students. He noted that while preliminary work on guidelines have been made, staff were waiting on direction coming out of *Bill 194, Strengthening Cyber Security and Building Trust in the Public Sector Act, 2024*. He shared that only a few school boards have implemented guidelines to date and that WRDSB staff have collaborated with those boards. Privacy, security and safety are a priority for WRDSB and will be underpinning AI guidelines. To inform the work, staff have developed an AI

community table where staff, students and the community can provide input on the use of AI in WRDSB.

Trustee C. Watson asked for clarification on why Waterloo Collegiate Institute's trip to the United States was cancelled last year, referencing a newspaper article indicating it did not have a competition component. Associate Director A. Gaymes-San Vicente indicated that there is an Administrative Procedures in place for such trips and that the required approvals outlined in the Administrative Procedure were not received prior to students being invited on the trip, and that the timelines did not allow for staff to ensure the remainder of the procedure, ensuring the safety of students and curriculum expectations outlined in the procedure's guiding principles, could be completed prior to the trip.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

5. Moved by J. Weston, seconded by J. Meissner:

That the Board Meeting of January 27, 2025, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.