

**FEBRUARY 10, 2025
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: M. Radlein (Chairperson), B. Cody, S. Estoesta, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Ramsay, M. Waseem*, C. Watson, J. Weston and K. Woodcock.

*Virtual Attendance

Trustee C. Johnson was unable to attend.

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

The following senior administration members were in attendance: S. Miller (Interim Director of Education and Secretary), L. Agar, J. Albrecht, A. Gaymes-San Vicente, C. Hill, N. Landry, D. Lane and B. Lemon.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson M. Radlein called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the February 10, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting, with the addition of a delegation, be approved with the exception of:

- **Board Policy 1003 - School Council**
- **Board Policy 3006 - Student Trustees & Student Representation within the Board**
- **Board Policy 6007 - School Nutrition Programs**

-Carried-

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustees M. Radlein and J. Weston visited a grade one math class at Queen Elizabeth Public School.

Trustee S. Piatkowski observed a grade seven math class at Lincoln Heights Public School.

Trustee M. Radlein visited Stewart Avenue Public School and Forest Glen Public School.

Chairperson M. Radlein announced that the Board of Trustees have appointed Scott Miller to the position of Director of Education for the Waterloo Region District School Board for a term of 3.5 years. She provided background on S. Miller's career at WRDSB which started in 1995. Director S. Miller thanked trustees and those who have had an impact on his career.

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

DELEGATIONS

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Paul Stephens - Consultation

Trustees were provided an opportunity to ask questions of clarification.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer the delegation's presentation to the Policy Working Group to consider the information provided.

-Carried-

STAFF FOLLOW UP

There were no staff follow up items.

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 6012 - PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO STUDENT CONCUSSIONS

Trustees discussed the portions of the policy that were struck out. The Policy Working Group indicated that they were included in the procedure and that it would satisfy legislation.

A recorded vote was requested on a motion to send the policy back to the Policy Working Group.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board refer Board Policy 6012 - Prevention and Response to Student Concussions back to the Policy Working Group to compare the policy against legislation.

-Defeated-

In Favour:

B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

Opposed:

S. Estoesta
J. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
M. Radlein
M. Waseem
J. Weston

K. Woodcock
*F. Luo

* 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))

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 6012 - Prevention and Response to Student Concussions as presented at the February 10, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

Opposed:
B. Cody
M. Ramsay
C. Watson

REPORTS

ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARY CHANGE - CARRIAGE CROSSING, WATERLOO

The proposed boundary change reassigns the Carriage Crossing neighbourhood in Northeast Waterloo from Lincoln Heights Public School for Junior Kindergarten to grade 8 to Millen Woods Public School for Junior Kindergarten to grade 6 and Lester B. Pearson Public School for grades 7 to 8. Staff have engaged all impacted families through an online survey and virtual public information session. Based on the feedback received, most impacted families and the broader community are very supportive of the proposed boundary change.

Trustees asked questions regarding communications with the families and the capacity at Millen Woods Public School.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the elementary school boundaries consistent with the boundary map shown in Appendix B (Proposed Millen Woods Public School and Lester B. Pearson Public School Boundaries); and

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve an exception for existing Grade 7 students registered at Lincoln Heights Public School to stay at Lincoln Heights Public School for Grade 8 in 2025/26 with transportation (ending June 30, 2026).

-Carried-

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR 2025-2026

In preparation of the 2025-2026 School Year Calendars, a consultation process was established with representatives from stakeholder groups within the Waterloo Region District School Board, which included employee federations, associations and administrators. In addition, discussions related to the alignment of School Year Calendars have occurred with the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB). As in past years, it is our committee's goal to ensure that the calendar is aligned as closely as possible with the calendar proposed by the WCDSB while also observing days of significance as we allocate PA Days and Exam/Assessment Days.

Trustees asked questions about the current year's exam days for grade 9 and 10 students.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the 2025-2026 School Year Calendars containing 194 school days, as outlined in Appendix A of the Report titled "School Year Calendars – 2025-2026".

-Carried-

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR INCIDENT STRATEGIES

This report was provided for information.

In response to the Trustee motion, staff engaged in structured interviews with the representatives of front-line staff groups in order to collect feedback specific to what each respective group experiences in the field. These interviews focussed on accounts of employee experience, feedback on local solutions and opportunities to share additional information. From an analysis of the data, the essential practices to effective responses to challenging student behaviour are staff collaboration and staff training and learning. In addition, staff have undertaken a more detailed analysis of the current and historic behaviour incidents in order to better understand root causes and patterns in these data.

Trustees asked questions regarding collaborative leadership, collecting this information regularly, staffing shortages, providing families with information on supports available, and classroom evacuations. Staff agreed to provide trustees with information on the number of staff on central support teams. Trustees also asked questions about staff training.

BOARD REPORTS

There were no Board Reports.

QUESTION PERIOD

Student Trustee Feiyang Luo asked if there was any reasoning or limitations that would prevent contraceptives from being left out and available in the school office for students to access. Interim Associate Director B. Lemon indicated that both students and public health nurses prefer a level of supervision over condoms so that students can feel safe and assured that the

condoms have not been tampered with. He suggested that any concerns over access should be directed to the school so they can make efforts to have them more available with best practices in mind. When asked about any central directions regarding the availability of condoms, Interim Associate Director B. Lemon will discuss the matter with his colleagues and would welcome the Student Trustee to provide him with any specific concerns or gaps in availability.

Trustee S. Estoesta asked staff to share information on why the WRDSB utilizes a summative approach for destreamed secondary students, the expectations of students and staff during this time, and the support available to students as they complete their summative work. Superintendent C. Hill shared that the goal is to ensure that our students are assessed fairly, supported appropriately, and provided with the best possible learning conditions. She indicated that Instructional Time Alignment with Provincial Standards and the WRDSB school year calendar and exam periods are developed in accordance with the Ministry of Education's guidelines and regulations. In alignment with this framework, WRDSB's calendar includes 177 instructional days, consistent with other school boards across Ontario, including the coterminous board. This ensures that students receive the same amount of instructional time as their peers across the province, maintaining equity and consistency in educational access. She informed trustees that the WRDSB utilizes a summative assessment approach rather than traditional exams in Grade 9 and 10. The Ministry of Ontario's Growing Success policy provides clear guidance that assessments should be:

- fair, transparent, and equitable for all students.
- supportive of students with diverse learning needs, including special education accommodations.
- ongoing and varied—not reliant on a single, high-stakes exam.

Research and student and family feedback have reinforced that traditional, one-shot final exams can amplify stress and anxiety, especially for students who are new to destreamed classrooms, learning the language of instruction, or receiving special education support. Under the Growing Success policy, final evaluations for Grades 9-12 can include projects, presentations, performances, or written tasks. It was shared that students are not out of the classroom without purpose—many are completing structured, rigorous summative tasks, which may include research projects, performance-based assessments, and portfolio work. Teachers and staff continue to work directly with students during the summative period. Their responsibilities include assessment support, credit rescue work with students and preparing report cards. It is recognized that assessment periods can be challenging for students and, as a result, WRDSB has implemented the following supports:

- Credit Rescue: Extra support for students at risk of not earning their credits.
- Assessment & Evaluation Days: Strategically placed to allow students additional time to complete summative tasks.
- Flexible Scheduling: Ensuring workload is spread out appropriately to reduce stress.

As a concluding remark, Superintendent C. Hill reiterated that the summative approach aligns with provincial policies, supports student success.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following Notice of Motion was served by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee B. Cody:

Whereas the WRDSB report, Staff Consultation Regarding Student Behaviour Incidents

states that , “The number of incident reports identified as student aggression saw an increase of 70% from the 22/23 school year to the 23/24 school year.”

Whereas classroom evacuations are not being monitored by trustees and there is no way to measure if evacuations are increasing or decreasing,

Whereas information about classroom evacuations will help determine which schools need extra support,

Whereas learning environments are being disrupted by classroom evacuations,

Whereas it has been suggested that most parents are not informed if their child’s classroom has been involved in a classroom evacuation because of a violent incident,

Therefore be it resolved that the WRDSB trustees direct staff to include “classroom evacuations” in the quarterly Report, “Student Behaviour Incidents Quarterly” to help trustees monitor the amount of class room evacuations each quarter and whether classroom evacuations are increasing or decreasing,

And that all parents of children in a classroom that has been evacuated because of a violent incident are informed about the evacuation.

This Notice of Motion will be scheduled for a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 10, 2025, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.