

**MARCH 24, 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 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, V. Collis, E. Dougan-McKenzie, A. Gaymes-San Vicente, C. Hill, H. Hughes, R. Hume, P. Kaur, N. Landry, D. Lane, B. Lemon and C. Sagar.

Other staff in attendance: C. Gingerich, R. Hower, R. Howey, D. Loveless, M. Mayer, V. McKenna, A. McLellen, S. Reidel, L. Unsworth and S. Watters.

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 March 24, 2025, Board Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

ANNOUNCEMENTS/CELEBRATING BOARD ACTIVITIES

Chairperson M. Radlein introduced Acting Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, Ryan Hume, who is attending his first Board Meeting this evening.

INTRODUCTION OF NEXT YEAR'S STUDENT TRUSTEES

Trustee C. Johnson introduced incoming Student Trustee Kinjal Kaur, a student at Galt Collegiate Institute, who was elected in the South riding.

Trustee M. Waseem introduced incoming Student Trustee Krishna Aarya Trivedi, a student at Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute, who was elected in the North riding.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustees K. Woodcock and M. Radlein attended the Waterloo Region Labour Council's Annual International Women's Day Lunch.

Trustee J. Meissner attended the University of Waterloo's robotics competition. A number of WRDSB students competed and Elmira District Secondary School's team won a number of awards.

Student Trustee F. Luo invited trustees to donate at a student-led book drive at Country Hills Public School this Saturday.

Trustees S. Estoesta, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein and K. Woodcock attended the Elizabeth Ziegler Public School community meeting last week to discuss the school closure.

Chairperson M. Radlein attended the Muslim Students Association's Iftar Dinner.

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 for this meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of March 24, 2025, and the actions contained therein, be approved with the exception of Folios 20 #5, 21 #7 and Folio 22 #8.

-Carried-

MARCH 17, 2025, COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES - FOLIOS 20-22

Trustee C. Watson spoke to the two amendments about parents specifically sharing concerns rather than just providing input on the educational needs of students. She asked trustees to reconsider allowing the amendments. Trustees discussed the amendments.

Trustee S. Piatkowski called a Point of Order, noting that trustees cannot assume why other trustees are voting for or against something. Trustee C. Watson explained further what she was trying to say about the motions and the impact on the consultation. Chairperson M. Radlein confirmed that town halls, in nature, will include hearing from parents.

After further discussion Trustee C. Watson indicated that she would like her amendments withdrawn as she has heard that trustees want to hear parent concerns.

Trustee M. Ramsay called a Point of Order asking why it is acceptable for a trustee to use Point of Order to interrupt another trustee without it being addressed. Chairperson M. Radlein asked what Point of Order was not addressed. Trustee M. Ramsay withdrew his Point of Order as it was not addressed.

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

That Folios 20-22, from the consent agenda of the March 24, 2025, Board Meeting, and the actions contained therein, be approved with withdrawal of amendment motions #5 and 7.

-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 S. Estoesta, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the agenda of the March 24, 2025, In Camera Board Meeting be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera with the addition of Chair's Concern to Other Business.

-Carried-

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

That the consent agenda of the March 24, 2025, In Camera Board Meeting and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

RISE AND REPORT

C. Moved by J. Meissner, 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.

REPORTS

Trustee M. Waseem left the meeting.

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CHARGES BY-LAW ANNUAL REVIEW

This report was provided for information.

The annual increase in Education Development Charges (EDC) rates is capped under Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 20/98. The maximum eligible charge established as part of the 2022 by-law amendment is sufficient to allow the WRDSB to increase its EDC charges annually, in compliance with O. Reg. 20/98. As such, no further increase to the maximum EDC charge can be recommended at this time. A motion was approved, directing staff to annually review the rates. The EDC rates, approved as part of the 2022 amendment, will increase on June 1, 2025, and will be \$3,448 per unit (residential) and \$1.91 per square foot (nonresidential).

BOARD IMPROVEMENT AND EQUITY PLAN UPDATE - MATH ACHIEVEMENT ACTION PLAN

This presentation was provided for information.

System Administrator S. Watters introduced the staff providing the presentation and provided an overview of the presentation. Math Consultant C. Gingerich outlined the foundational beliefs that underpin our approach to math education in the WRDSB. She reiterated the Ministry's Math Achievement Action Plan's structure around three priority action areas:

- Curriculum Fidelity
- Math Content Knowledge for Teaching
- Knowing Students

She then shared information about a Ministry of Education visit in November. On the first day, Education Officers visited three schools to see how strategies are being applied in classrooms. On the second day, they spent time with the Math Facilitators, discussing implementation, professional learning, and the direct impact of targeted math interventions. Their overall feedback was highly positive and provided valuable affirmation of WRDSB's efforts.

Math Facilitator L. Unsworth shared information on how early numeracy supports are expanding to kindergarten and ACE educators. Math Facilitator A. McLellen shared how a collaborative partnership with a teacher in a congregated LD classroom at Prueter Public School has led to opportunities to adapt resources and facilitate professional development with other teachers supporting students with Learning Disabilities. She also provided information on supports provided to non-ministry-identified schools.

Trustee M. Waseem joined the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

System Administrator S. Watters shared that student confidence in math has increased from the beginning of the year to mid-year based on survey results. Math Facilitator V. McKenna provided information on the objective to gain a deeper understanding of students' self-perception in mathematics and identified ways to strengthen their confidence. She also provided quotes from a few students sharing how Tier 2 and Tier 3 support has influenced their perception of their mathematical abilities.

System Administrator S. Watters provided data from tracking engagement of the Elementary Long-Range Plans through Google Analytics. The data shows that WRDSB educators continue to explore the site for the first time and a strong number of users are coming back regularly, indicating that the Long-Range Plans are being integrated into classroom planning and instruction. To summarize key findings, staff played a short video highlighting the survey results of educators and administrators in Ministry identified schools summarizing their perspectives on professional learning, assessment resources, and instructional confidence.

Math Consultant R. Hower shared that as staff continue to integrate math technology tools into student learning, they are seeing significant engagement across key grade levels. She also shared ways the WRDSB is engaging families and shared gains students are making and how these tools are supporting their progress in math. At the start of the year, 16.4% of students demonstrated fluency. Now, that number has increased significantly, with 44% of students reaching fluency. These gains mean that more students can recall basic facts automatically, freeing up cognitive resources to focus on more complex problem-solving.

Trustees asked questions regarding funding from the Ministry of Education, trends in student confidence in math, the Long-Range Plans and special education.

REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

There were no reports from Board members.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications received.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no Other Business.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee K. Woodcock apologized for her actions earlier in the meeting and for not adhering to the meeting norms.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The following Notice of Motion was served by Trustee S. Piatkowski with support from Trustee C. Johnson:

Whereas revised wording for regulation Ontario Regulation 463/97: Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance requires that all trustees be physically present in the meeting room for Committee of the Whole meetings unless the Chair approves the trustee to participate by electronic means.

Whereas this regulation, together with s.228(1)(e) of the Education Act, means that missing one regular Committee of the Whole meeting (public or private) would result in a trustee vacating

their seat if the trustee fails to be physically present and has not been approved to participate by electronic means or fails to participate by electronic means, if approved to do so.

Whereas, the board has no authority to approve an absence by a trustee from a regular Committee of the Whole meeting, as they do from a regular board meeting.

Whereas, no other level of government in Canada requires elected officials to vacate their seats for missing a single meeting.

Be it resolved that

The WRDSB write a letter to Paul Calandra, the newly appointed Minister of Education, supporting the concerns about this regulatory provision that have been raised by OPSBA, CODE, and other Ontario school boards.

That the WRDSB ask the Minister to amend Ontario Regulation 463/97: Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance so as to allow boards to approve an absence of a trustee from a Committee of the Whole meeting in the same way that the regulation gives them the right to do so for a regular board meeting.

That copies of this letter be shared with local MPPs, other Ontario school boards, OPSBA and CODE.

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

Whereas staff are currently soliciting feedback and preparing an update to the Student Mental Health and Addictions Strategy for 2025-2028, resilience is widely recognized as a protective factor for mental health and well-being and promoting student resilience aligns with the WRDSB's commitment to supporting students and ensuring that all students have the tools to succeed in the face of adversity;

Whereas research has shown that resilience is not a fixed trait, but a skill developed through experience, especially by overcoming manageable challenges with appropriate support (Meichenbaum, 1977; Masten, 2001) and that fostering resilience in students supports better emotional regulation, problem-solving skills, and overall academic and personal outcomes (Seery et al., 2010; Duckworth et al., 2007);

Whereas educational practices such as creating low-stakes challenges, teaching coping strategies, building strong student-teacher relationships, and promoting a growth mindset have been proven effective in supporting the development of resilience in students;

That the WRDSB Trustees direct staff to provide a written report on the specific strategies currently employed, and or that will be employed, to promote resiliency in students in support of mental health.

And that the information be included in the Student Mental Health and Addictions Strategy for 2025-2028, and that a written report be presented to the Trustees at a Committee of the Whole in May 2025.

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

That the Waterloo District School Board suspend Bylaw 25.1.4. allowing the Notice of Motion served by Trustee Piatkowski to be considered at the March, 24, 2025, Board meeting without first being scheduled by the Agenda Development Committee.

-Carried-

Trustee discussed the motion to write a letter to the Minister of Education. It was noted that the Ad Hoc Board Committee Structure Committee would continue its work.

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

That the WRDSB write a letter to Paul Calandra, the newly appointed Minister of Education, supporting the concerns about this regulatory provision that have been raised by OPSBA, CODE, and other Ontario school boards; and

That the WRDSB ask the Minister to amend Ontario Regulation 463/97: Electronic Meetings and Meeting Attendance so as to allow boards to approve an absence of a trustee from a Committee of the Whole meeting in the same way that the regulation gives them the right to do so for a regular board meeting; and

That copies of this letter be shared with local MPPs, other Ontario school boards, OPSBA and CODE.

-Carried-

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Board Meeting of March 24, 2025, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.