



February 9, 2026

# Waterloo Region District School Board

## Minutes

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Special Meeting this evening at 6:00 p.m. in the Education Centre Boardroom, with the following members in attendance: M. Radlein (Chair of the Board), B. Cody, S. Estoesta, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Ramsay, M. Waseem, C. Watson, J. Weston and K. Woodcock.

Trustee C. Johnson was unable to attend this evening's meeting.

Student Trustees K. Kaur and K. Trivedi were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: S. Miller (Director of Education and Secretary), A. Gaymes-San Vicente and B. Lemon.

Other staff in attendance: S. Reidel.

---

### Call to Order

Chair M. Radlein called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Regrets from Trustee C. Johnson were shared.

### Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

### Delegations

There were no delegations scheduled.

### Board Reports

#### Motion - Letter to the Ministry of Education

This Notice of Motion was served by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee B. Cody at the February 2, 2026, Board meeting. Trustee C. Watson spoke to her motion, expressing concerns for parent advocacy if trustees were eliminated, noting that she believes that the Student and Family Support Offices are not a solution. She noted that she hoped all stakeholders could be involved in the decision-making regarding school board governance.

Trustees discussed the motion and a friendly amendment to send the letter more widely was accepted. Discussion continued regarding the role of trustees in local policy development.

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Minister of Education requesting a referendum be held or a formal province wide consultation process be developed and implemented before making a decision that would eliminate English Public Board Trustees; and**

**That this consultation process include province wide Town Hall meetings, surveys, virtual and in person focus groups and round table discussions that would seek input from students, parents, staff and community and also discuss research concerning the pros and cons of eliminating local English Public Trustee representation while also promoting open dialogue and two-way conversations; and**

**That a copy of the letter be sent to all Waterloo Region MPPs, local Mayors and the Regional Chair, OPSBA, all English Public School Boards, and the Ontario Premier; and**

**That this motion be considered time sensitive.**

-Carried-

Trustees requested that staff share this letter, and the next letter if approved, with media outlets.

### **Motion - Letter to the Ombudsman**

This Notice of Motion was served by Trustee J. Weston with support from Trustee J. Meissner at the February 2, 2026, Board meeting. Trustee J. Weston spoke to her motion indicating a belief that such a review would be within the mandate of the ombudsman and expressed concern for the lack of fairness to families in the English Public school system and a lack of transparency in the decision-making process.

Trustees discussed the motion. A concern was raised regarding the where as statements indicating that the board supervisions have resulted in less open, public meetings which can result in less accountability.

A friendly amendment was received to also send copies of the letter to local municipalities. This was followed by an amendment to ask the ombudsman to review the process for the decision making.

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

**That the language “process and” be added and motion be amended to read:**

**That the the Waterloo Region District School Board write to the Ontario Ombudsman to ask the office to review the process and potential impacts of removing English Public Trustees with respect to fairness, openness, transparency and accountability; and**

**That a copy of the letter be sent to all Waterloo Region MPPs, MPs, local Mayors, the Regional Chair OPSBA, OPSBA member Boards, Minister Calandra and the Ontario Premier.**

-Amendment Carried-

Discussion on the amended motion continued, citing the neutrality of the ombudsman. Trustees also further discussed the where as statements included in the report and it was determined that the one statement would be amended to say “Whereas the removal of democratically elected Trustees at some supervised Boards has resulted in less open, public meetings which can result in less accountability.”

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

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board write to the Ontario Ombudsman to ask the office to review the process and potential impacts of removing English Public Trustees with respect to fairness, openness, transparency and accountability; and**

**That a copy of the letter be sent to all Waterloo Region MPPs, MPs, local Mayors, the Regional Chair OPSBA, OPSBA member Boards, Minister Calandra and the Ontario Premier.**

-Amended Motion Carried-

Trustees discussed the timelines for sending the letters with consideration given to a possible Ministry decision in March. Direction S. Miller shared that staff will work to get the letter written and sent as soon as possible, giving a timeline of within a week if not sooner.

## Adjournment

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

**That the Special Board Meeting of February 9, 2026, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.