



February 23, 2026

Waterloo Region District School Board

Notice of Board Meeting

The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held in the Boardroom, Building 2, 1st Floor, 51 Ardel Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario, on Monday, February 23, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

Call to Order

Territorial Acknowledgement and O Canada

Approval of Agenda

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Communications Good News Update

H. Hughes

Delegations

Consent Agenda

Receipt/Approval of Minutes:

Approve Minutes - Audit Committee Meeting of November 12, 2025

Approve Minutes - Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of November 25, 2025

Approve Minutes - Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of January 7, 2026

Receive Minutes - Board Meeting of February 2, 2026

Receive Minutes - Special Board Meeting of February 9, 2026

Approve Minutes - Policy and Governance Standing Committee of February 9, 2026

Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:

32 Staffing Information – Retirements and Resignations

B. Lemon

35 Staffing Information – Appointments

B. Lemon

37 Trustee Absence Approval

Chair

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J. Fedosoff

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Board Communications

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Other Business

Question Period (10 minutes)

Future Agenda Items (Notices of motion to be referred to Agenda Development Committee)

Adjournment



Report to Board

February 23, 2026

Subject: Staffing Information – Retirements & Resignations

Recommendation

This report is provided for information.

Status

The employees listed in Appendix A of this report have received acknowledgement of their retirement or resignation.

Background

The board's practice is to receive information regarding staff retirements and resignations at regular monthly board meetings.

Financial implications

Expenditures are accounted for within existing budgets.

Communications

Employees listed in this report have communicated through Human Resource Services.

Prepared by: Bill Lemon, Associate Director, in consultation with Leadership Council.

Appendix A

Staffing Statistics – Retirements Current at February 23, 2026

Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Robyn	Ioannidis	Teacher, Queensmount PS	March 30, 2026	27

Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Trevor	Ritchie	Department Head, Mathematics, Jacob Hespeler SS	June 30, 2026	31

Retirements: Administrative & Support Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Rick	Eckert	Head Custodian, Sir Adam Beck PS	May 31, 2026	27
Patti	Gutscher	Child Youth Worker, Bluevale CI	June 26, 2026	37
Irene	Metzger	Educational Assistant, Grand River CI	February 28, 2026	24
Miles	von Hausen	Network & Data Security Analyst, ITS	February 27, 2026	40

**Staffing Statistics – Resignations
Current at February 23, 2026**

Permanent Staff Resignations			
First	Last	Position/Location	Resignation Date
Jennifer	Daniells	Secondary Teacher, Forest Heights CI	February 17, 2026
Tanya	Hamilton	Elementary Teacher, Southridge PS	February 2, 2026
Heidi	Normore	Elementary Teacher, Saginaw PS	February 13, 2026
Emily	Varady	Elementary Teacher, Sir Adam Beck PS	February 13, 2026
Terry	Whetham	Elementary Teacher, William G Davis PS	February 13, 2026



Report to Board

February 23, 2026

Subject: Staffing Information – Appointments

Recommendation

This report is provided for information.

Status

The staff appointments as noted on Appendix A of this report are effective the dates indicated.

Background

The board's practice has been to have appointments presented for information at regular monthly board meetings.

Financial implications

Expenditures are accounted for within existing budgets.

Communications

Employees listed in this report have been advised of the appointments.

Prepared by: Bill Lemon, Associate Director, in consultation with Leadership Council.

Appendix A

Staffing Information – New Appointments Current at February 23, 2026

New Appointments: Elementary Teaching Staff			
First	Last	Location	Effective Date
Emma	Beltman	Sandowne PS	February 9, 2026
Kayla	Gaudette	Queen Elizabeth PS	February 9, 2026
Melissa	Legros	Moffat Creek PS	February 9, 2026
Lanqing	Lu	Chicopee Hills PS	February 2, 2026
Katherine	McClanahan	Oak Creek PS	February 2, 2026
Melissa	Mather	William G Davis PS	February 4, 2026
Rebecca	Smith	Blue Heron PS	February 11, 2026
Rachel	Steckly	Forest Glen PS	February 10, 2026

New Appointments: Secondary Teaching Staff			
First	Last	Location	Effective Date
Jax	D'Hondt	Kitchener CI	January 29, 2026

New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff			
First	Last	Position / Location	Effective Date
Delia	Loveless	Officer, Student Engagement, Communications	January 27, 2026
Teresa	Zuzinjak	Secretary, Stewart Avenue PS	February 17, 2026

New Hires - due to retirements, resignations or leaves and are to replace full or part time vacancies.

Human Resources & Equity Services



Report to Board

February 23, 2026

Subject: Absences from Board Meetings - February

Recommendation

This report is provided for information.

Status

This report provides a summary of approved absence requests from Trustees between the period of November 22, 2025 and February 20, 2026.

Approved Absences

Trustee	Date of Request	Meeting Date	Public Meeting	In Camera	Approved	Approved By	Approval Date
C. Johnson	02/06/26	02/09/26	Yes	N/A	Yes	M. Radlein (Chair)	02/09/26
M. Radlein	02/04/26	03/30/26	Yes	Yes	Yes	M. Waseem (Vice-Chair)	02/04/26

Background

The [WRDSB Bylaws](#) provide guidelines for absences under Section 13.2. Request to be Absent from a Board Meeting:

13.2.2. The Board gives the Chair and Vice-Chair the authority to approve absences on behalf of the Board and will notify the board at the next Board meeting of any absences as part of the Consent Agenda.

13.2.3. Trustees shall follow the process outlined in “Request for Approved Absence from a Board Meeting” to request approval from the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board for their absence.

Financial implications

There are no known financial implications to the approval of Trustee absences.

Communications

Trustee attendance at meetings is recorded and available on the WRDSB website.

Prepared by: Manager S. Reidel for Chair M. Radlein in consultation with Leadership Council.



Report to Board

February 23, 2026

Subject: Recommendations from the Policy & Governance Standing Committee

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the recommendations from the Policy & Governance Standing Committee meeting of February 9, 2026.

Status

Recommendations from the Policy & Governance Standing Committee are outlined in Appendix A for Board consideration.

Policy Recommendations

For ease of reference, copies of the policies for approval have been included in the appendices. The following policies are recommended for approval:

- Board Policy 3001 - Trustee Expenditures (Appendix B)
- Board Policy 4003 - Trespassing (Appendix C)
- Board Policy 4011 - School Parking Lot Safety and Students (Appendix D)
- Board Policy 5000 - Employment (Fair, Equitable, and Inclusive Hiring) (Appendix E)

Standing Committee Meeting Agenda Package, Recording and Minutes

For context and background on the recommendations, please refer to the following standing committee materials:

- [Agenda Package](#)
- [Meeting Recording](#)
- Meeting Minutes (included in Board meeting package)

Background

In accordance with [WRDSB Bylaws](#), Standing Committees assist the Board in fulfilling its duties related to governance with a system wide focus by providing advice on system issues.

The Policy & Governance Standing Committee will ensure Board policies, bylaws and trustee self-evaluation are in alignment with the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and operational goals.

Financial implications

Known financial implications for each recommendation are indicated within the applicable reports from the committee meeting.

Communications

Communications for each recommendation are indicated within the applicable reports from the committee meeting.

Prepared by: Manager S. Reidel for the Policy & Governance Standing Committee in consultation with Leadership Council.

Appendix A

Policy & Governance Standing Committee Recommendations

February 9, 2026

A. Board Policy 3001 - Trustee Expenditures (Appendix B)

That the Policy & Governance Standing Committee recommend approval of Board Policy 3001 - Trustee Expenditures as presented at the February 9, 2026 Policy & Governance Standing Committee meeting.

B. Board Policy 4003 - Trespassing (Appendix C)

That the Policy & Governance Standing Committee recommend approval of Board Policy 4003 - Trespassing as presented at the February 9, 2026 Policy & Governance Standing Committee meeting.

C. Board Policy 4011 - School Parking Lot Safety and Students (Appendix D)

That the Policy & Governance Standing Committee recommend approval of Board Policy 4011 - School Parking Lot Safety and Students as presented at the February 9, 2026 Policy & Governance Standing Committee meeting.

D. Board Policy 5000 - Employment (Fair, Equitable, and Inclusive Hiring) (Appendix E)

That the Policy & Governance Standing Committee recommend approval of Board Policy 5000 - Employment (Fair, Equitable, and Inclusive Hiring) as presented at the February 9, 2026 Policy & Governance Standing Committee meeting.



Board Policy 3001

TRUSTEE EXPENDITURES ~~TRAVEL, MEALS AND HOSPITALITY EXPENDITURES~~ —TRUSTEES

Legal References:	<i>Education Act, Section 171(1)17: Powers of Boards - Membership Fees and Travelling Expenses</i> <i>Education Act, Section 191(2): Travel Expenses</i> <i>Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive (Effective January 1, 2020)</i> <i>Ministry Memo 2006:B15 – School Board Expenditure Guidelines</i> <i>Ministry Memo 2009:B8 – Trustee Expense Guideline</i>
Related References:	<i>Administrative Procedure 4380 – Expense Reimbursement</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 4381 – Travel and Meals Expenditures</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 4382 – Hospitality Expenditures</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 4383 – In-Service Expenditures</i> <i>FS 17 AS6 – Request for Reimbursement of Expenses</i> <i>Board Policy 3008 – Use of Board Resources During the Election Campaign</i>
Effective Date:	<i>March 2007</i>
Revisions:	<i>June 18, 2018, February 8, 2021, February 9, 2026</i>
Reviewed:	<i>March 20, 2017</i>

1. ~~Preamble~~ Purpose

- 1.1 ~~The Education Act provides for reimbursement to members of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) trustees for expenses incurred while on WRDSB business or for professional development.~~
The policy that follows outlines the roles and responsibilities of members of the Waterloo Region District School Board (Board) where a trustee is to be reimbursed for purchases they have made on behalf of the Board for travel, meals, hospitality, out-of-pocket expenses or professional development.
- ~~1.2 The Education Act provides for a Board to reimburse trustees for expenses incurred while on Board business.~~

2. Application ~~Travel, Meals and Hospitality Expenditures~~

- 2.1 ~~It is the policy of the Board to reimburse trustees for out of pocket expenses incurred while on board business;~~ Reimbursement will be in accordance with Administrative Procedure (AP) 4380 – Expense Reimbursement, AP 4381 - Travel and Meals Expenditures, AP 4382 - Hospitality Expenditures and AP 4383 In-Service Expenditures ~~Travel, Meals and Hospitality Expenditures.~~
- 2.2 Expenses related to political activities or events are not reimbursed.
- 2.3 All expenses to be reimbursed must be reasonable and relevant to the business activity of the Board. The expenditures must be reasonable and transparent, with appropriate accountability and relate to the goals and objectives of the Board's Strategic Plan. Requests for employee time or other board resources, which are for trustee personal use, are not permitted.
- 2.4 For an expense to be paid or reimbursed it must have the appropriate authorizations and approvals as set out in Administrative Procedure 4380 – Expense Reimbursement, and AP 4381 - Travel and Meals Expenditures ~~Travel, Meals and Hospitality Expenditures.~~

- 2.5 The Board assumes no obligation to reimburse expenses that do not comply with this policy.
- 2.6 A detailed breakdown of trustee expenses and any required explanation must be posted ~~quarterly~~ **annually** on the Board website.
- 2.7 ~~It is the policy of the Board to~~ **The WRDSB will publicly report** ~~include~~ the total amount reimbursed to trustees in a public report published annually in November for the previous ~~budget year~~.

DRAFT



TRESPASSING

Legal References:	<i>Trespass to Property Act, R.S.O. 1990 Education Act Ontario Regulation 474/00 - Access to School Premises</i>
Related References:	Board Policy 6000 – Safe Schools Board Policy 6001 – Code of Conduct
Effective Date:	<i>February 23, 1998</i>
Revisions:	<i>March 17, 2014, February 9, 2026</i>
Reviewed:	<i>June 11, 2018, March 22, 2021</i>

1. Purpose Preamble

- 1.1 It is the policy of the ~~The~~ Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) ~~to will~~ give appropriate notice regarding access to, and the use of, school premises, ~~and to~~ ~~The~~ WRDSB authorizes the Director of Education to designate WRDSB employees and other duly authorized agents to act with the authority of an occupier in compliance with legislation contained in the Trespass to Property Act and Ontario Regulation Access to School Premises. recognizing that:

2. Application

The WRDSB recognizes that:

- 2.1 school premises exist for unique and specific purposes;
- 2.2 the WRDSB must safeguard school premises for those purposes on behalf of the public;
- 2.3 persons entering school premises without authority, or using them to engage in prohibited activities, may endanger such premises;
- 2.4 the Trespass to Property Act gives a school board all the rights and duties of an occupier in respect of its school premises;
- 2.5 unless invited or otherwise directed by the school principal (or designate), all persons who enter school premises and who are not students or staff members of that school, must report to the main office of the school promptly upon arrival and obtain the principal's (or designate's) permission to remain on the school premises.



Waterloo Region
District School Board

Board Policy 4011

SCHOOL PARKING LOT SAFETY AND STUDENTS

Legal References:	<u>Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2</u>
Related References:	<u>Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19</u>
Effective Date:	May 2004
Revisions:	June 12, 2017, March 22, 2021, February 9, 2026
Reviewed:	November 12, 2018,

1. Purpose

- 1.1** ~~It is the policy of the~~ The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) ~~to~~ will ensure that student safety is the priority when schools establish guidelines for the managing of traffic in school driveways and parking lots., recognizing that:

2. Application

The WRDSB recognizes that:

- 2.1** elementary students in Junior Kindergarten through to Grade six (6) must not be used to actively manage or direct traffic;
- 2.2** students in grades seven (7) to twelve (12) may assist only during special events, with training, direct supervision, and the required safety equipment.



EMPLOYMENT (FAIR, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE HIRING)

Legal References:	<i><u>Education Act Regulation 298 Operation of Schools - General (OREG 435-00)</u></i> <i><u>The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/112</u></i> <i><u>Ontario Human Rights Code</u></i> <i><u>Ontarians with Disabilities Act</u></i> <i><u>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)</u></i>
Related References:	<i>Board Policy 5001: Appointment of Principals and Vice-Principals; Elementary and Secondary</i> <i>Board Policy 5010: Conflicts Of Interest: Hiring And Placement Of Relatives</i> <i>Employment and Placement of Relatives</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 3340: The Selection of Personnel for Positions of Added Responsibility; Principal and Vice-Principal</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 3350: The Selection of Teaching Personnel for Positions of Added Responsibility; Coordinator, Consultant</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 3360: The Selection of Teaching Personnel for Positions of Added Responsibility; Department Head, Assistant Department Head</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 3370: Employee Candidate Screening, Interviewing and Selection</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 3600: Selection Procedure for ESS/OSSTF and ESS/OSSTF Related Positions</i> <i>Administrative Procedure 4360 – Principles of Business Conduct for Board Employees</i>
Effective Date:	<i>February 23, 1998</i>
Revisions:	<i>March 7, 2016, March 22, 2021, February 9, 2026</i>
Reviewed:	<i>February 13, 2017, April 23, 2018</i>

1. **Purpose Preamble:**

The Waterloo Region District School Board ("WRDSB") recognizes that, consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), employment practices and procedures at all levels should reflect, demonstrate understanding of, express a value in, and respond to a diverse population.

~~It is the policy of the~~ **The WRDSB, to will** ensure that all staff are employed through a fair, equitable, **accountable** and transparent process, and/or promoted based on qualifications, merit, and professional ability, lived ~~experience~~ and work experience. ~~and WRDSB staff should~~ reflect the diversity of the students it serves ~~and the Waterloo Region community~~. It is the aim of the Board to attract, develop and retain **qualified competent staff employees** in all job classifications and provide a workplace environment that is inclusive, welcoming and equitable to all.

2. **Application Policy:**

2.1. The WRDSB will:

- 2.1.1. **Apply** equitable recruitment, hiring, employment and promotion practices ~~shall be applied~~ to all applicants and employees of the Board and shall consider

individuals who self identify as Indigenous persons, members of racialized communities, gender identity/women, members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, persons with disabilities, and members of other historically marginalized communities, protected under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

~~Increasing diversity of the workforce in the school board is vital because the workforce should be reflective and representative of the students and community it serves.~~

2.1.2. ~~In keeping with our commitment~~ **Commit** to hiring, promoting and retaining the most qualified staff.;

2.1.3. ~~ongoing emphasis will be placed on the~~ **Emphasize** development and communication of these principles throughout the Board via administrative procedures.

Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights

2.2. The promotion and support for human rights in the context of employment, as protected under the Ontario Human Rights Code is vital to achieving a ~~diverse and representative~~ workforce to meet the needs of the diverse student body of the WRDSB.

~~The way to achieve an inclusive, diverse and representative workforce is to~~ **The WRDSB does this by:**

- **valuing**, **promoting** and **encouraging** the hiring of staff from under-represented communities;
- **ensuring** all employment policies and practices are non-discriminatory;
- **working** to intentionally identify and remove barriers for marginalized communities when identifying and setting job requirements and employment conditions at each stage of the hiring process.

Qualifications and Merit

2.3. ~~Although~~ **The WRDSB's** hiring policies ~~must~~ adhere to the qualification requirements set out in applicable Regulation (e.g. Regulation 298, "Operation of Schools – General"), ~~the Board~~ **and** recognizes the importance of the following when developing its selection and evaluation criteria:

- **valuing** applicants' additional experiences, lived experience, skills, backgrounds and perspectives;
- **granting** first consideration, where the skills, ability, and qualifications of the applicants are relatively equal, to applicants who self-identify as members of historically under-represented communities.

Where a collective agreement governs the hiring or promotional process, this will be done in a manner that is consistent with the ~~Board~~ **WRDSB's** collective agreement obligations.

Fairness and Transparency

2.4. ~~In recognition of its commitment to accountability as a fair, equitable and inclusive employer, the Board~~ **The WRDSB** will implement and sustain the following mechanisms to help ensure that candidates are evaluated through a fair and transparent process:

- a conflict of interest disclosure process;

- ~~bona fide~~ relevant job requirements and qualifications, while following the requirements as outlined in the applicable Regulation 298, Operation of Schools - General;
- where possible, diverse hiring panels to draw on ~~the~~ different experiences, skill sets, and educational and professional backgrounds in the ~~Board~~ WRDSB;
- objective evaluation criteria and structured interview questions that prevent selection bias.

Monitoring and Evaluation

2.5. In further demonstration of ~~its accountability to employment equity principles and guided by its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code~~, the ~~Board~~ WRDSB will monitor, evaluate and review the effectiveness of its hiring ~~practices~~ policy on a regular basis. This evaluation process will include:

- assessing the skills and competencies of its workforce and identifying any gaps;
- developing and implementing a response plan to ~~close~~ ameliorate the identified gaps
- collecting workforce demographic data, determining the diversity of the workforce and identifying any gaps in representation;
- developing and implementing a strategy to support the enhancement of diverse representation across all levels of the workforce;
- ensuring all employment systems, policies, procedures, and practices are non-discriminatory and free from systemic barriers.

Special Programs

2.6. The Ontario *Human Rights Code* enables organizations to develop and implement programs to help members from historically ~~disadvantaged~~ under-represented groups, which have experienced hardship, economic disadvantage, inequality, or discrimination. ~~Such programs strive to achieve substantive equity by creating opportunities for people and groups who face disadvantage and discrimination.~~

Where the ~~Board~~ WRDSB determines that specific marginalized communities are demonstrably under-represented within the Board's workforce, the ~~Board~~ WRDSB will consider implementing special programs to aid in creating employment opportunities for under-represented groups within our community. Such programs are expressly protected under the *Code*.



Report to Board

February 23, 2026

Subject: School Year Calendars: 2026 - 2027

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the 2026-2027 School Year Calendars containing 194 school days, as outlined in Appendices A and B of the Report titled “School Year Calendars: 2026-2027

Status

In preparation of the 2026-2027 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, administrators and community. Members of this year’s School Year Calendar Committee (alphabetically by surname) are:

Name	Role
Marsha Auxilly	President, Waterloo Region Occasional Teachers’ Local
Jennifer Bistolas	Counsellor, Ontario Principals’ Council [OPC] (Secondary)
Vicki Buder	President, ESS/OSSTF & STSWR/OSSTF
Estefania Brandenstein	Communications Officer
Justin Brown	Senior Manager, Human Resources & Equity Services
Danielle Bower	Payroll Officer
Brenda Cathcart	System Administrator, Learning Support Services
Carol Dey	Executive Manager, Human Resources & Equity Services
Susan Faber	President, Supervision Monitors and Cafeteria Assistants (SMACA OSSTF)
Jay Fedosoff	Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being (Committee Co-Chair)

Jenni Guy	Counsellor, Ontario Principals' Council [OPC] (Elementary)
Melissa Hilton	Extended Day Program Manager
Caitlin Plant	Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Member
Nick Landry	Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer of the Board
Carrie McCone	Paraprofessional Student Services Supervisor
Roger Mohammed	Manager, Payroll Services
Michelle Newlands	Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being (Committee Co-Chair)
Stephanie Oliver-Guppy	Manager, Human Resource Services
Ann Ofori-Atta	President, Paraprofessionals (PSSP OSSTF)
Gregory Patterson	President, Custodial & Maintenance Assoc. (CAMA OSSTF)
Laurie Pett	Human Resources Officer
Kathleen Woodcock	Trustee
Kristie Stanzel	Vice President, ETFO-WR
Kelly Sutherland	Supervisor of Application Student Systems, ITS
Andi Thiessen-Regehr	Manager, Business Services
David Vandenberg	President, District 24 T/OT OSSTF (Teachers Bargaining Unit)
Jenn Wallage	President, Waterloo Region DECE
Lynn Wilson	Educational Assistants Association (EAA)

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.

The 2026-2027 school year for both elementary and secondary students is as follows:

- September 2nd and 3rd, 2026 are PA days for both panels.
- September 8th, 2026 classes begin for both elementary and secondary students
- June 28th, 2027 is the last day for secondary students
- June 29th, 2027 is the last day for elementary students
- June 29th, 2027 is a PA day for secondary schools only
- June 30th, 2027 is a PA day for both elementary and secondary schools.

Background

In accordance with Regulation 304, district school boards are required to prepare, adopt, and submit to the Minister of Education, on or before the 1st day of March, a School Year Calendar. The Regulation also states that the School Year Calendar shall include a minimum of 194 school days of which 7 days may be designated by the board as professional activity days. Three of these days must be devoted to specific provincial education priorities. Furthermore, a board may designate up to 10 instructional days as examination days [Section 3. (3.1)].

Financial Implications

The School Year Calendar Committee continues to make every effort to align our school year calendar between panels (elementary/ secondary) and with that of the WCDSB. However, the proposal for the 2026-2027 school year results in two (2) unaligned days and this represents an additional cost to the Board in terms of providing student transportation.

The additional costs incurred for unaligned days during the 2026-2027 school year are estimated to be \$286,668; the Waterloo Region District School Board's share of this cost is estimated to be \$189,756 with the remaining balance being charged to the WCDSB.

Communications

Subsequent to Board approval of the above recommendation, School Year Calendars will be submitted to the Ministry of Education for Ministry approval. The School Year Calendars will be shared, noting that they are pending Ministry approval, with students, staff and members of the public following Board approval. As per Ministry direction, schools must communicate the date and purpose of the Professional Activity (PA) Day ten days before each PA day.

Prepared by:

- Alison Gaymes San Vicente, Associate Director, Education Services
- Michelle Newlands & Jay Fedosoff, Superintendents, Student Achievement & Well-Being, in consultation with Leadership Council



February 13, 2026

The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
315 Front Street West, 14th Floor
Toronto, ON, M7A 0B8

Subject: Urgent Request for Province-Wide Consultation Regarding English Public School Board Trustees

Dear Minister Calandra,

On behalf of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB), I am writing to formally request that the Ministry of Education initiate a comprehensive, province-wide consultation process or a referendum before any final decision is made to eliminate English Public School Board Trustees.

As the provincial government reviews the current school board governance model, it is vital that the voices of those directly impacted—students, parents, staff, and the broader community—are central to the conversation.

School Board Trustees serve as a critical democratic link between local communities and the provincial education system. They provide essential oversight and ensure that the unique needs of local students are reflected in board policies.

The WRDSB believes that removing this elected layer of governance without robust public engagement would significantly undermine local accountability.

To ensure a transparent and evidence-based decision, the WRDSB urges the Ministry to implement a consultation process that includes:

- **Public Forums:** Province-wide Town Hall meetings and virtual/in-person focus groups.
- **Broad Engagement:** Targeted surveys and round table discussions involving students, families, and education sector partners.
- **Research Transparency:** A public review of the "pros and cons" concerning the elimination of local English Public School Trustee representation.
- **Two-Way Dialogue:** An open platform that promotes authentic conversation between the Ministry and the constituents it serves.



We believe that a decision of this magnitude, which affects the democratic rights of Ontarians to have a voice in their public education system, must not be made in isolation. According to one poll, [“Support for elected trustees climbed to 59 per cent among parents with school-aged children”](#) and according to another poll, Ontarians [“believe the \[proposed\] changes would either make no difference for students or actively make things worse.”](#)

We look forward to your response and to the opportunity to participate in a meaningful dialogue regarding the future of educational governance in Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maedith Radlein".

Maedith Radlein
Chair, Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

cc: WRDSB Trustees
The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) for Waterloo Region
Local Mayors and the Regional Chair
Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and Member Boards
WRDSB Parent Involvement Committee
WRDSB Special Education Advisory Committee
Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils



February 13, 2026

Paul Dubé, Ombudsman
The Office of the Ontario Ombudsman
483 Bay Street
10th floor, South Tower
Toronto, ON M5G 2C9

Formal Request for Review: Proposed Removal of English Public School Board Trustees

Dear Ombudsman Dubé,

On behalf of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB), I am writing to formally request that your office review the process being used to remove English Public School Board Trustees as well as the potential impacts of their removal.

As an independent officer to help keep the government and public services accountable and protect the rights of Ontarians, your oversight is essential in evaluating whether this proposed transition aligns with the principles of accountability and transparency.

The role of the trustee is fundamental to Ontario Education, serving as a direct link between local families and the provincial education system. We hold significant concerns regarding the following:

- **Fairness:** The Minister of Education has stated the intention to remove the role of democratically elected English Public School Board Trustees and has stated that French and Catholic Trustees will not be removed.
- **Accountability:** Removal of democratically elected Trustees at some supervised Boards has resulted in less open and transparent, public meetings.
- **Truth and Reconciliation:** The removal of English Public School Board Trustees would result in the loss of Indigenous Trustees representation where it currently exists.
- **Student Voice:** The removal of English Public School Board Trustees would also result in the loss of Student Trustees, which is the sole legislated role giving voice to Ontario students in English Public Schools.
- **Public Support:** There has been no formal public consultation on the proposal to remove the role of English Public School Board Trustees and polls have shown



support for the role of Trustees and scepticism that the proposed governance changes will improve public education. According to one poll, [“Support for elected trustees climbs to 59 per cent among parents with school-aged children”](#) and according to another poll Ontarians [“believe the \[proposed\] changes would either make no difference for students or actively make things worse.”](#)

Given your office's mandate to investigate the administrative conduct of school boards and the provincial government, we believe a systemic review is necessary to ensure that efficiency is not prioritized at the expense of procedural fairness.

The WRDSB remains committed to ensuring that any changes to educational governance are rooted in evidence and maintain the highest standards of transparency for the people of Ontario.

The Minister of Education has indicated that a decision regarding the future of English Public Trustees is imminent. Therefore, we request that this review be considered a priority.

We look forward to your guidance on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maedith Radlein".

Maedith Radlein
Chair, Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

cc: WRDSB Trustees
The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Education
Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) for Waterloo Region
Members of Parliament (MPs) for Waterloo Region
Local Mayors and the Regional Chair
Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and Member Boards
WRDSB Parent Involvement Committee
WRDSB Special Education Advisory Committee
Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils