



April 27, 2026

Waterloo Region District School Board

Minutes

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 (Chair of the Board), B. Cody, S. Estoesta, C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Ramsay, M. Waseem, C. Watson, J. Weston and K. Woodcock.

Student Trustee K. Kaur was in attendance. Student Trustee K. Trivedi was absent.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: S. Miller (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, P. Bender, B. Chatha, J. Fedosoff, A. Gaymes-San Vicente, C. Hill, H. Hughes, R. Hume, N. Landry, D. Lane, B. Lemon, J. Maliha, K. Pividor and C. Sagar.

Other staff in attendance: B. Cathcart, M. Mayer, S. Reidel and S. Watters.

Guest: Lee Cookson, Director of Strategy, Overlap Associates.

Call to Order

Chair M. Radlein called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

1. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the agenda of the April 27, 2026, Board Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Tim Walker Memorial Awards

The Tim Walker Memorial Award for Environmental Stewardship recognizes school-based initiatives that promote environmental benefits, student engagement, and ecological leadership.

The following recipients were awarded \$500 to support their respective projects:

- Northlake Woods Public School: The Native Shade Tree Replacement Project

- Trillium Public School: The Trillium Peace and Learning Garden
- Forest Heights Collegiate Institute: The Lorax Play
- Kitchener-Waterloo Collegiate: Greenhouse Garden: A Natural Approach to Soil Amendment and Biodiversity Gains

Other Announcements

Trustees C. Johnson, M. Radlein and J. Weston attended the regional council meeting to support WRDSB Student Trustees.

Student Trustees K. Kaur and K. Trivedi advocated for affordable student public transportation rates at the regional council meeting.

Trustees S. Piatkowski and K. Woodcock joined the Honourable Bardish Chagger for a visit to Lexington Public School.

Trustee S. Piatkowski attended the Wilmot State of the Township event.

Trustees S. Piatkowski , M. Radlein and K. Woodcock attended the Waterloo State of the City Breakfast.

Trustees S. Piatkowski and J. Weston attended the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Let Grow Panel Discussion and Information Night event at Forest Heights Collegiate Institute.

Trustee K. Woodcock attended the Woolwich Mayor's Breakfast.

Trustees M. Waseem and K. Woodcock attended the Mayor's Dinner fundraiser for the Working Centre.

Chair M. Radlein attended the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) Guidance Training Session.

Chair M. Radlein also attended Sikh Heritage Day and the United Way Spirit Awards.

Chair M. Radlein visited Southwood Secondary School, attended the ACE Spring Fling at Northlake Woods Public School, and Smithson Public School's performance of Into the Woods.

Chair M. Radlein attended the land blessing for the Breslau Hopewell Crossing site.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Chair M. Radlein declared pecuniary interest for the previous in camera meeting.

Trustee K. Woodcock declared pecuniary interest for the Ontario Public School Boards' Association - Delegate.

Communications 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 M. Waseem, seconded by J. Meissner:

That the consent agenda of the Board Meeting of April 27, 2026, and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

Motions From In Camera Meeting

The following motions were approved in the In Camera session held earlier this evening.

Approval of Agenda

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

That the agenda of the April 27, 2026, In Camera Board Meeting be approved and be deemed to meet the legislative requirements for discussion in camera.

-Carried-

Consent Agenda

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

That the consent agenda of the In Camera Board Meeting of April 27, 2026, and the actions contained therein, be approved.

-Carried-

C. This item remains confidential in nature.

Rise & Report

D. Moved by M. Waseem, seconded by C. Johnson:

That the In Camera Board Committee Meeting of April 27, 2026, rise and report in public.

-Carried-

This concludes the reporting of In Camera motions.

Recommendations from Standing Committees

Policy and Governance Standing Committee

The Policy and Governance Standing Committee is recommending updates to three policies:

- Board Policy 4010 - Video Surveillance In Schools
- Board Policy 5002 - Leave-Of-Absence: Staff Seeking Or Holding Elected Office
- Board Policy 5009 - Travel, Meals And Hospitality Expenditures – Staff

A friendly amendment was accepted for Board Policy 5002 - Leave-Of-Absence: Staff Seeking Or Holding Elected Office to update the related reference for the 2022 Candidates' Guide for Ontario Municipal and School Board Elections to the 2026 Guide which was not previously available.

A request to develop a policy requirement for trustees who choose to run for federal or provincial government to take a leave of absence similar to that in Board Policy 5002 - Leave-Of-Absence: Staff Seeking Or Holding Elected Office was referred to the Policy and Governance Standing Committee for consideration.

3. Moved by S. Estoesta, seconded by J. Meissner:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the recommendations from the Policy and Governance Standing Committee meeting of April 13, 2026.

-Carried-

Staff Follow Up

There were no items of staff follow up.

Reports

Strategic Plan Consultation Final Report

In response to a March 2025 Board motion, the WRDSB conducted a comprehensive community consultation to evaluate the effectiveness of the current Multi-Year Strategic Plan. This process was supported by Overlap Associates Inc. and engaged 2,231 individuals including students, staff, families, and community members, through surveys, focus groups, and public consultations. Participants expressed high interest in priorities such as student well-being and engagement, yet reported lower confidence in the actual implementation of these goals. A recurring theme was the need for clearer language, as abstract terminology often creates a bottleneck for understanding. Stakeholders requested more transparent "closing the loop" communications regarding how feedback influences Board decisions. There is a strong community desire for measurable outcomes, clear milestones, and regular public reporting to demonstrate meaningful progress.

Based on the data collected, the report recommends that the WRDSB develop a new Multi-Year Strategic Plan during the 2026-2027 school year.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board suspend Bylaw 25.4.2. allowing trustees to speak more than twice to the topic at hand.

-Carried-

Trustees were provided an opportunity to ask questions of both staff and the representative from Overlap. Trustees asked questions regarding the report provided and next steps including further communication. Staff indicated that they would wait for the implementation of Bill 101 before moving far along in the development of a strategic plan.

Trustees discussed an amendment that would add a specific discussion on the Learner Profile. This amendment was withdrawn with the understanding that as it is mentioned in the Overlap report, it would be discussed as part of the strategic plan process.

Questions continued regarding the report received.

5. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by M. Waseem:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board develop a new Multi-Year Strategic Plan during the 2026-2027 school year; and

That the WRDSB Multi-Year Strategic Planning process be informed by the recommendations and information shared in the Engagement Summary and Recommendations report by Overlap Associates Inc.

-Carried-

Board Improvement and Equity Plan: Transitions and Pathways

This report was provided for information.

The report reviewed the impact of the MAT1LY course, designed to address learning gaps through increased instructional time on pre-algebra skills and the utilization of the Math180 program. Preliminary data indicates that student growth in core skills has exceeded program benchmarks for many participants. The report highlighted the expansion of the Math Instructional Support Team, funded through strategic investment. Current data reveals that 89% of educators now prioritise asking students to explain their thinking process following a mistake rather than providing immediate correction. Additionally, 40% of staff report being intentional about reinforcing the value of productive struggle and learning from errors throughout the semester.

The WRDSB is committed to preparing for future success through a robust framework of experiential learning and pathway programs. These initiatives are designed to bridge the gap between classroom theory and real-world application, focusing on essential skills development, critical thinking, and work-integrated learning. Cooperative Education (Co-op) serves as the fundamental pillar for these programs, which include the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), and Dual Credit opportunities.

The report highlighted that the WRDSB has enacted a successful improvement plan, resulting in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that now exceed provincial averages:

- SHSM participation has grown from approximately 1,000 students in 2022 to 2,975 in the current term.
- The SHSM completion rate has increased significantly from 60.5% to 89.6%, surpassing the provincial average of 79.4%.
- Data indicates that students participating in these experiential programs benefit from a higher five-year graduation rate compared to the provincial average, attributed to increased engagement and the relevance of their studies to future career goals.

Trustees asked questions regarding the MAT1LY course, data collection and sharing, setting an encouraging and welcoming tone in the classroom, supporting transitions, and funding sources.

Director's Quarterly Report

This report was provided for information.

The April 2026 Director's Quarterly report reflects some of the many ways we are keeping students at the centre of our work, and building strong communities through partnerships with families, local leaders and community members. The report highlights school visits, community events, student events, community meetings and government relations.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board extend the Board meeting an additional 30 minutes to 10:00 p.m.

-Carried-

Board Reports

Schedule Ad Hoc Board Committee Structure Committee

Recommendations

As requested by the Board of Trustees, the ad hoc committee met twice in 2026 to review the WRDSB Board Bylaws and Standing Committee structure implemented on August 31, 2025. At this time, the committee is recommending that the Draft Bylaws be scheduled for discussion at the May 25, 2026, Policy & Governance Standing Committee meeting for minor updates.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board schedule the Ad Hoc Board Committee Structure Committee recommendations for the May 25, 2026, Board meeting for discussion.

-Carried-

Ontario Public School Boards' Association - Delegate

Trustee K. Woodcock left the meeting.

Trustees confirmed or appointed trustees to positions within the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) for 2026 and in preparation for the Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) being held from June 4-6, 2026 in Ottawa, Ontario.

Voting Delegate

Trustee S. Estoesta nominated Trustee S. Piatkowski for the position of Delegate. There were no other candidates for the position and Trustee S. Piatkowski was acclaimed as the Voting Delegate.

Alternate Delegate

Trustee C. Johnson nominated Trustee M. Radlein for the position of Alternate Delegate. Trustee M. Radlein accepted the nomination. There were no other candidates for the position and Trustee M. Radlein was acclaimed as the Alternate Delegate.

Trustee K. Woodcock rejoined the meeting.

Board Communications

The Waterloo Region District School Board received the following communications:

- Waterloo Region District School Board to Minister of Education - Classroom Evacuations
- Township of Woolwich to Premier of Ontario and Minister of Education
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to Premier and Minister of Education
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to Ontario Ombudsman

Trustees discussed a motion to write letters of support for the concerns expressed by Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

8. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by B. Cody:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board write letters in support of the two letters from Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, dated April 22, 2026 and echo their concerns.

-Carried-

Opposed: M. Ramsay

Other Business

There was no other business.

Question Period

Trustee C. Watson asked when the deferred motion regarding a Collaboration Sub-Committee is scheduled for. Manager S. Reidel indicated that it is scheduled for the June 15, 2026, Student Achievement and Well-Being Standing Committee meeting.

Future Agenda Items

There were no future agenda items.

Adjournment

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

That the Board Meeting of April 27, 2026, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.