

WRAPSC Minutes April 1, 2025

Welcome: Chair of WRAPSC Sara

Territorial Acknowledgement: Angie Hallman

Director of Education: WRDSB Director of Education Scott Miller

- Scott Miller' history: had 2 retired principal parents; went to the high school here at Forest Heights; Western, U of T; his kids went to WRDSB schools; taught Grade 7 & 8 in Centennial; taught at Preston Heights & Glenview Park; became a VP; Sheppard's School; Townsend; worked at the Education Center (assistant superintendent; student success; superintendent); finance, IT, facilities, extra curriculums as a teacher, coaching, student activities director, etc.
- Scott's belief: Sense around success builds success; everyone has something to offer; celebrate people's strengths; see the good in people and cultivate a sense of belonging; collective responsibility
- Conditions for building community: networking, building with school board
- Encourage children to take risks; pedagogy and assessment (what does it look like in our classrooms); high expectations
- Teachers have high professional standards so even though people have thoughts of standards being watered down, this isn't the case
- Student achievement & well-being goals: to help children achieve higher than kids expect; sense of belonging
- Parents as partners: Scott listened to parent's perspectives on what was working well and what wasn't
- Find common ground: children being successful at school instead of focusing on polarizing issues
- Listening to students
- Teacher's plan: to ensure students have opportunities to be successful and to work with community partners
- Special education plan: IEP, what are the accommodations needed, sometimes parents tell school what their child needs
- Scott wants to come out to things like WRAPSC & wants to listen
- Member Question: What are the challenges you see happening now in our schools? Response: The cultures and beliefs that have become part of our region are amazing. Challenges are around mental health & well-being, access to misinformation, challenges for kids to know who to go to about images they see when parents have told them not to look at these (being available for conversations with kids and bringing parents into it).
- Member Question: Does Scott Miller get to meet with political leaders? Response: That is mainly a trustee job. There are some opportunities that Scott has to speak to leaders like Right to Read Report. Absenteeism is a large problem (1/3 of what spends goes towards absenteeism that could go to fund EAs) (note: absenteeism is referring to staff not students)
- Special education (15% of gov. funding): special education and mental health component
- Board has \$1B budget
- Dollars do increase from the government in spending for education, but not percentage-wise

- Absenteeism is referring to staff not students

High School: Principal Paula Bender

Transition to & from High School:

- Smooth pathway is the plan for K-Grade 12
- K-6 sometimes
- High school is a big academic and social transition
- Introduction to My Blueprint in elementary school
- Michelle: more funding for K to Grade 8; K to 8 have separate staff meeting, different doors for students

Transitioning into high school:

- My blueprint introduced in Grade 7 & 8 for course selection
- Secondary school open houses: recommended to attend even before grade 7; student volunteers
- Cambridge does 2 open houses
- Course selection resources & support at grade 8
- Paula's high school sends support into (elementary) feeder schools about course selection
- Paula's school hosts meeting
- Students are scared during transition to high school; fears that no one will care about them in high school, but is not true: high school teachers care about their students
- High schools sometimes talk back with grade 8 teachers to discuss problems that they see ie math holes in learning
- Member Question: How do they help students that are 2SLGBTQIA+ to help the transition to connection. Response: High schools have CYW
- Member Concern: The kids in clubs like GSA and other clubs don't connect with other kids in the high schools because of being in a club with students already. Response: Teachers are working on building classroom connections.
- Member Concern: How many child and youth workers are there at high school? Response: 1.5 CYW's at Paula's school. 1550 students at Paula's. Guidance Counselors and student success teachers are also there to help students.
- Member Concern: What will the transition meeting look like for grade 9? Response: That happens with school staff. They rely on a partnership with parents, so parents need to tell the school if they need a transitional meeting, or if their youth has needs that the parent wants to address. Reach out early.
- Member Concern: French immersion schools transition. Response: High school brings common ground.
- Grade 8 Day: Cambridge schools doing November & May
- Member Suggestion (High School): PRO grant idea: To put together welcome tickets; bus tickets to visit the schools, nutrition, sticker and bag with logo; well received.

Transitioning to Grade 10-11:

- Grade 9-10 de-streaming has resulted in new academic transitions in grade 10-11
- Workplace, college, or university pathway in Grade 10-11
- Used to be applied & academic in grade 9
- There are flexible pathways
- Member concern: Grade 10-11 transition is a disaster; grade 10 high achievers aren't prepared. Exams aren't happening until grade 11. Response: Yes, this is true for some students. However, data is showing good outcomes for other kids. WRDSB is working on giving lower stakes pressure. Teens need this. Applied level wasn't really preparing kids either.
 - Further response: Grade 9 has some amazing benefits they are seeing; some kids with executive functioning skills (that have nothing to do with academics) were getting moved out of academic tracks
- Member Concern: Students in science class (in their school) are having virtual lessons watching a teacher every day on a video while the same teacher is present in class. Students can also access these videos when they are sick and at home. No notes are given so videos aren't helpful when teen is sick. Response: That's good that you mentioned to the teacher.
- Support through guidance
- Support through dual credit (university & high school credit)
- SWAC program with Conestoga College https://schools.wrdsb.ca/pathways/dual_credit/swac/
- Specialist High Skills Major program <https://www.wrdsb.ca/learning/programs/secondary-school-information/specialist-high-skills-major/>

Transitioning out of high school:

- Can't take more than 34 credits unless they have IEP. In special circumstances the principal can wave it, but the gov gives less money to the school
- Some students plan for a 5th year. So many options for how kids graduate.

How can Councils support High Schools:

- Limited fundraising
- 4-5 meetings per year
- Communication about the school
- Try to recruit and retain community members
- Member Suggestion: Have surveys of Council Members and ones that have left that are anonymous; running events gets people interested in council; having fundraisers; meeting time is an important issue: too early doesn't work for parents (like 6:00); make sure also if want to change the meeting time that the council agrees in a meeting to the new time; enabling subcommittees for eager parents; adapting to the variety of needs of different council members
- Member Suggestion: Communication
- Member Suggestion: Signal chats for school council; magnets made with the Ministry Grant with school council dates on them given to every student, mini school tours during council meetings, hand out flyers on Meet the Teacher nights, put chair's email address on any School Day messages or fundraisers to encourage parents to contact, bring friends of school council members.

PIC: Co-Chair of PIC Amanda

- PIC magnet coming

Treasurer's update:

- 61,000 Parent Engagement for Councils \$500/school
- Parent Engagement for OUC
- Parent Engagement for PRO grants
- All PRO Grant Decisions have been made

Work that PIC is doing:

- Have subcommittees
- Poor communication
- Survey has been created to guide our work, currently complete

SCIS:

- <https://www.wrdsb.ca/pic/links/safe-caring-and-inclusive-schools-scis-resources/>
- will be meeting with Associate Director Bill Lemon & Superintendent Ryan Hume
- Every school must have (mandatory legally for every school)
- Feb. 25th communication

Upcoming Event:

- Parent Info Night: What's On Your Mind event: April 22 from 7-10pm KCI Auditorium talk to school board reps

Requirements of PIC membership:

- WRAPSC rep has a permanent membership on PIC
- 2 community members
- PIC membership is an education mandate
- pic@wrdsb.ca
- need to be available for 4-5 PIC meetings (every other month 2.5 hours)
- virtual meetings

Questions:

- Member concern: WRDSB firewall so chairs can't be added
- Member request: To communicate amongst the schools
- Member Concern about April 22 event getting out of hand. Response: PIC will explain what they are doing. Will break up into individual classrooms.

Large Group Discussion

- Possible topics for next WRAPSC meeting: de-streaming
- Group can think about next meeting questions for large group discussion

Adjourned: 9:03pm

Next WRAPSC Meeting Date: Tues., May 6

Minutes recorded by WRAPSC secretary Amy Pharoah