

AGENDA

MEETING OF THE WATERLOO REGION ASSEMBLY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCILS TUESDAY, April 4th, 2023 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Presenter/ Facilitator</u>	<u>Notes</u>
7:00 to 7:05	Welcome and Territorial Acknowledgment - Review of Agenda	Sara	Sara welcomed everyone. Played the land acknowledgement.
7:05-7:35	Presenter from OSSTF	Robert Gascho	<p>President of the OSSTF. Ontario Secondary Secondary School Federation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions: Coming back from pandemic, how are bringing kids back. What are the issues? It's been crisis management. Very frustrating time for teachers. Adapting to online teaching when they didn't know how. Far from an optimal way to teach adolescents. For the synchronous portion - no video, no idea who was actually paying attention. Some kids thrived. Most don't have that self discipline. It's not so much about catching up academically. Real challenge is social and behaviour management. Lost a sense of how to interact in real life and school in particular. Have had some issues with serious violence. Some teachers with serious injuries. How do you manage students who are fighting when you aren't allowed to physically intervene. Kids are afraid of the bathroom. Violence in bathrooms, ripping doors off stalls. Teachers aren't always sure how to intervene. Some schools have tried a major reset on rules. Kids may push back on boundaries but teachers have seen some improvements. Question: is this really just part of the pandemic or has this always been an issue? Is there a data to support the increase? Observable pattern of coming back from the

			<p>pandemic. Now that schools can have clubs and orientations it is helping. Question: How can parents help rebuild community? School activities returning. Support your students to be involved. Parents can be involved, but need teacher supervision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Question: There are some issues with washroom rules. Some young girls don't want to tell a male teacher they need to go and why.● Question: Is there a plan from teachers point of view to learn to do the online education. It is a part of the world they will live in. There is a difference between adults and teenagers. Lose alot of human connection especially with students who are developing social skills.● Question: Asking about blended learning/ ISP days. Ministry sets out a certain number of days for professional development. Most of those are already designated for certain purposes. When something new comes along, you need additional days. Such as de-streaming which is a massive change. Need a whole lot of time to think about how you will handle it. You can't add more professional development days, so they offer blended learning to split the day. Will these days end? May continue next year as destreaming is still going, not sure. Are there fewer PD days? No less PD days those are already designated. Catholic school does not do it? Can't speak to Catholic schools.● Question: Trying to address concerns about drugs and vaping. Speakers are very expensive. Wanted the speaker to work with Council and the school. Board may prefer a consistent approach rather than one off approaches.● Comment: Not all activities have come back into all schools. Some schools have had very little back into schools. School dependent. Some teachers and schools are still recovering and it may take time to come back to all back.● Question: How are unions working with parents? Unions don't regulate the relationship between parents and the administration and student. Try to have a staff rep on each parent council. It is a voluntary role. Robert came tonight to build that relationship.
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<p>7:35-7:50</p>	<p>Presenter from OK2BME</p>	<p>Erin Huston</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Erin presented a deck that is attached to minutes. Presented on what advocacy in school can be incorporated. ● Available for youth under 29. Over 12 do not need parental counselling. Under 16 try to get parental involvement. ● Youth group every Tuesday. ● All schools must make a Gay Straight Alliance available - legislation. Safe space - can be who they are and may have different name and pronouns everyweek and that's ok. ● Curriculum can allow a window and see other ways of being or a mirror to reflect a students own experience. ● Question: What can we / parents do to support? They have an MOU to work with schools. Can offer workshops to educators. Parent Councils can promote and share that information. Often they are brought as a reaction to a bad situation versus being brought in proactively. Because of the MOU students can access counselling. Additional education is part of that. For example they are now working with special education classes across the Board. Always helpful when it is coordinated across schools and the Board. ● Question: What are some best practices for parents to support inclusion of books etc in schools. This has been the focus of attacks. A major focus of representation is for students to see themselves in libraries. Guidelines at the school and ministry level is important. ● Question: Sexual education curriculum at elementary schools - is there something in the curriculum for students? School says no. Concern that students won't have access to information that they need. Not all students will have support from their parents and school. It's an issue in all levels of education. Teachers don't even know how to teach it. In some cases students had to teach some pieces.
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<p>7:50-8:20</p>	<p>Questions answered from the Board</p>	<p>Scott Miller and Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scott has received a lot of the questions that members have forwarded over the year along with the results of the most recent survey. ● Scott acknowledged the inconsistencies that parents are experiencing at schools. Vast majority of Principals are very new and have not been a Principal outside of the pandemic. ● New Superintendent Michelle Newland who will be a lead for parent engagement along with Mackenzie a student in Scott's office. ● Scott reflected on a theme of transparent communications. He appreciated our survey so that he could take some of those best practices and look at how those could be shared across schools. ● Some questions like google groups etc. Scott will work with Sara on. There are security concerns with outside people access school systems. ● Question: How does information flow from Board to schools to staff. Some memos go just to administrators. Some messages shared with staff. Rarely would there be a communication to administrators only. Some may not go to community. Do our best to have community communications go through the school. Board website is used for communication. Sometimes parents may get duplicate messages. Don't have a good solution right now. Important messages can be missed. ● Question: Some information on the website is very difficult to find. School administrations didn't even know they could share the information. How do you ensure information is shared? The example is the changes to French instruction. Difficult to figure out how to be a delegation to Board. Delegation information is on the website. French immersion work has been happening for a few years. There were committees and opportunities for engagement. Information was released very recently. Shift is now french immersion will start in gr 2 not gr 1 to ensure students are more ready. There are many recommendations being addressed. In french immersion language arts, math and science will be in English. The concern from parents is not the issue of the change but that it hasn't been communicated well. ● Question: Concern at one school about ongoing concerns about
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			<p>communications. There was a major incident. Communications are not happening well. Parents feel they are in the dark. Some of these issues happen very quickly, hard to mobilize. With ongoing investigations there is sometimes very little that can be said.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Question: Suggestion that the paper agendas could help with communications.● Question: what are system decisions vs school? Volunteers in schools - there would be a policy - there should be consistent practices such as criminal reference checks. If there is a policy it should be system level. All policies are on the website. All policies have complimentary procedures to explain how the policy should be implemented. How can councils hold their school accountable? Ask questions. Michelle Newlands could be a contact to help reinforce these issues with all schools.● Police checks - can we do offense declaration instead? Less expensive? Less accountability with that approach● There are system leader meetings where this information can be shared.● Can the board communicate directly to Councils for policies and directives such as celebrations and field trips. Given that not all schools can rely on their administration to communicate. If year end celebrations were already underway for planning they can go ahead. It is a school level decision not a system level decision so there is a lot of inconsistency. There is some miscommunication about what is board vs school level control. Some principals will communicate that it is a board decision.● There appear to be differences between school level decisions and board level policies. When decisions are left at the school level it leaves a wide level of discrepancy. Some level of guidelines and guidance to schools would help reduce inconsistency.● Question about the plan to move forward and address the inconsistencies across schools? And specifically around communications.● Ultimately there is a hierarchy at the Board. If you talk to a Teacher and want to discuss further you can go to Principal. From there you can go to Superintendent. Can be uncomfortable for a parent
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8:20-8:30	PIC/WRAPSC Bridging Update	Sara	Progrant update - over 70 applications. Will make decisions soon.
8:30-8:55	Best Practices- How to best work with School Administration	Sara	Sara reviewed the results of this survey. The results will be attached. While there are some challenges with administration, there are many examples where the relationship is working well. If you are having trouble, there are many areas you can learn from.
8:55-9:00	Closing: Future meetings dates (May 2) Next meeting: Tues. May 2nd, 7-9 pm	Sara	Really encourage everyone to come in person. There will be breakout groups and no trustees will be online. There will be snacks! For future agendas, be conscious of time and how in depth discussions will be needed. WRAPSC is on instagram and twitter now!