

WRAPSC Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 6th, 2017

Forest Heights Secondary School Library

Attendance: 17 WRAPSC reps

Guests: Matthew Gerrard (Coordinator Superintendent Business Services, Treasurer of the Board); Husayn Jamal (Student Trustee); Kathi Smith, Trustee

Welcome – meeting start at 7:00pm

Approval of Agenda

Motioned by: Linda Waellering

Seconded by: Sara Heroux

Approval of Minutes

Motioned by: Sara Heroux

Seconded by: Michelle Vollick

WRAPSC Co-Chair Report

Laurie Tremble (PIC/WRAPSC co-chair)

Events of Note:

Feedback Session, to the Ministry of Education on Student Wellbeing - has been rescheduled to February 16 2017 at the School Board offices in the Cambridge Room, 7-9 pm. Please register with EventBrite if you plan to attend.

Waterloo Regional School Board - hosting a meeting regarding the purpose statement included now as a part of the Strategic Plan. February 21 2017, at the St. Jacob Education Centre at the board offices, 530-8pm.

Parent Involvement Committee - Parent Engagement Event April 8th 2017. The theme is Empowering Students Through Parent Engagement. Volunteers are still needed. The event is free, with free childcare for children age 2-11 (out of diapers). This will be held at Bluevale Collegiate.

Kitchener Citizen Community Teacher Award - given to a teacher (K-12) currently teaching in Kitchener, please send any nominations by February 15th, 2017 to KCCTA@outlook.com

Equal Are We - hosted by the Cambridge YWCA, a conference on creating safe, tolerant and equitable communities. February 17th, Cambridge Centre for the Arts, 8 am to 1230 pm or 330 pm. Please register with EventBrite.

Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce - hosting a breakfast, and will be giving each high school two (2) tickets for students to attend. A \$500 bursary is available; please submit entries by February 24th 2017. The breakfast will be March 3rd 2017, 7 am to 9 am.

KW Counselling - hosting a workshop: Raising Your Gender-Independent Child. March 23rd, 2017, 630-830 pm, at 480 Charles Street East. No fee to participate, but please register at 519-884-0000 x 248 or parenting@kwcounselling.com.

Business Education Partnership - is hosting a session for students (grade 7-12) and their parents, about careers and educational pathways. April 12th 2017, 6-9 pm at Bingemans Conference Centre. Please register at 519-576-6610 or info@bus-edpartnership.org.

KCI - is hosting a Human Library, for middle and high school students. March 28th 2017.

Other:

Director of Education Annual Report is now available. It is online only, however please contact the board if you require accommodation. It contains the board's Strategic Plan.

Laurie Tremble and Brent Hutzal will be meeting with the OSSTF on February 28th 2017, with the secondary school parent council teacher representatives. This will be to discuss the role of WRAPSC and PIC within the school parent council.

Kitchener Grand River Rotary Club is offering grants to schools for items to meet student needs. This is for items, which will directly benefit the students, but is not already covered in the school's board budget. Examples include Epipens, field trip funding for students in need, refrigerator for nutrition program, chromebooks, projectors, etc. The grant will not be given for greening projects or playgrounds. Please either contact Trustee Kathi Smith, or access the Rotary website for more information. An application is required and can be found on the website. The application does require a financial statement, but this is covered by WEFI.

Calendar committee is close to setting the 2017-18 school calendar, and information gathered from WRAPSC on placement of PD Days has been forwarded.

Immigrant Engagement sessions at Franklin PS are complete. They were a great success, and there is support within the school to continue themselves. The PIC subcommittee is interested in offering another group of sessions to another school, if a need exists. If you are interested, please contact your administrator and then contact Laurie Tremble.

SCIS resources for parents are available on the website. The subcommittee is currently discussing the function of SCIS teams in the schools, as a survey is currently ongoing throughout the board with the administrators. The group is also looking at the Bullying and Intervention policies in the board.

SafeTalk training is still ongoing. A few more sessions are available. Please discuss with your administrator if you believe your school would benefit from this training. There are also general sessions that you can attend as an individual. Upcoming sessions will be advertised via the board website and emails.

Presentation - 2017-2018 Budget for the WRDSB

Matthew Gerrard (Coordinating Superintendent Business Services)

$\frac{2}{3}$ of the funding to the board is directly tied to student enrolment. The Grant for Student Needs (GSN) is based on counts that occur on March 31 and October 31 each year.

Elementary enrolment is higher than was projected, 511 students over the estimate, and is on an upward trend. This is most likely due to migration along the 401 corridor.

Secondary enrolment has been on a downward forecast, however, we seem to have hit the bottom of the trough. The enrolment was also higher than expected, by 150 students.

Funding comes from the following sources:

1 - Pupil foundation (in class resources, teachers, specialized teachers, textbooks, supplies, etc.) is based by enrolment.

2 - School Foundation (administration, secretarial and office costs), is based by building. This is increasing in the board.

2016-7: 101 elementary schools, 16 secondary

By 2019: 4 elementary schools will be added.

3 - Special Purpose (given for a specific purpose, such as special education, and must be spent on the purpose only. If it's unspent, it carries over to the following year)

4 - Capital Funding (site specific funding, covers new school sites such as Groh and Chicopee)

5 - Education Program Other (targeted funding, usually tied to initiatives, such as the math strategy)

6 - Other (Interest, WEFI, Rotary grants, etc.)

Parent Involvement Committee Funding: comes from the GSN, in the Board Administration and Governance line. This is a capped line (at 2% of total budget). The board gets: \$5000, plus \$0.17 per student. Each school receives \$500, on September 1st of the year. Tracking of the money, and records of spending are kept at and by the school.

PRO Grant: comes from the EPO grants. In the 2016-2017 budget, there is \$62430 allotted. The money was granted to 59 elementary schools (down from 64 in 2015-2016) and 7 secondary schools (up from 2 in 2015-2016). The grants were given for projects which encourage parent engagement, and breaking down barriers to engagement. In the 2015-2016 budget, only 62.58% of the allocated grant money was actually spent. The remainder was spent on a mass translation project, to bring school information materials to parents and families in their native language.

Capital Funding: is based on provincial numbers. The province created a Facility Condition Index, all public schools. The higher the average, the higher need the school was for repair. Provincial average was 27.5%, but WRDSB was 19%, which reflects that our schools are in comparatively good condition. This average was done with Franklin PS in the old building, which has now been replaced. Any money allotted here will be carried over to following years, and will only go to building/capital needs.

New Initiatives: 4 new initiatives are included in this budget. First is an increased board personnel. This included the hire of a new System Administrator (K-12), additional HR and Wellness officers, support for extended day billing (this is now done in house) and a School Travel Planner. Second is support for new capital expenditures. The 2 new schools (Groh and Chicopee) are only funded by the Ministry from the day the classes start. The WRDSB must fund the 6 months prior of administrative staff setting up and preparing the new school. Third is increased WIFI structure to support chromebook initiatives. Last is a new telecommunication system to replace the old, antiquated system.

2017-2018 Process:

February - Compile working papers and initiative requests

- Public Engagement

March - conclude public engagement

- Grant For Student Needs is announced by the Ministry of Education

April - review working papers and compile budget

May - Trustee Workshop

- Senior Strategy Team meetings

June - Board budget discussions

June 30 - Budget is submitted to the Ministry of Education

Budget Pressures: there are three main pressures on the 2017-2018 budget. First are increased transportation costs, as wages are increasing. Second are expected increased utility costs in the buildings. Third is that the province has mandated that the provincial budget must be balanced in 2017-2018, and the effects of that are currently unknown.

Next Steps: a budget survey will be sent out mid February, and available for approximately 4 weeks, to about the end of March Break.

Questions: none.

Presentation - Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grants Application Process

Laurie Tremble (PIC/WRAPSC Co-Chair)

PRO Grants are provided by the Ministry of Education to schools and boards to encourage parent engagement in the schools. School councils receive up to \$1000, and PIC can apply for regional grants of up to \$30,000. This is over and above the automatic \$500 per school PIC Grant given on September 1.

Types of projects included in this grant are ones which focus on information for, or engagement of, parents. These projects should identify, and/or remove barriers for parents to engage in their child's education. Special consideration is also granted to schools that haven't applied in the previous year (although schools can and often do get grants in multiple consecutive years), and projects that match the Ministry of Education's focus that year (such as Math and SCIS projects in 2016-2017). Ineligible projects include (but are not limited to): activities already completed in the previous year, staffing, capital projects, field trips, student audience presentations, software, entertainment, prizes, fundraising, etc.

Applications are available online at: <http://Education.Factorial.ca>, and open on February 23rd 2017. The deadline is usually late May, near to the Victoria Day weekend. Each school may only apply once per year. The person who applies must give an email address that will be accessible for the whole year. Your application should include as much detail as possible, while still leaving some flexibility in the project. Utilizing key Ministry wording is helpful. Review the application with your administrator prior to submitting, and always keep a copy for your records. Try to maximize your budget where you can. There is a limit of 5% maximum for advertising, and 15% maximum for refreshments in your budget, based on your requested amount. Please note, that if approved, those maximums will apply, and only to the amount actually granted. Approval will come late August by email.

If your school receives a grant, the following will apply. All materials must acknowledge the Ministry of Education and the PRO grant. All cost overruns are borne by the school. All monies must be spent by the end of June for that school year. Money is given to the board, and the school invoices the board for costs of the project. Original receipts are given to the board, and the school must keep copies on site. Any unspent money is lost. Any significant changes to the project must be notified to the board. A report back on the project will be due in July, with a copy to the board and a copy on site. An interim report may also be requested.

Examples of successful grants are available on the Ministry website. These include:

- Curriculum Nights
- Parent resources (such as math kits or lending libraries)
- Presentations to Parents (such as: Sky Buffalo for drum making and First Nation awareness, Paul Davis for social network safety, Abe Giesbrecht for internet safety, Dr. Meg Popovick for resiliency, Newcomer Engagement seminars, Dr Karen Gordon for mental health issues)

Discussion of the PIC/WRAPSC Structure in future school years

The issue was raised that the current structure of PIC and WRAPSC needs to be evaluated. The current structure was set in 2014. The concerns raised are as follows:

- The dichotomy between the access to voting seats for PIC only members vs WRAPSC members who sit on PIC
- Timing of the meetings means that PIC is delayed from starting until November, which reduces the time in which they have to address issues in the school year
- Workload for PIC/WRAPSC members is high, as they must sit on their individual school council, attend 6 WRAPSC meetings annually, attend 6 PIC meetings annually, and sit on at least one subcommittee of PIC
- WRAPSC has traditionally had difficulty filling the 8 steering committee positions.

Options:

- Stand as current
- Officially split PIC and WRAPSC to create independent bodies
- Amend WRAPSC to become a standing subcommittee of PIC, and have a PIC member as the WRAPSC chair
- Amend the WRAPSC steering committee membership process to align with the PIC membership process

OReg612 requires that the PIC's role is to support parent engagement by, among other things, communicating with and supporting school councils. Traditionally, PIC has leveraged WRAPSC for this purpose. Other boards have various structures to support this, but only a few boards have a "super parent council" such as WRAPSC.

Commenters: - statements in summary (clarifications noted in parenthesis)

Angelica Allen - by email and in person

It is a mistake to merge the two groups because WRAPSC needs to maintain its arms length position to the board. WRAPSC is not as involved in the boards bureaucratic processes, and is able to speak to political matters should the group so wish. The merge would reduce or remove the individual school council voice to the board. WRAPSC was originally created in response to concerns by parents to changes to education under the Harris government. Though educational politics seems stable at current, this could change. As a subcommittee, WRAPSC would get less focus from board representatives. PIC has too small of a membership to adequately represent all parents and school councils. Separating the two groups, but maintaining communication between them may be the best solution.

Kriss Stone - in person

Similar concerns regarding WRAPSC's arms length position being lost. There is no direct benefit to WRAPSC to report directly to PIC. WRAPSC could stand to lose an already decreasing participation if the membership requirements were raised to equate with PIC. Concerns raised: WRAPSC meetings are open, but are PIC meetings? (yes, public can attend, but not speak), PIC has board and staff members on it, so could one of them chair WRAPSC as a subcommittee? (Terms of Reference would reflect it must be a parent)

Laurie Tremble - in person

The WRAPSC numbers are decreasing. It's unclear if WRAPSC is truly an arms length organization to the board. Current operation of WRAPSC has not entertained a political theme. It is possible that WRAPSC could cease with decreasing participation, and it is a shame to lose it.

Sara Heroux - in person

WRAPSC could run a smaller steering committee.

Kathi Smith, Trustee - in person

Should WRAPSC become a political voice, the board could direct board employees to not attend meetings of WRAPSC, which would remove much of its informational purpose. Such an action could also cause removal of board funding to WRAPSC (\$1000 annually). If parents wanted to hold the board to task, than separation would be the best choice, however, that change could have unintended consequences to the function, scope and influence of WRAPSC.

Corinne Kukor - in person

Membership may be decreasing, but the meeting with the teachers union regarding the FDK program had one of the highest attendances. Many non-members attended because they were allowed to speak (clarified that in PIC subcommittees, meetings are still public and can ask questions, though may not be reflected in minutes). We need to determine our goals before we determine our status. We need an avenue or resource for school councils - everyone takes something back to his or her school of value.

Sara Heroux requested discussion of next steps.

Laurie Tremble

Changes for next school year require PIC bylaws to be changed by March 7 2017, for WRAPSC to vote at April meeting, and finally to be approved by Trustees in June. Otherwise, changes would have to wait until next year.

Kathryn Blair

Members should have the chance to take the issue back to their respective school councils, but most won't have a meeting prior to the deadline.

Laurie Tremble - resolve

More discussion is needed. Therefore, the matter will continue in discussion, and changes will be looked for in the 2018-2019 school year.

Presentation - Student Trustees and Student Senate

Husayn Jamal (Student Trustee)

There are 2 student trustees per board, to bring student issues to the table when otherwise lost. The student trustee has a non-binding vote in meetings, and they run the student senate. Student Senate occurs on the first Wednesday of each month. They discuss policy, and give feedback. Currently there are 40-50 high school representatives. They are looking to expand and include Grade 7 and 8, though no plans to include students younger than that. Student Trustees have a report included in the Director's Report. The outgoing senate group elects the senate, annually.

Next meeting - April 4th 2017. The meeting will consist mainly of small group discussion, with the theme TBD. There will be a presentation by Nick Manning (Director of Communications).

Adjourned at 920 pm.