

## **Welcome and Territorial Acknowledgement, Agenda and Minutes Approval**

### **The Business and Education Partnership of Waterloo Region – Explore your Future**

- Jame Howe, bepwr.ca
- Collaboration of education and business leaders to help local youth explore ways to live and work in the community
- Help youth from grade 7-12 explore career opportunities, identify goals, and determine how they will reach these goals
- Career and job are 2 different things – Students may have a career goal, but sometimes things happen along the way and their plan takes a different direction. That may affect their opportunities.
  - Keep in mind that career trajectory is often a game of Snakes and Ladders
  - Can learn to evaluate interests, skills, and pathways to achieve career goals and transfer this ability into the future
- Initiatives
  - Speakers bureau – in school program
    - Teacher contacts BEP to find a speaker in a particular career field
  - Innovation Creativity and Exploration Challenge – specialist high skill major program
  - Promote Ontario apprenticeship program
  - Whole page of career profiles and list of speakers on website, see how people ended up in their current job/profession, how people got there is an important piece of what they can do
  - Explore your future – career fair (used to be in person), now virtual sessions
    - 4 different people with a job around a common theme, present career stories and youth/parents can ask questions of the speakers
    - One per month starting in September
      - Next one will be January 19 – Careers in science
      - February 9 – Post-secondary students to talk about their path to post-secondary education with some individuals from institutions to answer questions
      - February 23 – Co-op opportunities and specialist high school majors for grade 7-10
- Always looking for new speakers, particularly looking for more diversity in the speaker pool – find information on the speakers bureau page or in the How You Can Help area

### **Equity and Inclusion** (see slide deck for more information)

- Crissa Hill, Deepa, Lila Read, Evelyn Giannopoulos, Deepa Ahluwalia
- Maintaining and upholding human rights is the minimum bar and the board strives to work from a place of equity, not just protection of human rights
- Important to own the impact/harm of decisions and policy and procedures, not just the intent

- Board Improvement and Equity Plan – achievement for all students, accountability around metrics specific to marginalized groups, human rights and equity for all, mental health and well-being and engagement foster a sense of belonging and supportive environment plus tiered support for mental health, transitions and pathways, learning recovery & renewal
- What is the boards vision/goal for equity?
  - Transformational change to ensure the student's identity does not predict academic achievement/outcomes
  - Looking for barriers that are in place that keep youth from succeeding
- If we treat all individuals exactly the same, they will all have different experiences. But if we give them supports based on their individual characteristics, reality is actually beyond equality
- Job is to dismantle the barriers so they can exist with full identities confirmed so they can experience their world as their true selves
- Resource to be released in February for school councils to play at a meeting to help disrupt traditional views and expectations and consider how to make sure the voices of people that are often not heard can be represented in parent council
- Diversity looks to determine do we have different people in the room, but equity determines what barriers may prevent people from being in the room and what harm may they be experiencing
  - Inclusion is important, but needs to break down barriers marginalized people often face
- If experiencing human rights issues – please reach out at [human-rights@wrdsb.ca](mailto:human-rights@wrdsb.ca)
- Human Rights Policy – <https://www.wrdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/1017-Human-Rights.pdf>
- Member question – How will progress in this area be monitored?
  - The goalposts in this work will change with time and as we learn more, but there will be specific goals and monitoring to make sure that the changes that are being made are helping
- Member question – How can parent councils support diversity and inclusion?
  - Specifics are dictated by the school community
  - Some examples include:
    - Making sure individuals have an opportunity to speak (call on them directly)
    - Offer childcare
    - Offer opportunities outside of meetings to contribute (ie google docs)
- Member question – When will student census be shared to school communities?
  - Information will be shared carefully at a system level. It will be challenging to share at school level as it may identify individuals
  - Should be shared later in spring (end of April, early May)
- Member question – What will grade 6/8 grad look like?
  - Unknown at this time as we don't know what public health guidelines will look like
  - Important to keep in mind that for those with privilege, equity sometimes feels like oppression

- It was clear that some people were experiencing barriers and equity issues surrounding celebration of grade 6/8 grad
- Celebrations need to be replicated in all schools

**Closing**

- The next meeting will be on February 1 2022 from 7-9 pm and will focus on Communication/School Councils and Social Media and the new Math Curriculum
  - Connection details will be sent prior to the meeting