

DRAFT WRAPSC Minutes

Oct 7, 2015 7:00 to 9:00 pm

Forest Heights Collegiate Library

Attendance:

- 48 representatives from 35 different schools & 1 guest
- 4 members of the 2014-15 WRAPSC Steering Committee

Agenda & Approval of May Minutes: Christine Gillis Bilton

- No amendments to the May minutes
- Motion to approve: Kerri Gettliffe, second: Laurie Hunter. Approved.

Welcome
Добродошао - Serbian
Bienvenida- Spanish
歡迎 - Chinese
مرحبا - Arabic
Chào mừng - Vietnamese
soo dhowow - Somali
Karibu- Swahili

WRAPSC & PIC : Outgoing Co-Chair, Christine shared a presentation about the committees: WRAPSC and PIC.

WRAPSC is a parent-run committee that brings together school council representatives from across Waterloo Region to share ideas and work collaboratively to improve the effectiveness of school councils.

- hear directly from WRDSB staff about programming and policy decisions
- provide input to staff on behalf of the parents they represent
- WRAPSC has a co-operative and supportive relationship with PIC

How can you get involved with WRAPSC?

- join WRAPSC as a school council representative of the general assembly
- join the WRAPSC steering committee
- attend WRAPSC meetings
- volunteer to help with WRAPSC and PIC events
- offer suggestions, concerns, information to the WRAPSC steering committee
- share your school council's successes and challenges with the assembly
- find information about past and future meetings at www.wrdsb.ca/wrapsc

PIC (Parent Involvement Committee)'s mandate is to support, encourage and enhance the engagement of parents in their children's education, to improve student achievement and well-being.

- PIC has a co-operative and supportive relationship with WRAPSC
- develop/recommend strategies that the Board can use to effectively communicate with, and engage parents in their children's education
- organize presentations and resources to help parents support their children's learning
- embrace diversity and inclusion, and address barriers to engagement
- foster wellness and well-being in our students and families
- communicate information from the MOE to parents

How can you get involved with PIC?

- join PIC as a member
- attend a PIC Meeting
- volunteer to be on PIC sub-committees
- attend PIC Events
- visit the PIC website <http://www.wrdsb.ca/pic/>
- offer suggestions, concerns, information to the PIC committee

Positions available on the WRAPSC steering committee, which we are looking to fill tonight:

WRAPSC Co-Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must be the WRAPSC rep for your school council • Attend 6 WRAPSC General Assembly meetings • Attend approximately 3 Steering Committee meetings
WRAPSC Secretary	
2 x WRAPSC/PIC member-at-large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both require a commitment to WRAPSC Steering Committee and PIC • Attend 6 WRAPSC General Assembly meetings • Attend approximately 3 Steering Committee meetings • Attend 6 PIC meetings

While the existing steering committee held a side conversation with potential new members, the rest of the assembly was asked to use the time to record their ideas for future agendas items on the chart paper around the room. After the break, Laurie announced that Jessica Rodriguez (Driftwood PS) was our new secretary, Kerri Gettliffe (Baden PS) & Jordan Jackson (Linwood PS) were the new WRAPSC/PIC members-at-large. Thank you!!

UPDATE: after the meeting, Jessica decided to take the Co-Chair role instead of secretary!

PIC/WRAPSC Co-Chair report: Laurie Tremble

1. Reorganization of Senior Staff

Over the summer, senior staff was reorganized; see the website under [Roles and Responsibilities](#).

Senior Superintendents, Student Achievement and Well-Being:

- Mark Schinkel
- Lila Read

Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-Being (there are now 7 families of schools) There is a coloured star on each of your name tags indicating which superintendent covers your school:

- Green is for Laura Hodgins
- Orange is for Scott Lomax
- Purple is for Angela Mercier
- Yellow is for Scott Miller
- Blue is for Elaine Ranney
- Pink is for Peter Rubenschuh
- Red is for Graham Shantz

2. Director's Town Hall

For council chairs and principals by invitation only; they should receive an invitation shortly in interoffice mail.

6:30-9pm. 6:30-7 is registration and networking. 7-8 is welcome by principal, and WRAPSC and PIC co-chairs then John Bryant will give a presentation and take questions. 8-9 is a working session where elementary and secondary councils will separate and hear from panelists. Panelists will be council chairs (or past-chairs) and principals who have experience running successful school councils. They will discuss some successes they have had and answer questions on topics such as fundraising, recruiting volunteers, running effective meetings etc. This will be a Q&A session as well. All attendees will leave with a memory stick containing a revised and updated School Council Handbook including a new Policy and Procedure Index.

- Nov 12: Eastwood, Nov 19: Bluevale, Nov 26: Galt

3. PRO Grant

Last spring, WRAPSC applied for a PRO grant to provide parent training in **safeTALK**. You may remember that Barbara Ward, Mental Health Lead for the WRDSB, spoke to us last year about the mental health plan for the board. One of their priorities was training as many staff as possible in safeTALK. SafeTALK is a program that trains people to recognize the signs that someone may be considering self-harm and gives them tools to talk to people at risk and help them access care at the next level. Barbara indicated that for this year, she would like to start training some parents in the system as safeTALK trainers, and they in turn would train other parents. We were successful in obtaining \$12,500 through the PRO grant for this program. We will be working with community partners including the Lutherwood and the Centre for Mental Health Awareness. We will be looking for volunteers, but are still at the early planning stages of this initiative.

4. COPA

COPA is an organization funded by the Ministry of Ed that helps to create safe caring learning environments for students and schools. There are lots of good resources on their website including the newest resource which is A Circle of Caring, a multimedia FNMI resource for students, families, and schools. Find more at <https://infocopa.com/copa-in-english>.

5. Updates from WRAPSC for 2014-15

Attendance Report: in the 14-15 school year, 50 schools sent representatives to at least one WRAPSC meeting with an average of 35 people per meeting. Those numbers are down slightly from the previous year. Feedback on the meeting topics, length, how they were run etc. was quite positive.

At the end of the school year we did a survey to get feedback from general assembly members. Interesting information that came out of that survey includes:

- lots of people are receiving our information electronically even though they are not attending meetings. Many are no longer WRAPSC reps but enjoy receiving the minutes and other information;
- attendance is generally highest at first meeting, drops to a steady # between 25-35, although not the same 25-35;
- word-of-mouth is our strongest advertisement, so we encourage all to spread the word;
- people who attended January's small-group working session really enjoyed the format; will try it again this January.

Things to consider:

- how to retain members who come to the first meeting but don't necessarily come back;
- how to make better use of our electronic community for two-way communication between parents and board;
- how to get councils to come who have not attended. Suggestion has been made by many to visit councils in person.

6. Communications Update

Christine Rose (PIC Co-Chair) and Laurie met with staff in the communications department including Marty Deacon yesterday. (Topics discussed included the need for a standardized Parent tab on each school website, a request to post a limited number of standard resources for parents in this tab (including PIC/WRAPSC info, SCIS info, ministry documents for parents etc.), a request to streamline the method for parents to sign up to receive information via email from the board, and communication to parents about the electronic resources in the Welcome Package.)

Of interest to us, communications wants the school website to be the main source of information for parents and would like PIC and WRAPSC to work through school councils to provide resources to councils to be posted on school websites. In addition, councils should be encouraged to work primarily through their school websites to communicate with parents. There is no possibility for councils to get parent email information from the board. Instead, you would have to collect that yourself and manage it in a CASL compliant way. There is nobody on staff at a school who is responsible for updating the website so you will need to work through your principal to ensure that things get posted for council. This may be difficult until the labour situation is sorted out. There is no option for a parent volunteer to do this work.

Similarly, the PIC website is to be the hub for parent resources and information across the board. The communications and IT staff are working on ensuring that every school website has a "School Council" tab and that a link to PIC is on every school council section of every school website.

PIC is attempting to collect the email information for all school council chairs (for CASL reasons this can't be collected by the board and shared with us). Your council chair should receive something in the Director's Town Invitation with a link to a short survey monkey survey, which we are using as a temporary measure to collect emails. Please sign up with us!

Lots of school year info is available electronically on school websites, but not all schools sent out info about this. Check if your school did, and if not, try to make your parent community aware that this info exists.

Re social media, principals must approve use of things like Facebook and Twitter, must be administrators and must monitor it. However, council members can do the actual work of updating etc. You must ensure you are following all board policies regarding privacy of students' info etc. and be aware that council is an extension of the school. Principals have some leeway to decide how much free-reign parents have on these platforms, but it is wise to ensure that your principal knows what you are initially posting or of any issues that come up.

The Parent Engagement study that was done by an outside company three years has been mentioned here several times by parents wondering what the board's response was to the survey and what actions came out of it. There is no official response or report but the reorganization of communications, including Marty Deacon's role, changes to the website and several other projects undertaken by communications have all been in response to that study.

In order to receive email information from the board and your school you need to sign up on the website. You need to sign up on each individual page of the board site that you want to receive information from such as the board's main page, your school page, the PIC page, etc. In addition, you need to sign up at the bottom of the board's main page where it says Parents/Guardians Add your email. It is by signing up here (you will need your child's OEN number) that your email address will be linked to your child's information so that teachers can email you.

7. From People for Education: Healthy Schools Certification

Ophea has a new certification program for schools. The program is intended to help create a healthier learning environment for students and improve the health and well-being of the broader school community. Registered schools that complete the 6-Step Healthy Schools Process will be recognized as either a Gold, Silver or Bronze certified Ophea Healthy School. Schools must register for the program, and the registration deadline is Friday, October 9. For more information, visit <http://www.ophea.net/healthy-schools-certification>.

8. Community Hubs Report

WRAPSC and PIC will be providing feedback to the trustees later in October. Email feedback to wrapsc@gmail.com

Presentation: Public Health Resources on Teens & the Use/Misuse of Alcohol

Guest speaker: Laura Morelli: Region of Waterloo Public Health

Youth drink less often than adults, but when they do drink, they drink more than adults do.

50% of youth use alcohol & 25% use pot

Guidelines for what it takes to reach .08 blood alcohol content

Girls 9-17 = 3 drinks and Boys 9-13 = 3 drinks, 14-15 = 4 drinks, 16-17 = 5 drinks

Binge drinking is considered 5 or more drinks on one occasion and it puts youth at risk for acute harms:

- Violence
- Alcohol poisoning
- Impaired driving
- Sexual assault
- Brain development
 - o Promotes risk taking and increases risk of harm
 - o Disrupts the ability to control impulses
 - o Impacts memory and academic functioning

Evidence says that simply giving youth information or telling them not to drink does not help reduce it. We need to give them more of a supportive environment at home and/or school.

- It's never too early:
 - o Youth prefer to get credible, factual information from trusted adults
 - o Best to start talking about substance use before it becomes an issue
 - o Make use of alcohol advertising to start conversations – young women are targeted
- Spend time together and stay connected
 - o Allows for opportunities to discuss your values and reinforce rules around drinking
 - o Important during school and other transitions
- Don't provide alcohol to anyone underage
 - o It enables youth to drink and lessens parental influence on youth to make responsible decisions
 - o Liability issues when providing to other youth than your own

Grade 5 curriculum provides opportunity for discussion around substance use, addictions, and related behaviours. In grade 5 there is a particular focus on alcohol; critical thinking and making healthy choices. These are the Healthy Living key topics that may be covered:

Short- and long-term effects of alcohol use

- Describe the short- and long-term effects of alcohol use, and identify factors that can affect intoxication (e.g., amount consumed, speed of consumption, sex, body size, combinations with other drugs or food, emotional state)

#1 resource online is SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), which provide help for talking about alcohol with your child, as well as:

- How To Tell If Your Child Is Drinking Alcohol
- The Consequences of Underage Drinking
- What You Can Do To Prevent Your Child From Drinking
- Why Small Conversations Make a Big Impression
- Why You Should Talk With Your Child About Alcohol

- Why Your Child Might Start Drinking

Other parent resources:

Hamilton Public Health

- [Strategies for Parents to Prevent Underage Drinking](#)
- Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7vz8OEtkY>

Alberta Health Services - Parent Information Series

- <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2434.asp>

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse

- [Canada's Low Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines](#)

Saying When

- <http://www.camheducation.ca/new-media/apps/saying-when/>
- Allows for tracking and goal setting around low-risk alcohol use

Drug and Alcohol Helpline

- <http://www.drugandalcoholhelpline.ca/>
- 24/7 online chat
- Seek help for yourself or someone else

Contact information: Laura Morelli, RN, Public Health Nurse

Injury & Substance Misuse Prevention

Region of Waterloo Public Health

lmorelli@regionofwaterloo.ca

519-575-4400 ext. 7865 or TTY: 519-575-4608

Presentation: The Revised Health & Physical Education Curriculum (H&PEC)

Guest speakers: WRDSB staff

- **Graham Shantz, Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-Being**
- **Ian Mann, Coordinator, Learning Services**
- **Deepa Ahluwalia, Equity & Inclusion Officer**

The Revised Curriculum

Ministry of Education vision & goals of the H&PEC:

The revised health and physical education curriculum is based on the vision that the knowledge and skills students acquire in the program will benefit them throughout their lives and enable them to thrive in an ever-changing world by helping them develop physical and health literacy as well as the comprehension, capacity, and commitment they will need to lead healthy, active lives and promote healthy, active living.

The Ministry of Education recognizes a partnership with parents:

Parents are the primary educators of their children with respect to learning about values, appropriate behaviour, and ethnocultural, spiritual, and personal beliefs and traditions, and they are their children's first role models. It is therefore important for schools and parents to work together to ensure that home and school provide a mutually supportive framework for young people's education.

- Curriculum include overall expectations stating what the student will know and be able to do when finished an area of study and also, specific expectations for learnings.
- Examples and teacher prompts are optional, not mandatory & can be used when students ask difficult questions.
- At the very back of each of the elementary/secondary curriculums, are summary charts by grade level to see what skills, concepts and strategies are included

Making Accommodations

In 2010, [WRDSB Policy 1012: Faith & Religious Accommodations](#) put in place and was reviewed in January 2015

Section 1.6 includes the types of things that may be accommodated:

For many students and staff in Waterloo Region schools, there are a number of areas where the practice of their religion may result in a request for accommodation on the part of the school and/or Board. These areas may include, but are not limited to:

1.6.1 Observance of major religious holy days and celebrations

1.6.2 Prayer and rituals

1.6.3 Dietary requirements and fasting

1.6.4 Religious attire

1.6.5 Participation in school curriculum, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

See also WRDSB Procedure 1230: Faith & Religious Accommodations

The main importance is to make accommodations, not exemptions, in an alternative lessons that can still be graded and still be part of the curriculum. It can take time and creative ideas to come up with solutions.

- Board is talking to community and faith leaders to help develop some accommodations.
- Done on a case-by-case basis
- Have a conversation first; sometimes find there is misinformation
- Afterwards, 9/10 accommodations are not even required.

Please share this information with parents; it can help to alleviate concerns

Any time there are questions or concerns about any curriculum, the first conversation should be with the teacher. If further dialogue is needed, talk with the principal.

Questions:

1. When will this be implemented?
 - Hope to have the training sometime this fall; it will take a full year to implement the curriculum.
 - Currently working on documentation to provide advice to teachers and administration on how to have those difficult conversations.
2. What about accommodations for teachers who have concerns about what they have to teach?
 - Yes, these can be considered; work with Deepa and the Equity/Inclusion team.
3. What if I have a specific concern about a teacher's way of teaching something?
 - The new curriculum requires training, so hopefully this will address it
 - If have concerns, talk to the principal.
4. Currently, there is little communication due to the labour situation. How do we reach out to people if they don't come into the school or to school council or if there is a language barrier?
 - Settlement workers should be reaching out
 - Share as much of this information as possible
5. Previously sent home a form about a topic being discussed to give parents notice ahead of time.
 - If you are not getting this contact, reach out to your teacher.
 - Since the training has not happened yet, this may be part of the issue.
 - Teachers are allowed to communicate about what they are teaching if it relates to curriculum and helps them teach, but not if it makes work for themselves
6. How are "qualified" community partners selected?
 - Use community partners such as: Interfaith Grand River & Equity & Inclusion Advisory
7. With the previous sex ed curriculum, were there a lot of accommodations?
 - No, just a few related to dance.
 - So far there has not be a dramatic change in requests
8. The Region of Peel Board has said they are not making accommodations where the issue falls under the Human Rights Commission. What about our board?
 - When there are two competing rights, it will depend on what the complaint is.
 - Have not received a complaint yet
9. How has the labour unrest impacted the rollout of this curriculum?
 - The training has not been able to happen.

Trustee Kathi Smith advised that there are several trustees on board who are willing to have difficult conversations with parents to help them understand the curriculum/changes etc.

Please remind please that the reality is that the majority of the curriculum has not changed! Parent resources on the new curriculum can be found at:

WRDSB Communication regarding the Revised H&PE Curriculum: <http://www.wrdsb.ca/blog/2015/09/03/2015-health-physical-education-curriculum-2/>

Board Myths vs. Facts info sheet - <http://www.wrdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/Myths-vs-Facts-HPE-2015-02-22-Sectors.pdf>

Ministry of Education site: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/

There is a link on the right of the main page to the 2015 Health and Physical Education curriculum

You will find links to the actual curriculum, parent guides and grade overviews, some available in several languages.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health.html>

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health.html>

OPHEA: <https://www.ophea.net/> - numerous supports for teachers in implementing the curriculum as well as for parents

People for Education: <http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/how-does-education-work/parent-and-school-council-resources/multi-lingual-information-for-parents/> - has resources for parents/school councils including a tip sheet on sex ed

Sex Information and Education Council of Canada: has some in english and french.

<http://sieccan.org/wp/sexual-health-education-in-the-schools-questions-and-answers-updated-2015-ontario-edition/>

EduGains - Resources for Educators: <http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/curriculum/elementaryresources/healthphysed.html>

Access to Faith and Religious Accommodations Video: <http://www.wrdsb.ca/bipsa/category/diversity-and-inclusion/>

WRAPSC dates for this year: Nov 3, Jan 12, Feb 2, Apr 5, May 3

Contact us!	
WRAPSC	PIC
Email: wrapsc@gmail.com	Email: pic@wrdsb.on.ca
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/WRAPSC/	Twitter: @PicWRDSB