

WRAPSC Minutes – February 5th, 2019

Meeting Start time: 7:00pm

Motion to approve January 8th, 2019.

Motioned by Nicole Huskins, Seconded by Christine Carmody.

Motion to approve February's Agenda.

Motioned by Lorraine Buckley, Seconded by Heidi Holmes.

I. Welcome

- Angelica Allen welcomed all our WRAPSC members, and opened the floor to Heather from the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council. She informed WRAPSC about a play that helps bring awareness of human trafficking, which is increasing in our area. The play, titled Chelsea's Story, will happen on Feb 21st at The Registry Theater, and there will be a movie for those 18+ at the KPL with a panel of police, social services, and other personal to help answer any questions that may arise.

<https://www.registrytheatre.com/chelseasstory/>

-Brenda Bradley notified WRAPSC members about an event at WCI happening on Wednesday February 6th, on the topic of Vices and Devices. (Note: cancelled due to weather)

II. Question Period with Director John Bryant

1. How will the WRDSB ameliorate or reduce the effects of the changes the Provincial Government is proposing, in terms of the Physical Education Curriculum, the math curriculum, budgets, and other changes?

A: the members of the school board were surprised when this was announced, as they felt the curriculum was working well, and was supported by the unions, staff, etc.

- As of right now, they are continuing on the same path, until the new revised curriculum comes into effect. Teachers will still exercise professional judgement when it comes to the diversity of the students and the need to accommodate.

- The staff will continue to ensure that all students feel safe and cared for. Although there is a responsibility of the staff to adhere to the curriculum, there is latitude within the curriculum to accommodate all students' needs.

- The trustees are looking into the new curriculum, and are waiting to hear about the changes.

2. One of the WRDSB's priorities is staff and students wellness, with a focus on mental health. How does the Board plan to address the issues of violence students in the elementary panel whose actions are affecting the mental health and safety of their classmates? So many classes now have students on safety plans, with regular acts of violence towards peers and staff, and frequent evacuations. At what point do the negative effects of the exposure to violence on the witnessing or victimized students become so great that the students' needs an alternative plan? In some cases, students who are victims of the violence and then exhibit anxiety towards school get very little support, while the violent students get one on one support, extra resources, etc.

A: When it comes to students with behavioural issues, it is the behaviour that needs to be changed, not the student. Typically children with behavioural outburst are trying to communicate something, and are just not able to understand how to say/express it.

- When it comes to behavioural issues, it is best to talk to the kids and their parents, and try to identify the root causes. From there help is put in place. There is never enough help to go around.
- Training is provided for teachers that work with children with behavioural issues, and they also have the aid of CYW, and social workers.
- Director Bryant referred to Administrative Procedure 23-30 on the school Boards website.

Side note: concerns were brought forth on this topic, as most of the information was given about the child with behaviour issues, and not those that are exposed. Most parents don't even know about what happens in the classroom. Parents are wanting a form, similar to the lice form, indicating that there was something that happened in the classroom, and follow-up with their child may be needed. As well, there is nothing in the policies that help to assist those affected by these acts. John Bryant will be consulting with Scott Miller – Special Education Department.

3. School Council relationships with school principals can range from excellent to poor, depending on the school. What can the Board do to improve situations which are fraught with conflict?

A : Should councils find themselves in this situation, it is advised that the chairs/co-chairs to talk to with the principle to see if an amicable outcome can take place.

- If one does not feel comfortable, or should the tensions still run high, the next step would be to contact your schools superintendent, which are listed on the school boards website.
- EQUAO tests have shown over the years, that when parents are more active in the school, and with their children, students perform better, making the school experience overall better.

4. We understand that the Board is considering pooling funds raised by school councils. Can you please give us an update, and avenues for input by individual school councils?

A: There was a motion put on the floor, which indicate schools have to opportunity to help schools who could use a little help, but it is not a mandate.

- If you would like to have your voice heard, you can phone your local trustee.

III. Budget with Matthew Gerard

INTERIM Financial Report.

a. Operating Revenues

- student Enrollment is up by 0.2 % of total enrollment (by 102 students)
- special education allocation, up by about \$945k, or 1.07%
- Education Program other (EPO) Grants approximately \$330K reduction compared to budget
- ESL funding is up by \$655K or about 6.41%

b. Expenses

- instructional Staff – 41 additional staff in Elementary (\$3.6M), and 5 additional staff to support ESL
- supply costs are \$700k, which is a 3.4 % increase
- Non-operating costs (\$2.5M) – 21.34 additional staff to support higher enrolment in extended day, direct revenue offset.

c. Education Program other (EPO) Grants

- ministry update December 14, 2018
- reductions compared to 2018/2019 budget (approx. \$331k)
- Additional clawbacks of unspent fund from the 2017/2018 budget may occur.

d. Capital Funding

- there is no priority process currently in place, and a slowdown in Ministry approvals
- there have been a shortage of portables as a temporary accommodation, and no increase in funding has been assigned as of yet
- education development – rates have been frozen until the completion of a provincial review

e. Ministry Consultation reg. 274

- Consultation on the following topics:
- Mobility between boards (retention of seniority)
- OT and LTO rosters
- Offering interviews
- Interviewee caps
- Consistency amongst bargaining units
- Class size hard caps and overall class size
- Board wide average class size
- Two educator model in Kindergarten Classrooms.

f. Budget Survey

- Your opportunity to provide feedback about the boards annual budget
- Survey will be available on the Board’s website from Mid- February to about mid-March. WRAPSC will send out link.

g. Fundraising

- Trustee notice of motion scheduled for discussion
- Board policy 4017 – fundraising
- Administrative Procedures
 - 4690 school generated funds
 - 4900 fees for earning materials

Break 8:05-8:10pm

IV. Alana Russell, Chief Communications officer

- Alana ask members of WRAPSC to write down ideas of what we as parents would want our “Ideal” School board website to look like. Summary of comments from WRAPSC members listed below.

A. GENERAL COMMENTS

- Very important to keep individual school websites. Helps build community around the school, and the calendars (when updated) keep families aware of events & deadlines.
- stress the need to have a staff member at each school responsible for updating the site. This is an equity and accessibility issue.
- Too many steps. Sometimes takes 3 or 4 clicks to get to a basic level. Need more direct links. Ex: direct links to elementary info, 7/8 info, & secondary info.
- Every WRDSB site requires a different subscription, which is more work for parents with kids in multiple schools.
- Need a phone app and ical subscription
- Better search engine, include key word search function
- Bigger search bar
- Issue specific or user specific landing pages

B. HEADER

- Use of Community is misleading, really more of a parent category. EX: SEAC info is really for parents.
- Definitely need more parent resources on the site.
- Improvements to the PIC and WRAPSC portions of the site.

C. MISSING INFORMATION

- Need a parent portal (parent resources) front and centre.
- IPRC info hard to find
- Accommodate multi-school families (parents with kids in more than one school)
- Post bus delays on twitter

D. THINGS TO ADD

- Need a list of secondary school course codes and titles all on one page. Brochures on the website that are pdf's (example: High School Specialist Majors) just list codes, and it is very hard to find a list of what all the codes stand for on one page.
- Checklist for large events (ex: prom)
- Notifications for important information, allowing for preferences. Ex: French Immersion registration – so you can sign up to be notified.
- Direct link to school guidance counsellors. Right now you have to find the names of the counsellors under guidance, and then look up emails in staff list.
- Directory for school including staff, principal, trustee, superintendent, council chairs etc – making sure to update.
- “Toolbox” for parent information
- Q & A Board, communication link, and “who to contact” (link to IM chat?)
- Breaking news/emergency notifications section (ie: not on main list)

- Link to fundraising options
- Busing eligibility, link to STSWR
- Social media links by school
- Include top trending searches
- All board committees should have a spot on the site. Some won't have much to post but all should be reporting something of what they are doing even if it is just very general. Also list committee membership and contact info. Part of transparency.
- Computer in school office that allows use by parents who don't have a computer at home or don't know how to do something. Does not need to be full-time parent use, just set up so that it can be accessible. Ex: parent can come in to learn how to set up on school day
- Translation option

E. THINGS TO FIX

- Too many hoops to go through to reset passwords
- Easier access to student information (up to legal age) such as class info, etc
- Portal login – real time student info (ex: class course selection enrollment)
- Better transportation notifications
- Use school website more, so have more links from it. Keep main website simple.
- Make it easier to figure out which trustee and superintendent are responsible for your school.
- School websites need to be updated regularly, especially staff lists and calendar.
- Easier way to find policies and bylaws
- when you click on the policies and procedures some open a new page and some don't. When they don't you have to use the back arrow to get back to the policy page and I can't tell you how many times I've closed the whole website thinking I was just closing the one policy!

F. THINGS TO KEEP DOING

- Continue to post things like the Caregiver's guide for students with anxiety, perhaps add a health and wellness section
- Individual school websites, especially for elementary schools.

G. OTHER BOARD WEBSITES TO EXAMINE

- <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/> Hamilton Wentworth
- <https://www.tvdsb.ca/en/index.aspx#> Thames Valley
- <http://ocsb.ca/pic/> Ottawa Catholic Board – this is their PIC page

V. Board Updates, Including Board Committees & Provincial Changes

I. Nicole Huskins (WRAPSC Steering Ctte member) presented an update from the Board of Trustees meeting, which was held on February 4th, 2019

A. Annual Report:

- The 2018 annual report can be found at report.wrdsb.ca.
- Trustee Smith: It should be able to be read to website viewers since it is a lot of information
- Response: board will be AODA compliant by 2020/2021

B. Severe Weather/Inclement weather

1. Process

- School buses travel on 90% of roads in Waterloo Region. Snow clearing priorities are based on the Municipal Act:

Major arterials: 6 hrs

Major Collectors/bus routes: 12 hrs

Residential streets: 16 hrs

Cul-de-sac/minor residential: 24 hrs

Note that buses are not permitted to back up on streets.

Roads are a priority over sidewalks. Crossing guards can refuse to work if they believe conditions are unsafe. There is increased traffic around schools.

2. DECISION:

- Decisions to cancel Buses or close schools are made before 5:30 am
- Factors include the weather forecast: precipitation (Snow, freezing rain) which gets complicated since pedestrians like to walk on roads when sidewalks aren't clear. Wind: Wind-chill and accumulation of snow due to blowing
- Capacity of city to clear roads and maintain them clear
- Director Bryant has final say

C. Question Period

- Trustee Piatkowski : Pro grants were decreased this year from \$99000 to 91000. Is this correct ? Will it still be needed to be spent by June? This is an issue since some schools have cancelled activities not knowing if they would get the money. A: Yes there lower dollar is due to fewer applications from the schools. Need to still use by June 7. The school board will provide feedback to the ministry about how late delivery of the money has affected the schools.

Future Agenda Items at Board Meeting:

- Support for continuing FDK motion signed by Trustee Piatkowski, Waddell and one other trustee asking for chair to write a letter to the ministry and pass it on to other school boards.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05

ad/12 Feb 2019