



Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date: Monday, February 10, 2025.

Time: **6:00 p.m.**
** Committee of the Whole In Camera, if necessary, will precede or follow the Board Meeting, as appropriate.*

Location: 1st floor Board Room, Catholic Education Centre, 35 Weber Street, Kitchener

Attendees:

Board of Trustees:
 Linda Cuff (Vice-Chair), David Guerin, Renée Kraft, Marisa Phillips, Robert Sikora (Chair), Conrad Stanley, Tracey Weiler

Student Representatives:
 Allison-Hannah Berwick, Matteo Leone

Senior Administration:
 Tyrone Dowling, Gerald Foran, Shesh Maharaj, Paul Mendonça, Judy Merkel, Kerry Pomfret, Jennifer Ritsma, Annalisa Varano

Special Resource:

Recording Secretary:
 Stephanie Medeiros

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
1. Call to Order	Board Chair		
1.1 Opening Prayer & Memorials	Board of Trustees	--	--
1.2 Territorial Acknowledgement I (we) would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather today is the land traditionally cared for by the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutral People. I (we) also acknowledge the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge, laws and philosophies of the Indigenous People with whom we share this land today.	Board Chair	--	--
1.3 Approval of Agenda	Board of Trustees		Approval
1.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest 1.4.1 From the current meeting 1.4.2 From a previous public or in-camera meeting	Individual Trustees		
1.5 Items for Action: NA			
2. Consent Agenda: Director of Education			

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
(e.g.: operational matters from the Ministry of Education that the Board is required to do; update on the system)			
3. Consent Agenda: Board (Minutes of meetings)			
3.1 Approval of Minutes of Regular and Special Meetings 3.1.1 Committee of the Whole Minutes – Jan 13, 2025	Board of Trustees	pp. 4-7	Approval
4. Delegations			
4.1 Delegation presentation	N. Brewer	pp. 8	Information
5. Advice from the CEO			
5.1 Early Years Report 5.2 Interim Financial Report #1	J. Ritsma S. Maharaj	pp. 9-26 pp. 27-33	Information Information
6. Ownership Linkage (Communication with the External Environment related to Board's Annual Agenda; ownership communication)			
6.1 Linkages Activity 6.2 Pastoral Care Activity	Trustees Trustees	-- --	Discussion Discussion
7. Reports from Board Committees/Task Forces			
8. Board Education (at the request of the Board)			
8.1 OCSTA/CCSTA Communications OCSTA/CCSTA Communications Link	Board of Trustees	Link	Information
8.2 Trustee Work Plan – February 8.3 MYSP Consultant	Chair T. Dowling	-- --	Information Discussion
9. Policy Discussion (Based on Annual Plan of Board Work)			
10. Assurance of Successful Board Performance (monitoring)			
11. Assurance of Successful Director of Education Performance (monitoring)			
12. Potential Agenda Items/Shared Concerns/Report on Trustee Inquiries			
13. Announcements			
13.1 Upcoming Meetings/Events (all scheduled for the Catholic Education Centre unless otherwise indicated): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb 12 – Student Trustee Election • Feb 13-16 – OSTA/AECO EAC • Feb 17 – Family Day • Feb 24 – Board of Trustees • Feb 26 - Pink Shirt Day • Mar 3 – Committee of the Whole 	Chair	--	Information
14. Items for the Next Meeting Agenda	Trustees		

ITEM	Who	Agenda Section	Method & Outcome
14.1 Board of Trustees Meeting: (February 24, 2025) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Procedure Update • Audit Report on Trustee Expenses • Guarding Minds Update • School Year Calendar • Update on Budget Preparation • Student Trustee Report • Chair of the Board Report • Director’s Report • Monitoring Report IV – 002 - Treatment of Public • Monitoring Report IV 003 – Treatment of Students • Monitoring Report IV – 011 – Emergency CEO Replacement 	Chair	--	Information
15. Adjournment/ Confirm decisions made tonight	Director of Education		
15.1 Confirm Decisions	Recording Secretary	--	Information
15.2 Trustees move into Double In Camera meeting	Board of Trustees	--	Approval
16. Closing Prayer			
16.1 Closing Prayer	All		
17. Motion to Adjourn	Board of Trustees	Motion	Approval

CLOSING PRAYER

O Risen Lord, you have entrusted us with the responsibility to help form a new generation of disciples and apostles through the gift of our Catholic schools.

As disciples of Christ, may we educate and nurture hope in all learners to realize their full potential to transform God’s world.

May our Catholic schools truly be at the heart of the community, fostering success for each by providing a place for all.

May we and all whom we lead be discerning believers formed in the Catholic faith community; effective communicators; reflective and creative thinkers; self-directed, responsible, life-long learners; collaborative contributors; caring family members; and responsible citizens.

Grant us the wisdom of your Spirit so that we might always be faithful to our responsibilities. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Rev. Charlie Fedy, CR and the Board of Trustees, 2010



Committee of the Whole Meeting

A public meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held Monday, January 13, 2025, 1st floor Board Room, Catholic Education Centre, 35 Weber Street, Kitchener.

Trustees Present:

Linda Cuff (Vice-Chair), Winston Francis, David Guerin, Renee Kraft, Marisa Phillips, Robert Sikora (Chair), Conrad Stanley, Tracey Weiler*

*- attended virtually via Teams

** - left meeting at 9:01 p.m.

Student Trustees Present:

Allison-Hannah Berwick**, Matteo Leone

Administrative Officials Present:

Tyrone Dowling, Gerald Foran, Shesh Maharaj, Paul Mendonça, Judy Merkel, Kerry Pomfret, Jennifer Ritsma, Annalisa Varano

Special Resources For The Meeting:

Regrets:

Absent:

Recorder:

Stephanie Medeiros, Executive Administrative Assistant

NOTE ON VOTING: Under Board by-law 4.7, when a decision is reached by consensus, the minutes of the Meeting shall indicate a decision by consensus with the notation in the minutes that consensus means the decision was supported by all Trustees present and eligible to vote on a matter. Under Board by-law 4.11 Whenever a vote is required, every Trustee present when a vote is taken, including the Chair but excluding any Trustee who has declared a direct or indirect pecuniary interest as required by the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, shall vote on all questions on which the Trustee is entitled to vote and abstentions are not permitted.

1. Call to Order:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1.1 Opening Prayer & Memorials

Opening prayer led by Trustee Francis.

1.2 Territorial Acknowledgement

Territorial Acknowledgment declared by Chair Sikora.

1.3 Approval of Agenda

Chair Sikora motioned for approval of the agenda with the following amendments:

- Move item 5.4 ahead of item 5.1. Item 5.1 to become item 5.2, etc.
- Add item 15.2 Trustees to move into Double In Camera meeting.

**2025-01 -- It was moved by Trustee Phillips and seconded by Trustee Francis:
THAT the agenda for Monday, January 13, 2025, be now approved, as amended.
--- Carried by consensus.**

1.4 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

1.4.1 From the current meeting - NIL

1.4.2 From a previous public or in-camera meeting – NIL

1.5 Items for Action - NIL

2 Consent Agenda: Director of Education (e.g., day-to-day operational matters from the Ministry of Education that the board is required to do

3 Consent Agenda: Board of Trustees (Minutes of meetings)

3.1 Approval of Minutes of Regular and Special Meetings

3.1.1 Committee of the Whole Minutes – Nov 4, 2025

Chair Sikora motioned for approval of the consent agenda.

**2025-02 -- It was moved by Trustee Phillips and seconded by Trustee Stanley:
THAT the Consent Agenda: Board of Trustees and the recommendations contained therein be now approved.
--- Carried by consensus.**

4 Delegations

4.1 Delegation Presentation

Joe Henhoeffler gave a presentation on addressing concerns regarding the Rosenberg boundary review.

4.2 Delegation Presentation

Joe Thomas gave a presentation on addressing concerns regarding the Rosenberg boundary review.

5 Advice From the CEO

5.1 Rosenberg Boundary Review – Final Boundary Review Report

Superintendent Maharaj introduced, Jennifer Passy, Manager of Planning and Virina Elgawly, Planning Officer to present the Rosenberg Boundary Review – Final Boundary Review Report. This report summarized the events that have transpired thus far and included survey responses regarding the boundary review, emphasizing key concerns such as childcare and transportation. It assessed the advantages and disadvantages of options one and two while also detailing the new option three. The presentation concluded with the recommendations put forth by the Planning Department. Trustees asked clarifying questions.

5.2 The CCFOWR Update

Director Dowling welcomed Chris Gehan, President of The Catholic Community Foundation of Waterloo Region, to provide an update on the CCFOWR. Mr. Gehan shared a concise history of the Foundation and emphasized the strong governance framework and the strategic plan that guides their efforts. The presentation detailed the Foundation's mission to offer emergency food card assistance to marginalized individuals, especially within WCDSB schools. Additionally, Mr. Gehan highlighted the grants program available for schools, parishes, and community organizations, along with various fundraising activities. Lastly, emphasizing that the WCDSB remains the Foundation's primary focus and supporter. Trustees asked clarifying questions.

5.3 Leadership Strategy Update

Superintendent Varano presented the Board Leadership Strategy for the 2024-2025 school year. The presentation highlighted work of Executive Coaching and details of the Catholic Leadership Program Parts I, II and III. Induction and training process for newly appointed administrators was also discussed as well as

how NTIP Mentorship is evolving including new leadership opportunities. The presentation also touched on AI Integration and Robotics Leadership Initiatives. Trustees asked clarifying questions.

5.4 Literacy Update

Superintendent's Ritsma introduced Literacy Consultants Amy Healy and Kim DeGasperis, to present the Literacy Update. The presentation focused on modifications to the Ontario Language Curriculum and outlined the WCDSB's resource investments for 2023-2025. It also included a review of response instructions and interventions, as well as the programs that support this initiative. Trustees asked clarifying questions.

6. Ownership Linkage (Communication with the External Environment)

6.1 Linkages Activity

Trustee Kraft detailed the linkages activities highlighting an opportunity to share events.

6.2 Pastoral Care Activity

Trustee Guerin presented the pastoral care activity and highlighted that April 7th is scheduled for the Trustee Spiritual retreat.

7. Reports From Board Committees/Task Forces

8. Board Education (at the request of the Board)

8.1 OCSTA/CCSTA Communications

Chair Sikora briefly discussed OCSTA/CCSTA Communications.

8.2 Diocese of Hamilton – Forward Together in Christ

Director Dowling presented the Forward Together in Christ document developed by the Diocese of Hamilton. Trustees participated in a roundtable discussion focusing on the relationships and concerns between parishes, families, and schools.

2025-03 -- It was moved by Trustee Stanley and seconded by Trustee Francis:

THAT the meeting be extended passed 9:00 p.m.

--- Carried by consensus.

8.3 Trustee Work Plan – January review

Chair Sikora reviewed items for review for the month of January in the Trustee Work Plan.

8.4 OCSTA Resolutions

Chair Sikora presented the OCSTA resolutions for consideration. Chair Sikora then passed the discussion to Trustee Weiler, who elaborated further on each resolution. Trustee Stanley provided an overview of the final resolution. Director Dowling noted that the finalized resolutions need to be completed by next week to be included for approval in the agenda package for January 27th.

9. Policy Discussion

10. Assurance of Successful Board Performance

11. Assurance of Successful Director of Education Performance

12. Potential Agenda Items

13. Announcements (all scheduled for the Catholic Education Centre unless otherwise indicated)

13.1 Upcoming Meetings/Events

Trustees discussed upcoming events.

14. Items for the Next Meeting Agenda/Pending Items

14.1 Trustees discussed upcoming items on the next agenda.

15. Adjournment – Confirm decisions made tonight.

15.1 Confirm Decisions

The Recording Secretary confirmed the meeting decisions.

15.2 Trustee move into a Double In Camera meeting at 9:28 p.m.

2025-04 -- It was moved by Trustee Phillips and seconded by Trustee Francis:

THAT the Board of Trustees move into a Double In Camera meeting.

--Carried by consensus

16. Closing Prayer

16.1 Closing prayer led by all.

17. Motion to Adjourn

2025-05 -- It was moved by Trustee Cuff and seconded by Trustee Phillips:

THAT the meeting be now adjourned. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 11:42 p.m.

Chair of the Board

Secretary

I am here today as a professional working actively in the areas of literacy, freedom of expression, and freedom to read, with an educational background in library science and lived experience as a queer woman.

At the last WCDSB Board meeting, on January 27, 2025, a delegate from the Canadian Life Coalition spoke at length about the importance of upholding Catholic values in the Catholic school system, with specific reference to the inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ materials in school libraries. I feel confident that the Board, as a group of individuals trusted with the education of our region's young people, needs no further encouragement to uphold the freedom to read in our public schools, but I wanted to make sure that you see the support of your community, as well.

It is absolutely essential that children of all ages are afforded access to age-appropriate reading material that can support their emotional, intellectual, and personal development. When it comes to 2SLGBTQ+ materials, age-appropriate means the same thing as with the depiction of heterosexual families and romance: showing the *existence*, or history, of queer people and families is no different than showing the existence or history of heterosexual people and families. Just like Black families, interracial families, and single-parent families, queer families exist whether they are in libraries or not, and it is a disservice to all children to remove that representation from their lives. Libraries hold information, truth, and possibility as it relates to all the diverse parts of our society, culture, and world: libraries are the cornerstone of the freedom to read, and removing age-appropriate materials based on one group's moral objections is in direct opposition to the nature of education and libraries.

I am grateful to live in a place that honours freedom of religion alongside freedom of expression, and I am so proud to see Catholic public schools all over Ontario embracing the diversity of their students and their communities by shelving representative books in their libraries.

Thank you for your time.



Date: February 10, 2025
To: Board of Trustees
From: Director of Education
Subject: Early Years Report

Type of Report: Decision-Making
 Monitoring
 Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

Type of Information: Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making
 Monitoring Information of Board Policy **XX XXX**
 Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)

- ❖ Education Act Section 169. (1)
Every Board shall: (a) promote student achievement and well-being; (b) ensure effective stewardship of the board’s resources; (c) deliver effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils; f) develop a multi-year plan aimed at achieving the goals of student achievement and well-being, positive school climate, inclusive and accepting schools, stewardship of resources, and effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils
- ❖ Education Quality and Accountability Office Act, 1996

Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:

- ❖ The Kindergarten Program, 2016
- ❖ The Catholic Kindergarten Program, 2019
- ❖ Growing Success, the Kindergarten Addendum, 2016

Alignment to the MYSP:

Awaken to Belong

- Every student can see themselves reflected in their learning.
- Staff experiences a positive, healthy, and inclusive workplace.
- Are aware of and/or use the available resources to assist in navigation of the school system.

Ignite to Believe

- Every student experiences the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGEs) and the WCDSB pastoral plan within their learning environments.
- Staff are welcomed and invited to continue to be a partner in their adult faith formation journey.
- The relationship between home, parish and school is strengthened.



☒ Strengthen to Become

- ☒ Every student reaches their full potential.
- ☒ Staff see their impact on student achievement.
- ☒ Are engaged as active partners in our students' Catholic education journey.

Background/Comments:

The Early Years Report provides updates on the kindergarten program at WCDSB and community partnerships in the Waterloo Region, with a focus on supporting student growth founded in the pedagogical approaches outlined in The Kindergarten Program 2016 and How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years 2014.

The Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016 and the Ontario Catholic Kindergarten Program 2019 aim to offer a comprehensive and developmentally appropriate faith-based educational experience for our youngest learners. These documents emphasize play-based learning, recognizing that children thrive through hands-on experiences and exploration. The program nurtures cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, acknowledging the interconnected nature of these aspects and the belief that all children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential.

Inquiry-based learning is encouraged, motivating children to explore their surroundings, make discoveries, and develop problem-solving skills. Collaboration with families is key, recognizing parents and caregivers as vital partners in the educational journey. The Kindergarten Program also provides individualized learning experiences tailored to the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of each child.

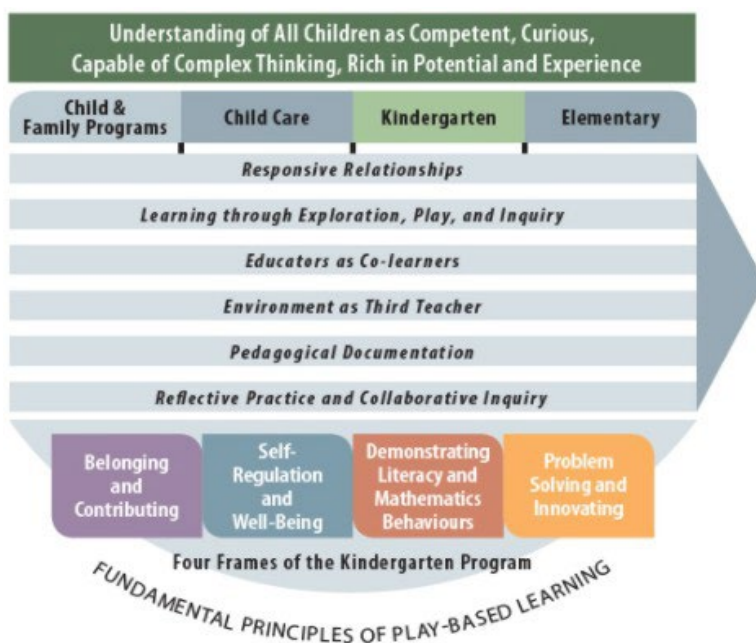
Communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, are highlighted to foster language development and effective interactions with peers and adults. Additionally, the program lays the groundwork for a successful transition to Grade 1 by incorporating fundamental literacy and numeracy skills.

The framework of the Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016 is structured around four frames:

1. **Belonging and Contributing:** Aims to instill a sense of community and belonging in each child by fostering positive relationships with peers, educators, and families. It promotes feelings of security, well-being, and engagement, and values diversity to create a collaborative and inclusive environment.
2. **Self-Regulation and Well-Being:** Addresses the development of self-regulation skills and overall well-being, emphasizing physical, social, and emotional health. It encourages the cultivation of self-regulation skills, including emotional regulation and impulse control, and prioritizes creating a healthy and safe environment to support each child's well-being.
3. **Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours:** Aims to lay the foundation for literacy and mathematics skills. It acknowledges that even in early childhood, children engage in meaningful literacy and numeracy behaviours. The frame provides opportunities for exploration and experimentation with language and mathematics concepts through play and daily activities, supporting the development of early literacy skills and foundational mathematics concepts.
4. **Problem Solving and Innovating:** Focuses on fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation skills in young children. It encourages exploration, experimentation, and risk-taking in learning, providing open-ended activities to promote problem-solving and creative thinking. It also values and appreciates the unique ideas and perspectives of each child.



These four frames guide educators in creating effective learning experiences for young children, ensuring their holistic development—socially, emotionally, and physically. Educators use these frames as a roadmap for planning, observation, and assessment practices within the Ontario Kindergarten Program.



A. Belonging and Contributing

The Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016 emphasizes equity, diversity and inclusion to create an early educational experience that values each child’s unique identity, background, and experiences. Kindergarten educators foster a sense of belonging through intentional practices that promote positive relationships and inclusion. Classrooms are designed to be welcoming and reflective of the community, with culturally responsive teaching that bridges home and school. The program supports linguistic diversity by incorporating students’ multiple languages whenever possible. Educators build meaningful relationships with students, understanding their strengths and needs, and design activities that encourage positive peer interactions and community building. Celebrating each child’s achievements and contributions helps build self-esteem and reinforces their value in the learning community. Leadership opportunities empower children to contribute to the class and school, thereby laying a foundation for active participation in a diverse society.

Early Development Instrument (EDI) Surveys Spring 2023

In the spring of 2023, regional school boards across Ontario were asked by the Ministry of Education to collect information about how well children are prepared for success in school.

The *Early Development Instrument*, or the EDI for short, is a questionnaire developed by Dr. Dan Offord and Dr. Magdalena Janus at the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University. The EDI is a 103-item questionnaire completed by kindergarten teachers in the second half of the school year that measures children’s ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations in five general domains:



1. Physical Health and Well-being
2. Social Competence
3. Emotional Maturity
4. Language and Cognitive Development
5. Communication Skills and General Knowledge



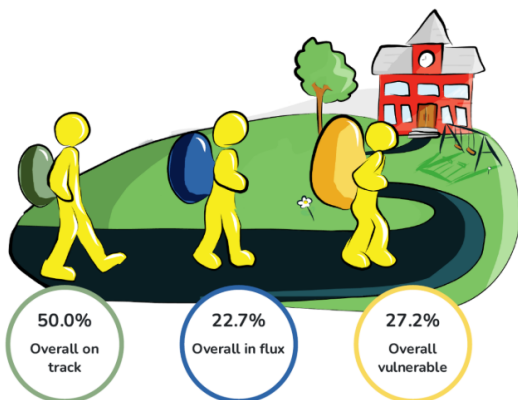
What happens during the early years sets the foundation for all the years that follow. Despite having access to many local resources and services designed to support young children and their families throughout the Waterloo Region, there are still children struggling to reach their optimal development leaving them vulnerable to experiencing developmental difficulties that may make it more challenging for them to succeed in school. EDI scores can be a powerful tool for influencing policy and programming decisions by providing data about the strengths and weaknesses of all the kindergarten age children in a neighbourhood or community.

All students registered in Year Two of the kindergarten program (current Grade 2 students) were included in the EDI survey. Kindergarten classroom teachers completed an individual EDI survey on each Year Two student answering relevant questions in each of the five domains.

Since the EDI data has been collected (Spring 2023) and analyzed (Fall 2023), a report was then generated at the school level, the board level as well as the provincial level (Spring 2024). School reports were shared with Principals and kindergarten educators in May 2024. Administrators, educators and board representatives have since used the EDI results to help identify the strengths and needs of the children within their communities.

With over 1.6 million EDI surveys conducted in 2023 across Canada, the Offord Centre at McMaster University offers the public the opportunity to look at overall results by visiting their website: <https://efts.offordcentre.com/results/>.

In Waterloo Catholic District School Board, we had 1512 surveys completed with almost 100% compliance which gives us a fulsome understanding of the vulnerability of our students in the five domains investigated. Being vulnerable means that children are at an increased risk of difficulties and, without additional support, may continue to experience challenges.



EDI Overall Outcomes

Year	On track in all 5 domains	In flux - not vulnerable on any domains, not on track on all 5 domains	Vulnerable on one or more domains
2004	60.7%	18.1%	21.1%
2007	56.1%	20.3%	23.6%
2010	52.0%	22.8%	25.2%
2015	52.1%	19.4%	28.5%
2018	47.2%	23.1%	29.7%
2023	50.1%	22.7%	27.2%

Currently and moving forward, the EDI data results are helping educators identify areas where the children in their classrooms may need additional support across the five domains. The information gleaned allows educators to tailor their instructional strategies and areas of focus, in alignment with the Kindergarten Program to meet the specific needs of their students, fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning



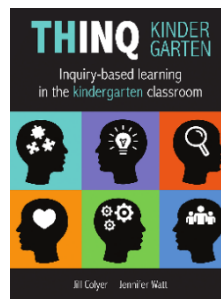
environment. School Administrators are using the EDI data to help develop their School Achievement Plans by addressing the identified needs and promoting overall student well-being and academic success.

At the board level, the EDI data provides a broader view of developmental trends and vulnerabilities across different communities which can in turn help implement initiatives that promote equity and inclusion. For example, the EDI data has been utilized to re-evaluate the Welcome to Kindergarten EarlyON Target schools, ensuring that the needs of specific communities are supported and help improve educational outcomes.

Kindergarten Committee

In 2022-2023, a committee was formed consisting of kindergarten educators from across WCDSB. Currently there are eighteen kindergarten educators, including both OCTs and DECEs, permanent and occasional who offer their feedback, opinions, and leadership for kindergarten classrooms across the region.

1. In 2024, committee members participated in a book club featuring 'Oh! Now I Understand: A Hands-on Approach to Reggio Emilia'. This school year, several committee members are interested in diving deeper into inquiry by working through 'THINQ Kindergarten', a book that helps educators understand the inquiry process and reflect on how this aligns with our Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016.



2. Kindergarten Committee members provide feedback on our current Welcome to Kindergarten program, practices and communication. They assist with ensuring that the materials and activities chosen for these events work effectively in practice and that all communication to schools is fulsome and practical.
3. A sub-committee of OCTs and DECEs is currently reviewing and reflecting on what was purchased for newly created classrooms this year, giving feedback on possible changes for the coming school year with a 're-think' of how furniture and materials are used in kindergarten and what the possibilities could be for new classrooms moving forward.

WCDSB Kindergarten Working Group

In the 2024-2025 school year, a collaboration between the Kindergarten Consultant, the Manager of DECES, social workers, speech and language pathologists, special education liaisons, child and youth works, and educational assistants was created as the WCDSB Kindergarten Working Group. The main purpose of this group which meets quarterly is to create a networking opportunity and a collaborative table where overall kindergarten needs can be shared and discussed.



This working group is crucial for ensuring that kindergarten students' needs are met effectively with collaboration between all employee groups that support kindergarten classrooms. By working together, these professionals can share insights, strategies, and resources, creating a cohesive support system that addresses each classroom's unique needs.

WCDSB Kindergarten Consultant Classroom Support

The Kindergarten Consultant at WCDSB plays a pivotal role in supporting the needs of kindergarten classrooms across all schools, (156 Kindergarten Classrooms 2024-2025). By providing guidance and resources, the consultant helps new teachers acclimate to the Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016, ensuring they understand and implement best practices in academic planning and student instruction. For experienced teachers, the consultant offers ongoing professional development and innovative strategies to enhance classroom management and instructional techniques. This support extends to DECEs (Designated Early Childhood Educators), who collaborate closely with teachers to create a seamless and effective learning environment. The consultant's expertise in behaviour management and academic planning ensures that all students, including those with special needs, receive the appropriate support.

Additionally, the Kindergarten Consultant emphasizes the importance of the classroom as the third teacher, a concept central to the Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016. By fostering an environment that encourages exploration, creativity, and independent learning, the consultant helps educators design classrooms that are dynamic and responsive to students' needs. This approach not only enhances the flow of the day, but also promotes a holistic learning experience where students feel valued and engaged. Through collaborative efforts with teachers, DECEs, and other support staff, the consultant ensures that every aspect of the kindergarten program is aligned with the goal of nurturing well-rounded, confident learners.



WCDSB Stay and Play Pilot

In the spring of 2024, the Student Achievement Consultant for Kindergarten approached Christ the King School in Cambridge to pilot a 'Stay and Play' program. This program is designed to invite families to spend a half day with their children in the context of the play-based program in order to gain a better understanding of the Ontario Kindergarten Program all while having the opportunity to spend some time with their child(ren) without distractions, just taking time to play.



The idea of parents staying to play with their kindergarten children for a half day fosters a strong sense of community and belonging by creating opportunities for meaningful interactions between parents, children, and educators. This practice allows parents to actively participate in their child's learning environment, building stronger connections with teachers and other families. It helps children feel more secure and supported, knowing their parents are involved in their education. Additionally, it encourages a collaborative atmosphere where parents can share insights and strategies with educators.

With the success at Christ the King School, St Brigid School also tried an afternoon in December 2024 stating lots of positive support and enjoyment from families about the experience. We will be opening up the option of trying a 'Stay and Play' day at all interested schools moving forward.



WCDSB Website Rebranding

In the Spring of 2024, discussions began about rebranding the kindergarten portion of the WCDSB website to be more interesting and kid-friendly to significantly enhance its appeal and usability. By incorporating vibrant colours, engaging visuals, and interactive elements, the website rebrand will capture the attention of young children and make navigation more enjoyable for families. Simplifying the layout and providing clear, concise information about the kindergarten program, including resources for parents and highlights of classroom activities, will help families feel more informed and confident in their choice of school boards.

As we continue to work on this, we hope to include different parts such as a 360-degree interactive video of a kindergarten classroom, updated photographs from current kindergarten classrooms, and feature testimonials from current families. The goal is to showcase the unique aspects of the WCDSB kindergarten experience hence positioning the board as the first choice for families seeking a nurturing and dynamic, faith-based educational environment for their children.

Kindergarten Connections Newsletter

Sharing information through a quarterly Kindergarten Connections Newsletter is vital for keeping educators across WCDSB informed and connected. This newsletter serves as a platform to disseminate important updates, share best practices, and highlight innovative teaching strategies tailored to kindergarten classrooms. By regularly providing educators with relevant and timely information, the newsletter fosters a sense of community and collaboration, ensuring that all teachers and support staff are aligned with the board's goals and initiatives. Additionally, it offers a space to celebrate successes, share resources, and address common challenges, ultimately enhancing the quality of education and support provided to our youngest learners.





Classroom Purchases

In collaboration with our Kindergarten Consultant, FNMI (First Nation, Metis and Inuit) Consultant, classroom teachers and DECEs, we continue to reflect on and rethink the learning materials available in kindergarten classrooms in WCDSB. Our priority is to provide resources and materials are carefully selected with the intention of ensuring that all voices are heard and valued and that we are aligned with the expectations of the Ontario Kindergarten Program.

FNMI Learning Materials and Resources

A Seven Grandfathers book, finger puppet kit and a Turtle Island play mat with sixteen different Indigenous North American animal figures was provided to all Kindergarten divisions at each of our elementary schools last school year. With support from our FNMI budget, in 2024 we were able to make additional purchases this school year so that all kindergarten classrooms in WCDSB have been provided with these play resources.



Indigenous Loose Parts Inquiry Kits

Kindergarten and FNMI partnered together to create hands-on, play-based, inquiry kits using Indigenous loose parts such as jingle skirt bells, braided sweet grass, pebbles, beads, leather strips, and more. Each kit consists of several loose parts, laminated placemats with Indigenous invitations to play such as making a dream catcher, and ideas that could lead to further inquiry such as different types of traditional Indigenous homes.



Six kits were created in total and are available through the CEC Learning Commons. They continue to be signed out frequently, and so additional kits were created.

Newly Created Classroom Resources

As our board has continued to grow population-wise, we added another twelve kindergarten classrooms this school year. With input from kindergarten educators across the board, the resources provided for play and inquiry exploration and instruction across the four frames of the kindergarten program are carefully selected and reviewed annually to ensure that the children in each classroom see themselves and their families reflected in the materials that they access. This means that we are purposeful in our choices to intentionally provide versatile, open-ended access wherever possible and allow children's ideas and creativity to be reflected in their play and learning.



B. Self-Regulation and Well-Being

Self-regulation and well-being are crucial for the overall health and development of kindergarten students. Educators help children develop skills to manage their emotions, impulses, and behaviours while prioritizing their well-being. Creating a supportive environment that enhances physical, social, and emotional health is emphasized in this frame. By fostering self-regulation, children learn to identify and express their feelings constructively, which is essential for emotional intelligence. Classroom activities and interactions encourage children to understand and manage their emotions, making it easier for them to navigate social situations. This approach highlights the interconnectedness of physical and emotional well-being, laying a foundation for lifelong learning and positive social interactions.

a. Faith

Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ Program

The *Ontario Catholic School Kindergarten Program 2019* was released to all kindergarten classrooms in WCDSB during the 2020-2021 school year. In January 2024, in collaboration with our Religion and Family Life Consultant, *The Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ* program was released to all kindergarten classrooms. This included online and hands-on faith-based classroom resources and learning materials for students that are engaging and help promote learning through play and inquiry.

All kindergarten teachers and DECEs received further information through a professional development in-service workshop in April 2024 to ensure that all classrooms are accessing this resource and understand how best to bring our faith into the classroom and the lives of the students they serve. There was a lot of positive feedback on the program and how it aligns with the liturgical year as well as our play-based kindergarten program effectively.





New Classroom Resources

As part of the focus on careful consideration of resources and learning materials purchased for all newly created kindergarten classrooms a selection of faith-based play resources have been purchased for each new classroom as they open. These hands-on, play materials include, faith-based floor puzzles, a wooden nativity set, a wooden decade of the rosary resource, a wooden church/mass resource, a Beginner Bible, and a doll representing each school Saint.



b. Social-Emotional Learning

Read-Write-Rest:

Read-Write-Rest, a WCDSB exclusive program introduced in the winter of 2023 is an opportunity for kindergarten educators to address self-regulation skills with students within a calm, safe classroom environment. Socio-emotional literacy is the ability to recognize, label and understand feelings in yourself and others. This skill set is necessary for students in controlling their own feelings, getting along with others,



and solving problems effectively when they arise. Students who have lagging skills in this area may have significant difficulty managing their emotions in the classroom.

The goal for Read-Write-Rest is that all students will more consistently be “calm, alert, and ready to learn.” We continue to work with educators across the board to work toward implementing the program as well as engaging in Christian meditation to help co-regulate students during times when they may need an opportunity to destress and learn to better understand what their bodies are telling them.



Classroom Resources:

We continue to provide all kindergarten classrooms with information and support for the development of social emotional learning skills and self-regulation.

- *Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Lessons using Mo Willems Books:* Our Speech Language Pathologists continue to model these lessons in kindergarten classrooms as requested to support the development of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in the early years.
- *OPEY Book Series, Tires, Wires, and Brakes:* Together with *Our Place*, one of our community partners, this series of books is currently in all WCDSB Kindergarten classrooms. The implementation of the related lessons supports the development of self-regulation skills in kindergarten. Written by local, diverse authors in partnership with Dr. Jean Clinton, these books and related lessons are rooted in this collection of texts and teach the importance of co-regulation through storytelling.
- *Mental Health Ontario Resources:* Kindergarten educators have access to a range of valuable lessons to support the healthy development of self-regulation skills and well-being through the online portal at Mental Health Ontario. WCDSB Mental Health Lead and our WCDSB Kindergarten Consultant created and shared a document with relevant links to lesson plans and information to support kindergarten educators and students.

c. Professional Development

On Tuesday, September 3, 2024, all kindergarten educators in WCDSB, including classroom teachers and DECEs, gathered for a professional development morning at St David’s School in Waterloo. The event kicked off with a presentation by WCDSB Senior Manager of Equity, who discussed the fundamentals of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and their direct application to teaching kindergarten and engaging with families. Following this, two WCDSB Behaviour Analysts presented on understanding student behaviour and shared strategies and best practices for effective classroom management in today’s educational environment. Both



presentations were very well received, with positive feedback indicating that the information would be immediately implemented in the new school year.

C. Problem Solving and Innovating

The 'Problem Solving and Innovating' frame aims to develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills in students. Educators foster an environment filled with open-ended play, provocations, and inquiry-based learning. Students are encouraged to explore, question, and collaboratively solve problems through inquiry projects and STEM activities. Emphasizing collaboration, this approach promotes teamwork and shared problem-solving experiences. Role-playing scenarios and outdoor exploration further enhance creative and critical thinking skills. Educators also facilitate reflection and document children's learning to foster metacognition. The flexible nature of kindergarten classrooms supports individual needs and group engagement, aiming to build a foundation for lifelong learning.

New Classroom Purchases:

All newly created kindergarten classrooms continue to receive intentional, open-ended learning materials related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics including hands-on manipulatives, coding resources, materials related to trades pathways, tools for science and outdoor learning.



Deep Learning Monthly School Program

Deep learning highlights the importance of a holistic approach to education, promoting the balanced development of a child's intellectual, emotional, social, and physical aspects. In kindergarten, this approach aims to establish a well-rounded foundation for future learning, addressing all areas of a child's growth. As part of the monthly Deep Learning Assembly slides provided to schools, our Kindergarten Consultant includes a slide tailored for kindergarten educators and children. This slide each month focuses on essential skills that help young learners analyze, inquire, and navigate their surroundings, fostering curiosity and a genuine enthusiasm for learning.



Let's Talk Science: Tomatosphere

Let's Talk Science's Tomatosphere is an engaging, hands-on program that allows students to investigate the effects of outer space on the germination of tomato seeds. In this inquiry project, students plant two groups of seeds – one that has been exposed to space conditions and a control group that has not – and compare their germination rates. This project aligns with the Ontario Kindergarten Program by fostering scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and curiosity. It encourages young learners to explore, ask questions, and engage in collaborative problem-solving, all which are key components of the program. WCDSB kindergarten classrooms that intend to participate in this project during the spring of 2025 will receive all the materials that they require to grow tomato seedlings in their classroom.



Outdoor Learning:

“Outdoor spaces offer valuable learning opportunities, and natural settings can inspire the kind of thinking, learning, leadership, and innovation that may be inhibited in children in the classroom but that, once revealed, can be incorporated back into the classroom environment.”

- **Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016**

Outdoor learning aligns seamlessly with the Ontario Kindergarten Program, which emphasizes experiential, inquiry-based learning and the development of the whole child. By taking learning outside, educators can create rich, hands-on experiences that engage students' senses and curiosity. The benefits of outdoor learning for kindergarten students include improved physical health, enhanced social skills, and increased engagement and motivation. It also fosters a deeper connection to nature and encourages an understanding of how our faith asks us to become stewards of the earth. For educators, outdoor learning provides opportunities to observe students in different contexts, tailor instruction to individual needs, and create a dynamic and flexible learning environment that supports diverse learning styles.

Our Student Achievement Consultant for Kindergarten consistently promotes daily outdoor learning in alignment with the Ontario Kindergarten Program. They provide innovative ideas for outdoor teaching and instruction, along with valuable resources and a variety of field trip options that encourage students to play and explore in nature. In the summer of 2024, Canadian Martyrs School became the most recent school to receive an investment in kindergarten outdoor play, with the installation of a new outdoor learning area. This secure space offers educators and students a dedicated environment for engaging and enriching outdoor activities.





D. Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours

The 'Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours' frame focuses on building foundational literacy and mathematics skills in early childhood. In literacy, children engage in language-rich activities such as storytelling, exploring books, and expressing themselves through writing, which helps develop pre-reading skills. Additionally, kindergarten educators utilize a number of board-provided resources such as Heggerty and The Phonic Companion to engage children in more structured literacy whole and small group instruction. In mathematics, educators emphasize hands-on exploration of concepts through activities like counting, sorting, and recognizing shapes. By integrating these behaviours into play and daily routines, educators foster a love for reading and enjoyment of mathematical thinking, aiming to instill fundamental literacy and numeracy skills that create a solid foundation for future academic success.

Professional Development

On November 1, 2024, all kindergarten educators, including classroom teachers and DECes, gathered once again at St. David's School for a professional development day focused on kindergarten instruction. The morning session was led by our WCDSB Math Coordinator, alongside the Student Achievement Consultant for Math, and supported by two WCDSB math coaches. They reignited interest in the 'Joyful Math' book resource and school math kit, guiding nearly 400 educators in exploring small group math instruction.

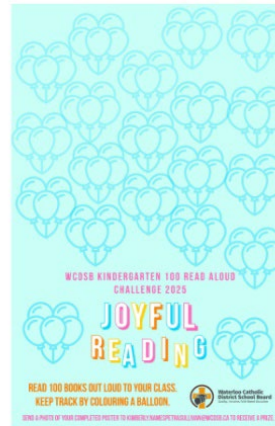
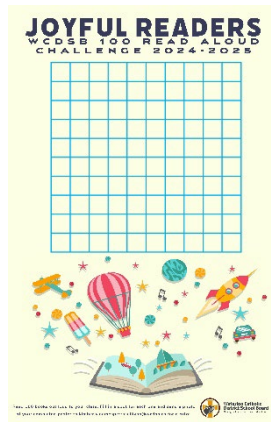
After a lunch break, some educators participated in Acadience screener training at another location within the school. Meanwhile, others stayed to learn about small group literacy instruction from our Student Achievement Consultant for Kindergarten, in collaboration with a Literacy Support Teacher. Together, educators explored the resource 'Next Steps to Literacy Instruction.' The afternoon's goal was to empower educators to use data from the Acadience screener to effectively plan small group literacy instruction within the play-based framework of the Ontario Kindergarten Program.

100 Read Aloud Book Challenge

Reading picture books aloud is essential for developing language skills, cognitive abilities, and pre-reading competencies. It introduces children to a wide range of vocabulary, different sentence structures, and the concept of print. The captivating illustrations and stories spark imagination and creativity, while also aiding social and emotional growth. Sharing stories nurtures a love for learning and creates a positive connection with reading. Picture books often showcase diverse characters, enhancing cultural awareness and understanding.



To promote daily read-aloud sessions in our kindergarten classrooms, each WCDSB kindergarten class received a 100 Read Aloud Book Challenge poster at the start of the 2024-2025 school year building on the success of last year's challenge. One poster option features a 100-grid that allows educators to incorporate patterning while tracking the number of books read aloud to their classes while the other offers groups of five balloons so that students can practice counting by fives. Upon completing 100 books, classes receive a new picture book for their classroom library. There are already three classrooms that have met the challenge and are now aiming to read another 100 books by the end of term two.



Kindergarten Literacy Pilot Project

Small group literacy instruction is a key element of the Ontario Kindergarten Program and is essential for effective early childhood education. By working with small groups, educators tailor their teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of students, providing targeted support and fostering a deeper understanding of literacy concepts. This approach allows educators to closely monitor each child's progress, offer immediate feedback, and create a more engaging and interactive learning environment. Small group instruction as a best practice promotes differentiated instruction, ensuring that all students, regardless of their skill level, receive the appropriate challenges and support they need to succeed.

Beginning in January 2025, our Student Achievement Consultant for Kindergarten in collaboration with our Student Achievement Consultant for Literacy K-6, are beginning to implement a Kindergarten Literacy Pilot Project with thirty kindergarten classrooms across ten WCDSB schools. Lunch and Learn sessions have been booked from end January 2025 to mid-February 2025 to spend time explaining the pilot project with educators and then beginning in March 2025, the pilot project will begin focusing on effective small group literacy instruction using The Phonics Companion Resource and Handwriting Without Tears Resource along with a number of versatile hands-on manipulatives that will be provided to each participating classroom following a coaching and modeling approach within the context of a play-based kindergarten program.

E. Assessment and Evaluation

'Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum' is an assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy framework designed to guide kindergarten educators in assessing student success and achievement within the four frames of the Kindergarten Program 2016. It emphasizes the importance of play-based learning and recognizes the unique developmental needs of young children. Educators gather evidence of student learning and growth through pedagogical documentation, engaging in conversations with students to understand and extend their thinking. The addendum acknowledges that young children often express their learning through



creative products and performances, such as drawings, constructions, and dramatic play. Educators use this pedagogical documentation, or 'learning story,' to provide feedback and support further development.

Professional Development

- a. In collaboration with the NTIP Consultant, a virtual report card writing session was held on January 15, 2025 for educators to access support with understanding how to utilize pedagogical documentation of student learning to write personalized comments in the Communication of Learning for Term 1.
- b. Pedagogical Documentation and D2L virtual professional development sessions were offered on November 20, 2024, virtually by our WCDSB eLearning Contact Teacher. Kindergarten educators have expressed interest in having further opportunities to learn more about pedagogical documentation and D2L Brightspace later this school year.

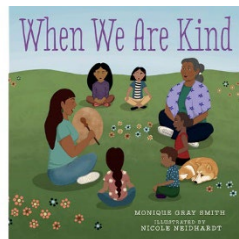
F. Supporting the Transition in Kindergarten

The Welcome to Kindergarten program is fundamental for easing children's transition into school. Each WCDSB school hosts a spring evening event where children and families can familiarize themselves with the school environment, reducing anxiety and creating a sense of comfort. This familiarity makes the September transition smoother for educators, students, and families. Early interactions with kindergarten educators during these events help children form positive relationships and establish connections with educators and peers, fostering trust and making them feel more secure in a new setting.

Additionally, the Welcome to Kindergarten events engage parents and caregivers by providing important information about the school, program, and community resources. Parental involvement is key for a child's successful transition into kindergarten, and this program helps bridge the gap between home and school. These events offer a supportive environment where concerns and questions can be addressed, alleviating fears and uncertainties.

We continue to build relationships with families before the child enters Kindergarten through personalized communications and *Welcome to Kindergarten* events each spring. Last spring, we provided families with the following:

- An interactive *Welcome to Kindergarten* experience focused on play, relationship, and building a sense of community and belonging using pre-planned play activities and centers.
- Welcome to Kindergarten bags with culturally responsive texts including, *When We Are Kind*, written by M. Gray Smith and *We Pray in Many Ways* by Christine Way Skinner. Our Welcome to Kindergarten bags also included a number of tools and focused ideas for families to engage with their children in learning and exploring through play.



- We shared 7 new system communications to all kindergarten families throughout the year to highlight play-based learning in our classrooms and home connections.

We also continue to work alongside community partners to know our learners and support their diverse learning needs so that we can support all students as they enter our schools for the very first time. Last year, we partnered with EarlyON to support 6 schools located in geographically vulnerable areas. EarlyON staff joined *Welcome to Kindergarten* events and met one on one with each family to go through the Looksee Checklist to determine if families/children might wish to be connected to community supports, to ensure children receive early supports when needed. Of the families who met with EarlyON staff, 100% were referred to a community support of some type. Referrals ranged from how to find a family physician to visiting an EarlyON Centre to work toward developing social skills through preschool play programs.

We continue to work collaboratively with our Multilingual Learners Consultant and teachers of multilingual learners to ensure information is translated into multiple languages and to assist families and educators with communication.

We work with our community partners such as EarlyON, Region of Waterloo Early Years Community of Practice, Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT), and Early Learning and Literacy Alliance (ELLA) to improve quality education in the early years by focusing on the pedagogical approaches as outlined in *How Does Learning Happen?* and *The Kindergarten Program 2016*. We believe this will support the continuity of learning for the child across early years programs in our region.

Together with the Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT) we are committed to fostering a sense of belonging for our families and students at all ages. As part of the transition process into the kindergarten program, we feel this is especially important in the early years and work to intentionally foster a sense of belonging for new families and students by nurturing a culture of community in all schools and Kindergarten classrooms.

a. Registration

Online registration for new families opened during the Christmas Break 2024 and will continue until the 2025-2026 school year. Last year we welcomed over 1800 Year One students into kindergarten classrooms across our region, increasing the number of kindergarten classes from 147 in 2023-2024 to 156 this current year.



b. Welcome to Kindergarten Program

We are happy to announce that WCDSB is once again partnering with the Canadian Education Warehouse to offer a comprehensive and new this year Catholic Welcome to Kindergarten Program that aligns both with our provincial counterparts but is also part of a national program that offers families access to both hands-on resources, seven issues of 'Talk, Read, Create, Play' newsletter and access for educators and families to an online portal of ideas, articles and information about helping children transition to school successfully.



Recommendation:

This report is for the information of the Board.

Prepared/Reviewed By: Tyrone Dowling
Director of Education

Jennifer Ritsma
Superintendent of Learning

Kimberly Namespetra-Sullivan
Student Achievement Consultant Kindergarten and Early Years Lead

*4.2 DIRECTOR Monitoring Reports: Where the Board receives from the CEO a monitoring report that flows from a responsibility delegated to the Director under Board Policy – except where approval is required by the Board on a matter delegated by policy to the Board – the minutes of the Meeting at which the Report is received shall expressly provide that the Board has received and approved of the Report as an action consistent with the authority delegated to the CEO, subject in all instances to what otherwise actually occurred.





Date: February 10, 2025
To: Board of Trustees
From: Director of Education
Subject: Interim Financial Report - #1 of 3

Type of Report:

- Decision-Making
- Monitoring
- Incidental Information concerning day-to-day operations

Type of Information:

- Information for Board of Trustees Decision-Making
- Monitoring Information-Board Policy IV 008 “Financial Conditions and Activities”
- Information only of day-to-day operational matters delegated to the CEO

Origin: (cite Education Act and/or Board Policy or other legislation)

Interim financial reports are presented to the Board to assist Trustees in their monitoring of the financial well-being of the school board. Interim reports are presented to the Board of Trustees three times per school year (January, March, and June). Reports are reviewed by the Audit Committee prior to being sent to the Board of Trustees.

Policy Statement and/or Education Act/other Legislation citation:

Executive Limitation IV008: Financial Conditions and Activities:

“With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition of the organization, the CEO shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a significant deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in the approved budget.”

Alignment to the MYSP:

- Awaken to Belong
 - Every student can see themselves reflected in their learning.
 - Staff experiences a positive, healthy, and inclusive workplace.
 - Are aware of and/or use the available resources to assist in navigation of the school system.

- Ignite to Believe
 - Every student experiences the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGEs) and the WCDSB pastoral plan within their learning environments.
 - Staff are welcomed and invited to continue to be a partner in their adult faith formation journey.
 - The relationship between home, parish and school is strengthened.



- ☑ Strengthen to Become
 - ☑ Every student reaches their full potential.
 - ☑ Staff see their impact on student achievement.
 - ☑ Are engaged as active partners in our students' Catholic education journey.

Background/Comments:

Attached to this report are the following:

1. Dashboard Report
2. Expenditure Summary
3. Revenue Summary

This report contains data up to and including November 30, 2024. Notes, where appropriate are included to provide the reader with additional information.

General Commentary:

The first quarter interim financial report aligns with the Revised Estimates submission presented to Trustees on December 9, 2024. Additional commentary has been provided specific to risks, projection methods, and known pressures to the budget.

Enrolment changes:

Day School Enrolment	2024-2025 Estimates	2024-2025 Revised Estimates	Change
Elementary	19,844	19,801	(43)
Secondary	7,822	7,888	66
Total	27,666	27,689	23
Elementary – VISA	50	24	(26)
Secondary – VISA	180	165	(15)
Total Students of the Board	27,896	27,878	(18)



Changes to budget:

Revenue adjustments		
Benchmark and enrolment changes	\$ 12,558,316	
Language Allocation grants	3,564,602	
Continuing Education revenues	435,291	
International and Extended Day revenues	(893,532)	
Temporary Accommodation	(359,345)	
Other revenue adjustments (interest and miscellaneous)	201,921	
		\$ 15,507,253
Expense adjustments		
Staffing and benefit adjustments (collective agreement compliance)	\$ 13,075,007	
Additional teaching staff (resource teachers)	1,993,615	
Additional school support staff (ECEs, EAs, CYCWs etc)	708,282	
Increased insurance and portable lease/move costs	386,700	
Facilities reductions	(345,000)	
General PD reduction	(208,625)	
Other expense adjustments	(102,726)	
		\$ 15,507,253
2024-2025 Revised Estimates submission - December 2024		\$ (0)

- Subsequent to the filing of Revised Estimates, the Board approved use of \$250,000 accumulated surplus to offset the losses from the Extended Day program. This has now been incorporated into the reports.
- The enrolment change over the Estimates budget is a net increase of 23 students. Staffing has been updated to reflect appropriate ratios where needed. This did not have a significant impact on Core Education grants.
- Significant increases for both revenues and expenses have been made to salary and benefits over the estimates. All collective agreements have now been settled, and Bill 124 impacts have been incorporated into the both the Ministry funding and expenditures.
- The Ministry has acknowledged an error with the Temporary Accommodation grant but has yet to resolve this discrepancy. Management continues to actively solicit a resolution with the Ministry but has currently removed the anticipated funding as at revised estimates. Any changes to this funding will be updated through the quarterly forecasting.
- Certain budget areas present additional risk:
 - Staff replacement (supply) costs are always difficult to predict as they are dependent on active flu cases, staff morale, workplace culture, demographics, absence management program efficacy, and availability of replacement staff. Modelling has been undertaken by finance staff based on historical data, trends in the Region, and a review of staffing complements. The budget contains management’s best estimates of supply costs as at the time of writing. These costs will be monitored closely and changes to estimates if any will be provided in the next financial report.
 - Utility costs can be volatile due to changes in commodity prices, government initiatives (carbon pricing), school activities/usage, and heating/cooling equipment age/condition. Conservative estimates have been used in the development of utility budgets and contingencies were removed in order to balance the budget. This area will be monitored closely as the year progresses.



- The costs of Educational Assistants are driven by student needs, number of students enrolled, and available staff complement. The budget contains management’s best estimate of costs to be incurred during 2024-25. This estimate could change as student needs change or additional students enroll during the school year who require dedicated supports. This area will be monitored as the year progresses.
- International Education and Extended Day programs have both adjusted their positions to be more conservative since June. Both these programs are subject to external factors, which may be beyond the control of the Board. Given the lower than anticipated 2023-24 year ending positions for both these programs, these areas will be closely monitored throughout the year. However, due to the nature of the programs, pivoting to reduce costs is not always possible.
- Lawsuits, grievances, and other claims, if any, have been disclosed in private to the Audit Committee. Associated expenses, if any, have been added to the budget.

Management’s risk assessment related to the Board’s financial well-being for the 2024-25 school year is **MEDIUM**.

There have been no significant deviations from the budget priorities set in June 2024 and revised in December 2024.

Recommendation:

That the Board of Trustees receive this interim financial report as information on the financial well-being of the Board as at November 30, 2024.

Prepared/Reviewed By: Tyrone Dowling
Director of Education

Laura Isaac
Senior Manager, Financial Services

Renee King
Manager of Budget

Shesh Maharaj
Executive Superintendent, Corporate Services

*Bylaw 4.2 “where the Board of Trustees receives from the Director of Education a monitoring report that flows from a responsibility delegated to the Director under Board Policy – **except where approval is required by the Board of Trustees on a matter delegated by policy to the Board** – the minutes of the Meeting at which the Report is received shall expressly provide that the Board has received and approved of the Report as an action consistent with the authority delegated to the Director, subject in all instances to what otherwise actually occurred.”



Waterloo Catholic District School Board

2024-2025 First Quarter Financial Report - Revised Estimates
For the Period Ended November 30, 2024

Summary of Financial Results

	Prior Year	Estimate	Revised	In-Year Change	
	Actuals	Budget	Budget	\$	%
Revenue					
Provincial Grants (Core Education Fund)	360,916,410	341,836,965	360,326,093	18,489,128	5.4%
Capital Grants	29,899,959	29,265,862	30,623,300	1,357,438	4.6%
Non-Core Education Grants	6,919,824	5,440,466	6,243,416	802,950	14.8%
Non-Grant Revenue	21,003,769	20,248,025	20,448,345	200,320	1.0%
Total Revenue	418,739,962	396,791,318	417,641,154	20,849,836	5.3%
Expenses					
Classroom	280,427,671	275,438,832	292,093,271	16,654,439	6.0%
Non-Classroom	52,825,307	51,883,033	54,498,114	2,615,081	5.0%
Student Transportation	10,041,718	10,654,847	10,691,721	36,874	0.3%
School Operations	29,013,797	29,654,991	29,625,984	(29,007)	(0.1%)
Pupil Accommodation	47,286,613	29,196,283	31,008,910	1,812,627	6.2%
Total Expenses	419,595,106	396,827,986	417,918,000	21,090,014	5.3%
Balance before Accumulated Surplus	(855,144)	(36,668)	(276,846)	(240,178)	655.0%
Accumulated surplus - MYSB	574,155	-	-	-	-
Accumulated surplus - SSF	141,341	36,668	22,316	(14,352)	(39.1%)
Accumulated surplus - WSIB	135,118	-	-	-	-
Accumulated surplus - Extended Day	-	-	250,000	250,000	-
Accumulated surplus - committed capital	4,530	-	4,530	4,530	-
Surplus/(Deficit) - end of year	-	-	-	-	-

Changes in Revenue

Provincial Grants: Increase due to enrolment and benchmark increases as a result of Bill 124 and labour enhancements.
Capital Grants: Increase due to timing of capital projects offset by the reduction of the Temporary Accommodation funding anticipated.
Non-Core Education Grants: Increase due to targeted grants announced since budget.
Non-Grant Revenue: Increase due to interest earned and participation in the Extended Day program offset by anticipated lower enrolment of international students due to federal policy changes.

Changes in Expenses

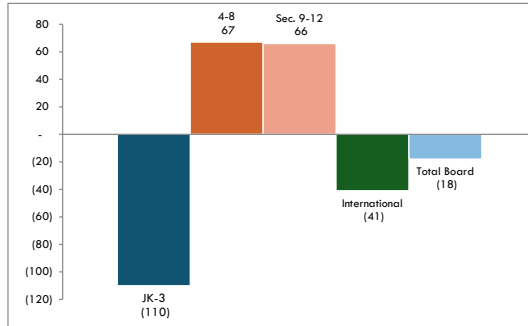
Classroom: Increase due to labour enhancements, enrolment, sick leaves, staff to support student needs, and resource teachers.
Non-Classroom: Increase due to labour enhancement and staffing needs due to enrolment and programming changes.
Pupil Accommodation: Increase due to timing of construction projects and anticipated portable lease/move costs.

Summary of Enrolment

ADE	Prior Year	Estimate	Revised	In-Year Change	
	Actuals	Budget	Budget	#	%
Pupils of the Board					
JK-3	9,413	9,824	9,714	(110)	-1.1%
4-8	9,572	10,020	10,087	67	0.7%
9-12	7,597	7,822	7,888	66	0.8%
Total Pupils of the Board	26,582	27,666	27,689	23	0.1%
International Students					
Elementary	51	50	24	(26)	-52.0%
Secondary	186	180	165	(15)	-8.3%
Total International Students	237	230	189	(41)	-17.8%
Total	26,820	27,896	27,878	(18)	-0.1%

Note: ADE is comprised of actual enrolment reported as at October 31, 2024 and projected enrolment as at March 31, 2025
 Note: International students pay tuition & their enrolment does not affect our Core Education Funds

Changes in Enrolment: Estimate Budget vs. Revised Budget



Highlights of Changes in Enrolment:

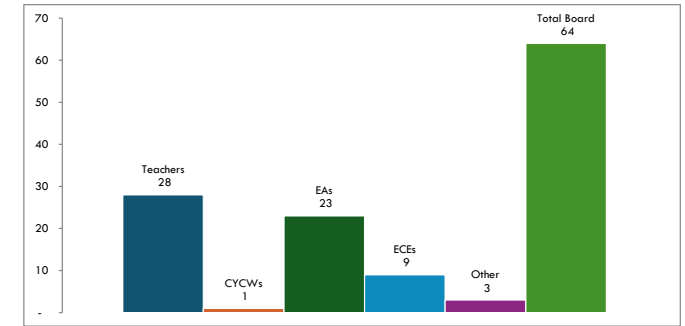
International Students: Decrease to reflect a more conservative estimate based on prior year figures and known commitments.

Summary of Staffing

FTE	Prior Year	Estimate	Revised	In-Year Change	
	Actuals	Budget	Budget	#	%
Classroom					
Teachers	1,590	1,675	1,703	28	1.7%
Child & Youth Care Workers (CYCWs)	59	58	59	1	1.7%
Educational Assistants (EAs)	390	391	414	23	5.9%
Designated Early Childhood Educators	190	204	213	9	4.4%
Total Classroom	2,229	2,328	2,389	61	2.6%
Other Support Staff					
School Administration	175	183	183	-	0.0%
Board Administration	92	94	93	(1)	-1.1%
Facility Services	198	209	211	2	1.0%
Consultants	35	30	30	-	0.0%
Para-professionals	128	134	136	2	1.5%
Library and Guidance	69	69	69	-	0.0%
Total Other Support Staff	697	719	722	3	0.4%
Total Staffing	2,926	3,047	3,111	64	2.1%

Note: FTE is calculated as of Oct 31, 2024

Changes in Staffing: Estimate Budget vs. Revised Budget



Highlights of Changes in Staffing:

Classroom Teachers: Increase required to maintain pupil-teacher ratios due to enrolment and the addition of 22 resource teachers.
Classroom Support - EAs: Increase to support student needs in both core day and the Extended Day program.
Classroom Support Staff - DECEs: Increase due to participation in Extended Day program.

Waterloo Catholic District School Board
2024-2025 First Quarter Financial Report - Revised Estimates
Revenues
For the Period Ended November 30, 2024

Budget Assessment						
2024-2025						
	Prior Year Actuals	Estimate Budget	Revised Budget	Change		Material Variance Note
				\$ Increase (Decrease)	% Increase (Decrease)	
Classroom Staffing Fund (CSF)¹						
CSF - Per Pupil Allocation	172,527,461	151,052,063	158,021,966	6,969,903	4.6%	a.
Language CSF	12,622,373	12,991,761	16,301,183	3,309,422	25.5%	b.
Local Circumstances Staffing Allocation	27,517,063	26,642,544	28,451,397	1,808,853	6.8%	a.
Indigenous Education CSF	407,209	32,443	35,521	3,078	9.5%	c.
Supplementary Staffing Allocation	1,815,085	1,872,774	2,040,327	167,553	8.9%	
Learning Resources Fund (LRF)¹						
LRF - Per Pupil Allocation	16,910,279	17,661,423	17,696,929	35,506	0.2%	
Language Supports and Local Circumstances Allocation	3,412,944	3,476,763	3,740,613	263,850	7.6%	
Indigenous Education Supports Allocation	597,395	1,428,664	2,242,087	813,423	56.9%	c.
Mental Health and Wellness Allocation	1,103,723	1,098,731	1,140,940	42,209	3.8%	
Student Safety and Well-Being Allocation	581,204	593,516	618,430	24,914	4.2%	
Continuing Education and Other Programs Allocation	5,921,829	4,428,418	5,699,273	1,270,855	28.7%	d.
School Management Allocation	21,734,165	20,048,447	21,564,788	1,516,341	7.6%	a.
Differentiated Supports Allocation	2,696,026	2,845,064	2,912,469	67,405	2.4%	
Special Education Fund (SEF)	42,546,515	44,576,961	46,336,682	1,759,721	3.9%	a.
School Facilities Fund (SFF)	29,523,024	31,333,191	31,597,372	264,181	0.8%	
Student Transportation Fund (STF)	9,495,635	10,062,182	9,992,600	(69,582)	(0.7%)	
School Board Administration Fund (SBAF)	9,240,141	9,554,216	9,595,978	41,762	0.4%	
Supports for Students Component	2,264,339	2,137,804	2,337,538	199,734	9.3%	
General Operating Allocation	360,916,410	341,836,965	360,326,093	18,489,128	5.4%	
Capital Grants						
Temporary Accommodation	3,563,571	3,104,226	2,744,881	(359,345)	(11.6%)	e.
Short-term Interest	63,431	276,515	489,492	212,977	77.0%	f.
Permanent Financing - NPF	397,975	397,975	397,975	-	0.0%	
Debt Funding for Capital	1,542,533	1,247,477	1,247,477	-	0.0%	
In-Kind Grant	139,127	50,000	100,000	50,000	100.0%	g.
Amortization of DCC	24,193,322	24,189,669	25,643,475	1,453,806	6.0%	f.
Total Capital Grants	29,899,959	29,265,862	30,623,300	1,357,438	4.6%	
Non-Core Education Grants						
Continuing Education	2,061,336	2,064,296	2,064,296	-	0.0%	
Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program	280,239	280,239	289,854	9,615	3.4%	
Responsive Education Programs (REP)	4,578,249	3,095,931	3,889,266	793,335	25.6%	h.
Total Non-Core Education Grants	6,919,824	5,440,466	6,243,416	802,950	14.8%	
Non-Grant Revenue						
Continuing Education Fees	3,747,794	3,567,698	3,542,473	(25,225)	(0.7%)	
Rentals	915,951	810,888	844,922	34,034	4.2%	
Interest	1,687,871	993,000	1,193,000	200,000	20.1%	i.
Extended Day Fees	5,157,611	5,886,279	6,718,543	832,264	14.1%	j.
International Tuition and Fees	6,193,032	7,972,390	7,043,754	(928,636)	(11.6%)	k.
Other	3,301,510	1,017,770	1,105,653	87,883	8.6%	
Total Non-Grant Revenue	21,003,769	20,248,025	20,448,345	200,320	1.0%	
Total Revenue and Grants	418,739,962	396,791,318	417,641,154	20,849,836	5.3%	

Note 1: Some prior year amounts have been prorated for comparison purposes as the data is not readily available due to the new funding allocations

Explanations of Material Grant Variances

- a. Increase due to increased benchmarks as a result of Bill 124 and labour enhancements.
- b. Increase due to immigration to the Region.
- c. Increase due to funds carried forward from prior school year and increased benchmarks due to Bill 124 and labour enhancements.
- d. Increase due to Continuing Education enrolment and benchmark increases.
- e. Decrease due to assumption that the Ministry will not flow funds to correct their allocation error. Board continues to actively pursue Ministry for correction.
- f. Change due to timing of capital projects.
- g. Increase to better reflect prior year in-kind grants received.
- h. Increase due to targeted grants announced since budget.
- i. Increase due to trending of cash on hand.
- j. Increase due to participation in the program and subsidies received from the Region of Waterloo.
- k. Decrease due to federal foreign student policy changes and a revised conservative change to enrolment to better reflect the current reality.

Notes: 32

- 1. Budget is the 2024 - 2025 Estimates Budget as approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2024

Waterloo Catholic District School Board
2024-2025 First Quarter Financial Report - Revised Estimates
Expenses
For the Period Ended November 30, 2024

	Budget Assessment					Material Variance Note
	2024-2025					
	Prior Year Actuals	Estimate Budget	Revised Budget	Change		
\$ Increase (Decrease)				% Increase (Decrease)		
OPERATING						
Classroom Instruction						
Teachers	196,372,393	191,675,320	204,105,912	12,430,592	6.5%	a.
Supply Teachers	9,544,459	10,572,625	12,018,821	1,446,196	13.7%	b.
Educational Assistants	23,564,158	22,325,732	23,918,228	1,592,496	7.1%	c.
Designated Early Childhood Educators	12,980,040	13,108,500	13,542,130	433,630	3.3%	
Classroom Computers	3,436,781	3,801,827	3,702,855	(98,972)	(2.6%)	
Textbooks and Supplies	7,789,748	7,878,090	8,387,533	509,443	6.5%	
Professionals and Paraprofessionals	18,672,925	18,304,393	18,452,783	148,390	0.8%	
Library and Guidance	6,795,422	6,562,913	6,732,319	169,406	2.6%	
Staff Development	754,388	699,393	709,350	9,957	1.4%	
Department Heads	517,357	510,039	523,340	13,301	2.6%	
Total Classroom	280,427,671	275,438,832	292,093,271	16,654,439	6.0%	
Non-Classroom						
Principal and Vice-Principals	11,482,195	11,634,124	12,554,275	920,151	7.9%	
School Office	8,128,839	7,952,361	8,027,991	75,630	1.0%	
Co-ordinators and Consultants	9,590,877	8,750,493	8,895,484	144,991	1.7%	
Continuing Education	11,124,331	10,546,230	11,818,233	1,272,003	12.1%	d.
Total Non-Classroom	40,326,242	38,883,208	41,295,983	2,412,775	6.2%	
Administration						
Trustees	334,341	342,434	342,434	-	0.0%	
Director and Supervisory Officers	1,512,730	1,911,746	1,901,299	(10,447)	(0.5%)	
	10,651,994	10,745,645	10,958,398	212,753	2.0%	
Total Administration	12,499,065	12,999,825	13,202,131	202,306	1.6%	
Transportation	10,041,718	10,654,847	10,691,721	36,874	0.3%	
School Operations and Maintenance	29,013,797	29,654,991	29,625,984	(29,007)	(0.1%)	
Pupil Accommodation						
In-Kind Donation	139,127	50,000	100,000	50,000	100.0%	e.
Other Pupil Accommodation	5,029,181	4,952,082	5,260,906	308,824	6.2%	
Labour Provision	17,811,054	-	-	-	0.0%	
Amortization and Write-downs	24,307,251	24,194,201	25,648,004	1,453,803	6.0%	f.
Total Pupil Accommodation	47,286,613	29,196,283	31,008,910	1,812,627	6.2%	
TOTAL OPERATING	419,595,106	396,827,986	417,918,000	21,090,014	5.3%	

Explanations of Material Budget Variances

- a. Increase due to labour enhancement, increased enrolment, and resource teacher additions to settle grievance.
- b. Increase due to sick leave offset with anticipated reduction of missed planning time due to the addition of resource teachers.
- c. Increase due to additional support for student needs and job evaluations.
- d. Increase due to additional staffing and supply costs attributed to increased enrolment and programming.
- e. Increase to better reflect prior year in-kind grants received.
- f. Increase due to timing of construction projects

Notes:

1. Budget is the 2024 - 2025 Estimates Budget as approved by the Board of Trustees in June 2024