

**WRAPSC Meeting  
1 May 2018**

- I. Welcome  
(Angelica Allen, Co-Chair)
- II. Presentation on *The Ripple Effect*  
(Kate Gingerich, Director of TREE, Conrad Grebel University College)
  - Her groups works with children to teach conflict resolution
  - <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-peace-advancement/news/planting-seeds-launch-ripple-effect-education>
- III. Presentation *Innovating Tomorrow by Educating Today* & Discussion (John Bryant, Director of Education, WRDSB)
  - Reviewed the WRDSB's Strategic Plan (<https://www.wrdsb.ca/learning/>)
  - Development of the plan was consultative with parents, students, and staff contributing feedback
  - The WRDSB purpose statement is: "Innovating tomorrow by educating today"
  - The Board prioritizes improved EQUAO results, in particular in mathematics
  - The Board wants to increase graduation rates by 5%
  - The Board is invested in cultivating relationships with its stakeholders and partners (teachers, parents, but also groups such as WRAPSC and Parent Councils)
  - [www.wrdsb.ca/survey](http://www.wrdsb.ca/survey) allows parents to submit feedback

Q: How does the Board reconcile the demands of the AODA with conserving heritage buildings? (properties, conservation districts).

- a. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>
- b. [http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage\\_designation.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_designation.shtml)

Do the demands of the AODA trump the building if it has a heritage designation or the other way around?

A: (Technically heritage trumps OADA.) Heritage is important, but so too is accessibility. There is a tension there. The Board looks for innovative solutions that balance the two needs. Seven schools have components that have heritage designation. Suddaby Public School (<https://sud.wrdsb.ca/>), for example, has a heritage façade, but the building's interior is not designated.

Q: Schools seem to get E.A.s based on head counts, and often schools with a small population but a high needs student body do not receive enough E.As. The Board is likely handicapped by Ministry of Education models, but what can be done in these situations?

A: Allocation is based on priority, given limited resources. The Board overspends its E.A. budget, but there just is not enough to go around. He feels collective agreements also tie the Board's hands sometimes (not clear how). The Ministry of Education also limits how its funding can be used, and often money not earmarked for staffing cannot be converted. So the Board is limited in many respects by a budget that is constantly inadequate.

Q: Where is the Board going with French Immersion, given the shortage of teachers and increased demand?

A: The Board has just allocated \$150,000 to produce a report on French Immersion in the Board. The shortage of French teachers is a real challenge for the Board. He went to Montreal and could not find French teachers. He says B.C. is poaching French teachers from Ontario. He acknowledges that the problem is systemic, and that the Ministry of Education needs to take a hard look at reforming the curriculum, potentially changing the degree requirements for teachers (as they did for certain technical programs), etc. He thinks the Ministry is listening to parents now.

Q: What can the Board do encourage principals to support their school council? Some principals are very good, others need help.

A: The Director said he does not know of a single Principal who does not leap at the opportunity to engage school councils. He has never had a Principal say that the school council is not important to them. If, as a parent, you will you are not being engaged, then he encourages you to go in and speak with your Principal. He pointed to the history, when Parent Teacher Advisory committees (PTAs) existed only to raise money, and how the schools pushed to grow the responsibilities of these groups.

IV. Encouraging School Council Involvement (Jennifer Crits, Principal, Preuter Public School)

- Talked at length about her school and how she engages parents and about community-building

V. Closing (Melissa Jenkins, Co-Chair)