

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR OPEN BOARD MEETING
OF THE NEW WESTMINSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Tuesday, October 29, 2024, 7:00 PM
In-Person and Via Zoom Link**

PRESENT Maya Russell, Chair
Cheryl Sluis, Vice-Chair
Gurveen Dhaliwal, Trustee
Danielle Connelly, Trustee
Elliott Slinn, Trustee
Cheryl Sluis, Trustee
Kathleen Carlsen, Trustee

Mark Davidson, Superintendent
Geraldine Lawlor, Associate Superintendent
Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer
Robert Weston, Executive Director, HR
Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects
Matt Brito, Director Operations & Facilities
Amy Grey, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
Laura Goodman, Recording Secretary

Members of the Public
Laura Kwong, DPA President
Dave Bollen, CUPE 409 President
Kristie Oxley, NWTU President

The New Westminster School District recognizes and acknowledges the Qayqayt First Nation, as well as all Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories we live, we learn, we play, and we do our work.

Chair Russell acknowledged Diwali, the festival of lights, which occurs on October 31, 2024; a wish to all those that celebrate.

Trustee Connelly requested that Dyslexia Awareness Month be listed under events for October.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2024-068

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) adopt the agenda for the October 29, 2024, Regular School Board meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

- Minutes from the Open meeting held:
 - i. September 24, 2024, Regular School Board Meeting.

2024-069

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as presented for the Regular School Board meeting held on September 24, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- Business Arising from the Minutes.
Nil.

3. **PRESENTATIONS**

- a. Learning Story No. 2 - Intellectual Literary Focus (S. Singh, T. Dewar, E. Larkman).

Sandra Singh, Director of Learning, Instruction, and Innovation; Tammy Dewar, Vice Principal of Queen Elizabeth School and District Speech-Language Pathologist Emily Larkman, presented Learning Story No. 2 Literacy Intervention at Queen Elizabeth School.

Four literary models were highlighted: 1) The University of Oregon's screening tool DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) model which is a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of literacy skills; 2). The University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) program is an explicit and systematic phonics instruction method to categorize students by reading proficiency and implements targeted interventions; 3). The Continuous Improvement Model (evaluate, prioritize, plan, implement) is a multi-tiered system support model which focuses on using data, so children get the help they need from local educators when they need it; and 4) The RTI (Response to Intervention) triangle which categorizes students into tiers based on their needs. Teachers are also encouraged to consider behaviour and social-emotional needs when plotting students on the RTI triangle.

Singh noted that in the Enhancement Student Learning Report for the 2023-2024 school year, the aggregated performance of students on the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) and graduation assessment is in line with the provincial average; the District's aggregated performance tends to mirror provincial trends.

Questions and discussion ensued.

Chair Russell acknowledged the presenters' dedication and skill and looks forward to the next update.

To review the full Learning Story No. 2 presentation, refer to the meeting [video](#) at 7:04 p.m.

- b. National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (T. Hansen & K. Dunbar)

New Westminster Secondary School (NWSS) teachers and staff Reconciliation Committee members: Tamara Hansen, Katelyn Dunbar, and Brenda Johnstone provided a recap of the Truth and Reconciliation week activities at NWSS as requested by the Board of Education.

Questions and discussion ensued about the importance of creating policies and guidelines to support reconciliation efforts with a commitment to further exploration and development.

Chair Russell and the Trustees acknowledged the presenters for working with the NWSS students and teachers to support Reconciliation efforts, and for their dedication and inspiring work they continue to do.

To review the full National Day for Truth and Reconciliation presentation, refer to the video recording at [\[7:30 p.m.\]](#)

c. Rotary Club of New Westminster

Rotary Club members Laurie Stewart and John Barry provided an overview of the Rotary Club of New Westminster. The presentation highlighted the extensive support and programs provided by the Rotary Club to New Westminster Secondary School (NWSS) students. Abigail, a grade 12 student, shared her transformative experience as a Rotary Youth Exchange student in Austria, emphasizing the personal growth and global connections she made.

To review the full Rotary Club of New Westminster presentation, refer to the [video](#) recording at 7:51 p.m.

4. **COMMENT & QUESTION PERIOD FROM VISITORS**

DPAC: Laura Kwong, Chair

- DPAC co-authored an open letter with other DPACs to provincial election candidates calling for action on portable funding.
- DPAC was pleased to host a table at the District's Kindergarten information night.
- DPAC updates also included participation in committee meetings and a small survey they distributed to gain feedback on personal digital device restrictions.
- DPAC was pleased to see the October 8th letter from the Board to the City of New Westminster regarding the capacity crisis.

CUPE 409: Dave Bollen, President

- Bollen congratulated members that assumed new executive roles.
- November professional development day will focus on health and safety training for all CUPE members and site reps.
- Grievance & Bargaining Committee training is planned for 2025.

NWTU: Kristie Oxley, President

- Oxley attended the recent Kindergarten information session and praised Spencer Elementary School teacher Stacy Calogero for her amazing presentation.
- Oxley has written and distributed a letter regarding Kindergarten gradual entry.

The public was given the opportunity to ask questions on items related to the agenda with staff responding where appropriate. To view the first full comment and question period, please refer to the meeting [video](#) at 8:08 p.m.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Ltr. to Mayor & City Councillors (M. Russell)

- a. Chair Russell noted that the Board had sent a letter dated October 8, 2024, to Mayor Johnstone and City Councillors regarding the 22nd Street Station development zone.
- b. BCPSEA - Conflict of Interest Guidelines for Trustees (M. Russell)

Chair Russell noted that BCPSEA has released new conflict of interest guidelines for trustees. This item is included in this evening's agenda package and is being brought forward for information purposes only.

6. **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a. Education Policy & Planning Committee, October 15, 2024.

- 1. Comments from the Committee Chair, Trustee Andres.

Trustee Andres highlighted the following topics: the new student representatives for Student Voice, the implementation of Ministerial Order 9 ban on cell phone usage, an update on the Kindergarten gradual entry process with an information session held on October 31, 2024. Andres also acknowledged and thanked the staff for their excellent work on the AI usage framework.

- 2. Approval of the October 15, 2024, Education Policy and Planning Committee Minutes.

2024-070

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as distributed for the Education Policy and Planning Committee held on October 15, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- b. Education Policy & Planning Committee, October 15, 2024.

- 1. Comments from the Committee Chair, Trustee Connelly.

Connelly acknowledged and thanked Queen Elizabeth principal Sarah Phelan and staff for their efforts to continue to keep students safe during the current expansion project at the school; a report from Associate Superintendent Lawlor reveals data that enrolment continues to grow rapidly; this data also helps direct the Districts advocacy efforts to ensure that students continue to learn in safe environments. Connelly also acknowledged Human Resources, Executive Director Weston and his team who continue to work hard to ensure staffing needs are met.

2. Approval of the October 15, 2024, Education Policy and Planning Committee Minutes.

2024-071

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as distributed for the Operations Policy and Planning Committee held on October 15, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chair Russell requested a 5-minute recess at 8:31 p.m.

Chair Russell reconvened the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

7. REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT

- a. Superintendent Update (M. Davidson) (Verbal)

Superintendent Davidson provided an update on the following activities:

- Davidson reported on his school site visits emphasizing the importance of collaborative conversations among administrators and teachers. Teachers have been patient with his visits to schools and he expressed his gratitude to the Principal and Vice Principal Association for allowing him to attend their professional learning session last week; it was a great experience.
- Davidson and Pam Craven, Director of Instruction, Secondary Programs will visit New Westminster Secondary School, Middle Schools, and F.W. Howay, and Associate Superintendent Lawlor and Directors will visit other schools; both groups with the intent to review school plans to see how they align with the data in the FESL Report.
- Davidson highlighted the FESL Report which aims to provide support to help schools move young learners forward with a focus on individual student learning experiences. Davidson noted that the data sets inform the administrators' contribution to the Strategic Plan which helps to construct specific goals, targets, and measures. The focus remains on individual learners rather than just numbers, which ensures that the data is actionable and supports student improvement. The new Strategic Plan will use a well-received format that guides the school system's direction forward and will continue to involve regular meetings with administration teams.

- b. Bank Signing Authority (B. Ketcham) (Verbal)

2024-072

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster)'s bank signing authorities be updated to include Mark Davidson, Superintendent.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

c. Board Work Plan - November / December 2024 (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham provided an update regarding the Board Work Plan, noting that the September and October plans were previously approved by the Board in June 2024; proposed revisions for November and December are included for Board approval. The Board Work Plan aims to provide a clearer understanding for their partner groups and members of the public.

2024-073

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the Board Work Plan for November and December 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. NWSS 5-Block Model (P. Craven)

Pam Craven, Director of Instruction-Secondary Programs provided an update regarding the proposed implementation of the new NWSS 5-Block model, meetings with stakeholder groups, and consultations with students, parents, and teachers. *Highlights:* Craven noted that the block length will be kept as long as possible, around 77 minutes, with a 4-minute transition time between classes. The model separates students and teachers into A-D and B-E blocks, which aligns with the Collective Agreement language. Concerns were raised for the lack of support blocks, the impact on students' schedules, sports programming and bussing students from Queensborough.

Craven clarified that support blocks are still available and that additional support can be provided in 'A' and 'E' blocks; a review of the impact of the 5-block model on student access to support blocks and elective courses will be re-examined. Craven confirmed that bussing will continue as planned, and adjustments will be made as required which will ensure communication and coordination with the Queensborough community regarding bussing impacts from the 5-Block model. Adjustments will also be made to ensure students can continue with their sports programs and continue to participate in their chosen activities.

The NWSS 5-Block Model Final Report will be brought forward on Tuesday, November 26, 2024.

e. AP 341 - Transportation of Students with Disabilities and Diverse Abilities

- AP 341 - addresses transportation services for students with disabilities and diverse abilities. Rhonda Jones, Director of Instruction and Learning Services, and team members reviewed the language and the need for clarity in prioritizing services for students with mobility challenges was identified. The redline changes within this document reflect these changes.

f. Administrative Procedures (B. Ketcham)

1. AP 544 - Access to Buildings

- AP 544 – edits included helps to address access to buildings during breaks for preventative and scheduled maintenance. *Highlights:* the need for staff to notify principals and facilities about their comings and goings during critical times; clarification on the unacceptable use of facilities for personal reasons, and changes to procedure 8.

2. AP 520 - Fundraising and Coordination of Fundraising with PAC;

3. AP 522 - Charitable Donations, and 4. AP 525 - Corporate Sponsorship.

- The background information and changes to APs 522, 525 and 520 regarding donations and sponsorships were reviewed. Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham noted that AP 522 and 525 had been separated from AP 520 to reduce confusion and to provide clarity; a backgrounder report detailing the consultation process and feedback is included in this evening's agenda package. AP 522 covers donations, including equipment from PACs, and AP 525 addresses sponsorships with robust documentation and expectations for recognition. The importance of acknowledging gifts and sponsorships appropriately was emphasized.

Chair Russell acknowledged and thanked the staff team, Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham, Trustees Sluis and Connelly, Learning Team Director Jones, and various partner groups for their contributions to the Administrative Procedures and the School Generated Funds Committee.

To review the Administrative Procedures refer to the meeting [video](#) at 9:00 p.m.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Policy 26 – Fundraising (C. Sluis & D. Connelly)

Trustee Sluis introduced Policy 26, which provides guidance for staff and partners on the District's approach to fundraising. The Policy aims to support decision-making when procedures are unclear to provide a clear guide for the Board. The policy has been reviewed and updated with feedback from the ad hoc committee and partner groups.

2024-074

Moved and Seconded

That the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) adopt Policy 26 Fundraising as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

Nil.

10. **TRUSTEE REPORTS**

Trustees provided highlights of the events they attended in October. Refer to the meeting [video](#) at 9:40 p.m. for full comments.

Trustee Andres put forward the recommendation at 9:29 p.m. to extend the meeting past 9:30 p.m.

11. **QUESTION PERIOD (15 Minutes)**

The public was given the opportunity to ask questions on matters that arose during the meeting with staff responding where appropriate. To view the full comment and question period, please refer to the meeting [video](#) at 9:28 p.m.

12. **NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

Events

- Dyslexia Awareness Month – October 2024
- National Custodian Appreciation Day - Wednesday, October 2, 2024
- Recognize World Teachers' Day - Saturday, October 5, 2024
- World Mental Health Day - Thursday, October 10, 2024
- Represent Board at the British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) Provincial Council Meeting - Friday, October 25th – Saturday, October 26th, 2024
- First Nations Schools Fall Professional Development Day - Friday, November 15th to Saturday, November 16, 2024
- Canada School Library Day - Monday, October 21, 2024

13. **REPORTING OUT FROM IN-CAMERA BOARD MEETING**

- a. Record of the September 24, 2024, In-Camera Meeting.

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer