

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

**Tuesday, April 28, 2020, 7:00 PM
Via Webex Livestream**

PRESENT	Anita Ansari, Chair	Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent
	Dee Beattie, Trustee	Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer
	Danielle Connelly, Trustee	Maryam Naser, Associate Superintendent
	Gurveen Dhaliwal, Vice Chair	Robert Weston, Executive Director, Human Resources
	Mark Gifford, Trustee	Marcel Marsolais, President CUPE Local 409
		Caroline Manders, Recording Secretary
REGRETS	Mary Lalji, Trustee	
	Maya Russell, Trustee	

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.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair of the Board called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2020-027

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve participation at all Committee and Board of Education meetings up to June 30, 2020 to be held via videoconference.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2020-028

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) adopt the agenda for the April 28, 2020 Regular School Board meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes from the Open Meetings held:

i. March 10, 2020 Regular Meeting

2020-029

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as distributed for the March 10, 2020 Regular School Board Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Business Arising from the Minutes

Nil.

3. NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

a. New Westminster & District Labour Council

The New Westminster & District Labour Council had been invited to attend the meeting, however given the current situation preventing a face-to-face meeting, they asked that the Proclamation be read on their behalf. Chair Ansari read the Proclamation of the National Day of Mourning. A minute of silence was observed.

b. Marcel Marsolais, President CUPE Local 409

President of CUPE Local 409 Marsolais highlighted the Board with WorkSafeBC's time-loss claims in public school districts' data. The mandate should be prevention for both the Union and District to stop violence in the workplace. He thanked the District's custodial staff for their work during this difficult time. He thanked the Board for their recognition of the National Day of Mourning. Chair Ansari thanked President Marsolais for his presentation and acknowledged the importance for custodians and the health and safety initiatives to prevent injuries on the job.

4. COMMENT & QUESTION PERIOD FROM VISITORS

Please note questions will be answered during Question Period near the end of the meeting.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Nil.

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. CANCELLED-Education Policy & Planning Committee, April 14, 2020

Chair Ansari thanked Trustee Beattie for being integral in continuing to bring forward matters for consideration.

b. Operations Policy & Planning Committee, April 21, 2020

i. Comments from the Committee Chair, Trustee Connelly

Trustee Connelly thanked staff for ensuring a smooth transition from in-person to livestreaming Board meetings.

ii. Approval of the April 21, 2020 Operations Policy and Planning Committee Minutes

2020-030

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes from the April 21, 2020 Operations Policy & Planning Committee meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

iii. 2020-2021 Budget Process Schedule Amendment

2020-031

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the Amended 2020-2021 Budget Process as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT

a. Superintendent Update

Superintendent Hachlaf provided COVID-19 highlights:

- No update on potential return to classes at this time; schools have developed videos to reach out to the community.
- District continues to reach out to its families and foster relationships.
- Lunch program support has expanded.
- Expanding supports to vulnerable families; childcare support for Essential Services Workers; now reaching out to students with diverse needs.
- Student Transition Planning: Secondary School is reaching out to Middle School students to welcome them to high school via videos; Middle Schools are ensuring a smooth transition for Grade 5 students entering Middle School; Kindergarten virtual events are also being planned.
- Grade 12 Graduating Students, NWSS administration, in consultation with the graduation council, is engaging with the community to gather ideas as to how an alternative event can be hosted.
- Online Learning: the online format does not always lend itself to be an effective check-in with students so teachers are following up with individual students on their progress. Parents are most welcome to connect with teachers.

b. 2020-2021 Operating Budget

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham provided a detailed update on the status of the 2020-21 budget since the March 10, 2020 Regular Open Board meeting and how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the current budget process. The amounts, which are being presented are conservative and a number of efficiencies to be outlined at the May 12 Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting have not been included. This is not the final budget; this is a sharing of data of where the District stands currently:

- To date, the Ministry of Education has not indicated plans to claw-back the District's savings.
- Scenario 4 presented at the March 3 and March 10 Board meetings contemplated the reduction in the Continuing Education (CE) program to close both the day and late afternoon sessions and also included the reversal of the 2019-20 surplus initiatives along with several other significant adjustments. This left an estimated accumulated surplus balance of \$1.9M by the end of 2020-21 which utilizes a significant portion of the opening \$3.4 M opening balance.
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic are reflected in the following assumptions:
 - Reduction of international revenues of nearly \$600,000 to assume only 88 students enrolled as opposed to 130 originally planned. This is offset by some reductions to expenses.
 - Reduction to facilities rental revenue of \$85,000.
 - Reduction to interest revenue of \$250,000.
 - Budget has also been adjusted for the announced 2020-21 revenues per the Ministry of Education.
 - Some additional known costs and savings have been incorporated. This includes the Board's investment of \$1M for NWSS furniture and equipment which will go to enhance a 21st century learning environment in the new NWSS facility.

- Under these assumptions, the operating shortfall stands at nearly \$2M, which after the \$1M investment in NWSS furniture and equipment would leave only \$417K of accumulated surplus – well below the \$2M balance considered healthy to maintain. This does not yet include any operational efficiencies currently being examined that will be presented during the May 12, 2020 Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting, nor any savings from the 2019-20 fiscal year. The District is not allowed, by law, to be in an operational deficit position.

The adjusted 2020-21 Budget was reviewed in detail:

- Ministry's funds confirmed in mid-March; Continuing Education (CE) adjustments; CE investment of relocating program; portables is a placeholder until the number and cost to be confirmed at the May 12 Operations Committee meeting (currently 1 portable has been purchased for Qayqayt); Principals'/Vice Principals' salaries; 2019-20 surplus initiatives; one-time costs in Special Purpose Funds coming back to Operations; CE programs reduction to having only nighttime instruction were outlined; Superintendent Recommendations will be brought to the May 12 Operations Committee meeting.
- Leftover amounts from accumulated surplus balances, after adjustments are made \$1.9M will remain, not including the Superintendent Recommendations still forthcoming - approximately \$2M which also includes the \$1M for the Richard McBride project.
- Grant adjustment from Ministry received on March 13, 2020 has now been reflected.
- COVID-19 adjustments - specifically facility rental revenue; interest on short term investments.
- Support staff wage increases (placeholder as agreement has not yet been ratified).
- Benefit Premium Holiday - the District has accumulated some surplus in benefit accounts due to non-usage; District has therefore saved \$627,000 (one-time saving).
- Service Improvement Allocation (CUPE) - \$92,000 to be funded by the government.
- International revenues had to be further adjusted due to COVID-19 and were reevaluated again to reduce the expected revenues due to travel constraints; however, the program can grow by 100 students though it is still unclear when travel restrictions will be lifted:
 - Cancellation of international summer program, this is in line with other districts cancelling similar programs; the regular stream of summer programs seems to be going ahead and planning continues under that assumption.
- Miscellaneous services and supplies have been adjusted.

A final budget is due to the Ministry by June 30, it is anticipated that the budget will be finalized by the end of May. The Board was asked for their comments.

Trustee Gifford, acknowledging that this year's budget planning is challenging, asked that the one-time surplus arts education funding passed in 2019 be carried forward to 2020-21. Superintendent Hachlaf confirmed an update regarding the status of the arts education will be forthcoming at the May 26, 2020 Board meeting. However, the provision of the arts funding put in place last year will not be carried forward into the 2020-21 budget year. This was confirmed by Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham.

Trustee Beattie would like to hear the recommendations pertaining to the special education review and the Superintendent Recommendations at the May 12 Operations Committee meeting.

Trustee Dhaliwal reminded the Board that the District is facing tough budget decisions and that not all initiatives can be carried forward in 2020-21. The efficiencies that the Board is undertaking are aligned to the Five-Year Capital Plan.

Trustee Connelly asked that the Ministry be approached about having the District be able to keep the savings realized. Chair Ansari indicated not all districts are in the same boat and would like to discuss this further at the May 12 Operations meeting.

Chair Ansari thanked Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham for her work in preparing this budget review.

Superintendent Hachlaf asked that any specific budget-related questions be passed along to staff to prepare responses for the upcoming Operations Committee meeting.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Nil.

9. TRUSTEE REPORTS

Trustees provided highlights of activities they participated in April.

The Board expressed their gratitude to the District's staff for how supportive they have been during this difficult and challenging time. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, sent a letter of appreciation to all District staff on April 23.

10. QUESTION PERIOD (15 Minutes)

The public was given the opportunity to ask questions on matters that arose during the meeting. Chair Ansari welcomed Beth Ott, Co-Chair of the District Parents' Advisory Council and Karen Klein, Director of the International Program.

11. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Tuesday, May 12, 2020: Operations Policy & Planning Committee, 7:00pm - Via Webex

Tuesday, May 12, 2020: Special Open Board Meeting, 9:00pm (immediately following the Operations Committee Meeting) - Via Webex

Tuesday, May 26, 2020: School Board Meeting, 7:00pm - Via Webex

12. REPORTING OUT FROM IN-CAMERA BOARD MEETING

a. Record of In-Camera March 10, 2020 Board Meeting

b. Record of the Special In-Camera April 21, 2020 Board Meeting

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43pm.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer