

**MINUTES OF THE NEW WESTMINSTER BOARD OF EDUCATION  
OPERATIONS POLICY & PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 6:15 PM  
Via Webex Livestream**

**PRESENT** Gurveen Dhaliwal, Chair  
Dee Beattie, Vice Chair  
Anita Ansari, Trustee  
Danielle Connelly, Trustee (6:25pm)  
Mark Gifford, Trustee  
Maya Russell, Trustee

Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent  
Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer  
Maryam Naser, Associate Superintendent  
Robert Weston, Executive Director of Human Resources  
Caroline Manders, Recording Secretary  
Guests:  
Members of the Public  
Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects  
Stephen Inniss, District Vice Principal of Continuing Education  
Kristen Keighley-Wight, Communications Manager  
Julie MacLellan, Reporter, New Westminster Record  
Sarah Wethered, President, NWTU

**REGRETS** Mary Lalji, Trustee

*Chair Dhaliwal recognized and acknowledged 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. Approval of Agenda**

Due to technical difficulties, Committee Chair Connelly asked Trustee Dhaliwal to chair the meeting on her behalf. The meeting was called to order at 6:17pm.

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the agenda for the February 9, 2021 Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting be adopted as distributed.***

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**2. Comment & Question Period from Visitors**

Nil.

**3. Reports from Senior Management**

a. Capital Projects Update

i. Richard McBride Elementary School Replacement Project

Director of Capital Projects provided highlights:

- Upcoming project milestones were reviewed.
- At the January 12 Operations Committee meeting, a concern was raised regarding traffic flow around the build site, the contractor Heatherbrae and the District reviewed the construction delivery schedule, which has been adjusted to ensure that they not take place during student drop-off and pick-up times. Will continue to monitor this situation.
- The project work scheduling for June to September is being reviewed to take advantage of when school is not in session during summer vacation.

- The project website will be updated to include photos, a rendering of the completed project.

*Trustee Connelly joined the meeting at 6:25pm.*

b. Operations Update

i. Facilities Report February 2021

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham provided the following highlights:

- Queen Elizabeth PDR – second draft has been submitted to the Ministry.
- Outside Learning Centres – the metal roofs arrived damaged and had to be replaced; replacements have now arrived, they will be installed by Habitat and should be completed over the next two weeks.
  - Outdoor furniture has been ordered and will be placed when the roofs are installed; the furniture is metal and will be bolted into the cement.
- Installation of the wash cart at Qayqayt will be completed mid-February.
- Financial Update – a new system to support facilities rentals is being researched.

It was asked whether there are any plans to place rubber mats on the Learning Commons Grand Stairway at NWSS so students can sit more comfortably. Director of Capital Projects Crowe indicated that may not be possible as the stairs are fire-rated and placing anything on them would affect the functionality of the stairs, as well as posing a tripping hazard.

Superintendent Hachlaf indicated that there are plans to furnish each learning neighbourhood at NWSS with softer lighting and furniture.

ii. TIS Verbal Update

Associate Superintendent Naser provided highlights of current projects:

- Developing a service catalogue to reduce the number of devices used in schools and to better support students and staff with the devices.
- Lifecycle of laptops for teachers – refreshing laptops on an annual basis.
- Consultation work taking place with principals and vice principals regarding SharePoint and manage the content shared by principals and vice principals and how this can be best realized.
- Office 365 - Teams, Notebook, etc. professional development taking place in District (Train the Trainer model) so in-house pro can train in-house staff. Microsoft trainers were in the District to complete the training for the in-house trainers.
- Professional Development Day on February 16 will include additional training opportunities.

Associate Superintendent Naser indicated that a lifecycle schedule will be created around the refresh cycle. Perhaps, 1/3 of the schools this year; 1/3 next year and then 1/3 the following year, this would provide everyone with an opportunity to share hardware. Older laptops would be recycled; newer laptops are refurbished for use within the District.

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham thanked the TIS, Procurement and Finance teams for their work in ensuring smooth installation of the multi-functional Xerox devices across the District over the past couple of weeks.

c. 2020-2021 Amended Budget Update

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham provided highlights of the 2020-21 Amended Budget as follows:

- Budget Bylaw will be brought forward to the February 23 Regular Open Board meeting.
- COVID-19 caused a number of assumptions to be made early 2020 and over the past few months these assumptions have been adjusted as necessary.
- Accompanying notes to the financial statement explain in detail the changes made to the budget.
- In May 2020, a \$1.3 million deficit budget was passed; in February 2021 the deficit has all been eliminated due to the following factors:

Revenues:

- Number of positive adjustments were explained.
  - Total \$890,000 adjustment added to the budget

Expenses:

- Savings were realized in several areas due to some services were moved online; these are most likely one-time adjustments.
  - Total \$226,000 savings
  - Anti-racism consulting: \$45,000, which has not been yet approved by the Board, it will come forward as a motion at the February 23 Board meeting.

Accumulated Surplus items were reviewed.

It was explained that the \$1 million set aside for furnishings of the new NWSS is outside the \$3.9 million surplus.

Trustee Connelly thanked staff for their work and nimbleness to adjust to the various challenges posed by COVID-19 that were presented during a year of so much uncertainty.

d. 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget Process

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham reviewed the 2021-2022 Budget Process schedule and what the format for engaging with various stakeholder groups will be. The Board Budget In-Service will take place on April 6 to review the preliminary budget and identify priorities.

Discussion followed regarding the Board's preference of the format for Talking Tables / Student Symposium / use of ThoughtExchange. Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham indicated that the Board's support of focused consultations with individual groups would work best. Stakeholder consultations, which will include Student Voice, will take place after the April 6<sup>th</sup> budget review; the 2021-2022 Budget Process schedule will be adjusted accordingly.

e. Continuing Education Update

District Vice Principal of Continuing Education Inniss provided highlights:

- Adult Learning Centre - age distribution: 46% are 19-29; 33% 30-39; 18% are 40-59
  - Largest student group is from New Westminster (and may already have Secondary education and are looking to upgrade qualifications); others come from Vancouver, Coquitlam, Burnaby and Surrey.

- The profile of the group and the reasons for attending varies pertaining to the individuals' personal situation and does not vary much from year-to-year.
- Currently there are 334 students enrolled. Students have been retained following the elimination of the morning and afternoon sessions. Course instruction is adjusted to best suit the situation of the student's learning needs.

Trustee Dhaliwal thanked District Principal Inniss for his presentation.

f. COVID-19 Update

Superintendent Hachlaf indicated that Fraser Health has streamlined their communication strategy. Some revisions will be made to COVID-19 guidelines for schools, which will affect the District's health and safety guidelines. These revisions will be finalized by February 26. This includes strengthened mask guidelines; enhancements for physical education (PE) and music classes; additional safety protocols regarding staff-only spaces and gatherings and new K-12 health check app. Reduction of any congestion/contacts where possible amongst adults. Each site will customize their own plan from the District's plan. This will be reviewed with staff.

A concern was expressed pertaining to the workload of the District sites' health and safety committee members. Executive Director of Human Resources Weston indicated that a District-level meeting will take place this week and site committees will meet over the next several weeks. Feedback will be collected and will monitor the situation. If there is a need to provide additional support, that will be considered.

Compared to December, thus far in 2021, the COVID-19 exposure trend within the District has declined, there has been a 72% drop in Early Notifications and a 68% drop in Self-Monitoring letters. Hoping that this downward trend will continue. Two presentation slides published by the Provincial Health Officer were reviewed.

g. Neighbourhood Learning Centre – Wellness Centre Update

Associate Superintendent Naser provided highlights since the last update November 24, 2020:

- Integrated Child and Youth Supports Centre – no funds have been received and District is awaiting further announcements from the ministries involved regarding details of the funding. Funding will be targeted to add additional staffing.
- Grants have not been identified that are appropriate at this time; follow the Maple Ridge model and grants do not support Capital Projects; some are quite specific as to what they support.
- Superintendent Hachlaf and Board Chair Dhaliwal met with Minister Whiteside to promote the Wellness Centre and its vision with the hopes of securing possible future financial support.
- Unchanged from the last update is that the greatest challenge continues to be securing funding to finish the space.
- The District has strong partnerships within the New Westminster community.
- Sponsorships/fundraising could be another option should the Board support such initiatives.

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham indicated that the cost of completing the Wellness Centre would depend on the scope of the work – cost could range from \$150K to \$300K. The District Director of Facilities has been asked to research other options to finish the space.

**Moved**

***THAT the Operations Policy and Planning Committee recommend to the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) to instruct District staff to pursue a proposal for a basic option and an expanded option for completing the Wellness Centre space.***

**MOTION NOT SECONDED**

This matter will be reviewed along with other budget priorities at the April 6 Board In-Service.

h. 2021-2022 District Calendar

Associate Superintendent Naser indicated that the District Calendar was posted on the website on January 8 to provide the community with an opportunity for feedback. No feedback was received. The calendar will be brought to the February 23 Board meeting for approval and will then be submitted to the Ministry.

**4. General Announcements**

Pink Shirt Day, February 24. Please wear your Pink Shirt at the February 23 Board meetings.

**5. New Business**

a. BCPSEA Report Out

Trustee Russell attended the BCPSEA AGM on January 28. A unanimous decision was made to participate in a business case to exempt school districts from the salary freeze imposed in 2020.

**6. Question Period (15 Minutes)**

Nil.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:41pm.