

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

**Friday, October 1, 2021, 12:00 PM  
Via Microsoft Teams**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Gurveen Dhaliwal, Chair	Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent
	Dee Beattie, Vice-Chair	Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer
		Maryam Naser, Associate Superintendent
		Robert Weston, Executive Director – Human Resources
	Anita Ansari, Trustee	Guests:
	Danielle Connelly, Trustee	Members of the Public
	Mark Gifford, Trustee	Julie MacLellan, Reporter, New Westminster Record
	Maya Russell, Trustee	Mike, CTV
	Mary Lalji, Trustee	Kristen Keighley-Wight, Communications Manager
		Sarah Wethered, President NWTU
		Dave Bollen, CUPE 409 President
		New Westminster DPAC
		Leanne Sojka, Recording Secretary

***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 12:03 pm.

Chair Dhaliwal reminded everyone that school transmission risk is low and commended staff for creating a safe and supportive environment for students. School exposures are now listed on the Fraser Health website and the Provincial Health Officer will be releasing a monthly report on how the virus is affecting school aged children.

**2021-070**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the agenda for the October 1, 2021 Special Open School Board meeting.***

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## 2. REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT

### a. Mask Update (K. Hachlaf)

Superintendent Hachlaf shared the Provincial Health Officer's formal announcement K-3 mask mandate effective October 4, 2021 provides the District the formal authority to exercise the mask requirement. He reiterated that the Provincial Health Authority confirms that schools remain a safe place and that the Delta variant transmissions have not fundamentally changed how we deal with the pandemic. He noted that the District intends to implement the expanded K-3 mask mandate in a supportive, inclusive approach as has been done during the entire pandemic to support their youngest learners - above all else students to remain in school. Communication will be forthcoming to families later today.

Discussion ensued.

#### **2021-071**

#### **Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) indefinitely postpone the motion to extend the current grade 4 to 12 mask mandate to include kindergarten – grade 3 students.***

Trustee Beattie offered the explanation that given the Ministry of Education, with the support of the PHO, have implemented a mask mandate, the original motion proposed before the announcement is not necessary.

Discussion ensued.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### b. COVID-19 - Other Matters (K. Hachlaf)

#### i. School-based Vaccinations

Superintendent Hachlaf reiterated the District will continue to work collaboratively with Fraser Health with respect to school based vaccinations.

#### ii. COVID-19 Mouth/Gargle Rinse Test Kits

Superintendent Hachlaf shared that similar to last year, the District will be volunteering again to pilot mouth/gargle rinse test kits working collaboratively with Fraser Health. He wanted to clarify that these tests get sent back to the lab.

#### iii. COVID-19 School Notifications

Superintendent Hachlaf shared that Fraser Health has already begun to post notifications on their website, posting a day after the exposure letter

goes out. Will continue and work hard in their partnership with Fraser Health ensuring staff and families continue to receive transparency and access to information.

iv. Staff Vaccinations (M. Russell)

Trustee Russell shared the concern raised by a number of DPAC's in the lower mainland surrounding staff vaccinations and added that they could be another piece to protect younger students who were unable to be vaccinated. Superintendent Hachlaf stated the legal opinion they would seek would be comprehensive, around the rationale and other mechanisms they have around "what if's".

**2021-072**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) seek out a legal opinion on mandatory staff vaccinations with a report back at the October 12, 2021 Operations Policy & Planning Committee meeting.***

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

c. Custodian Staffing

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham shared that staff have been engaged in preparing the fall presentation to come before the Board on their analysis of the additional custodial support. She advised the spring 2021 budget consultation encompassed 6 part-time custodians to help with high touch areas at a cost of \$90,000 to the end of December. Based on their understanding of the present pandemic circumstances, staff are in support to extend this measure until the end of June and the cost for the entire school year would be \$170,000 to support this priority.

**2021-073**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education School District No. 40 (New Westminster) extend the current staffing levels of day time custodians that were specifically added in response to the pandemic for the 2021-22 school year to June 30 2022 in order to deal with high touch points within our facilities and schools.***

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:27 pm.

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Chair

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Secretary-Treasurer