



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

**Tuesday, February 8, 2022, 6:45 PM
Via Webex Livestream**

PRESENT Dee Beattie, Vice-Chair
Anita Ansari, Trustee
Mary Lalji, Trustee
Danielle Connelly, Trustee
Maya Russell, Trustee
Mark Gifford

Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent
Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer
Maryam Naser, Associate Superintendent
Robert Weston, Executive Director Human Resources
Leanne Sojka, Recording Secretary
Guests:
Dave Crowe, Director – Capital Projects
Kristen Keighley-Wight, Communications Manager
Julie MacLellan, Reporter, New Westminster Record
Sarah Wethered, President, NWTU

REGRETS Gurveen Dhaliwal, Chair

Committee Chair Connelly 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. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair of the Board called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

Moved and Seconded

THAT the agenda for the February 8, 2022 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. Queen Elizabeth Elementary School Expansion Project (Verbal) (D. Crowe)

Director Capital Projects Crowe provided a brief update. A great deal of information was gathered during visioning sessions with the school-based team. This first step will support the architectural team with completion of the functional program (facility design). Following that, the team will work with the Principal and Vice-Principal to determine how to engage public consultation and input.

ii. NWSS Decommissioning Project (Verbal) (D. Crowe)

Director Capital Projects Crowe shared the City of New Westminster is moving forward quickly with utilities reconnection. It is anticipated there will be no further delays to the most recent completion target date of June or July and the RFP for decommissioning is due to go out within a couple of days.

iii. Skwo:wech (D. Crowe)

Director Capital Projects Crowe provided the update that many major milestones were achieved this past month:

- Gym flooring installed with sanding ongoing
- Elevator inspection and approval to use completed
- Concrete curbs and sidewalk completed at level 3
- Front doors have arrived and installed
- Concrete floor polishing is complete
- Lighting installation 95% complete
- Painting of drywall 100% first coats and 55% final coat
- Interior window frames 75% complete
- Exterior cladding 95% complete
- Millwork installation 85% complete
- Wood slat ceilings are complete

b. Operations Update

i. Facilities Report February 2022 (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham shared that all 64 HEPA filters have been installed into portables and school sites that were not equipped with the Ministry recommended MERV 13 filtration units. Rapid COVID-19 antigen tests provided by the Ministry were deployed to staff at all sites. The District is awaiting to receive from the Ministry, rapid COVID-19 antigen tests for students. The Herbert Spencer Elementary gymnasium was offered to the City of New Westminster at no cost to assist with the lack of community space impacted by the closure of Canada Games Pool.

The Finance team is preparing 2021 T4's and working on the amended budget which will be presented at the regular open Board meeting of February 22, 2022.

Confirmation was provided that an intentional deficit is anticipated for the current year due to the inclusion of several surplus based priorities. The anticipated deficit is expected to be lower than the approved amount in May 2021 due to an increase in the number of international education students and increase in general enrolment within the District.

ii. Technology Information Services Verbal Update (M. Naser)

Associate Superintendent Naser provided highlights of the work that is continuing with the hardware refresh. Student devices have been ordered and staff devices will be ordered later this week. There will a lengthier delay in receiving staff devices due to supply chain issues resulting from COVID-19 but the District expects them to be distributed at the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. Pre-used staff devices are being recovered for student use in schools. The team has been providing technical support to the Skwo:wech project by ordering equipment and commissioning Wi-Fi

access points. She confirms both the Ministry and the District contribute to the cost of Wi-Fi and the technology team has implemented improvements in terms of bandwidth as well as examining the needs and prioritization of competing demands.

c. Replacement Coverage (R. Weston)

Executive Director Human Resources Weston shared highlights of the report which represented November and December 2021 data:

- Average of 5.6% teacher absenteeism rate in November
- Average of 5.5% teacher absenteeism rate in December
- Average of 10% education assistant absenteeism rate in November
- Average of 8.3 % education assistant absenteeism rate in November

He cited exceptionally high rates of absenteeism approximately double these percentages for January 2022, but a downward trend was experienced the first week of February.

Comments and questions ensued.

d. Living Wage Report (Verbal) (R. Weston)

Executive Director Human Resources Weston confirmed that the District's application as a Living Wage Employer was recently approved, joining only two other districts within the province.

e. COVID-19 Update (K. Hachlaf)

Superintendent Hachlaf confirmed the distribution of two rapid COVID-19 antigen tests per employee had been completed. The Ministry has commenced a phased distribution rollout of rapid COVID-19 antigen tests for students:

- Phase 1 - school districts that are considered remote
- Phase 2 – school districts within the northern and interior health authority
- Phase 3 - elementary and middle schools of all other districts
- Phase 4 – secondary schools of all other districts

He noted that each family within Phases 1 - 3 will receive a kit that includes 5 rapid COVID-19 antigen tests. The Ministry has not yet provided rollout dates for Phases 3 -4 (which New West Schools would be included in). School tournaments are now allowed while following strict health and safety protocols.

4. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pink Shirt Day is February 23. Please wear your Pink Shirts at the February 22, 2022 Board meetings.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. BCPSEA Report Out (Trustee Russell)

Trustee Russell attended the BCPSEA Annual General Meeting January 27 – 28, 2022 and provided background that BCPSEA is an 8-million-dollar operation that supports school districts in their role as employers and leads bargaining for collective agreements

between major unions. She shared some major CUPE projects: French teacher recruitment; a large cross-province project completing job evaluations for all support staff is being reviewed against the benchmark; provincial bargaining this spring; local teacher bargaining will conclude March 4, 2022, and provincial bargaining will follow.

She reminded Trustees to refrain from commenting on provincial bargaining and shared that she attended a lengthy information session regarding Trustee conflict of interest. If Trustees have any questions pertaining to pecuniary conflict, Trustee Russell can assist by providing clarification.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

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

Nil.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm