

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

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023, 7:00 PM
In-Person and Via Zoom Link**

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| PRESENT | Maya Russell, Chair Cheryl Sluis, Vice-Chair Danielle Connelly, Trustee Cheryl Sluis, Trustee Marc Andres, Trustee | Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer Robert Weston, Executive Director, HR Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects Amy Grey, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Laura Goodman, Recording Secretary |
| REGRETS | Elliott Slinn, Trustee Gurveen Dhaliwal, Trustee Maryam Naser, Associate Superintendent | Members of the Public Laura Kwong, DPAC 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.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

2023-082

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) adopt the agenda for the December 12, 2023, Regular School Board meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes from the Open Meetings held:

i. Open Board Meeting held Tuesday, November 28, 2023.

2023-083

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as distributed for November 28, 2023, Regular School Board meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Business Arising from the Minutes

Nil.

3. PRESENTATIONS

Nil.

4. COMMENT & QUESTION PERIOD FROM VISITORS

DPAC: Laura Kwong, Chair

- 2024 By-election: In preparation for the February 3, 2024 By-election DPAC Executives are working on their all-candidate debate, which is scheduled for Monday, January 22, 2024 at the NWSS Grand Commons.
- Kwong stated that the 'proposed fund-raising policy amendment' agenda item was shared at the NWSS PAC meeting in November 2023. On behalf of all PACS and parent led fundraising groups, DPAC requests a consultation with the District and reps from these groups so they can understand the potential impacts from this proposed admin procedure amendment.
- Walking School Bus Pilot: DPAC noted that they were surprised to learn that this project was funded from September to December 2023 only by the City of New Westminster, and not the entire school year.
- DPAC has consulted with their MLAs on how to best focus their advocacy related to school builds and school funding so they can be effective with their time and resources.

NWTU: Kristie Oxley, President

- Timetable Changes: NWTU met with Human Resources; Murray McLeod, NWSS Principal; and Pam Craven, Director of Instruction-Secondary Programs to discuss the proposed timetable changes.
- Career Life Education: Oxley stated that Pam Craven's recommendation to move the Career Life Education (CLE) course completely online, and to increase the class size to 45 students per class will substantially impact the teacher's workload at NWSS.
- NWSS & Maximizing Space: Oxley asked the Board what the potential would be to build internal classrooms into the wide hallways which are located on the 2nd and 3rd floors of NWSS, and if the addition of a 4th floor at NWSS been explored.

Discussion ensued and questions answered by the Chair Russell, Superintendent Hachlaf, Trustee Connelly, and Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham.

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 [7:07 pm].

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Nil.

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. The next EPPC & OPPC meetings will be held on January 16, 2024.

7. **REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

a. Superintendent Update (K. Hachlaf)

- Superintendent Hachlaf referenced the Strategic Plan tracking document that was initially shared with the Board at the beginning of 2023; and noted that 4 years of the five-year plan have been completed. Hachlaf spoke to the data in this report as a means to provide a progress update to the Board, and to provide context re: the current strategies the District will employ to keep on track as they move towards the successful completion of their 5-year plan. Items of discussion: Safe schools; Student learning survey participation rates; Is school a place you feel you belong? Do you feel safe at school; How many adults at school care about you? and Do you feel welcome at your school? Hachlaf noted that ‘Safe and Welcoming Schools’ will continue in their next strategic planning cycle.
- Reminder: Discover New Westminster Schools will be held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at NWSS – 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

To view the full presentation, please refer to the meeting video at [7:28 pm].

i. After School Care Pilot Update (I. Neilson)

Ileana Neilson, Manager, Early Learning and Childcare announced the new child care pilot program called ‘Tweedsmuir After School Studio; and highlighted the following areas: the background, licensing update, about Tweedsmuir after school studio, community communication, waitlist and registration, and staffing. This program will start at Lord Tweedsmuir Elementary School in January 2024, at which time 24 child care spaces will be open to Kindergarten and Grade 1 students. This program will be available to families in the after-school-care program only. Neilson, noted that the Fraser Health inspection took place today, and the District expects to receive their license for this after school studio by the end of the week; the last step of the process before this program starts up in January 2024. Registration for this program will begin once the license is finalized with Fraser Health.

Community Communication: The New Westminster Schools website has been updated to include the dedicated Child Care in Our Schools section. This link includes information on child care partnerships within our schools and district- operated programs.

[Tweedsmuir After School Studio – New Westminster Schools – District 40 \(newwestschools.ca\)](https://www.newwestschools.ca)

b. NWSS Capacity Recommendations (P. Craven & B. Ketcham).

Pam Craven, Director of Instruction, Secondary Programs, and Secretary-Treasurer Bettina Ketcham spoke to short-, medium-, and long-term solutions to manage the District’s ongoing capacity issues at all school levels including NWSS.

Highlights: Short-term and medium-term solutions could include: NWSS retention of the 4-block timetable for 2024-25, which could be achieved via strategic space utilization, timetable considerations, and moving the Career Life Education (CLE) course to an online approach which would free up 14 classroom spaces for a total of 350 seats over the course of two semesters. Consultations will continue with staff for the 2024-25 school year to

ensure that the District employs the new changes that are being brought forward. Explore alternatives for course offerings: review grade 9 elective rotations, offer elective courses in alternate years, and explore courses to transfer online or hybrid delivery model.

Long-term solutions could include program modifications including International education, the continued use of portable structures which could include future permanent modular structures to support school additions. Ketcham noted that portables have an operating budget implication and permanent modulars and/or building renovations require capital requests that must be submitted to the Ministry by June 30th of each year. Ketcham also reiterated the importance for the District to continue to explore long-term viable solutions both in terms of facilities and balancing educational outcomes for students.

c. Public Interest Disclosure (R. Weston)

- i. Public Interest Disclosure Policy No. 25
- ii. Public Interest Disclosure Administrative Procedure No. 404

Executive Director, Human Resources Weston reported on Policy No. 25, and Administrative Procedure No. 404, both of which reside under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA). The Public Interest Disclosure Act provides protection from any form of retaliation or reprisals for current and former employees (including the Board of Education) who disclose “*serious or systemic issues of wrongdoing*” by their public sector employer (i.e. the District). This legislation requires employers to have a policy and procedures in place for employees who choose to file a report. Weston noted that this ‘whistleblower’ legislation initially came into effect within the public sector in December 2019, and came into force in the K-12 education sector on December 1, 2023.

Weston noted that the primary obligations of the employer in this situation are: 1). To make available, and to ensure that every employee including the Board of Education has viewed the educational promotional video; 2). To confirm the Board Policy, and to establish an administrative procedure for handling any complaint that is brought forward from a current and/or former employee to ensure it is handled in an appropriate manner within the District; 3). The appointment of a designated officer who will serve as the central contact for any complaints, and processes those complaints in accordance with the AP 404), and 4). That both Policy No. 7, and AP 404, and the required forms and subsequent information that an employee may use for initiating a complaint be posted on the District website.

Chair Russell confirmed that the Executive Director of Human Resources is the ‘Designated Officer’ who will be responsible for receiving and processing allegations of wrongdoing under the PIDA Act. Weston stated that if there are any employees who have not yet viewed the video, to please reach out to your administrator and/or supervisor to arrange a viewing.

2023-084

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve Policy 7 and Administrative Procedure 404 as distributed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Extracurricular Athletics Audit (Trustees C. Sluis and D. Connelly).

Trustees Sluis and Connelly reported out on the 'Extracurricular Athletics Audit' and spoke to the benefits of both physical and mental health, and academic performance. Sluis noted, "to ensure these benefits can be realized they need to be aware of and remove the barriers of participation whether it is socio-economic status, sexual orientation or gender identity, race, disability, and gender. The Human rights law requires that the provision of services, including in schools, must not discriminate (whether directly or indirectly) on the basis of these grounds.' In 2018, the federal government set the target to achieve gender equity in sport by 2025. Equity is important not only to increase opportunities for girls, but to change perceptions, particularly the incorrect perception that sports participation is not important for girls.

Trustees Sluis and Connelly believe that the New Westminster School District has a role to play in supporting an equitable and meaningful way, the role of athletics in their communities and in their schools. They believe they need to start with the work included in the Motion they present to the Board this evening.

2023-085

Moved and Seconded

THAT the New Westminster School Board (SD40) direct staff to review the district's approach to provide and support extra-curricular physical activities (including intramurals and inter-varsity competition), including but not limited to:

- *Review current mandates / regulations including the British Columbia School Athletics Association and Burnaby New West School Athletics Association,*
- *Review district policies and procedures,*
- *Assess the current situation (including quantity and quality of extracurricular opportunities for students, quality of coaching, funding for and access to equipment and facilities),*
- *Identify gaps, and*
- *Make recommendations*

All work should be completed with equity lens considering gender, race, sexual orientation and gender identity, class, age, and ability.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Superintendent Hachlaf stated that he will bring this recommendation forward, and assign it to a staff lead in the new year to identify gaps in order to improve the student experience.

9. TRUSTEE REPORTS

Trustees spoke to various meetings and events they attended over the past month.

10. QUESTION PERIOD (15 Minutes)

The public was given the opportunity to ask questions on matters that arose during the Meeting. Members of the public voiced their concerns to the Board of Education on the following topics: extracurricular athletics, student safety action plans, and NWSS capacity concerns. *Please refer to the meeting video at the [8:43 pm] for full comments.*

11. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

- January 16, 2024 - Education Policy & Planning Committee meeting. (TBD)
- January 16, 2024 - Operations Policy & Planning Committee meeting. (Hybrid)
- Tuesday, January 30, 2024 – Open Board Meeting at 7:00 pm (Hybrid)

12. REPORTING OUT FROM IN-CAMERA BOARD MEETING

- a. Record of the November 28, 2023 In-Camera Board Meeting.

13. ADJOURNMENT

- The Open Board meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.
- The In-Camera Board Meeting reconvened at 8:54 pm.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer