

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

**Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 6:30 PM  
In-person & Via Zoom Link**

PRESENT	Danielle Connelly, Committee Chair Maya Russell, Trustee Cheryl Sluis, Trustee Gurveen Dhaliwal, Trustee Marc Andres, Trustee Kathleen Carlsen, Trustee	Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent Julie Pearce, Interim Associate Superintendent Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer Robert Weston, Executive Director, HR Amy Grey, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects Matt Brito, Director of Facilities & Operations Laura Goodman, Recording Secretary
REGRETS	Elliott Slinn, Trustee	Members of the Public Kristie Oxley, NWTU President

***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 meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the agenda for the February 13, 2024, 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 (D. Crowe)

Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects provided an update on the following items:

i. Queen Elizabeth Expansion Project:

Crowe presented the Queen Elizabeth Elementary addition concept design plans and the project schedule timeline. He was pleased to announce that the construction work will commence in July 2024, and be completed in December 2026. The new building foundation will consist of approximately 200 steel piles being driven into the ground. This work will commence in summer 2024 and will take approximately four weeks to complete. Crowe noted that they have spent a considerable amount of time and effort with their engineers to mitigate the inconvenience to the public regarding the noise that will be created by the pile driving. A robust neighborhood communication plan will state the exact days and times the pile driving will occur, and will be distributed to those residents who live in close proximity to the construction site closer to the start of construction.

Crowe noted that the District's final design plan had been presented to the City of New Westminster's Design Review Panel a week ago, and met with favourable results. The team is well into their design development permit application process, and received their first round of feedback from the City. The District will be submitting its building permit application by February 20<sup>th</sup>.

ii. NWSS Decommissioning Project:

Crowe announced that the decommissioning at the old NWSS site is going well. The District team has informed the Memorialization Advisory Committee (MAC), and the stakeholder site groups of a viable design for the Memorial Park. The final step in this process will take place this Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> when the team will sit down with City staff to determine the final design for the Memorial Park. Once the drawings and design are finalized, a notification will be placed along the fences that surround the site to inform the general public how the site will be developed.

*Questions and discussion ensued.*

b. Operations Update

i. Finance and Facilities Report (M. Brito & A. Grey)

Matt Brito, Director of Facilities and Operations highlighted key capital projects:

*F.W. Howay and Lord Tweedsmuir Daycare Centres*

- Currently have occupancy at F.W. Howay and Lord Tweedsmuir daycares. Initial inspections with Fraser Health went well, and they do not anticipate any delays from these inspections. Howay Daycare will open on February 26<sup>th</sup>, followed by Lord Tweedsmuir on March 11<sup>th</sup>. Purpose Society has toured both daycare spaces and are pleased with both; Purpose Society will send out notifications to families to inform them of these two new openings.

*FRMS and QayQayt:*

- Classroom renovations will begin once the spaces at FRMS and QayQayt are vacant. The Ministry of Education and Child Care has approved the District to tender the work that is required to convert these spaces into classrooms. The demolition of these two spaces will take place over spring break to minimize dust

and disturbances to the rest of the school. Occupancy will be in September 2024, with 2 additional classrooms at Qayqayt and 5 additional classrooms at FRMS.

*Portables:*

- To accommodate continued school growth, 3 portables have been placed at Lord Tweedsmuir. The plan is to have 2 portables ready for February 20<sup>th</sup>, and one portable has been set in advance for a September 2024 occupancy.

*NWSS Cooling:*

- Brito noted that they had submitted a School Enhancement Project (SEP) submission at the end of September 2023 for the NWSS Cooling project for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, and anticipate a funding announcement in March 2024.

ii. Amended Budget Update (A. Grey)

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Grey provided a brief update:

- The Finance Department continues to work on finalizing the 2023-24 amended budget in preparation for the February 29<sup>th</sup> submission deadline to the Ministry.
- Operating Grant: recalculations were announced on these in mid-December with an increase in planned revenues from what was preliminary budgeted of about \$1.7 million due to the higher-than-expected enrollment.
- This growth resulted in an increase in the salary and benefits expense for enrolling and non-enrolling teachers as well as for EAs, and an increase in portable costs to accommodate this growth.
- One-time costs related to capital cost share, Trustee by-election and recruitment fees were not known at the time of the preliminary budget and will be incorporated into the amended budget. Grey noted that the total of these one-time adjustments is about \$850,000 however the costs will reverse going into the next budget year.
- The preliminary budget that the Board passed in June 2023, had a neutral budget with no expected deficit. As a result of these one-time adjustments, a budget deficit is expected for the amended budget. A few numbers are still being verified and confirmed. The amended budget will be presented at the Regular Open Board meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup>.

*To view the operations update and the budget update in their entirety please refer to the meeting video at [\[6:59 pm\]](#).*

c. Nourishment Update (R. Bloudell)

i. Fuel Up! School Lunch Program.

Rick Bloudell, Manager of Community Project and Partnerships provided an update regarding the Fuel Up! – Nourishment Program. Highlights include 'Feeding Futures' overview; Lunch Lady highlights; Survey Feedback Themes; Survey Action Items Program Data 2023-24, Subsidies, and a Budget overview.

The purpose of this nutrition program is to alleviate food insecurity and to reduce stigma within our schools that negatively impact a child's academic and health outcomes. New Westminster Schools receives \$826,000 per year from 'Feeding Futures' – a provincial

investment of \$214 million over 3 years. The District serves as a model for other districts that undertake similar lunch programs. Bloudell noted the importance of continuing to monitor the ‘Feeding Futures’ budget to ensure that the students who are facing the greatest needs are fully supported, and are aware of this lunch program. He also suggested to the Board to enlist school communities for continued feedback to examine ways to better target students within their schools who face the greatest needs in order to ensure the ongoing success of this program.

*To view this presentation in its entirety please refer to the meeting video at [\[7:12pm\]](#)*

*Trustee Russell requested that Bloudell report back regarding the program status update in June 2024.*

4. **General Announcements**

Nil.

5. **New Business**

Nil.

6. **Old Business**

a. Board 2024 Advocacy Plan (Draft) (M. Russell)

Questions and discussion ensued regarding the best way to approach the undertaking, identifying, and prioritizing of the Board’s 2024 Draft Advocacy Plan which includes the framework, the goals, and the objectives & tactics for Student Funding, Capital Projects, Diverse Learners / ELL students, Mental Health, and Child Care. It was determined that each Trustee review this document in its entirety to separate and prioritize key objectives, and to identify a main focus for the remainder of the school year, and beyond. It was also suggested that the title be changed to the ‘Board Advocacy Action Plan’. Once the Trustees review the Advocacy Draft plan, they will reconvene, and report back regarding their findings at the Open Board meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

*Trustee Russell noted that she would reach out to their partner organizations to reaffirm if there were any additional items, they would like to include in the Advocacy plan.*

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

Nil.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.