



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

**Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 6:30 PM  
In-person & Via Zoom Link**

PRESENT      Danielle Connelly, Committee Chair      Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent  
                  Maya Russell, Trustee                      Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer  
                  Gurveen Dhaliwal, Trustee                  Robert Weston, Executive Director, HR  
                  Cheryl Sluis, Trustee                         Amy Grey, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer  
                  Marc Andres, Trustee                        Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects  
                  Elliott Slinn, Trustee                        Matt Brito, Director of Facilities & Operations

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 6:32 pm.

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the agenda for the January 16, 2024, Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting be adopted as distributed.***

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

2.      **COMMENT & QUESTION PERIOD FROM VISITORS**

Members of the public shared their comments regarding the New Westminster Secondary School (NWSS) musical theatre program school generated fund balance and draft updates to AP 520 Fundraising Activities. Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham responded to comments and informed all that amounts will be reinstated back to the musical theatre account. *Questions and discussion ensued.*

3.      **REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

a.      Capital Projects Update (Verbal) (D. Crowe).

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

i.      Queen Elizabeth Elementary Expansion Project:

Crowe was pleased to announce that a third story will be added to Queen Elizabeth Elementary School. As per protocol, the architect design team will present their initial concept plans to the City of New Westminster's Design Review panel on January 23, 2024, for feedback. More information to follow.

A public information session will be held in the Queen Elizabeth School gymnasium on February 1, 2024, from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, at which time the public will be invited to view the concept design plans in person. Representatives from the school district and City of New Westminster will be in attendance, and look forward to receiving comments and answering questions from the public.

ii. NWSS Decommissioning Project:

Crowe announced that the decommissioning of the old NWSS site is complete as the team is now working on the final design phase for the Memorial Park. The Memorial Park Design Team have presented their final design concept to the City of New Westminster and various stakeholders; the Memorial Park plan will be presented to the Memorialization Advisory Committee (MAC) in the next week for their comments and feedback. The District landscape architects will now begin to investigate landscape contract vendors within the community. Crowe stated that he will present a more robust report at the next OPPC meeting which will be held on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

*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 points:

- They currently have occupancy at Lord Tweedsmuir daycare portable. F.W. Howay's final daycare inspection with the City of New Westminster is Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. The district is currently working with Fraser Health, and Purpose Society regarding inspections and tentative move-in dates. Purpose Society will distribute notification of both move-in dates to the local community.
- Brito noted that the scheduled classroom renovation work at Qayqayt and FRMS is on track for Spring Break.
- Building permit applications have been submitted to add another two portables and a washcar at Lord Tweedsmuir. Classroom portables have been placed, and they are currently working on the electrical connections. Placement of the washcar portable will occur in January 2024; followed by sanitary and water connections. They are currently planning for September 2024 portable locations.
- Vape Detectors will be operational in all twelve washrooms at NWSS by Monday, January 22, 2024.
- New bus service for students from Queensborough to NWSS started on Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024. There are five buses to transport the 181 students currently registered.

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Grey provided a brief overview of the Finance section of the Operations report.

- The payroll team is working through the processes relating to starting a new calendar year and closing of the 2023 calendar year.
- The Finance team is currently working on the 2023-24 amended budget to present to the Board of Education for approval, and to submit to the Ministry before the February 28, 2024 deadline.

ii. School and Portable Cooling (M. Brito)

Matt Brito, Director of Facilities & Operations presented a 'Cooling in Schools' update. The District commissioned SMCN Mechanical Engineering, and O'M Electrical engineers to perform a cooling feasibility and cost analysis study regarding their main school buildings and portables. This assessed the feasibility and adaptability to integrate cooling systems within their schools. Topics presented included the: 1) Cooling Feasibility Study Summary; 2) Mechanical Assessment; 3) Recommended cooling method 4) Cost 5) Funding for main school cooling upgrades; 6) Portable cooling options; 7) Cost to add heat pumps in portable classrooms; and 8) Funding for Portable Cooling.

The District will look to Trustees for budget prioritization in April 2024 on cooling portables. NWSS cooling project is on the way for 2024.

*Please refer to the meeting video at [ [7:14 pm](#) ] to review the complete update.*

c. Human Resources & Staff Update (R. Weston)

Executive Director, Human Resources Weston shared highlights re: the Non-Replacement Data (Staffing Report) for September to October 2023 and November to December 2023.

Hiring Process:

- **EAs - Recruitment:** Weston noted that challenges remain in the hiring process as they continue with their recruitment. December saw an increased effort in recruitment; a dedicated resource team was brought in for two weeks in December 2023 to focus entirely on the recruitment of EAs. Weston was pleased to report that this initiative was successful, as it resulted in 30 EA interviews and twenty new hires. Weston reported that there have been no unfilled vacancies for EAs in the past five school days, and stated that they are hoping to obtain their replacement levels within the 90% range.
- **TTOCs – Recruitment:** Weston stated they currently have twenty-four interviews slated with TTOCs over the next two weeks and are confident that they will hit the 80-90% range required for replacement teachers.
- It has become increasingly difficult over the last two years to find TTOCs and casual EAs that want to work regularly, and they continue to struggle to find replacements for absences for both EAs and TTOCs for education system support.
- Weston noted that he will be participating in the next Lower Mainland HR Directors' meeting which will provide an opportunity to address, compare, and discuss shared District challenges and opportunities within their educational support systems.

d. Child Care Update (I. Neilson)

Ileana Neilson, Manager, Early Learning and Child Care provided an update regarding the recent Early Learning and Child Care activities within New Westminster Schools.

Highlights include:

- Qayqayt Seamless Daycare kindergarten program continues to thrive with twenty-four children; and a consistently full capacity attendance. The first pilot is now in its third year, and they anticipate receiving additional information from the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC) by March 2024, regarding the Post Pilot Model which will contribute to the program's future development.
- Queensborough Just B4 program is going well, currently welcoming seventeen families at present; these families are expected to transition seamlessly into their Kindergarten classrooms in September 2024. Neilson noted that the Just B4 program is currently in the second year of a 3-year funding cycle, and they are excited about advancing and sustaining this initiative.
- StrongStart Program: a total of 185 children are registered for three programs.
- Neilson stated that she was pleased to announce that the 'After School Studio' is set to open at Lord Tweedsmuir Elementary. Five children are currently enrolled, and a total of twelve registrants are required to start the program. They remain optimistic as they continue to register children.
- The 'Changing Possibilities' program for young children is strong with twelve community educators which include ECEs, and K-1 teachers who come together to examine the social-emotional context for children and to foster the shared pedagogy between early childhood educators and primary educators.
- The District will be receiving \$19,000 in funding which will focus on children, and the strengthening of their relationships from the early years to kindergarten (SEY2KT).

*Please refer to the meeting video at [\[7:53 pm\]](#) for the full presentation.*

e. Administrative Procedures (A. Grey)

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Grey reported on the following two Administrative Procedures and noted that the majority of changes were made to bring the procedures up to date to coincide with current accounting practices; both APs were initially adopted in 2017.

- AP 510 Financial Accountability
- AP 511 Cash Management

*Questions and discussion ensued.*

4. **General Announcements**

Nil.

5. **New Business**

Nil.

6. **Old Business**

Nil.

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

Questions directed to the Chair on matters that arose during the meeting.

*Refer to the meeting video at [\[8:15 pm\]](#) for full comments.*

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.