



New Westminster Schools

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

Tuesday, May 14, 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 Elliott Slinn, Trustee	Sylvia Russell, Interim 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	Kathleen Carlsen, Trustee	Members of the Public Laura Kwong, DPAC 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 May 14, 2024, Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

DPAC President Laura Kwong stated that it had recently come to her attention that some families who had their names on the waitlist for the Westminster Children's After School Society (WCAS) program operating at Qayqayt Elementary School no longer have spaces because the license for the WCAS program had changed.

Trustee Russell stated that the Board of Education had not been notified of this change and that staff will investigate.

3. **REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

- a. Capital Projects Update
 - i. Memorial Park Update (D. Crowe)

Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects presented the following highlights regarding the final decommissioning of NWSS and the Memorial Park design.

- Division 2 contractor is in the process of completing the final stages of the decommissioning project with priority paving, parking improvements, and final site preparations to move forward with the next phase of this project.
- The Memorial Park design is still being finalized with various stakeholders. There is a very tight budget for Memorial Park, and the team continues to collaborate with consultants to maximize the value and scope that they can produce with limited funds. Once the park design is finalized, a contractor will be brought on to complete the work which is expected to commence by the end of May or the first week of June which will allow the team to keep on track for the projected completion of this project. Crowe noted that wayfinding signage will be placed on the entire site including the Memorial Park, NWSS, and the Massey Theatre. Information will also be placed on the website to inform the general public what the completed Memorial Park will look like.
- *Memorial Plaque:* Crowe noted that a tremendous amount of care and work has taken place behind the scenes to ensure the wording on the plaque accurately depicts the previous history of the Memorial Park. The plaque will be situated at the entrance to the Memorial Park, which is situated off Dublin Street (commonly known as the roundabout where NWSS was previously located).

- b. Operations Update
 - i. Facilities and Finance Report (M. Brito & A. Grey)

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

Fraser River Middle School (FRMS) and Qayqayt Daycare to classroom renovations:

Qayqayt Elementary:

- The electrical and mechanical rough-in is complete and inspected; both classrooms have been drywalled, mudded and taped. They will move on to installing the ventilation system in the classrooms, cabinetry, flooring, and ceiling work.

Fraser River Middle School:

- FRMS is a couple of weeks behind due to the magnitude of the project being five classrooms compared to the two at QayQayt. The electrical and mechanical rough-in is complete and inspection passed. In the process of drywalling all the classrooms, and then move on to the unit ventilator, cabinetry, duct, and ceiling work.
- *They do not expect any delays, and everything is going well at both sites with expected completion dates on time for September 2024.*

Short Term Capacity:

- Site prep for one portable at Lord Kelvin to be placed at the front of the school; prep was complete as of today. A firewall will be built due to the proximity of the portable to the main school building.

NWSS Cooling Project:

- The team is currently working with Entity Mechanical regarding the construction schedule to ensure there is cooling by this time next year.

2023 Climate Action Report (CCAR)

- The CCAR has been submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC); the report link is located on the SD40 website.
- The total offsets for 2023 - 1045 tCO₂e equivalent has steadily dropped every year from 2019 which was initially 1,943 tCO₂e. Brito noted that with all the portable additions they were still able to drop this number due to the mechanical upgrades that they implemented at some schools.

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Grey provided the following finance update.

1. Grey and Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham completed their yearly spring finance roadshow school visits with P/VPs to discuss their budgets & planning for the 2024-25 school year.
2. The external audit contracted by the OAG wrapped up this past week with no significant findings being brought forward.
 - ii. Annual Facilities Grant Expenditure Plan for 2024-2025 (M. Brito)

Matt Brito, Director of Maintenance & Operations provided an overview of the proposed AFG Expenditure Plan:

The AFG facility grant is provided by the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC) as a supplementary funding source for projects regularly required to extend the life of existing facilities at all schools; funding is based on student enrolment and the average age of facilities. The SD40 allotment for this year is just over \$1.487 million, up \$31K from 2023. *Key Projects:* NWSS: cooling project and automatic door at the Welcome Centre; Queensborough and Glenbrook Middle Schools: cooling programming; Lord Tweedsmuir: upgrading the electrical to make the school safer; Skwo:wech: mandatory wiring upgrade to the EV chargers that were installed last year; Queen Elizabeth School: public announcement system upgrade; Glenbrook library: to be reconfigured into a new classroom; Queensborough Middle school: one classroom will be reconfigured to become a shared space; Tweedsmuir: portable reroofing; Spencer: duct cleaning; Tweedsmuir and Kelvin schools: installation of drywall in storage rooms to comply with fire department regulations; Qayqayt: a ramp to be installed on a portable to make it more accessible for the public and custodial staff to transport cleaning supplies. Brito noted that due to enrollment growth the total cost for all portable site upgrades, preparation and installation was significant at just over 1 million dollars.

iii. Financial Forecast to June 30, 2024 (A. Grey)

- The amended budget approved by the Board in February 2024 expected an operating deficit of \$389K; March projections were estimated to be in an operating deficit of approximately \$800K.
- Current projections remain consistent with March projections, and they still estimate an operating deficit of approximately \$800K for the year ending June 30, 2024.
- Increases to the revenue are being offset by higher than-estimated salaries and benefits related to teachers and education assistants that have been deployed to support students and to address the current needs in their schools. Substitute salaries are also trending higher than anticipated.

c. Interior School Renovation Report (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham provided the Board-requested report regarding the school renovations that have taken place over the last 5 years.

Ketcham highlighted that the District does have space within their schools that are well preserved, such as sensory rooms. Areas within their middle schools also contain shared multi-purpose rooms, music rooms, and drama rooms which is good news considering their District's current capacity pressures. Ketcham noted that the Annual Facilities Grant funds the renovation costs listed within this report. Staff will continue to review space allocation as capacity pressures increase. *Questions and discussion ensued.*

d. Five Block Model at NWSS (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham presented a Backgrounder report which recommended the Board support in principle a five-block timetable model at New Westminster Secondary School (NWSS). Ketcham noted that the trustees had approved the governing guiding principles for grades 9-12 for short term capacity creation at NWSS at the April 30th open Board of Education meeting. Work has commenced to engage in discussions with partner groups on various options of the five-block model being considered. The following recommendation has been brought forward for the Board's consideration with the understanding that staff will report back on the implementation of the five-block model for the 2025-26 school year no later than November 2024.

Moved and Seconded

That the Operations Policy and Planning Committee recommend to the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) support in principle a 5-block timetable model for New Westminster Secondary School,

AND

That consultation with partners continues to take place with a recommended option be brought forward for implementation for the 2025-26 school year no later than November 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. 2024-25 Superintendent Recommendations (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer and members of the Senior Management team provided a detailed overview of the Recommendations for the 2024-25 budget:

Superintendent Russell provided opening remarks and highlighted the importance of inclusive education, citing student passion and Board support; expressed excitement about new staff members and their potential for positive change; and the importance of infrastructure, budget, and capacity, particularly in future years.

Base Budget Re-Cap

- Amendments to the base budget originally presented were made to adjust for substitute salaries costs which have been trending higher than originally projected.
- The next three years have the following anticipated base budgets if they assume no reduction in international revenues and implementation of the 5-block model for capacity creation.
 - 2024-25: Deficit of \$589,659
 - 2025-26: Deficit of \$ \$292,000
 - 2026-27: Surplus \$101,000
- No confirmation of funding for C.O.L.A or exempt staff wages has been provided by the Ministry and is expected in June.
- The management team thoroughly presented Superintendent recommendations which included:
 - Priorities - Ongoing \$84,250; One-time \$35,000
 - One-Time Efficiencies identified at \$150,000

Partner Group Consultation:

- Consultations with our partners have been robust over the last number of weeks with the following consultation themes: concerns about space in schools, safety, well-being and equity; increase in funding for equipment, resources and supplies; hiring more staff to provide support, and improving school facilities (A/C, washrooms).
- Ensured the Superintendent's recommendations aligned with the Board's Strategic Plan.

Next Steps: the 3rd and final reading of the budget bylaw will be completed at the Regular Open Board meeting on May 28, 2024.

Trustees shared their thanks and appreciation for the budget work completed by the Senior Management Team.

Questions and discussion ensued.

To review the Superintendent Recommendations in their entirety please refer to the meeting video at [\[7:29 p.m.\]](#)

i. 2024-2025 Budget Summary

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Operations Policy & Planning Committee recommend to the Board of Education of School District No. (New Westminster) complete the first and second reading of the 2024-25 budget bylaw based on the Superintendent's recommendations.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. 2024-2025 Special Purpose Funds Report (A. Grey)

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Grey provided a Backgrounder Report which included the following highlights of the 2024-25 Special Purpose Funds.

Feeding Futures Fund:

- 2024-25 is the 2nd year of the Ministry's 3-year commitment totalling \$214 million; the District will receive \$858K for the upcoming school year.

The Student and Family Affordability Fund:

- The District has received \$191K from the Province to assist families struggling with rising costs of living. These funds will allow the District to continue to provide the local supports established under the original funding received in the 2022-2023 school year.

Community Link:

- Supports the academic achievement and social functioning for vulnerable students. The District's allocation is just over 1.7 million dollars and will continue to fund social-emotional supports for vulnerable learners with 15 FTE Youth Care Workers, and 5.7 FTE for counselling, learning resources and SOGI staffing.

The Classroom Enhancement Fund (CEF) for 2024-25:

- This fund is approximately 7.3 million dollars and funds staffing for 55.5 FTE teachers and overhead costs relating to the corresponding memorandum of agreement (MOU).

Learning Improvement Fund:

- The District uses the Learning Improvement Fund to provide educational assistants and Youth Care workers with one additional hour of time each week to support complex classes. The 2024-25 funding of \$314K will need to be supplemented by their operating fund for approximately \$90K as this funding has not increased inline with the Collective Agreement wage increases and/or the growth in EA staffing.

Strong Start:

- The District receives \$96K to provide 3 Strong Start programs: the funding is used for the salaries and benefits of the 3 Strong Start facilitators and a small supplies budget. Approximately \$10K is supplemented by the operating fund.

4. **General Announcements**

Nil.

5. **New Business**

Nil.

6. **Old Business**

Nil.

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

Questions were directed to the Chair on matters that arose during the meeting. Please refer to the meeting video at [\[8:26 p.m.\]](#) for complete comments.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.