



Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 6:00 PM  
In-Person and Via Zoom Link

PRESENT    Maya Russell, Chair  
              Cheryl Sluis, Vice-Chair  
              Danielle Connelly, Trustee  
              Elliott Slinn, Trustee  
              Gurveen Dhaliwal, Trustee (online)  
              Kathleen Carlsen, Trustee  
              Mark Andres, Trustee

Mark Davidson, Superintendent  
Geraldine Lawlor, Associate Superintendent  
Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer  
Robert Weston, Executive Director, HR  
Anne-Marie Martin, Recording Secretary  
Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects  
Ken Millard, President NWPVA

Members of the Public  
Kristie Oxley, NWTU President  
Karrie Andrews, CUPE 409 President  
Laura Kwong, DPAC Chair

*The New Westminister 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 6:03 p.m.

**2025-025**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminister) adopt the agenda for the March 11, 2025, Regular School Board meeting.***

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

a. Minutes from the Open meeting held:

1. February 25, 2025, Regular School Board Meeting.

**2025-026**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminister) approve the minutes as distributed for the February 25, 2025, Regular School Board Meeting.***

b. Business Arising from the Minutes.

Nil.

3. **BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

a. 2025-2026 Preliminary Budget Partner Presentations

1. New Westminster Teacher's Union (President K. Oxley)

- Budget priorities for the upcoming year emphasizing the need for additional counselor time at the high school, additional funding for library collections, requests the full replacement of LST and ELL teachers (noting the efforts of HR), request for print services team at NWSS, maintenance of mentorship program to support new teachers and improve retention and recruitment and the need for improved ventilation.

*Questions and comments can be viewed on the [video](#) at 10:25*

2. CUPE 409 (President K. Andrews)

- Budget priorities include requests increased staffing and funding for Indigenous support workers, the need for increased hours for Child and Youth Care Workers, request for clerical staff for the IT department, continued support for ECE programs, including the addition of staff to support the growth and popularity of these programs, the need for additional custodians, additional minutes for education assistants, creation of an EA mentorship position at large sites and equipment for the Life Skills Program at NWSS

*Questions and comments can be viewed on the [video](#) at 27:35*

3. DPAC (Chair L. Kwong)

- Budget priorities include the need to protect FTE ratios for staff that support vulnerable learners, protecting Strong Start programs and other early intervention programs, as well as non-enrolling classroom spaces such as art rooms and gyms

*Questions and comments can be viewed on the [video](#) at 35:50*

4. NWPVPA President K. Millard

- On behalf of the Principals and Vice Principals Association, expressed appreciation for the increase in VP time approved mid-year.
- the increase in VP time has made a significant difference. VP's play important roles in organizing, leading, caring, and assisting students and families
- acknowledges the fast-growing nature of the district and the challenges it presents, expressing gratitude for the trust and confidence placed in the work of principals and vice principals

*Questions and comments can be viewed on the [video](#) at 38:30*

4. **DELEGATIONS**

Nil.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

*Chair Russell noted the following correspondence:*

- a. Letter to City of New Westminster RE: Queensborough High School
  - The discussion centered around ensuring the letter accurately reflected the district's capital plan, even if the Queensborough school request was not an immediate priority compared to other facility needs. The board agreed the facts should be presented correctly.
  - A motion was made to remove the line “New Westminster schools is not requesting a school in Queensborough at this time.”

**2025-027**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) remove the line “New Westminster schools is not requesting a school in Queensborough at this time” and resubmit the letter to the City of New Westminster RE: Queensborough High School.***

6. **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a. **Coordinating Committee** – Tuesday, March 4, 2025 – 3:30 p.m. (SBO) minutes to be reviewed and approved at the Open Board meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

7. **REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

- a. NWSS Memorial Park Update D. Crowe
  1. The final plan for the memorial park is very similar to the previous plans but has been tweaked to stay within budget.

The key highlights include:

    - a. A new entrance to the park, moved slightly north and across from Dublin Street, to maintain the integrity of the "sacred" feature area where the plaque will be located.
    - b. Rolling hills and berms to discourage uses not allowed under the Cemeteries Act.
    - c. Connectivity paths, string lighting, and benches/seating areas to create an attractive and reflective space.

- d. Meadow grass and low shrubs around the feature area.
- e. Maintaining the same number of parking stalls (around 325) as previously planned.
- f. The plaque design has gone through extensive consultation with stakeholders to have meaningful wording.

The city of New Westminster is contributing additional funding to enhance the landscaping around Massey Theatre (owned by the City), which will blend with the district's plans on the adjacent memorial park.

Overall, the goal is to create a respectful and contemplative space that honors the history and significance of the site, while also making it an accessible and usable space for the community.

*Questions and comments can be viewed on the [video](#) at 52:40*

b. 2025-2026 District Calendar Approval (G. Lawlor)

Associate Superintendent Lawlor presented the proposed 2025-2026 district calendar for the board's approval. The calendar was noted to be very similar to previous years, with vacation and spring break dates aligned with other districts. The trustees did not have any questions or concerns about the proposed calendar.

**2025-028**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the 2025-2026 District Calendar as presented.***

c. 2025-2026 Budget Survey Results (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham noted the budget survey garnered over 1,000 responses with the majority being from parents/caregivers and district staff noting most respondents were connected to elementary, followed by middle and secondary schools.

Highlights from each of the surveys questions on Learning Priorities, opportunities in schools, operational priorities, and board advocacy. She noted that trustees were provided with a copy of all written feedback for their consumption but highlighted a number of themes that arose as part of the written feedback.

The survey results provided valuable insights into the community's priorities and perspectives on budget allocations for the upcoming year. The information will help inform the board's budget deliberations.

- Trustee Andres asked about the district's experience and expertise in partnering with industry and businesses to secure donations or equipment. Secretary-

Treasurer Ketcham acknowledged the district has an administrative procedure on corporate sponsorship (AP 525) and associate superintendent Lawlor shared that she has prior experience in another district successfully leveraging industry partnerships and grants to support strategic priorities.

- Trustee Andres requested that for the board's in-service staff provide a breakdown of increased costs that have not been met with funding increases, such as inflation and benefit costs.

The board members will have the opportunity to meet with senior staff after spring break, as well with the members of the coordinating committee (partner groups) and then the superintendents' recommendations on the 2025-2026 budget on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

## 8. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. BC Provincial Budget Update (M. Russell)

Chair Russell provided a brief update on the recent provincial budget announcement, noting that funding has been maintained though not enhanced. She acknowledged the district's ongoing fiscal pressures for the 2025-26 budget year.

The discussion focused on exploring opportunities for industry partnerships, as well as providing trustees with more granular budget information to support their decision-making process.

## 9 **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. 2025-2030 Strategic Plan for Adoption C. Sluis

Trustee Sluis introduces the New Westminster Schools 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, emphasizing its collective vision shaped by students, families, staff, and community partners. The plan focuses on equity, inclusion, and excellence, addressing challenges like student outcomes, staff capacity, infrastructure deficits, safety, and mental health. The new vision includes fostering an inclusive learning community, cultivating a healthy school community, and enhancing organizational resilience and adaptability.

Annual plans will be implemented throughout the strategic plan period, with success evaluated through key indicators grounded in shared values and meaningful collaboration.

**2025-029**

**Moved and Seconded**

***THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) adopt the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan for the district.***

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

10. **BOARD HIGHLIGHTS**

- Trustee Sluis reported on the BCSTA motion regarding portables submitted by the District, noting there are ongoing discussions and expected updates to come.
- A number of trustees provided an update to the work they had undertaken and visits to schools that had been made.

11. **QUESTION PERIOD (15 MINUTES)**

The public was given the opportunity to ask questions on items related to the agenda, with staff responding where appropriate. To view the full comment and question period, please refer to the meeting [video](#) at 1:38.00

12. **NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

Regular Board Meeting – Tuesday April 29, 2025 – 6:00 p.m. (SBO and via Zoom)

13. **REPORTING OUT FROM IN-CAMERA BOARD MEETING**

- a. Record of the February 25, 2025, In-Camera Meeting

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

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*Chair*

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*Secretary-Treasurer*