

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

**Tuesday, May 27, 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 Kathleen Carlsen, Trustee	Mark Davidson, Superintendent Geraldine Lawlor, Associate Superintendent Bettina Ketcham, Secretary-Treasurer Robert Weston, Executive Director, HR Sandra Singh, Director of Instruction, Innovation and Learning Anne-Marie Martin, Recording Secretary
REGRETS	Mark Andres, Trustee	Members of the Public Kristie Oxley, NWTU President Laura Kwong, DPAC Chair

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 6:02 p.m.

**2025-042
Moved and Seconded**

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) adopt the agenda for the May 27, 2025, Regular School Board meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Trustee Slinn honoured Dave Seaweed highlighting his contributions to the community.

2. **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

a. Minutes from the Open meeting held:

i. April 29, 2025, Regular School Board Meeting.

**2025-043
Moved and Seconded**

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as distributed for the April 29, 2025, Regular School Board Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- ii. May 5, 2025, Special Open Board Meeting.

**2025-044
Moved and Seconded**

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as distributed for the May 5, 2025, Special Open Board Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- iii. May 13, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting

**2025-045
Moved and Seconded**

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) approve the minutes as distributed for the May 13, 2025, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- b. Business Arising from the Minutes.

Nil.

3. **PRESENTATIONS**

- a. K-12 Literacy Supports Initiative Ministry of Education and Child (S. Singh and G. Lawlor)

The following key points and goals for the Literacy Supports Initiative were discussed.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care is providing \$30 million to school districts to support literacy development for K-12 students. Some key points include focus on evidence based early literacy screening for kindergarten to grade 3 students.

The district received approximately \$250,000 for the initiative with goals to ensure students meet or exceed literacy expectations, supporting teachers with training and resources and improving overall student literacy outcomes.

The presentation can be viewed on the video at 9:00 (6:07pm)

b. Accessibility Committee Report

The Accessibility Committee conducted assessments using the “Accessibility Assessment Tool” at Herbert Spencer Elementary and New Westminster Secondary School, identifying numerous accessibility barriers such as inaccessible parking lots, heavy doors, lack of Braille signage, inadequate washroom designs, and challenging playground access. The facilities team was a part of the review process and where able, will look to address barriers identified.

The committee recommended writing a letter to the Minister of Education and Minister of Infrastructure requesting dedicated and predictable funding for accessibility upgrades beyond current grant programs, with the goal of making schools more inclusive and supportive for students and staff with diverse needs.

2025-046

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) write a letter to the Minister of Education the Honorable Lisa Beare and the Minister of Infrastructure, the Honorable Bowinn Ma asking for a commitment for dedicated and predictable funding and/or grants to be made available annually to school districts to complete accessibility upgrades at schools, above and beyond the Annual Facilities Grant and the Minor Capital Plan grants.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The presentation can be viewed on the video at 37:33 (6:36 pm)

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Chair Russell noted the following correspondence:

- a. Response to Letter – Reduction in Nurse Practitioner Hours at NWSS

5. **REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

- a. Superintendent Update

Superintendent Davidson provided updates on several areas including staffing that is underway for the next school year, with ongoing rounds of hiring. Working on an operational plan to align department goals with the strategic plan. The Superintendent attended multiple events, including:

- Chamber of Commerce meeting
- Change of command for Royal Westminster Regiment
- Night of Jazz
- NWSS Capstone presentations
- International Culture Fair
- Superintendent's talk show at a school

The presentation can be viewed on the video at 1:10:18 (7:09 pm)

b. Integrated Child & Youth Team Funding Application (M. Davidson)

Superintendent Davidson is working directly with the ministry, preparing a draft plan that highlights the district's unique needs as the fastest-growing community in the province. Unlike a traditional application process, the ministry selects districts based on their data, and New Westminister has previously been unsuccessful in securing a Foundry center. The goal is to submit a comprehensive framework that outlines potential services, leveraging existing community partnerships and emphasizing the urgent requirement for integrated mental health support.

The presentation can be viewed on the video at 1:15:06 (7:13 pm)

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. MOU with NWPDP

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Westminister Police Department (NWPDP) was proposed by Trustee Carlsen with the key points including to direct the Superintendent to work with the NWPDP to create a new partnership framework. To focus on building a relationship grounded in values.

Board members engaged in a discussion centered on shared values, with several highlighting principles such as integrity in partnership, a relationship-centered approach, inclusivity, and trauma-informed training.

The presentation can be viewed on the video at 1:22:23 (7:21 pm)

2025-047

Moved and Seconded

THAT the New Westminister Board of Education (#40) direct the Superintendent to work with the NWPDP and school administrators to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that considers a comprehensive School Safety Partnership Framework.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the framework include:

A review and incorporation of all outstanding elements from the 2021 MOU direction and are grounded in the following values:

1. Integrity in partnership
2. Relationship centered approach
3. Inclusive and responsive & trauma informed training
4. Effective and respectful communication

5. Community accountability & regular reporting processes to assess program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement:
6. Spirit of inclusion and equity
7. Transparency

AND THAT the Superintendent bring a public report for community feedback to the Board with a FINAL DRAFT memorandum of understanding (MOU) - including the School Safety Partnership Framework, timeline for implementation, and a cycle of review and reporting regarding the effectiveness of the partnership.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Trustees discussed their views in favour and against the need for a sub committee in regard to the MOU discussions with NWPD. Trustee Sluis brought forward the following motion:

THAT the New Westminster Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) direct the Superintendent to form a sub-committee that includes 2 Trustees selected by the Board of Education that will serve to provide feedback and receive updates on ongoing work towards a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NWPD.

CARRIED

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Superintendent Evaluation Timeline (M. Russell)

- Chair Russell provided information on her duty to report and ensure an evaluation of the Superintendent is completed. The Chair put forward Jordan Tinney former Superintendent of Surrey School District to complete the evaluation. Tinney will join the next school board meeting, with the goal to provide a report in the fall.

8. **TRUSTEE REPORT**

Trustees provided updates on events and activities they attended over the past month.

9. **QUESTION PERIOD**

DPAC Laura Kwong – An update was provided on the events and initiatives in which DPAC was actively engaged.

NWTU President Kristie Oxley provided comments on the presentations and questions that were addressed by the Board members.

The updates and questions can be viewed on the video at 2:03:21 (8:02 pm)

10. **NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

- Committee of the Whole – Tuesday June 10, 2025 – 4:30 p.m. (SBO and via Zoom)
- Regular Board Meeting – Monday June 23, 2025 – 6:00 p.m. (SBO and via Zoom)

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

- a. Record of the May 27th, 2025, In-Camera Meeting

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer