

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

**Tuesday, April 16, 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	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	Elliott Slinn, Trustee	Members of the Public Kristie Oxley, NWTU President Laura Kwong, DPAC

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 6:33 pm.

Moved and Seconded

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

Nil.

3. **DELEGATION**

a. Annual Day of Mourning Presentation (S. Wethered)

On behalf of the New Westminister & District Labour Council (NWDLC), teacher Sarah Wethered read a statement in commemoration of the National Day of Mourning. The National Day of Mourning ceremony for workers killed or injured on the job will be held on Sunday, April 28, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. at Westminister Pier Park. For the full statement, please refer to the meeting video at [\[6:52 pm\]](#).

Trustee Russell thanked Sarah for her presentation and emphasized the importance of safety education and spoke to the Alive After Five Young Worker Awareness Program of the BC Federation of Labour; an innovative initiative that seeks to make the province a healthier and safer place to live and work for all of us. The New Westminster Schools District holds this program at various school libraries.

3. **REPORTS FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

a. Capital Projects Update (D. Crowe)

i. Queen Elizabeth Expansion Project:

Dave Crowe, Director of Capital Projects presented the following highlights for Queen Elizabeth Elementary School.

The District received both the variance approval and the development permit application from the City of New Westminster which will allow the District to proceed to the building permit process.

On-site challenges continue, and the team is working through these including the pile driving which is on schedule to commence in July 2024.

The final submission for the expansion project was submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC) last week; once approved the project will move to the tender process. In the interim, a call-out for contractor pre-qualifications was completed which resulted in 6 quality contractors, the shortlisted group will be invited for tender.

ii. NWSS Decommissioning Project

The decommissioning project is now complete at NWSS; the next phase of the process is to finalize the design and create the Memorial Park. The District will continue to work on the final design of the Memorial Park and proceed with creating working drawings which will go out for tender to the landscape contractor

iii. Simcoe Elementary School

Questions were asked by Trustees Connelly, Russell and Sluis. Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham, and Director of Facilities Brito provided answers to their questions.

Trustee Connelly requested that Brito reach out to Communications Manager, Mike Lee to facilitate the process of having both the NWSS cooling information and the school classroom project information placed on the District website.

Trustee Connelly requested that it would be beneficial to have a breakdown of the District's classrooms regarding how their individual tech ed, art room and music rooms have changed over the last few years and how they are going to be changing moving forward. Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham stated that they are currently working on a report of this nature to bring back to the Board in May 2024.

ii. March 31st Financial Projection (A. Grey)

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Grey provided highlights.

The projected operating deficit as of March 31 to June 30, 2024, is \$800K, a higher deficit of \$400K more than anticipated from the 2023/24 amended budget deficit of \$389K.

Grey stated that increased expected revenue of approximately \$364K is being offset by higher-than-expected salaries and benefits.

Staff salaries and benefits are projecting about \$920K higher than budget due to student support salaries that have been deployed earlier than budgeted to address the current student needs in our schools; substitute costs are also trending higher than budgeted.

The HR department has seen significant successes in recruiting thereby reducing unfilled absences which also leads to higher replacement costs.

The accumulated surplus balance which will carry into the 2024-2025 school year is estimated at \$2.3 million; above the \$2 million threshold set by Board Policy 19.

To view the operations update and the budget update in their entirety please refer to the meeting video at [\[7:03 pm\]](#).

c. 2024-2025 Base Budget Presentation (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham reviewed the 2024-2025 Base Budget.

Highlights:

Enrolment is anticipated to increase by 315 FTE.

The base budget without any additional efficiencies and priorities is a structural deficit of \$129K.

Labour settlement funding related to the Cost of Living (COLA) for teachers and support staff have been confirmed at 1%; to date the funding allocations have not been announced by the Ministry.

District is also waiting on Ministry announcement for exempt/PVP funding.

Superintendent recommendations will be presented at the OPPC meeting on May 14th.

Significant consultation process commencing, which includes: the district budget survey which opened today and will remain open until April 26th, one-on-one partner budget consultations with Board Trustees on April 23rd and 25th, and ongoing open meeting presentations.

Questions and discussion ensued.

To view the 2024-25 Base Budget Presentation in its entirety please refer to the meeting video at [\[7:17 pm\]](#)

d. Board and Committee Meeting Calendar Approval (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham outlined proposed changes for the Board and Committee Meeting calendars for the 2024-25 school year, and noted that this meeting calendar is a roll-over schedule with no significant changes.

Moved and Seconded

THAT the Operations Policy and Planning Committee recommend to the Board of Education of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) that the Board and Committee Meeting Calendar be approved as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Capital Plan Response Bylaw (B. Ketcham)

Secretary-Treasurer Ketcham provided highlights to the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC) announcement of the \$3-million-dollar funding for the NWSS School Enhancement Program. The District has completed the tender and awarded the contract for the above-noted project and will commence work in the Summer 2024. Ketcham noted that the bylaw will be brought to the April 30, 2024 Board meeting where three-

Guiding Principles have been shared broadly with the community to advise them of their capacity challenges, and the guiding principles that the Board will consider at the Open Board meeting on April 30, 2024.

Trustee Sluis noted that this would be a good opportunity to simplify some of the