



Jay Aspin, Chair

963 Airport Road North Bay, ON P1B 8H1

Phone: 705.472.8170

Website: www.nearnorthschools.ca

Craig Myles, Director of Education

The February 15, 2022 **Public Session Committee of the Whole** of the Near North District School Board was held via video and/or teleconference.

Trustees Present:

Jay Aspin, Chair
John Cochrane, Vice-Chair
Al Bottomley
Bill Steer
Caren Gagne
Donna Breault
Louise Sargent
Rob Learn
Allen Lewis Trodd, Student Trustee
Cecilia Darling, Student Trustee

Administrative Staff Present:

Craig Myles, Director of Education
Gay Smylie, Superintendent of Education
Deb Bartlett, Communications Officer
Krista Messenger, Executive Assistant
Melanie Gray, Superintendent of Education
Seija Van Haesendonck, Superintendent of Business
Tim Graves, Superintendent of Education

Other:

Staff, media and community partners

Trustees Absent:

Nichole King

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Aspin called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

1.1 Land acknowledgement

Chair Aspin read the declaration aloud.

1.2 Attendance

Attendance indicated that 10 trustees are present for the meeting, including the two student trustees.

1.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

NIL

2.0 Approval of the Agenda and Previous Minutes

Motion: A. Bottomley/ D. Breault

That the agenda for the Committee of the Whole meeting of February 15, 2022, and the minutes of the previous meetings of January 11, 2022, be approved - **Carried.**

3.0 Business Arising

3.1 Audit Committee Membership Update

Chair Aspin invited Vice-Chair Cochrane to speak to this item. Trustees were referred to the report included in the agenda package. Highlights of the information presented are noted as:

- After filling an external member vacancy in November 2021, the Audit Committee also needed to fill this second vacancy because the term of the current member had expired. As noted in the report, the board advertised extensively to seek a new candidate, which included scaling back on specific criteria and reposting to appeal to a wider audience.
- Despite these efforts, there were no additional candidates who stepped forward, but one of the current external members (J. Kleinhuis) did express interest in being reappointed.
- Despite a lack of competition- the Audit Selection Committee is confident in its recommendation to reappoint J. Kleinhuis for another three-year term, noting her strengths as a certified CPA and her dedication to the committee throughout her previous term.
- Vice-Chair Cochrane noted the Audit Selection Committee is seeking consensus at the Committee of the Whole to accept the appointment of J. Kleinhuis for a three-year term.
- Closing comments to note the Vice-Chair would also like to thank and welcome Trustee Breault to the Audit Committee. It is noted that Trustee Breault will fill the remaining trustee vacancy on the Audit Committee so it is well poised for fulsome discussion at the next committee meeting in March.

Chair Aspin thanked Vice-Chair Cochrane for his report, and acknowledged Trustee Breault for her willingness to participate on the Audit Committee. The floor was opened for comments, with none rose. It is noted that consensus has been achieved on this item and it will be brought forward to the Board meeting as a recommendation from the Committee of the Whole.

4.0 New Business

4.1 Trustee Initiative Fund (TIF) Application

Trustees were referred to the application contained in the agenda package regarding a request for funding in the amount of \$16,670 for STEM resources to be used in teaching coding linked to new mathematics curriculum and the use of STEM technologies in environmental science. Highlights of the discussion are noted as:

- Director Myles was invited to comment and noted that the learning will occur in STEM camps aimed at gap closing and reengagement for intermediate students.
- Context provided to note there have been no other TIF proposals brought forward for approval thus far for 2022/23, so the fund remains fully intact at this point (\$50,000). If trustees approved this request, it would bring the total available for future applications to approximately \$33,000.
- Director Myles noted his full support for this proposal, recognizing its alignment to the Board's commitment to Excellence in Innovation to create these opportunities for our students.
- The floor was opened for comments or questions about the proposal, with the

Officer of Corporate Affairs, L. Blaskievich, on hand to respond.

- Vice-Chair Cochrane expressed his full support for this application, noting his expectation that it would encourage may encourage girls to pursue STEM careers.
- Trustee Breault inquired about the age group the camps would target. L. Blaskievich confirmed the intention is to focus on intermediate students in Grade 7 and Grade 8. The second component would expand the focus to expose all students (Kindergarten to Grade 12) to further coding activities and STEM thinking.
- Comment from Trustee Sargent to note her full support for this proposal, with a question regarding the status of the historic proposals the Board has supported through the TIF fund. Director Myles noted it is likely that many programs are not operating fully given the limited ability to gather in groups because of the pandemic.
- Follow-up comment from Trustee Sargent to inquire if this request would be an annual or a one-time request. Confirmation to note it is a one-time request, with the potential to apply in future years as equipment needs to be refreshed.

With no further comments, it is noted that consensus has been achieved on this item. Chair Aspin noted the recommendation for approval would be presented as part of the Board meeting.

4.2 Consideration for Virtual Meetings of OPSBA

Chair Aspin noted this item was tabled at the request of Trustee Steer, who is the Board's representative at the Ontario Public School Board's Association (OPSBA).

Trustee Steer was invited to speak to this item. Highlights noted as:

- Brief comments noted regarding the historical success NNDSB has had to influence change/further thinking at the OPSBA table regarding environmental awareness, which is the inspiration for raising this item.
- It is noted that virtual meetings create cost savings while also being more environmentally friendly. The pandemic has increased comfort and ease of participating virtually, so Trustee Steer would like to raise considering for this to continue as OPSBA transitions out of the pandemic.
- Note that there would be exceptions such as the Labour Relations event, Public Education Symposium, the OPSBA Annual General Meeting, as well as any meetings at the call of the President where in-person presence would be required.
- A draft motion was read aloud for trustee consideration: *"BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Near North District School Board move that OPSBA give consideration, as it transitions out of the pandemic, that Board meetings, except for the AGM, PES and Labour Relations or any meeting deemed necessary, at the call of the President; in reducing our environmental/carbon footprint, will remain virtual, as discussed during the Committee of the Whole meeting"*.
 - Comments from Vice-Chair Cochrane and Trustee Gagne to note their support given this is the way many boards are electing to operate.
 - Support expressed from Trustee Breault to note above the benefits already discussed, it may also serve to encourage participation by

reducing barriers people may experience with in-person attendance.

With no further comments, it is noted that consensus has been achieved on this item. Chair Aspin noted the recommendation for approval would be presented as part of the Board meeting.

5.0 Motion to Adjourn

Motion: L. Sargent/ R. Learn

That we do now adjourn at 6:29 PM. – **Carried**