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Erika Lougheed, Chair

Craig Myles, Director of Education

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The January 9, 2024 **Committee of the Whole Public Session** of the Near North District School Board was held in person at the Head Office and via a Zoom video and/or teleconference.

**Trustees Present:**

Erika Lougheed, Chair  
Ashley St. Pierre, Vice Chair ®  
Howard Wesley®  
Bill Steer  
Chantal Phillips ®  
Jeanie Fuscaldo ®  
Julie Bertram ®  
Louise Sargent  
Shane Hall ®  
Albany Benson, Indigenous Student  
Trustee®  
Dora Chen, Student Trustee ®

**Administrative Staff Present:**

Craig Myles, Director of Education  
Seija Van Haesendonck, Superintendent of Business  
Melanie Gray, Superintendent of Education ®  
Gay Smylie, Superintendent of Education ®  
Deb Bartlett, Communications Officer ®  
Maureen Egan, Executive Assistant ®  
Glenn Morrison, Manager IT ®

**Other:**

Staff, media, and community partners

® attended remotely via Zoom video or audio conference

**1.0 Call to Order**

Chair Lougheed called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

**1.1 Land acknowledgement**

Chair Lougheed read the declaration aloud.

**1.2 Attendance**

Attendance indicated that 11 trustees were present, including the two Student Trustees.

**1.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest Nil**

**2.0 In-Camera**

At approximately 5:49 pm, Chair Lougheed advised the Committee of the Whole would be moving into a private session. Members of the public were excused and advised they would be permitted back into the meeting once the Board arose in public session.

Motion: CW 2024 01 01 L. Sargent/ C. Phillips

That the Board move into a Committee of the Whole Private Session in order to discuss items pertaining to *The Education Act* R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2 section 207(2)(b). - CARRIED.

A brief pause was noted to coordinate the appropriate video conference controls and allow staff and community members time to exit the meeting room. Trustees attending virtually were reminded to secure their space as well to ensure confidentiality.

**3.0 Arise and Report**

At approximately 7:45 pm, the Committee arose and reported in the public session of the Committee of the Whole. A brief pause was noted to coordinate the appropriate video conference controls to permit members of the public to re-enter the virtual meeting and open the physical meeting space for in-person guests to re-enter.

**4.0 Approval of the Agenda**

Trustees were referred to the agenda included in the agenda package. The floor was opened for comments or corrections, with none rose.

Motion: CW 2024 01 02 S. Hall/ J. Bertram

That the agenda for the Committee of the Whole meeting of January 9, 2024, be approved. - CARRIED.

**5.0 Review of Previous Minutes**

5.1 Trustees were referred to the minutes included in the agenda package. The floor was opened for comments or corrections, with none rose.

CW 2024 01 03 B. Steer/A. St.Pierre

That the minutes for the Committee of the Whole meeting of December 12, 2023 be approved. – CARRIED.

**6.0 New Business**

6.1 Union Partner Correspondence

Chair Lougheed stated that we welcome the support of our union partners in shedding light on the issues staff face and that she and the Director want families to be assured that the safety of our school communities is priority. Similar to boards across the province, NNDSB is facing challenges hiring classroom staff. Being a northern board with some rural and remote schools, there are additional obstacles to hiring and retaining staff. We look forward to working with our union partners and others in solving this very complex problem facing education in Northern Ontario.

Director Myles advised that student and staff safety remains our priority and is pleased that we can face this issue together with all members of our school community including

our union partners. This is a very challenging issue across Ontario boards. He referenced the NOEL coalition (Northern Ontario Education Leaders) who has sent a letter to the Ministry endorsing this issue. Director Myles referenced other sources where this matter is being discussed including OPSBA, the Ontario Principals Council and many educational forums. We will continue to move forward on this issue with consideration to lobby the Ministry with our coterminous boards. Trustees suggested this issue can also be raised at the Public Education Symposium later in January.

**6.2 Notices of Motion – Trustee Bertram**

Motion to Defer: CW 24-01-04 J. Bertram/L. Sargent

That the Notice of Motion provided by J. Bertram be deferred to the February meeting.  
- CARRIED

**7.0 Motion to Adjourn**

Motion: CW 24-01-05 J. Bertram/ S. Hall

That we do now adjourn at 7:57 pm. – CARRIED.