



963 Airport Road North Bay, ON P1B 8H1  
Phone: 705.472.8170  
Website: www.nearnorthschools.ca

Erika Lougheed, Chair

Craig Myles, Director of Education

---

The March 19, 2024 **Public Session Board Meeting** 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 ®  
Bill Steer ®  
Chantal Phillips  
Howard Wesley ®  
Jeanie Fuscaldo  
Julie Bertram ®  
Louise Sargent  
Shane Hall ®  
Albany Benson, Student Trustee  
Dora Chen, Student Trustee

**Trustees Absent:**

Nil.

**Administrative Staff Present:**

Gay Smylie, Superintendent (Director designate)  
Timothy Graves, Superintendent of Education ®  
Seija Van Haesendonck, Superintendent of Business  
Deb Bartlett, Communications Officer  
Glenn Morrison, Manager  
Maureen Egan, Executive Assistant

**Regrets:**

Craig Myles, Director of Education  
Melanie Gray, Superintendent

**Other:**

Staff, media, union and community partners

® attended remotely via Zoom video or audio conference

**1.0 Call to Order**

Chair Lougheed called the meeting to order at 7:13 pm. Members of the public were welcomed in person and virtually and directed to the question period submission forms/survey link. Superintendent Smylie was identified as Director designate for the meeting.

**1.1 Land Acknowledgement**

Chair Lougheed read the Land Acknowledgement.

Chair Lougheed thanked everyone for attending and kindly asked that we all treat each other with respect during the meeting. The Board will be hosting a question period later on in the agenda for members of the public to ask questions of trustees related to anything on the Board's agenda this evening. Guests joining in person can find the form on the front table. Once complete, please pass it to the Executive Assistant at the front to confirm submission. Guests joining virtually can find a link to a virtual survey located in the meeting chat. Please complete this survey and your question will be submitted to the Executive Assistant automatically. Members of the public can submit questions freely in alignment

**Minutes of the Public Session Board Meeting of the Near North District School Board held March 19, 2024**

with the Board's By-law regarding question period (BL-114) up until this item arises on the agenda.

**2.0 Requests for Leaves of Absence**

Director designate Smylie confirmed for the Chair that there were no notices of regret provided by trustees for the meeting this evening.

**3.0 Attendance**

**3.1 Confirmation of Quorum**

Attendance indicated that 11 trustees were present for the meeting, including both Student Trustees.

**3.2 Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

The floor was opened for trustees to declare conflicts of interest, with none rose.

**4.0 Approval of the Agenda**

Motion: 24-03-01, S. Hall/J.Fuscaldo

That the agenda for the Board meeting of March 19, 2024 be approved as amended. The amendment being the deletion of item 6.1.3 Administrative Guideline School Opening, Closures & Consolidations and the addition of the Ombudsman Report under Information Items.– CARRIED.

**5.0 Review of Previous Minutes**

Motion: 24-03-02, J. Fuscaldo/ C. Phillips

That the minutes of the regular Board meeting of February 13, 2024, be approved. – CARRIED.

**6.0 Communication to the Board**

**Community Involvement**

Scheduled Delegations & Question Period

Chair Lougheed noted the community involvement section of the Board's agenda has been advanced on the order of items, following a recommendation stated as an OBSPA Leader's Academy professional development session.

It is noted that there are no scheduled delegations for this evening. Chair Lougheed noted the Board would move to its public question period. Submissions of questions will now be closed to organize the list for review. It is noted that there are no questions submitted in—person or virtually for review by trustees.

**6.1 Information Items**

**6.1.1 Professional Development Opportunities Calendar**

Trustees were encouraged to review current offerings.

**6.1.2 Monthly Tender Report- February 2024**

6.1.3 Ombudsman Final Report

Chair Lougheed noted this report will be posted on our website and that it concludes the Ombudsman's investigation.

6.2 Director's Update

Chair Lougheed invited Director designate Smylie to review the Director's Update. Director designate Smylie noted that we continue to be very concerned with staff workloads and challenges. The Director had verbally shared with you the letter to the Ministry from NOEL (Northern Ontario Education Leaders) and concerns from OPSOA, OPC, OPSBA and more. This province-wide issue is our main focus and our support to all staff remains a primary concern. The Director writes and I quote: "Let us remember, for staff to direct their energies toward Student Achievement and well-being, we need to direct our energies to supporting staff."

Trustee Bertram asked for trustees to gather and draft a letter of support to send to the Ministry. Chair Lougheed reminded her we are in the process of doing just that with our coterminous boards as a result of the letter shared with the Board from our union partners in January.

6.3 Chair's Remarks

Chair Lougheed updated the board on her school visits with the unions and the Directors where she sees first had the staffing shortages, challenges in classrooms, and the economic burdens facing our families. Front line staff are wearing hats far beyond the mandate of teaching; they are helping with housing and food insecurity. Schools are picking up the pieces of the fall-out from such burdens and what normally are emergency situations are now daily routine. Our education workers are under high levels of stress and burnout. They are leaving the profession and schools and education are in crisis. This is reported widely in the news, and she asked trustees if they would consider carefully whether they are contributing to distracting the administration team and schools from helping students. She ended by noting that we have a great board and we have to keep working to address the challenges. She commended staff for successes ie graduation rates given the huge challenges.

6.4 OPSBA Report

Trustee Steer attended the OPSBA regional meetings on March 1 and 2 and provided his report in the agenda package. He reported that negotiations continue through central bargaining and that many boards are reporting deficit budgets, with transportation being a financial challenge. It was also highlighted the emerging trend re attendance and absenteeism. There is a crisis in staffing. This is a standing item for OPSBA to lobby. The next meeting is the northern caucus on April 26 and 27, 2024.

6.5 Student Trustee Report

Student Trustee Dora Chen's report was provided in the agenda package and included highlighted events for students. March Break trips included to Ottawa, Italy, the U.K. and Paris; a regional music competition for Chippewa's senior band and guitar ensemble. Plays were performed at West Ferris and Chippewa, and West Ferris and Parry Sound High Schools are preparing for upcoming arts fests. Almaguin Highlands Secondary School raised awareness of bullying on Pink Shirt Day and ran a teacher versus student volleyball game.

Indigenous Youth Circle (IYC) Update

Indigenous Student Trustee Albany Benson provided the Board with an update of activities and achievements of the Indigenous Youth Circle (IYC). She reported that Northern Secondary School is hosting drumming lessons and students are looking forward to ribbon shirt/skirt workshops and wampum bracelet workshops. Students in Grades 11 and 12 attended an Indigenous mentorship program at Nipissing University, visited the Witness Blanket at Canadore College and represented their school at the recent North Bay powwow. Students at Chippewa will be having a moccasin workshop and a dream catcher workshop for Grades 7 and 8 students.

Indigenous Student Trustee Benson also shared with trustees the recent Necessities Drive for northern communities. Recognizing the high cost of essentials in the north, administration, staff and each school community came together to fundraise and donate items through the first two weeks of February.

**7.0 Items for Decision**

**7.1 Report from Committee of the Whole Closed Session**

Motion: 24-03-03, L. Sargent/C. Phillips

That the NNDSB ratifies the Memorandum of Settlement dated March 1, 2024 for Part B of the OSSTF Teacher/Occasional Teacher Bargaining Union District 4 agreement, effective September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2026 - CARRIED

**7.2 Report from Committee of the Whole Public Session**

Motion: 24-03-04, B. Steer/H.Wesley

That the Board requests OPSBA to petition the Ministry of Education to create and develop a mandatory Ministry of Education, high school course entitled 'Living Consciously' (draft – working title) that includes four sections: Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (social norms); Food Security and Nutrition; Wellness (active lifestyle choices and mental health) and Climate Change (mitigation and living with); in accordance with the OPSBA Mission, Vision and Values. - CARRIED

**7.3 Math Achievement Action Plan**

Chair Lougheed asked Director designate Smylie to introduce this item. Director designate Smylie noted the recent efforts in mathematics by the Ministry which includes regular reporting. This report once endorsed, will be sent to the Ministry. With us tonight is Assistant SO Math Lead Kim Pauli and Math Coordinator Melissa Peddie who she thanked for their work on this report. Trustee Fuscaldo asked about intervention strategies and content specifically designed by our Board. Assistant SO Pauli responded that intervention is a priority and also that our inhouse tools will be shared with families in April.

Motion: 24-03-05, L. Sargent/S.Hall

That the Near North District School Board approve and endorse the Math Achievement Action Plan submission to the Ministry of Education (Interim Report dated March 28, 2024) - CARRIED

Motion: 24-03-06, B.Steer/J. Fuscaldo

That the Board approve the extension of the Regular meeting to 8:15. - CARRIED

**7.2 Report from Finance Committee**

Motion: 24-03-07, S. Hall/J.Bertram

That NNDSB award the tender NNDSB 2024-006 Window Replacement Phelps Central Public School to Venasse Building Group in the amount of \$405,000.00 plus HST. – CARRIED

Trustee Fuscaldo asked questions surrounding style and grade of window re ventilation and window product. SBO Van Haesendonck explained energy efficiencies and the product expectations from the professional teams involved.

Motion: 24-03-08, S. Hall/J.Bertram

That NNDSB enters into a Client Supplier Agreement (CSA) with Edsembli to provide the products, services and subscriptions needed for ERP, including K212 FIN and K212 HRP software. – CARRIED

**8.0 Committee Reports and Minutes**

**8.1 Multi-Year Strategic Plan Committee Report  
Mid-Year Strategic Plan Progress Review**

**8.2 Finance Committee Report  
Quarterly Report**

**8.3 Committee Meeting Minutes included for Information  
2024 03 04 MYSP Committee – unofficial  
2024 03 05 Finance Committee - unofficial**

**9.0 Next Meeting Date**

Chair Lougheed confirmed the Board of Trustees will meet next on April 9, 2024.


**10.0 Motion to Adjourn**

Motion: 24-03-09, C.Phillips/B. Steer

That on March 19, 2024 we do now adjourn at 7:59 pm. – CARRIED



**Erika Lougheed**  
Chair



**Gay Smylie**  
Director Designate

**RESOLUTION SUMMARY**

<p><b>24-03-01</b> S. Hall J. Fuscaldo</p>	<p>That the agenda for the Board meeting of March 19, 2024 be approved as amended. The amendment being the deletion of item 6.1.3 Administrative Guideline School Opening, Closures &amp; Consolidations and the addition of the Ombudsman Report under Information Items.– CARRIED.</p>
<p><b>24-03-02</b> J.Fuscaldo C. Phillips</p>	<p>That the minutes of the regular Board meeting of February 13, 2024, be approved. – CARRIED.</p>
<p><b>24-03-03</b> L. Sargent C. Phillips</p>	<p>That the NNDSB ratifies the Memorandum of Settlement dated March 1, 2024 for Part B of the OSSTF Teacher/Occasional Teacher Bargaining Union District 4 agreement, effective September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2026 - CARRIED</p>
<p><b>24-03-04</b> B. Steer H. Wesley</p>	<p>THE NNDSB requests OPSBA to petition the Ministry of Education to create and develop a mandatory Ministry of Education, high school course entitled ‘<i>Living Consciously</i>’ (draft – working title) that includes four sections: Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (social norms); Food Security and Nutrition; Wellness (active lifestyle choices and mental health) and Climate Change (mitigation and living with); in accordance with the OPSBA Mission, Vision and Values. - CARRIED</p>
<p><b>24-03-05</b> L.Sargent S.Hall</p>	<p>That the Near North District School Board approve and endorse the Math Achievement Action Plan submission to the Ministry of Education (Interim Report dated March 28, 2024) - CARRIED</p>
<p><b>24-03-06</b> C.Phillips J.Bertram</p>	<p>That the Board approve the extension of the Regular meeting to 8:15. - CARRIED</p>
<p><b>24-03-07</b> S.Hall J. Bertram</p>	<p>That NNDSB award the tender NNDSB 2024-006 Window Replacement Phelps Central Public School to Venasse Building Group in the amount of \$405,000.00 plus HST. – CARRIED</p>
<p><b>24-03-08</b> S.Hall J.Bertram</p>	<p>That NNDSB enters into a Client Supplier Agreement (CSA) with Edsembli to provide the products, services and subscriptions needed for ERP, including K212 FIN and K212 HRP software. – CARRIED</p>
<p><b>24-03-09</b> C.Phillips B.Steer</p>	<p>Be it resolved, that on March 19 we do now adjourn at 7:59 pm. – CARRIED</p>