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Ashley St. Pierre, Chair

Craig Myles, Director of Education

The May 13, 2025, **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:

Ashley St. Pierre
Howard Wesley
Jeanie Fuscaldo ®
Caren Gagne
Shane Hall
Chantal Phillips
Julie Bertram ®
Bill Steer
Louise Sargent

Administrative Staff Present:

Craig Myles, Director of Education
Gay Smylie, Superintendent
Seija Van Haesendonck, Superintendent of Business
Timothy Graves, Superintendent
Melanie Gray, Superintendent ®
Deb Bartlett, Communications
Maureen Egan, Director's Office
Glenn Morrison, Manager IT
Liana Blaskievich, Exec. Officer Corporate Affairs ®

Regrets: Student Trustee Trudeau
Student Trustee Sidhu

Other:
Staff, media

1.0 Call to Order

Chair St. Pierre called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

Vice-Chair Wesley read the declaration aloud.

1.2 Attendance

Attendance indicated that 9 trustees were present.

1.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Chair St. Pierre asked for declaration of conflicts. None arose.

2.0 Approval of the Agenda

Motion: CW 25-05-01, L. Sargent/J. Bertram

That the agenda for the Committee of the Whole meeting of May 13, 2025, be approved as amended. The amendment being the request by Trustee Sargent to go into closed session. - CARRIED.

Motion: CW 25-05-02, C. Gagne/L. Sargent

That the Committee move into Closed Session in order to discuss items pertaining to *The Education Act* R.S.O. 1990, c.E.2 section 207 (2) (a).

3.0 Review of Previous Minutes

Motion: CW 25-05-03, C. Gagne/S. Hall

That the minutes for the Committee of the Whole meeting of May 13, 2025, be approved as amended. The amendment being the addition of the correspondence from the Chair to the Minister. – CARRIED.

The amendment by Trustee Steer re addition of a motion to rescind Motion 25-03-03 did not have the support of a seconder and therefore was not carried.

4.0 Business Arising

4.1 AG School Openings, Closures and Consolidations

Trustee Sargent asked this be moved to a future meeting.

4.2 OPSBA Membership Information

Chair St. Pierre referred to the information provided in the agenda noting it was received following last month's meeting when questions and comments arose regarding membership. She asked Trustee Fuscaldo if this satisfied her queries. Trustee Fuscaldo clarified that she had no questions but instead was suggesting that if we ever need to cut programming, we would look to other areas first such as OPSBA membership. Trustees thanked Trustee Steer for the information noting its value and importance in school board governance.

4.3 Correspondence from Minister Calandra April 14 and 29, 2025

Correspondence to Minister Dunlop October 21, 2024, from Trustee Fuscaldo
Correspondence to Minister Dunlop October 15, 2024, from MPP Smith

Trustees discussed concerns regarding correspondence being sent to the Minister without full board discussions or approval. Trustees also discussed the role of the chair as spokesperson and noted her valuable leadership. Vice-Chair Wesley said Chair St. Pierre acted in good faith by confirming the Board's decision.

Trustee Steer expressed concern that being 2.5 years in their current mandate why we waited so long to address these issues i.e. keeping McDougall PS open. He noted all the Parry Sound Build Committee minutes on the website with a transparent page dedicated to the build. He was also concerned with a competing motion that has never been addressed again reiterating "not good governance". He noted all enrolment and plans were approved by trustees who sat on that committee.

Trustee Phillips moved for a motion to continue the discussion and Trustee Steer seconded it. Vice-Chair Wesley suggested a meeting with the Minister of Education to gain a better understanding of his position and what information he has. Trustee Fuscaldo discussed capacity concerns. Trustee Steer asked for an update on enrolment and on construction. Further conversation included decisions and minutes

by previous board. Director Myles reminded trustees that decisions made by previous board members are normally regarded by the Ministry as the collective responsibility of the current board, emphasizing that “the board is the board is the board.”

Motion: CW 25-05-04,

That the Committee of the Whole meeting be extended for ten minutes longer. – CARRIED

Trustee Fuscaldo asked staff whether the new build could safely accommodate all the kids as was designed and planned.

Director Myles drew trustees’ attention to the updated enrolment report included in the agenda package noting that this time of year we follow enrolment numbers very closely. Projected enrolment conversations are occurring now, and we are very much engaged in our pupil forecasts.

Director Myles advised the Board that construction is on time, and we will be ready to accept students in September. He also cautioned that realistically anything could affect this i.e. supply chain delays, etc. but that staff are confident with our timelines.

SBO Van Haesendonck explained projected enrolment and the work of the program team, capital projects manager and Executive Council who have determined that the enrolment can be fit into the building as it’s been designed, including the six hexagon pods. She also noted that this information was provided to trustees at the March board meeting. She also confirmed that construction is 79% complete and that the hexagon pods are currently in production and will be on site and ready.

Motion: 25-05-05, S. Hall/J. Fuscaldo

That our next response to the Minister will be a request for a meeting with Chair St. Pierre and other members of NNDSB and that we will invite MPP Smith to attend and seek to find solutions with the Minister for more permanent placement given enrolment projections at the Parry Sound build. – CARRIED

5.0 Notices of Motion

5.1 Notice of Motion – Trustee Fuscaldo

Trustees were referred to the Notice of Motion filed by Trustee Fuscaldo contained in the agenda package regarding the Trustee Initiative Fund. It was noted that to proceed to discussion, the notice requires a seconder. Trustee Phillips seconded the motion. Trustee Fuscaldo introduced the motion.

Motion: CW25-05-07, J. Fuscaldo/C. Phillips

Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of the Near North District School board hereby allocate the Trustee Initiative Fund divided equitably amongst all schools for the fiscal year 2025 to provide assistance to schools as deemed appropriate by each school principal. - CARRIED

5.2 Notice of Motion – Trustee Fuscaldo

Trustees were referred to the Notice of Motion filed by Trustee Fuscaldo contained in

the agenda package regarding the area locations. It was noted that to proceed to discussion, the notice requires a seconder. Vice-Chair Wesley seconded the motion. Trustee Fuscaldo introduced the motion.

Director Myles asked to speak to this motion to remind trustees that we have a stringent guideline beginning in September regarding physical attendance at meetings at the Board office. He noted logistics of external spaces for board meetings including staffing and cost and a potential conflict with our current bylaws. He indicated that he would like to research this further. Trustees agreed to table this motion until they have information from OPSBA and the Ministry.

Motion: CW 25-05-08, J. Fuscaldo/H. Wesley

Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees directs the Director of Education to find suitable locations in West Parry Sound (Parry Sound) Almaguin, Sturgeon and Mattawa, for trustees and the public to attend board meetings. – TABLED

6.0 Adjournment

Motion: CW 25-05-09, C. Gagne/C. Phillips

That on May 13, 2025, we do now adjourn at 7:10 pm. - CARRIED