

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

11:15 am Tuesday August 19, 2025

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
Land Acknowledgement

2. **Attendance and Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

3. **Review of the Agenda**

Motion:

That the agenda for the Special Board meeting of August 19, 2025 be approved.

4. **Parry Sound Build JK-2**

5. **Declaration of Office and Oath of Allegiance**

- 5.1 Trustee Elect Jay Aspin Declaration of Office and Oath of Allegiance

- 5.2 Trustee Elect John Arkwright Declaration of Office and Oath of Allegiance

6. **Adjournment**

Motion:

That on August 19, 2025, we do now adjourn at _____ pm.



52 Seguin Street, Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 1B4
Tel: (705) 746-2101 • Fax: (705) 746-7461 • www.parrysound.ca

Office of the Mayor

August 13, 2025

Ministry of Education
5th Flr, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M7A 2A5

Via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Calandra,

RE: Delayed Opening of Parry Sound JK-12 Super School

Thank you for your concern and making the trip to Parry Sound on May 23rd to meet with Near North District School Board trustees, staff and contractors, as well as staff and myself from the Town of Parry Sound on site at the new JK-12 Super School in Parry Sound. I also acknowledge and appreciate your follow-up letter to our Clerk after the meeting.

You may be aware that on August 7th, the School Board issued a press release stating in part that construction of the Parry Sound JK to Grade 12 school “*continues to present timeline challenges. At this time, NNDSB is unable to confirm when the new school will be ready to welcome students. In light of this uncertainty, contingency plans are being developed to ensure that all students, families, and staff begin the school year in safe, supporting learning environments.*”

At last evening’s meeting, Parry Sound Council heard a deputation and received the attached *Community Call to Action Regarding the Delayed Opening of the JK-12 Super School in Parry Sound*, which I have signed. With school scheduled to open in less than 3 weeks, our Council is similarly dismayed and concerned at the lack of information available to parents and students in the West Parry Sound area.

In addition to the concerns expressed by parents last evening and endorsed by our Council, we have several requests in an attempt to advance communication and information. Would you as Minister, provide a plan for the opening of the JK-12 Super School with an immediate transparent public release of the plan?

Would you investigate the administration of the Near North District School Board and be able to provide some response to the Town within two weeks?

Given our concerns that West Parry Sound receives less attention within the Board than the North Bay area, would you consider the Town's recommendation to reinstate the West Parry Sound District School Board?

Thank you again for your concern and attention to this troubling issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jamie McGarvey', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jamie McGarvey
Mayor, Town of Parry Sound

c.c. Near North District School Board
Premier Doug Ford
MPP Parry Sound-Muskoka Graydon Smith
West Parry Sound area municipalities.

Community Call-to-Action

Regarding the Delayed Opening of the K-12 Superschool in Parry Sound

Date: August 11, 2025

Background

The new K-12 Superschool in Parry Sound was scheduled to open for students in September 2025. We have now learned that the facility will not be ready for the start of the school year. This delay comes after months of minimal updates and unanswered concerns raised by First Nation leadership, municipal representatives, parents, and community members.

Families have made critical decisions—relocating homes, arranging transportation, and securing childcare—based on the promise of an on-time opening. The lack of transparency from the Near North District School Board has left the community without the information needed to plan for the year ahead.

Our Community Demands

We are united in calling on the **Near North District School Board** and the **Ministry of Education** to immediately:

1. **Provide a full explanation** of the causes of the delay.
 2. **Release a realistic, updated completion and opening timeline.**
 3. **Publish a detailed contingency plan** for student accommodations, including transportation, safety, classroom resources, and staffing.
 4. **Commit to regular public updates** until the school is completed and operational.
 5. **Host an urgent public meeting** in Parry Sound within two weeks to address concerns directly.
-

Why Your Support Matters

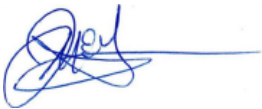
The presence of local elected officials, First Nations leadership, and community organizations in this call for accountability will demonstrate to the Board and Ministry that this is not a small, isolated issue—it is a matter of urgent public interest.

By co-signing this call-to-action, you are standing with families, advocating for student well-being, and reinforcing the importance of transparent governance in public education.

Contacts for Coordination:

Vicki Christie | Shane Reynolds | Amy Black
parentsforparrysound@gmail.com
705.346.1408

Signatories:

Name	Title/Organization	Signature
Jamie McGarvey	Mayor of Parry Sound	 _____
Tracey Hendrick	Chief Moose Deer Point First Nations	_____
Shane Tabobondung	Chief Wasauksing First Nations	_____
Graydon Smith	MPP Parry Sound-Muskoka	_____
Scott Aitchison	MP Parry Sound-Muskoka	_____

August 15, 2025

To:

Near North District School Board Administration

Subject: Response to Contingency Plan Release – Parry Sound JK–12 Project



Dear NNDSB Administration,

We acknowledge receipt of your email and the contingency plan released today. While we appreciate the effort to provide an update, the plan still does not address the critical safety measures and assurances that parents have been requesting repeatedly.

At eight pages, the plan offers length but little substance — largely repeating the earlier press release without providing concrete answers or timelines on the immediate safety of the current Parry Sound High School building, which will house students during this delay.

Our position remains unchanged: you have both the funds and the responsibility to ensure this facility meets acceptable safety standards before any student enters. Beginning **Monday, August 17th**, we call for the following urgent actions:

1. Engage a licensed structural engineer to verify and publicly confirm the building's structural integrity.
2. Conduct a full air quality assessment, with specific attention to asbestos levels.
3. Test the water supply to confirm potability.
4. Obtain and share written occupancy approval from the Fire Marshal.
5. Secure Town of Parry Sound building department approval for the change from demolition to occupancy permit.
6. Complete and publicly document all required inspections and approvals by NNDSB before students return.

Parents, guardians, and the wider community expect — and deserve — transparent, documented proof that these steps have been completed and passed.

We are equally concerned about the **impact of limited space** on high school course offerings — particularly in **technical education, culinary arts, drama, and athletics** — as well as the reduction of available **gymnasium facilities** during the construction delay. These programs are vital to student career readiness, diverse interests, physical health, and overall development. Space constraints cannot be an excuse to narrow opportunities.

Your own contingency plan states that *“dedicated mental health professionals will support students through transitions, with approaches including embedded classroom strategies to foster resilience and emotional stability.”* If NNDSB truly values student mental health, then protecting access to robust programming and physical activity spaces must be part of that strategy — not an afterthought. The loss or reduction of these opportunities will directly undermine student well-being, resilience, and engagement.

The NNDSB's **special meeting on Tuesday, August 19th** must deliver **clear, accountable answers** to the community — not more vague assurances.

This situation was entirely avoidable. A lack of foresight, strategic planning, and transparent communication has placed unnecessary strain on families, students, and staff. The time for delay is over. We expect immediate, verifiable action to address both safety and program access before the school year begins.

Sincerely,

Vicki Christie, Shane Reynolds & Amy Black

On behalf of Parents for Parry Sound

August 15, 2025

To: Marianne Speirs – Capital Projects Manager NNDSB

Subject: Urgent: Accountability & Safety Concerns – Parry Sound School Facilities



Dear Ms. Speirs,

On behalf of *Parents for Parry Sound*, we are reaching out to you directly regarding your role as Capital Projects Manager with the Near North District School Board. Based on publicly available information and Board records, you have been a central figure in major facility decisions, including:

- The closure of McDougall and Nobel Public Schools, despite community opposition.
- The delay of the JK–12 “superschool” project, originally expected to be ready for the 2025–2026 school year.
- The halted demolition of the existing Parry Sound High School, which is now expected to reopen with students occupying approximately 60% of the building this September.

We remind you that McDougall Public School has been the subject of a petition to reopen, supported by trustees, community members, and even MPP Graydon Smith. At the same time, the superschool — projected to serve JK through Grade 12 — is already falling short of community needs by nearly **300 student spaces** compared to current enrollment levels.

This situation places families, students, and staff in a state of prolonged uncertainty. We have compiled and attached all correspondence to date — including our letters to the NNDSB, the Minister of Education, our MP, the Town of Parry Sound, and surrounding municipalities. You may already be aware that we have had recent media coverage from CTV News with more exposure in the days to come from CBC and beyond.

At this point, we need direct answers to ensure the safety of our children and staff for the upcoming school year. Specifically:

1. **Safety Standards** – What independent inspections and approvals (structural, fire, air quality, water potability, asbestos testing) have been completed at Parry Sound High School?
2. **Transparency** – Will parents and staff receive documented proof of these approvals before school begins?
3. **Capacity Planning** – How does the Board plan to address the nearly 300-student shortfall at the new school before it even opens?
4. **Community Engagement** – Will the Board revisit the closure of McDougall Public School, given continued community and political support for its reopening?

The time for vague statements is over. Parents and community members deserve concrete, verifiable assurances that students will return to a safe and properly resourced learning environment in September.