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Ashley St. Pierre, Chair

Craig Myles, Director of Education

The September 9, 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, Chair
Howard Wesley, Vice Chair
John Arkwright
Jay Aspin
Caren Gagne
Shane Hall
Louise Sargent
Student Trustee Trudeau
Student Trustee Bassi

Administrative Staff Present:

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

Regrets: B. Steer

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 8 trustees and two student trustees were present.

1.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

2.0 Closed Session

Motion: CW 25-09-01, S.Hall/C.Gagne

That the Committee move into closed session in order to discuss items pertaining to *The Education Act* RSO 1990, c.E.2 section 207 (2)(e). – CARRIED

3.0 Approval of the Agenda

Motion: CW 25-09-02, L.Sargent/H.Wesley

That the agenda for the Committee of the Whole meeting of September 9, 2025 be approved. - CARRIED.

4.0 Review of Previous Minutes

Motion: CW 25-09-03, C.Gagne/S.Hall

That the minutes for the Committee of the Whole meeting of June 10, 2025 be approved. – CARRIED.

Trustee Sargent asked for minutes of the Special Board meeting on August 19 and Chair St. Pierre advised that she consulted with OPSBA and since a delegate for the Director was not assigned it did not constitute a meeting. She also noted that OPSBA's letter is included in today's agenda package. Trustee Sargent and Wesley asked that there be a record of the meeting minutes for future reference. The Chair advised it would be included in a future agenda.

5.0 Business Arising

5.1 AG School Openings, Closures and Consolidations (Trustee Sargent)

Trustee Sargent explained that in February 2024 this AG was on the agenda as an information item after having gone through the consultation phase. Trustee Sargent had some concerns with language in the AG that was trustee related. She briefly reviewed some of the changes she felt were necessary. Chair St. Pierre deferred to Director Myles who noted staff had not received the changes from Trustee Sargent and therefore were not prepared to discuss. He asked that it be presented in writing for proper consideration and discussion.

Trustee Aspin said he appreciated Trustee Sargent's concerns but would like to see them in written format with some time to review before discussing at the board table. Trustee Gagne suggested this item go to the Governance Committee first and then to board. Friendly consensus reached that it would be sent to the Governance Committee. Trustee Sargent asked that it come back to the October meeting with hard copies provided.

5.2 Parry Sound Build JK-12 School Update

Director Myles noted the significant documentation in the agenda package re planning surrounding the build. He said that he wanted to reassure the board of trustees, staff, students and families and the communities that we continue to work extremely hard, to ensure we deliver a quality product. He advised that Executive Superintendent Graves is overseeing the project to ensure it has the necessary support needed as we continue to deal with unexpected issues. He asked Executive Superintendent Graves to continue this update including the most recent news received.

Executive Superintendent Graves announce that we received notification from the Town of Parry Sound that we have occupancy for staff and students. He acknowledged the hard work of the Facilities department staff throughout. The next step of our process is to invite our union partners and admin to reintroduce them to the building followed by staff. He acknowledged the work ahead for teachers and support staff. Teachers normally come in a week before school to unpack and this wasn't the case. Teachers will need an opportunity to set up their classrooms, unpack their resources and teach at the same time. We are working closely with the union to support them. We expect to announce students' occupation very soon once transportation is in place.

Vice-Chair Wesley thanked the parents and municipalities who opened their doors to assist. This will be welcome news. He also acknowledged the efforts of all who worked hard including bus drivers who have done a great deal of extra work and ensured the best for our students. Trustee Gagne echoed the VC's remarks also thanking the senior administration for their work.

Director Myles expressed his sincere gratitude to the trustees for their recognition, acknowledging the dedication of the senior staff who went above and beyond, often making personal sacrifices. He emphasized that their actions reflect the core values of the organization – student success. He highlighted the contributions of principals, IT staff, custodial teams, and those working on the construction site, who not only faced challenging situations but also endured unfair criticism while maintaining professionalism and resilience. Director Myles shared he is deeply moved by the commitment displayed under significant external pressure, acknowledging the added stress that was placed on everyone involved.

6.0 Adjournment

Motion: CW 25-09-04, J.Aspin/L.Sargent

That on September 9, 2025 we do now adjourn at 6:22 pm. – CARRIED