



The Northland School Division (NSD)

Board Highlights Regular Board Meeting – January 24, 2020



Board of Trustees left to right: Back Row – Silas Yellowknee (Ward 6), Randy Anderson (Ward 3), Robin Guild (Board Chair, Ward 7), Maddy Daniels (Ward 1), Jules Nokohoo (Vice-Chair, Ward 10), Louis Cardinal (Ward 5), Jesse Lamouche (Ward 4).

Front Row - Rubi Shirley (Ward 9), Loretta Gladue (Ward 8), Karen Telford (Ward 11), Cathy Wanyandie (Ward 2).

Board of Trustees unanimously approved to disqualify Ward 1 Trustee

The Board of Trustees approved to disqualify Ward 1 Trustee Maddy Daniels. The unanimous decision was made after Trustee Daniels violated conditions of censure. A by-election will be held in the spring.

Notice of motion for possible school closure at Pelican Mountain School

The Board of Trustees approved a notice of motion regarding the possible school closure of Pelican Mountain School (Sandy Lake). NSD's school closure policy (Policy 15 - School Closure) outlines a process for a possible school closure. This includes hosting a public meeting. The public meeting will help NSD understand the reasons why parents are sending their children to other schools and give parents and community members the opportunity to discuss alternative programs and the preferred future for both schools.

The Board will vote on the motion no later than May 22, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Before a notice of motion, the trustees review the Pelican Mountain School viability report.

Board approved instruction program continuation at Hillview School and Susa Creek School

After reviewing the viability reports for Hillview School and Susa Creek School, the Board of Trustees approved to have both instructional programs continue. The trustees noted Hillview School's marked improvement with respect to student enrollment. For Susa Creek School, the instructional program will be re-evaluated in the fall of 2020 for operational viability if student enrollment does not improve.

Self-Evaluation Report and Board Positive Path Forward Action Plan approved

The Board of Trustees approved its annual self-evaluation report and Board Positive Path Forward Action Plan. The self-evaluation highlights the Board's progress with fulfilling defined roles and priorities. The Board Positive Path Forward Action Plan outlines the Board priorities for 2019-2020. Each priority includes a list of goals. The plan also lists the important issues the Board is advocating on behalf of Northland School Division. Click on the website link to view the Board Positive Path Forward Action Plan <https://www.nsd61.ca/download/230708>.

Board approved changes to the Susa Creek School Lunch Program

On October 26, 2019, the Board of Trustees approved a change to the Susa Creek Lunch Program. At that time, the motion stated NSD will no longer provide a no cost lunch program to students attending Grande Yellowhead Pubic School Division (GYPSD) after December 31, 2019. On December 4, 2019, NSD hosted a community meeting at Susa Creek School. The meeting was an opportunity for parents and community members to understand the Board's decision to discontinue the lunch program for students in Grande Cache.

After reviewing the feedback from parents and community members, the Board gives notice to stop providing a no-cost lunch program to students attending Grande Yellowhead Public School Division as of March 31, 2020. After March 31, 2020, the lunch program will be provided to Susa Creek School students only.

2020-2021 School Year Calendar draft accommodates families

The 2020-2021 School Year Calendar draft is geared towards accommodating families. A winter break is scheduled during the second week of February (February 8-12, 2021). Principals and teachers will be attending Teachers Convention during that time. Spring break is scheduled during the first week of April (April 5-9, 2021) which aligns with the Native Hockey Provincials. A number of NSD students participate in the annual hockey tournament.

Orientation for new staff will look different. New teachers will participate in orientation located in their school communities instead of in a central location. A centralized orientation for new principals will take place on Tuesday, August 25, 2020. The draft calendar will be brought back to the March Regular Board Meeting for approval.

Board approved change to number of Regular Board Meetings

The number of Regular Board Meetings is changing. The Board approved holding nine meetings a year instead of 10. As a result, the August 21, 2020 meeting has been eliminated. The decision will reduce Board and administration costs for NSD.

Housing priority list approved

An update on housing provides a clearer picture to the Board on priorities and ongoing renovations taking place in Fort Chipewyan. The report shows housing priority in terms of which school communities have the most urgent need for repairs and improvement. Some of the factors considered are location,

demand, current state of housing construction and the external options for housing in the community. Fort Chipewyan is ranked number one because it ranks high on all scales.

In regards to the renovation projects in Fort Chipewyan, a tender has gone out for two projects. The main construction materials have been ordered and will be shipped on the ice road. Following the presentation, the Board approved that housing units be renovated based on the priorities set in the January Housing Plan. Click on the website link to view the plan <https://www.nsd61.ca/download/229828> (Pages 63-65).

Transfer of land, building and school furniture to Little Buffalo approved

The Board of Trustees approved the transfer of the school furniture and the division-owned land, including all school buildings and excluding mobiles homes used as teacher housing, to 2033800 Alberta Ltd., all for \$1.00, subject to Ministerial Approval. 2033800 Alberta Ltd. is a wholly owned company by Lubicon Lake Band.

Transfer of houses to the Peavine Métis Settlement approved

The Board of Trustees approved the transfer of the three houses to the Peavine Métis Settlement in the amount of \$1.

Policies approved:

- Policy 7 Appendix C – Trustee Expenses and Corporate Credit Card Guidelines.
- Policy 15 – School Closure. An adjustment was made to the Superintendent’s role.
- Policy 10 – Policy Making. The second reading of the policy was approved.

Every Season Learning Calendar Update

Area 3 Associate Superintendent Dr. Tim Stensland updated trustees on the plan for sharing the “Every Season Learning Calendar” concept with school communities. School councils or Principal Advisory Committees will be including a standardized “Every Season Learning Calendar” presentation on upcoming agendas to gauge interest from parents and community members. The trustees originally presented the idea at the Council of Schools Council Meeting on April 26, 2019.

Board Chair Highlights



In the January edition, Board Chair Robin Guild discussed the upcoming recruitment fairs NSD is attending. Trustees, central office staff and a few principals will be attending upcoming fairs in January and February at the University of Alberta, University of Calgary, University of Lethbridge, University of Saskatchewan and Grande Prairie Regional College. Guild also started a discussion on having a professional development budget cap for each trustee. A motion will be brought back at the February Regular Board Meeting.

Superintendent Highlights



Area 3 Associate Superintendent Dr. Tim Stensland highlighted recent meetings Superintendent of Schools Dr. Nancy Spencer-Poitras attended, information about water testing and Jordan's Principle. First, Spencer-Poitras met with the Attraction and Retention Committee. The committee includes trustees and members of the ATA Local #69. The Board outlined housing advocacy to date and an updated housing plan. Other topics discussed included ideas to better promote NSD, ideas for recruiting and retaining staff, workload issues and essential services in communities.

Spencer-Poitras attended the Teacher and Learning Committee Meeting. The committee discussed how NSD can better celebrate staff, reviewed the draft calendar for 2020-2021 and technology support for schools. In November, NSD received a letter from Alberta Health Services recommending the water in schools be tested for lead content. The Occupational Health and Safety Officer is sampling water at schools in January and February.

Jordan's Principle responds to the unmet needs of First Nations children no matter where they live in Canada. Different levels of government fund different services for First Nations children. Some of the items that can be claimed for education are as follows; school supplies, tutoring services, teaching assistants, specialized school transportation, psycho-educational assessments, assistive technologies, and electronics. Currently, six NSD schools access supports through Jordan's Principle. All the services that we have been approved for this year to date have been Education Assistants.

NSD launching a pilot project in partnership with Children's Autism Service

For rural school divisions such as Northland School Division, accessing regular service delivery for students who need social, communication and behavioural support is an ongoing challenge. The geographical size of the division, combined with the small student population, relative to larger urban jurisdictions in the province means that our cost per student is higher. Distance, the cost of contracting services and the down time of travelling from urban centres to rural northern communities results in high costs and limited services.

To overcome these challenges, Area 1 Associate Superintendent Dermod Madden discussed an alternative delivery model to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). There has been a rise in the number of children identified with this condition in recent years, as more information is discovered about the condition. The alternative model will see NSD launch a pilot project in partnership with Children's Autism Service (CASE). The project is going to begin with piloting this alternative approach with Paddle Prairie School.

Instead of costly visits once a month, service providers would meet at the beginning of year and again in May to assist with year-end reports. In between, service providers will utilize video conferencing options for greater access and quicker response times. CASE will also work with colleges to assist in developing an ASD Educational Assistant certification program. Having certified educational assistants on site will build capacity from within and also create a model that works for the school and the community.

Trustees updated on Attendance Improvement Operational Plan progress

Director of Student Engagement, Attendance and Completion Don Tessier provided an update to the trustees on addressing strategies within the Attendance Improvement Operational Plan. Within the plan, NSD has been working on standardizing attendance tracking. This year, we transitioned to a new Student Information System (SIS) called PowerSchool. Tessier's report says training for staff on how to use the system for assignments such as attendance tracking is ongoing.

Tessier also provided updated information on how the division is analyzing data. To help NSD understand why students, identified as chronically absent, are missing school, principals submitted reasons for chronic non-attending student absences. The top reasons identified for October 2018 and 2019 are sickness/medical and skipping.

The report concludes with attendance information for the month of December. Our overall attendance for December 2019 is 78%, which is down two percent when compared to December 2018. Our overall target for 2019-2020 is 82.4%. Click on the website to view the entire report <https://www.nsd61.ca/download/229828> (Pages 158 – 164).

Trustee Activity Reports



Vice-Chair, Ward 10 Trustee Jules Nokohoo started the month of December attending the community meeting at Susa Creek School. On December 10th, Nokohoo attended a school council meeting at Conklin Community School. During the meeting, there was a discussion about the process of changing the name of a school. On December 12th, he attended the Anzac School/Bill Woodward School Christmas Concert. Nokohoo also visited with parents and community members to discuss wellness. Parents he spoke to said their school should have a physical education teacher and opportunities for kids to play organized sports.



Ward 2 Trustee Cathy Wanyandie also attended the community meeting on December 4, 2019 at Susa Creek School. Before the holiday break, she attended the Susa Creek School Christmas Dinner. The students recited Christmas songs in Cree.



Ward 11 Trustee Karen Telford had a busy December. On December 12th she participated in a meeting with the newly appointed Policy Committee and attended the Christmas Concert/Community Gala in Fishing Lake. She also attended the Christmas Community Breakfast at J.F. Dion School on December 20, 2019.



Ward 9 Trustee Rubi Shirley participated in a teacher interview with Athabasca Delta Community School Principal Elia Haydon and Area Associate Superintendent Dr. Tim Stensland. Shirley also participated in a meeting with the newly appointed Policy Committee.

View Board Schedule, Agendas, Minutes, Highlights and Attachments on our website at <https://www.nsd61.ca/governance/board-meeting-agenda-minutes>.

Next Corporate Board Meeting is Friday, February 21, 2020

Note: These writings do not constitute the official record of the Northland School Division No.61. They are however, provided as general information relating to action taken at board meetings. For further information, please call 780-624-2060 or 1-800-362-1360.