



Board Meeting Highlights

January 27, 2024

2024-2025 Draft Calendar presented and received as information

Associate Superintendent of Human Resources Krista Veitch presented a draft calendar for the 2024-2025 school year. The Board has the responsibility to set the school division calendar as set out in Section 60 in the Education Act.

The draft calendar will be circulated for feedback and will be brought back to the March Regular Board Meeting. Click on the website link to view the draft calendar: <https://www.nsd61.ca/download/440564> (see page 52-53).

Board approved a Notice of Motion for possible closure of Pelican Mountain School

The Board of Trustees approved a Notice of Motion regarding the possible closing of Pelican Mountain School in Sandy Lake. Northland School Division's Policy 15 outlines a process for school closures, which follows section 62 of the *Education Act*. This includes hosting a public meeting, which is scheduled for March 11, 2024 at Pelican Mountain School. The Board will vote on the motion no later than the May 31, 2024 Regular Board Meeting.

Before the notice of motion regarding the possible closure of Pelican Mountain School, NSD conducted a viability study. School viability is measured by the ability to provide educational opportunities for students in NSD in relation to the cost of providing such opportunities.

Based on the fact that many local parents choose to transport their students out of the community to a school of choice, the relative cost of continuing to offer a full ECS to grade 3 programming has risen dramatically. Despite the age of the building, however, both the school's location and general high-quality facility, the school site would be ideal to support division-wide land-based learning programming for students as well as staff members. You can view the entire viability study by clicking on the website link: <https://www.nsd61.ca/download/440564> (see page 74-87).

Additional busing authorized to transport junior and senior high students from Fishing Lake to Cold Lake



The Board of Trustees authorized administration to proceed with an option that will increase the number of buses transporting students from Fishing Lake Métis Settlement to Cold Lake. In November, the Board examined a letter from the Fishing Lake Métis Settlement Chair Charles Gladue. In the letter, Mr. Gladue addressed concerns about transportation for students attending schools outside the settlement.

After reviewing the letter, NSD evaluated the transportation situation and presented solutions to the Board. The recommendation selected by the trustees is designed to better support the Fishing Lake Métis Settlement. The new arrangement is intended to provide two full bus runs transporting students to Cold Lake instead of one, along with a feeder bus to reduce ride times. The bus service accommodates students moving onto junior high after completing kindergarten to grade 6 at J.F. Dion School. This arrangement is intended to be in place for the remainder of the 2023-24 school year.

Once the new busing arrangement is finalized, NSD will communicate information to the families impacted.

J.F. Dion School programming to be discussed during a future community engagement



During the discussion about bussing junior and senior high students from the Fishing Lake Métis Settlement to Cold Lake schools, the Board turned its attention to the current programming at J.F. Dion School. Currently, the school offers programming for students in kindergarten to grade 6. On May 26, 2023, the Board approved a motion to adjust the grade levels offered at the school, transitioning from kindergarten through grade 8 to kindergarten through grade 6. This decision was

supported by survey responses from parents, guardians, and community members, with the majority favouring the removal of programming for grades 7 and 8.

Following the discussion, the Board authorized administration to organize a community engagement session with Fishing Lake Métis Settlement families. The engagement would focus on proposing the idea of bringing back grades 7 and 8 back to J.F. Dion School.

Acting Superintendent's Highlights: Strengthening community connections and educational innovation



In the latest edition of the Acting Superintendent's Highlights, the Board was presented with a video showcasing the NSD Music Program, received updates on community engagement sessions, and learned about a recent professional learning exercise for principals.

Last year marked the launch of an NSD initiative aimed at expanding access to quality music opportunities for a greater number of students. A highlight of this initiative was during Métis Week, November 12-18, 2023, when students and staff at Bishop Routhier collaborated with Artists in

Residence Marissa Karpiak, Septimus Alexander, and Northland Music Specialist Boyd Davies. This collaboration resulted in the creation of an original song celebrating Métis culture. The song's performance can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vs49W92d6OU>.



Since November, NSD has been actively engaging with parents and communities across its jurisdiction. These sessions have identified various themes that will guide the Board of Trustees and Administration in achieving long-term, sustainable outcomes, processes, and relationships. The schedule for upcoming engagement sessions is as follows:

- Anzac School and Bill Woodward School (Anzac) - February 5, 2024
- Father R. Perin School (Janvier) - February 7, 2024
- Conklin Community School (Conklin) - February 8, 2024
- Northland Online School (Virtual Meeting) - February 21, 2024

Parents, guardians, and community members are encouraged to share their perspectives by completing a brief survey at [letscometogethernsd.com/2023-2024-community-engagement-survey](https://www.nsd61.ca/governance/board-meetings). The deadline for survey submissions has been extended to **Friday, February 23, 2024**.

Mr. Johnson also discussed a recent professional learning session for principals that focused on restorative practices. Held in Slave Lake on January 17, 2024, the session involved role-play exercises, where principals assumed various roles in a hypothetical situation to understand and apply restorative conversation techniques. These techniques are designed to facilitate solution-based discussions involving all affected parties, allowing everyone to share their story and collaboratively develop a positive way forward. This approach ensures everyone has a voice and contributes to mutually agreed-upon solutions, facilitated by a trained and unbiased mediator.

Visit <https://www.nsd61.ca/governance/board-meetings> to view upcoming Regular Board Meeting dates and Board-related documents.

Note: These writings do not constitute the official record of the Northland School Division. They are, however, provided as general information relating to the action taken at board meetings. For further information, please call 780-624-2060 or 1-800- 362-1360.