

Minutes of the Special Board of Trustees Meeting of Northern Gateway Public Schools

May 9, 2021 @ 1:00 p.m. (via Zoom)

Opening

A. Opening

Meeting to be recorded – started at 1:04 p.m.

**Call to Order
and Roll Call**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The May 9th, 2021 Special Board meeting was called to order by Chair Wigton at 1:04 p.m.

Roll Call:

Trustees: Linda Wigton, Sherry Jeffreys, Barb Maddigan, Christine Peck, Gerry Steinke, Judy Muir, Anita Portsmouth, Diane Hagman, and Jim Hailes.

Kevin Andrea, Superintendent, NGPS
Michelle Brennick, Deputy Superintendent
Leslee Jodry, Assistant Superintendent
Christine Bzdel, Principal, Twilight Colony School
Tamara Spong, Secretary-Treasurer
Lisa Bakos, Communications Officer
Wendy Robertson, Board Secretary

2. Waiver for a Special Meeting

The Board of Trustees hereby waive the requirements of Section 3, Subsections (1) to (3) of the Board Regulation Procedures pertaining to the calling of a Special Meeting.

Treaty Land
Acknowledgement

3. **Treaty Land Acknowledgement**

Trustee Barb Maddigan read the Treaty Land Acknowledgement.

4431 -21

4. **Acceptance of the Agenda**

Moved by Trustee Maddigan - that the agenda for the May 9th, 2021 Special Board meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Hutterite Colonies -
At Home Learning

5. **Hutterite Colonies – At Home Learning**

Northern Gateway received a letter from the members of the Twilight Colony voicing their concerns over the At Home Learning directive.

Chair Linda Wigton read the letter out loud for all present at the Special Board meeting.

Kevin Andrea – Superintendent and discussion:

- Since November, 2020 we have had: 53 Covid Positive cases, affecting 157 staff and 1295 students.
- Northern Gateway has taken safety measures for all students and staff.
- The three main reasons this decision was made:
 1. Health and Safety of Students and Staff
 2. Continuity of Learning: if Teachers get sick, there are no teachers to teach students. Moving to at home learning will ensure the continuity of Learning.

3. Maintaining a consistent approach across the Division.
 - If the Board disagrees, the Board can reverse the decision and teachers will return to work tomorrow morning.
 - If decision is reversed, staff is obligated to return to work, there is no other option.
 - After contacting Alberta Education three times for clarification, it was indicated that the direction of "will be allowed" to continue in-person classes was not "must" continue in-person classes. This distinction was critical in my making a decision in support of the health and safety of our staff.
 - Beyond the Colony Schools, in general there are few students doing at home learning. Our tech team has been working with these families in these areas to provide on-line learning. Many parents upgraded their internet service earlier this year, which has helped immensely.
 - What are other jurisdictions doing? Some jurisdictions are doing in school learning and others are going to the at home learning for colony schools.
 - It would be a significant challenge to replace the 5 staff at the Twilight and Homeland Colony schools.
 - Do Colony members travel in and out of the colony? Yes there is a huge amount of travel.
 - This decision was made for all four of our colony schools.

4432 -21

Moved by Trustee Steinke – that the Board direct administration to operate Twilight Colony School with in-person learning, according to the permission and guidelines provided by Alberta Education following the May 4th, 2021 announcement.

Recorded Vote:

In favour:

Anita Portsmouth, Gerry Steinke, Sherry Jeffreys

Opposed:

Barb Maddigan, Jim Hailes, Diane Hagman, Judy
Muir, Christine Peck, Linda Wigton

Motion Defeated

Adjournment

4423-21

Adjournment

Moved by Trustee Hailes – that the meeting
be adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

Motion Carried

Board Chair

Secretary-Treasurer