

MINUTES

Northern Gateway Public Schools Board of Trustees

Regular Board Meeting

Division Office Board Room – Whitecourt, Alberta

November 5, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

OPENING

Call to Order and Roll Call

A. OPENING

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The November 5, 2024, Regular Board Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Gerry Steinke at 10:02 a.m.

Present at this time: Board Chair Gerry Steinke, Board Vice-Chair Diane Hagman, Trustees Jim Hailes, Judy Muir, Barb Maddigan, Deb Koloski, Christine Peck and Linda Wigton; and Administrators Kevin Bird, Superintendent; Leslee Jodry, Deputy Superintendent; Tamara Spong, Secretary-Treasurer; and Nancy Whittaker, Recording Secretary. Trustee Les Urness was absent from the meeting.

Lisa Bakos, Communications Officer, and Vince Dikaitis, Percy Baxter Principal, were present at this time and there was one guest present in the gallery. Meghan Caron, Hillside High School teacher, was present via Zoom.

O Canada

2. O Canada

A recording of O Canada by Whitecourt Central School students, was presented.

Treaty Land Acknowledgement

3. Treaty Land Acknowledgement

Vice-Chair Diane Hagman read the Treaty Land Acknowledgement.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

4. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

- a) The PSBAA report will be presented by Trustee Muir at the request of Trustee Peck.

- b) A motion recommendation by the Community Engagement Committee was added to Action Items by Trustee Wigton.

Acceptance of the Agenda

5. Acceptance of the Agenda

The Agenda for the November 5, 2024 Regular Public Board Meeting was accepted as amended.

Acceptance of the Minutes

6. Acceptance of the October 15, 2024, Regular Public Board Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the October 15, 2024, Regular Public Board Meeting were accepted as presented.

DELEGATIONS

B. DELEGATIONS

Nil

ACTION ITEMS

C. ACTION ITEMS

Staff Presentations

1. Staff Presentations

- a) **Meghan Caron**, Lead Teacher, Hillside Jr Sr High School
2026 International Field Trip to Scotland

Meghan Caron presented details about the proposed trip and answered questions from Trustees as appropriate.

5045-24

Moved that the Board approve, in principle, the 2026 Hillside Jr Sr High School International Field Trip to Scotland.

Motion Carried

Meghan Caron left the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

- b) **Vince Dikaitis**, Principal, Percy Baxter: 2024 – 25 Student Exchange Program

Principal Dikaitis presented details about the proposed student exchange program for Percy Baxter grade 8 students. Trustees requested clarification on supervision, student code of conduct, and learning outcomes.

5046-24

Moved that the Board approve the proposed Percy Baxter Exchange Program as presented.

Motion Carried

Vince Dikaitis left the meeting at 10:39 a.m.

Appointment of Returning Officer

5047-24

2. Appointment of Returning Officer

Moved that the Board approve the appointment of the Secretary-Treasurer as Returning Officer for the October 20, 2025, School Board Election.

Motion Carried

Election Bylaws

5048-24

3. Election Bylaws

a) Receipt of Nomination Papers

Secretary-Treasurer Tamara Spong gave First Reading of Bylaw 2-24 which allows for the receipt of nomination papers for the Office of School Trustee at locations other than the jurisdiction office.

Moved that *Bylaw 2-24 Receipt of Nomination Papers for the Office of School Trustee at Locations Other than the Jurisdiction Office*, receive First Reading by the Board.

Motion Carried

b) Deposit for Nominations

Secretary-Treasurer Spong gave First Reading of Bylaw 3-24 which provides for every nomination for elected office be accompanied by a deposit of \$50.00. Trustees recommended that the deposit be increased to \$100.00 and that the Bylaw be adjusted for Second Reading on November 26, 2024.

5049-24

Moved that *Bylaw 3-24 Deposit for Nominations for Elected Office*, receive First Reading by the Board, with the amendment of changing the amount from \$50.00 to \$100.00.

Motion Carried

c) Bylaw Requiring a Criminal Record Check

Secretary-Treasurer Spong presented information regarding new legislation which authorizes School Boards to require that criminal record checks be included in nomination packages for elected office. Changes to the Local Authorities Election Act have not yet been released.

Trustees had roundtable discussion regarding privacy, cost, and potential difficulties in acquiring the report.

5050-24

Moved that the Board direct Administration to prepare a bylaw requiring that every nomination for elected office be accompanied by a criminal record check.

Motion Carried

INFORMATION/REPORTS D.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

Staff Reports

1. Staff Reports

Rhett Czaban, Director of Transportation, joined the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Director Czaban presented his report on student transportation to the Trustees for information.

Trustees and administration had roundtable discussion regarding the continuing problem of some drivers not stopping when busses are using red lights and stop arms. School bus safety information will be posted on the Division's Facebook page, and this issue will be added to topics for future discussion.

Rhett Czaban left the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS E.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Community Engagement Committee

Committee Chair Linda Wigton gave a summary of the October 29, 2024, meeting. Going forward, the Committee will provide Trustees with the annual list of staff award recipients for their respective schools. The 2025 School Visits schedule and the Community Engagement Plan will be provided to Trustees at the next Board Meeting. Information was provided regarding the recommended changes to the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

5051-24

Moved that the Northern Gateway Public School Board of Trustees approve the Land Acknowledgement Statement be adjusted to a Truth and Reconciliation Statement, as recommended by the Community Engagement Committee.

Motion Carried

Changes to Policy 7 will be made by the Policy Committee and future agendas will be adjusted accordingly.

INFORMATION/REPORTS F.

ASBA and Zone 2/3

PSBAA/PSBC

Superintendent's Report

School Operational Viability Report

Board Work Plans

Motion Review Cycle

Upcoming Events

INFORMATION AND REPORTS (continued)

2. Alberta School Boards Association and Zone 2/3

Trustee Hailes presented the ASBA Zone 2/3 report and Trustee Wigton presented the ASBA Fall General Meeting Policies Bulletin. Trustees had roundtable discussion regarding the proposed position statement by Lethbridge School Division on full funding and accessibility to full-time kindergarten.

YouTube live streaming of the meeting started (pilot project)

3. Public School Boards' Association of Alberta

Trustee Muir gave a synopsis of the recent PSBAA Fall General Meeting.

4. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bird presented his report to the Trustees for information.

5. School Operational Viability Report

Superintendent Bird presented the report to the Trustees and answered questions as appropriate.

6. Board Annual and Term Work Plans

Work on November priorities will continue at the next Board Meeting on November 26, 2024.

7. Motion Review Cycle

The Motion Review Cycle is up to date.

8. Upcoming Events

- November 18 to 19 – ASBA Fall General Meeting
- November 26 – Regular Board Meeting
- November 27 and 28 – Results Reviews
- December 16 – Professional Development/GSD Meeting
- December 17 – Regular Board Meeting

TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

CLOSED SESSION

5052-24

5053-24

ADJOURNMENT

G. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS

- Advocacy for student transportation issues

H. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM ADMINISTRATION (BY BOARD MOTION)

Nil

I. MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Hillside High School 2026 Field Trip to Scotland
- Percy Baxter Student Exchange Program
- Election Bylaws
- Student Transportation Update
- COMPASS Leadership Group
- Annual School Operational Viability Report

J. CLOSED SESSION

Moved that the Board move to Closed Session at 1:27 p.m.

Motion Carried

Superintendent Kevin Bird, Deputy Superintendent Leslee Jodry, and Secretary-Treasurer Tamara Spong were invited to stay.

Electronic recording and live streaming stopped at 1:27 p.m.

Moved that the Board move out of Closed Session at 2:01 p.m.

Motion Carried

K. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

Board Chair

Secretary-Treasurer