

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.92 (NISGA'A)
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE – MICROSOFT TEAMS
GITLAXT'AAMIKS, BC
Tuesday, January 19, 2021

In attendance: Elsie Davis, Board chair	Laxgalts'ap Trustee
Charlene Ousey	Gitlaxt'aamiks Trustee
Alvin Azak	Gitwinksihlkw Trustee
Norman Hayduk	Nass Camp Trustee
Floyde Stevens	Gingolx Trustee

Also, in attendance: Jill Jensen	Superintendent of schools.
Kory Tanner	Secretary Treasurer

Absent: Sharlene Grandison	Recording Secretary (Illness)
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1. CALL TO ORDER:

Secretary Treasurer called to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. TRUSTEE ELECTIONS:

2.1 CALL FOR BOARD CHAIR NOMINATIONS

Trustee Ousey nominated Trustee Elsie Davis. Trustee Davis accepts

Second Call, none

Third call, none

Trustee Davis voted in as the Chairperson of the Board by acclamation.

2.2 CALL FOR VICE-CHAIR

Trustee Ousey nominated Trustee Floyd Stevens. Trustee Stevens accepts.

Second call, none

Third call, none

Trustee Floyd Stevens voted in as Chairperson of the Board by acclamation.

2.3 CALL FOR BCPSEA & PROVINCIAL COUNCIL REP

Trustee Floyd Stevens appointed as Representative to BC Public School Employers' Association.

Trustee Norman Hayduk appointed as Representative for BCSTA Provincial Council.

5-minute break to rectify technical difficulties.

3. DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Board Chair declared a quorum.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR JANUARY 19, 2021

R02-1332

The Board of Education approve the January 19, 2021 Agenda as presented.

Trustee Stevens/Trustee Ousey

Carried

5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:

R02-1333

That the minutes of the regular Meeting of the Board held on DEC 15,2020 be approved as presented.

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Hayduk

Carried

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:

None

7. PRESENTATION:

None

8. EDUCATION:

Jill Jensen, Superintendent

8.1 Appropriate use of Social Media

Section 4.4 to be constructed as a separate document for Spring 2021 to ensure that students and employees are using social media appropriately.

8.2 COVID & Continuity of Learning Update

Superintendent Jensen updated the board of news on continuity of learning outside the classroom around the district.

For information only.

8.2 Around the district

Superintendent Jensen updated the board of news around the district.

For information only.

8.3 Strategic thinking and planning

Superintendent Jensen discussed the vision and expectation on how to honor the founding vision and philosophy that was accepted in 2010.

Peter McKay shared the vision in the Nisga'a language.

8.4 Language and Culture

Peter McKay shared an update on language and culture program and relayed information on mentorship training, language classes, development of books/ digitizing, traditional address, digital share platform, educating new staff, video conferencing equipment.

Received positive responses on all the efforts that are being done to ensure language and culture is learned and lives on.

POINT OF ORDER

Board Chair

ADOPTION OF THE NEW AGENDA ITEM UNDER 10.1 POLICY UPDATE

Trustee Ousey/ Trustee Stevens

Carried

9. BUSINESS:

Kory Tanner, Secretary Treasurer

9.1 Monthly financial statements

Secretary treasurer presented the monthly Financial reported for Dec 31, 2020, a report for viewing was provided.

9.2 2020/2021 Amended Annual Budget

To be completed February 16, 2021

9.3 Information Technology report

Report attached for reading (Secretary treasurer shared that the IT department has been working hard to make sure technology is up to date and meeting firewall standards with the Ministry.

10. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Secretary Treasurer shared highlighted that there's Creation of strong governance policies, delegating management and administration to senior staff, monitoring student results, monitoring the strategic plan, making the right budget decisions, maintaining certain responsibilities, policies for Nisga'a language and culture, Nisga'a employment, Nisga'a leadership development, supporting senior staff and holding other employees accountable. Also shared objectives for new policy development.

R02-1334

That the Board of Education approve that effective January 19, 2021 all current School District 92 (Nisga'a) administrative procedures bylaws, board policies with the exception of the Trustee elections bylaw and the appeal bylaw be rescinded.

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Stevens

Carried

All in favor

R02-1335

That the Board of Education approve that approve the Board Policy Handbook as provided and attached.

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Stevens

Carried

R02-1336

That the Board of Education acknowledge receipt for information purposes only the current regulation and administrative procedures and authorize the current Superintendent to review and amend them as reacquired.

Trustee Stevens/Trustee Ousey

Carried

11. TRUSTEE REPORTS:

None

12. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

Trustee Ousey suggested it be shared privately.

13. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

7:45pm

Request for Superintendent to email Mr. Leeson at the email provided.

C. Peal: The school district refers to the Nisga'a constitution and names our language as Nisga'a, yet the language is also being referred to as Sim'algax in the district and in reports which can be confused with Sim'algyax. What is the direction to refer to our language?

Superintend Jensen: Within district official documents we will refer to Nisga'a language since that is what it is referred to in the constitution.

Catherine: I do not have a question, but I would like to thank the board and administration for making the decision for remote learning for students due to the rise in covid 19 cases. It eases the worry about ensuring our bubbles are safer.

Trustee Ousey: I just wanted to know if its still open to join the Nisga'a class tomorrow?

Peter McKay: Yes, it is still open.

Mr. Hotson: During his report Mr. McKay inquired about supporting new teachers who wish to learn the Nisga'a language. I remember previous boards developing a procedure/policy that will reimburse teachers for their tuition when they are successful in completing a language course at WWNI. My question is, is this still in effect or was I discontinue and if it were discontinued could it be re-established?

Trustee Ousey: Since we just rescinded the whole policy today and put in the new policy wouldn't it be today?

Trustee Davis: I do not recall it being there. But it is something that is good for discussion.

Superintendent Jensen: The timing of that is great because as we will be going to our meetings on strategic planning, if that it one of our priorities, then that is somewhere we could absolutely focus some of our funding.

Secretary Treasurer: the Nisga'a language that is being offered right now is being offered at no charge and I was also going to say what Superintendent just said.

Trustee Azak: There was a lot of support, I do not know about teachers but a lot for non teachers and that was done through the village governments and that was mostly done by the then language and culture I cannot remember his title, but he was the head of it. He did a lot of things, including having those teachers taken to UBC taking summer sessions so they could learn about teaching the Nisga'a language. That is where some of the older teachers now became very proficient in their craft and that was done through village governments I do not know if the school district actually did very much except employ them. So, I cannot remember, I think Mr. Hotson must have some information that we do not have. We in our strategic plan we currently state that we will support the teachers working on the Nisga'a language.

T. Scott: thank for the reports. In the Superintendent's reports there was mention of our students being behind in the curriculum. What will the process be to assist the students in setting and achieving the achievable goals of higher education?

Superintendent Jensen: that is something I do not have a personal answer for. I have lots of ideas, but that will be work that we all might need to do together. I know that we can do it and we will get there, part of that comes back to our strategic planning and working together. It depends on each individual student because every child has unique needs, and we need to make sure we are meeting the needs of every one of our students.

Trustee Hayduk: Is the instruction of the students they are receiving over the internet, is it very much like tutoring? Is it individualized or is there an attempt to move groups of students together?

Superintendent Jensen: like I mentioned earlier it really varies depending on the teacher and their comfort level with online platforms. It's being delivered in so many different ways depending on what our teachers are comfortable with. I can just say all our teachers are doing their very best to ensure that students are continuing with their learning.

Trustee Davis: This question came at a good time just because we are reviewing our strategic plan. There is going to be more consultations with our strategic plan. This is a perfect opportunity for parents, families and community to work together with our teachers, our staff and our board to come up with the process that is going to make our children successful and to make those suggestions and to be able to be accountable to each other for the sake of our kid's higher education and them achieving those goals. Anyone that is on I encourage you to please make sure your family and community are aware that we are going to be going out and we are going to be seeking that input and that direction. This board has always been committed to listening to their community when its in the best interest of your children.

C. Peal: I wonder about the question about noting the attendees from the previous minutes. Was this added?

Secretary Treasurer: I think that yes, we did agree to do that and at the last meeting as well as this meeting we have 6 attendees.

C. Peal: Will any staff be reimbursed if they take the Nisga'a language course at WWNI?

Trustee Davis: Thank you for the input I do believe that this board is committed to supporting our language and culture in any way that we can because we do not know about it now does not mean that it's not something we can or will not visit or revisit in order to ensure that were immersing our kids in the language as much as we can.

Peter Leeson: Are all the children picking up their packages each week? If not, what is the plan to get all parents on board to pick up packages? I am concerned that those not picking up packages will lag and fall further behind.

Superintendent Jensen: All of our students are not engaged in either virtual learning or picking up the packages and doing the work at home and that is for a variety of reasons. What schools are doing is their very best to reach out and connect with students and families daily. That is happening for the majority of our families but as I mentioned in my report, there are some families and students that we are really struggling to connect with and ensure that they are well and that they are able to engage in some of their

learning. So, that is something that principals and teachers are working very hard at but no we do not have a hundred percent of our students engaged.

Trustee Stevens: Thank you and Thank you for the question Peter. I asked earlier about percentages of schools, the success rate of students picking up their packages and I know here in Kincolith the school recognised the students who have picked up their packages over our local VHS system and I think we can probably do more in the communities. Every community has a system, to make announcements and so on. I hear the principal here on the VHS almost weekly letting families know that the packages are ready to be picked up and its my understanding that here there is a 95% success rate. So, I think that there is more we can do and certainly from the village governments to support the school's announcements. If they are not picking up the curriculum this year they will be behind next year. So, Peter you are spot on with that and that is something we do not want to see happen is that children that are to be moved to the next grade have not learned what they were supposed to learn this year. That will totally set them back a year throughout their whole learning. I know the teachers are working hard to get the packages out, getting them prepared and the parents have to pitch in as well and support their child by getting the packages in school. I know it seems like I am preaching to the choir here but that is the message we need to get out and the Superintendent can convey our thoughts on behalf of the board through a Newsletter, we all have post offices in each of the communities. A letter on behalf of the board can go out to each parent through the post office, there is no contact. Just a reminder that parents should be picking up their children's packages and just explain that if they do not learn the stuff, they are supposed to learn this year they will be behind next year. That message just needs to get out there, thank you.

Trustee Azak: Good to hear from you Peter, I am glad that you are still very much interested in supporting the district. We had some very stressful times when this came up in the past and my response now is the one thing that is totally out of our control is the covid 19 pandemic. It is ruling what is going on in the whole world right now, its not just us. So, we are at its mercy. We try to operate within all the restrictions that it presents and the Superintendent and the teachers and all the other staff are doing their absolute best to try and mitigate the damage that it is caused. All we can do is just pray that the vaccine works and that this will eventually allow us to go back to what we were doing in the past. I guess the feeling of hopelessness, powerlessness and all those other things are something that we have been living with for a little while and seems like it will be going on for a little while longer. That is the only thing I can say because there are really good people in our district working very hard and doing their absolute best within their powers. Thanks.

Trustee Ousey: I just wanted to take this opportunity to say that we are probably the only school who is doing remote learning and everybody else has their students in classrooms. So, I think that our administration and our teachers are going above and beyond and accommodating our Nisga'a people by protecting our students. With that said maybe other people have suggestions on how we can get parents to get involved with their children's education because I am not understanding, I do not know what more we could do. If anyone has any suggestions, I am open to hearing anything and I am pretty sure our Superintendent is too. I just do not understand what more we as educators can do to get our parents to get their kid's packages back to the school. Thank you.

T. Scott: During the settlement for the late Eleanor Wright there was a donation of an education scholarship to school district 92. A suggestion is that teachers nominate a grade 12 student to receive a set amount at the end of the year. The amount suggested by a family member was \$500 that way the amount donated lasts for a while and that the family may choose to continue to donate to that scholarship.

Trustee Davis: Thank you very much to Eleanor's family that is a really amazing legacy to leave the district and to leave our kids. Thank you, Mrs. Scott for the suggestion. I am sure it will be taken under advisement.

Trustee Hayduk: one of the aspects of student instruction is finding out where the understanding is on the part of the student. So that is testing, finding out what needs to be addressed. I am not sure how the teachers are approaching their packages that is being sent out. It seems to me if deficiencies in student learning are not identified, that means testing its very difficult for students to be expected to complete assignments if they are not quite ready to work at that particular level. Is there an element of evaluation that staff are using to pick up instruction for student at the right level individually?

Superintendent Jensen: Teachers are the ones who know their students best and they know where they are at in a number of ways based on assignments and interactions with students. So, I trust that teachers have the knowledge of their students and where they are at with their learning, and once students are back in class teachers should be able to pick up with students and carry on from where they are at.

Melanie W: Just to know the internet connectivity has been a real challenge as there are so many online and having to compete with working from home individuals as well. Is it possible to request support or work with Village government, Nisga'a Lisims government to ensure connectivity is essential and required in New Aiyansh? The upper community has intermittent connectivity and bandwidth is slow.

Trustee Davis: I know that Kory and our tech are doing the best that they possible can. I am not sure how much pull we would have by way of the internet within the valley. I know that we are all dealing with it, even tonight we were a bit glitchy and we were losing Trustees and definitely I empathise with the difficulty. I do not know, Kory do you have anything to add?

Secretary Treasure: No, I do not. Sorry, it has been very challenging. I know that a lot of people have tried reaching out to Lisims internet to try to see if there is a faster connection or a bigger bandwidth.

Trustee Davis: There was a suggestion here that I did dismiss. I did dismiss it because its not really emergent, so that is why it was dismissed just an explanation there.

Trustee Davis: Okay we will give it 5 more minutes so at 8:22 we will seek a motion for adjournment if there are no new questions.

Trustee Stevens: On Ms. Scott's question there on the \$500, how much was actually donated by the family? I think it looks like it would be a good program and it will definitely help out students that whether its in scholarships and I do know that because I attend a lot of feasts there's always excess moneys available, the tribe is always looking to donate some of that money to something, to a worthy cause and I want to say thank you for the donation and this will really help someone who's moving on to college for sure.

Secretary Treasurer: By the Eleanor Wright's family \$4000 was donated and over the summer we had from the late Perry Azak \$10000 donated.

Trustee Stevens: That is quite a significant amount of money and maybe one of the things we can look at is coming up with a name for the fund and that can be spread out throughout the tribes who are looking to donate to a cause. To come up with a scholarship name, a memorial fund or something so that this can live on for a while.

Trustee Ousey: I just want to say point of order, that this is really not on the agenda, the grant. We can probably discuss it at another time.

Mr. Leeson: I will bring up the issue of parents not picking up the packages to the village government meeting this week to see how we can assist the district in getting parents involved during distance learning times.

Trustee Davis: Thank you Mr. Leeson, this board appreciates the support from our village government very much.

Trustee Davis: It is 8:21 if there are no other questions, I am sorry 8:22. I will give it another 5minutes. At 8:27 I will be seeking a motion for adjournment if there are no other new questions.


Trustee Davis: It is 8:27, there are no new questions. I am seeking a motion for adjournment.


14. ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 8:27

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Azak

Carried


Certified correct,
Elsie Davis,
Board Chair


Certified correct,
Kory Tanner,
Secretary Treasurer