

**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 92 (NISGA'A)
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGUAR BOARD MEETING
SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE VIA TEAMS
GITLAXT'AAMIKS, BC**

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020 – 6:30 PM

In attendance:	Elsie Davis, Board Chair Charlene Ousey Alvin Azak Norman Hayduk	Laxgalts'ap Trustee Gitlaxt'aamiks Trustee Gitwinksihlkw Trustee Nass Camp Trustee
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Also in attendance:	Jill Jensen Kory Tanner Sharlene Grandison	Superintendent Secretary Treasurer Recording Secretary
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Absent:	Floyde Stevens	Gingolx Trustee
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1. CALL TO ORDER:

Trustee Azak addressed with prayer to the two families who have recently lost a loved one.

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm.

2. DECLARATION OF QUORUM:

Board Chair declared a quorum.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 20, 2020:

R02-1324

That Board of Education approve the October 20, 2020 Agenda with the following additions:

- 7.6 Board Authorized Course
- 7.7 Staff Travel
- 7.8 Language and Culture Report

Trustee Hayduk/Trustee Azak

Carried

4. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING:**

R02-1325

That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board held on September 22, 2020 be approved as presented.

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Hayduk

Carried

5. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

None

6. **PRESENTATION:**

None

7. **EDUCATION:**

Jill Jensen, Superintendent

7.1 District Enrolment Update

Final enrolment:

NESS: 234

GES: 27

AAMES: 74

NBES: 36

DL: 7

Total: 378

7.2 New Teacher Orientation

October 27, 2020 – 3:30 – 4:00 pm (virtual event) that will introduce and welcome new teachers to the district.

For information only

7.3 Professional Development

- POPARD sessions: every two weeks 3:40-4:40 pm, focusing on differentiating instruction and executive functioning
- October 23rd Provincial Day – Connecting Leaders (BCPVPA); teachers engaged in a variety of content-focused sessions; language and culture teachers working together
- Learning with Syeyutsus – Indigenous Learning series with Canadian authors and thought leaders (Nanaimo-Ladysmith District) who will speak on a variety of contemporary Indigenous issues

<http://trc57speakerseries.ca>

For information only.

7.4 School Plans for Student Success

Principals are in the process of reviewing various pieces of evidence/information with staff and setting goals for the year around improving student outcomes. Plans will be approved by the Board on November 9th. As discussed, schools will present those plans to the Board and be posted on school websites by mid-November.

Trustee Azak:

When was that information gathered, that they will be using to make their plans?

Superintendent Jensen:

Some of it will have been gathered this Fall, I know some schools have been working on their school writes and math assessments, reading assessments, they may use that, they can use their FSA assessments from last year or any other assessments they completed at the end of last year as well.

School District Report:

The Ministry publication that was put out, it is a yearly report on how we are doing and looks at a number of different measurers that align with the BC Curriculum and expectations around student learning. Transitions as well, the Early Developmental Index, the student satisfaction survey. It is a compilation of several measurers that are available provincially. There is a comparison in there of our district to the province.

Trustee Ousey:

This is specifically made for our school.

Superintendent Jensen:

This is our district. Every district in the province receives this report from the Ministry. It is a public report. School have access to this information as well, they can use any of this information in their school plans too. There is school specific information.

7.5 Teacher Recruitment & Retention

Staff recruitment tends to be a challenge. We have the opportunity to work Simon Fraser University – Exploration C and offer a 2-hour session for teacher candidates to learn more about the Nisga'a school district. The session will be held virtually on November 12th from 1:30 – 3:30 pm. It will be virtual, there could be up to 40 teacher candidates participating in that session, it will be interactive. Principals will have the opportunity to talk about their schools and provide some information about each school and each village.

Trustee Azak:

Sounds like a real exciting opportunity. We need to focus on good people that

we want on our staff. In preparation for that recruitment opportunity, what do we know about what the young people want?

Superintendent Jensen:

I don't really know, it is an exploratory option for them, it is part of their teacher education program. I am hoping it will get some of them excited about coming to a rural location to teach.

Trustee Azak:

So, we could be using just a shotgun approach just hoping they get something that excites them, or just try to play off our district as much as we can.

Superintendent Jensen:

That is what this opportunity is, I am hoping that we will have other opportunities as well. Another opportunity that has been mentioned to me is having teacher candidates actually come and do some of their course work in district, not their practicum but actual coursework in district so they get a little bit more exposure and they are on-site. There are some opportunities with Vancouver Island University. I have not explored with UNBC, but it is something we can look into more, working more closely with the universities.

Board Chair:

Do you have any idea of who your team is to present?

Superintendent Jensen:

Principals, if anyone on the Board would be interested in joining that, would be great. Peter I am hoping would be part of that.

7.6 Board Authorized Course

One of our strategic priorities is student voice and having student participation in decision-making. What I have done in an effort to make sure that we have that this year is develop a Board Authorized Course called Leadership 12. I have right now 5 students who have expressed interest in that course and they would like to be called Youth Council. But with the Leadership Course, it is outside of their regular high school schedule. They will meet once a week. The Administrative team at NESS is participating in the course, Patrick David who is one of the new teachers is also going to be one of the instructors. My hope is that through this course we can develop some leadership skills, and give these students some opportunities to participate in Board meetings, participate in their communities and be a voice at their school for students, and a voice in the district for students. We have had only one session. I think it is a great opportunity and if the course is authorized, then the students also get 4 credits towards graduation. I tried to keep it open because we want the students to participate in creating the course as well, so what is important to them? What do they want to learn? Are they interested in governance, leadership style, all of it.

Trustee Azak:

I know some young people get really excited about that, we have done that during our summer programs. I have done things that really got them excited, that really surprised us. I showed it to Joe, and he said they can get 4 credits for that. Are you going to be able to set a guideline of things that you can give credit for what communities prepare?

Superintendent Jensen:

We can yes, and because much of this course will be in the hands of the students, they will get to create and determine a lot of what this course will look like for them. We do have some flexibility about what we can include.

Trustee Azak:

That is one way to have the community participate.

Superintendent Jensen:

It would be great if we can have community involved.

R02-1326

That the Board of Education for School District No. 92 (Nisga'a) approve and give Board Authority for the proposed Leadership 12/Citizenship 12 for the Superintendent and NESS Principal to conduct at Nisga'a Elementary Secondary School.

Trustee Ousey/ Trustee Hayduk

Carried

7.7 Staff Travel

In consultation with Nisga'a Valley Health Authority, if staff travel outside of the Northern Health Region, they will be required to wear a mask for 14 days upon return and get a COVID-19 test. These measures are put in place to support the continuity of learning for students. Staff will continue to follow strict personal safety measures, including staying home if sick.

Trustee Ousey:

It is my understanding, when we're in common areas and we are really not that spaced out as we could be, that we should be wearing a mask anyway? Shouldn't they be wearing masks while they are in close contact with students?

Superintendent Jensen:

The guidelines are when they are in their cohorts, they don't have to. And the guidelines are as long as you can social distance, keep your six feet or 2 meters a mask is not required. We do have a lot of staff and students who choose to wear a mask.

For information only.

7.8 Language & Culture Report

Amaa yukwsa loosim, good evening. Sim amgoogit wila sim algax gip guun, tsaxw gasgoohl ga'ay. Our children are doing so well in speaking our language. I am really surprised at what I see. I have visited a few classrooms the past month and one classroom in particular, grade one students were understanding the context of how our language is to be spoken and they were readily conversing with the teacher and with each other and I was absolutely thrilled to witness that at that young age. And knowing that we come from, that we are descendants from people who were told to be quiet and don't speak our language and knowing that these children come from homes where the tv might be blaring all day long and they are hearing English all day long. That is an amazing accomplishment, because these children in turn go home with that and teach it to their siblings. The beautiful thing that I've witnessed is the ASKME document is being used readily throughout the district and I have witnessed the expansion of this document, there is things in there that you have to abide by in order to teach it effectively, and I have witnessed as the children progress teachers are readily expanding the use of this curriculum. One good example we have is on Monday, our first high school class started and I am sitting with the two teachers in that room this week to get them started and it was amazing to witness that as well, the expansion of this ASKME document. There is so much that can be done with it. On Wednesday last week all the sim algax teachers met and had a pro d together, and again it was a fun time when our people get together all we do is laugh. It was all about the curriculum and how to incorporate it and it was a practice time. And it was amazing to witness the work of Gwinsbiguut and her son at Laxgalts'ap, to witness what they have created just from the basis of this document that we have decided to use in the district. They have created videos that they upload, they created home packages for parents to learn from. They're out there teaching in the streets and the kids you can hear them using the language on the playground which is really exciting to see, they're out there waiting to come in and you can hear as you are passing by, these kids are becoming brave with our language, which is really exciting to see. So, we had a blast as teachers to sit and witness the work of Dianna and her son. There is so much more that can be done. It is exciting to see, extremely exciting. Outside of the sim algax class, I have also witnessed the teachers in the high school sector readily using teaching Nisga'a culture. I was invited to go and share stories in one class, an English class, grade 10, with a new teacher, and I had to applaud the new teacher because he did his research he was using our language and reading from text that was written and if he didn't know and stumbled, he was asking the students, that was totally amazing to see, that someone who is fresh in the valley is wanting to grasp it, and what it is done for the students is it created a level of security for them, they feel safe around this teacher, because he is taking something that is so important to our identity and he is putting it on a platter for them, and he has allowed them to have an influence over that. So, our kids are doing well, our teachers are doing good.

Board Chair:

Thank you, Mr. McKay, it is amazing and really heartening to hear.

Board Chair:

What is the interest at the high school level?

Peter McKay:

The first class that is running is a 19-day course, and that was set up at NESS because of COVID, which is understandable. The students are in Sim Algax for 5 hours in one day. I sat with the teachers that are teaching this class and we designed...what that is going to look like, you are going to teach Sim Algax for 5 hours. We have a schedule that they are abiding by the students had input on that schedule on what they want to do. They basically designed it. So, we wrote it down for the principals to review. There are 21 students registered in the course and it is grade 10-12. Our wish though is that lets just teach everybody, every day, why not? If it is 15 minutes a day, imagine what you can do all year long. When COVID is over, we will go that route, for now it is going to be one co-hort, learning what they want to learn. They love it. Right now they are building stories, we have given them 10 words that they are going to practice and 10 words that they are going to practice every week for the 5 weeks, so they'll have 50 new vocabulary. Their mission is to accomplish how to write that word in this one week. How to say that work in our...how we speak. They have created their own sentences. They are going to create one sentence every day with that one word and create a 19-day story. That becomes a video at the end, it is one of their big projects. Student led; student driven.

Mrs. Dianna Rai's Accomplishment:

One of our very own teachers in the Valley and the District, long time resident of the valley and influencer of sim algax has been acknowledged with the Prime Minister's Award for her dedication in teaching our language. If you ever get a chance to go and visit and sit in Dianna Rai's classroom, go and do it. You will be impressed with what you see there. We lift our hands up to Dianna for her big accomplishment.

Trustee Azak:

To you Dianna from all of us here, the Board, we would like to congratulate you for the amazing accomplishments that you have shown, the amazing work, that you have done with the children that have been in your class over the years and in that school. We are extremely, extremely proud to see in the media and you sending it to me too, thank you for that. Congratulations and we hope to see much, much of this from you for as long as you can teach our children. Thank you.

8. **BUSINESS:**
Kory Tanner, Secretary Treasurer

8.1 Monthly Financial Statements – September 2020

At our last Board meeting we approved the year end, Financial Statements, so I was able to get our new budget entered for this year and catch up on my Financial Statements. For your review I have attached a snapshot of the end of September. So as always, the last page is in regards to how much we have spent on salaries, benefits, and then our services and supplies, it just breaks it down to a summarized sheet, which is the first sheet, you can see that our revenue that's come in, our expenses and it tells you what schedule it aligns with. At the moment our projected surplus just based on, we haven't paid all the bills for September.

Trustee Azak:

What is the Ministry's instruction on how we handle our finances during the times of our school not receiving all of the students?

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

Fortunately, we are a district that has received 90% of our students back, so we are doing very well that way. We have probably 17 extra reports added to us to track how we are spending our operating dollars as well as how we are spending the special grants that they have given us for extra COVID measures. At the moment for our operating they have changed nothing, but they have added extra dollars through special trust grants for COVID, like supplies or extra help.

Trustee Azak:

So we are not losing anything?

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

Our FTE is done a bit, so you always lose money when your FTE is down.

For information only.

8.2 Day Care Update

The Day Care is ready to open. We have had many things go in there. We have had some inspections, we had all of the equipment up to par. As many people came and saw the Open House. It is absolutely beautiful in there. Mr. McKay has been very helpful at helping us with a few language and culture things for the Day Care, so we are really excited. We are waiting for the Day Care to get licensed and opened as well, as I know that a lot of our public are. Where we are at this point right now is just waiting for Village Government to approve the Day Care, so that we can move on with the final piece of licensing. We do have started Strong Start running in Aiyansh.

Trustee Ousey:

You have the workers in place for the Day Care?

Secretary Treasurer:

We have Manager in place for the Day Care, because do not have a license, it is hard to put everybody else in place, without numbers and registration.

Trustee Ousey,

So, we have a Manager there, who is probably getting things ready?

Secretary Treasurer:

As well as running the Strong Start.

Trustee Ousey:

Strong Start is out there for the public to know.

Secretary Treasurer Tanner:

Yes, I believe she has put out pamphlets, we have it on the website. We do have some registrations. We hope that continues to improve.

Board Chair:

To give a little bit of history in regard to the approval that Kory is talking about. Kory had sent an approval form from Northern Health, because Village Government is considered a municipality that our Day Care is under, so they fill out I believe it is three pages. I believe there is 12 questions on there just seeing if they will approve having the Day Care up and running. When they receive that from Kory, they reached out to myself and Floyde and requested a meeting with us. So, I, Floyde and our Director of Operations met with them. At that meeting it had come to our attention that we had missed some steps in regard to what our approval was with getting the building renovated. Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government has clearly stated that they support us, and they want to work with us. They did request the original proposal that we had sent to the Ministry for Children and Family Development, so that they could review it before they filled out the forms as well as there was one other, the floor plans for the Day Care. The day after we had that meeting Kory had forwarded those documents to the Village Government. Kory sent the email, cc'd me and Floyde. I did a follow up a week later, so that is where we are right now waiting for that document. Once that document is filled out, we can get that sent to Northern Health. The Licensing officer has already been up here. It is the only document we are waiting for now.

Not sure if you had a chance to see that Mr. McKay had also helped with the naming of the Day Care. It was put out for public consultation on our website as well as on our district facebook page, as well as the logo.

9. **POLICY DEVELOPMENT:**

None

10. **TRUSTEE REPORTS:**

None

11. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

None

12. **PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD: 7:32 pm**

Mr. Hotson

I am pleased to hear the arrangements made for teacher travel that will be very good for our teachers from away. And was uplifted by Peter McKay's report about the current state of the Nisga'a language....

Taron Scott

With number of students in NESS, before full day commences for elementary
Will there be another teacher hired and or support staff?

Superintendent Jensen:

Yes

Board Chair:

There have been some extra dollars given to district. Our administration decided to use those extra dollars because they were for COVID relief to staff the schools for more teacher assistants as well as janitors in each of the schools.

Superintendent Jensen:

We also looked at the numbers at NESS elementary and it made sense to have an additional teacher. So, they are in the process of hiring another teacher. And all of our other schools have looked at additional EA support and additional custodial support. And we have added additional language and culture support.

Taron Scott

Thank you for last month's report on language and culture. Happy to hear the improvements, and impact it has on the children and new staff.

Will there be opportunities for individuals interested to participate maybe via Teams learning.

Peter McKay:

We have had interest from two students from outside of our district who have made contact and requested language classes for credit purposes. So, we are investigating how that can look right now. There are Nisga'a out there in other districts that want to learn our language. Would be lovely to get to that space with them.

Taron Scott

Did the dollars for Nisga'a language teacher or EA come from COVID dollars or FNEESC?

Superintendent Jensen:

Both, I believe. Yes, FNEESC for language teachers, but with our EAs, some of our additional was part of the federal grant.

Board Chair:

Ok from both. The Nisga'a language teacher came from FNEESC, and the EA came from the COVID dollars.

Rich Hotson:

What bird was it that Mr. McKay referred to in his explanation of the name of the Day Care?

Peter McKay:

Some people have said it is the flicker. We do not know which specific bird it is.

13. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Trustee Ousey/Trustee Azak

Carried

Certified correct,
Elsie Davis,
Board Chair

Certified correct,
Kory Tanner,
Secretary Treasurer