

**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUSINESS COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING  
INFORMATION SHEET**

DATE: March 8, 2023  
TO: Business Committee  
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer  
SUBJECT: NDSS Consultation Update

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### Background

This Information Sheet is intended to provide an update and next steps on the NDSS consultation process and to provide an update on potential changes for September 2023.

### Discussion

As a reminder, the NDSS capacity and safety report can be found on the [district website](#).

To date the consultation included ThoughtExchange and email feedback that closed on February 28, 2023, a public meeting on Gabriola Island held on February 16, 2023 and an online public meeting held on February 21, 2023, which is available to watch on the [district website](#). Thank you to all participants who utilized every form of feedback the consultation had offered. In addition, staff and trustee reps attended sessions of both the Gabriola and NDSS PACs. Although the consultation period has now ended, staff and trustee reps will be attending one additional meeting with the Lacrosse Academy at NDSS on Thursday, March 9, 2023.

As the Action Sheet of January 25, 2023, stated:

“The goal of the consultation is for the Board to make a determination of the direction for NDSS prior to spring break as one of the options could be instituted as of September 2023. However, there is no specific requirement to be completed prior to spring break and if additional time is required to ensure a fulsome consultation and community awareness the timeline can be extended.”

At this time the feedback report is being drafted and is anticipated to be presented to the Board at the March 29, 2023, Board meeting. However, in advance of the report staff believe it is important to address one issue. Specifically, the report contemplated that if Gabriola Elementary were to feed Cedar rather than NDSS that a shift, at least for grade 8s could occur as early as September 2023. This concept was predicated on the community being supportive of the shift. The consultation has made it clear that support is not present for such a shift. Given this reality, whatever the outcome associated with the recommendations Gabriola Elementary School students currently in grade 7 will not be impacted for the 2023-24 school year. As there will be no specific changes to programming or catchments prior to September 2023 the Board is not required to make an immediate decision.

This clarity will hopefully ease community concerns while the final report is being drafted. It will also allow NDSS, Cedar Secondary and the Transportation Department to plan accordingly for September 2023.