

## NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### EDUCATION COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

#### ACTION SHEET

DATE: May 5, 2021  
TO: Education Committee  
FROM: Secretary-Treasurer Mark Walsh  
SUBJECT: Child Care and Early Years Programs Policy

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#### Recommendation:

***The Education Committee recommends that the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) begin the process of creating a Childcare Policy pursuant to Policy 2.7 – Policy Development.***

#### Background:

In 2020 the provincial government amended the *School Act* with sections 85.1-85.4 regarding the establishment of policies governing child care facilities on board of education property. The Minister of Education also issued a prescriptive Order (M326) which includes contents required in board policy. As a result of these amendments and this Order, boards of education are required to review its policies and administrative procedures on childcare within the District.

Currently, the District has [Administrative Procedure 518 – Out of School Care \(AP 518\)](#), that governs childcare on our sites and [Administrative Procedure 220 – Early Years Program \(AP 220\)](#) that addresses early learning. This memo outlines a new Administrative Procedure (new AP) that combines the current AP 518 and AP 220 to more reflect the proactive expansion of child care on our sites. It also recommends that the Board create a standalone Board policy. Finally, the new Administrative Procedure ensures that requirements of the *School Act* and M326 with respect to childcare policies and procedures are met in the interim.

#### Discussion:

##### ***Policy Creation***

Staff is recommending that the Board create a child care policy. While the Board has supported early childhood education and child care on District sites for many years, staff believe that a Board policy that outlines its commitment to child care is important for the community as well as to provide a basis for the recommended child care strategy in the Long Range Facilities Plan.

##### ***Highlights of the new AP***

The following are the key highlights to the new AP:

1. As noted above, the AP combines the current AP 518 and AP 220 into a comprehensive document. We have not highlighted the format changes or minor edits;

2. A requirement for qualified early childhood educators to deliver early learning programming utilizing the B.C. Early Learning Framework;
3. A description of the child care program fees if operated by the board or a licensee is included;
4. A requirement to ensure child care programs are operated in a manner that fosters indigenous reconciliation, promotes the acquisition and use of Hul'q'umi'num language, and is inclusive and consistent with the principles of non-discrimination set out in the British Columbia *Human Rights Code*;
5. A list of conditions to be included in the contracts with licensees, as well as a requirement to review the child care programs on an annual basis;
6. A requirement for the district, on an ongoing basis to assess community need for child care programs on board property, through a process of engagement with employee groups, parents and guardians, Indigenous community representatives, Indigenous rightsholders, Indigenous service providers, municipalities and regional districts, and existing child care operators; and
7. A requirement for ongoing consideration to be made whether child care programs are best provided by licensees other than the board, the board, or a combination of both;

**Timing of the AP**

We note that the AP is coming ahead of the anticipated policy. This is for two reasons. First, we want to make sure our AP aligns with requirements of the *School Act* and M326, which we understand that it does. Second, as noted in our presentation on March 3, 2021 at the Business Committee meeting, we intend to engage external providers for 2021-22. We want the providers to be aware of the expectations of the District with respect the alignment of child care and schools. Further, it also telegraphs to our existing providers the direction of the District.

In the event that the AP does not align with the Policy staff will make the required changes.

**Appendix A: New AP XXX – Child Care Services and Early Years Programs**

