

**Head Office**

P.O. Box 3110  
963 Airport Road  
North Bay, ON  
P1B 8H1  
Fax: 705.472.9927

June 3, 2019

Mr. Paul Dube  
Ombudsman of Ontario  
483 Bay Street  
10th floor, South Tower  
Toronto, ON M5G 2C9

Main switchboard for all offices:  
705.472.8170

Dear Mr. Dube,

Toll Free:  
1.800.278.4922

Web site:  
[www.nearnorthschools.ca](http://www.nearnorthschools.ca)

On behalf of the Trustees of the Near North District School Board (NNDSB) I wish to thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments with respect to your Preliminary Report of May 2019 regarding your investigation into the transparency of the NNDSB's decision to close Widdifield Secondary School after the 2016-2017 Pupil Accommodation Review process.

Our board has reviewed your Preliminary Report and agree with your findings and recommendations. We are committed to moving forward with improved policies, guidelines and procedures to increase transparency, fairness and accountability to our students, stakeholders and constituents. The quality of education provided by the NNDSB is something we are very proud of and we are committed to taking these steps to restore the public's confidence in our organization.

To that end, the following steps have proactively been undertaken to ensure that we are able to fully implement the recommendations contained in your final report:

- On December 10, 2018 six days after inauguration, our Board established a Governance Ad Hoc Committee to comprehensively review and update the Board's Governance Policies and By-Laws.
- That Governance Ad Hoc Committee will ensure all recommendations pertaining to Board Governance Policies and By-Laws from your final report will be implemented.
- Our Board will authorize our Director of Education to prepare a new final staff report regarding the 3:2 decision. This information will be presented at a public meeting prior to any vote on the North Bay secondary school closing and consolidation. Our Board intends to schedule this meeting after the issuance of your final report.

- Shortly after our inauguration in January of this year, our Board was provided with training by legal counsel with respect to open and closed meeting requirements of the Education Act. When the updated Board Governance Policies and By-Laws are finalized, further training will be provided to Trustees.
- Public notification of all Board and Committee Meetings, including Ad Hoc and Standing Committees is posted on the NNDSB website. This information includes the date, time and location of the meeting along with an electronic copy of the agenda and attachments for review at the meeting.

Our board appreciates the thorough work your office has provided in its investigation. Your recommendations will provide a key cornerstone for the Near North District School Board in restoring a strong foundation in good governance practices.

Sincerely,



Jay Aspin

Chair, Near North District School Board