

**MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC MEETING
March 11, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.**

TRUSTEES: Cendra Beaton, Board Chair
Russ Chipps (online via MS Teams)
Christine Lervold
Trudy Spiller

Allison Watson, Vice Chair
Amanda Dowhy
Ebony Logins

STAFF: Paul Block, Superintendent
Brian Jonker, Secretary-Treasurer
Monica Braniff, Deputy Superintendent
D'Arcy Deacon, Associate Superintendent
Dave Strange, Associate Superintendent
Fred Hibbs, Executive Director, Human Resources
Steve Tonnesen, Manager, Digital Solutions - Operations

REGRETS:

SECRETARY: Jenny Seal

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATIONS TERRITORIES

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by the Board Chair who provided a territorial acknowledgment.

2. AGENDA

2.1 Call for amendments and additional items

56. **MOVED** Ebony Logins/Amanda Dowhy
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting agenda of March 11, 2025, as presented.
CARRIED



2.2 Report on In Camera Meeting – Cendra Beaton

The Board Chair informed the public that prior to this meeting an “in-camera” meeting of the Board was held where issues of legal, land and personnel were discussed.

3. MINUTES**3.1 Call for amendments to minutes**

Trustee Dowhy read a proposed amendment to the February 25, 2025 public minutes.

57. MOVED Amanda Dowhy/ Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting minutes of February 25, 2025, as amended.

CARRIED

4. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**4.1 Board Chair Update – Cendra Beaton**

The Board Chair highlighted announcements from the BC Budget 2025, that are pertinent to education. The Vancouver Island School Trustees Association (VISTA) conference for all regional trustees took place March 7-8, 2025. Our district received an overwhelmingly positive response to the ‘Seed to Harvest – Growing Comprehensive School Food Programs’ presentation. The Board Chair expressed gratitude for the presenters and to Trustee VanWell from Saanich School District, who is a director on the VISTA Board, and who led the overall conference and planning. The Chair extended her gratitude for the work and leadership of Vice-Chair, Trustee Watson. As a BCSTA Director, she has made a positive impact at the provincial level.

The Chair referred to Section 15.1 of the agenda, Trustee Election for Board Chair, and expressed her commitment to her oath of office and appreciation to the partner groups for their work and passion.

5. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS – no presentations**6. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL – no report****7. CORRESPONDENCE & DELEGATIONS****7.1 Correspondence**

- a. Email from Parent Dated March 2, 2025, RE Approaching Students in Public
- b. Email from CPF Sooke Chapter Dated Mar 5, 2025, RE Concours d'art oratoire
- c. Letter from Minister Beare Dated March 4, 2025, RE Child Care Funding



58. **MOVED** Amanda Dowhy/Ebony Logins
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the above noted correspondence as outlined in items 7.1a, b, and c.
CARRIED

7.2 CUPE 459 – Amber Leonard

Amber Leonard spoke to the anticipation of spring break felt in schools by students and staff. The CUPE President read Call to Action #46, which identifies the principles for working collaboratively. The President stressed the value of one-to-one relationships, regardless of role in the District. CUPE is here to help and support. In closing, the President expressed gratitude for the work being done and encouraged everyone to take care of themselves over the break.

The Board expressed appreciation to Amber for a heartfelt presentation and strong leadership, and for bringing the Calls to Action to the Board meeting. The Board would like to see the Calls to Action posted in every school.

Standing Delegations (STA, CUPE, PVP, SPEAC) – 5 minutes each

STA – Ed Berlando

Ed Berlando expressed gratitude for those present at the meeting and for Amber's comments. The STA representative acknowledged the efforts parents and staff are making to support children and commended the relationships that have been built over the years between staff and partner groups. An invitation was extended to Trustees to visit a classroom and witness the support and work being carried out in schools.

SPEAC – Tom Davis

The SPEAC President echoed CUPE's anticipation of spring break and wished for everyone to be able to recharge over the break. The next SPEAC meeting is tomorrow and a SPEAC appreciation night will be held in May.

SP/VPA – Melissa Horner – no report

7.3 **Other Delegations – no reports**



8. FINANCE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

8.1 Resources Committee Meeting of March 5, 2025 – Christine Lervold

Trustee Lervold sat as Committee Chair, covering for Trustee Watson. The Chair provided an overview of the March Resources Committee meeting. The value of the Resources Committee Work Plan was communicated.

59. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Resources Committee Meeting of March 5, 2025.

CARRIED

8.2 2025/26 Enrolment Projections Update – Monica Braniff

The Deputy Superintendent presented an update on student enrolment projects for the next school year. Using past trends combined with local knowledge, projections for K-12 standard (regular) school enrolment totals 13,700 FTE. This shows a growth rate of 3% or 403 FTE which is a slightly less than previous years. English Language Learners/English as a Second Dialect (ELL/ESD) enrolment numbers are flattening, as is Indigenous Education. The Deputy Superintendent also indicated that enrolment forecasting in light of the geopolitical environment, economic situation and federal government policy changes on immigration all add to the uncertainty and inability to forecast to the same level of confidence as previous years. Projections for this year used a variety of data points both internal and external along with Ministry of Education data and trends.

The Board acknowledged the work around projections and the value of doing groundwork to corroborate the data.

9. EDUCATION PROGRAM

9.1 Education-Policy Committee Meeting of March 4, 2025 – Ebony Logins

Trustee Logins provided an overview of the Education-Policy Committee Meeting of March 4, 2025. The Safe Schools team presented to the Committee, and it was demonstrated that the focus is on meeting students where they are at. Leadership is passed along to students, making it a sustainable way of running the program. Trustee Logins expressed gratitude to everyone present at the meeting for their participation in meaningful conversation about difficult topics.

The Superintendent shared the planned engagements to facilitate input on the proposed policy and regulation revisions. These motions will be brought back to the May Board meeting, to allow adequate time for feedback.



60. **MOVED** Ebony Logins/Amanda Dowhy
That the Board of Education for School District 62 (Sooke) give Notice of Motion to draft revised Policy and Regulations C-316 “Safe Schools”.

CARRIED

61. **MOVED** Ebony Logins/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give Notice of Motion to draft new Policy and Regulations C-318 “Sexual Misconduct”.

CARRIED

62. **MOVED** Ebony Logins/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give Notice of Motion to draft revised Policy and Regulations C-319 “Student Suspension”.

CARRIED

63. **MOVED** Ebony Logins/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Education-Policy Committee Meeting of March 4, 2025.

CARRIED

10. **STUDENTS** – No presentations

11. **FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNANCE**

11.1 Trustee Liaison Reports – Board of Education – No reports

12. **ADMINISTRATION**

12.1 Board of Education 90 Day Work Plan – Cendra Beaton

The Board Chair provided an overview of the 90 Day Work Plan.

13. **PERSONNEL**

13.1 Superintendent’s Report – Paul Block

The Fast Forward to Grad program is returning for students aged 18+. It is an opportunity for adults to participate in a one-semester program to obtain their BC Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD). The Superintendent requested this opportunity be shared as much as possible. Associate Superintendent D’Arcy Deacon was acknowledged for the work and leadership behind this.



The Superintendent congratulated the EMCS AAA Girls and Boys Senior Basketball teams for their performance at the provincial championships.

Over 450 people gathered for a district-wide Lahal tournament. It was remarkable to hear from Brother Rick and their Elders about the impact of watching this ancient game enjoyed across the District.

Secretary Treasurer Brian Jonker was recognized for organizing a District site tour for representatives from the Ministry of Infrastructure. The tour, carried out on an electric school bus, allowed staff the opportunity to highlight accomplishments and needs across the District. In the last 10 years, the District has delivered 7 new schools which demonstrates effective partnership and project management.

Congratulations to internal candidates Glenn Gibson, Shannon Miller and Shawn Taal for entering the Elementary Principal's Hiring Pool, and to Melissa Horner, who will be replacing Mike Huck as Principal of Royal Bay Secondary, effective August 1st, 2025.

The Board expressed gratitude to the EMCS coach and assistant coaches, many of whom are past Wolverines. Coach Trevor Bligh's passion for the sport and for sharing that passion with students was highlighted. The consideration of adding Lahal to regular sports program offerings was requested.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

- March is Irish Heritage Month
- District of Sooke Partnership Meeting – March 12
- Bannock & Books – March 15
- Spring Break – Mar 17 to 28
- Education Policy Meeting – April 1
- Board of Education Meeting with Minister Beare – April 1
- Autism Awareness Day – April 2
- International Children's Book Day – April 2
- World Health Day – April 7
- Resources Committee Meeting – April 8
- Education Committee of the Whole Meeting – April 29
- Audit Committee Meeting – April 16
- Good Friday – April 18
- Easter Monday – April 21
- Next Board Meeting - April 22

*Representative only



15. RISE AND REPORT**15.1 Trustee Election for Board Chair – Brian Jonker**

The Secretary Treasurer requested a motion to assume the role of chair for the purposes of conducting the election.

64. MOVED Amanda Dowhy/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) direct the Secretary Treasurer to assume the role of chair for the purposes of conducting the election of Board Chair.

CARRIED

Trustees Beaton, Logins and Watson indicated their opposition to the election.

Brian Jonker and Cendra Beaton exchanged seats. The Secretary Treasurer stated that the election procedure will follow Board By-law 1-20, section 1.6 which requires the nomination and election processes to be conducted by secret ballot. Associate Superintendent D'Arcy Deacon was appointed scrutineer for trustees in the room and Deputy Superintendent Monica Braniff was appointed scrutineer for trustee(s) online. Instructions were provided to Trustees. The Scrutineers distributed, collected and reported the tally of the 1st call for nominations to the Secretary Treasurer who reported:

- Trustee Dowhy is nominated for Board Chair
- Trustee Beaton is nominated for Board Chair
- Trustee Lervold is nominated for Board Chair

The Secretary Treasurer asked each nominated candidate if they accept the nomination for the position of Board Chair. Trustees Dowhy and Beaton accepted, Trustee Lervold declined.

The Secretary Treasurer made the 2nd and 3rd call for nominees for the position of Board Chair. No further nominations were received.

Instructions were provided to Trustees for the election. Scrutineers distributed, collected and tallied the votes and reported to the Secretary Treasurer who declared Trustee Dowhy elected as Board Chair, by majority vote.

Trustees Watson, Logins and Beaton physically exited the meeting at 8:31pm



The Secretary Treasurer requested a motion to destroy the ballots.

65. **MOVED** Russ Chipps/Christine Lervold
That the Board of Education of School District 62 direct the Secretary Treasurer to destroy the ballots from the election of Board Chair.
CARRIED

Trustee Dowhy assumed her seat as Board Chair and continued the meeting.

16. QUESTION PERIOD

Members of the public have the opportunity to ask questions related to agenda items discussed at tonight's meeting using the QA function in MS Teams. Individuals must identify themselves and ask questions directed to the Chair. Members of the media can direct their questions to the Manager, Strategic Communications for response following the meeting.


The CUPE President rose for Q&A and requested CUPE be notified of the next Lahal tournament, as they would like to offer assistance. Trustee Chipps offered recognition to the organizers of the Lahal tournament.

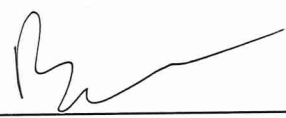
The Board expressed gratitude towards Secretary Treasurer Brian Jonker for conducting the election.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Certified Correct:



Chairperson of the Board

Secretary-Treasurer