

**MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC MEETING
December 17, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.**

TRUSTEES: Amanda Dowhy, Board Chair
Russ Chipps (online via MS Teams)
Ebony Logins
Allison Watson
Cendra Beaton, Vice Chair
Christine Lervold
Trudy Spiller

STAFF: Paul Block, Superintendent
Harold Cull, Secretary-Treasurer
Monica Braniff, Deputy Superintendent
D’Arcy Deacon, Associate Superintendent
David Strange, Associate Superintendent
Fred Hibbs, Executive Director, Human Resources
Steve Tonnesen, Manager, Digital Solutions - Operations

REGRETS: Farzaan Nusserwanji, Executive Director, Digital Solutions

SECRETARY: Jenny Seal

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATIONS TERRITORIES

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. by the Board Chair, who acknowledged the traditional territories of the First Nations.

Retiring Secretary-Treasurer, Harold Cull, took a moment to express his gratitude for his time in the District thanked individuals and teams he has worked with.

TRUSTEE ELECTIONS

- 1.1 Harold Cull thanked the Board of Education for their service and called for nominations for Board Chair.
- Cendra Beaton was declared elected by acclamation. Chair Beaton then assumed her duties and continued the election process.
 - Allison Watson was nominated and acclaimed for the position of Vice-Chair.



- Christine Lervold was nominated and acclaimed as BCSTA Provincial Council Representative.
- Amanda Dowhy was nominated and acclaimed as Alternate BCSTA Provincial Council Representative.
- Christine Lervold was nominated and acclaimed as BCPSEA Trustee Representative.
- Allison Watson was nominated and acclaimed Alternate BCPSEA Trustee Representative.

2. AGENDA

2.1 Call for amendments and additional items

46. MOVED Amanda Dowhy/Allison Watson
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting agenda of December 17, 2024, as presented.
CARRIED

2.2 Report on In Camera Meeting – Cendra Beaton

This notice is to inform 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

47. MOVED Allison Watson/Amanda Dowhy
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting minutes of November 26, 2024, as presented.
CARRIED

4. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ANNOUCEMENTS

4.1 Board Chair Update – Cendra Beaton

The Board Chair expressed her gratitude for being elected to the position of Board Chair and said she is looking forward to the positive impact the Board can make. She extended her appreciation to the partner groups for providing feedback on the strategic plan development for 2025-2029 and encouraged them to do so if they have not. She recognized the late John Horgan for his service and the contributions he made to the community and this District and then recognized Harold Cull for his dedication and hard work over the last 12 years. In closing, the Board Chair wished everyone a happy holiday.



Trustee Spiller acknowledged Chief Chipps for his dedication at the service for John Horgan.

5. **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

6. **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL – No report**

7. **CORRESPONDENCE & DELEGATIONS**

7.1 Correspondence

a. Letter from Minister Lisa Beare dated November 29, 2024 RE: Cybersecurity Threats. Trustees expressed appreciation for this letter, given the importance of cybersecurity for the District. BCSTA is working on a motion to support funding for cybersecurity.

48. **MOVED** Christine Lervold/Amanda Dowhy
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the letter from Minister Lisa Beare dated November 29, 2024 RE Cybersecurity threats.
CARRIED

49. **MOVED** Allison Watson/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) write a letter to the Minister of Education and Child Care and the Minister of Finance requesting targeted funding for cybersecurity.
CARRIED

50. **MOVED** Christine Lervold/Ebony Logins
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) send a letter to the Chair of Campbell River School District acknowledging the work that is underway and offering support for that motion regarding cybersecurity.
CARRIED

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

Karen DeCicco presented some of the events going on across the District. Spencer Middle School held a staff vs. student basketball game. Their 'You Belong Here' display was featured. John Muir celebrated Winter Solstice with a concert. Lakewood Elementary held a staff vs. grade 5's volleyball game. At Millstream Elementary they played a whole-school version of the game "Clue". NA'TSA'MAHT staff were blanketed by local Elders. A Journey student brought home made cookies to the residents at the Sooke Shelter Society. EMCS had a pop-up market



featuring their goods. The Early Learning Team held their first Ready, Set, Learn event. Diversity décor was highlighted at 3 different schools. A message of thanks was shared from an ELL family. Happy Valley held an entrepreneur show and a ‘Twelve Days of Kindness’ food and charity drive. At PEXSISEN, there is an interactive display of a world map with locations marking where some students are from. When the QR code is scanned, it opens information recorded by the student about themselves.

In closing, Karen DeCicco shared her gratitude for her relationship with Harold Cull over the years and the teams he has led. She credited his leadership for fostering collaboration across departments in the interest of students. She shared a story of a student with complex needs who, due to family circumstances, required a spot at Happy Valley. Despite multiple barriers with space and required documentation, the District team, teachers at the school, Facilities, Transportation and Community Health worked together to support her attendance at Happy Valley.

STA – Rita Zeni

Rita Zeni congratulated the Trustees on their new roles and thanked Amanda Dowhy for her work as Board Chair. She also recognized Harold Cull for his work in the District. She thanked the Bargaining Committee for the work being done and CUPE for their collaboration on joint projects. She extended her wish to everyone for a safe and happy holiday.

CUPE 459 – Tim Hamblin

Tim Hamblin sent his appreciation to the Board and to Amanda Dowhy for her work and recognized Harold Cull for his time with the District. He mentioned the large number of newcomer students and spoke to their strength. In closing, Tim Hamblin shared how he was moved by the Water Ceremony at John Horgan’s service.

SPEAC – Tom Davis

The SPEAC President sent his gratitude to Harold Cull. He congratulated the Trustees on their new roles and thanked Trustee Dowhy for her work. Janine Brooks and Mark Johnston will be presenting about Inclusive Education at the SPEAC meeting on December 18, 2024.

7.3 Other Delegations – no reports

8. FINANCE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES



8.1 Resources Committee Meeting of December 10, 2024 – Christine Lervold

Trustee Lervold provided an overview of the Resources Committee Meeting of December 10, 2024. She thanked the Human Resources team for their work around the EFAP service contract renewal and Harold Cull for his work in setting the foundations around budget processes.

51. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the proposed 25/26 budget principles, assertions and process as outlined at the December 10, 2024, Resources Committee meeting.

CARRIED

52. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Resources Committee Meeting of December 10, 2024.

CARRIED

9. **EDUCATION PROGRAM**

9.1 Education-Policy Committee Meeting of December 3, 2024 – Cendra Beaton

Trustee Beaton provided an overview of the Education-Policy Committee Meeting of December 3, 2024.

53. MOVED Cendra Beaton/Allison Watson

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give Notice of Motion to draft Revised Regulations C-329 “Field Trips” and give Notice of Motion to draft Revised Policy Regulations D-121 “Animals on District Property and in Classrooms”.

CARRIED

54. MOVED Cendra Beaton/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Education-Policy Committee Meeting of December 3, 2024.

CARRIED

9.2 School Calendar 2025/26 and 2026/27 – Monica Braniff

The Deputy Superintendent outlined the consultation steps undertaken to arrive at the draft District School Calendars for 2025/26 and 2026/27 and sent her gratitude to the partner groups for their work on this. The 2027/28 calendar template is yet to



become available from the Ministry. The draft calendars will be posted to the SD62 website and feedback brought back to the Board for consideration.

9.3 Early Learning and Childcare Report – Paul Block

Paul Block presented the Early Learning and childcare report that was prepared in response to a motion passed at the August 27, 2024 Board Meeting. The Superintendent acknowledged Associate Superintendent Dave Strange and District Principal Frances Krusekopf for their work putting this highly detailed report together. There were questions regarding the data sources used. Dave Strange explained the data analysis process, in partnership with Digital Solutions.

55. MOVED Ebony Logins/Amanda Dowhy

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report on Early Learning and Childcare as presented at the December 17, 2024 Board Meeting.
CARRIED

10. **STUDENTS**

11. **FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNANCE**

11.1 Trustee Liaison Reports – Board of Education – no report

11.2 Strategic Plan Development Update – Paul Block

The Superintendent shared progress in the development of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan. Past and upcoming engagements were reviewed with formal approval coming to the Board in February 2025. Mike McKay was mentioned for his fantastic support and facilitation of the development of the new Strategic Plan.

11.3 Statement of Financial information – Harold Cull

The District is required to prepare the Statement of Financial Information (SoFI) report by December 31st each year. The Board of Education has been provided a copy of this report for their information. A question was raised about the \$75,000 threshold needing to be reviewed, due to changing pay rates.

11.4 Board By-Law No. 1-20 School Board Governance – Paul Block

By-Law No. 1-20 received first reading at the last Board meeting. It was clarified that the third reading is adoption of the By-Law.



56. **MOVED** Amanda Dowhy/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give Second and Third Reading of By-Law No. 1-20 “School Board Governance” at the December 17, 2024 Board meeting.
CARRIED

12. ADMINISTRATION

12.1 Board of Education 90 Day Work Plan – Board Chair

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

13. PERSONNEL

13.1 Superintendent’s Report – Paul Block

The Superintendent provided the Board of Education an update on Learning, Engagement and Growth.

Growth – The Superintendent reviewed upcoming registration dates. Nature Kindergarten enrolment has dropped for Nature Kindergarten in Sooke. The Superintendent encouraged everyone to spread the word regarding this program. A question was raised on the number of students needed to run the Late French Immersion program at Journey. Dave Strange estimated the number to be around 26 but the District will continue to monitor and report back.

School District 62 continues to remain a tight community despite having over 14,000 students. The growth does present challenges, but collaboration, care, service and a love for learning and growth, as well as a belief in children, will ensure the District meets these challenges.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

December 23 to January 3 – Winter Break

January 9 – Education-Policy Committee Meeting

January 13 to 17 – Nature Kindergarten & French Immersion Kindergarten Registration

January 13 to 24 - School change request for SCIANEW STELITKEŁ Elementary

January 14 – Resources Committee Meeting

January 29 to February 5 – Kindergarten & Late French Immersion Registration

15. RISE AND REPORT

16. QUESTION PERIOD

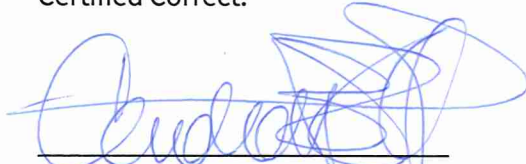


Members of the public have the opportunity to ask questions related to agenda items discussed at tonight's meeting using the QA function in MS Teams. Individuals must identify themselves and ask questions directed to the Chair. Members of the media can direct their questions to the Manager, Strategic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


17. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Certified Correct:



Chairperson of the Board



Secretary-Treasurer

