



Comox Valley Schools

A Community of Learners

INNOVATIVE • INQUISITIVE • INCLUSIVE

Board of Education

Regular Public Board Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

7:00pm

School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)
607 Cumberland Road, Courtenay, BC V9N 7G5
250-334-5500

A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS - INNOVATIVE ♦ INQUISITIVE ♦ INCLUSIVE

Vision

An inclusive learning community that embraces diversity, fosters relationships and empowers all learners to have a positive impact on the world.

Mission

To inspire engaged, compassionate, resilient lifelong learners and cultivate a collaborative community together.

We Value and Believe In

Trusting relationships based on respect, integrity and ethical behaviour

A commitment to Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples

Equity, inclusion, dignity, and acceptance for all

Global awareness and environmental stewardship

Innovation, creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking

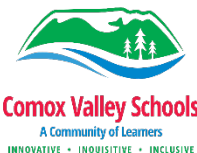
Accountability and shared responsibility

Open and engaging communication

Celebration of learning

Strategic Priorities

Educational Excellence
Community Engagement
Organizational Stability & Environmental Stewardship
Physical Health & Mental Well-Being



REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, November 23, 2021
7:00pm

A copy of the Public Board Meeting Agenda is available on the School District website at:

<http://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca>

Alternatively, copies are available on request from heidi.bell@sd71.bc.ca.

Public Board Meetings are recorded and live streamed on the School District's YouTube channel.

1. Call to Order – Secretary-Treasurer or Designate

The Board of Education acknowledges that we are on the traditional territories of the K'omoks First Nation. We would like to thank them for the privilege of living on their land and the gift of working with their children.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education adopt the November 23, 2021 Regular Public Board Meeting Agenda as presented.

3. Board Elections

- A. Election of Board Chairperson
- B. Election of Board Vice-Chairperson
- C. Election of BCSTA Provincial Council Representative and Alternate
- D. Election of BCPSEA Trustee Representative and Alternate
- E. Destruction of Ballots

Motion:

THAT the ballots from the Board elections be destroyed.

4. Board Meeting Minutes

Pages 1-6

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education adopt the October 26, 2021 Regular Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

5. Unfinished Business

None

6. Record of In-Camera Meeting Minutes / Reports

Pages 7-8

- October 25, 2021 – Special In-Camera Meeting
- October 26, 2021 – Regular In-Camera Meeting
- November 9, 2021 – Special In-Camera Meeting
- November 12, 2021 – Special In-Camera Meeting
- November 15, 2021 – Finance In-Camera Committee of the Whole Meeting
- November 15, 2021 – Facilities In-Camera Committee of the Whole Meeting

7. Board Chair’s Report

i. Recognition of Former Trustee

ii. Select Standing Committee Report – Education Section

Pages 9-15

https://www.leg.bc.ca/content/CommitteeDocuments/42nd-parliament/2nd-session/fgs/budget-consultation/42-2-2_FGS-Report_Budget-2022-Consultation.pdf

8. Presentations / Delegations

None

9. Education Committee Meeting – November 9, 2021

Pages 16-17

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the Education Committee Board Report as presented.

Next Education Committee Meeting:

TOPIC: Operations
DATE: December 07, 2021
TIME: 6:30 pm
LOCATION: School Board Office, Board Room

10. Strategic Direction

A. Superintendent

- i. District News - Verbal Update
- ii. Manager of Communications - Verbal Update

B. Assistant Superintendent

None

C. Secretary-Treasurer

- i. Cumberland Child Care – Verbal Update
- ii. New Spaces Fund, Two Applications – Verbal Update

D. Human Resources

- i. Retirements and Recognition

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11. Board Standing Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee Board Report – November 15, 2021

The Finance Committee met on November 15, 2021 as an In-Camera Committee of the Whole.

B. Audit Committee Board Report

No Meeting in November

C. Policy Committee Board Report – November 9, 2021

Pages 19-20

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the Policy Committee Board Report as presented.

D. Facilities Committee Agenda

The Facilities Committee met on November 15, 2021 as an In-Camera Committee of the Whole.

12. Board Business

A. Vaccine Mandate Media Release

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13. Board Correspondence

None

14. Public Question Period

15. Adjournment

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education adjourn this meeting.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, October 26, 2021
7:00pm

Trustees:

Sheila McDonnell, Board Chair
Michelle Waite, Vice Chair
Janice Caton, Trustee
Kat Hawksby, Trustee
Sarah Jane Howe, Trustee

Staff:

Tom Demeo, Superintendent of Schools
Brenda Hooker, Secretary-Treasurer
Geoff Manning, Assistant Superintendent
Candice Hilton, Director of Finance (via Zoom)
Ian Heselgrave, Director of Operations (via Zoom)
Sean Lamoureux, Director of Inclusive Education (via Zoom)
Vivian Collyer, Director of Instruction (via Zoom)
Jay Dixon, Director of Instruction (via Zoom)
Josh Porter, Director, Information Technology

Regrets: Tonia Frawley, Trustee – Cristi May Sacht, Trustee

Recording Secretary: Heidi Bell, Sr. Executive Assistant

1. Call to Order

Board Chair, Sheila McDonnell called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm and acknowledged that the meeting is being held on the traditional territories of the K'ómoks First Nation.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education adopt the October 26, 2021 Regular Public Board Meeting Agenda as presented.

[Howe/Waite]

CARRIED

3. Board Meeting Minutes

Pages 1-7

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education adopt the September 28, 2021 Regular Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

[Howe/Hawksby]

CARRIED

4. Unfinished Business

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke to a motion made on June 22, 2021, approving the Long-Range Facilities Plan (LFRP) 2021-2022 supporting Option A. The motion stated, "In the fall, senior staff will be bringing forward some potential options and solutions for the Board to consider". With the complexity of this topic the Facilities Committee proposes the November meeting be an In-Camera Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss this topic in detail.

5. Record of In-Camera Meeting Minutes

Pages 8-9

- September 28, 2021 – Regular In-Camera Meeting
- October 12, 2021 – Special In-Camera Meeting
Board Information

6. Board Chair's Report

Page 10

The Board Chair spoke to the ongoing work that staff have been working on; namely, managing our operations to make sure our school district continues to provide excellent educational opportunities for all students. The Board Chair also spoke to the possibility of mandatory vaccinations for employees and what the district is exploring with regards to this topic. She gave feedback about the Joint Partner Liaison Meeting, which was held on October 14th and 15th.

7. Presentations / Delegations

None

8. Education Committee Meeting

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Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the Education Committee Board Report as presented.

[Waite/Hawksby]

CARRIED

Next Education Committee Meeting:

TOPIC: Dual Credit Trades Courses

DATE: November 9, 2021

TIME: 6:30 pm

LOCATION: School Board Office

9. Strategic Direction

A. Superintendent

i. District News – Verbal Update

- In October, schools have held 3 district wide cross country runs for students in grades 4-7.
- Lake Trail Community school received recognition and a \$500 reward for their ongoing work from the Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education.
- Mark R. Isfeld Secondary raised over \$9000 during their Terry Fox run.
- Highland Secondary raised over \$2500 during their Terry Fox run.
- Cumberland Community School raised over \$1700 during their Terry Fox run.
- The Chanie Wenjack walked was held at Royston Elementary, Cumberland Community School and Ecole Puntledge Park Elementary.

ii. Framework Report – Verbal Update

A copy of the FESL Report (District Annual Review 2020-2021) was given to all Trustees and a digital copy can be found on the District website:

<https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/District-Annual-Review-2020-2021.pdf>

iii. Strategic Plan – Verbal Update

A copy of the 2020-2021 Strategic Plan Annual Report was handed to all Trustees and a digital copy can be found on the District website:

<https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Strategic-Plan-Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>

iv. Equity Scan – Verbal Update

The Equity in Action Consultation will start on November 19th. Invitations have been sent to all participating. This will be a lengthy process and the District appreciates the opportunity to participate in this process.

B. Assistant Superintendent

i. Inner Explorer Program – Verbal Update

Senior Leaders are excited to announce the new district wide Inner Explorer Program. Inner Explorer is an online mindfulness platform designed to support mental health and well-being through Mindfulness-Based Social Emotional Learning. All students will have access to these teachings and lessons.

C. Secretary-Treasurer

i. Long Range Facilities – Verbal Update

Student enrollment has significantly increased beyond the initial predictions. Due to new capacity pressures and previous capacity challenges, more information is being gathered and an In-Camera Committee of the Whole will meet to discuss this topic in-depth with an intention to find long-term solutions.

ii. Cumberland Child Care – Verbal Update

The Secretary-Treasurer and the Director of Operations continue to meet with the Village of Cumberland staff. The District has offered their support in helping to start the child care project. A proposal has been submitted to the Village of Cumberland and it is our understanding the Village will be looking at it in their November meeting.

D. Human Resources

i. Retirements and Recognition

Board Information

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10. Board Standing Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee Board Report - October 19, 2021

Pages 13-32

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the Finance Committee Board Report as presented.

[Caton/Howe]

CARRIED

B. Audit Committee Board Report

No Meeting in October

C. Policy Committee Board Report – October 21, 2021

Pages 33-34

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the changes and suggestions to Policy 7 4.15 as presented.

[Waite/Hawksby]

CARRIED

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the Policy Committee Board Report as presented.

[Waite/Caton]

CARRIED

D. Facilities Committee Board Report – October 19, 2021

Pages 35-40

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the Long-Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) Option A Solutions briefing note as provided.

It is further recommended that a Notice of Motion be presented at the October 2021 Board Meeting that the November Facilities Committee meeting be an In-Camera Committee of the Whole meeting to thoroughly review Option A solutions and that a motion for a decision on Option A solutions be presented at the November Board Meeting.

[Howe/Caton]

CARRIED

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the School Board Office Feasibility Study briefing note as provided.

[Howe/Caton]

CARRIED

Motion:

THAT the Board of Education receive the Facilities Committee Board Report as presented.

[Howe/Hawksby]

CARRIED

11. Board Business

A. VISTA Fall Meeting – Verbal Update

Page 41

Trustee Caton gave an overview of the Fall Vista meeting which was held on October 2. Guest speaker, BCSTA Director, Dr. Chenoweth spoke to the attendees on how best to move forward with Truth and Reconciliation.

The second guest speakers were Dr. Allison and D. Waters who gave a general COVID-19 updated.

The next VISTA meeting will be held in Courtenay on March 4-5, 2022.

B. BCSTA Provincial Meeting – Verbal Update

Trustee Caton attended the BCSTA Provincial meeting on October 23. Updates were given with regards to the Board of Education role, as the employer, when it comes to policy making and mandatory vaccinations. Four motions were passed at this meeting and two of them were submitted by Trustee Howe and Trustee Caton.

12. Board Correspondence

None

13. Public Question Period

None

14. Meeting Adjourned – 8:52 pm

MOTION:

THAT the Board of Education adjourn this meeting.

[Hawksby/Waite]

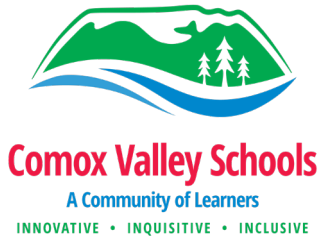
CARRIED

Board Approved on:
November 23, 2021

Certified Correct:

Brenda Hooker, CPA, CGA
Secretary-Treasurer

Sheila McDonnell
Board Chair



Comox Valley Schools

School District No. 71
Office of the Secretary Treasurer

RECORD OF IN-CAMERA MEETINGS

TO: Board of Education **DATE:** November 23, 2021
FROM: Office of the Secretary-Treasurer
RE: Record of In-Camera Meetings

RECORD PURSUANT TO SECTION 72 OF THE *SCHOOL ACT*

Matters discussed and decisions reached at the Special and Regular In-Camera meetings held since the last such report:

October 25, 2021 – Special In-Camera Meeting

1. Receipt of and updates on one legal matter

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 pm and adjourned at 8:35 pm.

October 26, 2021 – Regular In-Camera Meeting

1. Adoption of the September 28, 2021 Regular In-Camera Meeting Minutes
2. Adoption of the October 12, 2021 Special In-Camera Meeting Minutes
3. Receipt of and updates on one legal matter
4. Receipt of and updates on three land/property matters
5. Receipt of and updates on one other matter

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm and adjourned at 6:57 pm.

November 09, 2021 – Special In-Camera Meeting

1. Receipt of and updates on one legal matter
2. Receipt of and updates on one other matter

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm and adjourned at 8:35 pm.

November 12, 2021 – Special In-Camera Meeting

1. Receipt of and updates on one legal matter

The meeting was called to order at 11:39 am and adjourned at 12:13 pm

November 15, 2021 – Finance In-Camera Committee of the Whole Meeting

1. Receipt of and updates on two other matters

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 pm and adjourned at 4:51 pm

November 15, 2021 – Facilities In-Camera Committee of the Whole Meeting

1. Receipt of and updates on one land/property matter
2. Receipt of and updates on one other matter

The meeting was called to order at 4:52 pm and adjourned at 6:41 pm



K-12 EDUCATION

CAPITAL FUNDING

Several school districts and associations recommended increasing capital funding for K-12 education. The BC School Trustees Association noted that school districts are not funded for numerous capital items, including IT infrastructure, portables, classroom furniture, retrofits, or administrative or maintenance facilities. School District No. 41 (Burnaby) referred to a 2020 BC School Trustees Association report, which indicated that the routine capital program totaled \$204 million; however, the estimated cost of repairs and maintenance recommended by building system engineers was more than double that at \$441 million. School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) highlighted the need to address aging infrastructure, noting that the cost of maintenance increases as schools age, pointing to maintenance challenges with Mount Baker Secondary which is over 70 years old. Similarly, School District No. 60 (Peace River North) shared that 78 percent of their buildings received a poor or critical rating upon assessment. Two school districts emphasized the need to decrease the environmental impact of schools; School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows) stated that significant investments in retrofitting schools need to be made to achieve greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

Some school districts focused on funding for maintenance and recommended increasing the Annual Facility Grant. School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) noted that the increased cost of building supplies due to the pandemic has put pressure on Annual Facility Grant resources. They also stated that the grant remains a fixed amount and is not dependent on the age of a school and level of maintenance required. Other school districts including School District No. 57 (Prince George) cited buildings in poor condition and aging infrastructure as rationale for increasing the grant. School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows) explained that not completing necessary facility renovations at the time of seismic upgrading is inefficient and will add to the overall cost if completed separately.

The Committee also heard about the need for capital funding related to COVID-19. School District No. 41 (Burnaby) emphasized the importance of ventilation for infection prevention and exposure control and noted that funding is needed for many older classrooms and classrooms that are not connected to ventilation systems. Similarly, the BC Teachers' Federation stated that improving air quality in BC schools would have an immediate impact in reducing the total number of cases of COVID-19 as well as long-term benefits in decreasing transmission of other common respiratory viruses such as influenza.

With respect to capital funding policy, two school districts remarked on the requirement to have school districts contribute up to 50 percent of the total cost of capital projects for new space. School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) stated that this practice redirects funds away from student needs to capital projects which is cross-purpose to successful education. School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) noted that due to rapid growth, they have exceeded capacity and are obliged to make decisions about students being taught in portables or moving students outside of their neighbourhoods. School District No. 41 (Burnaby) also remarked on the needs of growing districts and recommended providing additional funding to acquire and setup necessary portable classrooms to accommodate student enrolment growth when districts can demonstrate no alternative solution exists.

Three submissions made recommendations related to funding for seismic upgrades. The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils cited a September 2021 Ministry of Education report which stated that only 38 percent of schools have had the seismic mitigation process completed, while School District No. 38 (Richmond) noted that 37 of their schools were identified as having at least one high-risk building section needing to be addressed.

DISTRIBUTED LEARNING AND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

The Committee heard a presentation from Self Design Learning Foundation regarding their independent online school which they state is the largest school of record for students with special needs in BC. They note that in 2020, the Ministry of Education decreased the per student funding amount to independent online schools which has negatively impacted all online students, and especially students with special needs. Further, they state that the Ministry has proposed additional funding changes to provincial online education which has created a high level of uncertainty for families with children with special needs who require a high level of care and continuity. They recommended maintaining funding and ensuring that the proposed changes to online education do not disrupt the continuity and support provided to students.

With respect to private schools, the BC Humanist Association recommended phasing out funds currently spent on funding private education and using that funding to support innovation and students with special needs within the public school system. According to the association, private school funding increases have outpaced increases for public school funding. The BC Teachers' Federation and Canadian Union of Public Employees British Columbia focused specifically on elite private schools, noting that these schools, in addition to receiving funding growth, also benefit from tax breaks for both schools and parents.

OPERATIONAL FUNDING

Some organizations called for general or overall increases to operational funding. School District No. 36 (Surrey) noted a growing reliance on portables for which there currently is no additional funding allocated to school districts. They advocated for a modified funding model or a specific grant to cover the cost of acquiring, moving, operating, and maintaining portables for those districts without sufficient school capacity to accommodate all students appropriately. First Call: Child and Youth Advocacy Society spoke to the need for increased investment to restore lost programming and address the inequities created by relying on parent fundraising. School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) noted the need for resources to develop and operationalize strategic plans to meet the Ministry of Education's goals in the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning as many districts do not have robust data collection tools for measuring outcomes. Other recommendations

cited the need for increased funding to address the cost of implementing the new curriculum, inflationary pressures, and enrolment growth.

With respect to the funding formula, the BC Teachers' Federation noted that the current model for funding public education is based on enrolment which they stated has led to some austerity budgets and inadequate funding. They proposed a funding model that follows from the vision for what public education should be, and that is firmly connected to the identified needs of students. School District No. 60 (Peace River North) referred to changes in the calculation of transportation funding, noting that it resulted in an immediate funding reduction of \$541,000 to their district, and recommended that this change be reviewed and addressed. Some organizations advocated for actions stemming from the Funding Model Review Panel Report with respect to reserves and the annual budget process.

A few submissions remarked on the shortfall in international student tuition due to the COVID-19 pandemic; for example, School District No. 41 (Burnaby) explained that the pandemic resulted in a 45 percent decrease in international education students attending their schools, representing approximately \$10 million in tuition grants. Recommendations in this area related to funding and supports for affected school districts.

The Committee also heard about other funding needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Many school districts noted the need for funding for health and safety measures, enhanced cleaning requirements, and learning recovery. With respect to health and safety, Canadian Union of Public Employees British Columbia described the increased demand on custodial workers and stated that understaffing and overwork in this area is a health and safety issue for all staff and students. Similarly, the Institute for Public Education BC stated that school districts should be funded to meet the higher expectations of cleaning from this past year. Some submissions, including First Call: Child and Youth Advocacy Society, also noted the need for funding to respond to student needs resulting from their experiences in the pandemic.

Two school districts called for funding related to compensation, noting that salary and benefits account for a very high percentage of operating costs. School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) shared that staffing is expensive and a long-term, committed cost that requires sustained funding, and explained that districts are reluctant to increase staffing when the funding is unpredictable. School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) explained

that the basic student grant is usually increased to cover teacher and support staff wage increases; however, it has not provided for benefit cost increases, salary increments for administrators and professional managers, or inflationary costs for supplies and services.

Regarding student transportation, recommendations highlighted the environmental impact of diesel buses and personal vehicles used to drive students to and from school. For Our Kids explained that the average diesel school bus emits 20 tonnes of greenhouse gases each year and that diesel buses produce pollutions that are harmful to children and bus drivers. They advocated for electric school buses to comprise 100 percent of new school bus purchases. School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan) stated that they spend an extra \$3.1 million per year on student transportation beyond the \$1 million they charge riders in busing fees. Further, they noted that adding to the number of personal vehicles driving to and from schools would be discriminatory to some families. They advocated for increased funding for the transportation of students.

Some organizations and districts advocated for funding related to programming and curriculum. The BC Teachers' Federation made two recommendations in this area, noting the need for resources to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing across the curriculum as well as resources for professional learning and planning time for teachers. Similarly, School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) explained that implementing the new curriculum requires an increased commitment to staffing at the district level to provide classroom teachers with resources, support, and modern technology. Comox Valley Families for Public Education highlighted the need for education regarding consent, noting that the BC curriculum has no mandatory sexual health education curriculum regarding consent for students in grades 11 and 12 and that the sexual health curriculum is taught through physical education which is not mandatory after grade 10.

Some organizations highlighted the need for funding related to reconciliation and supporting Indigenous learners. School District No. 39 (Vancouver) noted that while significant improvements in outcomes for Indigenous students is evident over the last several years, additional support is essential to continue this pivotal work. Further, they explained that many Indigenous learners who live on reserve attended school virtually last year and require support for the transition back to in-person learning. They advocated for funding to identify and amplify best practices in strategies and pedagogy to service Indigenous

learners. Canadian Union of Public Employees British Columbia called for funding to implement Article 14 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples regarding education, particularly with respect to expanding and adding Indigenous language learning opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The Committee heard that teacher recruitment and retention is a chronic challenge in BC and that more than 20,000 teachers will be needed over the current decade. School District No. 39 (Vancouver) explained that competition between districts as well as with other jurisdictions across Canada leads to challenges in adequately staffing roles to offer programs in French language instruction, tech studies, and special education. They advocated for funding for post-secondary institutions to increase their student intake for teacher training programs.

Recommendations related to compensation called for consistent and predictable funding and flexibility at the local level. School District No. 60 (Peace River North) noted that there are restrictions that make it impossible to adequately compensate existing district staff based on performance which exacerbates recruitment and retention issues. School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) stated that salary increases for non-union staff are linked to provincially negotiated union wage increases but are not funded which creates a structural deficit resulting in resources being removed from the classroom.

With regard to staff supports, the BC Teachers' Federation referred to a survey which indicated that 40 percent of teachers were more likely to leave education in the next two years than they were before the pandemic. Similarly, the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association explained that the mental health and wellness of their members is deteriorating, and long-term disability claims have been increasing. They also pointed to the need for leadership support and development throughout principals' careers.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Several organizations advocated for increased funding to support students with special needs with some highlighting inclusive education, as well as the need for counsellors, speech and language pathologists, and additional education assistants. With respect to inclusive education, the Down Syndrome Society of British Columbia stated that learners in inclusive education

settings tend to perform better than those in segregated settings. Similarly, Inclusion BC cited research which indicates that diverse and inclusive classrooms benefit all learners; however, they noted that many families of diverse learners are, or are considering, pulling their children from neighbourhood schools because their educational needs are not being met. School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) shared that approximately 14 percent of their student population is identified as having diverse abilities and require additional support to meet their needs and graduate with confidence and purpose.

With respect to the funding model for students with special needs, some recommendations called for needs-based funding while others called for resources for high-cost/low incidence students. BCEdAccess Society stated that the school district or independent school authority is free to use their discretion regarding how to spend funding for students with special needs and as a result, the per-student allocation or supplemental amount may fail to impact the student(s) in question. The BC Teachers' Federation noted that school districts disproportionately spend more money on inclusive education than they take in as they only get about 65 percent of what is needed. They added that about half of students with an identified need have a "high incidence" designation, which is accompanied by no additional funding. School District No. 41 (Burnaby) described a significant increase in the total number of students with disabilities and diverse abilities over the past number of years, especially in the Special Needs Funding Supplement Level 2 Category. They noted that the supplemental funding provided for students in Level 2 does not cover the cost of what the district pays to support these students in the learning environment. Regarding severe learning disabilities, Dyslexia BC explained that the funding category J was taken away in 2002; they recommend bringing this category back, stating a prevalence model is unlikely to include Dyslexia in Ministry of Education funding levels.

Many organizations made recommendations related to identification and assessments, highlighting long waitlists and the need for early identification. The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils noted that waitlists of three and four years for assessment are common and as a result, many parents opt to have their children assessed privately which creates further inequity in the public education system. Similarly, Cindy Dalgish noted that long waitlists for assessments within the education system impede students' ability to get the support they need in a timely fashion. Dyslexia BC recommended early screening

in kindergarten so that reading remediation can be done as soon as possible; they explain that it takes four times longer to remediate dyslexia if you wait until grade 3 or 4 to start. Both Inclusion BC and BCEdAccess Society suggested a targeted fund to increase the number of educational assessments, thereby reducing waitlists.

There were also a few organizations and individuals who made recommendations specific to education assistants. Canadian Union of Public Employees British Columbia stated that education assistants and aboriginal education assistants can help students make emotional connections to their education to improve their learning outcome; however, insufficient hours are a concern as shifts generally range from just four to six hours per day. BCEdAccess Society explained that there is no professional body governing education assistants in BC and no standardized program requirements in their certification. They added that without standards of practice, it is difficult to assign the role of professional to education assistants. They also discussed the importance of continuity and challenges when a child's relationship with an education assistant abruptly ends, and the emotional and intellectual energy needed to express the student's needs to a new person.

VULNERABLE STUDENTS

The Committee received a number of recommendations with respect to school food programs. Several organizations called for the expansion of school meal programs for low-income students, with many recommending a universal school program and some making recommendations related to specific nutrition programs including those run by the Breakfast Club of Canada and Backpack Buddies. The BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation highlighted the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program created in partnership with the ministries of Health, Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, and Education through which fruits, vegetables, and milk, supplied by over 1,000 BC farmers, are delivered to classrooms a total of 24 weeks in the school year. School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) noted that for many vulnerable students, time at school presents their only access to healthy meals. Similarly, the BC Teachers' Federation cited the most recent household food security dataset published by Statistics Canada which indicated that less than 70 percent of single-parent families in BC were food secure. The BC Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food stated that Canada remains the only G7 nation without a national school food program and made several recommendations

related to a task force, a school meal program coordinator, and pilot programs. The BC Alliance for Healthy Living stated that a universal healthy school food program could help increase fruit and vegetable consumption amongst children, reducing risk for numerous chronic diseases. The Institute for Public Education BC advocated for funding to be expanded and guaranteed through provincial initiatives, rather than a patchwork of programs.

The need for mental health and student supports was another key theme. Several submissions highlighted the impact of the pandemic on student mental health and the need for counsellors and other supports. CUPE 728 Surrey School District Support Staff stated that the pandemic has both triggered mental health conditions and made existing conditions worse. Similarly, School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) noted that 50 percent of families in the district report needing access to mental health services for their children. Both School District No. 36 (Surrey) and School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) stated that CommunityLink and Equity of Opportunity funding are insufficient and allocated inequitably across districts. The BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils noted that the new normal will require more funding for learning recovery, acceleration programs, school health and safety, student mental health and well-being, and connectivity and support to teachers. The Surrey Teachers' Association advocated for investment in counsellors for children and teenagers as providing students with the supports they need at a time when they are receptive to learning results in savings for society over the course of their lifetime.

School District No. 57 (Prince George) remarked on the number of students living in poverty and the impact on their readiness for full participation in their learning. They advocated for a provincial poverty reduction strategy to address the needs of vulnerable students and families. School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) explained that a decrease in in-class instruction time due to the pandemic has been detrimental for many students, both socially and academically, particularly those who are most vulnerable and recommended funding to address learning loss.

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee reflected on the large volume of input related to capital funding for K-12 education which highlighted difficulties associated with capacity and new builds, and addressing aging infrastructure. They also discussed the implications of districts needing to make capital contributions, and capital expenses

such as portables coming out of operating budgets, and how this impacts their ability to fund classroom expenses, transportation, staffing, and other operational expenses. They recognized that the province has areas of rapid growth where capacity is a real challenge, and discussed the need for innovative long-term capital solutions, such as modular construction, that would allow flexibility to respond to population changes and help to move away from portables. The Committee additionally considered how work can be done with municipalities to better respond to areas of population growth. Further, Members noted that capital funding needs to be proactive and responsive and reflected on presentations which highlighted the need for transparency in funding and decision processes. Members also recognized the importance of IT infrastructure investments both to prepare for another possible shift to online learning in the future and to provide education on the use of technology and to reflect a modern curriculum.

With respect to operational funding, the Committee again emphasized the importance of a proactive funding formula that anticipates future needs and population changes while also addressing a range of challenges highlighted by submissions. They discussed how current policies that do not take into consideration the cost of maintaining older buildings puts pressure on school districts that have declining or stagnant enrolment. Members also remarked on the challenge of student transportation in many communities and noted that investments in public transportation can help address this issue (see Transportation and Transit). They also discussed the environmental impact associated with diesel buses and the use of personal vehicles to drive students to and from schools.

Committee Members noted many benefits related to online and distributed learning for families in rural BC who may live three or four hours away from schools and for students, including those with special needs, who may learn better in such an environment. They discussed how distributed learning models could be better supported and further explored as part of a dynamic education system.

The Committee acknowledged that recruitment and retention is a significant issue and reflected on the many submissions that highlighted the toll of the pandemic on teachers and staff as well as the need for work-life balance. Members noted that the teaching profession has evolved over time, increasing in complexity and with new pressures. They also discussed challenges related to the high cost of housing which impact teachers' ability to live in the communities in which they work.

They considered ways to support and attract teachers from other countries, including supporting the Provincial Nominee Program and reducing barriers for individuals educated outside of Canada.

Committee Members acknowledged the number of presentations and recommendations which emphasized the importance of supports for students with special needs, including the need for inclusion, and to address challenges with respect to identification and long waitlists for assessments. They recognized that funding to support students with special needs is a significant issue in BC and were supportive of recommendations to increase these supports and improve early identification and assessment.

With respect to vulnerable students, the Committee emphasized the importance of school food programs, especially given the

link between nutrition and education outcomes. They noted that food programs can help to reduce stigma for students in need and encourage socialization and interactions between students and staff. Further, they discussed how these programs are largely volunteer driven and that there are gaps with respect to funding and coordination, resulting in a patchwork of programs across the province. Committee Members also noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected student mental health and led to an increase in eating disorders, depression, and anxiety for many as well as issues related to retention and support for guidance counsellors who are overwhelmed. Committee Members also acknowledged the interrelation between students with special needs and vulnerable students, noting that many students fall into both categories.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Capital Funding

107. Re-examine capital funding with a view to being more forward-looking and responsive, addressing inequities and gaps with respect to provincial funding for IT and maintenance, and reviewing policies regarding district contributions and portable construction.
108. Prioritize methods to fast-track construction of new schools and additions, including exploring the use of modular construction and prioritizing means to lower the environmental impact of new and existing schools.

Operational Funding

109. Review the operational funding formula for K-12 education to ensure it is proactive and transparent, based on the identified needs of school districts, with appropriate consideration for anticipated population changes, equitable distribution of resources, supports to deliver the new curriculum and reconciliation initiatives, increased health and safety measures, and student transportation.

Distributed Learning and Independent Schools

110. Recognize online and distributed learning programs as integral to the K-12 education system and re-examine funding to ensure these programs continue to meet the needs of all learners, particularly children and families in rural and remote areas and children and youth with special needs.

Recruitment and Retention

111. Explore creative measures to recruit and retain teachers, including providing incentives, providing relief to teachers in school districts with high housing costs, addressing work-life balance challenges, and reducing barriers for immigrants and internationally educated teachers.

Students with Special Needs

112. Increase supports for students with special needs, including providing supports and training to staff to support inclusion and improving early identification and assessment.

Vulnerable Students

113. Support the expansion, coordination, and sustainability of school meal programs, such as the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program, and encourage collaboration with BC agricultural producers.
114. Increase funding for mental health supports in schools, including student-focused resources, wrap-around services, and personnel.

**Education Committee Minutes
November 9, 2021**

We gratefully acknowledge that we are on the traditional, unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation. We are thankful for the opportunity to work with their families and teach their children.

Careers/Trades/Dual Credit/ADST/Robotics

- 1. Welcome** Michelle Waite
- 2. Presenters:** Steve Classen and Dawn Anderson
- 3. Careers:**
 - K-9 Curriculum:
 - Pictures books- created lessons with extensions that includes Global Problems. Brainstorm career opportunities.
 - Artifact totes- Job artifact totes consisting of 16 different careers
 - Teacher resources website with lessons available
 - Gr. 10-12:
 - My Blueprint being used as a platform
 - Grade 11-12 Careers course offered face to face
 - Presenters/Tours/Speakers Bureau
 - Spark Cards at Grade 10 allow students to use challenges and opportunities to work backwards to find a career. Allows students to think globally.
 - Work Experience:
 - Grade 12- 181 students enrolled
 - Runs outside the regular school schedule.
 - Career tours- allows students to “see” potential careers in the real world
- 4. Trades:**
 - Grade 7 Try-a-Trade
 - Led by Grade 10-12 students
 - Step Program
 - Electrical, Plumbing, Masonry

- Trades classes
 - Trades samplers- Construction, Metal, Transportation (full semester each)
 - Youth Train in the Trades- take course at college and get high school credits for it. Tuition is paid for.
 - Work in the Trades
 - students already working in the trades
 - Collect hours and after 900 hrs students receive \$1000.

5. Dual Credits:

- Open for Grade 12 students. Students take these courses at NIC. Students can take up to 4 courses and earn credits.
 - English 115, 122
 - Psychology 130, 131
 - Fine Art 110
 - Biology 160
 - Business 162
 - Criminology 131
- 3 Big Pathways are Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE), Health Care Assistant and Office Administration.

6. ADST: Applied Design Skill Technology:

- Jr. ADST- Project booklet used as a resource. 43 project requests so far this year. Over 100 projects were completed last year.
- Jr. Electronics/3D printing projects are underway
- Sr. ADST -3D printing is very popular and being used at all secondary schools.

7. Robotics:

- Elementary- Lego Mindstorms kits being used at Grades 5-7. Very popular and fully booked for this school year.
- Robotics 71- Secondary robotics. Very successful. Program is run out of Highland secondary. 75 students in this program all on their own time.

8. Conclusion/Questions

Michelle Waite facilitated a question-and-answer period throughout the meeting where trustees asked a variety of questions to the guest presenters. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Present:

Trustees

Sheila McDonnell
Michelle Waite
Janice Caton
Tonia Frawley
Sarah-Jane Howe
Kat Hawksby

Senior Leadership

Tom Demeo
Geoff Manning
Brenda Hooker
Jay Dixon
Vivian Collyer
Josh Porter



Comox Valley Schools

A Community of Learners

INNOVATIVE • INQUISITIVE • INCLUSIVE

Comox Valley Schools
Board of Education of School District No. 71

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Board of Education

DATE: November 23, 2021

RE: Human Resources - Retirements and Recognition

Retirements

Suzanne Rea, Teacher, Valley View Elementary, will retire effective December 31, 2021 after 29 years of service with the district.

**POLICY COMMITTEE
BOARD REPORT**

Date: Tuesday, November 09, 2021
Time: 2:00pm – 3:00pm
Venue: Zoom Meeting

Committee Members:

Michelle Waite: Chairperson
Janice Caton: Trustee
Kat Hawksby, Trustee

Tom Demeo, Superintendent
Brenda Hooker, Secretary-Treasurer

Recording Secretary: Heidi Bell, Senior Executive Assistant

A. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the committee and called the meeting to order at 2:03pm.

B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Update on Policy 24 Equity and Non-Discrimination – Engagement Process with our Education and Community Partners

Motion carried June 22, 2021

That the Board of Education receive the Draft copy of Policy 24 and request that the Policy Committee through the Superintendent begin an engagement process with our Education and Community Partners requesting written feedback to the proposed policy. A proposed timeline of completion will be November 2021.

The opportunity for feedback has gone out directly to groups at the schools and is also on the website. Some feedback has already been received and the opportunity will close on November 30, 2021. Discussion around feedback received directly during the DPAC meeting.

2. Preliminary Draft Child Care Policy

Districts were directed by the Ministry to have childcare policy. Director of Instruction Douglas worked on the policy in the 2020-2021 school year with consultation and review of other District's policies.

Committee to receive an updated draft childcare policy and bring questions for the next meeting. Current questions around content, ages, and operator.

The main discussion was around policy vs. administrative procedures, with the committee asking numerous questions.

The Superintendent reiterated that not every policy needs an AP and not every AP needs a policy. The Superintendent will look through the documents on Policy and AP and will bring forward to the next Policy committee date in December.

C. OLD BUSINESS

1. Administrative Procedures Review – To be placed on the next committee meeting.

Superintendent advised the review should be completed by the start of new year.

D. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for December 06, 2021

AGENDA – Policy 24 Feedback & Child Care Policy Update

Procedural Bylaw to be added in 2022

E. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:11pm.

For immediate release

17 November 2021

Comox Valley Schools will not require proof of vaccination for staff

Comox Valley, B.C. – After consulting with health experts and thorough discussions at an in-camera meeting, the Board for Comox Valley Schools will not be mandating COVID-19 vaccines for staff at this time.

“Serious consideration was given, including the priority of health and safety of students and staff in Comox Valley Schools as well as the potentially significant impact on student learning,” says Sheila McDonnell, Comox Valley Schools board chair. “We are encouraged by the high vaccinations rates in our region and urge everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated to help keep our schools healthy and safe.”

The decision was made after examining local information, and consultations with the local Medical Health Officer and Vancouver Island Health Authority. Health officials advised it would have a limited impact on transmission rates because of the already high community vaccination rate and the fact that schools are not a primary source of COVID-19 cases in the greater community.

The district also considered the [K-12 Sector Guidelines for Vaccination Policies](#) developed by the Ministry of Education, BC Public School Employers’ Association and the provincial advisory group.

Comox Valley Schools continue to operate safely and are low-risk settings. We are very grateful for everyone in our school communities and all they have done to support the health and well-being of students and staff.

-End-

Media Contact

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