

MINUTES OF THE BOARD EDUCATION AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 4:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

PRESENT

Trustee Rob Hutchins, Chair
Trustee Candace Spilsbury
Trustee Barb de Groot
Trustee Elizabeth Croft
Trustee Johanne Kemmler
Trustee Randy Doman
Trustee Joe Thorne
Jason Sandquist, Secretary-Treasurer
Robyn Gray, Superintendent
Sheryl Koers, Associate Superintendent
Larry Mattin, Director of Instruction
Richard Dyle, Director of Operations
Erin Egeland, Associate Secretary-Treasurer
Mike Russell, Director of Communications
Claire Spencer, Recording Secretary

APOLOGIES **Tom Longridge, Associate Superintendent**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Hutchins called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the traditional and ancestral lands of the Coast Salish people where we live, learn and play.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2.1 Motion to Adopt Agenda

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Thorne

"That the Board Education and Business Committee adopts the agenda of the February 22, 2022 Board Education and Business Committee meeting."

CARRIED

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the January 25, 2022 Board Education and Business Committee Meeting

Moved by Trustee Kemmler
Seconded by Trustee de Groot

"That the Board Education and Business Committee adopts the minutes of the January 25, 2022 Board Education and Business Committee Meeting."

CARRIED

4. ACTION LIST

4.1 Action List

The Secretary-Treasurer advised that meetings were held with CUPE and USW regarding District Closure week, and that he will be reporting to the Board at a later date.

5. PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

6. EDUCATION

6.1 School Plan Presentation: Palsson Elementary School

Palsson Elementary is a K-3 school in Lake Cowichan, on the unceded territory of the Ts'uubaa-asatx people. The school currently has 9 divisions with 189 students, including 63 kindergarten students. A before/after school program operates out of the school's gym, and a StrongStart program is located on site. A new daycare facility is in the final stages of completion and will provide 27 daycare spaces for preschool children. The school property includes the Friendship Forest, home to a wide range of flora and fauna including elk, and the fish bearing Oliver Creek. Staff continually explore the five elements of play in the Early Learning Framework:

- Inquiry play;
- Collaborative play;
- Learning games;
- Playful learning (name it, notice it, nurture it);
- Free play.

The school's learning goal is to improve the reading and writing literacy capabilities and level of retention for all its students. Staff have had deep, reflective discussions and have undertaken many professional development opportunities and initiatives to support growth in these areas. Palsson is a "CALM" pilot school, with all staff working to implement this social and emotional learning program school wide. The school has an active PAC that has worked hard the last three years to fundraise approximately \$50,000 to improve the accessibility and inclusive nature of the playground. There are some current projects in the works to increase the signage in the Friendship Forest to help maintain it as the amazing learning space that it is.

6.2 3-Year Plan: FESL: Technology Plan

The Instruction and Innovation Department, along with its partner groups, believes in co-creating technology-enriched learning environments offering students personalized, anytime anywhere, transformational, technology-infused learning.

The Plan's Strategic Priorities include:

- Expansion of internet bandwidths at each school;
- Improving wired and wireless networks across schools through stronger security, traffic shaping, and 10G switch connections;

- Provision of ongoing staff training and professional development to support instructional practice in digitally rich learning environment;
- Expansion of strategic leasing to keep technology equipment on a 3-4 year refresh cycle;
- A continued system-wide focus on privacy and security;
- Ensuring actions are aligned to the broader District Strategic Plan focused on Learning, Indigenous Ways of Knowing, a Culture of Care, and Future-Focused Systems.

Pillars of the Plan include a base which provides the infrastructure and hardware/software standard on which to build web services and cloud data services, instructional practices and training, and ultimately to provide learning amplified by instructional technology.

The continual addition of devices accessing our networks (from computer labs, laptops, cell phones, tablets, watches and TV's) impact network performance. As more work moves into the cloud, there is a focus on maintaining a strong privacy and security posture and ensuring end users how to keep their private data safe.

6.3 Supporting Indigenous Learning

Larry Mattin, Darlene Crane, Jen Calverly, and Dani Morrow shared stories that demonstrate how our District is responding to the needs of our Indigenous Learners. Director Mattin shared Indigenous Student Snapshot Data as it relates to our Indigenous learners academically and socially/emotionally. He also looked at the academic data comparisons of On and Off Reserve Indigenous learners and how it relates to graduation rates. This data led to deeper conversations with a few schools last year including two elementary schools: Alexander and Khowhemun. These conversations helped identify some literacy gaps resulting in the District refocusing efforts and resources to better address the literacy needs of learners at Alexander and Khowhemun, as well as at four high schools.

Principals from Alexander and Khowhemun highlighted the impact school-based literacy coordinators are having on classroom instruction and supports for students who are struggling to learn to read. Educators and students have benefited from the partnership with school-based coordinators. These roles are helping school teams identify assessments that more clearly define learning needs as well as instructional resources and approaches that can address those needs.

As the Khowhemun and Alexander staffs identify effective practices and resources, the learning is shared with other schools in our District and helps inform planning at the District level.

6.4 Performing Arts Academy

Larry Mattin, Director of Instruction, answered questions from Trustees arising from his briefing note. He advised that the fee of \$325 per month provides students with a half-day of specialty (Academy) classes per day, five days per week, for the school year.

Moved by Trustee Spilsbury

Seconded by Trustee Kemmler

“That the Board Education and Business Committee recommends that the Board of Education of School District No. 79 (Cowichan Valley) approves establishing a Performing Arts Academy at Cowichan Open School and authorizes the fees be set at \$325 per month or \$3,250 per year.”

CARRIED

7. **BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS**

7.1 2021-2022 Year End Projection

As we get further through the school year we get a clearer picture of what our year end will look like, which is currently anticipated to be a surplus of about \$1.2M.

Revenue:

- International Student Program fees are currently \$321,000 above budget.
- Rental revenue is also above budget due to the rental of Charles Hoey by the Francophone Authority.

Expenses:

- If salary trends continue we anticipate coming in \$84,000 under budget, however this could be impacted by February absenteeism rates, which are typically the highest of the school year.
- Benefits are projected to come in about \$295,000 under budget.
- Even though an additional \$150,000 was added to the utilities budget to cover the anticipated electricity required to maintain airflow through the increased filtration systems, it is expected that the budget will be overspent by close to \$179,000.

7.2 Enrolment Estimate 2022-2023

Enrolment plays a big role in budget planning. The Board's demographers, Baragar, provide data accumulated through birth rates (postal codes of parents of the children) as well as in/out migration patterns. When look at all the factors, we estimate a relatively modest increase of 49 FTE next year, vs. the 31 estimated by the Ministry's demographers. An increase of 36 FTE is being used for budgeting purposes due to the strict application of enrolment rules around K-9 Distributed Learning. Looking ahead to 2023-2024 we see an increase of another 105 FTE before enrolment begins to stabilize. Birth rates have decreased since peaking in 2017; the 2020 birthrate data is the lowest it's been since 2007.

7.3 2022-2023 Budget Preview

The Secretary-Treasurer presented an overview of the plans and considerations for preparing the 2022-2023 Annual Budget. Some items impacting the budget include:

- Enrolment not only affects both revenue and expenditures, but also plays a role in capital expenditures due to the potential need for portables;
- Wage and benefit cost increases;
- Expenditures for the Trustee election on October 15, 2022;
- Upgrading of financial, procurement, human resources and payroll software; and
- Pandemic-related expenses.

7.4 Draft Budget Guiding Principles

The Secretary-Treasurer thanked Director of Communications Mike Russell for his work helping to reframe the draft Budget Guiding Principles, which were presented to Trustees.

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Kemmler

"That the Board Education and Business Committee recommends the 2022/2023 Budget Guiding Principles to the Board for approval."

CARRIED

8. POLICY

9. COMMITTEES

9.1 Highlights of the February 15, 2022 Advisory Committee Meeting

The Advisory Committee Meeting was held on February 15, 2022. The Highlights of the meeting were attached to the Agenda.

10. ADJOURNMENT

10.1 Motion to Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Kemmler

"That there being no further business, the meeting be adjourned."

CARRIED