

MINUTES OF THE BOARD EDUCATION AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 29, 2022, 4:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

PRESENT

Trustee Rob Hutchins, Chair
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
Tom Longridge, Associate Superintendent
Larry Mattin, Director of Instruction
Richard Dyble, Director of Operations
Mike Russell, Director of Communications
Erin Egeland, Associate Secretary-Treasurer
Claire Spencer, Recording Secretary

APOLOGIES Trustee Candace Spilsbury

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Hutchins called the meeting to order at 4:05 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 March 29, 2022 Board Education and Business Committee meeting."

CARRIED

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the February 22, 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 February 22, 2022 Board Education and Business Committee Meeting."

CARRIED

4. **ACTION LIST**

5. **PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS**

6. **EDUCATION**

6.1 **For Information**

6.1.1 **Human Resources: 3-Year Plan**

The Human Resources team includes nine full-time staff members who are responsible for all things related to hiring and supporting employees. The team has undergone some reorganization over the past ten months and has welcomed new members, including the Health and Wellness Coordinator and Occupational Health and Safety Manager. The team has also reviewed roles and responsibilities to eliminate overlap and improve efficiencies. The three-year plan was created by the Human Resources team based on the results of the Human Resources Review that took place last year. Highlights of the plan include:

Learning:

This year Human Resources took over the responsibility of student teacher practicum assignments and placed 78 student teachers throughout schools. Strategies to increase recruitment and retention of student teachers include: maintaining personal connections with the students following their practicums; increasing the visibility of senior management at job fairs; creation of a recruitment video featuring senior staff and our District Elder and Knowledge Holder; and increasing the use of social media for recruitment. As part of the succession planning process, a Vice-Principal pool was created. Two members were placed very quickly into positions, and seven members remain available in the pool.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing:

Staff has been working with the CVTF on an Employment Equity Application with the goal of increasing the number of Indigenous staff within our employee pool. While the current focus is on the CVTF, there are plans to include CUPE and USW in the future. Ten District leaders attended a workshop on Diversity for Hiring Initiatives last month. The Staffing Officer and Indigenous Education are in the early stages of working on local recruitment strategies.

Culture of Care:

She has appreciated the cooperation, collaboration, and focus on problem solving when concerns arise with unionized partners. Meetings are held regularly with all three union partners, including new bi-monthly meetings with the CVTF which can be beneficial for

resolving challenges before they become grievances. While continuing to promote employee wellness, the Wellness Coordinator's role expanded this year to include medical leave and disability management, supporting all three employee groups. The attendance management program was not pursued due to the pandemic but will be a focus moving forward.

Future Focused Systems:

Team members' portfolios were reviewed to identify opportunities to streamline work, eliminate duplication of duties, and improve efficiency. Software is being investigated to support automating employee dispatch, which is preferred by TTOC's as it allows them the opportunity to more effectively plan their week.

6.2 For Action

6.2.1 Mill Bay Nature School: Qwiqwul tst tse (Let's Talk) New Clan Concept

Mill Bay Nature School is a school of choice that has been putting down deep roots since its opening four years ago. Parents have been advocating for a continuation of their children's learning based on the principles, philosophy and pedagogy of Mill Bay Nature School. Qwiqwul tst tse "Let's Talk" has been designed with adolescent growth and development in mind to accommodate students from Grades 6-9 within one clan.

Moved by Trustee Thorne

Seconded by Trustee de Groot

"That the Board Education and Business Committee recommends that the Board approve the Mill Bay Nature School new clan concept for the 2022-2023 school year."

CARRIED

6.2.2 International Student Program Change in Fee Structure

District Principal Alison Keple presented proposed changes to the International Student Program fees for the 2023/24 school year, which need to be published a year in advance. Proposed changes include:

- Transportation (to cover annual school bus fees) increase from \$400 to \$450 to cover increasing fuel costs;
- Homestay fee increase from \$900 to \$1,000 to address the rising costs (groceries, etc.) due to inflation;
- Tuition increase from \$14,000 to \$14,250;
- Report Card Validation Fee increase from \$125 to \$150 to align with fees charged by neighbouring districts;
- Introduction of a \$150/month vegan/vegetarian diet fee (no change to existing \$300/month celiac diet fee);

- Adjustment of early arrival fee to \$50/night (from \$32/night) to match the \$50/night late departure fee.

Moved by Trustee Thorne

Seconded by Trustee Kemmler

"That the Board Education and Business Committee recommends to the Board the approval of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 International Student Program fees as presented."

CARRIED

6.2.3 Early Learning and Child Care Committee

The Board established early learning as a priority in its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. The Cowichan Valley has had a shortage of child care spaces for many years. A childcare study commissioned by the CVRD in 2020 recommended increasing the number of child care spaces in the region as well as improving the quality of the child care available. When early learning and child care moves from the MCFD to the Ministry of Education on April 1, 2022, school districts will face increased demands to provide additional early learning and child care opportunities. The District has several initiatives on the go, including five new child care centres being put into operation on school properties, an out-of-school care program being piloted at Bench Elementary, six StrongStarts and two StrongStart outreach programs. To support the Ministry's direction and the Board's priority of early learning, the District requires an Early Learning Manager, responsible for quality assurance, partnerships and engagement, and operations. As the Ministry has not yet announced any additional funding related to early learning, at this time the funding for the position would come out of the operating budget.

Trustee Croft joined the meeting at 4:41 p.m.

Moved by Trustee Croft

Seconded by Trustee Thorne

"That the Board Education and Business Committee recommends that the Board of Education of School District No. 79 (Cowichan Valley) create a new Early Learning Manager position in the 2022-2023 Budget."

CARRIED

7. **BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS**

7.1 For Information

7.1.1 Year End Projection

The Secretary-Treasurer presented Trustees with an updated year-end projection. The projected surplus is currently \$1.2M, with notable changes this month including:

- International Student Program (ISP) revenue is now projected to be \$352K over budget;

- Miscellaneous revenue (e.g. ISP registration fees, transportation fees, homestay fees) is projected to be \$180K over budget;
- Salaries are projected to be underspent by \$494K, even with casual replacements over budget by an anticipated \$51K;
- Benefits are projected to be \$363K below budget;
- Budgets for supplies and utilities are expected to be above budget by about \$232K due to inflation.

7.1.2 2022-2023 Annual Budget

The budget was created to align with the 2022/2023 Budget Guiding Principles, as well as the Board's priorities as set out in its Strategic Plan. Inflation will have a significant impact on the budget.

The Provincial Grant is based on the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students. The per-pupil rate will be unchanged next year, but the grant is expected to increase by \$460K due to an anticipated increase of 36 FTE and funding for unique geographic factors. As provincial bargaining hasn't concluded with the BCTF, CUPE and USW, the grant doesn't include adjustments for wage settlements at this time. It is anticipated that wage settlement funding will come as a separate grant.

Just over 90% of the District's funding is from Provincial grants, with about 7% coming from LEA's. The remaining funding comes from the International Student Program tuition, rentals and leases, investments, etc. The majority of funding (82%) is spent on instruction, with 11% on operations and maintenance, 3.7% on District administration, and 3.15% on transportation. Wages and benefits make up 90% of expenditures; with 4.58% on services, 3.36% on supplies, 1.7% on utilities, and the remainder on insurance and operating capital.

Cost pressures:

- Statutory benefits will increase by approximately \$261K.
- Health benefits: The \$400K Extended Health/Dental credit due to decreased usage during the pandemic is now gone. The net increase in health benefits is estimated to be \$669K.
- Additional teachers to accommodate increased enrolment is estimated to be \$170K, with an additional increase of \$391K due to teachers moving to higher pay bands/experience rates. These may be offset by senior teachers retiring and being replaced by teachers with lower pay bands/experience rates.
- This year's budget had a \$200K one-time COVID initiative to increase the electrostatic program and add supplies. These were removed from the first draft of the 2022-2023 budget but will be brought back for consideration during the budget process. An additional \$150K was added to the amended 2020-2021 budget for absenteeism which was left in for next year as we have already exceeded that budget.

- Increased energy to support improved ventilation resulted in the Hydro budget being \$150K overspent.
- Diesel costs have increased significantly.
- Software licencing increases annually.
- Maintenance supplies expenses are up due to vandalism and inflation.
- Every fourth year \$100K is set aside for costs related to the Trustee election.

Budget impacts that remain unknown include health benefit rates for Teachers and Principals, and funding and expenditures for enhanced COVID-19 safety protocols.

The Operating Shortfall Reconciliation for the 2022/23 budget is \$2.4M. The 2021/2022 budget is projected to have a surplus at June 30, 2022 of \$4.48M. The Board's policy requires 1-3% (\$940K - \$2.8M) of its budget be held in contingency. As the Board considers the appropriate level of surplus to utilize in the 2022/2023 budget, consideration must also be given to future requirements identified in the three-year financial plan.

Next Steps:

The budget survey will be released April 1 and close April 17. Partner group meetings will be held on April 1 and April 8. The Budget will be on the Agenda for the Board meeting next week. Options will be brought to the Board at the Special BEBC meeting on April 14. A public meeting will be held following the Advisory Committee on April 19.

7.2 For Action

7.2.1 Out-of-Province Fees

Students that come in from out of province to study in the Cowichan Valley (to attend an Academy program, or because they have been recruited by a local sports team), don't receive funding from the Ministry of Education. The Board has ability to set out-of-province fees, as it does for International students.

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Kemmler

"That the Board Education and Business Committee recommends that the Board establish the 2022/2023 out-of-province tuition rate at \$12,400 and conduct a review prior to establishing the 2023/2024 rate."

CARRIED

8. POLICY

8.1 Update to Section 8.14 of Policy 2, Role of the Board

Section 8.14 of Policy 2, Role of the Board, currently states that the Board shall approve fee schedules for academies and International Students. The amendment would include the addition of Out-Of-Province fees.

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Croft

"That the Board Education and Business Committee recommends to the Board of Education of School District No. 79 (Cowichan Valley) the amendment of Policy 2, Role of the Board."

CARRIED

9. **COMMITTEES**

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

10.1 **Motion to Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Moved by Trustee Thorne
Seconded by Trustee Croft

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

CARRIED