

MINUTES OF THE BOARD EDUCATION AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, October 26, 2021, 4:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

PRESENT

Trustee Johanne Kemmler, Acting Chair
Trustee Barb de Groot
Trustee Elizabeth Croft
Trustee Candace Spilsbury
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 (Secondary)
Richard Dyble, Director of Operations
Erin Egeland, Associate Secretary-Treasurer
Mike Russell, Director of Communications
Claire Spencer, Recording Secretary

APOLOGIES Trustee Rob Hutchins

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2.1 Motion to Adopt Agenda

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Croft

"That the Board Education and Business Committee adopts the agenda of the October 26, 2021 Board Education and Business Committee meeting."

CARRIED

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the September 28, 2021 Board Education and Business Committee Meeting

Trustee Randy Doman joined the meeting at 4:01 pm.

Moved by Trustee Croft
Seconded by Trustee Spilsbury

"That the Board Education and Business Committee adopts the minutes of the September 28, 2021 Board Education and Business Committee Meeting."

CARRIED

3.2 Minutes of the October 12, 2021 Special Board Education and Business Committee Meeting

Moved by Trustee de Groot

Seconded by Trustee Croft

"That the Board Education and Business Committee adopts the minutes of the October 12, 2021 Special Board Education and Business Committee Meeting."

CARRIED

4. **ACTION LIST**

4.1 Action List

The CUPE/USW Time Bank will be part of the next budget discussions. Staff will aim to have revisions to the proposed Climate Change Committee section of Policy 8 brought to the November BEBC meeting.

5. **PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS**

6. **EDUCATION**

6.1 School Plan Presentation: Mill Bay Nature School

Trustee Thorne joined the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

Mill Bay Nature School Principal Kim Ondrik presented the School Plan to Trustees.

What are we paying attention to this year?

- What we observe and document permeates how we relate to the children in our care which will have major impacts on our expectations, our judgements, our lenses, our relationships with the whole child, their family and the community.

What are the unique, positive characteristics of our school?

- Over the past three years the school has been developing relationships with the Cowichan, Malahat, and Penelakut peoples, walking together with our Elders and residents and seek to build a place that honours the natural rhythms of this place, the lessons learned over millennia, and the structures of a village that honours and ultimately serves our sacred children.
- We enact the First Peoples Principles of Learning here because they reflect the natural rhythms of a healthy, sustainable human ecosystem.
- The staff is committed to an emergent curriculum which flows from provocations, questions, challenges, in the living of life in a community of people.
- The staff are also committed to the development of core competencies as described in the BC curriculum within themselves and the children.
- A video was shared showing a teacher gathering the students to work together to discuss a risky activity in the playground, which turned into a physics lesson.
- The school's 180 students are ungraded, but are put in groupings by age:
 - Dandelion Pod has three clans ages 4-8;

- Cedar Pod has 3 clans ages 6-10;
- Smuqw'a' Pod has 2 clans ages 8-12; and
- Blended Clan has ages 6-13.
- Dandelion Pod: The structure, design, rhythms and protocols are full of rigour for their young brains, e.g. finding friends on a huge field, helping to find consensus when there's a problem or conflict, and sitting respectfully for an hour in circles.
- Cedar Pod: The structure, design, rhythms and protocols are fodder for their developing thinking skills; they are growing agency and voice, and their sense of social and community of dynamics. They really love to do things like critique school guidelines and rules, adding new rules, guidelines and structures, beginning to problem solve with peers on their own and discerning when they need assistance, walking long distances for bathroom or water breaks and finding their way back to clans, and supporting younger children to find their shoes or backpack.
- Smuqw'a' Clan: The structure, design, rhythms and protocols were found wanting for this clan after the school's second year. They received a \$20,000 grant from the Vancouver Foundation and are working with their elders-in-residence, knowledge keepers, students, families, staff, university researchers and community members to think about how they can create an embedded, land-based Hul'q'umi'num immersed middle school at Mill Bay Nature School. The clan wanted to take action after seeing the amount of garbage at a provincial park on a field trip, and decided to protest at the parliament buildings. Ultimately different ministries got involved and the park has undergone significant cleanup since then.
- Blended Clan: This Clan was created initially as a response to COVID, but is now an alternative for families that want to home school with guidance from a trained teacher. This year students are coming to school at times to participate with the bigger school community.

What are our School Goals?

- Weaving the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the First Peoples' Principles of Learning and the BC Curriculum (core competencies, curricular competencies and content) to form a container to hold our children so each can thrive.
- **Learning Goal 1:** The intentional creation of a culture that develops and nurtures literacy in our children as well as a deepening understanding of the underlying brain processes so that literacy becomes a joy-filled, deeply-valued part of our school culture and each child can see their growth over time. The non-contact time at the school is used for literacy.
- **Learning Goal 2:** Helping teachers be able to witness learning as it uniquely emerges from each child and be able to communicate it well to parents, because what we observe and document permeates how we relate to the children in our care, which will impact our expectations, judgements, lenses and relationship to the whole child.
- **Indigenous Ways of Knowing:** The District's Strategic Plan is an inspiring document and is used a lot for the vision it contains. They are working to continue to amplify the Hul'q'umi'num culture in the school through speaking the language, drumming, singing, circle protocols, consensus building, privileging time/patience, Coast Salish artwork/design, practicing gratitude, witnessing, walking gently with themselves and others, apprenticeship learning pedagogy, and holding their sacred children - 'Xe'Xe Smune'em - in a generous gaze full of wonder. A \$6500 grant has been received which will be used for a mural by Stuart Pagaduan that will depict the land acknowledgement the students have been working on.

Louis Sylvester, a bus driver who did COVID cleaning at the school last year, is part of the Community and has been drumming once a week at the school. They also have a Knowledge Keeper from Penelakut who spends Fridays at the school. Many students, families and staff members participated in the march organized on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

- **Culture of Care:** They have been learning about how to move from democratic decision making to more consensus building decision making. They are learning the value of coming to understand that decisions take a long time to make if you want everyone to have a vote and have everyone's ideas heard.

6.2 Three Year Plans

6.2.1 Finance: Jason Sandquist, Secretary-Treasurer

The 2021-2024 Financial Plan was designed to align to the Board's strategic priorities, and is a requirement of the new K-12 Public Education Financial Reporting Policy. This is a dynamic document that will change as further information is received. The purpose of the plan is to help stakeholders understand the financial processes, and provide a summary of information used to make financial decisions that support the Board's strategic priorities.

The Board's budget process, which runs from December through May, ensures the priorities in the Strategic Plan are properly funded, and includes partner and public input through communication and consultation. The budget must comply with the School Act, collective agreements, and maintain an appropriate contingency balance.

Three different fund types are laid out in the Financial Plan:

1. The Operating Fund is roughly 80% of the Board's budget, and is used to support learning, teaching programs, administration, facility operations and maintenance, and busing.
2. Special Purpose Funds, such as the Annual Facilities Grant, are used for specific purposes and have rules governing their use.
3. The Capital Fund is used to fund buildings, fields, infrastructure, and land purchases.

Data from the three enrolment counts per year (September, February and May) is used to estimate funding, based on a lot of assumptions including the future per-pupil base grant. The anticipated growth in the International Student Program over the next few years has been reflected into the estimated International Revenues estimates and staffing levels. For future year forecasting, an assumption was made that each employee group will receive a 2% raise.

6.2.2 Operations: Richard Dyble, Director of Operations

The Operations Department's 2020-2024 Multi-Year Plan was created with input from employees and the management team to align with the District's strategic priorities. The Department's Mission Statement "Committed to providing excellent service out front and behind the scenes to support our District" was an employee submission, voted on within the work groups.

Operations provides support to the District and community related to capital planning and implementation, facilities, rentals, grounds, health and safety, maintenance, and transportation.

Strategic Goals

Learning:

- Integrate operations within early learning and K-12 programming;
- Introduce and engage learners in various aspects of school operational support;
- Assist with the renovations of spaces necessary to support childcare and outdoor classrooms.

The Department would like to engage and inspire students by having trades work done where students can watch and ask questions, and offering interactive tours and demonstrations.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing:

- Embrace an environmentally-sensitive way of thinking that will form the foundation for decision making;
- Engage in knowledge sessions on the historical lands and culture of our local Indigenous peoples;
- Support the schools with the creation of outdoor learning spaces;
- Rethink the use of our school sites to create greater access to natural play;
- Continue the incorporation of Hul'q'umi'num' greetings and messaging on our school buses;
- Encourage a district-wide composting and organics program (in partnership with Nanaimo Regional District, which gifted us green composting bins).

Culture of Care:

- Continue work to destigmatize mental health;
- Encourage Operations staff to engage in school activities and events;
- Create a focus towards projects that promote equity and inclusivity;
- Explore community engagement opportunities;
- Expand their knowledge sessions to include SOGI, respectful workplace, Indigenous knowledge, inclusivity and diversity.

Future-Focused System:

- Review operational plans quarterly for cohesive alignment with District strategies;
- Create access to online learning opportunities for opportunities for staff;
- Expand maintenance and renewals programs;
- Create opportunities for staff knowledge-sharing sessions;
- Complete a transportation review and align outcomes with the Strategic Plan;
- Implement new custodial techniques including the bucket system for chemical control;
- Increase alternate fuel options including electric alternatives within the school bus and light-duty fleet.

6.2.3 Communications: Mike Russell, Director of Communications

Director of Communications Mike Russell presented an overview of the Storytelling Strategy 2021-2024, which is guided by the District's Strategic Plan and is part of the larger Communications Plan.

The Storytelling Strategy is a framework that helps find compelling stories to engage the public in what's happening in the District and its schools. The Strategy isn't so much finding specific stories, but is a framework to go over the top of any story to pick out the important pieces so we have something that's very compelling, tells a very good story, and brings people into the change that we're trying to effect as an organization and as individuals.

Over the past three years, the District's stories have typically been told using captivating photos, compelling text and inspiring videos shared via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and on our website. The stories that generated the most social media conversations dealt with Indigenous education, community service, land-based learning, or individual contributions to community. We want our stories to be hopeful, learner centered, future focused, unique and interesting, and reflective of our communities and our roles within.

The Cowichan Valley School District is the only Canadian participant in Shared Story, which is a subgroup of The Partnership for the Future of Learning. The goal of this collaborative group is to shift the cultural narrative about public education. The Shared Story Strategy Screen refines our storytelling vision and provides a guide to our framing and the telling of our stories to:

- Advance a bold vision;
- Offer solutions and inspire action;
- Navigate, leverage and shift frames,
- Illuminate structural inequities; and
- Build power and participation.

The goal for the 2021-2024 Storytelling Strategy is to inspire hope. The last couple of years have been hard on people, and if we focus on inspiring hope within our School District's staff and community, it will resonate.

Our stories will be told using the following methods:

- Individual stories - 2-3 minute video stories from individual schools;
- Mini-Doc Series such as Xe'Xe' Smun'een (Our Sacred Children) and Nuts'a' maat shqwaluwun kw tst yaayus (Working together with one heart, one mind, one thought) produced by Keywork Designs
- In-house stories - photos and stories created by the Director of Communications and shared on social media;
- Indigenous Education - Hello Dolly and Hul'q'umi'num Word of the Week;
- Media outreach - focusing on ensuring that the media gets copies of our stories with the hope that they help us share them.

7. BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS

7.1 K-12 Public Education Accumulated Operating Surplus Policy

Boards are required to update their contingency policies to clearly explain the purpose of operating surplus and how that surplus will be used to support their Board's strategic objectives and other operational priorities of their District. The policies must also include guidelines on how inter-fund transfers will be managed, and outline how financial risks will be mitigated by establishing a contingency operating surplus. Boards are required to consult with all partner groups and First Nations around what will be restricted from the operating surplus at the end of the school year. A companion guide lays out steps Boards should take to manage their surpluses.

7.2 K-12 Public Education Financial Planning and Reporting Policy

The Secretary-Treasurer provided an overview of the new Policy, which ensures that Boards align their resources to their strategic plans, and that they are on target to achieve their long-term, strategic and financial goals. Boards should develop and implement internal processes to monitor and track the financial progress and performance.

7.3 Policy 17 Contingency Reserve

8. POLICY

9. COMMITTEES

9.1 Highlights of the October 19, 2021 Advisory Committee Meeting

Trustee Croft provided a summary of the October 19, 2021 Advisory Committee Meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT

10.1 Motion to Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

Moved by Trustee de Groot

Seconded by Trustee Spilsbury

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

CARRIED