



The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
Education Policy and Directions Committee Meeting
Meeting of Monday, November 4, 2019 @ 7:00 p.m.
Tolmie Boardroom, 556 Boleskine Road

AGENDA

Estimated Times	
	A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING
7:00 - 7:05 pm	A1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories we live, we learn, and we do our work.
	A2. Approval of the Agenda (pgs. 01-02)
7:05 – 7:10 pm	A3. Approval of the Minutes a) Approval of the Education Policy and Directions Minutes of October 7, 2019 meeting (pgs. 03-05)
	A4. Business arising from the Minutes
7:10 – 7:40 pm	B. PRESENTATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE
	B1. Marc Cittone and Melinda Jolley , Parents for Early Language Education (10 minutes)
	B2. Elise Murphy , Board Policies and Public Consultation
	B3. Angela Carmichael , President, George Jay PAC
	B4. Kimberlie Drapeau , Vice President, George Jay PAC
	B5. Kristil Hammer , VCPAC Inclusion Plus Sub-Committee (pgs. 06-10)
7:40 pm	C. NEW BUSINESS
	C1. Introduction of Student Representative – Shelley Green Karmen Legge, Esquimalt High School
	C2. Gifted Education Update (pgs. 11-12) Harold Caldwell
	C3. Emergency Preparedness Update Greg Kitchen
	D. NOTICE OF MOTION

Note: This meeting is being audio and video recorded. The video can be viewed on the District website.

E. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

F. ADJOURNMENT



**Education Policy and Directions Committee
October 7th, 2019 – Tolmie Board Room**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Nicole Duncan - Chair, Tom Ferris, Ryan Painter (via conference phone)

Regrets: Diane McNally

Other Trustees Present: Jordan Watters (Board Chair), Rob Paynter

Administration: Shelley Green - Superintendent, Katrina Stride, Acting Secretary-Treasurer, Deb Whitten - Deputy Superintendent, Colin Roberts - Associate Superintendent, Louise Sheffer – Director, District Team, Harold Caldwell – Director, District Team, Tammy Renyard – District Principal, Special Education, Tammy Sherstibitoff – District Principal, Human Resource Services, Andy Canty, Director of Information for Technology, Cindy Graff - GVTA Representative, Faith Liddie - CUPE 947 Representative, Jodi Whiteman - VCPAC President, Jeannette Alexander - ASA President, Vicki Hanley – Executive Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

Chair Duncan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chair Duncan also recognized and acknowledged the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories we live, we learn and we do our work.

A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

A1. Approval of the Agenda

It was moved by Trustee Ferris

That the October 7, 2019 Education Policy and Directions agenda be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A2. Approval of the Minutes

It was moved by Trustee Ferris

That the September 9th, 2019 Education Policy and Directions Committee Minutes be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A3. Business Arising from the Minutes – None

B. PRESENTATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE

B1. View Royal Elementary School / Jen Wark

B2. Central Middle School / Farheen HaQ

- B3. Central Middle School / Angela Carmichael**
- B4. George Jay Elementary School / Brianna Day**
- B5. View Royal Elementary School / Graham Haymes**
- B6. Central Middle School / Carrie Peter**

C. NEW BUSINESS

C1. Introduction of Student Representatives

Superintendent, Shelley Green, introduced and welcomed Student Representative, Angela Wang, Oak Bay Secondary School, to the Education Policy and Directions Committee meeting.

C2. School Support Profiles and Next Steps

Deputy Superintendent, Deb Whitten, referred Trustees to the information that she provided in their agendas with regards to school support profiles at District schools for students that require additional assistance and have diverse needs. Ms. Whitten further explained for Trustees the guiding principles of inclusive learning within the District and provided historical data on Ministry designations and Educational Assistants hours and the allocation of funding amongst schools. Ms. Whitten advised Trustees and parents that a Inclusion Forum is being planned for the end of November, followed by a high level survey by year end. Discussion ensued amongst the Trustees with questions being asked of Deputy Superintendent Whitten.

C3. Education Assistant Bridge Program

Tammy Sherstibitoff, District Principal, Human Resource Services, Tammy Renyard, District Principal Special Education/Inclusive Learning and Denise Wehner, District Vice-Principal, Languages and Multiculturalism, attended the committee meeting to provide Trustees with information regarding a new bridge program for Education Assistants which recently ran in the District. The two week program offered classroom work and on site practicum experience and after completing the course the District now has seventeen more EA's on the spareboard. The program was well received and will run again. Discussion ensued amongst the Trustees with questions of clarification being asked.

C4. Late French Immersion Program Review

Associate Superintendent, Colin Roberts, updated Trustees on the Late French Immersion review process with a summary of findings and advised what the next steps in the process will be. A final decision will be made and the motion will be brought back and presented at the October 28, 2019 Board of Education meeting.

That the motion "That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to establish and document a process for undertaking a review of Late French Immersion programming that takes into account the current Ministry of Education policy on French Immersion programs and that includes a consultation process which involves relevant stakeholders prior

to implementing a change to the program, in line with Policy 1163 – Consultation, be referred to the May 6, 2019 Education Policy and Directions Committee meeting.” **be tabled until the Education Policy and Directions Committee meeting of October 7th, 2019.**

D. NOTICE OF MOTION - None

E. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS - None

F. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Trustee Ferris :

That the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried Unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.



VICTORIA
CONFEDERATION
OF
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
TELEPHONE (250) 475 4193
WWW.VCPAC.CA

**VCPAC Inclusion Plus Sub Committee report to
Greater Victoria School District Board of Education
Education Policy and Directions Standing Committee -
November 4, 2019**

This report is an attempt to increase understanding of the work the committee doing and what VCPAC hoped to accomplish with it.

In March these two motions were accepted:

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to produce surveys for the purpose of gathering feedback on the District's Learning Support Operational Plan's goals. The purpose of the first survey will be to gather feedback from all staff regarding Goal 1: Provide meaningful and purposeful educational opportunities for vulnerable students with diverse learning needs while considering the physical, social-emotional and academic domains. The purpose of the second survey will be to gather feedback from parents and students on their experience of inclusive learning in our district. Survey participants should be invited to participate on a voluntary basis and the surveys should be conducted on an anonymous basis to exclude the collection of respondent's personal / private information.

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to consult with Victoria Confederation of Parents Advisory Councils and the appropriate VCPAC sub-committee for input on the development of a stakeholder engagement process for Inclusive Education in SD61 in advance of the Strategic Plan renewal process. The Superintendent shall report back to the Board at the May 2019 Education Policy and Directions Standing Committee meeting.

We understand a consultant has been hired to assist the District and will report back in due course. We believe this consultant was contracted to develop a stakeholder engagement process for inclusive education. However, if they were also hired to develop the survey we are eager to engage. VCPAC and the Inclusion Plus sub committee are very interested in being part of both the drafting of the parent survey and in engaging with the consultant to discuss inclusive education in SD61.



VICTORIA
CONFEDERATION
OF
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
TELEPHONE (250) 475 4193
WWW.VCPAC.CA

Our sub committee has compiled a list of possible question themes to develop for the survey and are currently drafting the questions we believe reflect the concerns raised by the parents we are hearing from. It is our hope that we will have the opportunity to discuss the merits of our questions for inclusion in the survey. We have also identified some information statements and definitions that will help the survey participants understand the issues we hope to be exploring in the survey.

Over the years the Board has accepted policies and motions that direct the District staff to plan actions that will support our children in their learning. Sometimes through data gathering and other times through creation of appropriate environments for students to attain optimal success in reaching their goals and the Ministry learning outcomes.

For instance in June 2018 the Board passed this motion about mental health literacy and mental wellness for the entire school community.

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) endorse mental health literacy and mental wellness, for the entire school community, as a priority area of focus for the Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee and task that committee with developing an action plan to be brought back to a future Education Policy and Directions Committee meeting

Then September 2018 opened with parents attending board standing committee meetings. They came asking for data to be gathered and hoping that data would help to inform decisions made by the School Board and District staff while they further implemented the new Inclusion goals. At the September 10th Education Policy and Directions Standing Committee meeting a few motions were passed that would ensure the collection and reporting of data. Parents hoped that would help all understand the frequency of requests to keep children home and the conditions some of our vulnerable students are being asked to accept as their learning spaces and conditions.



VICTORIA
CONFEDERATION
OF
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
TELEPHONE (250) 475 4193
WWW.VCPAC.CA

Those motions were brought to the Board meeting on September 24, 2018. One of them was carried unanimously unaltered:

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to survey schools each November regarding space pressures and use of resource, sensory and breakout rooms.

The other two were amended but did still carry.

The motion directly below instructs that the absences be recorded as absences if the student is not present with the class when they should be there and participating.

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to ensure all withdrawals and absences be recorded appropriately for all students with special needs, including absences due to being asked to stay home, excluded from class field trips, or sent home due to lack of appropriate care.

While the following motion asks for a report to be given of those absences so that the Board can understand the actual experience of the students and their parents as they advocate for student services and rights which carried unanimously.

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to provide a monthly report to trustees on students with special needs that specifies in unusual circumstances, outside of the student IEP and daily plan, the number of incidents, as per each point: 1. Being asked to stay home; 2. Being sent home; 3. Being dropped off late and/or picked up early by bussing services; 4. Being excluded from field trips; 5. Being sent out of the regular classroom to the Resource Room, or Sensory /Isolation Room, or other space, if no breakout room is available.

The parent concerns showed the need for further light shining on programs of choice and led to motions for better reporting of current conditions to the board. All this engagement of concerned parents occurring during the boundary review convinced VCPAC that there was a group of parents not participating in the mainstream parent/PAC voice. VCPAC formed the Inclusion Plus committee to



VICTORIA
CONFEDERATION
OF
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
TELEPHONE (250) 475 4193
WWW.VCPAC.CA

help unite the parents of vulnerable students that were now more scattered across the district with the cessation of district programming.

These parents are in need of follow through. They are strong, educated, devoted and determined but they are also exhausted, worried and frustrated. They are the ones calling work to take another day off when their child's supports are not available and attending school is not a viable option. Calling work for time off when their children are not able to participate in the excursions because it won't work for the child. They advocated for the programs at Arbutus and Esquimalt to continue. They ask for appropriate space for calming their frazzled children now in the over stimulating inclusive classroom. They advocate for support workers to help the cohort of students reach their learning goals by supporting the most vulnerable learners in the room. They advocate for the inclusion model to be truly inclusive not simply integrated. And they were isolated.

This committee has an executive and it meets a minimum once a month. They have members of the community, such as Tracy Humphries and professionals trained to support non neuro-typical learners, engaging regularly. The executive works to understand what the district is doing and the policies that guide the work of the district to support vulnerable learners alongside typical learners. They then share this information at times with standing room only groups of parents. They network and encourage parents to be strong advocates in the schools for their children within the structure provided by policy and motions of action from the Board.

The above mentioned accepted motions were rays of hope to these parents. They saw the possibility of support for both their children and themselves in ways to manage mental wellness issues that arise when stress levels are escalating. They looked forward to seeing the reports so they could see the real numbers of the children's absences recorded. Yet this report is done in-camera so they are not able to agree or disagree with the numbers. They know what they experience but don't know what the Board believes is their experience. We ask that the plan for collecting and storing the information is developed soon so that aggregate numbers



VICTORIA
CONFEDERATION
OF
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
TELEPHONE (250) 475 4193
WWW.VCPAC.CA

can be shared in public in order that we may understand and even question the information.

We ask that the Board and Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee recognize that the mental wellness is a concern for these parents as well. While we support the committee's action on First Nation wellness we encourage effort toward all student mental wellness, as more often than not, these children are very stressed and anxious. The District, in light of its inclusion model, needs to be responsive to those stresses experienced during this transition period. Change is particularly difficult with this demographic.

It is clear by the motions mentioned and policies in place that the Board recognizes the value of the parent perspective when it comes to the student experience. We encourage you to engage with VCPAC and its committee members fully in the development and analysis of the survey so that we can all move forward understanding together how we can do better for all students.



556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA V8Z 1E8

Phone (250) 475-4157 Fax (250) 475-4238

To: Education Policy and Directions Committee
From: Sean McCartney, District Principal
Date: October 30, 2019
Re: Gifted Education

Background: current context

A current outline of gifted education in the Greater Victoria School District (GVSD) is located on the District website at <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/programs/student-services/gifted-education/>.

Currently in the GVSD, there are 216 students with gifted designations.

These students are supported in their schools in the following ways:

- Classroom teachers support with differentiated instruction and enrichment activities.
- A gifted contact teacher is identified at each elementary and middle school. This teacher may co-plan and co-teach with classroom teachers for further support.
- The gifted contact teacher or a learning support teacher may offer individual or small group support as needed, or as part of a regularly scheduled block of time. Some families of schools also organize events and activities across schools.
- The gifted contact teacher or learning support teacher creates an IEP for each student.
- A District Gifted Coordinator (retired at the end of 2018/19) had supported the work of the gifted contact teachers. For this year, a district gifted education team is doing this work. The team includes district administrators, a district learning support teacher, and gifted contact teachers.
- An annual 'Challenge' event is hosted for elementary and middle school gifted learners.

Discussion: future considerations

Over the past two school years, the need for a review of gifted education was raised by a number of stakeholders: trustees, District Gifted Coordinator, school staff members, parents, and members of the District Team.

The following areas for review have been identified:

- Elementary and Secondary supports are not delivered consistently across schools
- Secondary challenge programs (and application process) should be reviewed
- The identification process does not include giftedness beyond academics/aptitude
- There is not currently a process for parent input and feedback
- The current District Policy 6142.05 needs to be updated

The district gifted education team has started some of the work to review gifted education:

- Held an exit interview with the retired Gifted Coordinator and involved him in training and orientation for the gifted education team members.
- Hosted a gifted contact teacher meeting to get input from school-based staff
- Liaised with organizers of the upcoming Inclusion Forum for the potential of gathering parent and staff input and feedback

During the remainder of the 2019/20 school year, the district gifted education team plans to:

- Identify and initiate the process to update district policy 6142.05
- Establish internal working groups to:
 - Improve consistency with elementary service delivery
 - Improve consistency with secondary service delivery
 - Review gifted identification process and tools
 - Review secondary challenge programs