



**The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
Regular Board Meeting
MINUTES
Monday, December 11, 2023, 7:30 p.m.**

Trustees Present: Nicole Duncan, Board Chair, Karin Kwan, Vice-Chair, Derek Gagnon, Emily Mahbobi, Natalie Baillaut, Rob Paynter, Mavis David, Diane McNally

Trustee Regrets: Angela Carmichael

Administration: Deb Whitten, Superintendent of Schools, Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer, Harold Caldwell, Deputy Superintendent, Tom Aerts, Associate Superintendent, Julie Lutner, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, Andy Canty, Director of Information Technology for Learning, Marni Vistisen-Harwood, Director of Facilities Services, Sarah Winkler, VPVPA

Partners: Ilda Turcotte, GVTA, Jane Massy, CUPE 947

A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

This meeting began at 7:30 p.m.

A.1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories

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

A.2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Trustee Gagnon
Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the December 12, 2023 agenda be approved.

Amendment

Moved by Trustee Duncan

Seconded by Trustee Baillaut

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) amend the December 12, 2023 agenda under B.1.

December 1, 2023, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (CIA) to ~~SD61 Trustees~~ **Deb Whitten, Superintendent**, Letter Supporting Further Consultations Between SD61 and Victoria Police Department.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Moved by Trustee Gagnon
Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the December 12, 2023 agenda be approved, as amended.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A.3. Approval of the Minutes

- a. Approval of the October 30, 2023 Regular Board Minutes

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the October 30, 2023 Regular Board minutes be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

- b. Approval of the November 14, 2023 Special Public Budget Board Minutes

Moved by Trustee Kwan
Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

That the November 14, 2023 Special Public Budget Board minutes be approved.

Amendment

Moved by Trustee Duncan
Seconded by Trustee David

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) amend the November 14, 2023 Special Public Budget minutes under B.2.

- **Other information or recommendations not presented at a working group will be presented for consideration at a regular Board meeting.**

Motion Carried

For (5): Trustees Baillaut, Gagnon, Mahbobi, McNally, Duncan, Kwan, David
Abstain (1): Trustee Paynter

Moved by Trustee Kwan
Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

That the November 14, 2023 Special Public Budget Board minutes be approved, as amended.

Motion Carried Unanimously

- c. Approval of the November 27, 2023 Regular Board Minutes

Moved by Trustee Gagnon
Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the November 27, 2023 Regular Board minutes be approved.

Amendment

Moved by Trustee Duncan
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) amend the November 27, 2023 Regular Board minutes under F. Question Period

A: Chair Duncan stated that the Board of Education holds Board meetings as needed in order to carefully consider the Board's business. The Board does not hesitate to call additional meetings as needed in order to ensure that we have enough time to do our due diligence with respect to our business. **Staff provided a Section 72 memo available under E.2. of the November agenda.**

Motion Carried Unanimously

Moved by Trustee Gagnon
Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the November 27, 2023 Regular Board minutes be approved, as amended.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A.4. Business Arising from the Minutes

Trustee Kwan asked Director Vistisen-Harwood if they had a follow up to the answer under question period from the November 27, 2023 Board meeting. Director Vistisen-Harwood checked the timeline and sent a response to the community member who asked the question.

A.5. Student Achievement

None.

A.6. District Presentations

None.

A.7. Community Presentations

None.

B. CORRESPONDENCE

B.1. December 1, 2023, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (CIA) to Deb Whitten, Superintendent, Letter Supporting Further Consultations Between SD61 and Victoria Police Department

C. TRUSTEE REPORTS

C.1. Chair's Report

a. Chair's Report

Chair Duncan provided the report for information.

b. Standing Committee Assignments

Chair Duncan provided the standing committee assignments in the Chair report.

Education Policy and Directions Committee Members are Trustees Baillaut, David, Mahbobi and McNally. Ex Officio Chair Duncan.

Operations Policy and Planning Committee Members are Trustees Gagnon, Kwan, Paynter. Ex Officio Chair Duncan.

c. Standing Committee Chair Elections

a. Education Policy and Directions Committee

Chair Duncan called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Education Policy and Directions Committee for a one-year term ending November 2024.

Nominations were received for Trustees Baillaut and Mahbobi. Trustee Baillaut declined the nomination and Trustee Mahbobi accepted.

Chair Duncan declared Trustee Mahbobi the Chair of Education Policy and Directions Committee by acclamation.

b. Operations Policy and Planning Committee

Chair Duncan called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Operations Policy and Planning Committee for a one-year term ending November 2024.

Nominations were received for Trustees Gagnon and Paynter. Trustee Paynter declined the nomination and Trustee Gagnon accepted.

Chair Duncan declared Trustee Gagnon the Chair of Operations Policy and Planning Committee by acclamation.

- d. Motion to Destroy Election Ballots/Text Messages

Moved by Trustee David
Seconded by Trustee McNally

That the election ballots/text messages be destroyed.

Motion Carried Unanimously

- e. Sub-Committee Assignments Chair Duncan provided the Sub-Committee assignments in the Chair report.

C.2. Trustees' Reports

None.

D. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

D.1. Combined Education Policy and Directions Committee and Operations Policy and Planning Committee

- a. Draft combined minutes from the December 4, 2023 meeting – information only
- b. Recommended motions from the December 4, 2023 meeting.

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) refer Draft Policy 6163.1 Learning Resources to the Policy Sub-Committee for further development,

AND FURTHER

Any recommendations will come to the Education Policy and Directions Committee meeting no later than February 2024.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Moved by Trustee Gagnon
Seconded by Trustee Paynter

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve revised Policy 8400 Whistleblower Protection and accept Administrative Regulation 8400 Whistleblower Protection.

Motion Carried Unanimously

E. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS

E.1. Superintendent's Report

- a. Monthly Report

Superintendent Whitten provided the report for information.

Moved by Trustee Kwan
Seconded by Trustee David

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) receive the Superintendent's report as presented.

Motion Carried Unanimously

- b. Draft Regulation 5128 International Student Enrollment – Update

Superintendent Whitten provided an update on Draft Regulation 5128 International Student Enrollment, it will come back to the Board of Education in January 2024.

- c. Trustee Questions

Trustees had questions of clarification.

E.2. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

- a. Monthly Report

Secretary-Treasurer Stride provided the report for information.

Moved by Trustee Kwan
Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) receive the Secretary-Treasurer's report as presented.

Motion Carried Unanimously

F. QUESTION PERIOD

Q: Have you looked to the Principals to research and site SLO involved incidences in their schools to determine if the police officer in their school assisted the staff with resolving the problem or hindered them in solving the problem? I personally can think of many times where a school resource officer was needed. E.g.: drugs located in student locker, evidence of dealing in the school, various types of threats, cyber bullying, harassment and assault complaints. Thefts. Monitoring kids once they leave the school yard at breaks to ensure their safety, mental health issues with students where they have to be brought to

see a doctor due to emergent violent behavior. The list goes on. A principal could call the police in these instances, but they would not necessarily get someone with the relevant training or someone who knows the kids and has built a rapport with them to help resolve matters more easily when these things happen.

A: Chair Duncan stated that there was a three-year review of the SPLO program and on the committee, we had Administrators, Principals and representatives of various partners at the time. The Board considered all the feedback from the committee before they made their decision. We still have existing protocols in place that involve police so whether it would be lockdown, violent threat risk assessment, and others that involve police where it is appropriate. Other services that are not provided will be provided by appropriate staff members or external community partners.

Q: In reference to the letter sent on September 18, 2023 to Families and Caregivers from the Board of Education and Superintendent, what work did the Board of Education, and the Superintendent of Schools do over the summer to ensure that appropriate processes are in place after the removal of the School Liaison Officer's? What are these appropriate processes?

A: Superintendent Whitten spoke to the operational component: Senior Leadership had conversations near the end of the school year with Principals and Vice-Principals around areas that they felt they would need support with. That conversation was continued in August when all administrators met. One additional meeting was held to look and see who they are leaning into from the community to provide supports to students and schools when they need them. At least three meetings have been held to discuss this topic. Chair Duncan stated that the Board has had numerous meetings with the Superintendent regarding this work.

Q: In reference to the Chair's Report on November 27, 2023, (item 3), additionally referring to the Times Colonist article on October 19, 2023, (Police board to meet Greater Victoria school board to discuss liaison officers). When will the Board of Education meet with the Police Board to discuss the shared responsibility for student and staff safety?

A: Chair Duncan stated that those meetings are ongoing and that the Board has already met with a few Police Boards and that they will continue to meet in 2024.

Q: When will the Board of Education return to holding in-person public meetings?

A: Chair Duncan stated that the Board is continuing to review when we might move back to in person, but they need to determine the investments that will be required in order to bring our Board room up to an adequate state to hold out meetings there from an audio video perspective.

Q: Considering the increased gang activity and youth violence in all of our schools in SD61, will this board reconsider their position on School Liaison Officers with the recommended changes to this program presented by the School Police Liaison Officer Program Review Ad Hoc Committee Report from May 1, 2023?

A: Chair Duncan stated that there is no plan currently to revisit the decision. Superintendent Whitten stated that what the District is monitoring and seeing similar activity that is in community. The District does not have evidence that there is direct gang related involvement for most of the situations. We have had incidences of behaviors that are what have been described as potentially gang related, and we don't believe there has been an increase since last year, so far this year.

Q: My question is in follow up to a question asked at the November 14th meeting relating to the educational challenges at vulnerable schools such as Quadra Elementary.

I understand multiple board members visited classrooms and I'm appreciative of the prompt action by the board.

Can one or more members briefly speak to their experience, and can someone provide specific next steps, both as immediate actions AND longer-term plans for the next year, that the board will be taking as a result of this?

A: Superintendent Whitten stated that District staff have regular meetings with Principals and Vice-Principals of priority schools where they continue to look at ways that the District can provide support both in staffing and financial resources. When staff are away, and priority schools reach a certain threshold, they are prioritized to have replacement staff sent. Priority schools will be an ongoing conversation that will continue throughout the school year. Chair Duncan stated that during the budget process for the 2024-2025 school year the Board will be looking at reallocating budgets.

Q: I understand the board will be setting up a budget subcommittee to look into options relating to funding allocation specifically to priority schools. Will there be opportunity for parents to be a part of this committee in some format and how can interested parents put their names forward to be involved?

A: Chair Duncan stated that there are three working groups for this budget cycle. We have Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (VCPAC) the parent representative group that sends representatives to each of the three working groups. Secretary-Treasurer Stride provided the contact email for VCPAC, treasurer@vcpac.ca and stated that for the public to participate in the process there will be budget information that will coming to and form the Board at all of the regular Board meetings between now and March. The Board will be approving the budge in early April 2024. There will be an event that will be open to partners such as VCPAC called talking tables held on March 7, 2024. There is a planned Public Open Board meeting on April 4, 2024 that will allow participation from the public.

G. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF IN-CAMERA ITEMS

G.1. Record of In-Camera Board of Education Meeting – November 27, 2023

H. NEW BUSINESS/NOTICE OF MOTIONS

H.1. New Business

None.

H.2. Notice of Motions

None.

I. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Moved by Trustee Gagnon

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer