



**The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)**  
**Education Policy and Directions Committee Meeting**  
**REGULAR MINUTES**  
**Monday, April 15, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

Trustees Present: **Education Policy and Directions members:** Nicole Duncan (Chair), Natalie Baillaut, Mavis David, Emily Mahbobi

**Operations Policy and Planning member:** Rob Paynter

Trustee Regrets: Angela Carmichael, Derek Gagnon, Karin Kwan, Diane McNally

Administration: Deb Whitten, Superintendent of Schools, Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer, Tom Aerts, Associate Superintendent, Sean Powell, Acting Associate Superintendent, Josh Barks, District Vice-Principal, Information Technology for Learning, Vicki Roberts, VPVPA

Partners: Lena Palermo, GVTA, Nyssa Temmel, VCPAC

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**A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Mahbobi invited Chair Duncan to preside over the meeting.

**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 Mahbobi

That the April 15, 2024 agenda be approved.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

### **A.3. Approval of the Minutes**

**Moved by** Trustee Baillaut

That the March 4, 2024 Combined Education Policy and Directions and Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting minutes pertaining to the Education Policy and Directions meeting, be approved.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

### **A.4. Business Arising from Minutes**

None.

## **B. PRESENTATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE**

None.

## **C. NEW BUSINESS**

- C.1.** District Principal Charmaine Shortt provided a memo and presented with McKenzie Elementary School Principal, Carmen Gauvreau and StrongStart Facilitator and Classroom Early Childhood Educator, Donna-Lynn Thorp. The presentation highlighted the kindergarten *Welcome Process* as it connects to the Enhancing Student Learning Report (ESLR), the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan, and Ministry of Education and Child Care accountabilities.

Trustees asked for clarification on the number of StrongStart centers as well as the number of students enrolled.

District Principal Charmaine Shortt clarified that there are six StrongStart centers and just over 4500 children registered in the program.

Trustees provided thanks for the presentation and asked what gradual entry looks like for children entering kindergarten?

District Principal Charmaine Shortt shared that Kindergarten has fewer instructional hours therefore a gradual start is offered.

Partners asked about the 6 StrongStart studios and the availability of Early Childhood Educators (ECE). Are they in the StrongStart studios as well as integrated into the kindergarten class?

District Principal Charmaine Shortt clarified that they have 12 ECE's working alongside kindergarten teachers. Six of them facilitate StrongStart in the morning and then join kindergarten classes in the afternoon. The remaining six spend their days along side the kindergarten teachers in the classroom.

Trustees asked if there is a long-term plan to integrate more ECE into the program?

District Principal Charmaine Shortt replied that play is foundational in kindergarten and ECE's work alongside Kindergarten teachers to provide play based learning in classrooms.

**D. NOTICE OF MOTION**

None.

**E. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**F. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by** Trustee Baillaut

That the meeting adjourn.

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.