



**The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
Special Board Budget Meeting
MINUTES**

Thursday, April 11, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

Broadcasted via YouTube

<https://bit.ly/3czx8bA>

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

Administration: Deb Whitten, Superintendent of Schools, Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer, Tom Aerts, Associate Superintendent, Sean Powell, Acting Associate Superintendent, Julie Lutner, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, Hervinder Parmar, Director of Finance, Budgets and Financial Reporting, Dr. Jeff Davis, Director of International Education, Shawn Boulding, VPVPA, Connor McCoy, VPVPA, Brenna O'Connor, VPVPA, Gillian Braun, VPVPA, Andy Canty, Director of Information Technology for Learning

Partners: Shawna Abbott, CUPE 947, Ilda Turcotte, GVTA President, Darren Reed, CUPE 382

A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

This meeting was called to order at 6:00 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 Mahbobi

Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

That the April 11, 2024 Special Board Budget agenda be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

B. CORRESPONDENCE

B.1. Public Correspondence – Feedback Period April 5 to 10, 2024 was received.

Trustees inquired about the 11% growth in administration costs since 2011.

Secretary-Treasurer Stride stated, if we assume the question is referring to the increase in the dollar value of the salaries, that would make sense as the District has seen increases in the Exempt salary grid matching teacher salary grid increases. She explained that the District has actually seen an overall reduction in the number of Exempt positions.

Trustees asked about low enrolling trades classes and which trades classes would be impacted by the budget reduction.

Associate Superintendent Aerts stated that it is not a specific class or course being impacted. He explained that it is a reduction in specific funds that are provided to Secondary schools to help support low-enrolling trades classes.

C. 2024-2025 ANNUAL BUDGET

C.1. 2024-2025 Annual Budget Memo – April 11, 2024

Secretary-Treasurer Stride provided a memo, which included responses to questions from the April 9, 2024 Special Board Budget meeting on student device ratios, elementary strings participation numbers, and enrollment projections.

C.1.1. 2024-2025 Annual Budget Memo – April 9, 2024

Secretary-Treasurer Stride referenced the 2024-2025 Annual Budget Memo presented on April 9, 2024.

C.1.2. 2024-2025 Budget Balancing Recommendation Worksheet

Secretary-Treasurer Stride referenced the 2024-2025 Budget Balancing Recommendation Worksheet presented on April 9, 2024.

C.1.3. Draft 2024-2025 Annual Budget Ministry Template

Secretary-Treasurer Stride referenced the Draft 2024-2025 Annual Budget Ministry Template presented on April 9, 2024.

C.1.4. Draft Multi-Year Financial Forecast Memo and Worksheet

Secretary-Treasurer Stride referenced the Draft Multi-Year Financial Forecast memo and worksheet presented on April 9, 2024.

C.2. Budget Bylaw Readings: 2nd and 3rd Readings

Trustees had questions of clarification concerning the counselling reduction and the impact on schools.

Acting Associate Superintendent Powell stated that the .40 FTE savings at elementary schools had been shifted to four different elementary schools in order to

maintain a minimum base of .50 FTE at each K-5 Elementary School. It was confirmed that priority schools would not be impacted by the reduction.

Trustees asked for clarification on the impact of the reduction to District Ukulele.

Associate Superintendent Aerts confirmed that there is no impact on the program.

Moved by Trustee Kwan

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) 2024-2025 Annual Budget Bylaw in the amount of \$318,006,345 be:

Read a second time the 11th day of April, 2024.

Motion Carried

For: Trustees Baillaut, David, Duncan, Kwan, Mahbobi, Paynter

Against: Trustees Gagnon, McNally

Education partners expressed concerns about the cuts to school counsellors.

Trustees expressed thanks to students, education partners, fellow Trustees, and staff for their participation in the budget process and for all of the hard work done to balance the budget. Trustees referenced the inadequate funding received from the Province and the need for advocacy.

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi

Seconded by Trustee David

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) 2024-2025 Annual Budget Bylaw in the amount of \$318,006,345 be:

Read a third time the 11th day of April, 2024;

And that the Secretary-Treasurer and Board Chair be authorized to sign, seal and execute this Bylaw on behalf of the Board.

Motion Carried

For: Trustees Baillaut, David, Duncan, Kwan, Mahbobi, Paynter

Against: Trustees Gagnon, McNally

D. NEW BUSINESS

D.1. Motions for Consideration

District K-12 Literacy Grant

Moved by Trustee Kwan

Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to reallocate an additional 0.074 FTE (or \$10,000) of the District

K-12 Literacy Grant funding to support literacy collaboration at the 10 priority elementary schools.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Hiring Freeze

Trustees had questions of clarification.

Moved by Trustee Baillaut

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to implement a District based staff hiring freeze (excluding school-based staff) for the balance of the 2023-24 financial year; AND FURTHER bring any urgent hiring requests to the Board of Education for consideration.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Crossing Guard Services Funding

Trustees spoke in favor of the motion and had questions about the current funding model.

Secretary-Treasurer Stride explained the discrepancy between the cost of providing crossing guard services at schools within the District of Saanich and the amount of grant funding received from the District of Saanich. She confirmed that, if the District of Saanich does not fully fund the cost of crossing guard services, the District will have a funding shortfall of up to \$127K.

Moved by Trustee Paynter

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Board Chair to write to the District of Saanich Mayor and Council imploring them to fully fund crossing guards on municipal roads in Saanich in line with the full funding for these services received by all other municipalities in Greater Victoria as well as in line with their obligations of ensuring road safety under the BC Motor Vehicle Act.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Elementary Strings Hub Model

Moved by Trustee Kwan

Seconded by Trustee McNally

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to prepare a plan for how an Elementary Strings HUB model will be equitably delivered including locations, time of day, and schools allocated to each HUB by June 2024; AND FURTHER provide a list of recommendations on how Grade 5 students, who won't have a Strings program at their own school, will safely travel to the HUB.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Music Equity Ad Hoc Committee

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi

Seconded by Trustee McNally

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to prepare a draft elementary strings and middle school music equity ad hoc committee terms of reference and present it to the Education Policy and Directions Standing Committee Meeting in June 2024.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Collaboration Time at Elementary Schools

Education partners noted, when the District previously had shortened days for collaboration time, that CUPE 947 staff did not participate. It was confirmed that CUPE 947 would like to participate in collaboration time if implemented.

Trustees inquired about the impact of a shortened day on the minutes of instruction.

Superintendent Whitten responded that there would be minutes added to the other days of the week to make up for the shortened day. She also noted that more consultation is needed as this would not be under consideration until the 2025/2026 school year.

Moved by Trustee Gagnon

Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to undertake a cost benefit analysis including assessing the impacts of implementing a short school day once per month at elementary schools to support school based collaboration, and provide a recommendation(s) to the Board of Education by December 2024.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Ministry Funding Allocations

Associate Secretary-Treasurer Lutner stated that most new funding from the Ministry of Education and Child Care would be provided for a specific purpose with no flexibility to reallocate to other purposes. She also noted that additional funding received that is not targeted to a specific purpose may be required to offset unanticipated expenses which would not be fully considered until the final budget is completed in February 2025.

Moved by Trustee Gagnon

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to notify the Board of Education of receipt of any new funds from the Ministry of Education and Child Care received during the school year, and make recommendations regarding the allocation of the funds for the Board's consideration.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Board Advocacy

Trustees suggested that the letter remain consistent with what was sent last year as well as adding more current context.

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi

Seconded by Trustee David

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Board Chair to write to the Minister of Education and Child Care and Premier advocating for additional K-12 funding.

Motion Carried Unanimously

E. QUESTION PERIOD

None.

F. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Duncan thanked Director of Information Technology for Learning Canty for his service over the years and wished him all the best on his two-year secondment.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Moved by Trustee

Seconded by Trustee

That the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer