



**The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
Regular Board Meeting
MINUTES
Monday, May 27, 2024, 7:30 p.m.**

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

Trustee Regrets: Angela Carmichael, Derek Gagnon, Diane McNally

Administration: Deb Whitten, Superintendent of Schools, Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer, Tom Aerts, Associate Superintendent, Sean Powell, Acting Associate Superintendent, Julie Lutner, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, Marni Vistisen-Harwood, Director of Facilities Services, Sarah Winkler, VPVPA

Partners: Darren Reed, CUPE 382, Winona Waldron, GVTA

A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

The 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 David
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the May 27, 2024 agenda be approved.

Amendment

Moved by Trustee Duncan
Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

Add a motion at C.1.b.

That the Board of Education of School District No.61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Board Chair to write to the Victoria Police Board to make a formal request for the following information:

- any and all data pertaining to gang recruitment or other criminal activity involving youth, between 2015 to date;
- any and all data pertaining to police call outs to each SD61 school (broken down by each school) within the Victoria Police Department's jurisdiction between 2015 to date;
- a copy of any and all Victoria Police policies and procedures related to vulnerable populations (including Youth).

Motion Carried Unanimously

Moved by Trustee David
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the May 27, 2024 agenda be approved, as amended.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A.3. Approval of the Minutes

- a. Approval of the April 29, 2024 Regular Board Minutes

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee Baillaut

That the April 29, 2024 Regular Board minutes be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A.4. Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

A.5. Student Achievement

None.

A.6. District Presentations

None.

A.7. Community Presentations (5 minutes per presentation)

- a. Annie Shum spoke to Trustees about preserving music classrooms.

Trustees thanked Annie Shum for the presentation.

- b. Lisa Gunderson, Community Advocating for Students and Safety (CASS), spoke to Trustees about data regarding black youth and School Police Liaison Officers.

Trustees thanked Lisa Gunderson for the presentation.

- c. Bart Van Tine spoke to Trustees about honouring the Canadian Flag.

Trustees thanked Bart Van Tine for the presentation.

B. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

C. TRUSTEE REPORTS

C.1. Chair's Report

- a. Chair's Report

Chair Duncan provided the report for information.

- b. Chair Duncan recommended a motion for Board consideration.

Moved by Trustee Duncan
Seconded by Trustee Paynter

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- a copy of any and all Victoria Police policies and procedures related to vulnerable populations (including Youth).

Motion Carried Unanimously

- c. Ad-Hoc Committee Annual Review

Chair Duncan provided a verbal report for information.

- d. District Annual Work Plan June 2024

District annual work plan was provided for information.

C.2. Trustees' Reports

None.

D. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

D.1. Education Policy and Directions Committee

- a. Draft minutes from the May 6, 2024 meeting – information only
- b. Recommended motion from the May 13, 2024 meeting:

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee David

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) refer the draft Regulation 6163.1. Learning Resources to the Superintendent for review and bring back a revised draft to the June 3, 2024 Education Policy and Directions Committee meeting.

Motion Carried Unanimously

D.2. Operations Policy and Planning Committee

- a. Draft minutes from the May 13, 2024 meeting – information only.
- b. Recommended motions from the May 13, 2024 meeting:

2023-2024 Audit Planning Report

Moved by Trustee Kwan
Seconded by Trustee Baillaut

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve the 2023-2024 Audit Planning Report as presented to the Audit Sub-Committee.

Motion Carried Unanimously

March 2024 Quarterly Financial Report

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) accept the March 2024 Quarterly Financial Report as presented to the Audit Sub-Committee.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Solar Panels

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi

Seconded by Trustee David

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to work with the District's Manager of Energy to provide the Board of Education with a report detailing the cost/benefit and feasibility of investing in solar panels at SD 61 schools.

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 Baillaut

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. Personal Digital Device Restriction in Schools

Superintendent Whitten provided a memo on Personal Digital Device Restriction in Schools. Feedback on the draft Personal Digital Device Student Code of Conduct statements will be received and amendments may be made prior to the finalized statements being submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care in July 2024.

Trustees had questions of clarification.

c. 2024-2025 Board of Education and Standing Committee Meeting Dates

Superintendent Whitten provided the 2024-2025 Board of Education and Standing Committee Meeting Dates for approval.

Moved by Trustee Kwan

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve the 2024-2025 Board of Education and Standing Committee meeting dates.

Motion Carried Unanimously

d. Elementary Strings Hub Model – Associate Superintendent Aerts

Associate Superintendent Aerts provided the Elementary Strings Hub model.

Trustees and partners had questions of clarification.

e. Trustee Questions

Trustees asked Superintendent Whitten to advise what work Senior Leadership has done to ensure proper supports are in place since the removal of the School Police Liaison Officer program.

Superintendent Whitten replied that Senior Leadership engages in ongoing conversations with school administrators about what they are noticing in schools and the supports they require. She explained that the needs within schools are complex, constantly evolving, and differ by school level. Superintendent Whitten advised that Senior Leadership leans into the professionals on both district and school-based teams to support students in schools.

E.2. Secretary-Treasurer's Report

a. Monthly Report

Secretary-Treasurer Stride provided the report for information.

Trustees had questions of clarification.

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi

Seconded by Trustee Kwan

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

Q1: Can you clarify #9 on the SPLO FAQ on the SD61 website. There are incomplete sentences and details need to be clarified. Can Police volunteer to assist in crossing guard duties, drop off food donations, deliver education pieces to students, pop in to say hi?

A1: Chair Duncan stated the website will be reviewed for discrepancies and confirmed that Police are welcome to volunteer in the same as any other person who wishes to volunteer.

Q2: After all the pleas and letters from members of the community why do you still refuse to consider a way to improve the SPLO program instead of removing it entirely?

A2: Chair Duncan stated that they reviewed the program over a two and a half-year period and the Board decided to end the program last year. The Board has since done its best to clarify the basis of its decision. The Board wants to make it clear that all of the District's safety protocols remain in effect. The Board continues to meet with Police partners to look at communication protocols. Police will continue to be utilized in appropriate ways when there is a policing matter that arises. There are assumptions about the nature and volume of feedback that the Board has received. There are differing perspectives.

Q3: Can a safe space/outpost be allocated, specific days and times for an officer to be available for students and parents to address their issues?

A3: Chair Duncan stated that is something that could be considered. If a student or a parent wants to interact with the police around a certain matter, there is nothing preventing them from reaching out. We do have police who interact with students and parents at their request.

Q4: Can Administrators and Trustees in SD61 seek counselling if they feel unsafe with police presence? Psychologist and counsellors would never advise anyone to stay away from police officers because they feel uncomfortable and unsafe in their presence.

A4: Chair Duncan stated the Board is trying to create a safe space and have services delivered by appropriately trained, certified and regulated professionals. That does not preclude and certainly has not in the last year precluded the Board from reaching out to the police to ask for support when it is a policing matter. What the Board's decision does mean is that we would not be using police to be involved in behavioral reprimand and discipline of students. We would not want to see police be involved in a quasi-counselling function. We want to be noticeably clear that if a matter comes up and it is a policing matter we would continue to liaise, and we will continue to consult with police. Nobody is suggesting and nor has the Board suggested that anyone in the community should be afraid of police. We want to ensure that policing services are provided when it is a policing matter. When it is an educational matter and requires the support of a trained, certified, and regulated professional that we would lean into those types of supports.

Q5: Will this Board edit or remove item #11 from the SPLO FAQ on the website? It is not factual and is misleading the public. In the absence of historical data from police it is not possible to determine wither reports of gang recruitment and criminal activities represent a change in activity.

A5: Chair Duncan stated that we will have to agree to disagree concerning historical data. The Board has made a formal request for data and hopefully will get a better understanding of the nature of the concerns. The Board will have more of a perspective on what if any changes have occurred.

Q6: Why is it that now when families are trying to engage with you directly to explain their lived experience of the past year you refuse to engage with them?

A6: Chair Duncan stated that was an assumption and she does not see the Board as refusing to engage. There are appropriate channels to engage, we have tried to refer folks to professionals that can assist and support them. We have also connected directly with individuals who have expressed an interest and a concern. The Board has issued numerous statements and provided a FAQ on the district website. We would encourage anyone who is having issues or is unclear how to access supports and resources to reach out to their school principals or to reach out to counselling support in schools. If you are having trouble, there are appropriate resources available to utilize. If there is a situation that requires police, they will be called.

G. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF IN-CAMERA ITEMS

G.1. Record of Special In-Camera Board of Education Meeting – April 29, 2024

G.2. Record of In-Camera Board of Education Meeting – April 29, 2024

G.3. Record of Special In-Camera Board of Education Meeting – April 30, 2024

G.4. Record of Special In-Camera Board of Education Meeting – May 13, 2024

H. NEW BUSINESS/NOTICE OF MOTIONS

H.1. New Business

None.

H.2. Notice of Motions

None.

I. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi

Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer