



The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Regular Board Meeting

MINUTES

Monday, June 17, 2024, 7:30 p.m.

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

Trustee Regrets: Angela Carmichael, Diane McNally

Administration: Deb Whitten, Superintendent of Schools, Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer, Sean Powell, Acting Associate Superintendent, Julie Lutner, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, Josh Barks, Acting District Principal, Information Technology, Sarah Winkler, VPVPA

Partners: Darren Reed, CUPE 382, Nyssa Temmel, VCPAC

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 Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee David

That the June 17, 2024 agenda be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A.3. Approval of the Minutes

a. Approval of the May 27, 2024 Regular Board Minutes

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the May 27, 2024 Regular Board minutes be approved.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A.4. Business Arising from the Minutes

Trustees inquired about the possibility of accommodating music classrooms at Doncaster Elementary and Vic West Elementary for the 2024-2025 school year.

Acting Associate Superintendent Powell stated that both Doncaster Elementary and Vic West Elementary are at capacity for in-catchment children. He advised that Doncaster Elementary has a multipurpose space that can be used as a music room.

A.5. Community Presentations

- a. Pegah Seisan presented on the Junior Youth Empowerment Program.
Trustees thanked Pegah Seisan for the presentation and had questions of clarification.

B. CORRESPONDENCE

B.1. June 6, 2024, Greater Victoria Teachers' Association to the Board of Education, Climate Action Plan

C. TRUSTEE REPORTS

C.1. Chair's Report

- a. Chair's Report
Chair Duncan provided the report for information.

C.2. Ad Hoc Committees Annual Review

- a. Trustee Baillaut provided the annual Advocacy and French Ad Hoc Committee reports.
- b. Trustee Mahbobi provided the annual Equity Ad Hoc Committee report.
- c. Trustee Paynter provided the George Jay School Naming Ad Hoc Committee report.

Moved by Trustee Paynter
Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Chair to engage directly with elected leadership of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations to determine their interest in the George Jay School naming initiative.

Motion Carried

For (5), Abstain (1)

C.3. Trustees' Reports

None.

D. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

D.1. Education Policy and Directions Committee

- a. Draft minutes from the June 3, 2024 meeting – information only

D.2. Operations Policy and Planning Committee

- a. Draft minutes from the June 10, 2024 meeting – information only

- b. Recommended motions from the June 10, 2024 meeting:

Trustees amended the Climate Action Plan Implementation Ad Hoc Committee Terms of Reference.

Moved by Trustee Kwan

Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve the suite of amendments to the draft Climate Action Plan Implementation Ad Hoc Committee Terms of Reference.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Amendment

Moved by Trustee Paynter

Seconded by Trustee David

Membership:

~~One representative of Indigenous ancestry, selected from the Indigenous Education Department and/or the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC)~~ **The Superintendent will engage with representatives of the four Houses to determine whether each wish to engage with the committee's work, and if so, how (examples – direct involvement in committee meetings, receive and provide comments on meeting agendas and meeting summaries, other)**

Motion Carried Unanimously

Moved by Trustee Baillaut

Seconded by Trustee Kwan

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve the amended Climate Action Plan Implementation Ad Hoc Committee Terms of Reference.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Moved by Trustee Gagnon

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve the proposed Five-Year Capital Plan (Major Capital Programs) for 2025-2026, as provided on the Five-Year Capital Plan Summary for 2025-2026 submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Moved by Trustee Mahbobi
Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve the proposed Five-Year Capital Plan (Minor Capital Programs) for 2025-2026, as provided on the Five-Year Capital Plan Summary for 2025-2026 submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Motion Carried Unanimously

E. DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORTS

E.1. Superintendent's Report

a. Monthly Report

Trustees asked if there were any emerging Topics from the June 7, 2024 All Superintendents meeting.

Superintendent Whitten stated that the meeting primarily focused on ensuring an emergency plan is in place in case of an emergency across the province, such as drought, floods, or fires.

Moved by Trustee Kwan
Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

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

Motion Carried Unanimously

b. 2025-2026 / 2026-2027 School Calendars

Moved by Trustee Kwan
Seconded by Trustee Gagnon

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approves the following 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 school calendars.

2025/2026 School Calendar*	
School Opening	September 1, 2025
First non-instructional day	September 22, 2025
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	September 30, 2025
Thanksgiving	October 13, 2025
Second non-instructional day (Province wide)	October 24, 2025
Remembrance Day	November 11, 2025
Third non-instructional day	November 21, 2025
Schools close for Winter vacation	December 19, 2025
Schools re-open after Winter vacation	January 5, 2026
Fourth non-instructional day	February 13, 2026
Family Day	February 16, 2026
Schools close for Spring vacation	March 13, 2026
Schools re-open after Spring vacation	March 30, 2026

Good Friday	April 3, 2026
Easter Monday	April 6, 2026
Fifth non-instructional day	May 15, 2026
Victoria Day	May 18, 2026
Administrative Day and School Closing	June 26, 2026
• Sixth non-instructional day to be chosen by each school	

2026/2027 School Calendar*	
School Opening	September 8, 2026
First non-instructional day	September 21, 2026
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	September 30, 2026
Thanksgiving	October 12, 2026
Second non-instructional day (Province wide)	October 23, 2026
Remembrance Day	November 11, 2026
Third non-instructional day	November 27, 2026
Schools close for Winter vacation	December 18, 2026
Schools re-open after Winter vacation	January 4, 2027
Fourth non-instructional day	February 12, 2027
Family Day	February 15, 2027
Schools close for Spring vacation	March 12, 2027
Schools re-open after Spring vacation	March 31, 2027
Good Friday	March 26, 2027
Easter Monday	March 29, 2027
Fifth non-instructional day	May 21, 2027
Victoria Day	May 24, 2027
Administrative Day and School Closing	June 25, 2027
• Sixth non-instructional day to be chosen by each school	

Motion Carried Unanimously

c. Climate Action Plan Implementation Ad Hoc Committee Terms of Reference motion was approved at D.2.b.

d. Personal Digital Device Restriction in Schools – Code of Conduct

Superintendent Whitten provided a memo on Personal Digital Device Restriction in Schools.

Trustees had questions of clarification.

Feedback on the draft Personal Digital Device Student Code of Conduct statements will be received and amendments made prior to the finalized statements being submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care in July 2024.

Moved by Trustee Kwan

Seconded by Trustee Baillaut

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to bring feedback to the Board after reviewing the Code of Conduct with School District schools.

Motion Carried Unanimously

- e. *Public Interest Disclosure Act: Annual Report for the Greater Victoria School District (SD61) Fiscal Year 2024*

Superintendent Whitten provided the *Public Interest Disclosure Act: Annual Report for the Greater Victoria School District (SD61) Fiscal Year 2024*.

- f. Elementary Strings Hub Model Update

Superintendent Whitten outlined the memo.

Partners and Trustees had questions of clarification.

- g. 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 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

- b. 2023 Climate Change Accountability Report

Secretary-Treasurer Stride provided the final report for information.

Trustees had questions of clarification.

- c. 2024-2025 Annual Budget – Student Device Ratios

Secretary-Treasurer Stride and Acting District Principal, Information Technology Barks provided information on student device ratios for the 2024-2025 school year.

Partners and Trustees had questions of clarification.

F. QUESTION PERIOD

Q: Have you looked to Principals to research School Police Liaison involvement around incidences in their school to determine if the Police officers in their schools assisted the staff in resolving the problem or hindered them in solving the problem?

A: Chair Duncan stated that through the two and a half year review process the VPVPA which is the Principal and Vice Principal Association were represented on the Review Committee. We used a public survey to get feedback from various members of our Learning Community including Principals and Vice Principals. During the period of the review we received a letter from the VPVPA on behalf of their members outlining their perspective and again more information about the Board's decision is available in the FAQ and recent board statement.

Q: Did this Board not consult with the four houses prior to the removal of the School Police Liaison program because of their support for the program?

A: Chair Duncan stated, the previous Board set up the review process through an ad hoc committee. That Ad Hoc Committee had a terms of reference which governed its activities. The Four Houses were invited to send representatives to participate in the Review Committee. Other partner groups in our school district were also invited to participate by sending representatives to the Review Committee. We also used a public survey which was sent to our Learning Community as another avenue for participation. Chair Duncan added that when we invite partners to participate we have no say in who or if they send a representative.

Q: The meetings of the Board are to be open to the public. When will the Board allow meetings with public participation?

A: The public is welcome to participate in all Board meetings whether they are in person or virtual. The same mechanisms apply including making a request to present, through writing to the board, and through question period. So, whether we're meeting virtually or we're meeting in person in a board meeting environment, there are clear structures and points during the meeting when the public can participate and that has not changed. The Board has tasked our Superintendent with looking at the costs associated with upgrading the boardroom so that we can return to some kind of in-person or perhaps hybrid option. So, stay tuned.

Q: Our children/your students want to know what steps has this board made to resolve these issues, so students feel safe to use the school bathrooms?

A: Chair Duncan stated that this is an operational question. From the Boards perspective we would expect that, if there were safety concerns in schools, staff would address them through the appropriate protocols, or if appropriate bring in external partners.

Superintendent Whitten stated that, from an Operational perspective, Principals and Vice Principals have a variety of mechanisms in place to support student safety and related concerns. Speaking specifically about washroom access we have Principals and Vice Principals who are always out in hallways and looking for who is accessing the washrooms and what may be occurring in there. We also always invite feedback or concerns to be shared with the Principal or Vice Principal or a staff member who is in the vicinity. But at any point we're always looking to listen to the student voice and also the parent voice and hear from them if they have specific concerns with the school or location.

Chair Duncan said to please raise any concerns with your school Principal or Vice Principal. There are also processes to resolve concerns which would be escalated up through the appropriate District Senior Leadership Team member. The board also has a Bylaw Appeal Process which again might be appropriate depending on the context.

G. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF IN-CAMERA ITEMS

G.1. Record of Special In-Camera Board of Education Meeting – May 13, 2024

G.2. Record of In-Camera Board of Education Meeting – May 27, 2024

H. NEW BUSINESS/NOTICE OF MOTIONS

H.1. New Business

Partners and Trustees discussed the motion.

Moved by Trustee Gagnon

Seconded by Trustee Paynter

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to implement a District hiring freeze for all exempt and excluded staff (excluding school-based staff) for the 2024-25 financial year (1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025); AND FURTHER bring any urgent hiring requests to the Board of Education for consideration.

Motion Carried Unanimously

H.2. Notice of Motions

I. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Moved by Trustee Gagnon

Seconded by Trustee Mahbobi

That the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer