

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
OCT. 17, 2023

October 19, 2023
INFORMATION RELEASE

Please note these are not official minutes of the Campbell River Board of Education.

Minutes are available from the school district website at www.sd72.bc.ca.

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You can watch a recording of the meeting on the district's YouTube channel at:
<https://youtu.be/SxvseabhGwM>

Chairperson Remarks

Chairperson Kat Eddy shared in her opening remarks that she participated in a meeting with representatives from CUPE National, CUPE Saskatchewan, CUPE Local 723, Associate Superintendent Philip Cizmic, and District Early Years Principal Melinda Gaberel to share information about the district's childcare program. There is significant interest in the model that School District 72 has adopted, the economies of scale used for construction, and the benefit these before- and after-school spaces provide to the community.

Watch this segment: 0:00:58

Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Geoff Manning shared that earlier in the day he was fortunate to participate in a professional development session at the We Wai Kai Band offices with 20 other SD72 educators. He said that the session with an anthropologist taught him a lot about the governance of the Liḡwítdaǰw people and he looks forward to participating in the other professional development sessions being offered by the We Wai Kai Band this year.

He continued his remarks with some information from a provincial presentation at a recent superintendents' meeting on the sustained decline of post-secondary enrollment in BC since the COVID pandemic. According to provincial data there are going to be one million jobs available over the next 10 years, but 80 percent of those jobs are going to require some form of post-secondary education.

He said that addressing this trend is a focus for the district and that discussions have already begun with local post-secondary institutions, like North Island College, to consider

how we can increase the number of students pursuing post-secondary education after high school graduation.

Watch: 0:01:52

Counselling and Food Services Some New Adds to Summer School

The district's summer school program served a diverse group of 732 students from K-12, including 52 students with special needs designations. The program was supported by 32 teachers, eight educational assistants and, as a district first, a school counsellor.

Also new this year the Summer School program continued the usual school breakfast and lunch programs provided at Cedar Elementary and École Phoenix Middle School and offered a month-long academic and cultural program in partnership with Wei Wai Kum First Nation.

To ease some of the demands in September, some assessments that are typically conducted during the academic months were also completed over the summer by school psychologists.

According to Summer School 2023 Vice-Principal Teri Parker, the elementary and middle school program was once again praised for its wide variety of course offerings.

Feedback continues to remain equally divided between families who prefer the half-day offerings and those who would like full-day sessions. Families also continue to ask the district to consider allowing students to register for more than one session.

Summer School courses are offered for free to SD72 students in kindergarten to grade 12 and most courses run for two-week sessions.



At the secondary level, because of low registration, the district only ran a Math 10 and Math 11 course this year, but Parker said that each student that registered made at least a one-letter-grade improvement from their previous course grade.

Parker recommended some enhancements for the program going forward, including continuing to use School Appointments for easier registration, evaluating the potential for school bus service, as well as early promotion and late registration to try to increase the number of secondary schools.

Watch this segment: 0:05:29

District Childcare Up and Running; Construction Well Underway

The six new district-operated childcare sites are open, providing licensed before- and after-school care for registered students at Cedar, Georgia Park, Ocean Grove, Pinecrest, Ripple Rock and Sandowne Elementary Schools.

According to Associate Superintendent Philip Cizmic, in a matter of 18 months the district has gone from design to construction on the permanent childcare buildings and, with construction well underway, the buildings are hopefully two to three months away from completion. Crews broke ground at the end of June/beginning of July.

The highest demand has been for after-school care but there are still spaces available except at Ripple Rock, which has a waitlist. All the locations are fully staffed with educational assistants and there is a casual contingency to cover absences.

Cizmic also shared with the board that the district is already receiving requests for children entering kindergarten in September 2024.

Given community interest and the program's success so far, the district is exploring the possibility of offering childcare over the school breaks and adding infant and toddler care, especially to help with employee recruitment and retention.

Watch: 0:25:46

Enrolment Higher than Projections

District enrolment has gone up by 111 students since last year, according to the provincially required September 30 enrolment count.

Superintendent Geoff Manning shared the good news with the board, also highlighting that this is 50 more students than what was projected.

Every February school districts are required to submit an enrolment projection to the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the funding that the district receives and staffing levels for the upcoming year is based on that projected number of students.

Watch: 0:39:00

Board Approves Addition of a Health & Safety Administrative Assistant

The Board of Education has approved a budget addition of approximately \$67,000 out of operating surplus for a new administrative assistant to be hired to support the district's health and safety officer.

The new position will assist with paperwork and reporting to help ensure compliance. This was a specific recommendation from WorkSafe following a workplace injury that occurred over the summer.

Health and safety expectations are also growing each year and the number of work refusals and injury claims have slightly increased since 2017, reflective of provincial trends and increases in complex student behavioural needs.

By creating this position and shifting some school-focused occupational health and safety responsibilities, such as safe schools and mental health and wellness initiatives, to the new district principal for learning support services, the district health and safety officer will be able to focus more on injury prevention training and programs, claims management, return to work supports, investigations, and policies and procedures.

Watch: 0:40:49

