

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
FEB. 6 2024

February 7, 2024
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/ahrEKmebsik>

Chairperson Remarks

In Chairperson Kat Eddy's absence, Vice-Chair Craig Gillis started the meeting by acknowledging Chair Eddy and others in the community who supported Literacy Week at the end of January. He shared his reflections on how literacy empowers students for the future and how fortunate we are to be engaged with partnerships with service clubs, businesses, families, and volunteers. He went on to highlight that the Campbell River Rotary Clubs read to 54 classes as part of Rotarians Read during Family Literacy Week.

Vice-Chair Gillis closed his remarks by highlighting the upcoming SD72 long service recognition evening at the end of February that will celebrate all our employees who have dedicated so many years of their careers in support of SD72 students.

Watch this segment: 0:00:09

Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Geoff Manning shared that he recently attended the official opening of the Pinecrest Elementary playground on January 26. He acknowledged the 12 years of fundraising by the Pinecrest PAC and community, and \$198,000 in provincial funding to bring the student and staff designed playground to fruition. He also extended a special thank you to the over 70 people who volunteered to prep the site and install the new playground equipment.

He continued by speaking to how the district began our official kindergarten registration for September 2024 last week, piloting a new online registration option. The district already has 244 registrations for next year and several paper-based registrations that still need to be entered into the student information system. Approximately half of the registrants opted to register online using the new system,

and so the district will be looking to make online registration available for all grades starting next school year.

In closing, he shared that Timberline is offering a musical theatre production of "Guys and Dolls" in March and tickets are now on sale. Performance dates and ticket information can be found on the district website at www.sd72.bc.ca.

Watch this segment: 0:02:35

District Working to Develop Own Youth Violence Prevention Program Using SafeTeen Guide

Associate Superintendent Morgan Kyle shared with the board that 14 staff members from the district's middle and secondary schools recently participated in three days of level one educator training in the SafeTeen program through a grant from the Ministry of Public Safety. The intent of the training is to develop facilitators to roll out a similar program that will be universally applied across the district starting in the 2024-2025 school year.

SafeTeen is a skill-based violence prevention program that offers gender-specific strategies for managing fear and anger and gives participants a way of standing up for themselves without violence.

Offering learning like this to middle and secondary students is directly connected to the district's strategic plan in connection with social-emotional learning and positive mental health and wellness at all sites and schools and meets requirements within the PE sexual health curriculum.

Three staff members who participated in the SafeTeen training, Alana Thompson (youth care worker), Dylan Grier (PE and health education teacher) and Maya Saxby-Jones



(counsellor) spoke to the board about their experiences with the training and the benefits that they see for students.

The SafeTeen program has elements where students are separated into gender identified groups because a key element includes building understanding of gender roles and the impacts of unwritten societal roles. For example, how girls are “nice” trained to be kind, nurturing and not outspoken.

SafeTeen works to create a safe space for those with female bodies to share their feelings without judgement to affirm assertiveness and teach them how to validate their feelings. It also touches on male gender expression, balanced and unbalanced masculinity, and what aggressive physical, emotional, and social qualities we may be unintentionally reinforcing as a society.

The gender identified groups then come back together to share their learning so that each group hears the others’ perspectives and messages. Then, universal to all gender identities are topics on consent, bullying and how it is taking power from others, empowerment skills, and emotional self-healing.

At the elementary level, the Second Step program is being offered for students in kindergarten to grade 5 which is focused on social emotional learning and naming feelings to lay the foundation leading into the SafeTeen type training at middle and secondary schools.

Those that participated in the level one SafeTeen training will be able to continue with level two training if they are interested and a working group is now meeting to develop a district-wide approach to identify what will be delivered at each grade level.

Watch: 0:07:16

Board to Review and Update Governance Policies from a DEI and Accessibility Lens

In connection to the district's new strategic plan priority, evolving for tomorrow, the board has committed to a review of the board governance policies to ensure that they are aligned with and reflect diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and accessibility.

Trustee Joyce McMann and Vice-Chair Craig Gillis, members of the board's policy review committee, have identified a possible consultant to help the board with that review process and will soon negotiate a contract for this service.

Watch this segment: 0:32:20

Cell Phones Not Being Banned in Schools; Boundaries to Limit Distraction in Classrooms

Superintendent Geoff Manning spoke to the board about the recent provincial government announcement that requires school districts to have policies in place by September 2024 that will restrict the use of cell phones in schools.

Cell phone usage in schools has been a topic in the news for the last three months as other jurisdictions have considered the sometimes detrimental and addictive implications of cell phone usage amongst young people and have implemented various degrees of cell phone restrictions, in some cases including bans, within schools.

Superintendent Manning shared that the BC announcement is in connection with two other components – launching services to remove images from the internet and pursue predators and legislation to hold social media companies accountable for the harm they have caused – to try to keep young people safe from online threats.

He clarified that despite media reports, the BC government is not banning cell phones in schools, but rather are requiring all school districts to have some type of procedure in place to diminish the distraction of cell phones in the classroom.

Currently, cell phone usage has been left to the discretion of teachers as part of their classroom management, but the district will be looking to have consistency across classrooms and schools. The district will look to take a balanced approach, recognizing and giving room for cell phones to be used as tools for learning and educating students on how to manage the draw of the technology and set appropriate boundaries around acceptable use.

Regarding online threats to young people Superintendent Manning shared that when the district learns of inappropriate images of students being posted online, we work with Safer Schools Together to get those images taken down as soon as possible.

Watch: 0:33:34

Quarterly Finance Report Aligned with Expectations

Interim Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Gillian Leask presented the board with a quarterly financial report as of December 31, 2023.

The district continues to have a structural deficit due to misaligned timing of revenues and expenses throughout the year, but costs are projected to align with revenues as the year progresses.

Revenues are up by \$519,375 due to this year's slight enrollment increase, some additional grants and investment income.

Expenses are currently one percent under budget with increased spending in contracted services, supplies, benefits, and transportation maintenance costs and underspending due to ongoing support staff position vacancies and lower heating costs.

Watch: 0:39:14

