

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
FEB. 27 2024

March 1, 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/Emn3AaooTc>

Chairperson Remarks

Chairperson Kat Eddy started the meeting by acknowledging what a busy time it has been in SD72. Trustees had the privilege to attend the long service evening on February 22 to recognize those employees who have given 20, 25, 30, 40 and 45 years of service to students and families in the district. On behalf of the board, she expressed gratitude to those professionals across all employee groups for their service.

She went on to also thank the Wei Wai Kum Treaty Society for the presentation on the ethnohistory of the Liḡwítḡaḡw people that they gave to trustees and district leadership on February 21.

Looking ahead to upcoming events, Chairperson Eddy highlighted that Timberline Musical Theatre is presenting "Guys and Dolls" starting March 1 with tickets are selling quickly, and that she will be moderating the district Battle of the Books competition on March 5 at Timberline Theatre. Then on March 8 several trustees will be headed to the Vancouver Island School Trustees' Association conference in Parksville to discuss regional issues.

In closing, she encouraged everyone to wear pink the next day on February 28, Pink Shirt Day, to raise awareness about bullying.

Watch this segment: 0:00:48

Superintendent Remarks

In his opening remarks, Superintendent Geoff Manning shared that he recently visited Cortes Island School, having the opportunity to meet the staff and students and enjoyed his visit and learning more about the Cortes school and community.

He also spoke about attending the long service evening and how honoured but also humbled he was to speak at an event recognizing those who have been in the district for such long and distinguished careers.

Also highlighting Pink Shirt Day, Superintendent Manning shared that we are fortunate to have Michael Bortolotto, a Southgate graduate and highly regarded motivational speaker with Cerebral Palsy, visiting seven of our schools to deliver messages about the importance and value of inclusion this week.

Watch this segment: 0:03:49

Dispelling French Immersion Misconceptions

Rachel Black, the district's vice-principal for French programs, provided the board with an overview of the district's French Immersion programs, aimed at clarifying misconceptions and promoting the program's inclusivity. Black emphasized that French Immersion is accessible to all students, supported by educational measures to ensure student success.

The program begins in kindergarten at École Willow Point and École des Deux Mondes where instruction is entirely in French up to grade 2. English literacy is introduced in grade 3, and by grades 4 and 5, English accounts for 20% of instruction. Currently, 388 students are enrolled in French Immersion at these two elementary schools.

At École Phoenix Middle School, French Immersion students in grades 6 to 8 receive 20% of their instruction in English. This level currently has 230 early immersion students and 21 late immersion students, the latter starting their French education in grade 6. A French learning support teacher was



added this year at the middle school level to further enrich the program.

Carihi Secondary offers the program for grades 9 through 12, with French instruction gradually decreasing to 50% in grades 9 and 10, 25% in grade 11 and 12% in grade 12. There are currently 266 French Immersion secondary students.

The French Immersion program's goal is to enable non-francophone students to become fluent in both English and French, preparing them for a range of future opportunities, including higher education and employment where French is the language of instruction or the workplace.

The benefits of bilingualism include enhanced employment rates, income, socialization, and cognitive outcomes. Research suggests that immersion students perform on par with or better than their peers in English-only programs.

Feedback from a recent survey of 103 French Immersion students showed that 63 plan to continue in the program until grade 12. Graduates of the program receive a double Dogwood diploma, signifying their achievement in both English and French.

This overview of the French Immersion program reflects the district's commitment to fostering bilingualism and ensuring inclusivity including within programs of choice.

Watch: 0:08:40

Board Adopts Amended Budget for 2023-2024

The board voted to approve the amended budget of \$89,915,205 for 2023-2024.

The total budget revenue is \$88,742,972 while the budgeted costs are \$89,445,205. The district has a consolidated deficit of \$662,437 and an operating surplus of \$403,338 without reserves. Combined with reserves, the district has an operating deficit of only \$39,796.

The total district budget for salaries and benefits is \$66,410,176. There has been a three percent increase to teacher costs which included an economic stability dividend and a 4.5 FTE increase for the 2023-2024 school year. The district has also been successful in getting special purpose

fund grants which have been used to offset salaries for administrative staff and add services.

The amended budget includes updated expenses, actual revenue based on the number of students attending district schools, and salary costs from the preliminary budget passed in May 2023.

The final budget will be available on the district website.

Watch this segment: 0:23:04

Southgate Gets Support from the Strathcona Regional District for a Wetland Restoration Project

The Strathcona Regional District will be supporting the planning and design of a wetland restoration at Southgate Middle School with approximately \$100,000 of funding through a Disaster Risk Reduction/Climate Adaptation grant.

This funding support from the Strathcona Regional District will allow the school to consider restoring a marshy portion of the school grounds which has not been conducive to proper drainage.

As the project moves ahead Southgate students will be involved in all aspects of the proposed wetland restoration, from initial design work and layout to planting and maintenance, providing real-life examples of human environmental impact and nature-based solutions that tie into climate curriculum.

This project will be like the wetlands project done at Quadra Elementary School in 2022. More funding will be sought as the project moves from the design phase to implementation.

Watch: 0:54:01

How Are We Doing Report Shows Need for Numeracy Improvement

Superintendent Geoff Manning shared with the board an overview of the district's annual "How Are We Doing" report issued by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. Note: for the purposes of this article 'Aboriginal' will be used as a synonym to 'Indigenous' in keeping with the language of the report.

Overall, the district had a total of 5,622 students in the 2022-2023 school year and 1,397 students, or approximately 25% of the district's total student population, self-identified as Aboriginal. Most district schools have between 10 to 20 percent of their student population who self-identify as Aboriginal.

While only 25 percent of the district's student population are Aboriginal, they make up almost half of the students in the district's alternate programs with 84 Aboriginal students compared to 95 non-Aboriginal students. According to the report the district also had more Aboriginal students with diverse needs than non-Aboriginal students.

The district's grade 4 literacy results showed that 51% of Aboriginal students are on track compared to 63% of non-Aboriginal students. Grade 7 literacy results show the gap narrowing between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student results by 9% with a slight improvement with 53% of Aboriginal students on track compared to 62% of non-Aboriginal students.

Grade 4 numeracy results show that 68% of Aboriginal students are emerging and 51% of non-Aboriginal students are on track. Grade 7 numeracy results show that 61% of Aboriginal students are emerging compared to 48% of non-Aboriginal students, a slight improvement of 7% between grade 4 and grade 7 Aboriginal student results.

Grade 10 numeracy and literacy results are quite low. Grade 10 numeracy results showed 55% of Aboriginal students in the developing category compared to 41% of non-Aboriginal students and grade 10 literacy results showed 43% of Aboriginal students in the proficient category compared to 62% of non-Aboriginal students.

Grade 12 literacy results show 60% of Aboriginal students in the proficient category compared to 63% of non-Aboriginal students.

For individual secondary school courses where students achieved a C+ or better, Aboriginal students had better outcomes than non-Aboriginal students in Workplace Math and Pre-Calculus, equal outcomes in Life Sciences and similar outcomes in Foundations of Math.

Over the last five years, the district's five-year completion rate for Aboriginal students has improved from 61 to 71% but

is still below the non-Aboriginal student completion rate of 83%. The six-year completion rates tell a similar story with a five-year improvement for Aboriginal students from 66 to 76% compared to a 90% completion rate for non-Aboriginal students.

The report also shares that 16% of the district's 25% Aboriginal student population are children and youth in care, and in 2020-2021 25% of Aboriginal students immediately entered post-secondary education after graduation, compared to 28.8% of non-Aboriginal students.

Superintendent Manning summarized that while there are improvements in grade 12 literacy rates, community college entrance, specific secondary courses and a decrease in the number of grade 7 students identified in the emerging category in numeracy, there is still significant work to do to improve outcomes for Aboriginal students.

He also stated that the district needs to improve numeracy results for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, work to improve grade 10 literacy and numeracy rates, continue to work towards parity between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student completion rates, monitor the alternate program population as well as the number of children and youth in care.

Watch: 0:57:49

Enrolment Forecasted to Increase Next Year

The district is expecting an increase of approximately 53 full-time equivalent (FTE) students next school year after analyzing community trends and information from the schools, according to Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick.

The enrolment forecast is used to build the district's preliminary operating budget.

Watch: 1:17:27

Budget Development Process for 2024-2025 Starts in March

Partner group consultations to develop the 2024-2025 operating budget will begin in March. Meeting details will be provided by the secretary-treasurer's office to respective groups. Dates to note for the public are:



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Tuesday, April 23 at 7 p.m.

Budget information will be reviewed with parents at the district parent advisory council (DPAC) meeting.

Wednesday, May 8 at 12 p.m.

Deadline for public submissions/presentations about the 2024-2025 operating budget to be heard at the May 14 public board meeting. Should you wish to make a presentation contact Natalie Crawshaw in the secretary-treasurer's office at (250) 830.2302 or natalie.crawshaw@sd72.bc.ca

Tuesday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m.

Public submissions/presentations submitted by 12 p.m. on May 2 will be heard at this meeting.

Tuesday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m.

Potential adoption of the 2024-2025 budget at the public board meeting.

Watch: 1:22:28

