

March 12, 2025
INFORMATION RELEASE

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You can watch a recording of this meeting on the district's YouTube channel at:
<https://youtu.be/IDjuyG7EzXA>

Chairperson Remarks

Vice-Chair Craig Gillis, who was chairing the meeting in Chairperson Kat Eddy's absence, opened the meeting with a message of community pride, highlighting a recent article that named Campbell River the happiest place in British Columbia.

According to a recent Statistics Canada survey, Campbell River residents reported the highest level of life satisfaction in the province, with a 61.34% rating – well above any other community. Vice-Chair Gillis encouraged everyone to take a moment to appreciate the incredible place we call home, celebrating all that makes Campbell River such a special place to live and learn.

The vice-chair also spoke about the arts flourishing in local schools, sharing his joy of attending this year's Timberline Secondary musical theatre production, *Head Over Heels*. The performance was a testament to the hard work and dedication of students and teachers, showcasing remarkable talent and a deep passion for the arts.

Additionally, Vice-Chair Gillis shared that he had the honour of emceeding the district's music showcase, which brought together seven elementary choirs, the Carihi Secondary choir and Carihi band. Originally scheduled to be held at Carihi Secondary, the event was relocated to Timberline Secondary this year due to the Carihi fire. Timberline's school community embraced the change, demonstrating the flexibility and collaborative spirit that defines our district.

Celebrating literacy, Vice-Chair Gillis also shared highlights from the recent district Battle of the Books, hosted at École Phoenix Middle School. This annual event saw teams of enthusiastic young readers from grades three through middle school competing in a fun challenge to showcase their love of books. While four new district champions were crowned,

the real victory was in fostering a lifelong passion for reading among all participants.

Watch this segment: [0:00:15](#)

Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Geoff Manning opened with praise for the district's recent musical showcase at Timberline, speaking to the incredible performances by students, overwhelming support from parents, and the remarkable event coordination by staff. The superintendent also took a moment to recognize Vice-Chair Gillis for his role as the master of ceremonies, noting his ability to keep the show running smoothly with humour and enthusiasm – something thoroughly enjoyed by parents and students alike.

Continuing the celebration of student achievements, the superintendent also acknowledged the recent Battle of the Books competition, which saw strong participation from elementary and middle school students. This year's district champions included Sandowne Elementary (grade 3), École Willow Point (grade 4), École des Deux Mondes (grade 5), and Southgate Middle School (grade 6).

Shifting focus to hands-on learning and career pathways, Superintendent Manning recognized the outstanding performances of students at the Skills Canada North Island regionals held at Timberline Secondary. Four Carihi Secondary students have advanced to the provincial competition in Abbotsford, with the potential to compete nationally. Additionally, seven students from both Timberline and Carihi medalled in various skills-based competitions, ranging from culinary arts to digital photography and cabinetmaking.



The superintendent also provided an update on kindergarten registration, which is ongoing. As of the board meeting, 299 students have registered, with the district projections being for a total of 375. Families with children entering kindergarten are encouraged to register as soon as possible as the district will be working on staffing for next year.

In closing, Superintendent Manning shared an important update on the return of Carihi Secondary students to their home school following the fire earlier this year. Thursday, March 13 will mark the final day of classes at Oyster River, and on Friday, Carihi teachers will be preparing classrooms for students to return to B-wing after spring break. While most classes will resume at Carihi, a few will continue at Robron for gym and at North Island College for food studies. The superintendent extended best wishes to the Carihi staff as they prepare to welcome students back, ensuring a smooth transition after months of adjustments.

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Fostering Inclusive and Equitable Schools

The Campbell River School District continues to prioritize inclusion and equity, ensuring that all students feel welcomed, valued, and supported in their learning environments. At the board meeting, Rachel Nelson, principal of École Phoenix Middle School and district anti-racism lead, and Christine Middleton, principal of Sayward Elementary and district inclusion lead, shared insights into their collaborative work in these key areas.

Rachel and Christine highlighted the natural connection between anti-racism and inclusion efforts, emphasizing that both are rooted in identity – helping students understand their own experiences while remaining open to the perspectives of others. Their work aligns closely with the district's strategic goals and overarching commitment to equity.

They highlighted that this work was already happening across the district in many ways and that their role is to help amplify and support these efforts, creating momentum for collective learning and action. Rachel and Christine outlined three primary areas guiding their work: creating inclusive

environments, building capacity for staff and administrators, and strengthening district policies and procedures.

Schools are undergoing scans to assess how welcoming and inclusive their spaces are for all students and ongoing work is needed to strengthen staff confidence in addressing incidents of racism and discrimination when they arise.

School administrators will be receiving professional learning opportunities through district leadership team meetings that they can bring back to their school teams with a new initiative called “Snippets of Learning” providing short, digestible learning pieces – such as myth-busting facts or discussion prompts – to help school staff navigate conversations about inclusion and racism.

Recognizing that today's students are navigating an increasingly complex world, the importance of creating safe spaces for students to ask questions, engage in difficult conversations, and develop the skills needed to critically assess the information they encounter is particularly important. The district's goal is to provide opportunities for students to safely explore and reflect on their own values through education, meaningful discussions, and supportive environments.

As district leads, Rachel and Christine are also working with the district's human resources department to review and refine policies to ensure that they reflect the district's stance on racism and inclusion, uncover potential systemic barriers, and examine how inclusion is considered from the hiring process onward.

The work of fostering inclusion and addressing systemic racism is ongoing and the school district remains committed to building learning environments where all students can thrive.

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Ministry Partner Liaison Meeting Highlights Key Education Priorities

On March 6 and 7, Chairperson Kat Eddy, Superintendent Geoff Manning, and Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick attended the ministry partner liaison meeting, which brought together superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and board chairs from all 60 school districts across BC.

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
MAR. 11 2025

The meeting featured an address from Minister of Education and Child Care, Hon. Lisa Beare, who outlined the ministry's priorities and ongoing initiatives to support students, staff, and school communities.

According to a summary from Superintendent Manning, Minister Beare highlighted several key priorities shaping the future of education in BC, including an ongoing commitment to erase (Expect Respect and a Safe Education) and Safer Schools initiatives, which focus on student safety, well-being and mental health, as well as educational excellence, and reconciliation efforts. It was also shared that there will be continued funding for Feeding Futures, which provides food security support for students, and funding for new mentorship programs to support professional development for educators and staff. Details on how these funds will be distributed to districts, including School District 72, are expected soon.

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Board Cyber Security Motion to Be Brought Forward at BCSTA AGM

The Vancouver Island School Trustees' Association (VISTA) have agreed to bring forward a motion proposed by the Campbell River Board of Education for provincial consideration at the BC School Trustees' Association (BCSTA) annual general meeting.

The motion is for the Ministry of Education and Child Care to develop and fund a coordinated provincial approach to addressing cyber security on behalf of school districts.

The BCSTA annual general meeting will be held in April in Vancouver.

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Budget Development Process for 2025-2026 Gets Underway After Spring Break

Partner group consultations to develop the 2025-2026 operating budget will begin after spring break on April 9. Meeting details will be provided by the secretary-treasurer's office to respective groups. Dates to note for the public are:

Tuesday, April 22 at 7 p.m.

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

Wednesday, May 7 at 12 p.m.

Deadline for public submissions/presentations about the 2025-2026 operating budget will be heard at the May 13 public board meeting. Those who wish to make a presentation need to contact Natalie Crawshaw in the secretary-treasurer's office at (250) 830.2302 or natalie.crawshaw@sd72.bc.ca.

Tuesday, May 13 at 7:30 p.m.

Public submissions/presentations submitted by 12 p.m. on May 7 will be heard by the Board of Education at this public board meeting.

Tuesday, May 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Potential adoption of the 2025-2026 budget at the public board meeting.

Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick reminded the board that the district is facing a deficit budget heading into next school year and that, as such, this year's budget development process will be difficult. Partner groups are being asked to provide management with a list of recommended potential reductions.

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