

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
APR. 29 2025

May 1, 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/URN9CP-6ek8?si=hQBxtwplmlotDIWG>

Chairperson Remarks

In her opening remarks, Chairperson Kat Eddy began by welcoming and congratulating Prime Minister Carney and all newly elected Members of Parliament, with a special acknowledgment to Aaron Gunn, the new MP for North Island–Powell River. She expressed appreciation to all candidates who stepped forward to run, recognizing the courage it takes to serve in public office.

Chairperson Eddy highlighted the importance of continued federal support for programs that directly help students and families, such as the National School Food Program, equity and anti-racism initiatives, and economic supports for low-income families. These national efforts, she emphasized, are essential in helping provinces focus on improving student learning, addressing inequities for Indigenous learners, and supporting recruitment and infrastructure needs.

She also shared updates from the recent BC School Trustees Association AGM, congratulating Tracy Loffler and the newly elected board members. Chairperson Eddy was honoured to announce her own election as president of the Vancouver Island School Trustees' Association and extended gratitude to Janice Caton for her 18 years of service in the role. She noted that Campbell River will host the fall VISTA conference and expressed her commitment to raising the profile of Vancouver Island's public education priorities.

To close, Chairperson Eddy acknowledged Red Dress Day on May 5—a National Day of Awareness for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people. She called on all leaders to engage meaningfully with Indigenous communities and use their positions to advocate for justice, equity, and a brighter future for all children.

Watch this segment: [0:00:56](#)

Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Geoff Manning began his remarks by congratulating Chair Kat Eddy on her successful election as president of the Vancouver Island School Trustees Association. He also extended appreciation to Vice-Chair Craig Gillis and Trustee Dave Harper for their significant contributions to the recent federal election, recognizing the many hours they dedicated to supporting the democratic process.

He then provided an update on the Carihi Secondary fire restoration. Progress is currently slow as the district awaits geotechnical results and architectural work before construction on the gym walls can go ahead. Four portables, including a camp kitchen, have been ordered and are in production. Two classrooms beneath the gym stairs are also expected to be ready for school startup in September.

Superintendent Manning highlighted the work of the district's accessibility committee, noting that it is now accepting applications for four new members. Eligibility requires either lived experience with disability or working closely with someone who has a disability. He shared that accessibility audits have been completed at every school and district building, and noted improvements made this year at Southgate and Carihi. At Southgate, these include more accessible parking spaces, widening an entrance to improve wheelchair access, elevator and lift repairs, as well as the addition of high visibility markers. At Carihi, an automatic door opener and more accessible parking were added. There are currently 68 open accessibility items from the first six accessibility audits that will continue to be addressed in the coming years.



In closing, Superintendent Manning acknowledged the financial uncertainty facing the district as it enters the next budget cycle. He emphasized the importance of compassion, kindness, and maintaining strong relationships during challenging times. While the decisions ahead may be difficult, he urged all present to remember that every decision will be made with the best interests of students in mind and that nobody in our system wants to make cuts.

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Campbell River Honoured with International Children's Rights Award; Calls to Renew Commitment to Children's Charter

Anne Boyd and Brenda Wagman from the Campbell River Child Network presented to the board to share that Campbell River was recently awarded the Janusz Korczak Medal for Children's Rights Advocacy. This international honour, typically given to individuals, was awarded to a community for the first time, recognizing Campbell River's collaborative creation of the Campbell River Children's Charter. The charter was developed in partnership with the Early Years Council, the City of Campbell River, and School District 72.

Boyd and Wagman thanked the school district for its role in earning this recognition and highlighted Dr. Korczak's legacy in advocating for children's rights and dignity—principles that influenced the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. They asked the board to consider reinstating and prominently displaying the Children's Charter in all SD72 facilities and collaborating with the city to include children's voices in the Official Community Plan update by creating a strategy to support meaningful student engagement and dialogue.

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Embedding Student Voice in Curriculum & Assessment

Director of Instruction Stephen Hawkins-Bogle and Rachel Friedrich, SD72's district teacher coordinator for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and social emotional learning, presented an engaging update on how the BC

curriculum is being brought to life in classrooms through student-centered practices.

The presentation focused on how the intention behind the current curriculum—first introduced in 2016—is to develop students into “educated citizens” who can thrive in an increasingly complex and diverse world. This curriculum prioritizes critical thinking, communication, and conceptual understanding over rote memorization. However, as Friedrich explained, while the redesigned curriculum is rich and relational, it is also complex for educators to implement without support.

Friedrich highlighted her work in supporting teachers and administrators across the district to integrate standards-based assessment and student-engaged learning. This approach invites students into the learning process—not just as participants, but as partners—by helping them understand “what” they are learning, “why” it matters, and “how” they are doing. These practices are built around three guiding questions known as “The Big Three”: What am I learning? How am I doing? Where am I going next?

The presentation showcased an example from Southgate Middle School where, in a social studies 8 lesson, teacher Tracy Fischer presented a lesson on how to characterize different time periods in history, including periods of progress and decline, and identify key turning points that mark change and then worked with students to unpack the academic language together. By helping students define terms like “progress,” “decline,” and “turning point,” they co-constructed meaning and criteria for success. Students then made personal connections to global events—like COVID-19 or 9/11—characterizing them using their own lived experiences.

A particularly moving example featured a student who illustrated his journey through a personal health crisis and how it shaped his understanding of the pandemic as a turning point. This kind of reflective work, said Friedrich, not only deepens understanding but also aligns with Indigenous ways of knowing by emphasizing holistic, personal, and relational learning.



Hawkins-Bogle and Friedrich emphasized that these shifts are not just about teaching differently—they are about preparing students to become thoughtful, informed, and active citizens. They closed by acknowledging the essential leadership of school administrators in fostering a culture where educators feel supported to adopt these approaches, and where students are seen not just as learners, but as co-creators in their educational journey.

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Trustees Report on Key Themes and Motions from BCSTA AGM

Trustees summarized their attendance at the British Columbia School Trustees' Association (BCSTA) annual general meeting. The report highlighted several key motions and themes discussed during the event, including the role of data in decision-making, strategies for improving student outcomes, expanding post-secondary transition data to include skilled trades pathways, and strategies and resources for K-12 to address sexism, misogyny and gender-based discrimination.

Trustees also noted a recurring theme around the need to embed student voice more intentionally within district planning and governance. Many motions included a focus on anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion, with an emphasis on ensuring these principles are reflected in local and provincial education initiatives.

Funding remained a central topic. Discussion focused on the current model of targeted funding and the need for increased flexibility to allow districts to respond to their unique community needs. Attendees also noted that British Columbia's public education system is one of the lowest funded in Canada, and emphasized the importance of ongoing advocacy to ensure provincial funding aligns with curriculum requirements and rising operational costs.

A total of 41 motions were debated at the AGM, 28 of which were classified as substantive. These motions reflected a broad range of district- and province-wide priorities and were brought forward for consideration by board representatives from across British Columbia.

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