

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
FEB. 3, 2026

February 4, 2026
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. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) under @CRSD72.

You can watch a recording of this meeting on the district's YouTube channel at:
<https://youtu.be/l5qT8BFGpjY>

Chairperson Remarks

Board Chair Craig Gillis opened the meeting by reflecting on how quickly the school year moves through moments of change and transition. He thanked the calendar committee for its work and noted that trustees would hear more later in the meeting about proposed school calendars for the next three years.

He also pointed to several milestones happening across the district. Kindergarten registration is underway this week, marking the start of a new school journey for many families. At the same time, grade 12 students have begun their second semester as they look ahead to graduation at the end of June.

Chair Gillis also highlighted literacy as both a school and community priority. He thanked community partners and Trustee Eddy for her leadership in Family Literacy Week activities, including classroom visits for Rotarians Read. He said these shared efforts help build strong connections between schools and the community while supporting student learning.

He also spoke about the board's ongoing work toward its strategic goals, including honouring Indigenous world views and perspectives. He referenced the district-wide Indigenous Focused Learning Day held on January 16 and noted the positive energy and learning that came from staff coming together across the district.

To close, Chair Gillis shared a reflection from Richard Wagamese, drawing on his words about the power of saying "yes" to opportunity and possibility. He connected that message to the district's vision of a responsive and

dynamic learning environment and emphasized that creating those opportunities for students is a shared responsibility across the board, the district and all staff.

Watch this segment: [0:03:57](#)

Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Geoff Manning spoke about both the challenges and fresh starts that come at this point in the school year. While winter can feel like a time of hard work and low energy, he echoed Chair Gillis' sentiments that there are also many new beginnings underway across the district.

He shared an early update on kindergarten registration. After two days, 138 students had registered online, representing about 38 per cent of the district's projected 363 kindergarten students. He explained that these projections, along with middle and secondary enrolment projections, must be submitted by February 13 to help build the district's budget for next school year.

Superintendent Manning also highlighted upcoming opportunities for students to say "yes" to learning and competition. The Skills Canada Vancouver Island North Regional competition will be held at the Timberline/North Island College campus, giving students a chance to showcase skills in areas such as trades, technology and the arts, with the potential to advance to the provincial level.

He also encouraged the community to attend Timberline Secondary School's upcoming musical, BIG FISH, which opens in early March, noting the dedication and teamwork behind the production.

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In closing, Superintendent Manning thanked the City of Campbell River for helping fast-track inspections so portable classrooms at Carihi Secondary School were ready for second semester. All Carihi students are now back on campus, except for gym classes, which will remain at Robron Centre until the gym repairs are complete.

Watch this segment: [0:08:38](#)

School Calendars Set for Next Three Years

The Board of Education approved the school calendars for the 2026-2027, 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 school years. The calendars include adjustments made in response to feedback from parents and staff.

One key change from previous years affects the start of the school year. The Tuesday after Labour Day, typically the first day of classes, will now be a professional development day. The first day of school will move to Wednesday.

The calendars were developed by a committee that included invited representatives from the Campbell River District Teachers' Association, CUPE Local 723, the Campbell River Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association, the CORE pro-d committee, the District Parent Advisory Council, trustees and senior leadership. Draft calendars were shared with staff and posted on the district website for public feedback from December 12 to January 9.

All school calendars must meet instructional hours set by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. The approved calendars will be available for download on the district and school websites.

Watch this segment: [0:14:50](#)

Board Changes Trustee Elections Bylaw and Role of the Board Policy

The Board of Education has adopted changes to its bylaw on trustee elections and board governance policy on the role of the board. The changes are based on updated School Act requirements and to allow provisions for the district to run byelections internally.

A notice of motion was given to allow for feedback at the board's January 13 public meeting, and the revised bylaw and policy are posted on the district's website under Board of Education/Governance Policies & Bylaws.

Watch this segment: [0:22:52](#)

Board Considers Governance Changes to Meetings and a New Child Care Policy

Vice-Chair Joyce McMan presented the board with notices of motion for changes to the board's governance policy on meetings and a new policy on childcare. The meetings policy is being revised to remove the requirement that the board meet on the first Tuesday in September after Labour Day and the new childcare policy is to meet the requirements of Ministerial Child Care Order M326.

Feedback on these proposed changes are invited before February 19 as the board will be considering the possible motion at their February 24, 2026 public board meeting.

The draft policies, along with information on how to give feedback, will be posted on the district website under 'News & Announcements'.

Watch this segment: [0:24:49](#)

Board Approves Updated Deferred Salary Leave Agreement with CRDTA

The Board of Education has approved updates to a long-standing deferred salary leave agreement with the Campbell River District Teachers' Association (CRDTA).

The agreement has been in place for more than 30 years and allows teachers to defer a portion of their salary so they can continue to receive income while taking an approved leave of up to one year. Both parties agreed the language needed updating to ensure it remains compliant with the Income Tax Act and to clearly define eligible leave options.

Under the updated agreement, the combined period of salary deferral and leave cannot exceed 84 months. Leave options are now limited to either one full year or a six-

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month leave. Six-month leaves may run from January to June for elementary, middle and non-enrolling teachers, or from February to July for secondary teachers.

The board passed a motion to adopt the revised agreement and authorize its signing. Once finalized, the agreement will be posted in the Agreements section of the board governance handbook. The related process will also be posted in the district's operational procedures, so it is easy for teachers to access.

Watch this segment: [0:26:07](#)

New Grade 11 Braille Course Supports Accessible Learning at Carihi

The Board of Education has approved a new Grade 11 braille course that will allow students who are blind or visually impaired to continue building essential reading and writing skills while earning secondary school credit.

The course, Expanded Core Curriculum – Braille 11, has been granted Board Authorized (BAA) status and will be offered at Carihi Secondary. Students who complete the course will earn four credits toward graduation.

Associate Superintendent Philip Cizmic presented the course outline to the board. The course was developed by the Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired in collaboration with teachers of students with visual impairments from across British Columbia.

The course is designed to support students who use braille as a primary or secondary way to access learning. It focuses on developing proficiency in Unified English Braille, including reading, writing, and formatting, while also building skills with both low-tech and high-tech braille tools.

Students will learn to use braille in a range of real-world contexts, including school, home, the community, post-secondary education, and the workplace. The course also supports students in advocating for accessible learning materials and understanding how braille fits into their personal learning toolkit.

Because students who use braille are often the only learner with a visual impairment in their school, the course is taught through direct, one-to-one instruction by a qualified teacher of students with visual impairments. The course is scheduled within the regular timetable as an elective.

By approving the course, the board is helping ensure students who are blind or visually impaired have equitable access to literacy instruction that supports independence, confidence, and long-term success.

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Funding Update Shows Modest Enrolment Growth, Mixed Results for Special Education

School District 72 will see a modest funding increase this year following final enrolment counts, but the additional dollars are limited and uneven across funding categories.

Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick presented a funding comparison to the Board of Education, outlining the difference between preliminary estimates and finalized provincial grants.

Final enrolment came in about 60 students higher than projected, with roughly 30 additional students in regular programs and another 30 in alternate education. That increase translates to about \$281,000 in new general operating funding, with additional funding tied to alternate programs.

Patrick noted the enrolment growth is positive news for the community, particularly at a time when many districts across the province are seeing declining numbers. However, he cautioned that student growth does not bring large funding gains.

One area that did not follow the provincial trend was special education funding. While funding for Level 2 students increased, it was offset by a decline in Level 3 designations. As a result, the district's overall special education funding decreased slightly. Patrick told the board that this runs counter to what is happening

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provincially, where special education funding has increased by about 10 per cent on average.

The district also received additional funding through the salary differential grant. This grant is based on average teacher salary costs and reflects the district's ability to retain more experienced educators compared to other districts. Patrick emphasized that while this brings additional revenue, it also reflects higher staffing costs.

Overall, the district's total funding increase is approximately \$746,000.

Patrick said the district did not need to add significant new expenses to accommodate the enrolment changes, which helps the overall budget picture. However, he stressed that the increase is modest and does not significantly change the district's financial pressures.

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District's Q2 Financial Picture Improves, Deficit Reduced

The Board of Education received its second-quarter financial update for the period ending December 31, showing an improved financial position compared to earlier projections.

Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick reported that while the district is still operating with a deficit, it is now estimated at about \$740,000, down from the \$1.8 million deficit originally expected. The improvement reflects higher-than-anticipated revenues and lower expenses so far this year.

Year-to-date revenues are about \$582,000 higher than budgeted. This is largely due to enrolment increases that are beginning to show in ministry funding. On the expense side, total spending is about \$513,000 lower than expected at this point in the year.

Together, those trends are helping to reduce the overall deficit.

Patrick emphasized that the report is still based on last year's approved budget and includes some timing

differences. A more accurate picture will be presented at the next board meeting, when updated and final budget figures are brought forward.

Several areas were highlighted during the review.

Teacher costs are currently close to budget, but Patrick said he expects total teacher spending to come in lower once final numbers are confirmed. If teacher costs remain over budget, he noted, that would be a concern and is being reviewed closely.

Educational assistant costs are under budget, which Patrick described as a return to more typical spending levels after several years of higher-than-normal costs. He said this does not appear to be related to staffing shortages but may reflect how funding formulas are being applied.

Employee benefit costs, which have been a significant pressure in recent years, are also under budget so far. While benefit spending is expected to increase later in the year, Patrick said the current trend is encouraging and may signal that costs are beginning to level off.

Some areas, such as classroom supplies, appear over budget. Patrick explained this is mainly a timing issue, as many supplies are purchased earlier in the year or during the summer, even though budgets are spread evenly across 10 months.

Operations and maintenance costs are significantly under budget at this point. Patrick said this is largely due to costs related to the Carihi fire being charged back to insurance or other funding sources. He cautioned that this does not reflect reduced staffing or services and will not change the district's overall deficit position.

Transportation costs remain over budget and have been trending higher in recent years. Patrick said this is an area where the budget will likely need to be adjusted going forward.

Trustees also asked about teacher-on-call costs, particularly during winter illness season. Patrick confirmed those costs are expected to continue increasing as the year goes on.

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The board will receive an updated budget with revised projections at its next meeting, which will provide a clearer picture of how current trends will affect the district's final financial position for the year.

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