

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
MAR. 17, 2026

March 18, 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/gwK2w5cbh5I>

Chairperson Remarks

In his opening remarks, Chairperson Craig Gillis noted that as the district approaches spring break, the pace of the school year begins to accelerate. He reflected that when students and staff return, the calendar will already be well into April, a time when the Board of Education typically reviews student achievement data, works through the challenges of budget planning, and prepares to celebrate another graduating class as they move on to post-secondary education and the workforce.

Before looking too far ahead, he said the board wished all students, staff, and families a restful spring break, with time to enjoy activities that bring them joy and to spend time with the people who matter most.

Chairperson Gillis spoke about the board's mission to develop well-rounded individuals who are prepared to meet the challenges of the future with resilience, responsibility, and respect. He noted the board's commitment to supporting the holistic development of students, so they have the skills needed to succeed in a changing world. He added that the board continues to highlight one strand of the district's strategic plan at each public meeting to help keep this work in focus.

While honouring Indigenous world views and perspectives remains an important priority, he shared that this meeting would place special attention on student-centred learning environments. He reflected on the many changes in today's school system, including the wide range of courses and programs now available, and the ongoing effort to recognize that students learn in different ways and bring diverse experiences into the classroom. He noted the

importance of reviewing current data to help guide decisions and identify where additional support may be needed.

To conclude, Chairperson Gillis recognized the strong arts and cultural programs in Campbell River schools and the partnerships that support them. He highlighted recent events including the Rotary Honours Concert, Words on Water, Sound Fest, and Timberline Secondary's production of *Big Fish*, as well as opportunities for students to work with visiting Indigenous author Conor Kerr. He said these events reflect the vibrant learning experiences taking place across the district and demonstrate that the arts are alive and well in Campbell River schools.

Watch this segment: [0:01:40](#)

Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Geoff Manning opened his remarks by sharing gratitude for the successful conclusion of the recent teacher bargaining session. He said the agreement brings three more years of stability to the district, which allows everyone to stay focused on the important work ahead of supporting students and their learning.

He also spoke about attending Timberline Secondary's recent production of *Big Fish*. Manning praised the students and staff for the many hours of work behind the performance, noting the strength of not only the acting, but also the costumes, pit band, stage crew, lighting and set design. He said the production was a strong example of the talent and commitment found across the district. He also highlighted Carihi Secondary's upcoming production



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of *Something Rotten!*, which will run April 22 to 25 at the Tidemark Theatre.

Manning then provided an update on the Carihi Secondary rebuild. He shared that the district's proposal has now been submitted to the treasury board and that a few final questions remain. Once that work is complete, the district hopes to move ahead with the rebuild as quickly as possible.

He also touched on kindergarten registration, noting numbers are slightly behind this time last year. The district is currently sitting at about 290 registrations and is forecasting about 360 students. Families with children starting kindergarten this fall are encouraged to register as soon as possible.

In closing, Manning acknowledged that this time of year can feel long for many staff and students. With spring break now close, he wished everyone a restful and rejuvenating break and thanked staff for their continued hard work and commitment throughout the school year.

Watch this segment: [0:05:12](#)

International Student Program Steady as Enrolment Fills Early

The Campbell River School District's international student program continues to show stable enrolment, strong community involvement and increasing numbers of returning students, according to International Student Program Manager Mercedes Hayduk.

This year, the district has 97 students in the program, representing about 75 full-time equivalent (FTE) students from 11 countries. Most international students attend Carihi and Timberline secondary schools, with a small number enrolled in other district programs.

The program is already nearly full for next year, with enrolment expected to remain at about 75 FTE. Having confirmed numbers earlier than in previous years allows the district more time to plan for homestays, course selection and school supports.

An increasing number of students are choosing to stay for more than one year. Fourteen students in the current program were also enrolled last year, and about 23 returning students are expected next year, which will make up roughly one quarter of the program. If all requirements are met, about 10 international students are expected to graduate from SD72 secondary schools next year.

Graduating international students receive the same Dogwood diploma as domestic students. Some continue their education in Canada, while others return to their home countries with credentials that support admission to post-secondary programs.

The update also highlighted the strong role local students, host families and community members play in the program. Student leadership classes at both secondary schools help welcome new students each semester, and Carihi's sports leadership class has organized weekly recreation nights that bring together international students from both high schools.

Host families continue to be an important part of the program, providing support and helping students experience the community. Many international students also take part in local sports teams and community activities.

The program has grown gradually over the past several years, from about 55 FTE to the current 75 FTE, and the district plans to keep the program at a similar size to ensure students continue to receive strong support.

Trustees noted that the program benefits both international and local students by building friendships, strengthening cultural understanding and creating global connections that continue beyond graduation.

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Board Invites Feedback on Proposed Policy Changes to the Role and Responsibilities of the Superintendent

Chairperson Craig Gillis presented the board with a notice



of motion for changes to the board's governance policy on the role and responsibilities of the superintendent. The board's governance policy committee are recommending the changes to combine the three existing policies (General Expectations of the Superintendent, Role and Responsibility of the Superintendent, and Monitoring Superintendent Performance) into one comprehensive policy.

Feedback on these proposed changes are invited before April 9 as the board will be considering the possible motion at their April 14, 2026 public board meeting.

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

Watch this segment: [0:28:49](#)

Board Reviews Diversity, Equality and Equity Policy, Proposes Updated Version

The Board of Education has begun reviewing its diversity, equality and equity policy, with proposed changes intended to strengthen the district's commitment to protecting the rights of all students and ensuring safe, inclusive schools.

The discussion took place during the public board meeting as part of a policy review. Trustees said the update is being considered in response to current events at the provincial level and to ensure the district's policy clearly reflects existing human rights legislation and the board's responsibilities as a public education body.

Trustee Kat Eddy told the board the review is not a notice of motion yet, but an opportunity to share proposed revisions publicly and invite feedback before the policy returns for formal consideration later this spring.

The proposed changes would expand the policy and update the language based on recommendations from the district's Equity in Action Committee and school administrators. The revisions also include direct references

to legislation to ensure the policy aligns with provincial human rights requirements.

Trustee Eddy said the goal is to make the policy clearer and more explicit about the district's responsibility to ensure every student feels safe, valued and respected at school.

Each year, the board sends a joint letter with its partner groups reaffirming a shared commitment to diversity, equity and equality. Trustee Eddy said the updated policy is intended to reinforce that message and provide clearer direction for the school system.

Trustees expressed strong support for the proposed wording during the discussion, describing the draft as clear and firm in its position on protecting the rights of all members of the school community.

Trustee McMann suggested a minor wording change in the definition of equality, recommending the policy refer to providing equal access to opportunities rather than the same opportunities, to better reflect the idea that students may need different supports to achieve similar outcomes.

Chairperson Gillis said feedback will be considered before the policy is brought forward as a formal motion at a future meeting. The board expects to consider final approval before the end of the school year.

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Preliminary Operating Grant Shows Pressure from Flat Funding and Enrolment Decline

The Board of Education has received the district's preliminary operating grant for the coming school year, with early projections showing continued financial pressure due to declining enrolment and flat per-student funding.

Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick told trustees the provincial operating grant remains set at \$9,015 per student, the same as last year. He said the unchanged



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amount does not reflect inflation or recent wage settlements, meaning costs are rising faster than funding.

In addition, the district is forecasting a decline of about 105 full-time equivalent students across school-age, online learning and alternate programs. Because operating funding is based on enrolment, the decrease is expected to reduce revenue by about \$1 million.

Patrick said the district is beginning budget planning with an estimated funding decline of about \$931,000 before other cost pressures are added. Additional increases, including fuel and other operating expenses, will need to be built into the draft budget.

The district will receive some enrolment-decline support from the province, which helps offset sudden drops in student numbers, but the district has not reached the level where additional funding protection would apply.

Trustees also heard that the difference between the number of kindergarten students entering the system and the number of Grade 12 students graduating remains significant, and regional trends suggest enrolment decline is likely to continue for the next several years.

Because the budget is based on projected enrolment, staff will continue to monitor student numbers through the spring. Adjustments may be required before the start of the school year if enrolment changes.

Under provincial legislation, all school districts must approve a balanced operating budget by the end of June.

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