

School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF
OCT. 6 2026

October 7, 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/Vbk1q1vLiQM>

Chairperson Remarks

Chairperson Craig Gillis opened the final public meeting of the current Board of Education by recognizing the death of Trustee David Harper. Following a moment of silence, trustees reflected on his long service to public education and the community. A separate tribute appears below.

Reflecting on the board's four-year term, Chairperson Gillis thanked trustees for their service and their shared focus on the best interests of students.

He also recognized World Teachers' Day and thanked teachers for the time, care and commitment they bring to students and their learning.

Chairperson Gillis welcomed new employees and shared highlights from a recent visit by a delegation representing Taipei City's education system. During a tour of Carihi Secondary School, delegates learned about a range of student-centred and specialized programs offered by the district.

He also thanked employees and schools for their work marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. He noted the importance of helping students learn about Indigenous histories, perspectives and experiences while continuing the district's work toward reconciliation.

In closing, Chairperson Gillis renewed the board's long-standing advocacy for the replacement of Cedar Elementary School. Built in the late 1950s, Cedar remains the district's oldest operating school and has been a capital priority for successive boards. He encouraged the next board to continue advocating for a modern learning

environment for students, employees and the surrounding community.

Watch this segment: [0:01:14](#)

Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Geoff Manning provided updates on enrolment, student learning opportunities and activities marking the beginning of the school year.

The district expects enrolment to decline from last year as larger Grade 12 classes leave the system and fewer kindergarten students enter. The decline is expected to be smaller than originally projected, but the district anticipates enrolment pressures will continue over the next three to five years.

Superintendent Manning highlighted TeenFlight, a program in which students work with community volunteers to build an aircraft. The program has completed two aircraft and is working on a third. Each project takes about two years, and participating students have an opportunity to fly in the completed aircraft.

He also recognized the work undertaken by schools for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Activities included school displays, neighbourhood walks, cultural presentations, songs and literacy learning. Author and Director of Indigenous Education Anne Tenning visited several schools and gave readings of her book, *I Am Indigenous*.

Superintendent Manning thanked teachers in recognition



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of World Teachers' Day and welcomed new employees who recently took part in a district orientation.

He also reported that operations staff would review progress on restoration work at Carihi Secondary School on October 7 and a community update will follow that review. The district plans to continue providing monthly updates throughout the school year.

In closing, Superintendent Manning thanked the outgoing board for its service and its commitment to working through difficult issues in the interests of students.

Watch this segment: [0:13:13](#)

Board Remembers Trustee David Harper

The School District 72 Board of Education began its October 6 public meeting with a moment of silence in memory of Trustee David Harper, whose death had been announced the previous day.

Board members reflected on his long service to public education and the community. The meeting heard that he had served the district over approximately 30 years as a teacher, association president and, most recently, a school trustee.

Trustees remembered his strong commitment to students, public education, community service and democratic participation. They also acknowledged the knowledge and historical perspective he brought to board discussions.

Superintendent Geoff Manning recognized Trustee David Harper's commitment to the district and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work with him.

A bouquet was placed at his seat during the meeting.

Watch this segment: [0:01:14](#)

SD72 Helps Test New Provincial Early Literacy Screener

School District 72 is helping test a new provincial early literacy screener as British Columbia moves toward a consistent screening approach for students from kindergarten to Grade 3.

Director of Instruction Stephen Hawkins-Bogle told the Board of Education that screening gives teachers an early indication that a student may require closer attention or additional support. It is not a diagnosis, grade or comprehensive assessment of a child's literacy development.

The province plans to introduce a common screening tool in the 2027-2028 school year. SD72 began early literacy screening in 2022 and currently uses DIBELS 8, a provincially approved tool.

Selected district schools are field testing Grade 1 English and French Immersion screeners. Kindergarten field testing is expected to begin later this winter. Participating teachers will provide data and feedback to support development of the provincial tool.

District results show gradual improvement. More students in Grades 1 to 3 are meeting or exceeding literacy benchmarks, while fewer students are in the category considered at greatest risk of reading difficulty. Grades 2 and 3 are approaching 50 per cent of students meeting or exceeding the benchmark. The district's longer-term goal is 70 per cent or higher.

After each screening period, the district literacy lead teacher works with elementary school teams to understand the results, set instructional priorities and monitor student progress. Schools receive more intensive support where the results indicate greater need.

The work is supported by SD72's K-5 literacy framework and district literacy team.

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District Expands Childcare and Plans More Rural Early Learning Support

School District 72 expanded from six to eight licensed childcare centres in September and is developing additional spaces at district schools.

Associate Superintendent Philip Cizmic told the Board of Education that new spaces have opened in converted classrooms at École Willow Point Elementary and Georgia Park Elementary. A second centre was added at Georgia Park Elementary in response to a large waitlist.

Construction of dedicated childcare buildings is underway at École Willow Point Elementary and Penfield Elementary School. The district also expects planned centres for children aged three to five to proceed to tender.

Two early childhood educators have been hired as lead facilitators to support employees in district childcare programs.

The board also received an update on StrongStart, a free school-based early learning program for children from birth to age five who attend with a parent or caregiver. Certified early childhood educators lead play-based activities supporting language, physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.

SD72 offers StrongStart at Penfield Elementary School, Pinecrest Elementary School and Sandowne Elementary School, as well as in Sayward and on Quadra Island. The district is considering opportunities to expand rural service, including a possible future program on Cortes Island.

The board heard that provincial StrongStart funding has changed little over the past 15 years and has not kept pace with operating costs. The district reduced some program preparation and planning time this year but did not reduce the time available to children and families.

Associate Superintendent Cizmic said the programs are especially important in rural communities where families may have fewer early learning and family-support services available nearby.

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District Presents Pay Transparency Report, Seeks More Detail on Results

School District 72 has published its second annual pay transparency report and will seek more information to understand the factors contributing to its organization-wide result.

The provincially required calculation reports that women employed by the district earned 89 cents for every dollar earned by men during the reporting period.

Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick told the Board of Education that payroll information is uploaded to a provincial tool that produces an aggregate result for the organization. However, further analysis is needed to understand how the calculation reflects the composition of the district's workforce.

Factors that may influence the result include differences in hours worked, the number of employees in different occupational groups, placement on salary scales and the distribution of employees among higher- and lower-paid positions.

Trustees asked staff to gather more information about the calculation and the way SD72's data is entered. They also expressed interest in examining results by employee group and determining whether valid comparisons can be made with other school districts.

The report must be posted on the district website by November 1.

Watch this segment: [0:49:17](#)

Grade 4 Results Improve; Middle-Years Learning Remains a Focus

School District 72's latest student learning report shows strong improvement in Grade 4 literacy and numeracy, while Grade 7 results remain an area of focus.



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Superintendent Geoff Manning presented the district's interim Framework for Enhancing Student Learning report to the Board of Education. The provincial accountability process reviews literacy and numeracy, student well-being and belonging, graduation, and transitions to post-secondary education.

Grade 4 literacy results increased by approximately 12 percentage points and reached their highest level in five years. Results for Indigenous students and students with diverse abilities also improved. Grade 4 literacy and numeracy results were at or above the provincial averages in the categories presented.

Grade 10 literacy results were also the strongest in five years, while Grade 10 numeracy improved from the previous year. Grade 7 literacy increased slightly, while Grade 7 numeracy declined.

All district schools are now participating in a common formative numeracy assessment, supported by the district's K-9 numeracy framework and numeracy lead teacher. The district's literacy framework will continue to guide classroom instruction and school improvement planning.

Grade 10-to-11 and Grade 11-to-12 transition rates were at or above provincial averages in all categories presented. Two student groups had 100 per cent Grade 11-to-12 transition rates.

Student Learning Survey results also improved. The percentage of students reporting that they feel welcome and safe at school reached its highest level in five years. Results were particularly strong among Indigenous students, although the district remained slightly below the provincial average for students reporting that they feel safe.

The five-year graduation rate declined from the previous year. However, six-, seven- and eight-year completion data indicates that many students are graduating on a longer timeline.

Immediate transitions to post-secondary education increased, with particularly strong growth among Indigenous students. The district will continue developing career programs, work experience and pathways supporting completion of a Dogwood diploma and transitions to post-secondary education, training or employment.

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Board Directs District to Reaffirm Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

The Board of Education has directed the superintendent to communicate the district's commitment to education grounded in truth and reconciliation.

The decision followed a discussion at the public meeting about recent residential school denialism, including the September 27, 2026 gathering of masked white nationalists on the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc reserve, and the harm it causes Indigenous people, families and communities.

The board approved a motion asking the superintendent to provide a message to employees, parents and students reaffirming that SD72's educational work is rooted in truth and supported by district policy and the board's strategic plan. Trustees also approved a second motion to pursue a collective statement with district partner groups and unions.

The discussion emphasized the responsibility of public education to teach the history and continuing effects of the residential school system and uphold the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

The motions followed activities in district schools marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. These included school displays, neighbourhood walks, cultural presentations, songs and learning with Indigenous authors and presenters.

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Correction Regarding Enterprise Resource Planning System

At the September 15, 2026 public board meeting, School District 72 reported that its enterprise resource planning (ERP) system had been down for six days during the summer.

Superintendent Geoff Manning clarified that the ERP system itself was not responsible for the interruption. The issue involved a backup system that interfaces with the ERP platform.

The district provided the clarification to ensure the public record accurately reflected the cause of the interruption. The board's decision to proceed with planning for replacement of the district's approximately 30-year-old ERP system remains unchanged. The system supports payroll, human resources and accounts payable functions.

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