

**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**PUBLIC MEETING**  
**January 28, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.**

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**TRUSTEES:** Cendra Beaton, Board Chair  
Russ Chipps online via MS Teams  
Christine Lervold  
Trudy Spiller

Allison Watson, Vice Chair  
Amanda Dowhy  
Ebony Logins

**STAFF:** Paul Block, Superintendent  
Brian Jonker, Secretary-Treasurer  
Monica Braniff, Deputy Superintendent  
D’Arcy Deacon, Associate Superintendent  
David Strange, Associate Superintendent  
Fred Hibbs, Executive Director, Human Resources  
Steve Tonnesen, Manager, Digital Solutions - Operations

**REGRETS:** Farzaan Nusserwanji, Executive Director, Digital Solutions

**SECRETARY:** Jenny Seal

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1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATIONS TERRITORIES**  
The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by the Board Chair, who acknowledged the traditional territories of the First Nations.
2. **AGENDA**
  - 2.1 Call for amendments and additional items
    57. **MOVED** Allison Watson/Ebony Logins  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting agenda of January 28, 2025, as amended.  
**CARRIED**



2.2 Report on In Camera Meeting – Cendra Beaton

This notice is to inform the public that prior to this meeting an “in-camera” meeting of the Board was held where issues of legal, land and personnel were discussed.

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 Call for amendments to minutes

58. MOVED Allison Watson/Amanda Dowhy  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting minutes of December 17, 2024, as presented.  
CARRIED

4. **INFORMATION ITEMS AND ANNOUCEMENTS**

4.1 Board Chair Update – Cendra Beaton

The Board Chair wished everyone a happy new year. She took a moment to send thanks to staff who worked over the holiday season ensuring a smooth return to operations after the break. She sent her gratitude for engagement by partner groups in the budget process. The Chair introduced Brian Jonker, the new Secretary-Treasurer and welcomed him to the District. After being elected Chair in December, Cendra Beaton assigned representatives to the District Committees and thanked Trustees for their work.

The 2025-2029 Strategic Plan is nearing completion and the Board Chair encouraged everyone to read it. In secondary schools, Capstone projects are underway. The Chair visited schools and spoke with students about their projects. This week marks literacy week across BC. The Chair stressed the importance of Literacy and sent her gratitude for all the work being done.

4.2 EFAP (Employee & Family Assistance Provider) Presentation – Walmsley EFAP Inc. – Garth Walmsley & Rob Baker

Fred Hibbs provided a brief background of the Request for Proposals process and introduced the successful proponent; Walmsley EFAP Inc. Fred expressed his appreciation to Christine Merner and Kathryn Roy, who worked on the RFP process, and the partner groups for their help in selecting the successful proponent.

Walmsley Inc. exclusively offers EFAP and is very pleased to be able to provide the service to a community they are a part of. Garth Walmsley and Rob Baker offered a brief history of the company and described the services available. Counsellors who work for Walmsley Inc. are locals who know the resources of the area. Services are



flexible and need-based, and accessible through a variety of methods. All counsellors are required to be PCACC qualified. Staff will have access to an Online Wellness Library on a variety of topics. Workshops and webinars are offered and can be customised. Some services will be available to add-on for a fee. Communications will go out shortly, announcing the start date of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

The Board offered congratulations to Walmsley Inc. for being the successful proponent. Questions were answered around webinars being offered.

## 5. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

### 5.1 Belmont School Trip to Shoreline, Washington July 13 – 16, 2025 – Kyle Harrington & Stephen McHugh

Kyle Harrington, Head Football Coach at Belmont, provided an overview of the trip to Shoreline, Washington. There will be 5-6 teachers, as well as parents. Kyle participated in this trip last year and shared some highlights. The trip itinerary was reviewed and details provided around supervision, cost and insurance. Questions were answered regarding communication protocols since the trip is being offered outside of the school calendar.

59. MOVED Christine Lervold/Amanda Dowhy  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) conditionally approve the Belmont Secondary School Trip to Shoreline, Washington from July 13-16, 2025, subject to the oversight and direction of the Superintendent's Office.  
CARRIED

## 6. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL – no report

## 7. CORRESPONDENCE & DELEGATIONS

### 7.1 Correspondence

- a. Letter from Minister Lisa Beare dated December 27, 2024 RE Enhancing Student Learning Report Submission
- b. Letter from Minister Kang dated January 7, 2025 RE Response to December 10 Letter
- c. Letter from Minister Beare dated January 13, 2025 RE Response to December 10 Letter
- d. Letter from C. Moss dated January 13, 2025 RE New School in Sooke
- e. Letter from C. Brown, RE 678 Latoria Rd.
- f. Letter from SD61 dated January 20, 2025 RE Climate Action Advocacy



60. **MOVED** Ebony Logins/Allison Watson  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the above noted correspondence as outlined in section 7.1a., b., c., d., e. and f.  
**CARRIED**

7.2 Standing Delegations (STA, CUPE, PVP, SPEAC) – 5 minutes each

STA – Francesca Lee

Francesca Lee explained her role in the Curriculum Transformation Department. As well as educating students, she works with teachers via presentations and assemblies. She has helped build the District's Resources by providing sexual health materials. Within the STA Francesca Lee holds the Public Relations Chair. She is on the Member Engagement Committee and works on TTOC appreciation.

CUPE 459 – Amber Leonard

The CUPE President read Call to Action #42. Her goal is to bring the truth and understanding to everyone in the community. She is proud to have worked towards establishing a protocol agreement between the STA and CUPE. The framework provides a map of dialogue to assist with collaboration. The CUPE Pro-D day is coming up in May. She is very proud of the members that step up to present, adding to their co-workers' knowledge and experience. She is hearing that members are seeking better workplace morale and suggested exploring mentorship programs to support. More opportunities for mentorship are needed. She praised the selection of Walmsley Inc. to provide EFAP services to staff.

The Board acknowledged CUPE's collaboration and Amber Leonard's leadership.

SPEAC – Tom Davis

The SPEAC President sent his thanks to Mark Johnston, Corrinne Kosik, Janine Brooks and Steve Tonnesen for their contributions to the Parent Education Session hosted by SPEAC on January 22, 2025. More sessions are coming up.

The Board requested a copy of the slide deck from the Parent Education Session and extended their appreciation to SPEAC for working with District staff to provide these opportunities to parents.

PVP – Katrina Abell & Jennifer Dailey

Katrina Abell & Jennifer Dailey presented examples of Kindness and Literacy from around the District. At Spencer, an artist presented. At John Stubbs, students enjoyed 'Reading Buddies' (Older students read to younger students). ` Starbooks



Café' was offered, where students can choose a book and enjoy a treat and a cup of tea. Award Winning Author, Michael Bortolotto presented. Port Renfrew Elementary students were gifted several copies of *The Guinness Book of World Records*. Millstream Elementary created a game called 'Kind-opoly'; instead of 'go to jail', the students draw a card instructing them to do an act of kindness. Happy Valley staff dressed up to represent '*The Bad Seed, The Good Egg, The Cool Bean, and The Great Eggscapes!*' reading series. The Victoria Grizzlies visited Ruth King, read and played hockey with the students. Poirier students have been working on being kind to each other through Gaga Ball, building and sharing. At John Stubbs, they shared a flashlight read in the gym with their buddy classes. Staff collected books donated by families for kids to take home and keep. Belmont students finished their Capstone projects. Sooke Elementary staff put on a 'Readers Theatre' and performed for the students. Sooke Elementary had guest readers, dress up day and an author visit. They practiced kindness using 'greetings in your pocket' and played a trivia game.

7.3 Other Delegations - none

## 8. FINANCE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### 8.1 Resources Committee Meeting of January 14, 2025 – Allison Watson

Trustee Watson provided an overview of the Resources Committee Meeting of January 14, 2025. Brian Jonker explained that the re-calculated grant from the Ministry of Education & Childcare was delayed but was received today.

61. MOVED Allison Watson/Christine Lervold  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) allow all three readings of the 2024/25 Amended Budget Bylaw at its meeting of February 25, 2025.  
CARRIED (UNANIMOUSLY)

(Motion #64 was addressed before returning to Motion #61)

62. MOVED Allison Watson/Christine Lervold  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the proposed Academy Fees for the 2025-26 school year as presented at the Resources Committee Meeting of January 14, 2025.  
CARRIED



63. MOVED Allison Watson/Christine Lervold  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke)  
receive the report from the Resources Committee Meeting of January 14, 2025.  
CARRIED

64. MOVED Allison Watson/Ebony Logins  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the  
proposed Outdoor Education Academy fee for the 2025-26 school year as  
presented at the Resources Committee meeting of January 14, 2025.  
CARRIED

9. **EDUCATION PROGRAM**

9.1 Education-Policy Committee Meeting of January 9, 2025 – Cendra Beaton  
Committee Chair Ebony Logins could not attend the January 9 Education-Policy  
meeting. Cendra Beaton attended in her absence and provided an overview of the  
meeting. She noted that Wayne Kelly provided a thorough presentation on the  
proposed Outdoor Education Academy. Outdoor Education provides a valuable  
opportunity to keep students interested who may become disengaged.

65. MOVED Cendra Beaton/Amanda Dowhy  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the SD62  
Outdoor Education Academy at Belmont Secondary School to begin  
September 2025.  
CARRIED

66. MOVED Cendra Beaton/Ebony Logins  
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report  
from the Education-Policy Committee Meeting of January 9, 2025.  
CARRIED

9.2 Adoption of District Policies & Regulations – Paul Block  
Draft revised Regulations C-329 and draft revised Policy and Regulations D-121 have  
received feedback. The required period has passed, and approval can proceed.

67. MOVED Ebony Logins/Amanda Dowhy  
Given that the required period for Notice of Motion has been served, that the  
Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) ADOPT draft revised  
Regulations C-329 “Field Trips”.  
CARRIED



68. **MOVED** Ebony Logins/Amanda Dowhy  
Given that the required period for Notice of Motion has been served, that the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) ADOPT draft revised Policy and Regulations D-121 “Animals on District Property and in Classrooms”.  
CARRIED

10. **STUDENTS**

11. **FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNANCE**

11.1 Trustee Liaison Reports – Board of Education

Victoria Family Court Youth Justice Committee – Christine Lervold

The AGM was held January 23, 2025. Marie-Térèse Little was re-elected as Chair and Kimberly Guiry was re-elected as Vice-Chair. The minutes from the meeting will be posted on the Victoria Family Court website.

EMCS Society Meeting – Amanda Dowhy

The EMCS Society hosted Family Literacy events on Saturday. Children enjoyed reading with a Colwood Firefighter and the Mayor. Every child in attendance had an opportunity to take home an age-appropriate book. An upcoming program called ‘Books and Bannock’ will feature an Indigenous Author and will be available to all families. Information to be communicated about this event soon.

12. **ADMINISTRATION**

12.1 Board of Education 90 Day Work Plan – Cendra Beaton

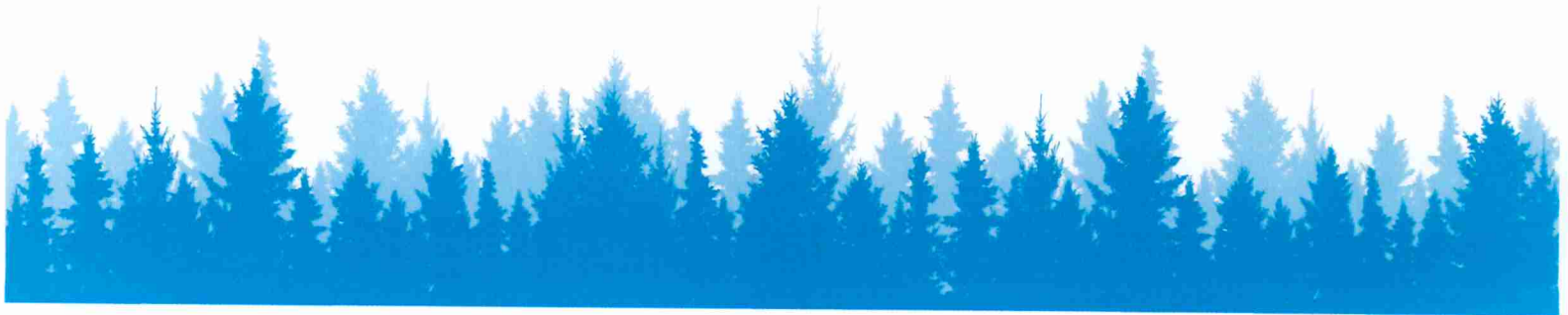
The Board Chair opened the floor to comments or questions regarding the 90-day work plan.

13. **PERSONNEL**

13.1 Superintendent’s Report – Paul Block

The Superintendent provided an update on Learning, Engagement and Growth. In an interview with Gregor Craigie on CBC radio, he spoke about registration opening and the needs in the District due to growth.

Principal and Vice-Principal interviews are ongoing. Paul Block sent his appreciation to Nora Reid, Dave Strange, D’Arcy Deacon & Monica Braniff for supporting this process. He sent kudos to the partner groups and members of the Indigenous Education Council for their role in recruitment interviews. Spring staffing has begun,



and the Superintendent acknowledged this can be a stressful time for teachers and support staff.

There have been almost 12 months of engagement around the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan which will come to the Board for approval at the end of February. This is important because the Strategic Plan informs the District Operational Plan, which informs School Plans. Acknowledgement goes to former Superintendent Scott Stinson for setting the District on this path.

Enrolment projections – Monica Braniff spoke about enrolment projections currently in progress for next year. No numbers can be provided today but projection updates will continue. The Data Team is looking at trends over time as well as students who may be leaving the District (graduating, moving etc.). Using data from MyEd BC and data from the community, the team comes up with a projection for the upcoming year. Three-year projections will be sent to the Ministry of Education and Childcare on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Superintendent celebrated that we are 8 months away from the opening of SCÍĀNEW STĒLITKĒL Elementary. The structure and culture of the school is coming together under the leadership of Principal Camille McFarlane and District Principal Mark Kaercher. They are working to ensure the school has the resources needed to open in September 2025.

Finally, Paul Block acknowledged the Finance department and the Trustees for their work over the winter break. He also sent his appreciation to staff who weren't at work ensuring they were recharged for their return in January.

#### 14. UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 29 – Kindergarten & Late French Immersion registration opens
- January 29 – Lunar New Year
- January 30-31 BCPSEA AGM\*
- February – Black History Month
- February 3 – Regular registration (grades 1-12) and Academy registration
- February 4 – Education Policy Meeting
- February 11 – Resource Committee Meeting
- February 14 – Valentine's Day & Non-instructional Day
- February 17 – Family Day
- February 22 - BCSTA Provincial Council\*

\*Representative only





15. **RISE AND REPORT**

16. **QUESTION PERIOD**

Members of the public have the opportunity to ask questions related to agenda items discussed at tonight's meeting using the QA function in MS Teams. Individuals must identify themselves and ask questions directed to the Chair. Members of the media can direct their questions to the Manager, Strategic Communications for response following the meeting.

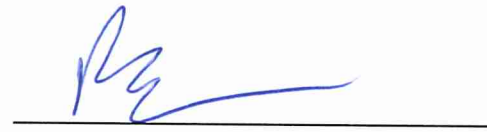
17. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Certified Correct:



Chairperson of the Board



Secretary-Treasurer

