

**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF  
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 58 (NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN)**

**MERRITT SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2022, 6:00 P.M.**

---

*Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow*

PRESENT:	Chairperson	G. Swan
	Trustees	B. Jepsen G. Comeau E. Hoisington J. Chenoweth L. Ward D. Rainer
	Superintendent	S. McNiven
	Assistant Superintendent	J. Kempston
	Secretary Treasurer	D. Richardson
	Assistant Secretary Treasurer	Vacant
	Executive Assistant	J. McGifford

---

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES AND METIS  
COMMUNITY**

**AGENDA**

22/034 It was moved and seconded:  
  
THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MINUTES**

22/035 It was moved and seconded:  
  
THAT the minutes of the Regular meeting September 14, 2022, be adopted as circulated.

**MOTION CARRIED****MINUTES**

22/036

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the amended minutes of the Regular meeting held April 13, 2022, be adopted as circulated with changes made to include “major and minor” replacing “major” as it pertains to the capital bylaw.

**MOTION CARRIED****Business Arising from the Minutes**

None

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE****Merritt Secondary School Presentation**

The Superintendent introduced Merritt Secondary School Principal Adriane Moulard and Vice-Principal Gian Cavaliere. They presented on the excellence of Merritt Secondary School Athletics and the path of growth the athletic department has been on over the years - even amidst the pandemic and school displacement due to the flood event of November 2021. They spoke of the upcoming 2022 AA Girls Volleyball Provincials as well as Merritt Secondary’s award of BC Sport School of the Year for 2021-2022. They highlighted to the strategic plan around sports, health and wellness and inclusivity.

**Director of Instruction – Inclusion Report**

Director of Instruction – Inclusive Education, Misty Sheldon, provided an update on her progress to date including making introductions to families, visiting school sites in both Merritt and Princeton - engaging with staff and administration; collaborating with CUPE for Education Assistant placements; interview and hiring new EA’s to alleviate the staffing shortages; supporting Student Support Teachers and school Principals with the 1701 process to meet Ministry of Education reporting requirements; collaborating with school teams in DVR (Diploma Verification Record) meetings; setting up POPARD to supports; connecting with high schools and Interior Health for collaboration on career opportunities; and dual credit programs specifically geared towards Indigenous students. Moving forward she looks forward to learning more about competency-based IEP’s and continuing to build relationships in and beyond our district.

### **Strategic Plan Update**

The Superintendent spoke to the priorities and work taking place regarding the focus on our Strategic Plan as progress was hindered somewhat due to the flooding events of November 2021. Topic areas included: Truth and Reconciliation; Literacy and Numeracy; Early Learning; Mental Health; Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and Communication.

### **Student and Family Affordability Fund**

The Assistant Superintendent spoke to the one-time grant of \$250,0000 to our District in order to offset the immediate effects of inflation on students and families.

Administrators and staff, DPAC, and Education Coordinators were asked about priorities and these came back as food, supplies and fees. The Social Service Index and specific school demographics will be factored when allocating these funds. All stakeholders expressed the importance of compassion and dignity when considering disbursement. The entire grant is scheduled to be allocated after consultation with school administration, noting that time is of the essence as direction from the Ministry of Education and Childcare requires school districts to have this money spent by end of 2022-2023 school year.

Trustees requested an update for early February so they may take this information to the AGM as it would provide beneficial information for the Province.

### **2022-2023 Calendar Amendment**

The Superintendent spoke to the memo in the Board Packages regarding amending the calendar to accommodate the National Day of Mourning for Queen Elizabeth II.

22/037

It was moved and seconded:

THAT: The District reduce the hours of classroom instruction by five hours this school year in recognition of the National Day of Mourning for Queen Elizabeth II.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Superintendent's Report**

The Superintendent circulated his report referencing important events occurring across our district including: visiting schools to thank teachers in appreciation of World Teacher's Day, the return of Welcome Dinners hosted in both Merritt and Princeton, National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and the MMIWG2S march, John Allison Harvest Festival, the return of athletic programs across the district, mentorship programs at Vermillion Forks Elementary and Merritt Secondary Schools, the Student and Family Affordability Fund, Mental Health initiatives across

the district and the improvement of communication across our district with our Communication Plan.

## **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

### **District Technology Update**

The Superintendent introduced the Manager of IT, Ben Grant, who spoke on the work completed by the Technology Department. Together, with Operations Manager Darrell Finnigan, collaborative efforts are being made towards developing and communicating an Information Technology plan across the district. He also explained notable recent IT accomplishments with some being: flood relief laptops (335 laptops were placed with students impacted by the floods last fall – this being a combination of older district equipment along with technology donated by the Ministry), IPAD replacements in K-3 classes, laptop replacements every four years for grades 4-12; printer replacements resulting from flood repairs; the purchase of three new servers to upgrade and meet district demands; Laserfiche digitization of paper records; the upgrading of wireless access networks in the district and the purchase of IT phones to facilitate a centralized phone system

### **Central School Update**

The Secretary Treasurer provided an update on the status of Merritt Central's ventilation system. Reports of an odor in the west part of the building were investigated by Onside Restoration and Apex EHS, concluding there was no risk to staff or students. The ventilation issue was resolved with no further reports of odor. Next steps will be consultation with a building envelope specialist to prevent similar situations in the future. The Secretary Treasurer expressed thanks for the quick response of Onside Restoration, Apex EHS and School District Staff.

## **AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **2022/2023 Financial Update**

The Secretary Treasurer provided an update on the district's 2022-2023 preliminary budget which was based on enrollment projections made last February. Confirmation of enrollment will be made through student data verification process (1701) with a funding announcement being made in December and the amended final budget being presented to the Board early in the new year.

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

### **Policy Committee Update**

The Superintendent spoke to our Equity scan and its impact on governance and potential policy changes, with the possibility of a third-party review of all of the district's policies and an update of district policies. Amended policies will be published on the district's website.

## **TRUSTEE REPORTS**

### **Student Trustee Reports**

The Assistant Superintendent introduced Student Trustees from Merritt Secondary School, River Anderson and Owen Bateson. They spoke of the strengths at MSS, including improved student representation and inclusion at the school, increasing enthusiasm and school spirit noted in students, staff, family, and the public. They also acknowledged the FNSW's and teaching staff that have had a positive influence in their time at Merritt Secondary and commended the supports in place for new students to the school.

### **P.A.C. Reports**

Trustees reported on recent PAC meetings:

- Trustee Rainer reported that no information was received from Princeton Secondary School.
- Trustee Comeau reported on the many positives happening at Vermilion Forks Elementary School including a review of their Code of Conduct.
- Trustee Ward reported on the 'Bright Lights' at John Allison Elementary School.
- Trustee Chenoweth reported on SCIDES art department linking with Kamloops Art Gallery, with the PAC expressing Thanks to Mrs. Goetz for her services in the district upon news of her future retirement in January. He also reported on the enthusiasm of the largely new PAC at Collettsville Elementary and that they had discussion surrounding FSA's.
- Trustee Swan reported on the success of Merritt Bench Elementary's cross country run. He also reported on Merritt Secondary School and that their PAC discussed the effects of vandalism at the school and are in full support the usage of cameras 24/7 to mitigate.
- Trustee Jepsen reported that Merritt Central Elementary School's meeting was cancelled on short notice.
- Trustee Hoisington reported on many inclusive and engaging events at Nicola Canford Elementary including their hosting own Welcome Dinner and

### **Other Reports**

The Board Chair wished to recognize the 42 years of service to the Board of Education by Trustee Comeau and the four terms of service by Trustee Jepsen. Both were thanked for their contributions to the children and families of School District No. 58.

Trustee Rainer requested a bussing review from the Operations Manager for the next meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE**


None

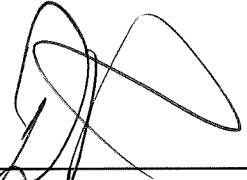
**PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary Treasurer