

NICOLA - SIMILKAMEEN SCHOOL DISTRICT



JOURNEYS

FALL/WINTER 2023

LATEST INFORMATION AND UPDATES FROM
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF S.D. 58.



WE RESPECTFULLY AND MEANINGFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE NLAKA'PAMUX-THOMPSON
AND SYILX-OKANAGAN NATION PEOPLES ON WHOSE UNCEDED LANDS
WE ARE GRATEFUL TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY. WE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OUR METIS COMMUNITIES
AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ABORIGINAL WAYS OF LIFE AND LEARNING.



A WORD FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Welcome to the first edition of Journeys, where our Board will regularly update you on activities both within the District and our reach beyond Nicola Similkameen.

As Trustees, we have a shared vision that education is a powerful catalyst for positive change. As the Board Chair, I'm honored to champion our commitment to excellence. Our educational journey is a testament to the strength of community, collaboration, and innovation.

Education isn't just about classrooms; it's about igniting a passion for learning. We're dedicated to creating an inclusive environment where every student's potential is recognized and nurtured. Our educators and support staff are the guiding lights, nurturing curiosity, and inspiring dreams.

We recognize that education isn't static; it evolves with the times. We embrace change and the opportunities it brings, ensuring our students are prepared for an ever-changing world. Part of that evolution is our new relationship with our Indigenous communities, as Right Holders, in our educational journey. This is articulated in our Local Education Agreements which have UNDRIP and BCTEA as their foundation.

The district's unwavering support for creativity and innovation has given rise to a vibrant culture of lifelong learning creating critical thinkers, and compassionate global citizens. In Nicola-Similkameen, education isn't just a journey; it's over 2600 individual journeys building upon a legacy of inspiration, empowerment, and boundless possibilities.

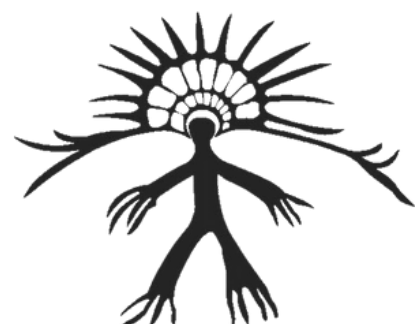
Sit back and enjoy our premiere issue.

Together, we shape a brighter future.

K^wuk^wscemx^w - Limlāmt - Marsee - Thank you

GORDON SWAN

BOARD CHAIR



WHO WE ARE

BOARD CHAIR GORDON SWAN (MERRITT): gswan@365.sd.58.bc.ca
VICE-CHAIR LEAH WARD (PRINCETON): lward@365.sd.58.bc.ca
TRUSTEE DAVID RAINER (PRINCETON): drainer@365.sd.58.bc.ca
TRUSTEE JOHN CHENOWETH (MERRITT): jchenoweth@365.sd.58.bc.ca
TRUSTEE EVERETT HOISINGTON (MERRITT): ehoisington@365.sd.58.bc.ca
TRUSTEE JAMIE KENT-LAIDLAW (PRINCETON): jkent-laidlaw@365.sd.58.bc.ca
TRUSTEE JUSTIN JEPSEN (MERRITT): jjepsen@365.sd.58.bc.ca

As locally elected representatives, the trustees on our board best understand the strengths, challenges and demands on the communities of Princeton, Merritt, and the rural areas connecting them.

It is our goal to engage our communities in building and maintaining a school system that reflects our local priorities, values and expectations. We are here to listen to you, guide the work of our school district and set plans, policies and the annual budget.

Our board typically meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month throughout the school year. We are pleased to report back to our communities on how our students are doing because we are directly accountable to You. These monthly meetings are also livestreamed on our [SD 58 Facebook](#) page so that you may join us from the comfort of your own home. If you have questions during the meeting please use the chat feature and your questions will be brought forward during the public question period.

The Board of Education of School District No. 58 shares a co-governance relationship with the provincial government through the Ministry of Education and Child Care. The British Columbia School Trustee Association (BCSTA) supports member boards in this relationship.

For more information on the BCSTA we invite you to visit:
<https://bcsta.org>

MERRITT SECONDARY SCHOOL
HAIDYN CLARK & OWEN BATESON



PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL
KABRIE HARTWELL & MATTHEW WILLIAMS



STUDENT TRUSTEES

Our student trustees bring a vibrancy and “lived experience” perspective to our Board Meetings that are of great value to us all. They give us a snapshot into the events that are taking place in schools and provide a representative voice for their student communities. We are grateful for the perspective they provide and look forward to working with these wonderful young adults this year.



BOARD NEWS

FEEDING FUTURES FUNDING:

We are very pleased to report that the \$350,000.00 in Feeding Futures dollars have been disbursed for the 2023 – 2024 school year. Some of these funds have been earmarked for minor equipment upgrades and the hiring of a food program coordinator however more than \$280,000.00 has been put directly into the hands of schools in order to ensure that every child has access to nutritional food on a daily basis. The board determined that the distribution of funds across the district should be based on a combination of students per school and a provincially recognized vulnerability index. We express our gratitude to the Ministry of Education and Childcare for this opportunity and encourage families to reach out to schools or the district if they feel that they would benefit from food support during a challenging economic time for so many.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS FOR YOUTH:

Rural and remote communities are continuing to be underserved, to a greater extent, by the provincial government with regards to Youth Mental Health when compared to larger urban centers. By way of example, the communities of Princeton and Merritt have been without consistent Youth Mental Health Worker support for years. This lack of Youth Mental Health Workers has put additional stresses on the Public Education System as school Counsellors attempt to fill a gap that in many instances, they are simply not equipped to handle which in turn puts our most vulnerable students at greater risk that the student population as a whole.

Our board was honored to bring forward a motion to the BCSTA at the recent Provincial Council meeting that the Government support the creation of a working group consisting of BCSTA, applicable Ministries, Right Holders and Partner Groups to prepare a recommendation to the Ministry of Finance that will provide incentives for Youth Mental Health Workers to locate in Rural and Remote Communities to meet the needs of Children and Youth in said communities.

NICOLA - CANFORD WALKING PATH:

SD 58 hosted a meeting with various stakeholder groups within the community of Lower Nicola to discuss short and long-term solutions for students and pedestrians walking to /from Nicola-Canford Elementary School. Members from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Lower Nicola Water Works, and the Thompson Nicola Regional District, local property owners, along with school board trustees and senior staff were represented.

We are pleased to report that meaningful discussions took place with a unified stance towards safety for students and citizens of Lower Nicola and that the school district has received a signed license access agreement from the property owner next to Nicola-Canford Elementary School. This will permit students to walk to/from school on the walking path that has historically been used) and perimeter access has been re-opened.

The license access agreement is in place until June 30, 2025, allowing adequate time for stakeholders to complete a long-term solution.



UPCOMING EVENTS

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING: PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL. WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023
33REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONIES: SHULUS, TOWN OF PRINCETON, CITY OF MERRITT: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2023
REMEMBRANCE DAY STATUTORY HOLIDAY: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2023
BCSTA TRUSTEE ACADEMY: NOVEMBER 23-25, 2023
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING: MERRITT SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE. WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2023
WINTER BREAK: DECEMBER 23, 2023 TO JANUARY 7, 2024
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING: PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2024
FAMILY DAY: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING: MERRITT SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING: PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL. WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2024
SPRING BREAK: MARCH 18-28, 2024
GOOD FRIDAY: : MARCH 29, 2024
EASTER MONDAY: APRIL 1, 2024

Please explore our [school district website](#) or the [SD58 Facebook page](#) for more school district information and upcoming events.

We, the Board of Education of School District No. 58, look forward to providing you with quarterly updates on the Strategic Plan work we continue to accomplish - focusing on Truth and Reconciliation, Literacy and Numeracy, Early Learning, Mental Health, our Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and Communication.

We invite and welcome you to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Until next time,

K^wUK^wSCEMX^w - LIMLƏMT - MARSEE - THANK YOU

