

MINUTES

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

**MERRITT SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2023, 6:00P.M.**

Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow

PRESENT:	Chairperson	G. Swan
	Trustees	J. Jepsen J. Kent-Laidlaw E. Hoisington (ABSENT) J. Chenoweth L. Ward D. Rainer
	Superintendent	S. McNiven
	Assistant Superintendent	J. Kempston
	Secretary Treasurer	D. Richardson
	Assistant Secretary Treasurer	L. Rusnjak
	Executive Assistant	J. McGifford

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

AGENDA

23/082 It was moved and seconded:

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

MINUTES

23/083

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the minutes of the Open Meeting held September 13, 2023, be adopted as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

EDUCATION

South Central Interior Distance Education School Update:

Dan Duncan, Principal of South Central Interior Distance Education School (SCIDES), introduced SCIDES teacher, Cory Hermiston. Together they provided an update on the following items: new initiatives, “The Rink” program, increased enrollment, SCIDES move to Coquihalla Middle School, and future plans.

Truth and Reconciliation Update:

Director of Indigenous Education, Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte, presented Trustees with an Indigenous Education update that included an overview of the following items: Aboriginal Events & Activities for 2023/2024, engagement, Local Education Agreement Committee updates, student attendance and engagement, the hiring of an Indigenous Student Engagement Facilitator. Ms. Oppenheim-Lacerte introduced First Nation Support Worker, Melissa Pinyon, who presented on the North American Indigenous Games and extra-curricular activities for Indigenous youth within the school district.

French Immersion Program Update:

The Assistant Superintendent informed trustees about the progress being made with implementing the French Immersion Grant and the many French Immersion initiatives it will launch for the district.

Feeding Futures Memo:

The Assistant Superintendent reported that the \$350,000 Feeding Futures Grant has been disbursed for the 2023 – 2024 school year. Some of the funds will be directed towards minor equipment upgrades and the hiring of a food program coordinator; however, as reported at the September open meeting, over \$280,000.00 has been put directly into the hands of schools to ensure that every child has access to nutritional food on a daily basis.

Trustee Branch Meeting Report:

Trustees were provided an overview of the upcoming Thompson-Okanagan Branch Meeting being hosted on October 13th and 14th by the Nicola-Similkameen School District. In advance of the event, the School District thanked Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Nicola-Canford Elementary School and the Ministry of Education and Child Care for their support. In preparation for the upcoming branch meeting, Trustees discussed the importance of mental health supports.

23/084

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board sponsor and present the following motion for Youth Mental Health Support at the BCSTA Provincial Council meeting in October:

That BCSTA request that Government supports the creation of a working group consisting of BCSTA, applicable Ministry's, 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. The work is desired to be completed prior to the tabling of the Provincial Budget in 2024.

MOTION CARRIED**Superintendent's Report:**

The Superintendent circulated and spoke to his report, reflecting on the district events that have taken place over the past month.

OPERATIONS

Capital Projects Update:

The Secretary Treasurer provided Trustees with an update on the district's ongoing and upcoming capital projects aimed at enhancing our infrastructure and services. With many projects being completed throughout the first quarter of the school year, the Secretary Treasurer expressed thanks and gratitude to Operation Manager, Darrell Finnigan, and his maintenance team for this work.

2023-2024 Amended Capital Plan:

The Secretary Treasurer presented Trustees with the Ministry Response Letter, dated September 15, 2023, regarding the Amended Annual Five-Year Capital Plan Submission, Capital Bylaw No. 2023/24-CPSD58-03. The amendment to the capital plan includes the newly introduced Food Infrastructure Program introduced last year by the Ministry of Education and Childcare.

23/085

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board approve the amended Capital By-Law No. 2023/24-CPSD58-03 for first reading.

MOTION CARRIED

23/086

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board approve the amended Capital By-Law No. 2023/24-CPSD58-03 for second reading.

MOTION CARRIED

23/087

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board approve the amended Capital By-Law No. 2023/24-CPSD58-03 to third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

23/088

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board approve the amended Capital By-Law No. 2023/24-CPSD58-03 for third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

Merritt Central School Bus Stop:

The Secretary Treasurer provided the Board with an update on the reconfiguration changes being introduced to the road and sidewalk on Voght Street and how these changes will affect the school bus stop at Merritt Central School.

Nicola-Canford Perimeter Access:

The Secretary Treasurer reported that meaningful discussions took place with a unified stance towards safety for students and citizens of Lower Nicola as it pertains to safe travel to/from Nicola-Canford Elementary School. The school district and stakeholders continue to work towards a short-term and long-term solution to provide the community with safe access to Nicola-Canford Elementary School.

AUDIT AND FINANCE

2023-2024 Budget Timeline:

The Secretary Treasurer provided Trustees with a timeline of key events that influence the budget process for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Public Interest Disclosure Act:

Barb McLean, Director of Human Resources, provided an overview of the Public Interest Disclosure Act highlighting the following key areas: the Purpose of the Public Interest Disclosure Act, The Definition of Serious Wrongdoing, Responsibilities of the District and Trustee Training Requirements.

POLICY

Policy Committee Update:

The Superintendent informed Trustees of the next Policy Committee meeting on October 24, 2023.

Procedural Bylaw:

23/089

It was moved and seconded:

THAT Bylaw No. 2-23, Procedural Bylaw, be moved for second reading.

MOTION CARRIED

Use of School District Property Bylaw:

23/090

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board move Bylaw 6-23, Use of School District Property, be moved for first reading.

MOTION CARRIED

Freedom of Information Bylaw:

23/091

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board move Bylaw 4-23, Freedom of Information Bylaw, forward for first reading.

MOTION CARRIED

Indemnification Bylaw:

23/092

It was moved and seconded:

THAT the Board move Bylaw 3-23, Indemnification Bylaw, forward for first reading.

MOTION CARRIED**TRUSTEE REPORTS****Student Trustee Reports:**

Merritt Secondary School Vice-Principal, David Andersen, introduced Merritt Student Trustees Owen Bateson and Haidyn Clarke. Together they provided Trustees with their perspective on what being an engaged/involved high school student looks like, as well as how grade 8's and new students get introduced to

(and engage with) school life at MSS. When asked what they would like to see more of, they would like to see more ways to express their thoughts and opinions (via surveys/polls), collaboration and teamwork with staff, and learning engagement via field trips and activities.

Trustee Reports:

Trustee Chenoweth reported on Collettsville Elementary and SCIDES.

Trustee Rainer reported on John Allison Elementary.

Trustee Hoisington reported on Nicola Canford Elementary.

Trustee Ward reported on Vermilion Forks Elementary.

Trustee Kent-Laidlaw reported on Princeton Secondary School.

Trustee Jepsen reported on Diamond Vale Elementary and Merritt Central Elementary.

Trustee Swan reported on Merritt Bench Elementary and Merritt Secondary School.

Selection of Board Committee & Representative Members:

The Superintendent led discussion on the selection of board committee and representative members. The following changes were made:

BCPSEA Representative:	Trustee Jepsen
BCPSEA Alternate:	Trustee Rainer
BCSTA Representative:	Trustee Rainer
BCSTA Alternate:	Trustee Kent-Laidlaw
OLRC Representative:	Trustee Jepsen
OLRC Alternate:	Secretary Treasurer, Dylan Richardson

CORRESPONDENCE


None.

PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD


None.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.



Chairperson



Secretary Treasurer