

## **AGENDA**

### **OPEN MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION NICOLA SIMILKAMEEN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 58**

**MERRITT SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025, 6:00 P.M.**

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*Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow*

1. Acknowledgement of the Traditional Territories and Metis Community
2. Agenda
3. Minutes of the Open Meeting held January 15, 2025
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
5. Reports
  - a) Closed Meeting held January 15, 2025
  - b) Closed Trustee Meeting held January 21, 2025
6. Presentation to the Board
  - \* a) Foster Parent Recruitment (Interior Community Services)
  - \* b) Proposed District Calendar (Princeton District Teachers' Union)
7. **EDUCATION**
  - a) Indigenous Education Report (In-Person)
  - b) Early Learning and Child Care Report
  - c) Inclusive Education Report
  - d) 2025-2026 District Calendar
  - \* e) Superintendent's Report
8. **OPERATIONS**
  - a) Riverside Learning Centre Update

9. **AUDIT AND FINANCE**

- a) 2024 - 2025 Amended Budget Bylaw Process
- b) 2025 - 2026 Preliminary Annual Budget Process

10. **POLICY**

First Reading

- a) None

Second Reading

- a) None

Third Reading

- a) 3.40 Board Authority Courses

Policies Recommended for Repeal

- a) Policy 300.1 - Hiring of Excluded Personnel
- b) Policy 401.6 – Criminal Record Checks
- c) Policy 404.2 – Bus Driver Training, Abstracts & Physical Exam
- d) Policy 406.6 - Use of Alcohol and/or Illegal Drugs
- e) Policy 307.0 - Interpretation AO's
- f) Policy 402.14 - Teacher Exchange
- g) Policy 402.15 – Teacher Trainees
- h) Policy 406.5 – Dress
- i) Policy 406.10 – Electronic Device Use
- j) Policy 406. 11 – Communicable Disease
- k) Policy 406.1 – Non-Sexist Environment

11. **TRUSTEE REPORTS**

- \* a) Student Trustee Reports (Merritt)
- \* b) P.A.C. Reports
- \* c) Other Reports
- \* d) BCSTA Motions
  - a. Technology Security
  - b. Feeding Futures
  - c. Fully Funded Exempt Compensation

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**
12. **PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**
13. **ADJOURNMENT**

**MINUTES**

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

**PSS LEARNING COMMONS  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2025, 6:00 P.M.**

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*Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow*

PRESENT:	Chairperson	G. Swan (Virtually)
	Vice-Chair	L. Ward
	Trustees	J. Jepsen J. Kent-Laidlaw E. Hoisington J. Chenoweth (Virtually) D. Rainer
	Student Trustees	Matthew Williams Sophia Pioquid
	Superintendent	C. Lawrance
	Assistant Superintendent	J. Kempston
	Secretary Treasurer	D. Richardson
	Assistant Secretary Treasurer	L. Rusnjak
	Executive Assistant	K. Buckland

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

**AGENDA**

25/004      It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Jepsen  
  
              THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MINUTES**

25/005 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the minutes of the Open Meeting held December 11, 2024, be adopted as circulated.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Business Arising from the Minutes**

None.

### **Report of the Closed Meeting held December 11, 2024.**

### **EDUCATION**

#### **Indigenous Education Update:**

Superintendent Lawrance presented a written report provided by Director of Instruction - Indigenous Education Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte, highlighting significant efforts with the girl's group and land-based learning initiatives. These activities are fostering connections with community Elder's, nurturing pride and respect for cultural traditions.

Vice-Chair Ward inquired whether the Indigenous Education report is shared with the band Chiefs, partners, teachers or posted to the District website. Superintendent Lawrance confirmed that the report is distributed through the ISA newsletter and agreed that posting it on the District website would be a great idea.

#### **Early Learning and Child Care Report:**

Superintendent Lawrance presented the written report submitted by District Vice Principal of Early Learning and Childcare Daniella Bennie, highlighting that Family Literacy Week will take place from January 27-31, 2025. Additionally, Bobs & Lolo will be performing a free concert at the Civic Center in Merritt on Friday, January 31, 2025, at 5:45pm.

#### **Inclusive Education Update:**

The Superintendent presented the written report submitted by Director of Instruction - Inclusive Education Misty Sheldon, highlighting that Phase 1 of the Student Cooperation Training (SCT) program developed with the Provincial Outreach Program for Autism and Related Disorders (POPARD), is now complete. Phase 1 of the course was completed at Central Elementary School and Phase 2 will take place at Diamond Vale Elementary School.

Vice-Chair Ward suggested preparing a thank you message to acknowledge the outstanding work of the teachers and faculty that lead this program.

Chair Swan agreed to draft something on behalf of the Board of Education to acknowledge those successes.

### **Anti-Racism and Equity Report Update:**

Assistant Superintendent Kempston discussed that the District is beginning to collect reports of racist incidents and concerns. They are collecting very specific data around what is occurring, who it is occurring between, what schools' responses are, and what is being done proactively to make sure it doesn't happen again. As they gather the reports, Assistant Superintendent Kempston will put together the data that will paint a picture for the District.

The District will be working with the McCreary Report, BC's Adolescent Health Survey. The Survey has very direct questions around student experiences with racism and what it looks and feels like in our schools, as well as what the students say they want and need in their schools. Assistant Superintendent Kempston will be working with the McCreary centre to amplify student voice. The District is collaborating with all school principals on setting school goals. Each school within the School District has incorporated an anti-racism goal as part of their school plan. The District will also review the Codes of Conduct to ensure they establish clear expectations regarding anti-racism.

The District has launched its new logo, which incorporates student input and reflects an Indigenous perspective.

Trustee Rainer inquired about the impact of social media on students' ability to learn. Assistant Superintendent Kempston responded that social media remains a multifaceted issue for students.

### **2025/2026 School Calendar:**

The 2025/2026 District Calendar was brought forward for consideration by the Superintendent. The calendar includes 192 days in session and 185 days of instruction, meeting the Ministry of Education and Child Care requirements.

25/006 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve the 2025/2026 District Calendar and it be brought forward for public review prior to submission for Ministry approval.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Superintendent's Report:**

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

### **AUDIT AND FINANCE**

### **2024-25 Ministry of Education Funding Announcements / Budget Update:**

Secretary Treasurer Richardson updated Trustees that the funding announcement, typically released by the Ministry in December, has been postponed to January 27, 2025, due to change in government process. The Secretary Treasurer advised Trustees that once the funding announcement is received from the Ministry on January 27, 2025, staff will prepare the Amended Annual Budget that is due to the Ministry by March 28, 2025.

Trustee Kent-Laidlaw asked Secretary Treasurer Richardson if there was any information on why Ministry of Education's funding announcement is a month later than in previous years. Secretary Treasurer Richardson explained that during a call with the Ministry and other Secretary Treasurers, they were informed that the delay was due to a change in government process with no additional information.

Chair Swan informed the Board of Education that they still have not received the Minister's Mandate Letter for both Education and Child Care as well as Infrastructure.

### **2023-2024 Statement of Financial Information Report:**

The Secretary Treasurer informed Trustees that the Statement of Financial Information (SOFI report) has been filed, as per the Financial Information Act. Chair Swan inquired whether the Ministry of Finance has considered increasing the threshold for reporting individual salaries? Secretary Treasurer Richardson responded that he has not received any indication of that threshold changing. The Assistant Secretary-Treasurer reported that the threshold has remained the same since 2002.

### **RFP External Auditor:**

Secretary Treasurer Richardson informed the Trustees that the Request for Proposal for an External Auditor was posted on January 9, with a closing date of Friday, February 7th, 2025. After this date applications will be reviewed, and recommendations will be presented to the Board for consideration.

### **POLICY**

#### **Policies For First Reading:**

##### **3.80 Animals in Schools:**

25/007 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board move Policy 3.80: Animals in Schools, forward for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

##### **5.10 Bullying and Harassment of Students**

25/008 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board move Policy 5.10: Bullying and Harassment of Students, forward for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED****5.20 Controlled and Regulated Substances**

25/009 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board move Policy 5.20: Controlled and Regulated Substances, forward for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED****5.30 Weapons**

25/010 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board move Policy 5.30: Weapons, forward for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED****5.40 Severe Allergic Reaction**

25/011 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board move Policy 5.40: Severe Allergic Reaction, forward for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED****5.50 Use of Physical Restraint & Seclusion**

25/012 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board move Policy 5.50: Use of Physical Restraint & Seclusion, forward for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED****5.60 Provision of Menstrual Products**

25/013 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board move Policy 5.60: Provision of Menstrual Products, forward for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED****Policies For Second Reading:****3.40 Board Authority Courses**

25/014 It was moved by Trustee Jepsen and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT the Board move Policy 3.40: Board Authority Courses forward for second reading as amended.

**MOTION CARRIED****Policies to be Repealed****503.0 Student Suspensions**

Chair Swan asked Superintendent Lawrance if parents will still have access to this policy if the Board decides repeal it. Superintendent Lawrance responded that it will be published within the



Administrative Procedure on the district's website when policy 503.0 Student Suspensions is removed.

25/015 It was moved by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT the Board approved Policy 503.0, Student Suspensions, be repealed and moved to the Administrative Procedures Guide.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Administrative Procedures (Information)**

- a) Student Behaviour and Discipline
- b) Flag Protocols

### **Student Trustee Reports:**

Assistant Superintendent Kempston asked Student Trustees to reflect on the following: When you think of your lives or your friend's lives, what are the major health or wellness concerns for kids your age? What resources do kids need or want more of? What is working well for kids in Princeton?

The Student Trustees expressed concerns about the normalization of vaping and smoking, as well as the constant need for social media on phones, which they see as major health and wellness issues. They also highlighted the benefits of having more time with guidance counselors at school, better technology, and more bussing for field trips would be beneficial. Additionally, they mentioned that events and presentations at school help improve the school's atmosphere, and they really enjoy participating in the sports program.

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

Trustee Rainer received a letter from the John Allison Elementary P.A.C concerning the YMCA Daycare, extra cost coming to the parents, and a strict 5:00pm student pickup.

Trustee Chenoweth reported on SCIDES and Collettsville Elementary. One question that Trustee Chenoweth would like to address the following: When P.A.C organizes a fundraiser, is there a policy that restricts the funds for trips and how do classes fundraise? They also asked if Public Health attend MSS anymore. The Collettsville P.A.C thinks that a letter from the Board of Education to Interior Health might help get Public Health back into MSS.

Chair Swan reports on Merritt Secondary School.

Trustee Kent-Laidlaw reported on Princeton Secondary School.

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

Trustee Ward reported on Vermilion Forks Elementary.

Trustee Hoisington reported on Nicola Canford.

### **Other Reports:**

Trustee Rainer informed the Board that he, along with Secretary Treasurer Richardson and Operations Manager Darrell Finnigan, attended the Town of Princeton Committee of the Whole to present to the Council about the challenges of transporting students within town.

Trustee Rainer reported that the Town of Princeton is in the process of acquiring a city bus. The town of Princeton also requested that Operations Manager Darrell Finnigan stay in contact with Lyle Thomas to coordinate using the data they have collected.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

**PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

25/016 Motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Ward and seconded by Trustee Hoisington. The Open meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm.

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Chairperson

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Secretary Treasurer

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: CLOSED TRUSTEE MEETING January 21, 2025 DATE: February 12, 2025

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Record of Closed Meeting Held Tuesday, January 21, 2025  
Vis Microsoft TEAMS

PRESENT: TRUSTEES: G. Swan, J. Jepsen, D. Rainer, J. Chenoweth

STAFF: C. Lawrance, Superintendent of Schools  
D. Richardson, Secretary-Treasurer  
J. Kempston, Assistant Superintendent  
L. Rusnjak, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer  
K. Buckland, Executive Assistant

ABSENT: J. Kent-Laidlaw, E. Hoisington, L. Ward

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Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

**Operations & Finance**

- The Board approved the hiring of Harold Cull as the temporary Secretary-Treasurer until such time that a successful candidate has been found.

The Closed meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.



CL/sc

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: CLOSED MEETING January 15, 2025

DATE: February 12, 2025

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**Record of Closed Meeting Held Wednesday, January 15, 2025  
Princeton Secondary Learning Commons**

PRESENT: TRUSTEES: G. Swan, J. Kent-Laidlaw, L. Ward, J. Jepsen, D. Rainer, J. Chenoweth

STAFF: C. Lawrance, Superintendent of Schools  
D. Richardson, Secretary-Treasurer  
J. Kempston, Assistant Superintendent  
K. Buckland, Executive Assistant

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Call to Order: 4:30 p.m.

**Education**

- Updates provided by the Superintendent & Assistant Superintendent on educational programs and outstanding action items.

**Personnel**

- Teacher, Support, and Exempt Updates provided by the Superintendent & Secretary Treasurer.
- Staffing & Labour Management Updates provided by the Superintendent & Secretary Treasurer.

**Operations**

- Property & Transportation updates provided by the Superintendent and Secretary Treasurer.

**Finance**

- The Secretary Treasurer updated trustees on the process used for the preparation of the annual budget as well as the steps leading towards the amended budget.

The Closed meeting was paused at 5:59 p.m. so the Open public meeting could commence. The Closed meeting reconvened at 7:22 p.m. Motion to Adjourn: 8:55 p.m.



CL/sc

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT

DATE: February 12, 2025

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Our new District Principal of Indigenous Education, Angela McIvor will introduce herself and present to the Board. The monthly report for Indigenous Education is provided.



CL/sc



# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

February 12, 2025

## **Farewell to Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte**

On January 28, I officially started my new role as District Principal of Indigenous Education. I have big shoes to fill as Shelly has made significant impacts on Indigenous Education in SD 58. It is bittersweet but I am very excited to be starting in this new role.

My name is Angela McIvor, I am nte?kepmx from the Lower Nicola Indian band. I have 29 years of teaching experience at Nicola-Canford Elementary. I have been an elementary school teacher for most of those years but spent the last 5 years co-teaching the nte?kepmx language to kids in grades K-7.





## WINTER CELEBRATION

On January 29, I was very excited to participate in the Winter Celebration hosted at the Merritt Civic Center. Our students had a great time watching and learning about the different styles of pow-wow dances. The Hoop dancing was a big hit as it told a story with movement, hoops and animals! Our district ISAs did a great job organizing, as did our master of ceremonies, Derrick Sheena! Students from MSS grades 8-12 attended along with the intermediate students from all our elementary schools and the band schools from Lower Nicola, Coldwater and Upper Nicola. In total, approximately 1208 students were able to partake in this cultural event.



WINTER CELEBRATION



I have heard so much positive feedback about this event from teachers and students. The organization enabled students to sit, watch and learn and was just enough time so that students enjoyed their time. Teachers raved about the ease of being able to keep track of students while still being able to enjoy the event.





## MERRITT CENTRAL

The intermediate classes love going to the welcome room to listen to different Indigenous stories and the grade 3/4 class had a great time going to the Nkwala pit house to listen to stories.

Students enjoying getting out on the land to enjoy fresh air and sunshine.



## PRINCETON SECONDARY

Students were able to participate in ribbon skirt making and learn about the effects of vaping from a community mental health nurse.



## NICOLA-CANFORD LANGUAGE CLASSES


Students in grades K-7 are learning the vocabulary associated with ice fishing. With elders and resource people, they are all making their very own wooden ice fishing poles. Nicola-Canford is fortunate to have Mattie Michel join their staff as one of the language teachers. We are very thankful that she will be there until June. The ISA spent time with each class building traditional Spirit Houses which helped set goals for each student.







**I am committed to supporting Indigenous students and fostering an environment where their cultural identities and learning needs are met. I hope to contribute meaningfully to our district's vision for Indigenous education. I have many jobs, but my first focus:**

- **meeting and learning about the ISAs at each school and learning the needs of students at each school**
  - **meeting and working with principals to support the schools and the ISA programs/activities**
  - **getting out to the community to meet education coordinators for each band**
  - **see how we can recruit and retain language teachers for our schools**
  - **working with organizations in town to see how we can join to offer support for Indigenous students to help supplement the culture programs that are currently taking the place of language programs**
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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE REPORT

DATE: February 12, 2025

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The monthly report from the District Vice Principal for Early Learning and Child Care is provided.



CL/sc

# Early Learning Update

## February 12, 2025



### SEY2KT (Merrit)— Strengthening the Early Years to Kindergarten Transitions

On January 31st, we had the pleasure of hosting a fantastic concert for children and families at the Civic Center, thanks to the wonderful Juno nominated duo, Bobs and Lolo. We had around 100 attendees, with 50-60 children in the crowd, all enjoying a show filled with joy, laughter, singing, and dancing.

In partnership with Family Literacy Week events and the Literacy Merritt and Nicola Valley Society (LMNVS) this was a special experience, offering families an opportunity to enjoy the performance while also supporting literacy. Every child was able to pick a free book to take home, and Bobs and Lolo generously gave out free CDs, along with a donation of free books for our program.

To accommodate all children, a sensory space within the concert room was set up, for those who needed a quieter spot. Additionally, another room was available as a sensory area for children who needed a break from the crowd to colour or engage in calming activities.

The event was a success, and it was especially great to see some new families who hadn't yet attended StrongStart or past early years events. We were able to provide them with information about upcoming Ready Set Learn dates.

Feedback from families was overwhelmingly positive, and it was heartwarming to see the smiles and excitement of the children. If you have a moment, check out the video attachment for a glimpse of the joy that filled the room. The concert ran from 5:30 to about 6:45, and it truly was an event to remember.

Thank-you to LMNVS, Beem Credit Union, United Way Local Love, and the SEY2KT funding through the Ministry of Education and Childcare for helping to make this event possible.



## SEY2KT Princeton

Exciting plans are underway for our first SEY2KT Princeton event of 2025! The date is still to be determined, but we are aiming for after spring break. In alignment with the school's literacy goals, we will be hosting a fun and interactive "Book Tasting" evening for families. While you might be familiar with book tastings in the context of Battle of the Books, our event will have a unique twist!

Targeting families with children ages 3-5 who are transitioning to Kindergarten, this event will feature various stations with a food theme to make reading even more engaging. Here's a sneak peek at what we have in store:

- **Main Meal: Dragons Love Tacos** - Families will enjoy tacos together while hearing the story of *Dragons Love Tacos*, and each family will receive a copy of the book to take home.
- **Read-to-Self/With Family Station: The Very Hungry Caterpillar** - At this station, families will collect a plate of fruit and veggies to go with their tacos. They can then read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* together and participate in a fun craft activity!
- **Sweet Treat: If You Give a Mouse a Cookie** - We will also be handing out cookies to families, inspired by the classic *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*.

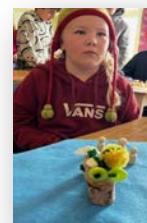
While we're still finalizing all the details, we plan to have additional games and crafts to keep everyone engaged. The main goal of the event is to create an opportunity for families to come to the school, connect with staff, and learn about events within both the school and the local community. We hope to foster a love of reading, model activities that connect with a book, while also providing the opportunity enjoy a meal together.

Our SEY2KT committee is comprised of community members, school and district staff. We can't wait to see everyone there and share a love of reading in such a fun way! More details to follow soon!

## Other News

Collaborative support meetings are almost complete this has been 1-2 meetings per elementary school across the district. A huge thank you to classroom teachers, ELT, SST's, Counselling Staff, Principals and District staff for coming together to wrap around students and ensure that students are on positive learning trajectories. School Teams should be commended for how well they know their students.

On January 20th we had Matthew McBride back for his second session on Story Workshop. I am pleased to see how teachers are embracing this work and seeing the joy students have in engaging in Story Workshop. The anchor text for this lesson was called "How to Catch a Dragon" - the story was chosen based on interest of the students in the class.



MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION REPORT

DATE: February 12, 2025

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The monthly report from the Director of Instruction for Inclusive Education is provided.



CL/sc

## **Director of Instruction – Inclusive Education Report February 2025**

**\*\***To enhance accessibility, this document can be easily read out loud through various text-to-speech programs. The background color, font size, and font choice are intentionally selected to enhance readability. **\*\***

This month's report highlights the wrap-around work of our Student Support teachers (SSTs) who dedicate themselves to fostering success for our diverse learners across the district. These stories showcase the power of collaboration, creativity, and community engagement in supporting students and their families.

### **Highlight 1: Transforming Challenges into Success for a Kindergarten Student**

One of our youngest learners began the year with significant challenges and difficulties with social and academic engagement. Thanks to a coordinated effort spearheaded by the school principal and SST involving community supports such as CYSN SW (Children and Youth with Special Needs Social Worker), ICS (Interior Community Services), MCFD (Ministry for Children and Family Development), Strong Start, and the family, this student's story is now one of remarkable progress.

With access to medical care and a tailored learning plan, the student has made strides in areas such as social communication, imaginative play, and fine motor skills. Daily breakthroughs include spelling advanced words and counting to 300 now that their dysregulation has been mitigated. A huge milestone was achieved recently when the student used the toilet independently for the first time at school. This success is a testament to the compassionate and strategic efforts of our SST team, Education Assistants, and the student's family.

### **Highlight 2: Overcoming Trauma to Achieve Inclusion and Joy**

A student who faced significant trauma and associated dysregulated behaviors is now thriving, thanks to a comprehensive support network. Our SST team engaged and worked closely with the family, ICS and the Complex Trauma Institute to address developmental gaps and implement therapeutic programming.

Through a highly adapted educational plan and a nurturing environment, this student has transitioned to full inclusion in the classroom. They have developed trusting relationships with peers and staff, and their academic growth has been astounding - progressing from a handful of sight words to reading fluently within three months. This success reflects the resilience of the student and the unwavering commitment of their support team.

### **Highlight 3: Building Bridges Through Community Partnerships**

A student with neurodiverse needs experienced transformative growth thanks to a partnership between the school's team, family and a local community organization. Together, they designed a personalized plan that included sensory accommodations, mental health supports, and a mentorship program with older students.

This collaborative approach has helped the student develop self-regulation strategies, strengthen communication skills, and build confidence in their abilities. Today, this student participates actively in class and recently delivered a presentation to their class – a moment of pride for all involved.

### **Highlight 4: Unlocking Potential Through Innovative Solutions**

An SST supporting a student who is non-verbal coordinated with technology specialists (Set-BC); together they introduced assistive tech tailored to the student's needs. The student is excelling in their individualized programming but also effectively using the technology at home, bridging the gap between school and home learning. This has been particularly transformative for a non-verbal student, who can now communicate more effectively. Their journey highlights the importance of adapting resources to individual needs and the dedication of our SSTs in supporting the home/school connection.

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: 2025/2026 DISTRICT CALENDAR APPROVAL DATE: February 12, 2025

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The proposed calendar was provided to our rights holders, stakeholders and the public for notification and feedback.

The 2025/2026 District Calendar includes the correct number of days in session and days of instruction meeting the Ministry of Education requirements. The non-instructional Days are outlined below:

- 3 non-instructional days for the Summer Institute in August
- 2 non-instructional days scheduled in October and February
- 1 non-instructional day in-lieu in March
- 1 non-instructional administrative day in June

The calendar is being brought back for final approval.



CL/sc





# Nicola-Similkameen School District

## School Calendar - 2025 / 2026 School Year

Days in Session **192** - Days of Instruction **185**

August 25 - 27, 2025	Mon. – Wed.	School-Based Session (Summer Professional Development Day.)
September 2, 2025	Tuesday	<b>SCHOOL OPENING.</b> School hours 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. (Bus schedule to be adjusted for the first day of school.)
September 30, 2025	Tuesday	<b>National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Statutory Holiday.</b>
October 13, 2025	Monday	<b>Thanksgiving Day.</b>
October 24, 2025	Friday	<b>Non-Instructional Day.</b> (Professional Development Day.)
November 11, 2025	Tuesday	<b>Remembrance Day Statutory Holiday.</b>
December 19, 2025	Friday	Last day of school before Winter Break.
Dec. 22, 2025 – Jan. 2, 2026		<b>Winter Break.</b>
January 5, 2026	Monday	Schools reopen after the break.
February 13, 2026	Friday	<b>Non-Instructional Day</b> (Professional Development Day.)
February 16, 2026	Monday	<b>Family Day.</b>
March 13, 2026	Friday	Last day of school before Spring Break.
March 16 - 27, 2026		<b>SPRING BREAK.</b>
March 30, 2026	Monday	Schools reopen after the break.
April 3, 2026	Friday	<b>Good Friday.</b>
April 6, 2026	Monday	<b>Easter Monday.</b>
May 18, 2026	Monday	<b>Victoria Day.</b>
June 25, 2026	Thursday	<b>Last day of classes.</b>
June 26, 2026	Friday	<b>ADMINISTRATION DAY - SCHOOLS CLOSED.</b>

*Draft – January 8, 2025*

***Success for ALL Learners ~ Today and Tomorrow***

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: Riverside Learning Centre Update

DATE: February 12, 2025

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Construction has been delayed due to the lighting package not arriving as scheduled. The original timeline was 12 weeks from the date ordered. The supplier providing the lighting package is also delayed. We continue to wait for an updated estimated time of arrival. Our consultants communicate daily with the supplier to highlight the importance of the materials to completing the project.

The project manager and construction team are working to mitigate additional costs. The construction budget includes a small contingency fund. The team has reviewed the budget, and we believe we will be able to cover the costs of the delay within our current project budget. However, as a precaution, we have contacted the Ministry, and they have advised the district to submit a request for additional funding in case it is needed to avoid further delays.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to meet the original opening timeline. Originally, Riverside was to be turned over to YCMA at the beginning of March with the goal of opening in April. With this delay, we are now looking at a May or June opening. The YCMA was advised of the delays and the new timeline.



CL/sc

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Harold Cull  
Interim Secretary Treasurer

RE: 24-25 Amended Budget Bylaw Process

DATE: February 12, 2025

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### **Background**

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board of Education (BoE) with an update on the 24/25 Amended Budget Bylaw process.

As Trustees may recall, the BoE is required to pass the Amended Budget Bylaw by February 28<sup>th</sup> of each year. The Amended Bylaw considers the updated operating grant amounts from the Ministry of Education and Child Care (MECC) based on actual September enrolment.

With the recent provincial election and resulting delays in receiving the updated funding amounts from MECC, the deadline for the passing of the Amended Budget Bylaw has been shifted to March 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Benefits of the Delay**

With the deadline delay, Districts now can confirm their February enrolment counts and include this actual funding in the Amended Budget Bylaw. This increases the accuracy of the budget estimates and allows for stronger financial decision making for the remainder of the year.

The extra month also allows Districts to use their latest financial information (actuals as of February 28<sup>th</sup>) in the bylaw amount, again adding to the accuracy of the budget.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will take the actual February enrolment counts and the latest financial forecast (February 28<sup>th</sup>) and present the BoE with the Amended Budget Bylaw for their review and consideration at their March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Given the deadline of March 28<sup>th</sup> and not having another scheduled BoE meeting until April, staff will ask the BoE to pass all three readings of the Bylaw on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Prepared by:**

**Harold Cull**

Interim Secretary Treasurer/CFO

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Nicola-Similkameen School District

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Harold Cull  
Interim Secretary Treasurer

RE: 25-26 Preliminary Budget Process

DATE: February 12, 2025

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### **Background**

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board of Education (BoE) with the proposed 25/26 Preliminary Budget principles, assertions and process for their review and consideration.

With new staff in the Superintendent and Secretary Treasurer positions, this process will look and feel different than previous years.

### **Proposed Budget Principles for Fiscal 25/26**

The following are the principles suggested to be considered by the Board for the 25/26 Budget Development process:

- Budget decisions will be based on the Strategic Plan;
- Input from the Rights Holders, partners and Administration Team will help shape 25/26 funding levels; and
- The annual budget process will be informed by the multi-year budget estimates on a 3-year rolling cycle.

### **Proposed Budget Assertions for 25/26**

The following are the assertions suggested to be considered by the Board for the 25/26 Budget Development process:

- The provincial funding formula will remain the same and be based on per FTE funding;
- Domestic enrolment will be consistent with 24/25 levels; and
- All negotiated/approved salary increases will be funded.

## **Proposed Budget Process for 25/26**

### **Staff will create a budget model to:**

1. Estimate 25/26 enrolment amounts to calculate Operating Grant revenue
2. Estimate Other Revenue amounts to complete the Total Revenue forecast
3. Identify existing Expenditure pressures
4. Identify 25/26 Expenditure pressures
5. Calculate funding shortfall based on projected revenues and expenditures
6. Define Strategic Priorities for 25/26
7. Develop Mitigation Strategies to address expenditure pressures, maintaining focus on Strategic Priorities
8. Assess Mitigation Strategies to provide a recommended **Budget Plan** for BoE consideration

### **Consultation Process**

There will be multiple touch points for Rights Holders and partner groups throughout the budget development process. The first point will be gathering input on the Strategic Priorities that the District should focus on in the upcoming fiscal year.

The second point of contact will be during the development of the Mitigation Strategies that impact their own group. Staff will invite feedback on proposed strategies and the potential impacts the strategies may have on the system.

Finally, once a draft **Budget Plan** has been developed, staff will consult with Rights Holders and partner groups to get their feedback on the recommendations prior to debate by the BoE.

### **Timing**

Staff are proposing the following schedule for the 25/26 Budget Development process:

<b>Board Meetings</b>
<b>Feb 12</b> – Review and consider draft budget assumptions, assertions & timelines
<b>Mar 12</b> – Review and approve draft 25/26 Strategic Priorities
<b>April</b> – Public Consultation Sessions (dates TBD)
<b>May 14</b> – 1 <sup>st</sup> reading of the Budget
<b>May 28</b> – 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> readings of the Budget (Special BoE meeting)

### **Prepared by:**

**Harold Cull**

Interim Secretary Treasurer/CFO

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Nicola-Similkameen School District

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Trustees

FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

RE: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS, REVIEWS,  
AND REPEALS

DATE: February 12, 2025

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### Recommendations:

Our policy committee is currently working on Section 5.00, Health and Safety. We have another meeting scheduled for February 18, 2025.

### Policy for Review – First Reading

- a) None

### Policies For Second Reading

- a) None

### Policies For Third Reading

- a) 3.40 Board Authority Courses

### Repeals:

The committee has recommended the repeal of the following policies:

- a) Policy 300.1 - Hiring of Excluded Personnel
- b) Policy 401.6 – Criminal Record Checks
- c) Policy 404.2 – Bus Driver Training, Abstracts & Physical Exam
- d) Policy 406.6 - Use of Alcohol and/or Illegal Drugs
- e) Policy 307.0 - Interpretation AO's
- f) Policy 402.14 - Teacher Exchange
- g) Policy 402.15 – Teacher Trainees
- h) Policy 406.5 – Dress
- i) Policy 406.10 – Electronic Device Use
- j) Policy 406. 11 – Communicable Disease
- k) Policy 406.1 – Non-Sexist Environment



CL/sc



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## POLICY 3.40 BOARD/AUTHORITY AUTHORIZED COURSES

The Board of Education believes that Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses provide an opportunity for students to explore content beyond the boundaries of the provincial curriculum. These courses are developed in response to local needs and student interests.

Board Authority/Authorized Courses (BAA) must meet the requirements set by the Ministry, be approved by the Board and have content not offered in Ministry developed courses.

### Guidelines

1. While Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses may overlap with Big Ideas and Curricular Competencies of Ministry courses they may not:
  - 1.1. significantly overlap with the provincial curriculum;
  - 1.2. be remedial or preparatory in nature;
  - 1.3. be a modified course;
  - 1.4. be an adapted course.
2. Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) courses can include courses that:
  - 2.1. Meet Fine Arts and/or Applied Skills 10, 11, or 12 requirements.
  - 2.2. Prepare students with special needs through skill instruction to be successful across a wide variety of subjects and settings.
  - 2.3. Address the cultural and academic literacy needs of English Language Learners.
  - 2.4. Support students in developing an understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture and/or Indigenous language.
3. Course program submissions will describe:
  - 3.1. The processes utilized in creating the submission, including student and teacher involvement.
  - 3.2. The educational rationale for such a course, including the need for a Board/Authority authorized designation.
  - 3.3. The course content; the procedures for selection of learning resources, the anticipated methodology to be utilized; the student evaluation criteria; and the link, if any, to other school or District programs.



- 3.4. The anticipated budget, equipment and facility requirements, including a listing of proposed course fees and the anticipated amount and type of travel, and
  - 3.5. The impact of the course or program on existing courses or programs; on the school's operating, learning resources and equipment budgets, and on the school's facilities.
4. Indigenous-focused graduation credit BAA courses must include content that provides the opportunity for students to develop a meaningful and substantial breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of specific First Nation peoples, cultures, worldviews, and histories in BC and:
  - 4.1. Be co-developed and approved by one or more local First Nation[s];
  - 4.2. Ensure that learning about and from First Nation peoples and cultures in BC is a significant outcome (courses may still focus on specific curricular areas); and
  - 4.3. Meet all existing BAA course requirements.
5. The Superintendent of Schools will submit proposals to the Board for consideration together with their recommendation, the request for establishing the proposed Board/Authority authorized course, the course of study, and other supportive material.
6. The Board will approve or rejects the course by Board motion.
7. If the course receives the approval of the Board, the Superintendent of Schools will forward notification to the Ministry of Education. A copy of the course description will be kept on file by the Superintendent of Schools to be available for Ministry review purposes.
8. The Superintendent will monitor Board Authority/Authorized courses, on an ongoing, basis in accordance with established administrative procedures.