

## **AGENDA**

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

***Merritt School Board Office  
Wednesday, June 11, 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
  - a) Regular Meeting held May 14, 2024
  - b) (Un-adopted) Policy Committee Meeting held on May 20, 2025
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
5. Reports:
  - a) Closed Meeting held May 14, 2025
6. Presentations:
  - a) Jamie Umpleby – Crimson Tine Theatre
  - b) MSS – 2024-2025 Costa Rica Trip
7. **EDUCATION**
  - a) Indigenous Education (In-person)
  - b) Inclusive Education
  - c) Early Learning and Child Care Update
  - \* d) Health Promoting Schools Coordinator / Feeding Futures Update
  - e) 2026-2027 – Costa Rica Trip (MSS) – Approval in Principle
  - \* f) Superintendent's Report
8. **OPERATIONS**
  - a) 2026-2027 Major 5-Year Capital Plan Submission
  - \* b) Operations Manager Update
  - b) Bus Cost Recovery

- c) Logo Roll Out – Mailboxes
- d) Riverside Learning Centre Update

9. **AUDIT AND FINANCE**

- a) IEC Preliminary Budget

10. **POLICY**

First Reading

- a) 6.51 Disposal of Land or Improvements

Second Reading

- a) 3.50 Nsyilxcən and Nłeʔkepmxcín and Culture
- b) 6.20 Signing Authorities
- c) 6.30 Expense Reimbursement
- d) 6.40 Public Use of Facilities
- e) 6.50 School Closure
- f) 6.60 Video Surveillance
- g) 6.70 Student Transportation

Third Reading

- a) 2.60 Respectful Learning and Working Communities
- b) 6.50 School Closure

Policies Recommended for Repeal

- a) None

11. **TRUSTEE REPORTS**

- \* a) Student Trustee Reports
- \* c) P.A.C. Reports
- \* e) Other Reports

12. **CORRESPONDENCE**

13. **PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

## MINUTES

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

**PSS LEARNING COMMONS  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2025, 6:00PM**

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*Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow*

Present:	Chairperson	G. Swan
	Vice-Chair	L. Ward
	Trustees	J. Jepsen J. Kent-Laidlaw E. Hoisington (Virtual) J. Chenoweth D. Rainer
	Student Trustees	M. Williams (Absent) S. Pioquid (Absent)
	Superintendent	C. Lawrance
	Assistant Superintendent	J. Kempston
	Interim Secretary Treasurer	H. Cull
	Assistant Secretary Treasurer	L. Rusnjak
	Executive Assistant	K. Buckland
	Manager of IT	E. Park

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

#### **AGENDA**

25/089 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw  
THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **MINUTES**

25/090 It was moved by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw and seconded by Trustee Rainer  
THAT the minutes of the Open Meeting held April 9, 2025, be adopted as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT the minutes of the Open Meeting held May 7, 2025, be adopted as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Business Arising from the Minutes**

None.

**Report of the Closed Meeting held April 9, 2025.**

**EDUCATION**

**Indigenous Education Report:**

Superintendent Lawrance presented the written report submitted by District Principal of Indigenous Education, Angela McIvor. She highlighted that at the next Board Meeting in June, Angela McIvor and a couple of students will attend to share their experiences from the Institute Inspire Conference.

**Early Learning and Child Care Report:**

Superintendent Lawrance presented the written report submitted by District Vice Principal of Early Learning and Childcare, Daniella Bennie, who highlighted the success of the event "Once Upon a Book Tasting" that she organized, which was attended by 37 kids and their families.

**Inclusive Education Report:**

Superintendent Lawrance presented the written report submitted by Director of Instruction Inclusive Education, Misty Sheldon, which emphasized the various partners that the District collaborates with.

**Superintendent's Report:**

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

Trustee Chenoweth requested if the Superintendent's Report be sent to the Minister of Education.

**OPERATIONS**

**Riverside Learning Centre Update**

Superintendent Lawrance informed the Board that the Child Care Centre has received its licensing and is set to open to families on Monday, June 2, 2025. The paving is finished, and the landscaping is almost complete. Superintendent Lawrance is working on scheduling a grand opening date, and the Minister's attendance is yet to be confirmed.

**Board Meeting Dates – 2025-2026**

Superintendent Lawrance presented the proposed Board Meeting Dates to the Trustees, and the Board approved them.

## **School Closure – Central Elementary School**

25/092 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT a motion to pass a School Closure, naming Merritt Central Elementary as the School.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **AUDIT AND FINANCE**

### **2024 - 2025 Budget Development Memo**

Superintendent Lawrance provided the Trustees with questions from the public that followed the Board's 1<sup>st</sup> reading of the Preliminary Budget Bylaw on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **2025 – 2026 Preliminary Annual Budget Bylaw – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Readings**

25/093 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT 2025-2026 Preliminary Annual Budget Bylaw be moved for second reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

25/094 It was moved by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT 2025-2026 Preliminary Annual Budget Bylaw be moved third reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

25/095 It was moved by Trustee Hoisington and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT 2025-2026 Preliminary Annual Budget Bylaw be moved for third and final reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **POLICY**

### **First Reading**

- a) 3.50 Nsyilxcən and Nłeʔkepmxcín and Culture
- b) 6.20 Signing Authorities
- c) 6.30 Expense Reimbursement
- d) 6.40 Public Use of Facilities
- e) 6.50 School Closure
- f) 6.60 Video Surveillance
- g) 6.70 Student Transportation

### **Second Reading**

None

### **Third Reading**

#### **a) 4.10 Respectful Working Environments**

25/096 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Chenoweth

THAT the Board move Policy, 4.10, Respectful Working Environment, forward for third and final reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **b) 4.20 Employee Recognition**

25/097 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Chenoweth

THAT the Board move Policy, 4.20, Employee Recognition, forward for third and final reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **c) 4.30 Protection of Employees from Violence**

25/098 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Chenoweth

THAT the Board move Policy, 4.30, Protection of Employees from Violence, forward for third and final reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **d) 4.40 Employment of Relatives**

25/099 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Chenoweth

THAT the Board move Policy, 4.40, Employment of Relatives, forward for third and final reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **e) 4.50 Teacher Professional Development**

25/100 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Chenoweth

THAT the Board move Policy, 4.50, Teacher Professional Development, forward for third and final reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Policies Recommended for Repeal**

None.

### **Trustee Reports:**

#### **Student Trustee Reports**

Both Student Trustees couldn't attend due to this Board meeting.

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

Trustee Hoisington reported on Nicola Canford Elementary.

Trustee Rainer reported on John Allison Elementary.

Trustee Chenoweth reported on SCIDES and Collettsville Elementary.

Trustee Kent-Laidlaw reported on Princeton Secondary School.

Trustee Jepsen has no PAC report for Merritt Central Elementary and Diamond Vale Elementary.

Trustee Ward was not able to attend Vermilion Forks Elementary PAC meeting.

Chair Swan reported on Bench Elementary and MSS.

**Other Reports:**

NONE

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

NONE

**PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

**In-person Question**

- How will laying off Princeton's one fulltime worker who does emergency electrical, plumbing, HVAC issues save the School District money?

**YouTube Questions**

- **Rani Bothe** - What is your next step for closing Central since you're all approved to move on? Would you consider turning Colletville into a dual language school?
- **Amy Mierau** - Colletville would have to go back to dual if they close central, we would need the space.
- **Rani Bothe** - If you close central then busing would be available for all 3 schools for everyone outside of the walking limit ?
- **Amy Mierau** - will there be buses going from Colletville, Diamondvale or bench, to a central location for our central kids? Have you looked at switching to more virtual trainings for Professional development days? - not sure what these currently look like.
- **Rani Bothe** - What are the buses routes and times? Any of these buses could get cut or buses combined? Central had only a drop of 13% vs. Diamond Vale drop of 27% and Colletville drop of 35% consider the staff of Central, they are special, they are a great team together they are strong!!
- **Sarah S** - Has the District explored the precedent-setting Supreme Court of Canada case that compelled the provincial government to fund bus transportation to French schools?
- **Amy Mierau** - I am biased, I love central! I also worry about the loss of programs that a lot of our central community relies on. there would be the way the staff works together, but also the food programming. We have a lot of children in central who rely on the breakfast and lunch program. Will these be available at the other schools? If another public agency takes over space of central, they too would need to complete the renovations, what's the difference if it's for them or for the school.
- **Sarah S** - Why didn't the Budget Working Group include representatives from each PAC/FAC? PAC is the officially recognized collective voice of parents. Meaningful engagement with families has not occurred. Why haven't results of the French Immersion Program review report been shared with parents who contributed perspectives? Implying that a lack of parent support is causing attrition of French Immersion teachers negates the responsibility of the Division to support their employees and develop teacher retention strategies. What does an 18-month cycle and hybrid courses mean academically at MSS? Students & families need to understand this better. What supports will help students/families navigate this confusing process? Which rights holders were consulted in the budget planning? Is there any plan to expand Bench Elementary with the closure of Central Elementary rather than continuing to rely on

portables? As Ms. Bennie is seconded to DV as principal, will her district role be reallocated to existing District staff to refund some of the cuts considering that seems to be an approach with other roles?

- **JStirling** - There are a number of teachers that are in District positions rather than in classrooms despite the fact that we have many classrooms without full-time teachers. Will this continue? Will travelling between Merritt and Princeton by SBO staff be reduced or omitted and moving online to save money?
- **Sarah S** - How much was spent to have 5 District reps present on the same topic at the BCSTA conference? Do you consider this a prudent use of resources? What will happen to positions at Central Elementary? Will they transfer to other schools? Will it be based on the seniority of staff members?
- **Tina Etchart** - Did you really suggest that the PAC's make a decision about Collettville becoming a dual track school? Perhaps let the PAC's take a crack at the budget.
- **Rani Bothe** - How many kids using bus from out in Quilchena? Route 1 and route 3 are doing some of the same stops or very close can they not be combined?
- **Sarah S** - When will the District shut down the smoke pit at MSS as per provincial law? Please answer the question: why weren't PACs/FAC included in the budget planning with other rights holders.
- **JStirling** - We have more admin, but less students. Admin used to teach off-timetable courses so teachers can stay in classrooms. This is not so much the case any longer. Why is that and will it change?
- **Sarah S** - Are you expecting students to do a grade 13 year if they can't get university prep courses or pre-requisites under the 2-year staggered cycle? How would they do science labs in a hybrid system?
- **Tina Etchart** - Why is the district refusing to recover bussing costs from students to get to school yet they charge pay per use for bussing while at school for curricular or extracurricular outings.
- **Amy Mierau** - if space is so limited (the size of the schools) is an issue with growth, why not keep the largest school functioning.
- **Stephanie Yakimchuka** - Catchment map was posted for the 2025 school year. Will kids be able to still attend the schools they are at if these kids are not in the catchment area? or are they grandfathered?
- **Tina Etchart** - There are a lot of barriers already and the district doesn't mind adding more. There's no problem charging the families once inside the school or they simply don't participate
- **Sarah S** - Parents came to the public meetings and sent emails but the budget was a done deal. Trustees are not elected to represent parents. That is why we have PACs that should be included in district planning
- **Rani Bothe** - Will grade 7 band still be offered next year in the district? Why haven't central parents not been informed before the meeting tonight?
- **Sarah S** - Will the District explore the precedent-setting Supreme Court of Canada case that compelled the provincial government to fund bus transportation to French schools based on Charter rights?
- **JStirling** - Just to confirm, teachers in district roles will stay in these roles despite classrooms not having full-time teachers, rather a revolving door of TOC's, TTOC's, and Librarians, etc.
- **Sarah S** - Will the District mandate the use of buses with seat belts at least for long distance trips?

### ADJOURNMENT

25/101

Motion to adjourn was made by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT the Open Board meeting be adjourned at 8:09pm

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Chairperson

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Interim Secretary Treasurer



## MINUTES

### **POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.58 (NICOLA – SIMILKAMEEN)**

**VIA TEAMS**

**TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025, 5:00 PM**

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Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow

ATTENDANCE: Chairperson	G. Swan
Vice-Chair	L. Ward
Trustees	J. Jepsen
	J. Kent-Laidlaw
	E. Hoisington
	J. Chenoweth
	D. Rainer (Absent)
Superintendent	C. Lawrance
Assistant Superintendent	J. Kempston
Executive Assistant	K. Buckland
Director of Education, LNIB	Shane Coutlee
NVPTU	Trina Moulin

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

#### **Approval of Minutes, April 15, 2025**

**It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw**

**THAT the minutes of the Policy Meeting held April 15, 2025, be adopted as presented.**

**Motion Carried**

#### **1. Section 6.00 Finance, Facilities and Transportation**

##### **a. 6.51 Disposal of Land or Improvements**

Superintendent Lawrance presented the updated policy to the committee.

The committee discussed whether to include municipalities and regional districts in the policy wording.

Chair Swan suggest using the term “Local Governments” to encompass both municipalities and regional districts.

The committee agreed that surplus land should be offered to local government first, and if a purchase agreement is not finalized, then to the general public.

**It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw**

**THAT Police 6.51, Disposal of Land or Improvements be brought forward to the Board of Education for public consultation.**

**Motion Carried**

**Meeting Adjourned @ 5:09pm**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Trustees**

**FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools**

**RE: INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT**

**DATE: June 11, 2025**

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The District Principal for Indigenous Education will present on the Indspire Conference.



CL/sc

June 11, 2025

# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION UPDATE

I'm excited to have two students share their experience at the 2025 Soaring: Indigenous Youth Empowerment Gathering in Vancouver, BC, April 7-9, 2025. A recap from last report: Indigenous high school students from across the country learned about career and post-secondary education options by participating in informative and engaging workshops.

## **The Importance of Indigenous-Based Workshops Exclusively for Indigenous**

Indigenous-based workshops designed solely for Indigenous students play a huge role in creating a safe, cultural and powerful educational environment. It lets students take pride in their identity and heritage. Students get to feel seen, feel safe, and feel valued.

## **Providing a Safe and Supportive Space**

Indigenous students can face systemic barriers and discrimination in educational settings, which can affect their mental health and academic performance. These types of spaces create a place where students can express themselves without fear of judgment or marginalization. Students can connect with their roots and embrace their cultural heritage.

## **Mentorship and Role Models**

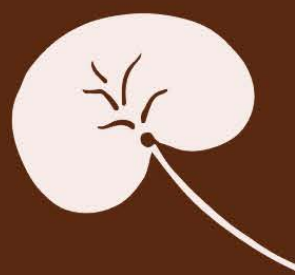
Indigenous-based workshops often have facilitators and mentors from Indigenous communities who serve as role models. These leaders inspire students by showcasing their own success, their hardships, and their resilience. They build confidence and encourage students to see a future where they can do anything they want.







The end of May and the beginning of June are proving to be very busy times of the year. Finishing off the year in a good way with planning for Indigenous Grad celebrations and National Indigenous People's Day plans are both big jobs, but exciting at the same time. We are excited that we had applications for the Indigenous language positions that were posted.



Coldwater Parent Interaction Engagement Night was a great opportunity to present and discuss the current LEA. We gave the community a chance to engage with the document and give feedback.



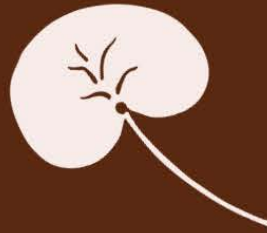
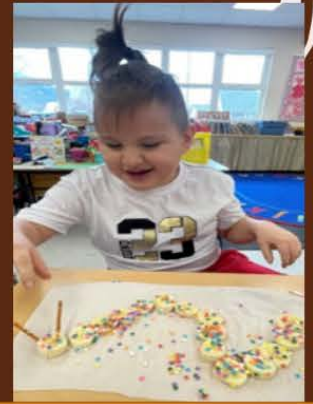
The ISAs at each school continue with such amazing work. Classroom connections provide a time when students are getting cultural content provided right in the classroom.

Central school has been busy making medallions for grad, doing some leather work, and releasing moths in the class.





CLC has great out on the land or out in the community. Scw'exmx 'Lunch n Learn' out day to the Wildfire Management Base. They also had a trip to Vancouver to the Museum of Anthropology and UBC.



Diamond Vale's Welcome Room is a hot commodity for students. On Tuesdays, they do puzzle days and crafts with the Primary students. On Thursday, the intermediate students get to join in on the fun.



Students at John Allison have been taking advantage of the weather and have been getting out on the land for walks and gardening. They did an exploration of Metis culture and tradition. They read "Metis Like Me," and created bookmarks on canvas using pointillism.

Classroom connections are essential to support teachers in learning about Indigenous ways of knowing. These connections help create inclusive learning environments where Indigenous students feel valued and proud of their culture. At the same time, they provide opportunities for non-Indigenous students to learn about local Indigenous cultures, languages, and traditions. By building these connections, educators can foster mutual respect, understanding, and reconciliation in their classrooms and communities.



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Trustees**

**FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools**

**RE: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION REPORT**

**DATE: June 11, 2025**

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The Director of Instruction for Inclusive Education's monthly report is provided.



CL/sc



## **Director of Instruction – Inclusive Education Report June 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. **\*\***

### **Celebrating Vision Screening in Nicola-Similkameen**

We are very pleased to share the continued success of a meaningful health initiative in our district. For the third consecutive year, the Lions Club of Kamloops has generously provided vision screening for all Grade 3 and Grade 6 students in Nicola-Similkameen. This year's screening reached 210 students across our schools, with 12 percent referred for follow-up care — a strong reminder of the value of early detection.

At the heart of this initiative are Beryl and Bob Cook, an inspiring volunteer team whose story is well worth celebrating.

Beryl and Bob moved from Nanaimo to Kamloops seven years ago to continue their retirement. They quickly noticed that no local vision screening program was in place anywhere around them. Drawing on their experience with the Lions Club in Nanaimo, they stepped up. Through their hard work and commitment, they raised \$10,000 to purchase a non-invasive vision screening camera — a tool that can complete a screening in under 20 seconds.

Retirement has not slowed down Beryl and Bob and they have brought their expertise and energy to our district for three years running. They offer this service entirely free of charge, and the connections they have easily made has left a lasting impression on our school communities.

The feedback from school principals across the district has been overwhelmingly positive. Not only is the service itself appreciated, but staff consistently comment on how warm, professional, and enjoyable Beryl and Bob are to work with. They have become familiar and welcome faces in our elementary schools in Princeton and Merritt.

We are also proud to share that Beryl and Bob have expressed a special fondness for our district. They've shared how much they enjoy working with our schools and how welcomed the principals, staff and students make them feel.

We extend our sincere thanks to Beryl and Bob Cook and the Lions Club of Kamloops for their exceptional commitment to supporting this initiative. Their efforts support students with vision concerns to be identified early. This is community partnership in action, and we are grateful for the care and generosity they bring to Nicola-Similkameen.



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Trustees**

**FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools**

**RE: EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE REPORT**

**DATE: June 11, 2025**

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The District Vice Principal for Early Learning and Childcare's monthly report is provided.



CL/sc

## Early Learning Report – June Board Meeting 2025

This will be my last report as the Vice Principal of Early Learning and Child Care. I'd like to first thank the Children and Families who I've been able to meet and make connections with over the past 3 years. I'd also like to extend my gratitude to the Board, Senior Admin, District Staff, and our community partners for allowing me to come into this role, learn, listen and help to highlight the wonderful and important world of Early Learning.

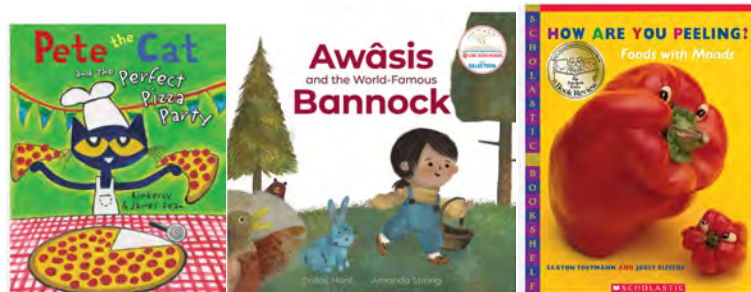
This month in Early Learning:

### SEY2KT – Princeton



A huge thank-you to the SEY2KT Team in Princeton. The SEY2KT Group includes members from the School District (Erin Williams, StrongStart Educator, Maddison Hillman, School Counsellor, Crystal Larsen, Principal JAE, Daniella Bennie, District VP of Early Learning & Child Care), the public library (Katie Fry and Keri St. Laurent), YMBC BC Merritt and Ashcroft CCRR (Nadine Ducharme), Princeton Family Services and Little Seeds (Jodi started out representing both organizations). We also gratefully acknowledge that these events are fully funded through the Ministry of Education and Child Care SEY2KT grant.

The event used these books for inspiration:



This group meets after school/evenings monthly so that we can plan and organize these events.

Children enjoyed a variety of early learning activities, including an obstacle course and interactive story time. They created beaded bubble wands, crafted paper plate faces to explore emotions and had fun with sticker crafts and colouring. Other outdoor play included bubbles and sidewalk chalk, adding to the excitement.

Families were treated to a delicious spread of pizza, Bannock bites and fresh veggies – served with a generous side of joy!



Chapter 2 of Once Upon a Book Tasting took place on May 28<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 pm-6:00 pm. We had about 34-37 children attend with their families. Some quotes I heard from families:

- “This is so great, how cool”
- “Wow – we got all the story books!”
- “Stickers, I don’t have stickers at home!”
- “This school is so great”
- Parent 1 -“Did you see how all the kids sat and listened for story Time?!?” Parent 2 – “Ya me too but I have got to up my game and be more animated!”
- “You guys have nailed how to welcome families”
- “Oh mom, look at all my new friends”
- From 2 little ones leaving “This was the best day of my life” “Me too!”

### Family Literacy Games with Literacy Merritt Nicola Valley Society

Over the course of a few weeks, I was able to participate and attend all 5 Family Literacy Game nights at all the Merritt Elementary Schools. A huge thank-you to our community partner, Literacy Merritt Nicola Valley Society for their work on planning this, the school PACs for helping to support the purchase of food, school principals for helping to organize and welcome families, staff who joined in and all the literacy volunteers who helped to play games and create game kits to supply to families! A special shout-out to Kelly Reid for all the planning and organizing.

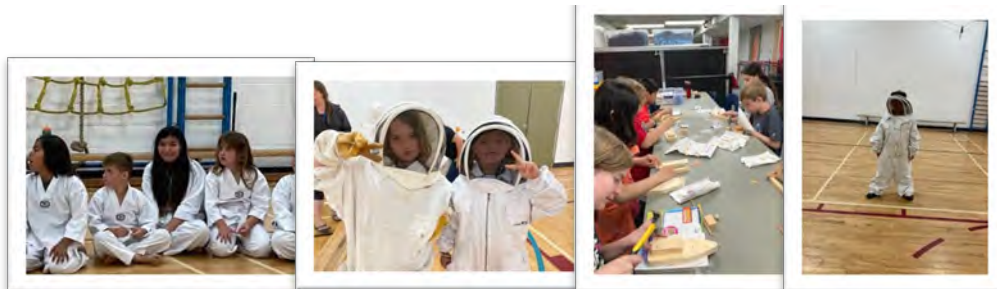
## StrongStart

We have our year end StrongStart Picnic in Merritt at Rotary Park occurring on June 20<sup>th</sup> from 9-12. In Princeton, they are participating in the Fun Field Day with different stations and a school BBQ provided by the PAC on June 13<sup>th</sup>. StrongStart on both ends of the district continues to be a pillar for connection for families and a bridge to support the transition from home to school for many children starting Kindergarten.



## After School Program

In May we finished up at Collettsville and Started our program at Nicola Canford. Crystal Klapstein and Wendy Van Dokkumburg, keep this program fun and engaging for the children along with special guests and expert facilitators. The program has also benefitted from 2 High School Volunteers (Shanavi and Kelsey) who have attended many of the locations as we have rotated through the school district. A huge thank you to all those who have participated, facilitated lessons/activities and helped to make the after-school program a success. Students participated in a variety of activities: crafts, games in the gym, opportunities to learn about bee keeping and making bee houses and Taekwondo.



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Trustees**

**FROM: Jane Kempston  
Assistant Superintendent**

**RE: COSTA RICA FIELD TRIP REQUEST**

**Date: June 11, 2025**

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Merritt Secondary School is bringing forward a field trip proposal to Costa Rica during Spring Break 2027.



JK/sc





## MERRITT SECONDARY SCHOOL

P.O. Box 5100, 1561 Chapman St. Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8

**April 24, 2025**

**Mrs. Jane Kempston**, Assistant Superintendent  
Nicola-Similkameen School District  
1550 Chapman Street, Merritt, B.C.  
V1K 1B8

Dear **Mrs. Kempston**:

We are very interested in participating in an international school trip to Costa Rica. This opportunity would provide our students with valuable cultural, educational, and environmental experiences that align with our school's commitment to global learning and sustainability. We believe that such a trip would greatly enrich our students' understanding of the world and allow them to engage meaningfully with diverse communities. After careful consideration, we have decided to move forward with EF Tours for this international experience upon approval from the School Board. This decision was based on several factors, including the opportunity to see more of Costa Rica, the range of cultural experiences included, and the convenience of having flights, meals and accommodations covered in the total cost.

In accordance with Policy 603.2, **Merritt Secondary** School is requesting approval from the Board of Education for an out-of-province field trip. The trip would involve **30-36 students and 5-7 chaperones** who would be traveling to **San Jose, Tortuguero, Sarapiquí and Guanacaste, Costa Rica, and will be participating in cultural and conservation experiences.**

The purpose of this field trip is **to allow MSS students to participate in a program that helps build community, to benefit the actions Costa Rica is engaging in to protect an endangered species, and to interact with local cultures and local Indigenous peoples.**

Although the plans for this trip continue to be finalized, I have attached a preliminary planning checklist for the Board's consideration. I will continue to work closely with **EF Tours and Adriane Moulard** to ensure that all policy requirements and conditions for this class of field trip will be met. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Molly Brigden




## MERRITT SECONDARY SCHOOL

P.O. Box 5100, 1561 Chapman St. Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8

### High Risk Field Trip Out of Province

#### Request for Approval to Proceed

Approval in principle:  (A. Mouland)

Destination: Barra Honda National Park, Costa Rica: Projects Abroad: Conversation and restoration

Duration: Nine days (with two travel days)

Date: March 2027 (spring break)

Preliminary Itinerary: Depart Kamloops, Tuesday, March 18, 2027  
(Kamloops)

Arrive: San Jose, Costa Rica

See attached brochure.

Our itinerary will be developed to meet the needs and interests of the students.

Depart: Guanacaste, Costa Rica

Arrive: Kamloops, March 28, 2027

A more detailed itinerary  
**will** be developed and  
submitted Spring of  
2026

#### Educational Purpose:

By participating in this educational trip, students will be engaging in but not limited to both curricular and core competencies.

#### Core Competencies:

Communication

- ❖ Working collectively for a common goal
- ❖ Connecting and engaging others
- ❖ Focus on a purpose.





## MERRITT SECONDARY SCHOOL

P.O. Box 5100, 1561 Chapman St. Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8

### Personal and Social Responsibility

- ❖ Understanding relationships and cultural contexts
- ❖ Identifying personal and cultural contexts
- ❖ Valuing diversity
- ❖ Building relationships
- ❖ Contributing to the community and caring for the environment
- ❖ CREATING MEMORIES FOR A LIFETIME!

### Curricular:

- ❖ Demonstrate a sustained intellectual curiosity about a scientific topic or problem of personal, local, or global interest (LS11)
- ❖ Assess risks and address ethical, cultural, and/or environmental issues associated with their proposed methods (LS11)
- ❖ Experience and interpret the local environment (LS11)
- ❖ Contribute to care for self, others, community, and world through individual or collaborative approaches (LS11)
- ❖ Cooperatively design projects with local and/or global connections and applications (CLC/CLE)
- ❖ Express and reflect on a variety of experiences, perspectives, and worldviews through place (CLC/CLE)
- ❖ Identify career-life challenges and opportunities, and generate and apply strategies (CLC/CLE)
- ❖ Practice effective strategies for healthy school/work/life balance (CLC/CLE)
- ❖ Assess personal transferable skills, and identify strengths and those skills that require further refinement (CLC/CLE)
- ❖ Explore possibilities for preferred personal and education/employment futures, using creative and innovative thinking (CLC/CLE)

### Target Group:

Grade 9 and 10 students who will be our seniors in 2027. There will be no other conditions for applying, but there will be criteria for being selected and staying on the group list: respect for the MSS Code of Conduct prior to going (for the next two years), maintaining an academically positive standing, and being on the graduation list (Gr. 12) prior to departure.

### Anticipate the Number of Students:

The max number is 30-36 students. The division between male and female students will be based on interest.





## **MERRITT SECONDARY SCHOOL**

P.O. Box 5100, 1561 Chapman St. Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8

### **Supervision:**

1 to 6 ratio

Chaperones: 5-7 Chaperones will be required

Molly Brigden – teacher

School Staff Volunteers – to be determined

### **Estimated Budget**

Deposit: \$300.00 per student – \$9000 per group secures a personalized EF Tour experience. If less than 30 students, EF Tours may pair two groups together.

Fees: \$4259.00 per student x 30 = \$128,370 per group of 30 students (includes airfare, accommodation, transportation, 3 meals daily, instructional materials, activities, insurance, 24-hour emergency services, and a full-time tour guide).

Ground Transport to and from airport: TBD - This will depend on what families desire, bus or personal vehicles.

### **Other Expenses (responsibility of parents/families and students)**

Passport (mandatory) - \$120 (5-year adult passport)

Vaccinations:

COVID, FLU, Hepatitis A

Twin Rix (suggested)

Dukoral (Suggested)

Personal Spending money – Recommended amount \$30 per day

### **Fundraising**

Over the course of the 18 months prior to departure we will offer no less than 5 opportunities to fundraise. We will be asking families to step up with ideas and take the lead in some of these. Fundraising will be for individual accounts; you will only raise money if you participate.

The other expectation is that parents should be making deposits to either the school or their own saving account on a regular basis in case we do not hit our fundraising goal. The goal is to fundraise 50% of the trip amount, minus spending money.



## MERRITT SECONDARY SCHOOL

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P.O. Box 5100, 1561 Chapman St. Merritt, B.C., V1K 1B8

### Parent Letter:

Once we get conditional Board approval then the permission forms from both the school and EF Tours will be sent out. We will begin to gather that important information like medical history and all the other required documentation.

## **Tour Itinerary**

### *Adventure in Costa Rica*

*9 days*

- **Day 1: Fly to Costa Rica**

Meet your Tour Director at your destination

- **Day 2: San José • Tortuguero**

Travel to Siquirres

Travel by boat to Tortuguero

Supervised exploration time in Tortuguero Village

- **Day 3: Tortuguero**

Visit Tortuguero National Park

Enjoy a boat ride through the Tortuguero Canals

- **Day 4: Tortuguero • Sarapiquí**

Travel to Sarapiquí

Enjoy the rainforest from a unique perspective as you take a zipline through the canopy

- **Day 5: Sarapiquí • Arenal region**

Enjoy the thrill of whitewater rafting on the Sarapiquí river

Travel to Arenal

- **Day 6: Arenal region**

Enjoy a kayaking trip on Lake Arenal

Visit La Fortuna Waterfall

Visit the Arenal Hot Springs

- **Day 7: Arenal region • Guanacaste**

Travel to Guanacaste

Visit Rincón de la Vieja National Park

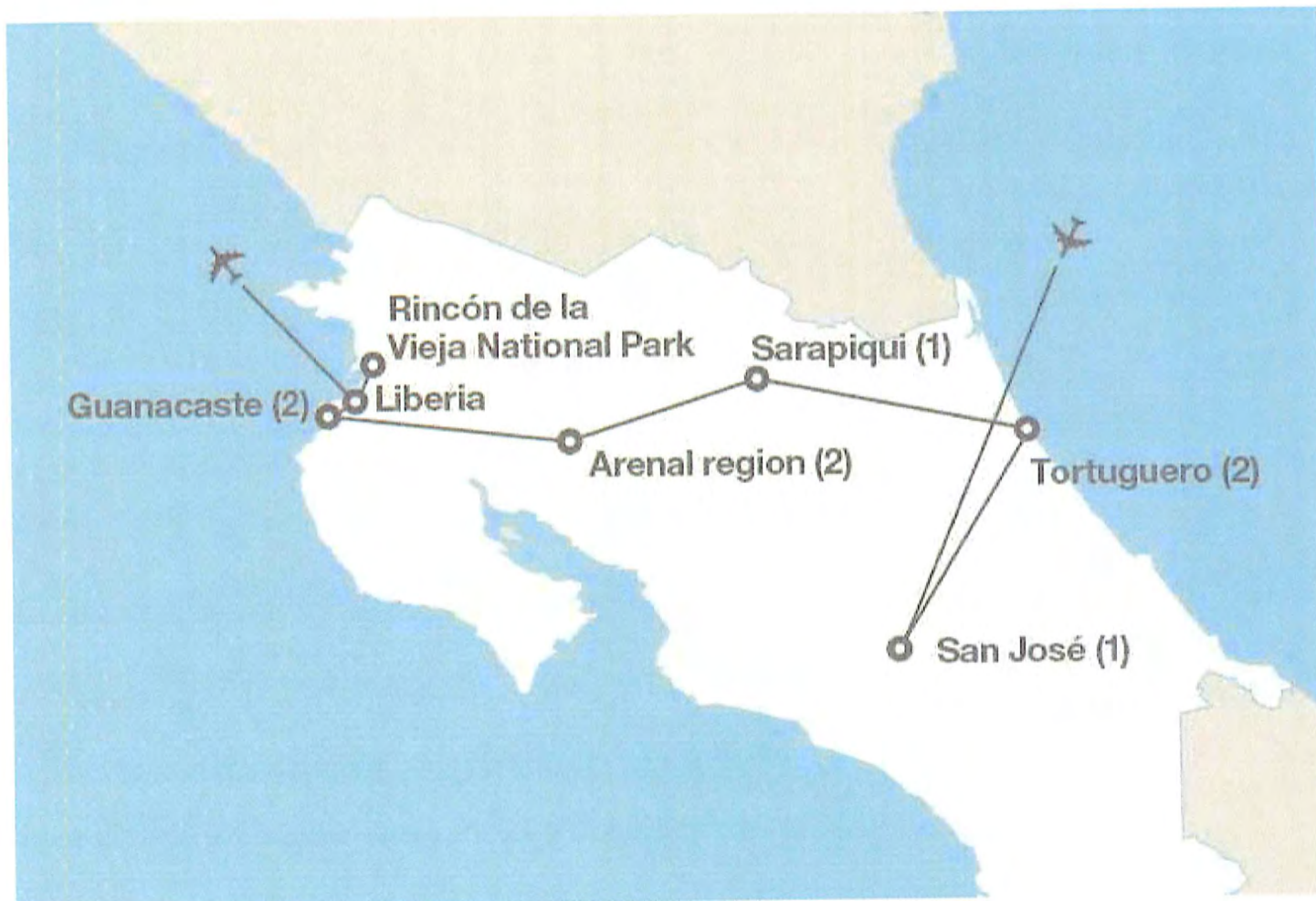
- **Day 8: Guanacaste**

Take a boat tour in Palo Verde National Park

Enjoy a snorkeling activity

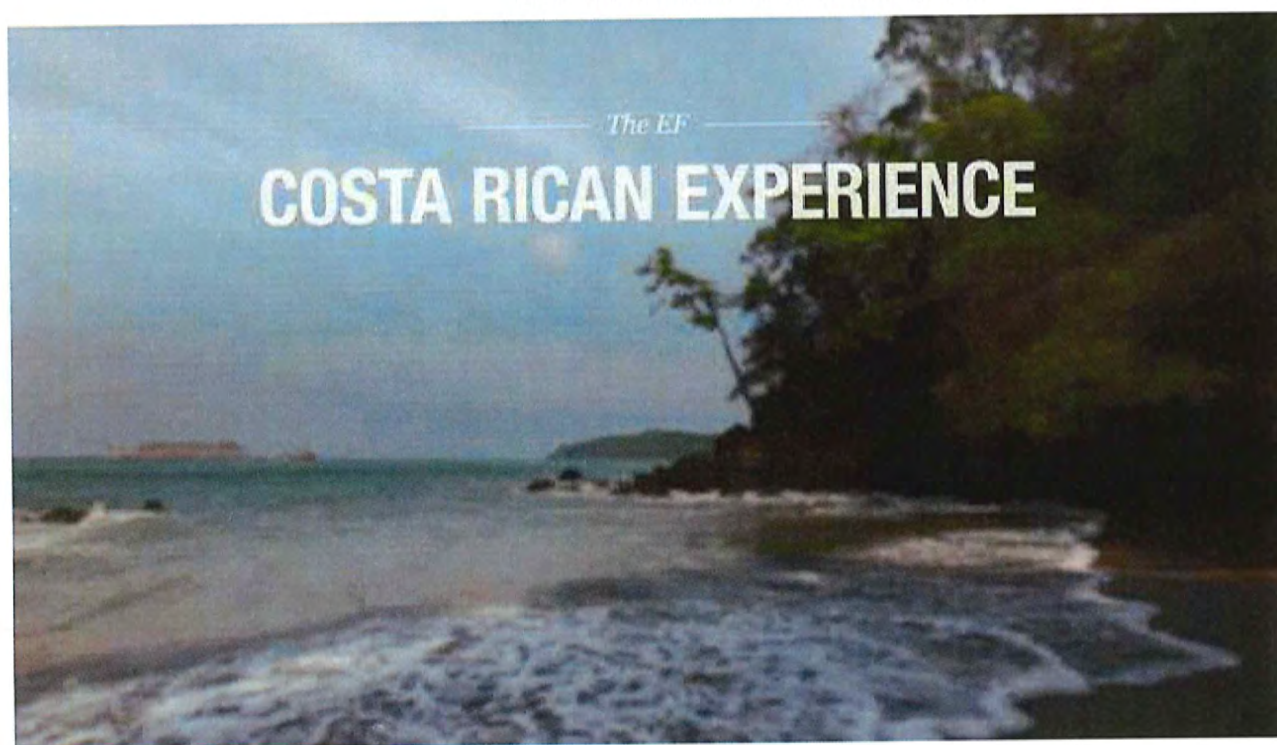
- **Day 9: Depart for home**





[View full itinerary](#)

See what an EF tour is really like



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Trustees

**FROM:** Harold Cull  
Acting Secretary Treasurer/CFO

**RE:** 2026/27 FIVE-YEAR MAJOR CAPITAL PLAN

**DATE:** June 02, 2025

We are currently in the process of preparing our Major Capital Submission, seeking approval from the Board to proceed with the submission of the following projects:

### 2026/27 Five-Year Capital Plan

School	Project	Project Type	Budget	Submission
NCE	Pit House	Major Capital	\$4,938,650	Resubmitted
MBE	Addition	Major Capital	\$14,615,968	Resubmitted
MSS	Gym Hallway	Major Capital	\$750,000	Resubmitted
<b>Total:</b>			<b>\$20,304,618</b>	

With the Board's approval, senior staff will complete the submission of the 2026/27 5-year Capital Plan for major projects. Once submitted, the Ministry will complete a six-month review of all projects across the province and provide a response letter to the Board in early 2026, for projects that have been approved by the Ministry.

Minor capital will be submitted to the board for the September board meeting.

### Suggested Motion:

*THAT The Board of Education approved the submission of the 2026/27 Five-Year Capital Plan as distributed and presented by the Secretary Treasurer.*

In addition to the proposed capital plan submission (above), the school district has the following capital projects underway:

Active Capital Projects (*Previously Approved, FYI purposes only*)

<b>School</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Budget</b>
MSS	HVAC Upgrades – 2 projects	\$666,250
JAE	FIP & Gym HVAC	\$320,000
VFE	FIP	\$50,000
MCE	FIP	\$100,000
JAE	AFG – 3 projects	\$23,000
VFE	AFG – 4 projects	\$22,600
PSS	AFG – 3 projects	\$17,000
The Bridge/BO	AFG	\$30,000
MSS	AFG – 4 projects	\$86,231
MCE	AFG	\$5,000
DVE	AFG – 6 projects	\$63,000
CVE	AFG – 5 projects	\$159,081
MBE	AFG – 4 projects	\$25,000
NCE	AFG – 2 projects	\$15,000
CMS	AFG – 3 projects	\$89,000
All Schools	AFG – 4 projects	\$121,500
Merritt/Princeton	LCR – Grounds (Mower)	\$25,000
Merritt Shop	LCR - Siding	\$15,000
Merritt	LCR - Pickup	\$60,000
Merritt /Princeton	LCR - Book Trailer	\$25,000
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,932,662</b>

Harold Cull  
Acting Secretary Treasurer/CFO



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** All Trustees

**FROM:** Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools

**RE:** Bus Cost Recovery

**DATE:** June 11, 2025

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On May 21, 2025, our Princeton Trustees as well as the Board Chair and Superintendent met with Donegal Wilson, the MLA for Boundary-Similkameen, and the Town of Princeton to discuss transportation in Princeton with parents from Princeton Secondary School and Vermillion Forks Elementary School.

There was a discussion about the Town of Princeton's application for a public transportation system as well as the transportation system for Nicola Similkameen School District.

There were questions about funding for transportation from the Ministry, questions about our current walk limits as well as the potential for cost recovery for additional routes.

1. What funding does the District receive from the Ministry?

When we review the rural factor, our funding was \$179, 761.00 for 2024/2025. Transportation is not a requirement of the *School Act* as the Ministry does not define it as a core service. Boards can decide how they allocate their overall funding. Our board already allots significant funding to bussing. When we look at our daily transportation routes alone, the cost is close to \$800, 000 or a \$620,000 shortfall from the funds we receive. For comparison's sake, this is equivalent to 5.16 FTE of teachers or 13.8 FTE of Educational Assistants.

2. Our current policy walk limits are 4 kms for students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 and 5 kms for students in Grades 4-12. Our transportation has complied the walk limits for both Merritt and Princeton.
- a. For Princeton, all elementary students are bus students with walking distance of no longer than 1.5 kms. Longest walking distance is 3.5 kms to Princeton Secondary School.
  - b. For Merritt, Bench was the longest walk distance of 2.4 kms. All other students within catchment are below 2.4 kms. The longest walk distance is Merritt Secondary School is 4.4 kms.
  - c. Please see the attached maps

While our walk limits are on the higher side, the vast majority of our students are within 2.4 to 3.5 kms from their catchment school.

3. Exploring cost recovery for an additional route.

- a. Buses are provided by the Province on a schedule of one every 12 years. However, this is dependent on funding. This year district only received replacement busses if they were both over 12 years old and over mileage for its age. To purchase a bus for an additional route would be approximately \$210,000. The operational cost of the bus (includes wages, fuel, and maintenance) is approximately \$100,000. If we assume that there are 48 students on the bus, the cost recovery for each student would be \$6458.33 per student for the first year and then \$2083.33 per student for each subsequent. You could reduce the fees and amortize over a period of years, but we did not have the funding to carry the cost of a bus purchase given our enrollment decline.
- b. We were asked to look in SD 67's transportation review.
  - i. Okanagan Skaha closed one school last year and two more are scheduled to close for 2025-2026. This was partially the reason for the transportation review. When a school or schools close, the transportation routes have to be rebuilt.
  - ii. Okanagan Skaha has contracted bus services. Our bus drivers are CUPE employees and we have collective agreement provisions we need to adhere to.
  - iii. Okanagan Skaha had significant capacity to absorb the number of students eligible for bussing when they reduced walk limits. We do not have the same capacity.

1. Fee Structure

- a. All eligible riders \$75 fee per rider (refers to those outside of the new walk limits – K-7 (+2.5 kms; was 4.0 kms previously); Grades 8-12 (+3.2 kms; was 4.8 kms previously)
- b. Courtesy Riders \$225 fee (lives within walk limits, attends out of catchment schools, attends program of choice)
- c. All riders pay \$25 registration fee
- iv. What happens when you have multiple children?



The first two riders in each family will be charged the transportation fees, each additional rider will not be charged.

#### Total Fees per Family

Eligible Riders			
Number of Riders	Transportation Fee	Registration Fee	Total
1	\$75	\$25	\$100
2	\$150	\$50	\$200
3	\$150	\$75	\$225
4	\$150	\$100	\$250

Courtesy Riders			
Number of Riders	Transportation Fee	Registration Fee	Total
1	\$225	\$25	\$250
2	\$450	\$50	\$500
3	\$450	\$75	\$525
4	\$450	\$100	\$550

Financial assistance will be available for families who are experiencing financial hardship.

2025-2026 will be the first year that SD 67 is implementing this fee structure. As a result, they could not give me what their collection rates are at this time. I asked if this would cover the cost of their transportation system. The answer was no. They spend approximately \$800,000 a year and this fee structure is projected to bring in about \$150,000.

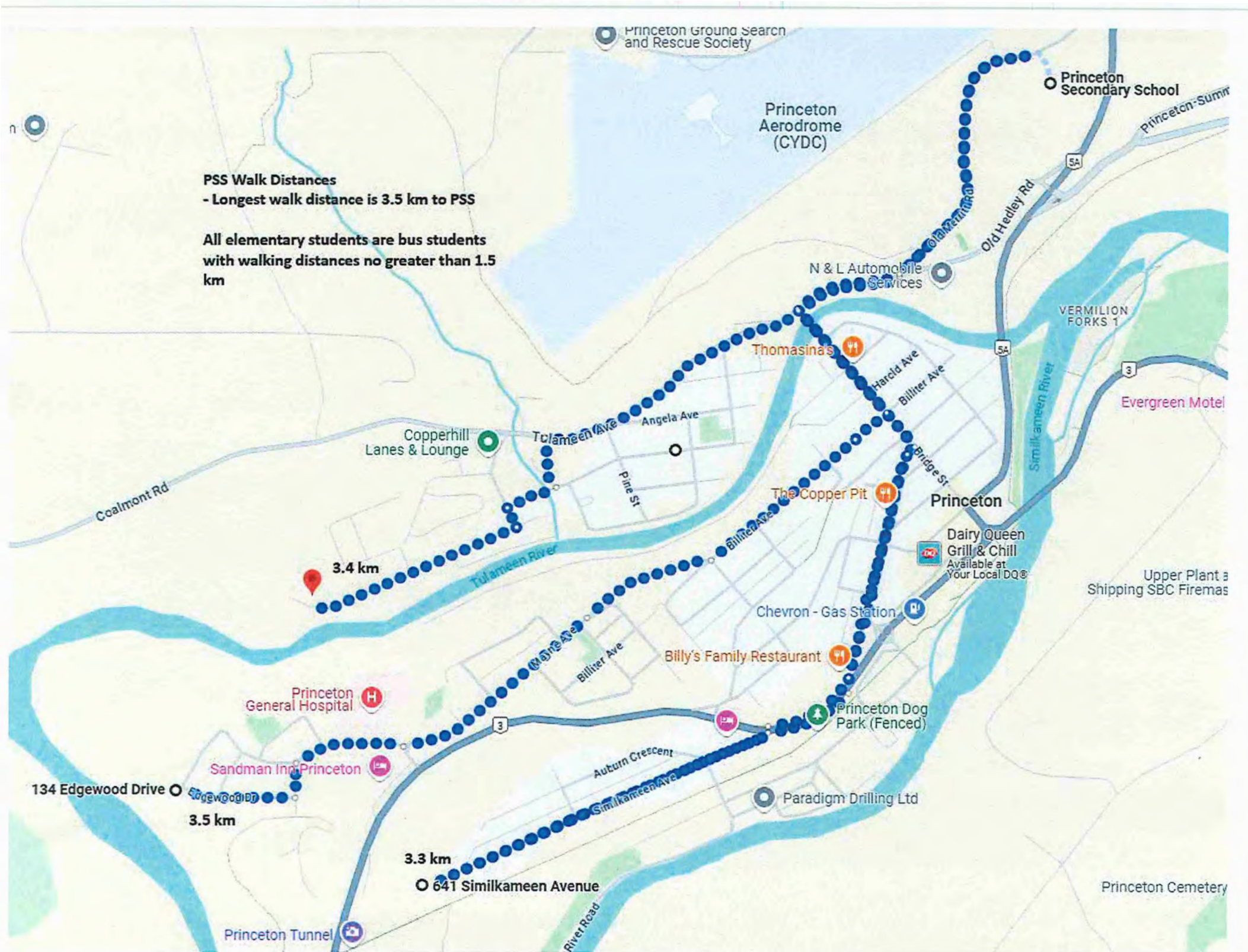
Financial hardship is a significant issue in both communities, but especially in Merritt where 75% of the districts' students reside. Our McCreary survey tells is 16% of our students go to bed hungry. I have deep reservations about implementing fees, even the \$25 reservation fee. If we allow financial assistance for families facing hardship, given our socio-economic index placement, we may only collect minimal fees.



**PSS Walk Distances**

- Longest walk distance is 3.5 km to PSS

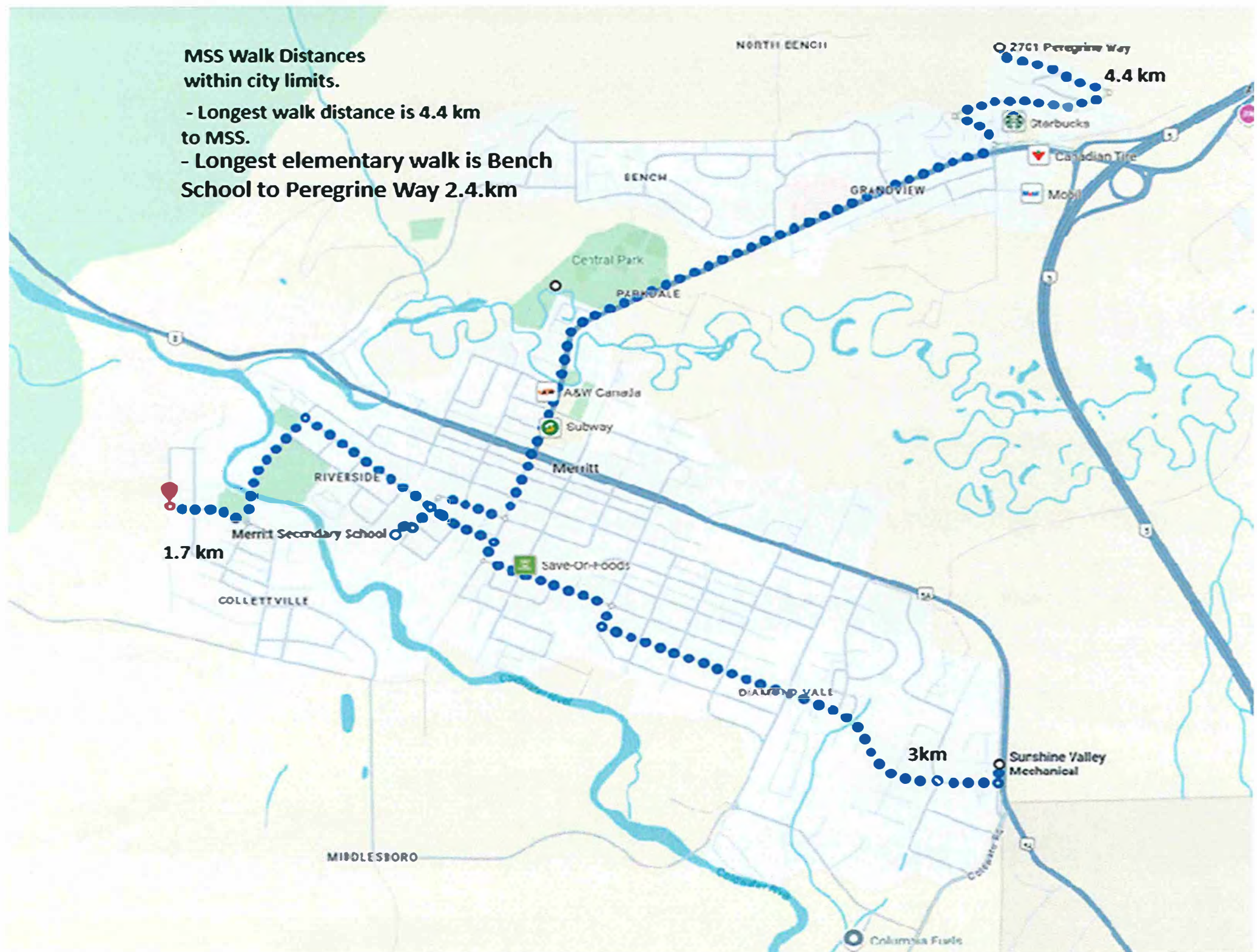
All elementary students are bus students  
with walking distances no greater than 1.5  
km

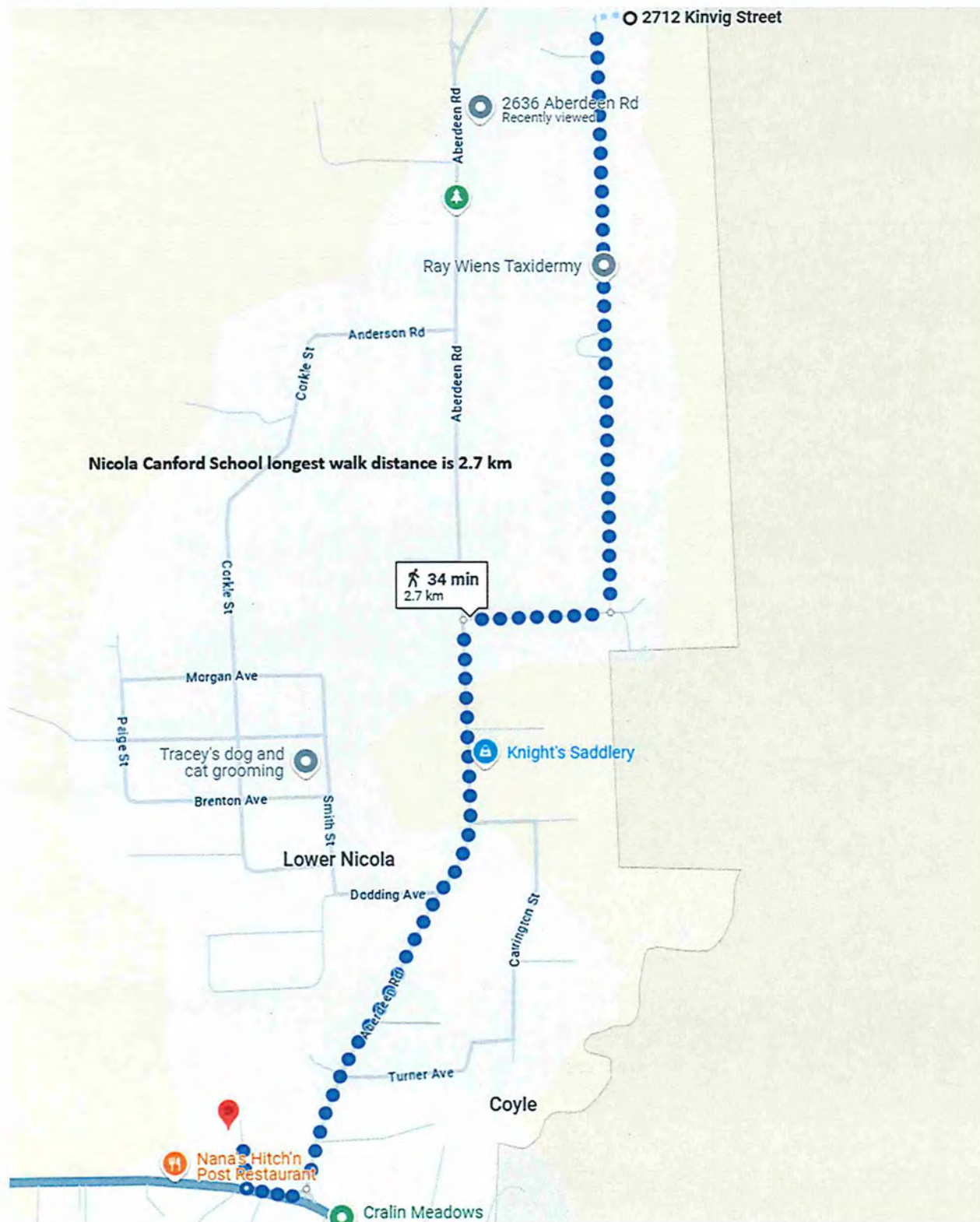




**MSS Walk Distances  
within city limits.**

- Longest walk distance is 4.4 km  
to MSS.
- Longest elementary walk is Bench  
School to Peregrine Way 2.4.km







**MEMORANDUM**

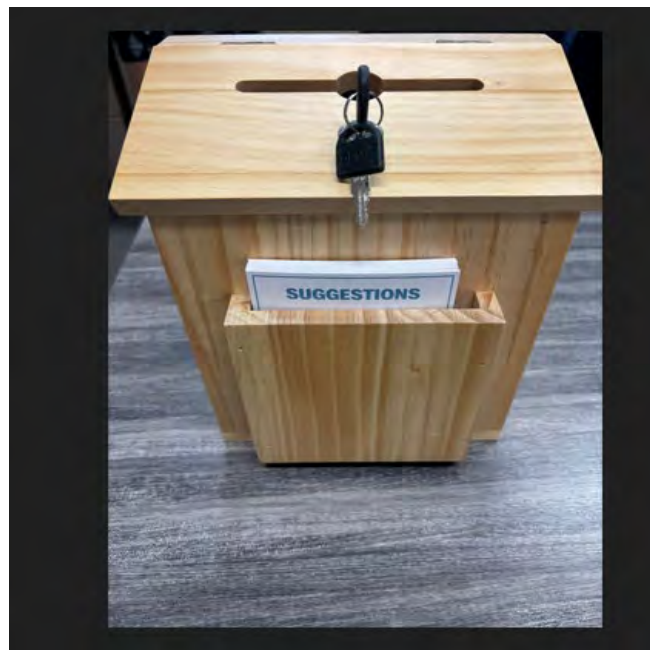
**TO: All Trustees**

**FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools**

**RE: Logo Roll Out - Mailboxes**

**DATE: June 11, 2025**

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We have purchased mailboxes/suggestion boxes for each school. We are in the process of adding our new logo. These will help facilitate student voice. We thought students could submit suggestions for things they would like the board to know, or have a chance to ask questions to the board directly.



CL/sc

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Trustees**

**FROM: Courtney Lawrance  
Superintendent of Schools**

**RE: Riverside Childcare Centre Update**

**DATE: June 11, 2025**

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Please see the report from our District Vice-Principal of Early Learning and Childcare.



CL/sc

## Riverside Update June 2025



\*Mural Artist credit Shianna Allison

We gratefully acknowledge that the funding for Riverside Learning Center was made possible through the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund, supported by provincial investments and federal funding. Being part of this project has been both an honour and a privilege. From writing the initial grant to engaging in the design process, and being part of the development, it's been incredibly rewarding to help create a facility that truly serves the families of Princeton.

I feel so fortunate to have worked alongside such an outstanding team – our dedicated district staff, project manager Doug Boyd, Operations Manager Darrell Finnigan, our operating partner Lynette Mikalishen from the YMCA BC, and the many teams on the ground working to build, create and design.

A heartfelt thank-you to Mandy, the Little Seeds Staff and PSS for their commitment to maintaining continuity of care for families throughout the renovation and construction phases.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of everyone who played a role in bringing this project to life. Your contributions have made a lasting impact.





# 2025-2026 Indigenous Education

**DRAFT** Summary Budget - as at June 3, 2025

## Indigenous Education

ITEM	24/25 Amended	25/26 Draft	Change
<b>Revenue</b>	1,437,229	1,449,900	12,671
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries & Benefits	968,452	1,003,652	35,200
Tutorial	11,000	11,000	
Cultural Programs	253,121	244,121	(9,000)
Travel   Transportation	70,591	70,591	
Language & Culture	6,100	6,100	
Equipment & Supplies	42,307	32,307	(10,000)
Director Discretionary	29,500	29,500	
School-Based Allocations	25,000	25,000	
Mental Health   Wellness	31,158	31,158	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,437,229</b>	<b>1,453,429</b>	<b>16,200</b>

## Indigenous Education Council

ITEM	24/25 Amended	25/26 Draft	Change
<b>Revenue</b>	98,646	110,431	11,785
<b>Expenses</b>			
Services	30,000	30,000	
Supplies	68,646	68,646	
To be allocated		11,785	11,785
Travel			
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>98,646</b>	<b>110,431</b>	<b>11,785</b>

## Total Indigenous Education & Council

<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>1,535,875</b>	<b>1,563,860</b>	<b>27,985</b>
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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Trustees** **FROM: Courtney Lawrance**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

**RE: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS, REVIEWS,** **DATE: June 11, 2025**  
**REPEALS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

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**Recommendations:**

Our policy committee's last meeting was held on May 20, 2025. There is one final policy to review: Section 6.51, Disposal of Land or Improvements. The following policies are presented for first and third readings:

**Policies:**

First Reading

- a) 6.51 Disposal of Land or Improvements

Second Reading

- a) 3.50 Nsyilxcən and Ntəʔkepmxcín and Culture
- b) 6.20 Signing Authorities
- c) 6.30 Expense Reimbursement
- d) 6.40 Public Use of Facilities
- e) 6.50 School Closure
- f) 6.60 Video Surveillance
- g) 6.70 Student Transportation

Third Reading

- a) 2.60 Respectful Learning and Working Communities
- b) 6.50 School Closure

Policies Recommended for Repeal

- a) None



CL/sc

## POLICY 6.51 DISPOSAL OF LAND OR IMPROVEMENTS

The Board of Education recognizes that occasionally certain lands or improvements owned by the Board may become surplus to the educational needs of the District and may therefore consider the disposal of such surplus land or buildings.

Prior to consideration of any possible disposal of lands or buildings, the Board will make a determination whether such lands or buildings are surplus to the educational needs of the District. In making such determination, the Board will:

- consider and comply with any guidance or direction from the Ministry responsible for K-12 public education in British Columbia; and
- undertake, with our local First Nations (Lower Nicola, Upper Nicola, Shackan, Coldwater, Nooaitch, and Upper Similkameen) stakeholders, local governments, community organizations and/or the public, such consultations as the Board may consider appropriate with respect to the lands or buildings involved.

A consultation process shall include:

- consideration of future enrolment growth in the District, including K-12, adult programs and early learning;
- consideration of alternative community use of surplus space in school buildings and other facilities; and
- a fair consideration of the community's input and adequate opportunity for the community to respond the Board's possible plan for the lands or buildings.

Where District lands or buildings have been designated as surplus, every effort should be made to dispose of that asset in a manner consistent with Ministry direction, and where such land or buildings are to be disposed of, the Board will seek to accrue the maximum financial benefit to the District given the nature of the body which is acquiring the lands or buildings.

Where the Board has determined that any given land and/or facility is surplus to current needs and should be disposed of, the following will apply:

1. The Board shall obtain an appraisal of the property by an independent professional appraiser to obtain an estimate of the fair market value of the land and/or buildings.

2. Following consultation and subject to the approval of the Minister, and as an act of reconciliation, the Board will first offer and attempt to negotiate an agreement with one or more local First Nations for the purchase of the property.
3. If there is no interest from one or more of the local First Nations to purchase the property and/or purchase agreement is not finalized, the Board shall, subject to the terms of this policy, offer such surplus land and building assets for sale to the local governments and then the general public, unless such disposal is to another board or institution for educational purposes.
4. After appraisal, authority to dispose of the surplus asset is delegated to the Secretary-Treasurer, who will establish the public process for its disposal, which shall be consistent with the intent of this Policy.
5. Acceptance or rejection of any offer is subject to Board approval.
6. Once the Board has determined a successful purchaser, a Board bylaw authorizing the disposal will be made pursuant to Section 65(5) of the *School Act*.
7. Notification to the Minister responsible for K-12 public education will be made pursuant to the Disposal of Land or Improvements Order.



### Policy 3.50 Nsyilxcən and Nłeʔkepmxcín Traditions and Culture

The Board of Education supports the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action regarding education, and more specifically the revitalization of Nsyilxcən and Nłeʔkepmxcín and the recognition of language as a fundamental and valued element of the local Nicola Valley's First Nations communities' traditions, cultures, and guiding practices. It is acknowledged that there is an urgent need to preserve Nsyilxcən and Nłeʔkepmxcín languages.

Students shall have the opportunity to learn the local ancestral languages, Nsyilxcən and Nłeʔkepmxcín with the district making every effort to make curriculum, teaching resources and language learning educators available.

Further, the Board understands and affirms that the preservation, revitalization and strengthening of Nsyilxcən and Nłeʔkepmxcín and culture are best managed by local First Nations and communities.

## POLICY 6.20 SIGNING AUTHORITIES

The Board of Education seeks to ensure a balance of efficiency and oversight in the handling of financial transactions, with particular attention to safeguarding against unauthorized expenditures.

The Secretary Treasurer will develop appropriate administrative procedures to delineate signing authority throughout the district.

## POLICY 6.30 EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

The Board believes that an adequate level of reimbursement should be provided for expenses incurred when trustees and staff participate in Board approved meetings, workshops and conferences.

The Board authorizes reimbursement for in-district and out-of-district activities in accordance with the British Columbia School Trustees Association (BCSTA) policy and rates for trustees, exempt and support staff, except for BCSTA dependant care costs. Teacher's expense reimbursement is in accordance with the Nicola Valley and Princeton District Teachers' Union Collective Agreement.

### Guidelines

1. The Board expects that individuals traveling for district-related purposes will demonstrate fiscal responsibility similar to that of a prudent individual, ensuring a clear distinction between business-related and personal expenses.
2. All claims for expenses will be reimbursed upon submission of a properly completed and approved expense claim form, together with supporting receipts as required by the Secretary-Treasurer.

## POLICY 6.40 PUBLIC USE OF FACILITIES

The Board of Education believes that District facilities represent a major public investment and should be available for public use to the greatest extent possible. The first consideration for the use of District facilities is to meet the needs of students and school programs as may be required.

The schedule of fees and terms and conditions for public use of school facilities are governed by the following considerations:

- Need for recognition of building-related costs
- Need for adequate control of use by District employees
- Provision of graduated fees, with lowest rates charged to student-related activities and highest to private or commercial activities

Administrative Procedures will be established to make district facilities available to the public on a rental basis in accordance with the guidelines within this policy.

### Guidelines

1. When facilities are not required for District purposes, preference will be given to activities that support children and youth. Public use will be in accordance with the following priorities:
  - 1.1. Local First Nations, NVIT continuing education programs and Municipal/City general interest programs.
  - 1.2. Non-profit community and recreational groups
  - 1.3. For-profit commercial and private enterprises
2. The following categories shall apply regarding scheduling and fees related to the use of school buildings, grounds and facilities:
  - 2.1. CATEGORY A – Includes children, Parent (DPAC) Advisory Councils, and youth groups (comprised of children up to 19 years of age) such as: Scouts, Girl Guides, Embers,





youth non-profit organizations, non-profit religion-based youth groups and non-profit minor sports.

- 2.2. CATEGORY B – includes all adult groups using facilities for non-profit purposes that are not covered under the provisions of a joint-use agreement such as: service clubs, civic and community agencies, organized non-profit adult recreation and appropriate celebrations.
- 2.3. CATEGORY C– includes all for-profit enterprises – where individual(s), groups, and/or organizations stand to make personal gain and/or profit from such use, such as: private and/or for-profit programs, commercial organizations, private recreational or instructional activities

### 3. Application for Use

- 3.1. Applications for rental reservations must be directed to the Secretary Treasurer or designate at the School District Administration building.
- 3.2. Applications for use on a repetitive or seasonal basis must be made and approved annually.

## POLICY 6.50 CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS

The Board of Education is responsible under the School Act for the management of the schools in its school district and for the custody, maintenance and safekeeping of all property owned or leased by the board, as well as for the effective and efficient use and operation of school buildings and associated grounds.

From time to time the Board may consider the possible closure of a school or schools in the District as authorized by the *School Act*. This Policy sets out the processes that will be followed by the Board in the event it is to consider such a possibility. The Board may close schools for reasons including but not limited to:

- declining enrollment resulting in a school no longer being educationally, operationally, or economically viable;
- restructuring of educational programs, consolidation of operations, relocation of students to other schools, or similar, such that the school is deemed surplus to the District's educational needs; and
- replacement of a school with a newly constructed school.

Permanent closure of a school is a significant event and therefore before a closure is effected, the Board will follow a process that provides for sufficient consultation with those who are or may be impacted by the possible closure.

The process for considering a school closure is as follows:

### 1. Initial Resolution

- 1.1. If the possible closure of a school is to be considered, the Board must pass a resolution at a regular open meeting of the Board determining that it will consider the closure of a school or schools within the district.
- 1.2. The Board must provide the public with no less than two weeks' notice that such a resolution will be considered at an upcoming open meeting.
- 1.3. If the Board passes such a resolution, the consultation process set out below must occur prior to any final decision regarding the closure or closures under consideration by the Board.



## 2. Consultation Process

- 2.1. The community and any relevant constituencies (including but not limited to parents, students, First Nations, employee groups, community members and community organizations) will be provided an opportunity to provide input, information and opinion(s) to the Board through the consultation process.
- 2.2. The Board will give fair consideration to public input before making any final decision with respect to school closure(s).
- 2.3. The consultation process will last at least sixty days measured from the date the Board passes a resolution providing for the consideration of a school closure or closures.
- 2.4. To support effective participation from the public in the consultation process, the Board will disclose relevant facts and information that will or may be considered by the Board in respect of the school closure(s) being considered. Such disclosure may include:
  - 2.4.1. the specific school(s) for which closure is being considered;
  - 2.4.2. the reasons for the potential closure of the school(s);
  - 2.4.3. the general effect of the potential closure(s) on surrounding schools;
  - 2.4.4. the number of students potentially affected at both the closed school(s) and surrounding schools;
  - 2.4.5. the effect of the potential closure(s) on student transportation;
  - 2.4.6. educational program implications for any affected students;
  - 2.4.7. the proposed date of the closure(s);
  - 2.4.8. financial considerations;
  - 2.4.9. impact on the Board's capital plan;
  - 2.4.10. proposed use of the closed school(s); and
  - 2.4.11. any other relevant information which will be considered by the Board related to the possible closure.
- 2.5. At any time prior to the conclusion of the consultation process, members of the public may provide written submissions to the Board in respect of school closure(s) under consideration. Information and directions regarding the provision of such submissions to the Board will be provided to the public within twenty days of the Board passing a



resolution or bylaw providing for the consideration of school closure(s). The information and directions will advise potential correspondents that their written response may be referred to and made public as part of the consultation process, unless the correspondent specifically states in the written response that the correspondent wishes their name and address to remain confidential.

- 2.6. The Board will hold a minimum of one public consultation meeting to hear opinion and submissions from the public regarding the school closure(s) under consideration. The Board may hold additional public consultation meetings as it deems necessary in order to meet its obligation to receive and consider public input.
- 2.7. The time and location of any public consultation meetings will be advertised to the public to ensure the community and relevant stakeholders are provided adequate advance notice of the meeting(s). Notice will include written notification to students and parents/guardians of students currently attending the school(s) considered for closure and public notice in local print or online newspapers and/or electronic postings on the Board's website. Specific notice will also be provided to affected or potentially affected First Nations.
- 2.8. At any public consultation meeting(s), the Board will welcome input on all matters relevant to the school closure(s), including the following:
  - 2.8.1. the implications or consequences of the potential school closure;
  - 2.8.2. implementation plans including the timing of the potential closure;
  - 2.8.3. options that the Board should consider as alternatives to the potential closure;
  - 2.8.4. the possibility of future enrolment growth in the area of the potential closure;
  - 2.8.5. possible future uses for the school building or property; and
  - 2.8.6. other relevant written submissions provided to the Board by members of the public.
- 2.9. Minutes will be kept of any public consultation meeting(s). The Board will also maintain the following consultation records: advertising and notice of meetings, meeting agendas and dates, working group and public community consultation meeting submissions, names of trustees/district staff who attended these meetings, a record of individuals attending public community consultation meetings, a record of questions asked and responses given, and any other related correspondence to and from the Board.





3. Decision of the Board

- 3.1. The Board may vote to close the school, not to close the school, or make another decision, based on the results of the consultation process, which may include engaging in further consultation on options other than the school closure(s) under consideration.
- 3.2. A decision to close a school or schools must be effected by the Board through the passing of a bylaw.

4. Notification of the Minister

- 4.1. If the Board decides to proceed with a school closure or closures pursuant to section 73 of the *School Act*, the Board will, without delay, provide the Minister with written notification of the decision containing the following information:
  - 4.1.1. the school's name,
  - 4.1.2. the school's facility number,
  - 4.1.3. the school's address, and
  - 4.1.4. the date on which the school will close.

5. Opportunities for Students Displaced by a School Closure

- 5.1. The Board will ensure that any students displaced by a school closure will have opportunities to receive an appropriate educational experience in another school in the district or otherwise.

## POLICY 6.60 VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The Board of Education recognizes their responsibility to provide a learning environment for students, staff and others that recognizes the right to assemble and associate without undue intrusion on personal privacy. This responsibility is balanced with a commitment to ensuring student safety, protecting Board property, deterring acts of vandalism and crime, and addressing inappropriate behavior.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that the need to deploy video surveillance is compelling and that any resulting effects on privacy rights are minimized and implementation of video surveillance considers recommendations made by the BC Privacy Commissioner from time to time.

Video surveillance is not intended to monitor the work of staff.

This policy is not intended for emergency deployments such as a short-term covert action relating to a specific criminal investigation.

This policy does not apply to non-school buildings owned or operated by the School District as video surveillance cameras are being deployed in increasing numbers to improve safety and reduce vandalism.

Parties whose privacy may be impacted by video surveillance have the right to be aware that they are under video surveillance.

The limited use of video surveillance systems shall comply with all federal and provincial legislation and regulation. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to develop administrative procedures to guide the implementation of this policy.

### Guidelines

1. In accordance with the *School Act*, appropriate approvals of the Parent Advisory Council will be obtained.
2. Ensure that there is a compelling reason for each deployment.



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3. Ensure that video surveillance is only used after all other reasonable and less invasive alternatives have been considered.
4. Ensure that video surveillance records are secure, and that access is restricted to Senior Staff, school administrators and the Operations Manager.

## POLICY 6.70 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL

The Board of Education recognizes the rural nature of the District and safe and accessible transportation plays a key role in the provision of education programs for some students. In accordance with the *School Act*, transportation for students going to and from school is provided at the discretion of the Board.

The Board is required to develop and submit to the Ministry, annually, a Joint First Nation Students Transportation Plan for First Nations served by the Board which guides the transportation services for each First Nation needing transportation for their First Nation Students to a District school.

It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to determine how their children will safely travel to and from school or to and from the bus pick-up and drop-off locations.

The following factors are considered when determining the provision of transportation services:

- whether there are sufficient students to justify the service,
- whether road conditions are suitable for school buses,
- the distance affected students live from the nearest school,
- available funding, and
- the need for operational efficiencies.

The needs of students with a disability or diverse ability shall be fully considered in planning transportation services.

It is recognized that bus transportation routes may not satisfy the requests of all parents/guardians.

### Guidelines

1. Where school bus transportation is established, eligible riders include:
    - 1.1. Primary (K-3) students residing more than 4.0 kilometres from a public school; or
    - 1.2. Students in grades 4-12 residing more than 5.0 kilometres from their neighbourhood school.
  2. The Board may provide transportation assistance to parents/guardians who transport students outside the limits described above.
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## POLICY 2.60 RESPECTFUL LEARNING AND WORKING COMMUNITIES

The Board of Education recognizes and values the diversity found within its communities and believes that each individual contributes to the strength of the district's culture so all members of the school community learn and work together in an atmosphere of respect and safety, free from discrimination, harassment and/or exclusion.

Accordingly, educational programs, student and adult behaviours, and district operations should promote positive interactions and be free from divisive actions and attitudes based upon: Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression or age, of that person.

The Board further expects that every individual in its care or employ, is treated with respect and understanding within their learning and working communities.

This policy applies to all members of the school district community including, but not limited to, students, staff, trustees, , parents and caregivers, volunteers, contractors and other persons who are invited to or who work on Board property.

This policy applies to discrimination or harassment that may take place outside of Board property, but which has the effect of or results in adversely affecting the Board's learning and working communities.

This policy seeks to:

- Support inclusion of all students and employees regardless of real or perceived differences as outlined in the *B.C. Human Rights Code*.
- Ensure that learning and working settings are free from discrimination and harassment
- Ensure that communications are free from discrimination and harassment.
- Raise awareness and improve understanding of Human Rights and the lives of all people.
- Define appropriate terms, behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and harassment through greater awareness of/and responsiveness to their harmful effects.
- Promote a systemic response through staff and professional development that strives to identify and address educational practices, policies, and procedures that perpetuate all forms of discrimination.

- Make resources and support services available and visible for students and staff throughout the schools.
- Act collectively to reduce discrimination and other systemic barriers that are faced by students, families, staff and the community at large.
- Ensure that all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with expeditiously and effectively

The Board will work to ensure:

Education:

- The promotion of opportunities for all staff to increase their understanding of the Canadian Charter of Rights and the *B.C. Human Rights Code*.
- The promotion of opportunities for all staff to increase their awareness of the scope and impact of discrimination and harassment.
- Schools provide age-appropriate activities that promote an understanding of Human Rights and the impact discrimination has on an individual or group.

Safety:

- School and district codes of conduct reflect statements that address the prohibited grounds of discrimination as set out in the *B.C. Human Rights Code*.
- The modelling and teaching of appropriate expectations and behaviours in order to prevent discrimination are everyone's responsibility.
- The district creates support systems for individuals or groups being discriminated against or harassed.
- The district encourages and supports activities promoting respect for human rights and the celebration of diversity.

Learning Resources:

- That current and promising practices, which promote safe and inclusive environments, be identified and shared with school staffs.
- That learning resources, when developmentally appropriate, provide the students with opportunities to become familiar with diversity.
- That staff have the responsibility and are provided opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills in promoting respect for human rights, supporting diversity and addressing discrimination in schools.
- That learning resources be developed in accordance with the Local Education Agreement.