

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

4:00 pm, Wednesday, February 11, 2026
School Board Office

NOTES

Present: Jaclyn Miller, Gretchen Conti, Maureen Mason
Also in attendance: Paul McKenzie (Superintendent), Steve Hopkins (Secretary-Treasurer)
Regrets: Kirsten Van't Schip, Dale Lawson,

The meeting was called to order at 3:58 pm by Chairperson Miller.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED: G. CONTI

SECONDED: M. MASON

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda of February 11, 2026, be adopted as circulated.

STATUS: CARRIED

2. STANDING COMMITTEES

2.a) Finance and Facilities

2.a.i) Budget Development Process and Timelines

Secretary-Treasurer Hopkins described the annual budget development process and timelines. He noted that preliminary grant information is expected to be announced prior to spring break and will be shared with the Board in April. Staffing considerations and consultation will occur in May, with preliminary budget information brought forward to the Board at that time. A draft budget will be presented at a Regular Meeting in May or at a Committee of the Whole meeting in June. Final budget adoption is scheduled for the June Regular Meeting, prior to submission to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

2.b) Education and Strategic Planning

2.b.i) School Calendar 2026/27, 2027/2028 & Draft 2028/2029

Superintendent McKenzie reported that no amendments are being recommended to the approved 2026/2027 calendar and noted that the 2027/2028 calendar will be brought forward next year for final review. He presented early draft dates for the 2028/2029 calendar, including proposed professional development days and break periods, and

advised that the draft will be shared with partner groups for feedback. He further advised that the draft calendar will be brought forward for Board review in March, followed by consultation with stakeholders and families, with Board support, prior to final adoption.

2.b.ii) Proposals: Academies (N/A)

2.b.iii) Program Review: Literacy Support / Level 2 Report

K. Brach and V. Kintzinger presented the Literacy Support Program Review (Level 2), highlighting strong participation from students, parents, caregivers, and staff. The District has implemented several key initiatives, including the DIBELS literacy screener, establishment of a Literacy Support Team, creation of a literacy toolkit, and use of the Ministry's Foundational Learning Progressions. Literacy support teachers are in place at each elementary school, working alongside classroom and inclusive education teams to provide targeted supports. Early results show stronger literacy growth in the primary grades, with ongoing efforts to use assessment data to identify students requiring additional support and to inform school-based planning and instructional strategies.

Feedback from surveys and consultations identified positive student attitudes toward reading and strong appreciation for teacher support, while also highlighting opportunities to strengthen writing instruction, improve consistency across schools, and enhance communication with families. Staff emphasized the need for increased intervention capacity, professional learning, and access to appropriate resources. District priorities moving forward include strengthening literacy instruction across the K–12 continuum, improving consistency in assessment and instructional practices, enhancing student engagement through choice and relevance, and expanding home–school partnerships. Next steps include sharing findings with schools and engaging PAC and DPAC communities to support literacy goals.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Education accept the Literacy Review (Level 2), as attached and presented.

2.b.iv) Outdoor Learning Programs Update

Superintendent McKenzie provided an overview of outdoor learning opportunities across the District in follow-up to a question raised at a prior meeting. Secondary outdoor education options are included in course selection and are scheduled based on student interest, with staff expertise and availability considered during the timetable development process. Staff noted that transportation has not been identified as a barrier to student participation.

It was further noted that all Grade 8 students participate in outdoor education as part of their elective rotation, ensuring exposure to outdoor learning opportunities early in their secondary experience.

2.c) Audit

2.c.i) N/A

2.d) Policy Development

2.d.i) Review of Select Board Policies - Policy 14 – School Closures/Grade Reconfigurations, Policy 16 – Indemnity By-law, and Policy 20 – Provision of Child Care Programs

Trustees reviewed the policies and provided additional suggestions for updates

Policy 14 – School Closures/Grade Reconfigurations, revisions order to:

- Improve transparency and ensure public input is meaningfully considered.
- Prioritize student well-being and transitions.
- Integrate equity into closure and reconfiguration decisions.
- Support early engagement with Indigenous Nations.
- Add a post-implementation review for accountability and learning.
- Expand consultation to include written and virtual participation.

Policy 16 – Indemnity By-law, revisions order to:

- Clarify when indemnification applies, including confirmation of good faith performance of duties.
- Establish a clear process to request and approve indemnification.
- Require trustees to recuse themselves from decisions about their own indemnification.
- Add annual reporting to improve transparency while protecting confidentiality.

Staff will take the feedback and prepare drafts for review at the March Committee of the Whole. With respect to Policy 20 - Provision of Child Care Programs, Secretary-Treasurer Hopkins suggested that the Board hold on implementing any revisions until pending changes to legislation come into force and effect.

2.d.ii) Policy 9 – Board Representatives Motion

Trustees reviewed the proposed edits and provided additional feedback to:

- Add more defined procedural steps to the trustee assignment process, including advance submission of trustee preferences and structured discussion elements.
- Clarify and expand the Chair’s role in facilitating the assignment process, including presenting and explaining a proposed slate of assignments.
- Incorporate explicit consideration of equity, workload balance, experience, and opportunities for trustees when determining assignments.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Education approve Policies 5 and 9 as amended.

2.d.iii) Policy 4 Proposed Amendments from Trustee Feedback

Trustees reviewed the proposed edits and provided additional feedback to:

- Clarify expectations for respectful conduct in public and digital settings;
- Strengthen standards related to harassment, intimidation, and behaviour inconsistent with the responsibilities of public office;
- Require trustees to clearly distinguish personal opinions from Board decisions in public communications;

- Reinforce responsible digital citizenship and protection of public confidence in the Board; and
- Align conduct expectations with the sanctions framework to ensure fairness, transparency, and progressive accountability.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Education approve Policy 4 – Trustee Code of Conduct and Appendix – Trustee Code of Conduct Sanctions, as amended.

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS

3.a) Ad Hoc Committee Notes – February 4, 2026

The Committee discussed next steps, which include continued dialogue on trustee inquiry questions, building on the work completed at the previous meeting and exploring progress to date.

4. OTHER INFORMATION

4.a) N/A

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: G. CONTI

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 11, 2026, be adjourned.

STATUS: CARRIED