

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

4:00 pm, Wednesday, September 24, 2025
School Board Office

MINUTES

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Chairperson Miller.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chairperson Miller acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the traditional unceded territories of the Tla'amin Nation.

QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions.

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

While we get ready to close out the first month of school, I'd like to begin by recognizing the effort it takes to start up a new school year. To our students, teachers, support staff, and administrators, thank you. The energy, preparation, and commitment required to create a strong beginning is no small task, and we are grateful for all that has gone into making these first few weeks successful.

Professional development for our employees marked a significant moment this month, with an Indigenous education-focused day for all staff built around the theme *Learn, Understand, Act*. We had the privilege of welcoming Dr. Marie Wilson, a Commissioner of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose insights and stories set the tone for a powerful day. Learning about witnessing as part of Tla'amin Nation's protocols and laws, and engaging with a diverse set of sessions, created an experience that was both educational and deeply meaningful.

Building on this learning, we were proud to partner with the City of Powell River, qathet Regional District, Tla'amin Nation, Vancouver Island University, and our school district to host a public event featuring Dr. Wilson. Her reflections on the devastating realities of residential schools and the lasting impacts still felt today resonated deeply with all who attended. Drawing on the thousands of testimonies she heard during her time as a Commissioner, Dr. Wilson reminded us that while September is often a time of excitement for many, for survivors of residential schools it is a month that recalls fear and trauma. These truths call on us to continue learning, acknowledging, and acting with intention as part of our path toward reconciliation.

Community has certainly been front and centre for our district this month. There was the Career Day hosted at Brooks Secondary where nearly 40 organizations from across our region came together to showcase the wide range of opportunities available to students in their own community. This kind of collaboration not only sparks imagination but also demonstrates to our young people that there are many pathways open to them, including right here in our own community.

Our district also took part in the Community Connection Expo at Dwight Hall as a way to connect with families and encourage greater parent involvement in schools. Our schools also showed their strong community spirit by supporting Cops for Cancer and hosting Terry Fox Runs to raise funds for cancer research, great reminders of how education and citizenship go hand in hand. And of course, this month we will join Canadians across the country in marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Schools will be closed on September 30, and in the days before, students will wear orange shirts and participate in learning activities to reflect on the legacy of residential schools and to honour survivors.

September is also an important month for the Board. This is when we review and approve key pieces of work that guide our direction and accountability, including our audited financial statements and the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning report. These are critical tools to ensure transparency and to demonstrate progress toward our commitments.

In all of these ways, from the classroom to the boardroom to the community, we see September as a time of renewal, of learning, and of connection. I want to thank everyone who has contributed to making this a strong start to the year.

And as we look ahead to October, I would also like to acknowledge that October 5 is World Teachers' Day. It's an opportunity for us to pause and recognize the dedication, care, and professionalism of our teachers. Their daily work not only supports student success but also helps shape the future of our community, and for that we are deeply grateful.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOVED: D. LAWSON

SECONDED: M. MASON

THAT the Regular meeting agenda of September 24, 2025, be adopted as circulated.

STATUS: CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED: G. CONTI

SECONDED: M. MASON

THAT the Regular meeting minutes of June 25, 2025, be adopted as circulated.

STATUS: CARRIED

3. REPORT OF CLOSED MEETINGS

3.a) June 25, 2025 – The Board met in-camera to discuss items which include property and personnel.

4. OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

- 4.a) qSD to City of Powell River – Letter of Support
Provided for information.

5. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS' REPORT

5.a) School Opening Report for September 2025

Superintendent McKenzie spoke to his written report and presentation, highlighting a smooth and positive school start-up and commending staff for their efforts in preparing welcoming environments. Enrolment remains stable, with elementary numbers similar to the prior year, a slight increase at the secondary level, and continued growth in PIE and International Education. Director Burt has been seconded to the Ministry (0.6 FTE), with V. Kintzinger stepping in part-time to support the district during the absence.

Superintendent McKenzie also noted ongoing progress across programs, including Indigenous Education, Career and International Education, child care, and transportation. Early learning initiatives such as the Kindergarten Snapshot continue to strengthen transitions and student readiness.

5.b) Enhancing Student Learning (ESL) Report

Directors Burt, Brach and Gaudreau presented the annual ESL Report, noting the introduction of a new three-year reporting cycle beginning in 2025, with two shorter reports and one in-depth review. This year's short-form report reflects the district's continuous improvement cycle, identifying patterns, interpreting data, and developing next steps, and aligns closely with the strategic plan priorities. Equity of outcomes remains a central focus throughout the report.

Directors reported on graduation rates, highlighting differences between brick-and-mortar schools and online programs. The district issued more Adult Dogwoods than the provincial average, primarily through its online program, while brick-and-mortar schools issued fewer. Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA) results showed less improvement in Grade 4 compared to the previous year but gains among students with diverse needs and Indigenous learners. Reading data (DIBELS) indicated early-year growth but declines at the intermediate level, leading to targeted interventions and additional literacy support from C. Clark. Numeracy assessments are also underway to identify areas for improvement, and inquiry work at Brooks and other schools continues to focus on equitable assessment and student engagement.

Trustees asked questions about provincial trends, strategies to improve graduation rates, and ongoing efforts to strengthen literacy and numeracy supports across schools.

MOVED: D. LAWSON

SECONDED: M. MASON

THAT Board of Education receive and approve the Annual Enhancing Student Learning Report 2025, as presented at the September 24, 2025, Public Board Meeting.

STATUS: CARRIED

5.c) Revised 2025/2026 Program Review Cycle

Superintendent McKenzie presented a revision to the previously approved program review cycle. The updated schedule, originally approved in June, includes adjustments to the order of reviews. Four major reviews will take place this year: Early Learning, Literacy Support, Feeding Futures, French Immersion, and Online Learning. A suggestion was made to review the ADST Innovator program and the OLC program in a future cycle.

MOVED: D. LAWSON

SECONDED: G. CONTI

THAT the Board of Education approve the revised Program Review Cycle for 2025-2026.

STATUS: CARRIED

5.d) Suspension, Exclusion, and Seclusion Report – September 3, 2024, to June 30, 2025

Superintendent McKenzie reviewed the annual report, noting comparisons to the previous school year. A related report on suspensions and exclusions was submitted to the Ombudsperson in June, with results expected in the new year.

MOVED: G. CONTI

SECONDED: D. LAWSON

THAT the Superintendent of Schools' Report be received as presented.

STATUS: CARRIED

6. SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

6.a) Approval of the 2024/2025 Audited Financial Statements

Secretary-Treasurer Hopkins reported that the audited financial statements were presented at the Committee of the Whole meeting and highlighted the accompanying Financial Statement Discussion and Analysis (FSDA), which offers context for interpreting the statements and includes an executive summary.

MOVED: D. LAWSON

SECONDED: G. CONTI

TO approve the operating surplus restrictions of \$353,890 and the Local Capital restriction of \$125,000 as detailed in NOTE 18 of the financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2025.

STATUS: CARRIED

MOVED: G. CONTI

SECONDED: D. LAWSON

THAT the Board of Education approve the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended June 30, 2025.

STATUS: CARRIED

6.b) Approval of the 2026/2027 Minor Capital Plan

Trustees reviewed the proposed 2026/2027 Minor Capital Plan at the Committee of the Whole meeting and moved to approve it. S. Hopkins noted that a response from the Ministry regarding approved projects is expected in the spring.

MOVED: D. LAWSON

SECONDED: M. MASON

THAT the Board of Education approve the submission of the Minor Capital Plan.

STATUS: CARRIED

6.c) Letter of Support for Texada Food Security Project

S. Hopkins shared a letter of support that was provided to the Texada group for information.

MOVED: G. CONTI

SECONDED: D. LAWSON

THAT the Secretary Treasurer's Report be received as presented.

STATUS: CARRIED

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.a) Committee of the Whole Report for September 10, 2025

M. Mason and G. Conti shared additional information on the purpose for the Ad Hoc Committee. Trustees supported the formation of the committee.

MOVED: D. LAWSON

SECONDED: M. MASON

TO appoint trustees M. Mason and G. Conti to an Ad Hoc Committee formed to review future Professional Development needs for Trustees.

STATUS: CARRIED

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.a) Quarterly Review of Board Work Plan

S. Hopkins reported that updates to the program review cycle have been incorporated into the work plan. Following direction from the June meeting, a data release schedule has been developed as a separate appendix. The dates are intended to be flexible and are presented within general time bands.

MOVED: G. CONTI

SECONDED: D. LAWSON

THAT the Board of Education approve the updated Board Workplan.

STATUS: CARRIED

QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions.

MEDIA QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: G. CONTI

THAT the Regular Meeting of September 24, 2025 be adjourned.

STATUS: CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.



J. Miller
Chairperson



S. Hopkins
Secretary-Treasurer

SH/attachments