

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

4:00 pm, Wednesday, October 8, 2025
School Board Office

NOTES

Present: Jaclyn Miller, Maureen Mason, Gretchen Conti, Dale Lawson

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.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED: D. LAWSON

SECONDED: G. CONTI

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda of October 8, 2025, be adopted as circulated.

STATUS: CARRIED

2. STANDING COMMITTEES

2.a) Finance and Facilities

2.a.i) N/A

2.b) Education and Strategic Planning

2.b.i) Suspension Review

Superintendent McKenzie and Director Gaudreau presented the suspension review, noting that overall suspension rates have declined over the past four years. Many non-violent suspensions are related to vaping, leading staff to question whether such incidents should be categorized under the drug and alcohol policy. It was further noted that the current Drug and Alcohol Administrative Procedure is rigid and not reflective of the progressive approaches being used in schools. Staff continue to follow the Ministry's *Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools* guidelines, using suspensions only after other interventions have been attempted, except in rare cases such as fights. Interventions include

counselling, de-escalation strategies, and multi-tiered supports aligned with individual student needs.

Superintendent McKenzie emphasized the importance of updating Administrative Procedures to better align with current practice and support learning continuity and restorative approaches. Trustees discussed reviewing AP language, in particular outdated drug-testing references.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Education receive the Suspension Review report as presented.

2.b.ii) School Growth Plans

Superintendent McKenzie presented the 2024/2025 School Growth Plans, noting a shift toward developing goals framed around inquiry questions with explicit connections to the Strategic Plan and the First Peoples Principles of Learning. The new format encourages schools to use a range of data sources, both quantitative and qualitative, to identify priorities and measure progress. Growth plans this year focus on literacy, numeracy, social-emotional learning, and graduation outcomes, with increasing attention to priority populations and attendance.

Trustees expressed appreciation for the updated template and for schools that demonstrated clear evidence measures. They encouraged greater consistency in linking goals to measurable outcomes. Discussion also touched on balancing quantitative data with “street data,” or student stories, to reflect the full range of learning experiences. Trustees asked about how success is measured beyond graduation rates and how schools are supporting both students who need additional help, those already meeting expectations and identified as “gifted”. Staff emphasized the district’s commitment to personalized learning, ensuring all students have opportunities to grow, and noted that future iterations of the plans will continue to refine evidence measures and alignment with district priorities.

2.c) Audit

2.c.i) N/A

2.d) Policy Development

2.d.i) N/A

3. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

3.a) South Coast Branch – Review of Constitution

Trustees reviewed the South Coast Branch Constitution and noted discrepancies related to the Education Representative and Secretary-Treasurer roles. As the draft provided did not include markups, tracking changes was difficult. A vote on the revised Constitution will take place at the November South Coast Branch meeting, and Chairperson Miller will share the Board’s concerns for consideration.

4. OTHER INFORMATION

4.a) Land Acknowledgements – M. Mason

M. Mason led a discussion on enhancing land acknowledgements by moving beyond the standard format to include personal and organizational connections to equity. Trustees considered opportunities for coaching from Jessica to deepen understanding and meaning. The Board discussed the balance between performative and genuine acknowledgements and agreed that rotating territorial acknowledgements at Committee of the Whole meetings would provide trustees with opportunities to learn and practice. This approach will be reflected on upcoming agendas.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: D. LAWSON

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned.

STATUS: CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

SH/attachments