



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

12:00 pm, Wednesday, November 13, 2024
School Board Office

NOTES

Present: Jaclyn Miller, Rob Hill, Dale Lawson, Maureen Mason

Also in attendance: Vianne Kintzinger (Interim Superintendent), Steve Hopkins (Secretary-Treasurer)

Regrets: Kirsten Van't Schip

The meeting was called to order at 12:03 pm by Chairperson J. Miller.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED: R. HILL

SECONDED: D. LAWSON

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda of November 13, 2024, be adopted as circulated.

STATUS: CARRIED

2. STANDING COMMITTEES

2.a) Finance and Facilities

2.a.i) Overview of Waste Management & Recycling in Schools (oral)

J. Formosa and V. Kintzinger provided an update on recent changes to recycling in schools due to new mandates from Recycle BC. These changes have significantly impacted Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) recycling in rural areas, including the qathet Regional District and Powell River. As of August 1, 2024, ICI packaging and paper products are no longer accepted at local depots. Recently, the City of Powell River has identified exemptions allowing recycling pickup at Edgehill and James Thomson Elementary schools. The City has also committed to advocating on behalf of the school district to Recycle BC to restore recycling services for other school sites, while district staff are developing alternative solutions for Texada Elementary and Kelly Creek Elementary.

The district is actively collaborating with the qathet Regional District and the City of Powell River to establish a sustainable, long-term waste management solution. In addition, the district and the City have initiated a pilot composting program in Brooks Secondary's culinary classrooms, with plans to expand it to the remainder of the facility after ensuring compliance with composting regulations. Potential fines from contaminated waste streams, including both recycling and composting programs, are a concern. Superintendent Kintzinger has engaged Sustainability Leads to support schools with interim measures, including zero-waste initiatives, pack-in/pack-out systems, and other strategies to divert waste from landfills.

2.a.ii) qSD to qRD – Emergency Preparedness

The committee revisited a 2019 letter and facility survey that outlined the qathet School District's commitment to providing school access and transportation supports to the qathet Regional District (qRD) in emergency situations. The district plans to update the facility survey to reflect any changes since 2019 and to incorporate seismic ratings, which are critical considerations for earthquake preparedness. Trustees expressed continued support for granting access to school sites during emergencies and directed staff to provide the qRD with updated information on facility suitability.

S. Hopkins clarified that in the event of an emergency occurring during school hours, the priority would be the needs of the school and its students.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the qathet School District provide the Regional District with an updated letter of commitment in support of its emergency planning.

2.b) Education and Strategic Planning

2.b.i) Program Review - Dual Credit Programs

T. Larkin presented the Career Programs – Dual Credit review and highlighted the evolution of career and dual credit education in the qathet School District. These programs provide opportunities for students to explore personal interests, develop competencies, and connect school-based learning with community and post-secondary pathways. The review emphasized the importance of maintaining program alignment with current workforce demands and student interests through surveys and program adjustments.

Key offerings include partnerships with Vancouver Island University (VIU), North Island College (NIC), and Camosun College, supporting trades like welding and automotive, as well as health care assistant, early childhood education, and academic courses. Programs are being reviewed to address low enrollments and ensure alignment with student needs. Initiatives like Work Experience and Youth Work in Trades integrate practical learning, offering credits and apprenticeships to strengthen career readiness. Looking forward, the district

aims to expand healthcare and culinary dual credit programs, enhance early career awareness in grade 10, and continue to address barriers such as transportation. Trustees commended the breadth of opportunities and supported continued alignment with local trends, such as mental health needs.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board of Education accept the Career Program-Dual Credit Review (Level 2), as attached and presented.

2.b.ii) Review of Indigenous Education Annual Report

District Principal J. Johnson presented the district's Indigenous Education Annual Report, a requirement under the Tla'amin Education Agreement (TEA). The report underscores the district's dedication to enhancing outcomes for Tla'amin Nation students and fostering collaborative relationships. It aligns with the district's strategic goals, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, supporting systemic shifts toward equitable education.

Key highlights emphasize the need for improved data collection to better identify Tla'amin heritage and Ayajuthem-speaking students, enabling more targeted interventions. Chronic absenteeism remains a significant challenge for some Tla'amin Nation students, with the district implementing community support initiatives, educational campaigns, and care calls to address frequent absences. A comparison of attendance data with non-Indigenous students was identified as a potential area for further exploration.

Cultural support remains a priority through initiatives such as čępθtans (Cultural Support Workers) and the establishment of the Indigenous Education Council. The report also celebrates successes, including Indigenous student graduation rates exceeding the provincial average for 2022/23. Looking ahead, the district plans to focus on reducing absenteeism, improving graduation rates, and strengthening communication with Tla'amin families through surveys and integrated community events.

Trustees expressed strong support for the ongoing efforts to create a welcoming, culturally inclusive educational environment.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board of Education accepts the report as presented and recommends submission to the Tla'amin Nation, as required in the Tla'amin Education Agreement.

2.c) Audit

2.c.i) N/A

2.d) Policy Development

2.d.i) Review of Select Board Policies

Trustees reviewed Board Policies 10 (Policy Making and Review), 11 (Board Delegation and Authority), and 12 (Role of the Superintendent). Policy 10 specifies that “The Board shall review and revise its policies on a rotational basis, ensuring all policies are reviewed at least once per term of office.”

A clarifying edit was proposed to Policy 10, item 3, to specify that the Policy Committee functions within the Committee of the Whole:

3. *“The Superintendent will inform the Board of the request for policy development/revision. The Board will determine the action to be taken, including the option of referring the matter to the Policy Committee portion of the Committee of the Whole.” (addition underlined)*

2.d.ii) Consideration of Alternate Board Meeting Calendar

Trustees supported a proposed change to the board meeting calendar, shifting regular meetings to the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. While adjustments would be required in December and March to accommodate school breaks, the revised schedule aligns with the past practice of providing a week between the Committee of the Whole and the Regular Meeting in September and June. This change will also grant staff additional time to prepare for meetings.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board of Education approves the implementation of a revised meeting calendar for the balance of the school year using the second and fourth Wednesdays as the regular meeting days.

3. OTHER INFORMATION

3.a) South Coast Branch Advocacy Discussion

The discussion was deferred to a future meeting to ensure Vice-Chair Van’t Schip’s presence. Trustees considered resubmitting the proposed changes to the South Coast Branch for discussion during their meeting at the Trustee Academy.

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: R. HILL

THAT the Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned.

STATUS: CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm.