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QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2024
6:00 PM
VIA VIDEO-CONFERENCING

ATTENDEES

Trustees

Eve Flynn	Chairperson
Carol Kellogg	Vice Chairperson
Julie Austin	Trustee
Barry Kurland	Trustee
Elaine Young	Trustee

Administration

Peter Jory	Superintendent of Schools
Ron Amos	Secretary Treasurer
Gillian Wilson	Associate Superintendent of Schools
Rudy Terpstra	Director of Instruction
Ryan Brennan	Director of Instruction – Human Resources
Phil Munro	Director of Operations
Braydon Gordon	Principal, Bowser Elementary School Qualicum District Principals and Vice Principals Association

Education Partners

Mount Arrowsmith Teachers Association (MATA)
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 3570
District Parents Advisory Council (DPAC)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Flynn called the virtual meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

Chair Flynn acknowledged that the Board was meeting on the shared traditional territory of the Qualicum and Snaw-Naw-As Peoples. She thanked the First Nations for their stewardship of the land, and for allowing the Board to live, work, and play in this beautiful part of Vancouver Island.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Trustee Young added a topic under Trustee Items.

24-110R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 69 (Qualicum) adopt the agenda as amended.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes: November 26, 2024
- b. Ratification of In Camera Board Meeting Minutes: November 26, 2024
- c. Ratification of Special In Camera Board Meeting Minutes: November 26, 2024

24-111R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 69 (Qualicum) approve the consent agenda items of the Regular Board Meeting of December 10, 2024, as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

None

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS)

None

7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

8. MOUNT ARROWSMITH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION (MATA)

No Report

9. CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (CUPE) LOCAL 3570

No Report

10. DISTRICT PARENT COUNCIL (DPAC)

No Report

11. ACTION ITEMS

None

12. INFORMATION ITEMS**a. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Jory reported on the following:

a. Student Achievement Update

The updated Student Success data page is now live, showcasing provincial and district-wide graduation rates. Provincial all-resident grad rates decreased to 91%, while Indigenous student rates improved to 75%, and students with unique needs rose to 78%. Qualicum School District reported an 88% six-year completion rate for resident students, with Indigenous students also achieving 88% and students with unique needs at 77%. These results are commendable, especially considering challenges like the recent decline in secondary attendance and the temporary absence of a key data set that tracks disengaged students for re-engagement efforts.

This data set has been reinstated and will be discussed in an upcoming meeting with secondary principals to further support vulnerable students.

While Indigenous grad rates reaching parity with the overall cohort is notable, the district aims for equity to be normalized rather than celebrated. Gratitude was expressed to staff for their dedication to meaningful graduation, a key focus of the district's strategic plan.

b. Attendance Improvements

Post-pandemic attendance issues have seen improvements thanks to coordinated efforts across elementary and secondary schools. New practices include consistent tracking, communication thresholds, and a more positive and personal outreach. Attendance trends show improvement this fall across all schools, with significant progress at the secondary level. Initiatives such as enhancing school culture and simplifying timetables have also likely contributed to this positive trend.

c. Ministry Planning Day

On November 29th, school staff engaged in discussions to support their school plans during the Ministry Planning Day. The district recognized long-serving staff over meals sponsored by the Board of Education, an appreciated gesture. The afternoon featured guest speaker Carolyn Roberts, Indigenous speaker, author, educator and Assistant Professor in Teacher Education, who addressed Truth and Reconciliation and decolonization in education. Acknowledgment was given to the committees and departments that ensured the event's success.

d. Transportation Review

The ongoing Transportation Review will continue into the new year, aiming for improved efficiency. Recent improvements include online registration, electronic rosters, and reduced ride times. Challenges remain with two schools starting earlier than others, creating equity issues. Surveys focusing on these schools will explore solutions, including expanded morning programs, to support families before any changes are proposed to the Board.

e. Updates to Password Security Protocols

Staff were reminded to review and update their practices according to recent computer security protocol changes outlined by Lesley Rowan, Principal of IT Services. While such adjustments may be seen as inconvenient, they are necessary for system improvements and security, and patience was requested during this process.

f. Winter Activities and Inclusivity

Staff and community members were encouraged to attend winter concerts and events, with a reminder to maintain inclusivity in celebrations and communications. The district emphasized the importance of creating a welcoming environment for all, respecting diverse backgrounds and traditions, and fostering a sense of belonging.

g. Closing Acknowledgment

Superintendent Jory concluded by expressing gratitude for the hard work and enthusiasm of staff during December, wishing everyone a safe, restful, and enjoyable holiday season.

b. Educational Programs Update

Director of Instruction Terpstra shared the following:

- District assessments across the district have been completed. For the past two weeks, the Teaching and Learning team have been coordinating groups of teachers at each of the schools to look at their school results, discuss the assessments, what they see from the students, and plan actions. This also provides the basis in planning for professional development and the teachers' learning support in the system.
- Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) booklets have been returned to schools, and will be provided to the classroom teachers for review prior to the booklets being sent them home with students, either by the winter break with the Learning Updates or early in the new year.
- Learning Updates for elementary students are in the process of being distributed and parents/caregivers can expect to receive them by December 18th at the latest. Secondary learning updates had already been distributed in mid-November
- The French Advisory Committee met on Monday, December 9th. Mr. Terpstra then shared a slide showing the Federal Provincial Languages Funding, of which the Qualicum School District receives close to \$100,000. The slide also showed the comparison between the previous reporting categories and the new reporting categories, which provide districts with more flexibility as where to allocate those funds and budgets have been adapted accordingly. Another slide was then shared comparing enrolment in the French Immersion and Core French from last year to this year, noting that all Grade 5 to 8 students are required to take Core French. The District has worked hard on making its Immersion Program both a solid program focusing on learning and improvements in Numeracy and Literacy along with creating bilingual students at the end of the program, which has resulted in a gradual increase and stabilization of the program.
- As a result of all the student data gained, the district has continued to work with Carol Fullerton, who will be in the District in the new year, specifically at Errington Elementary School, where every teacher will attend a learning round for half a day of Numeracy focussed sessions. Secondary teachers will also be spending a day with Carol Fullerton, and a dinner series will be held in February for any teachers that want to attend.

Trustee Young added that she has been attending the *Engaging all Learners in the Middle Years* webinar series and found the sessions valuable and enjoyable.

Mr. Terpstra noted that the sessions are taped and the session held on December 3rd featured two district employees; Katie Marren, District Principal of Indigenous Education and Sarah Elson-Haugan, District Indigenous Support.

Associate Superintendent Wilson commented on the following events/initiatives:

- The PreVenture program is underway with all grade 8's. Screening has been completed and the working groups will be formed for after the winter break.
- The Integrated Child and Youth Team (ICY) is steadily being established. The clinical counsellor, who will be a Qualicum School District employee, has been hired and will start at the end of January and work with community partners to determine the referral process. Island Health is working on adding their team members that are funded and supported through Island Health.

- The Community Literacy Group, met on Thursday, December 5th and is working on submitting **some grant applications for the community to determine how they want** to provide support to the particular age group that the different organizations are working with.
- Ready, Set, Learn is revisiting a past concept that was “Mother Goose Goes to School”. An Early Childhood Educator (ECE) attends at elementary schools and hosts activities for preschoolers and their parents. This helps them both become familiar with the schools prior to attending for Kindergarten. First reports from elementary principals and vice-principals are that the initiative has been slow to start; however, it is anticipated that the program will gain momentum. Families can view the Oceanside Building Learning Together (OBLT) website to see the dates and locations the ECE will be visiting the schools and can choose which session to attend; it does not have to be the child’s catchment area school.

c. Three-Year Local School Calendar Process

Associate Superintendent Wilson reviewed the proposed three-year local school calendar for 2025/26 to 2027/28, which has resulted from discussions and collaboration with MATA and the Curriculum Implementation Advisory Committee (CIAC).

A survey on the proposed calendar will be shared with the school community, which will be open over the winter break, for feedback prior to a final draft being presented to the Board for approval. It is hoped to bring the calendar to the Board for approval at the January Regular Board Meeting based on the recommendations from senior management. Associate Superintendent Wilson advised that the calendar can be changed with any 30-day consultation and, while MATA has agreed to sharing the 3-year calendar, they would be supporting the 1-year calendar with the second two years included for information.

She then shared the types of questions that would be included in the survey and noted that there will be an additional question on the survey for False Bay School to determine whether that community wishes to consider a four-day school week, to accommodate travel on and off the island for shopping and appointments, etc.

13. FINANCE & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 20, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.

14. POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 20, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

15. EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 2:30 p.m.

16. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

None

17. TRUSTEE ITEMS

a. Response to Email

Trustee Young shared an email she had received regarding a brief comment she had made at the November meeting regarding the newly hired Registered Clinical Counsellor in the District [in reference to the one hired to the Integrated Child and Youth Team (ICY)]. The writer had noted that the excitement expressed rarely landed on the skilled trained counsellors within the school district, who are RCC, CC or both.

Trustee Young clarified that she meant no disrespect to any of the District's counsellors by her comment and has always supported all counsellors being properly certified. She further noted that this response has led her to believe that the role of counselors in the District is not well understood. Her understanding is that each of the district's counsellors in every school is properly trained and certified and that allows them to be in private practice and to be therapeutic counsellors; however, they choose to be in the school system and are committed to students.

Associate Superintendent Wilson added that the *BC Inclusive Education Services Manual* outlines that school counsellors are not to be 'clinical therapists' for students, rather they are 'school counsellors'. The Qualicum School District is fortunate that all of the counsellors currently hired are RCC or CC and they could, indeed, do as Trustee Young had stated. The Qualicum School District specifically asks for those qualifications in its postings and has been able to recruit and retain counsellors that have those qualifications. It was recognized that the District's counsellors do counselling work; however, schools are not therapeutic settings and school counsellors are not able to provide ongoing therapy for students.

18. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

19. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE AND MEDIA

None

20. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

None

21. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Austin moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Original signed copy on file

CHAIRPERSON

SECRETARY TREASURER