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QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025
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
Paisley Hendricks	Vice Principal, Kwalikum Secondary 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

An additional item was added under Business Arising: *Update on French Creek School Site.*

The recommendations regarding the proposed local and altered school calendars were deferred to the February Board Meeting to allow time for additional collaboration and discussion of the alternate school calendar with the Curriculum Implementation Advisory Committee (CIAC).

25-01R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Kurland

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Flynn brought attendees' attention to the two mandate letters under Ministry News Releases.

- a. Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes: December 10, 2024
- b. Ratification of In Camera Board Meeting Minutes: December 10, 2024
- c. Receipt of Ministry News Releases
 - Mandate Letter: Lisa Beare - Minister of Education and Child Care
 - Mandate Letter: Bowinn Ma – Minister of Infrastructure
- d. Receipt of Reports from Trustee Representatives
 - OBLT Early Years Table – Trustee Young

25-02R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Kurland

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 69 (Qualicum) approve the consent agenda items of the Regular Board Meeting of January 28, 2025, as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

None

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

None

7. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Secretary Treasurer Amos provided the background to the three properties which were closed as they were no longer required for educational purposes in 2014. This led to the rental of space at the three sites to outside organizations. Following discussions regarding facility condition indexes for all district sites, the French Creek site was closed to public tenancy as of July 2023. Further discussions occurred regarding the upkeep required at the other two sites which culminated in a Notice of Motion in May 2024 for the June 2024 Board meeting for the Board to consider closing those two sites effective June 30, 2025.

The Board had deferred the recommendation to the November 2024 Board Meeting and directed staff to advertise a public notice for community input as to the best use for each site, prior to making a final decision.

The public notices resulted in the Town of Qualicum Beach collaborating with the School District on a long term solution for the Qualicum Commons site. The Board then separated the motion in order to consider each site separately and those motions were deferred to the January 28th Board Meeting.

As the Town is currently in the process of doing its due diligence in determining the capital needs of the building and the potential revenue from the current tenants in anticipation of keeping the site open for the foreseeable future, the motion to close Qualicum Commons effective June 30, 2025 was not being considered at this time.

The decision before the Board would then be to consider the motion to close the Craig Street Commons.

a. Craig Street Commons Property

Trustees discussed the challenges surrounding the closure of the Commons properties, acknowledging community frustration but emphasizing the need for a thorough and fair process, which resulted in a longer decision making process. The Board expressed appreciation for the community's input and praised the "Save the Commons" group's proposal.

The Board has identified four key values for the properties: public asset, green space, community use, and freeing the Board from capital costs. It was noted that there is another interested party that may fulfill the Board's key values. While some trustees were open to giving an interested party more time to explore potential solutions, they acknowledged the financial and safety risks associated with extended delays. Several trustees noted the risks of keeping the properties open, including financial constraints and the deteriorating condition of the buildings. There was a consensus that the priority should be public education and supporting current students, with limited resources available to maintain non-educational facilities.

A proposed amendment to the recommendation to delay closure until January 1, 2026, was discussed, with some trustees advocating for this to allow more time for community input and tenant transition, while other trustees as well as senior staff expressed concerns about the long-term viability of the buildings and the financial constraints the district was currently facing. The conversation underscored the difficult balance between preserving community assets and addressing the financial realities of the education system.

25-03R

Moved: Trustee Austin *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) amend the following motion:

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) supports the closure of the Craig Street Commons to public and business use effective July 1, 2025,

to read:

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) support the closure of the Craig Street Commons to public and business use effective **January 1, 2026.**

CARRIED

25-04R

Moved: Trustee Young *Seconded:* Trustee Kellogg

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) support the closure of the Craig Street Commons to public and business use effective January 1, 2026.

CARRIED

b. Qualicum Commons Property Update

Secretary Treasurer Amos referenced the July Joint Statement between the Qualicum School District and the Town of Qualicum Beach indicating that the parties would be pursuing a longer term option regarding this site. Over the past few months, staff from both the Council and Board have been discussing a formal agreement for the Town to lease the building. Before finalizing any agreement, the Town will conduct a building inspection to assess the financial implications and risks of the lease. Town staff have also reached out to tenants to gauge their interest in remaining and their space requirements. This process is ongoing, and the Town is aware that if no agreement is reached, the Board may consider a motion to close the site by year-end. At the January Town Council meeting, Council expressed excitement about the site's potential and asked staff to engage with the Save the Commons Group to gather their input. Town staff will continue to evaluate the risks and financial aspects of leasing the site and report back to Council. Both parties remain hopeful that this will lead to a positive outcome for tenants and the Board of Education.

c. Update on French Creek School Site

Secretary Treasurer Amos reported there is a public entity interested in the French Creek site, which is also working through a potential agreement to bring to the Board for its consideration; however, nothing further to report until such time as details could be confirmed with both parties.

It was noted that any discussion of property is confidential in order to protect the parties involved and the Board would share any information as soon as it was able.

8. MOUNT ARROWSMITH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION (MATA)

Matt Woods, MATA President, reported on the following:

- MATA acknowledged the challenges trustees face in making difficult decisions and noted that they do not make those decisions frivolously.
- MATA appreciated the time the Board takes to listen and consider partner groups' input.
- MATA did not support educational monies being used to keep Qualicum Commons or Craig Street Commons open or operating. Monies are tight and should be directed to student enrolment and the teachers who need the resources to do the work expected of them.
- MATA appreciated the deferral of the calendar motions to the February meeting. It had appreciated the conversations and input from other members that had been provided regarding the regular calendar as was presented; however, they have not had the same opportunity to review the results of the survey for the alternate calendar for False Bay School. They look forward to having further conversation at the CIAC meeting.
- Clarification was provided regarding some of the dates on the calendars (i.e. provincial and local professional development days, conferencing adjustment days). These days are not 'days off' for teaching staff, rather opportunities for teachers to incorporate new learning, enhance instructional and assessment practices, and expand their own professional growth, all of which are important to the teachers and their profession. These days were bargained, at which time it was also agreed to extend the school year so as not to take away instructional time for students.
- MATA supported the idea in the Ministry Mandate letter of increasing counsellors and education assistants as it feels that concept will bring support to the education

as a whole; however, MATA hoped that extra funding would be provided for those initiatives and that the Board would not have to make difficult decisions with current operating funds. MATA is unsure as to how this Mandate will be implemented and looks forward to those details and future discussions.

- On the Capital side, MATA is as excited as it believes the rest of the partner groups in the District are to look at finalizing some plans for False Bay School.
- Mr. Woods ended his report by stating that funding for public education should not be taken for granted. If the public wants a strong education system that supports all citizens, we, the public need to continue to stand up for public education and the monies necessary to fund it.

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

No Report

10. DISTRICT PARENT COUNCIL (DPAC)

Ray Woroniak, DPAC President, reported on the following:

- A request for proposal model was drafted to assist DPAC in allocating funds which also included a score card with which to rate those proposals.
- Drafting of a communications plan between PACs.
- Approval of \$2000 for volunteer First Aid certificates.
- Discussion occurred regarding a need for increased communications amongst Parent Advisory Councils.
- Confirmation of DPAC's endorsement and advocacy of PRIDE values. A request was made to the Board to adopt PRIDE values as guiding principles, create a new policy to ensure PRIDE flags are flown at all schools (it was noted that DPAC's intent is for policy to dictate flying of PRIDE flags so that Principals are not being criticized if a school is or is not flying the PRIDE flag at their school), provide more professional development to staff to understand and implement PRIDE values effectively, and to ensure all district policies reflect the principles of ERASE. DPAC believes these requests support and assist in achieving the Strategic Plan goals for the District and urged the Board to implement policy prior to PRIDE month (June 2025).

Chair Flynn noted that there are a lot of platforms and policies where those initiatives are already being embedded in the District; however, the Board would consider what other steps and initiatives may need to be undertaken to continue to ensure the District is a safe, inclusive and proud district on PRIDE aspects.

11. ACTION ITEMS

None

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Jory reported on the following:

- Senior Staff are working in the current school year while also starting planning for the upcoming school year with Kindergarten registrations open, student projections and staffing plans underway, and budget conversations beginning. Superintendent Jory has visited each school for a school planning check-in to ensure everyone is ready for next conversation.

- This is a bargaining year, and conversations with MATA are underway with the CUPE conversations following in right behind.
- Secondary schools are into second semester starting today, so this school year is now officially half over.
- Regarding the calendar process and one of the challenging perceptions with the non-instructional days that school districts deal with, the Superintendent believed it would be timely, given the consideration being given to a 3-year calendar, to communicate to the broader community why and how non-instructional days are used to ensure teachers are receiving the learning they need so they can best meet the needs of their students and to share the MATA President's point that the calendar was expanded to absorb professional development days.
- With winter underway and forecast of snow in the coming weeks, staff and families will be reminded to review the inclement weather procedure.
- Further to last month's report where Superintendent Jory mentioned some encouraging trends in student attendance, there has been a slight uptick across all of the District's elementary schools and an even stronger uptick in the District's secondary school. More student-centered scheduling and personal phone calls home are being given credit for the improvements in attendance.
- The District is also beginning to see some positive trending in adult attendance, and with that, comes some small relief in replacement costs. The District is experiencing some illnesses across the district this month as it is cold and flu season; however, staff remain hopeful that the positive trends will continue and lead to more consistent learning environments, as well as a little less budgetary pressure.
- In the January Finance and Operations Committee of the Whole Meeting, Director of Operations, Phil Munro, provided some insight into the new HVAC management software and how that has the potential to reduce heating costs. Attendees also heard from Manager of Operations – Safety and Transportation, Brant Prunkl, regarding the new busing software and the implementation that has already helped reduce fuel and wage costs, as well as student ride times. Other efficiencies are also being sought out across the District, which has always been and will continue to be the case, as it attempts to put the very best possible educational experience in front of the District's students with the limited funding received.
- Further to the earlier comments and discussion regarding the Craig Street Property, Superintendent Jory noted that, while it can be challenging, those types of conversations and decisions are part of the necessary work the Board and Senior staff must do. He applauded everyone for making hard choices when they have to, including the one made this evening to close Craig Street Commons as of January 1, 2026.
- Last year at this time, Superintendent Joy had reported out on the Later Start Survey, which was shared prior to that Winter Break and netted nearly 2000 responses. He had mentioned some general trends in the data, and shared some anecdotes, as well as the sentiment that there was some interest in the schools that start earlier to consider starting later. The Board did reject a proposal to shift the entire system ahead, but had done so with the hope that improved use of the busing software could isolate the changes to the schools that would most benefit from a shift, while keeping the later starting schools starting no later than 9 am. He shared that the District is getting closer to clarity on this issue, and that a second survey will be going out for Nanoose Bay Elementary, Errington Elementary,

Ballenas Secondary, and Kwalikum Secondary families, as well as a second round of student focus group conversations about a possible 20-minute shift forward for those four schools, to help advise next steps, with that information coming back to the Board as soon as is practicable.

Representatives from the partner groups were encouraged to share that information to ensure all avenues of communication to families and staff who might be affected by the time shifts so they are well informed prior to a recommendation coming to the Board table. Staff and parents/caregivers were also encouraged to subscribe to Constant Contact through the district website so messaging reaches all families in the district, particularly those that may be affected by a time shift.

- The District's Indigenous Advisory Council has been formed and will be receiving Secretary Treasurer Amos and Superintendent Jory on February 10th to discuss the upcoming school district budget.
- The most recent round of secondary grad assessments has just completed, and anecdotal reports are saying that the students demonstrated a heightened level of confidence and determination this year, which bodes well for our seeing better results in an area that has been a concern for the District.

b. Educational Programs Update

Associate Superintendent Wilson commented on the following events/initiatives:

- Families with children starting Kindergarten in September were encouraged to register their child online before January 31st. This will assist with planning of classrooms and staffing. Also, those registered by January 31st can be part of the Pre-K program in the spring where K students attend 2 times per week for 6 weeks.
- Applications for Programs of choice (Kindergarten French Immersion, Primary Learning Community and Science, Technology, Robotics, Engineering and Math (STREAM) are open until Friday, January 31st.
- The timelines for Cross-Boundary applications has changed with the applications open now until March 13th after which they will remain closed until the fourth week of August. While the District does its best to honour requests it must also protect space for new students to the district's catchment areas.
- The clinical counsellor for the Integrated Child & Youth Team began work on Monday, January 27th.
- Complements to the Oceanside Building Learning Together (OBLT) Board and Sheila Morrison, District Principal of Early Learning and child Care, for the work they are doing around Early Learning. *Family Literacy Day* was held on Monday, January 27th at Storybook Village in Qualicum Beach, planning for *Pete the Cat – Early steps to Kindergarten* are also underway.
- In recognition of increased attendance, the Resiliency Grant applied for and awarded to the District has supported additional hours for Child & Youth Care Workers (CYCW) to do outreach to students who are struggling to get to school and Iain Hay, District Social Worker and the CYCW team were acknowledged for their efforts in that regard.

Director of Instruction Terpstra shared the following:

- The District hosted the following four learning events in January:
 - Two Numeracy Sessions with Carole Fullerton, one for Primary teachers and one for Intermediate teachers, were held on January 7th.
 - Learning from and Alongside the Local First Nations: Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Classrooms session was held on January 16th.
 - Denise Spencer-Dahl worked with the Provincial Outreach Program for Early Years (POPEY) to present a session for 30 primary teachers. The Province had committed \$30m to boost literacy and the District looks forward to how that is distributed in the next school year to provide additional supports to primary students.
- A Numeracy dinner series with Carole Fullerton will be held on February 13th.
- The CIAC struck a working group on Artificial Intelligence (AI) which was attended by 17 teachers and administrators working towards guidance around AI and themes and learning as well as considering some AI recommended applications and tools.

13. FINANCE & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

As provided in the agenda.

14. POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

a. Board Policy 506: Conduct of Coaches

25-05R

Moved: Trustee Flynn *Seconded:* Trustee Kellogg

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) accepts the recommendation of the Policy Committee that Board Policy 506: *Conduct of Coaches* has been reviewed and confirmed as written.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It was noted that a DRAFT *Qualicum School District Athletics Handbook*, that was shared with the committee, was being reviewed for additions/revisions and would be presented to the February Policy Committee meeting as a reference document to be added to the Administrative Procedures.

b. Board Bylaw 3: Meetings of the Board of Education

25-06R

Moved: Trustee Flynn *Seconded:* Trustee Kellogg

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Bylaw 3: *Board of Education*.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

c. Board Policy 500: Communicating Student Learning

25-07R

Moved: Trustee Flynn *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt Board Policy 500: *Communicating Student Learning*.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. Board Policy 502: Field Experiences (Trips)

Chair Flynn noted a comment by the Premier regarding a moratorium on travel to the United States which will be considered at a future policy meeting.

25-08R

Moved: Trustee Flynn *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 502: *Field Experiences (Trips)*.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Board Policy 504: Copyright and Intellectual Property

25-09R

Moved: Trustee Flynn *Seconded:* Trustee Kellogg

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 504: *Copyright and Intellectual Property*.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. Board Policy 507: Programs of Choice and Specialty Academies

25-10R

Moved: Trustee Flynn *Seconded:* Trustee Kellogg

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 507: *Programs of Choice and Specialty Academies*.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

g. Board Policy 606: Respectful Workplace

25-11R

Moved: Trustee Flynn *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 606: *Respectful Workplace*.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

15. EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

Trustee Young apologized for the oversight resulting in the recommendations regarding the calendars being deferred to the February board meeting as the False Bay School altered calendar still required consideration by the CIAC.

She noted that the next Education Committee meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, February 18th, which is open to the public, and encouraged any staff who may wish to make a presentation at the meeting to contact her or Associate Superintendent Wilson.

16. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

None

17. TRUSTEE ITEMS

None

18. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

19. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE AND MEDIA

None

20. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

None

21. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Kellogg moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Original signed copy on file

CHAIRPERSON

SECRETARY TREASURER