



**Qualicum School District  
Education Committee of the Whole Report  
Tuesday, May 21, 2024  
Via Video Conferencing  
10:30 a.m.**

**Facilitator: Trustee Julie Austin**

**Mandate:**

*To discuss and make recommendations to the Board on aspects of teaching, learning and educational equity. We will strive to have all students receive whatever they need to develop to their full academic and social potential and to thrive every day.*

## **SCHOOLS AND/OR PROGRAMS**

### **Planning for Each Student Learning and the Learning Support Handbook**

Tandy Gunn, District Principal of Learning Support, provided an overview of inclusive learning and equity in educational practices. The discussion revolves around the need for a common understanding of inclusion and equity, highlighted by a review conducted by Kyle Burke. The committee has developed an operational guide called "Planning Learning for Each Student," emphasizing a shift from planning for all students to planning for each student individually. This guide aims to operationalize the District's commitment to inclusion and continuous improvement.



**Key points include:**

- Emphasizing the importance of inclusion and equity in educational practices.
- Highlighting the link between assessment, literacy, and numeracy in fostering inclusive learning environments.
- Defining inclusion as ensuring each student feels welcomed and supported to participate fully in school life.
- Encouraging meaningful alignment in planning for all students, including those with individual education plans (IEPs).
- Acknowledging the need for flexible programming to accommodate diverse student needs.

Tandy discussed the distribution and utilization of the learning support handbook, which includes essential resources and guidance for staff members. While the content is primarily available on the District's staff portal, the handbook aims to streamline access to the most commonly referenced materials.

There is a consideration of how best to introduce and integrate the handbook into staff practices, including:

- Providing opportunities for staff to review the handbook during learning support meetings.
- Involving staff in the development process to ensure relevance and completeness.
- Incorporating the handbook into the onboarding process for new staff members.
- Ensuring existing staff members are aware of the handbook and its importance to the District's direction.
- Soliciting feedback from staff to identify additional needs and supports for furthering the work outlined in the handbook.

The goal is to ensure that staff members at all levels are equipped with the necessary resources and guidance to support inclusive learning practices effectively.

## Assessment and Communicating Student Learning Plan

Rudy Terpstra, Director of Instruction discussed the assessment and communicating student learning plan, emphasizing the importance of not overwhelming schools, principals, and teachers with multiple initiatives. Instead, the focus is on creating literate, numerate citizens by incorporating principles of inclusivity and student engagement. The plan aligns with the District's mission of embracing curiosity and joy for learning and integrates ongoing formative assessments, district assessments, and communication of student learning to support student engagement and achievement.

	Students will:	Educators will:	Tasks/Assessments will:	Leaders will:
To Belong and to Give	Each student is able to share their learning with others	Each educator will collaborate and share with others to create a safe space for learning and provide opportunities for sharing and interacting	Each task/assessment will contain elements of student interest/culture and are interactive, predictable, safe and allow for demonstration of learning without feeling judged	Each leader will create time and space for educators to learn, about, practice and collaborate on creating safe spaces and tasks/assessments
To Learn	Each student is able to choose different tools and strategies to access the learning and meet the goal	Each educator will make time to learn, practice, model, collaborate on, and teach a variety of tools and strategies relevant to individual needs	Each task/assessment will provide students with choice in how to access the learning and reach the goal	Each leader will make time to learn, practice, model and collaborate on a variety of tools and strategies
To Grow	Each student can articulate their learning goal, describe where they are at, as well as next steps	Each educator will design tasks based on formative assessment and co-creating criteria and steps	Each task/assessment will provide multiple access points and require reflection/feedback on where they are at and next steps	Each leader will provide opportunities and model assessment practices that lead planning and improved student learning

Key points include:

- Aligning assessment practices with the District's Strategic Plan, which emphasizes inclusivity, relevance, and flexibility.
- Recognizing the significance of assessments in informing teaching practices and promoting student growth.
- Incorporating indigenous perspectives and the principles of truth and reconciliation into assessment practices.
- Ensuring alignment between district-wide assessments, provincial assessments, and classroom assessments to support continuous improvement.
- Providing resources and guidance for teachers through a comprehensive guide linked to the planning for each student framework.

The focus is on providing teachers with practical guidance and resources to effectively implement assessment practices that support student learning and achievement.

These two presentations will be brought forward as recommendations for approval to the Regular Board Meeting on May 28.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

### Pride Month

Rudy discussed various initiatives and updates related to Pride Month within the school district including:

- Resource Sharing:** He shared a poster resource outlining the significance of Pride Month, emphasizing community, love, friendship, and the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ rights. Schools are encouraged to personalize this resource for their own use.
- District Sharing:** The District will release a statement to remind everyone of the significance of Pride Month. This statement may be displayed on banners on the website. Trustee Austin suggested having a banner in the newspaper acknowledging Pride month and one for Indigenous History month.
- Actions Taken:**  
Recent actions within the Qualicum School District include:
  - Both high schools now have two flagpoles to fly their pride flags.

- Change room retrofits with private stalls and showers, including gender-inclusive change rooms, are underway at Bolinas and KSS.
- A learning resources policy reflecting sensitivity to diversity and positive role portrayals, including LGBTQ+ issues, is coming to third reading.

**d. Events and Activities:**

High schools have numerous events planned throughout the month, while elementary schools will also participate with various activities to highlight Pride Month and promote acceptance and inclusivity.

Karri Kitazaki, President of DPAC, shared that in a recent DPAC meeting, attendees voted unanimously to allocate funds for benches at each of the schools, including two at the high schools. These benches will serve as pride ventures or inclusive representation benches, promoting inclusivity and diversity within the school community. They are currently collaborating with Phil Munro, Director of Operations and Maintenance, and the District to implement this initiative.

Overall, the District is actively working to promote inclusivity, respect, and acceptance for all members of the community, with specific initiatives tailored to support LGBTQ+ rights and visibility during Pride Month.

<https://www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/pride-month-2024/>

**National Indigenous History Month**

Each school will work with the Indigenous Education Department to include materials and activities supporting Indigenous History Month. The District will include this on their website banner and perhaps in the newspaper.

June is [National Indigenous History Month](#) and June 21<sup>st</sup> is [National Indigenous Peoples Day](#).

**SHARED LEARNING**

**Community of Practice – Student Engagement and Attendance**

Director of Instruction Terpstra reported that he had led a project with a team that included high school principals, counselors, administrators, and other staff members to address the issue of student engagement and attendance. They conducted interviews with students who had missed the most classes at the high schools, focusing on Indigenous students and those with mental health designations. Mark, one of the counselors, shared his experiences conducting these interviews, highlighting the diverse reasons behind students' lack of attendance, including negative past experiences, struggles with mental health, and competing priorities outside of school. The team aimed to understand these students' experiences deeply to develop strategies for improving their engagement.



**Equity Centered Question**

What is your team's equity challenge?

What are the experiences of Indigenous students and/or students with mental health designations that are contributing to a lack of attendance in schools/classrooms?

What did your team want to address?

How do we engage the students who are not attending ?

Katie Marren, District Principal of Indigenous Education Programs, emphasized the importance of listening to the most vulnerable students in the system to design interventions that would benefit more than just the interviewees. She noted that the interviews revealed unexpected themes, such as the significant role of mothers in students' lives and the importance of nurturing and care for their well-being. The team plans to share their findings with teachers, administrators, and students to develop collaborative strategies for improving student engagement and attendance. The team identified that students felt successful when they experienced care and nurturing, with many recalling feelings of success from their kindergarten experiences. Katie emphasized that kindergarten teachers' role in providing care, such as helping with basic tasks like tying shoes and opening snack packages, was crucial for students' well-being. The importance of care at home was also highlighted, particularly for students who faced challenges outside of school.

#### Empathy Interviews 10 students, 3 schools, 14 ?'s

1. What experiences felt good or successful at school?
2. Tell us about a time you experienced success or belonging in school.
3. Tell us about school and your experiences as a learner.
4. Is there an assignment or example of learning from school that you feel most proud of? If they identify something, ask if they have the artifact and if they would share it with us later.
5. We notice that you've missed a lot of school, can you tell us about this?
6. What classes do you go to and why?
7. Tell us about a time when you did attend more often? Why was that? What changed?
8. Who notices when you are not there?
9. Tell us about a time you experienced success or belonging in school.
10. Who do you live with?
11. Tell us about your family's relationship with school/education?
12. What are you interested in, good at or passionate about?
13. What can adults do to positively support your attendance? Teachers? Admin?
14. If there is one thing you could change about school, what would it be?

Director of Instruction Terpstra noted that some students had generational negative experiences with education, which impacted their engagement with school. The team recognized that students engaged in behaviors like vaping, using drugs, or skipping class to cope with anxiety and feelings of not belonging. Moving forward, the team plans to focus on creating environments where students feel a sense of belonging and care, addressing their diverse needs and understanding what care truly means to them. They aim to develop strategies to provide the kind of care that students seek out, fostering a supportive and nurturing atmosphere in schools.

#### Reflections

- What has your team learned through this process?
  - We've been reminded of the importance of care in schools. Many students spoke about the need to be cared for, either by their mothers or by the staff.
- How have you as individuals and a collective team grown?
  - We feel more aware. We've listened and not jumping to how do I fix it.
  - Connect the dots vs. collect the dots
- What impact has your work had on students/school?
  - Students felt like they were seen and heard. They were interested in sharing with us, but they are skeptical about the changes we can make.
- What are your hopes and dreams for the future of this work?
  - We hope and dream to create a space where students feel valued and a sense of care from the adults in the building. We want student voice to be reflected in their learning environments.

Superintendent Jory emphasized the need to challenge the default response of implementing more rules, supervision, and consequences when students exhibit avoiding behaviors like leaving the classroom. He acknowledged that this mindset is deeply ingrained due to past experiences and the historical approach of the education system. However, he highlighted that the data indicates this approach is not only ineffective but also counterproductive, as it pushes students further away from the classroom environment. He further emphasized the importance of blending expectations with kindness and nurturing to create a supportive atmosphere where students feel comfortable and confident. He stressed the need to find a balance between maintaining expectations and providing support to help students re-engage in the classroom effectively. This approach aims to maximize students' confidence and comfort levels, ultimately encouraging them to stay in class longer and actively participate in their education.

#### INFORMATION

**Coffee with Trustees** – Next one is Wednesday, June 5 at Bowser Elementary School at 2:45 p.m.

COFFEE WITH TRUSTEES SCHEDULE	
BOWSER ELEMENTARY	JUNE 5 @ 2:48

**Learning Grant Presentations** – Monday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 – 6:00 pm at Sunrise Ridge Resort

## ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION TO MOVE TO THE BOARD MEETING

**a. Planning Learning for Each Student Plan**

*Recommendation:*

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve the Planning Learning for Each Student Plan as presented.

**b. Assessment and Communicating Student Learning Plan**

*Recommendation:*

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve the Assessment and Communicating Student Learning Plan as presented.

## UPCOMING TOPICS

TBD

## NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 2:30 p.m. via Microsoft TEAMS