



Yath cisum
Always growing
Grandissons ensemble

QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024
6:00 PM
VIA VIDEO-CONFERENCING

ATTENDEES

Trustees

Eve Flynn	Chairperson
Julie Austin	Vice Chairperson
Carol Kellogg	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
Phil Munro	Director of Operations
Cindy Neufeld	Vice-Principal, Bowser Elementary School Qualicum District Principals and Vice Principals Association

Education Partners

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Flynn called the video-conferencing 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 (Nanoose) First Nations and she thanked them for allowing the Board to live, work, play and learn on this beautiful part of the province and for their stewardship of the land.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

24-18R

Moved: Trustee Kurland *Seconded:* Trustee Kellogg

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: January 23, 2024
- b. Ratification of In Camera Board Meeting Minutes: January 23, 2024
- c. Receipt of Ministry News Releases
 - BC launches concrete actions to keep kids safe, healthy
 - More families in BC benefiting from \$10-a-day child care

24-19R

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 February 27, 2024, as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

None

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

7. MOUNT ARROWSMITH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION (MATA)

Matt Woods, MATA President, commented on the following:

- Congratulations and welcome to Ewen Rycroft, newly elected President of CUPE Local 3570. Mr. Woods looks forward to collaborating and working with him to support and evaluate district initiatives as well as to build union capacity and advocacy for workers.
- In reference to the Provincial Budget released during the week of February 19th, Mr. Woods noted that, despite the large deficit projected, the government did not make cuts to important public services like public education. He then provided the following highlights and shortfalls of the recent budget release:
 - Although a specific teacher retention fund was not created to enhance retention of the current workforce and improve working conditions and supports for students, Government has committed \$968 million to keep up with growing enrollment, which will include more teachers.
 - \$4.2 Billion to build, renovate and seismically upgrade schools, and he expressed his hope that False Bay School would receive a part of that funding.
 - \$255 million for the Classroom Enhancement Fund, that includes special education teachers and school counsellors.
 - \$30.3 million for learning supports to support students with dyslexia and related learning differences in the K-12 system. He noted that while the \$285 million funding for the Classroom Enhancement Fund and learning supports seemed impressive at the Provincial level, at the local level it will be interesting to see if this funding will fully cover what the Qualicum School District actually spends on inclusive education.

Mr. Woods stated that, overall, the \$968 million in new spending on the K–12 system may sound like a lot, but it simply covers growing enrollment caused by population growth and existing collective agreement requirements. Bold action is needed to target teacher recruitment, retention, and training to make a dent in the shortage.

- Further to Superintendent Jory's reports on employee absenteeism at previous board meetings and the conversations/formal meetings administrators are engaged in with teachers regarding the number of sick days some teachers have taken over the course of a year, Mr. Woods noted that while these conversations are intended to provide support, it is often interpreted by teachers as disciplinary. As professionals, teachers put their students and their job first before themselves at the detriment to their own personal health. He assured the Board that when teachers book a sick day, that decision is not done in haste as it often takes more work to take the time to be healthy than to simply "make it through the day"; it is to improve their health so that they can be their best for students in their care. The MATA negotiated Collective Agreement provides time to be taken off for its members to get and stay healthy.

Mr. Woods stated that, unfortunately, the cost of sick time is an unfunded Collective Agreement liability and he suggested that school boards lobby the Ministry to fund that part of the Collective Agreement appropriately as, given society's health priorities, the current situation is incompatible to current practice. As the Union President, he will support members who are not feeling well by continuing to suggest that they stay home and do what is necessary to get well.

- He then recognized the hard work of Julie Cloutier and the Pro-D Committee in organizing the March 1st Professional Development Day. They have organized a great list of presenters that included local teachers as seminar leaders.

8. **CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (CUPE) LOCAL 3570**

Ewen Rycroft, CUPE Local 3570 President, thanked all staff and trustees for their hard work and advised that he would have report prepared for the next Board meeting.

9. **DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (DPAC)**

Carol Kellogg, Trustee, provided the following report on behalf of DPAC as provided by Kari Kitazaki, DPAC President, who was unable to attend:

- DPAC has been focusing on 'Back to Basics' with its PACs to remind them that fundraising and the pressure felt to raise money, which can often become overwhelming, is not a key role of Parent Advisory Councils. The main roles were then shared with the focus being on supporting and celebrating children's learning journey.
- DPAC Executives toured the Winchelsea Learning Centre to visit the various district services located in that building. They also met with the Principal of Indigenous Education, Katie Marren, who was invited to the January DPAC meeting to share some of that department's initiatives.
- *Coffee and Chat* has been identified as a productive and informal way to connect community and, to date, the DPAC executive has held a *Coffee and Chat* with the PASS/CEAP and the Nanoose Bay Elementary School PAC Reps to discuss a variety of district related topics.
- Congratulations were extended to Ewen Rycroft, newly elected President of CUPE Local 3570, who was also welcomed as an attendee to the monthly DPAC meetings.
- DPAC is still considering the best use of its Gaming Grant and details on speakers and events will be shared once those decision have been made.
- There will be no DPAC meeting in March with the next one scheduled for Wednesday, April 17th via Zoom.

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

None

11. ACTION ITEMS

None

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

Superintendent Jory reported on the following:

- The school year is generally progressing positively, with various achievements highlighted in committee reports. However, there is a concern regarding attendance. On a number of occasions, the Superintendent had previously mentioned staff absenteeism, to comment not only on how the district was doing in regard to service delivery, but also in regard to budget pressures. Student absenteeism is still an issue across the system with typical attendance rates dropping from around ninety percent per day pre-COVID to the mid-eighties percentile currently. It was noted that this issue has also been observed globally.

While families had learned during the pandemic that their child staying home did not have immediate consequences, the effects on low or non-attendance will eventually show themselves in subtle and hard to identify ways. The district will be aiming to address this by implementing localized strategies focussed on reconnecting, community development, mental health improvement, and comprehensive student support, which aligns with the district's strategic plan. Additionally, there is a recognition of the need for consistent communication from schools, and efforts are underway to enhance information sharing using tools like EdPlan Insight to better understand and address absenteeism.

- Further to the ongoing discussion about implementing later school start times, he referred to the recent survey feedback already shared, and noted that recent insights from Ballenas Secondary's Student Voice discussion on start times have been shared with the Board. It was his belief that a later start could positively impact sleep patterns, mental health, and attendance. However, the complexities associated with adjusting the busing system was acknowledged, making specific changes challenging. The Transportation Department has digitized applications, advanced registration to the spring, and is introducing a texting system for real-time updates. There are plans to make minor bell time adjustments for three schools this April and the introduction of a swipe card system in the fall for improved data on ridership. A comprehensive review of the transportation system in the fall of 2024 was then proposed in order to gather information for developing new routes and procedures, aiming for a more effective and efficient service model.

Superintendent Jory suggested an incremental approach to the later school start time conversation. Should the district be able to move three schools start times forward by five minutes after spring break, then he may seek the Board's support for a district-wide adjustment of start times for September 2024. This aims to address concerns raised in surveys and focus groups. Following this, the plan is to evaluate the impact of using the transportation software and consider more specific changes for earlier

starting schools in September 2025. The complexity of the topic was acknowledged and Superintendent Jory promised further updates.

- Superintendent Jory then spoke to the recent announcement by Premier Eby regarding placing restrictions on cell phone use in the classrooms, to which the system has responded accordingly. Locally, draft language in a policy and administrative procedure was enhanced, offering more specific guidance to schools on their codes of conduct. A new section was also added to the district code of conduct template through the review process last year. Principals were informed about including the language in their next versions during annual consultation processes, which will later be summarized and shared with the Board.

Despite cell phones having minimal presence in most of the district's schools, these changes provide an opportunity to scrutinize practices, empower staff to make necessary changes, and promote additional learning opportunities for both staff and students. Also of interest was the legislation being considered by government that could potentially hold companies more accountable for the negative outcomes of technology. However, in the interim, the focus is on addressing the issue locally and supporting students for better outcomes.

b. Educational Programs Update

Rudy Terpstra, Director of Instruction, reported on the following:

- Qualicum School District hosted the Island Leadership Coalition on Friday, February 23rd. The Coalition is sponsored by the BC School Superintendents' Island Chapter and hosts teachers from across the island who are interested in learning about formal leadership.
- On February 26th, Qualicum School District hosted 50 teachers from Cowichan, Comox Valley and Nanaimo school districts for Learning Rounds, one of a three-part series lead by Qualicum School District teachers to share learning strategies they are using. He expressed appreciation to the students who participates while teachers observed their colleagues teaching practices.
- There will be three out of country student field experiences to Europe during spring break 2024. Student representatives from each of those trips will make a presentation to the Education Committee regarding their experiences during their travels.
- Kindergarten to Grade 7 Learning Updates will be provided to parents/caregivers by no later than spring break.

Gillian Wilson, Associate Superintendent, reported on the following:

- Kindergarten registration continues which assists with staff and classroom planning for the 2024/2025 school year.
- Cross Boundary applications deadline will close just prior to spring break and staff will determine which applicants are approved in a first round of deliberations.
- Associate Superintendent Wilson has had the opportunity to review some of the professional development day offerings and echoed the MATA Presidents comments that the Pro-D Committee has organized some strong and eclectic presenters for its workshops and courses.

- The Qualicum School District is unique in the province as it does not have any recruitment concerns at the moment with five new Teachers on Call hired within the last week with applications regularly being submitted.
- The Curriculum Implementation Advisory Committee met earlier in February to confirm how the members do their work together and what topics need to come to that particular committee. Cale Birk was back in the district in early February to work with the school principals and vice-principals around their school plans, and with the Needs Response Teams (NRTs) with district support through release time for teachers so they could do that collaboration. Mr. Birk guided the group on how to set norms, how to have productive conversations, and how to identify what the observable impacts are on the teachers and the students.
- Student Learning Surveys are beginning, which was a topic of discussion at the recent Island Leadership Coalition as to what districts would do with that data.

13. FINANCE & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

Trustee Young referred to the notes in the agenda package as well as the briefing note provided by the Secretary Treasurer that laid out the rationale to the motion regarding a \$25 registration fee for bus passes.

a. Transportation Registration Fee

Secretary Treasurer Amos reviewed the information provided in the briefing note as to the rationale for a registration fee to confirm ridership of those who ride the bus on a regular basis and allow the routes to be planned more accordingly to actual use, which will result in a more efficient system that better serves the school community.

Trustees considered Trustee Austin's preference to first determine how the new transportation software works for a year and generate data to parents on how much the bus passes are used, rather than downloading costs to families. She held the view that a registration fee would not necessarily deter parents who could more readily afford it from purchasing a bus pass that might only be rarely used.

24-20R

Moved: Trustee Young *Seconded:* Trustee Kellogg

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) support the staff recommendation to implement a transportation registration fee of \$25 for eligible and courtesy riders to coincide with the bus pass application process.

CARRIED

Trustee Austin voted against the motion

14. POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

a. Board Policy 103: School and District Branding

24-21R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 103: *School and District Branding* at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It was then shared that the administrative procedure to Board Policy 103 (previously named New/Repurposed Facilities) was not serving a purpose and would be redundant since the policy language is in the process of being revised.

24-22R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Austin

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) rescind the Administrative Procedures to Board Policy 103: *New/Repurposed Facilities* at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

b. Board Policy 510: Learning Resources**24-23R**

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Kurland

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt Board Policy 510: *Learning Resources* at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

c. Board Policy 700: Safe, Caring and Inclusive School Communities**24-24R**

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Austin

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 700: *Safe, Caring and Inclusive School Communities* at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

d. Board Policy 705: Corporate/Community Sponsorships, Partnerships and Advertising in Schools**24-25R**

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Austin

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve first reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 705: *Corporate/Community Sponsorships, Partnerships and Advertising in Schools* at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

e. Board Policy 100: Sustainable Practices**24-26R**

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Austin

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve third and final reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 100: *Sustainable Practices* and its attendant Administrative Procedures at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

f. Board Policy 105: Use of School Facilities

24-27R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Kurland

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve third and final reading to adopt the revisions to Board Policy 105: *Use of School Facilities* and its attendant Administrative Procedures at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

24-28R

Moved: Trustee Kellogg *Seconded:* Trustee Young

THAT the Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) approve third and final reading to adopt the revisions to Board Bylaw 3: *Meetings of the Board of Education* at its Regular Board Meeting of February 27, 2024.

CARRIED

Trustee Austin abstained from voting

15. EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

Trustee Austin referred to her report as provided in the agenda package and highlighted the upcoming Kwilikum Secondary Student Council's 2nd Climate Action Symposium, which will be held in April.

16. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

None

17. TRUSTEE ITEMS

a. Ministry Partner Liaison Meeting Update

Chair Flynn advised that she had attended the Partner Liaison Meeting on February 9th for Board Chairs to hear what initiatives are coming from the Ministry of Education and Child Care. Attendees received information on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) which measures 15-year-old students knowledge and skills in the areas of reading, mathematics and science. Numeracy was the declining factor in the PISA report. The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning continues to evolve with supporting student success being more of an introspective look at how students are doing in general following the pandemic. The Ministry is beginning to address the increased use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with the creation of four modules: one for Boards and education leaders, one for teachers, one for parents/caregivers and one for students. The Ministry's anticipated release for the modules is as soon as March.

Secretary Treasurer Amos added that his 'take-away' from the meeting was that AI is not something to be afraid of, it will not provide answers to all questions, and people have to learn how best to use it and understand what applications it can best support.

b. French Advisory Council Report

Chair Flynn provided updates on the following topics from the French Advisory Council meeting held on February 26th:

- Kindergarten French Immersion enrolment is solid with a potential two classes.
- The École Oceanside Elementary School's *Carnaval de Quebec* was a success with both French and English classes participating in games and activities that showcased the French culture. Grade 10 students from Ballenas were also on hand to help with some of the stations. Feedback was positive from students, parents and staff, especially with having the English classes included.
- Ballenas Secondary School is now able to offer Science in French to the secondary French Immersion Students.
- The District continues to obtain Federal funding grants for teacher support and Lynn Bouchard has, again, been on site to provide support to elementary and secondary French Immersion teachers.
- Overall, work in Numeracy is gaining strength in French assessment
- The Transition from elementary to secondary French Immersion will be a focus.
- The French Advisory Council is strong this year under the stewardship of Rudy Terpstra, Director of Instruction, and members are excited about many initiatives, including workshops and professional development offerings for teachers.

18. NEW OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

19. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE AND MEDIA

None

20. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

Association Superintendent Wilson answered a question regarding the rationale for parents/caregivers providing copies of proof of residency. Following the recent Learning Services Audit, a direction by the audit committee was that schools not only confirm residency by seeing proof and checking a box on the registration form but to obtain an actual copy. If audited in future, this would prove that the student is permitted to live in BC and attend public school.

Superintendent Jory added that the District must err on the side of having the most robust evidence of residency so that the District does not have a significant correction to its funding. He thanked the parents for their cooperation and apologized for any inconvenience.

21. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Kellogg moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Original signed copy on file

CHAIRPERSON

SECRETARY TREASURER