



MINUTES BOARD OF EDUCATION PUBLIC MEETING

May 26, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.

TRUSTEES: Amanda Dowhy, Board Chair
Trudy Spiller (online via MS Teams)

Christine Lervold, Vice Chair

STAFF: Paul Block, Superintendent
Brian Jonker, Secretary Treasurer
Monica Braniff, Deputy Superintendent
D'Arcy Deacon, Associate Superintendent
Lisa Leclerc, Associate Superintendent
Fred Hibbs, Executive Director, Human Resources
Steve Tonnesen, Manager, Information Technology - Operations

REGRETS: Cendra Beaton
Russ Chipps

SECRETARY: Jenny Seal

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATIONS TERRITORIES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Board Chair who acknowledged the territories of the First Nations.

2. AGENDA

2.1 Call for amendments and additional items

The Chair reviewed decorum as per Robert's Rules of Order and called for amendments to the agenda. Trustees attending online were asked to type in the chat if they wish to participate in discussion. The Chair reviewed the Q&A function in preparation for question period.

115. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting agenda of May 26, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED

2.2 Report on In Camera Meeting – Amanda Dowhy

This notice is to inform the public that prior to this meeting an “in-camera” meeting of the Board was held where issues of legal, land and personnel were discussed.



3. MINUTES

3.1 Call for amendments to minutes

The minutes from the Public Board meeting of April 28, 2026 and the Education Committee of the Whole meeting of May 19, 2026 were adopted by unanimous consent.

4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 Board Chair Update – Amanda Dowhy

The Chair recognized the passing of Councillor Lillian Szpak and extended condolences to her family.

Graduation season began with the Indigenous student graduation celebrating the accomplishments of over 130 graduates.

The Sooke Principals’/Vice Principals’ Association, the Sooke Teachers’ Association and the Sooke Parents Education Advisory Council all held their AGMs, and the Board Chair congratulated outgoing and incoming executives.

The opening of the Little River crossing in Sooke took place on May 15th. Sooke Elder Jackie was in attendance along with grade 4 and 5 students who led the initial crossing.

5. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

There were no educational presentations.

6. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL

6.1 Indigenous Education Council Update – Michelle Thut

The last meeting of the IEC was held May 5, 2026. Michelle Thut was selected as Chair and Jessica Kisby as co-chair. The IEC budget and targeted funding was discussed and approved by IEC council. The grade 8 and 12 gathering of Indigenous students at Camp Thunderbird was well attended, bringing together over 130 students from 6 school districts.

7. CORRESPONDENCE & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence – Amanda Dowhy

- a. BC Ombudsperson Quarterly Report October 1 – December 31, 2025
- b. Email from Sebastien B. Dated April 30, 2026 RE Proposal for Counsellor Supervision

The above noted correspondence was received by the Board.



7.2 Standing Delegations (STA, CUPE, PVP, SPEAC) – 5 minutes each

SPVPA – Tammy DeLeenheer and Mandi Becking

A slideshow was presented celebrating the many ways staff, students, families and communities come together to support one another.

CUPE 459 – Amber Leonard, STA – Rita Zeni, SPEAC Tom Davis

The CUPE 459 President read UNDRIP Article 13. SPEAC President and STA President joined the CUPE President to present a joint message to the Board about the importance of early childhood learning support provided by ECEs and urged the Board to advocate for more funding from the Province.

7.3 Other Delegations – 5 minutes each

There were no other delegations.

8. FINANCE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

8.1 Education Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 19, 2026 – Christine Lervold

The Committee Chair provided a summary of the ECOW meeting. Administrative cuts were included in the proposed budget to address the 2.2M deficit. Due diligence was practiced, and sustainability was a focus. \$1.3 M in corporate services savings has offset some of the deficit.

The ECE program was initiated in 2011 and began as partnerships through the Nature K program and over a time of enrolment growth, it evolved. In 2018, 8 ECEs were onboarded. There are currently 11 ECEs serving the District. ECEs may choose to move into an EA position.

116. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give first and second readings of the 2026/27 Annual Budget Bylaw, specifying a total of \$245,935,907.
CARRIED

117. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Education Committee of the Whole (ECOW) meeting of May 19, 2026.
CARRIED

8.2 Resources Committee Meeting of May, 2025 – Christine Lervold

The Committee Chair provided an overview of the Resources Committee meeting.



118. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the Quarter 3 Financial Forecast Report as presented at the Resources Committee meeting of May 12, 2026.
CARRIED

119. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve 2027/28 Five Year Capital Plan submission as presented to the Resources Committee on May 12, 2026.
CARRIED

120. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Resources Committee Meeting of May 12, 2026.
CARRIED

9. EDUCATION PROGRAM

9.1 Education-Policy Committee Meeting of May 5, 2026 – Christine Lervold
The Acting Committee Chair reviewed the items discussed at the Education-Policy meeting.

121. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) accept and endorse the 2026/27 School Codes of Conduct.
CARRIED

122. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Education-Policy Committee Meeting of May 5, 2026.
CARRIED

A correction to the May 5th Education-Policy report flagged that Tom Miller should say Tom Davis.

9.2 Adoption of Draft Revised Policy C-329 – Paul Block

123. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
Given that the required period for Notice of Motion has been served, that the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) ADOPT Draft revised Policy and Regulations C-329, “Field Trips”.
CARRIED



10. STUDENTS

10.1 Superintendent's Report – Paul Block

The highlights from the Superintendent's report were shared. There is \$8000 in funding available to assist students with expenses related to participation in sports tournaments. Donations are accepted at any school or by contacting the District's Finance Department.

11. FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

11.1 Trustee Liaison Reports – Board of Education

On June 2nd the Victoria Youth Family Court is having an open house.

11.2 Trustee Elections and By-Elections Bylaw – Brian Jonker

Boards are legally required to pass an election bylaw leading up to the trustee election on October 17, 2026.

124. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) allow all three readings of the School Trustee Elections and By-Elections Bylaw No. 1-26 at its meeting of May 26, 2026.

CARRIED (UNANIMOUSLY)

125. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give first, second and third readings of the School Trustee Elections and By-Elections Bylaw No. 1-26.

CARRIED

11.3 Governance Committee Meeting of April 13, 2026 – Amanda Dowhy

Connection issues resulted in lack of quorum when this motion was read at the April 28, 2026 meeting necessitating a repeat of this motion.

126. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the revised policy A-500, "Policy Development" as presented at the Governance Committee meeting of April 13, 2026.

CARRIED

12. ADMINISTRATION

12.1 Board of Education Work Plan – Amanda Dowhy

The Chair provided a summary of the work plan.

13. PERSONNEL

There were no personnel items discussed.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

- District Long Service & Retirement Recognition – May 27
- SPEAC Summit – May 27
- Anti-Racism Awareness Week – May 26 to June 1
- National AccessAbility Week – May 31 – June 6
- Education-Policy Committee Meeting – June 2
- Victoria Family Youth Justice Committee Open House – June 2
- Resources Committee Meeting – June 9
- Audit Committee Meeting – June 16
- National Indigenous Peoples Day Gathering – June 19 (at Royal Roads University)
- National Indigenous Peoples Day – June 21
- Next Public Board Meeting – June 23
- Last Day of School – June 25

15. RISE AND REPORT

The Chair noted the district is working towards a MoU with Pacheedaht First Nation to advance the seismic replacement of Port Renfrew Elementary.

16. QUESTION PERIOD

Members of the public had the opportunity to ask questions related to agenda items discussed at tonight's meeting. There were four questions:

1. How have you ensured that making cuts to ECEs won't endanger the wellbeing of neuro-divergent students and the mental health and well-being of teachers? Is there any research or statistics?

Staff referenced the [Early Learning and Childcare Report.pdf](#).

2. The STA report 19 classrooms being served by ECEs, but Associate Superintendent Lisa Leclerc reported 16. Why are these numbers different?

Associate Superintendent Lisa Leclerc confirmed there are 16 ECE partnerships, based on expressions of interest received.

3. Can this district be the lasting change for other districts to follow? Where else can this money be found?

School District 62 has been the leader across the Province for the last 8 years, in the hopes that permanent funding would come from the Ministry. No other districts have been able to operationalize an ECE program without funding. \$1.3 M in administrative cuts are being recommended.



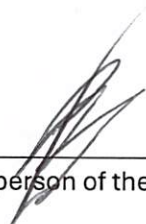
4. Has there been any consideration given to carry the deficit forward to allow more time for re-evaluation?

Yes, that option has been one of the options considered however, the district is not legally allowed to pass a budget with a deficit.


17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Certified Correct:



Chairperson of the Board



Secretary Treasurer