

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
November 30, 2022

NEW BOARD OF EDUCATION IS OFF TO A BUSY START

LANGFORD, BC – The Sooke School District Board of Education held its first public board meeting since the swearing in ceremony on November 1. The new Board had a busy agenda with approving several field trip applications, hearing from partner groups and setting its sights on supporting students and staff.

Trustee Allison Watson brought forth a motion for the Board to publicly reaffirm its support for the use of classroom materials that destigmatizes and normalizes conversations around gender identity and sexual orientation, including [SOGI 1 2 3](#) resources. Trustee Watson also recommended that the Board engage in gender diversity training and capacity-building to adapt inclusive practices and language as a form of professional development for all Trustees. Both motions passed unanimously.

“I heard from many families who were impacted by the hurtful rhetoric around gender identity during the election period and our Board felt it was imperative to publicly reaffirm our commitment to creating safe, accessible and inclusive learning environments for all students and staff,” said Trustee Watson. “We want our families to know that we stand with them and we will continue to work to ensure all students, families and staff feel safe, that they belong and are valued in our district.”

Turning the focus to staff, Board Chair Ravi Parmar proposed the creation of a one-time staff affordability fund. The motion was passed unanimously by the Board of Education and directed the Superintendent to create a one-time \$25,000 staff affordability fund to help staff members struggling with the rising costs due to global inflation.

“Life is becoming more expensive for people and I’m hearing that directly from SD62 staff who I meet in schools, worksites and in the community,” said Ravi Parmar, Chair of the Sooke School District Board of Education. “Our Board recognizes the financial challenges many are facing due to global inflation. The new staff affordability fund is a resource we can use to offer immediate support to staff who may need a helping hand.”

The staff affordability fund will be modelled on the student and family affordability fund created by the province at the beginning of the school year. The details of the staff affordability fund will be worked out over the next few weeks with the intention of staff having the ability to access the fund before the December break.

Associate Superintendent David Strange and the Safe and Healthy Schools Department worked on the creation of a delivery model for the [province’s student and family affordability fund for the district](#).



“The success of the student and family affordability fund for our district has really come from a multitiered approach that offers assistance in a flexible, private and stigma-free manner,” said David Strange. “We hope to action the staff affordability fund in a similar manner that ensures that those most in need are supported.”

-30-

For more information, contact:

Kristen McGillivray (250) 686-3750
Manager of Strategic Communications

