



## COMMITTEE REPORT OF THE EDUCATION-POLICY COMMITTEE

School Board Office  
January 11, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.

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- Present: Allison Watson, Trustee (Committee Chair)  
Cendra Beaton, Trustee (Committee Member)  
Trudy Spiller, Trustee  
Rita Zeni, STA  
Dana Savage and Tim Hamblin, CUPE  
Georgette Walker, SPVPA  
Paul Block, Superintendent/CEO  
Dave Strange, Associate Superintendent
- Guests: Wayne Kelly, Heather Lait, Denise Wehner, Frances Krusekopf, Kendra Laidlaw
- Regrets: Trustee Russ Chipps (Committee Member), D’Arcy Deacon, Associate Superintendent; SPEAC

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FIRST NATIONS TERRITORIES**

*We are honoured to be meeting on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish, specifically Esquimalt Nation, Songhees Nation, and acknowledge the three nations SD62 works with directly in our schools: Sc’ianew Nation, and T’Sou-ke Nation; including the West Coast Pacheedaht Nation, Nuu-chah-nulth. (words gifted by the three nations SD62 works with)*

2. **Opening Remarks from Chair, Allison Watson**

The Chair welcomed representatives from the partner groups and spoke to upcoming changes to Trustee representation on the committee. The Chair informed the group that she is stepping down as Chair and the new Chair will be Trustee Beaton. The Chair expressed gratitude for being part of the committee and expressed excitement for the committee continuing its work under new leadership.

3. **COMMITTEE REPORT** of Dec. 5, 2023 Education-Policy Committee meeting

The committee report for the Dec. 5, 2023 Education-Policy Committee meeting was received by the committee. No errors or omissions were noted.

4. **BAA COURSE PROPOSALS**

There are no BAA course proposals for this meeting.

5. **REVIEW OF POLICIES/REGULATIONS**

- a. Draft Revised Policy F-302 “Use of School Facilities for Child Care Programs” – Dave Strange  
Frances Krusekopf, District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care, provided background information on the district’s work related to childcare and the rationale behind reviewing and revising

the current policy. The revised policy was briefly spoken to and committee members engaged in conversation and posed questions to Ms. Krusekopf and Mr. Strange.

The discussion shifted to questions about new builds, in particular the proposed new build at Hans Helgesen Elementary. The Chair and Superintendent will confer as to the need for a separate presentation to the Education-Policy Committee or Resources Committee.

**Recommended Motion**

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give Notice of Motion to draft revised Policy F-302 “Use of School Facilities for Child Care Programs”.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Middle School Lacrosse Academy - Wayne Kelly

District Principal of Academies, Wayne Kelly, presented a proposal to establish a Middle School Lacrosse Academy. This included some historical background as well as current context. The Academy will be a District Academy providing opportunities for students from all middle schools to participate. Committee members engaged in conversation and posed questions to Mr. Kelly.

**Recommended Motion**

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the SD62 Middle School Lacrosse Academy as a District Academy to begin in April 2024.

b. Elementary Blended Learning Program – Heather Lait & Elementary PVP Committee rep. Kendra Laidlaw  
District Principal of Online Learning and Continuing Education, Heather Lait, presented a proposal to establish a new Elementary Blended Learning Program. This included some historical background related to blended learning programs in the district at the middle school level as well as current context and need at the elementary level. The presentation also presented potential program content and schedules. Committee members engaged in conversation and posed questions to Ms. Lait.

**Recommended Motion**

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) accept and endorse the Elementary Blended Learning Program as presented to the Education-Policy Committee meeting.

c. Late French Immersion (LFI) Consultation in the Milnes Landing Zone – Denise Wehner  
District Principal of Curriculum Transformation, Denise Wehner, presented an update on planned work to launch a consultation process exploring the implementation of Late French Immersion in the Milne’s Landing zone. This included some historical background related to Late French Immersion in the district. Committee members engaged in conversation and posed questions to Ms. Wehner.

7. **FOR INFORMATION**

a. Research Project Approval – Leblanc, Ella – “Effective Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies”

8. **FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

9. **ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING DATE:** Feb. 6, 2024

POLICY AND REGULATIONS ADOPTION

School District #62 (Sooke)

January 23, 2024

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Draft revised Policy F-302 "Use of School Facilities for Child Care Programs" is now ready for Notice of Motion.

**NOTICE OF MOTION:**

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) give Notice of Motion to draft revised Policy "Use of School Facilities for Child Care Programs".

<b>USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR CHILD CARE PROGRAMS</b>	No.: F-302
	Effective: Jan. 26/16 Revised: Reviewed: Dec. 1/15; Dec. 8/15; Jan. 26/16; June 1/21; June 22/21; Sept. 28/21; Jan. 11/24; Jan. 23/24

## SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

**The District recognizes the importance of access to affordable, quality child care on school grounds because positive opportunities for children ages birth to five years impact the success of students from Kindergarten to Grade 12.**

Consistent with sections 85.1, ~~85.2, 85.3~~ and **to 85.4** of the *School Act* and **Ministerial Order 326/20 – the Child Care Order**, this policy provides guidance with respect to how the Board will promote the use of Board property for the provision of child care programs, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. on business days, by either the Board or third-party licensees. **Use shall be subject to the details outlined below.**

~~Quality, accessible and affordable child care provides significant social and economic benefit for the community. Research shows that quality child care has a direct relationship to school readiness, literacy development, poverty reduction, and community engagement. While the funding and regulation of licensed child care is primarily a provincial government responsibility, the District, along with community stakeholders, can play an important role in planning, developing and coordinating child care in the Sooke School District.~~

~~The District supports non-profit societies and/or associations in delivering quality, accessible and affordable child care within District facilities and grounds, and provides the authority for the District itself to provide child care services.~~

~~The use of Board property by licensed child care providers must not disrupt or otherwise interfere with the provision of educational activities, including early learning programs and extracurricular school activities.~~

### **1. Procedures:**

#### **1. Assessment of Community Need for Child Care:**

- ~~1.1.~~ **1.1** The Board will, on an ongoing basis, assess community need for child care programs on Board property, through a process of engagement with employee groups (~~Sooke Teachers' Association [STA], Canadian Union of Public Employees #459 [CUPE]~~), parents and guardians **and caregivers** (~~Sooke Parent Education Advisory Council [SPEAC]~~), Indigenous community representatives, Indigenous rightsholders, Indigenous service providers (~~Aboriginal Education Council~~), **municipalities, community partners**, and existing child care operators. The process for engagement will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

- 1.2. **1.2** If child care programs are to be provided on Board property, the Board will consider, on an ongoing basis, whether those programs are best provided by licensees other than the Board, the Board, or a combination of both.

## **2. Hours of Operation:**

- 1.3. **2.1** The hours of operation will be between 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday, throughout the school year.
- 1.4. **2.2** If the child care services will operate outside of the school calendar, the Superintendent of Schools, or designate, will review feasibility with the Director of Facilities and School-based Administrators prior to approval.

## **3. Program Fees:**

- 1.5. **3.1** Child care programs, if operated by the Board, will be operated for a fee no greater than the direct costs the Board incurs in providing the child care program.
- ~~1.6.~~ **3.2** Fees for the use of Board property by licensees other than the Board will not exceed the direct and indirect costs the Board incurs in making Board property available for the child care program. ~~All child care contracts must bear all costs associated with the delivery of the program. The School District will not subsidize any community use of the facility or sites from instructional resources.~~

### **~~1.1.3.3~~ "Direct and indirect costs" could include, but are not limited to:**

**3.3.1 Utilities;**

**3.3.2 Maintenance and repair;**

**3.3.3 A reasonable allowance for the cost of providing custodial services;**

**3.3.4 A reasonable allowance for the time that school district administrators and other staff spend on matters relating to the use of board property by licensed child care providers.**

- ~~1.2.~~ **3.4** If child care programs are operated by a licensee other than the Board, the Board will require the licensee to agree to comply with this Policy.

## **4.0 Application Process & Licensee Contracts:**

- ~~1.3.~~ **4.1** In selecting licensees other than the Board to operate a child care program, the Board will give special consideration to the candidates' proposals to: (a) provide inclusive child care; ~~and~~, (b) foster Indigenous reconciliation in child care, **(c) maintain a program philosophy and management concept that aligns with our child care policy and our Strategic Plan, (d) implement the goals of the B.C. Early Learning Framework, and (e) opt into the Provincial Fee Reduction Initiative.**
- ~~1.4.~~ **4.2** If the board decides to operate a child care program, the board will ensure that it is operated in a manner that:

**4.2.1** fosters Indigenous reconciliation in child care. In particular, the child care program will be operated consistently with the following principles of the British Columbia *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*:

**4.2.1.1.** Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including in the area of education; and

**4.2.1.2.** Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education; and

**4.2.2.** is inclusive and consistent with the principles of non-discrimination set out in the British Columbia *Human Rights Code*.

**4.3.** Any contract with a licensee other than the Board, to provide a child care program on Board property, must be in writing and subject to **regular** review ~~annually (no less than every one (1) year)~~. The contract must contain:

**4.3.1.** a description of the direct and indirect costs for which the licensee is responsible;

**4.3.2.** an agreement by the licensee to comply with this policy and all other applicable policies ~~including adherence to schools' Code of Conduct and school rules;~~

**4.3.3.** a provision describing how the agreement can be terminated by the Board or the licensee;

**4.3.4.** ~~a provision describing how the program will serve students of the school;~~

**4.3.5.** an allocation of responsibility to ensure adequate insurance is in place to protect the interests of the Board;

**4.3.6.** a statement that the agreement can only be amended in writing, signed by the Board and the licensee;

**4.3.7.** a requirement for the licensee to maintain appropriate standards of performance; and

**4.3.8.** a requirement that the licensee must at all times maintain the required license to operate a child care facility; and

**4.3.9. an understanding that the licensee will work in co-operation with the District's Early Years' staff on on-going professional development.**

~~**4.4.** The Secretary Treasurer or designate shall have the authority to evaluate and make decisions with respect to applications to provide child care on Board property in a manner that is consistent with Board policy.~~

**4.4** Prior to entering into or renewing a contract with a licensee, other than the Board, to provide a child care program on Board property, the Board will consider:

~~2.10.1~~ **4.4.1** whether it is preferable for the Board to become a licensee and operate a child care program directly;

~~2.10.2~~ **4.4.2** the availability of school district staff to provide before and after school care;

~~2.10.3~~ **4.4.3** whether, with respect to a licensee seeking renewal or extension of a contract, the licensee has performed its obligations under this Policy and its

contract with the Board, in respect of providing an inclusive child care program and one that promotes Indigenous reconciliation in child care.

~~2.10.4 Upon receipt of an application, district staff will review the application's feasibility, available space in the school, and whether the school can accommodate any improvements that may need to be made in order to conform to licensing requirements.~~

**References:**

~~Board Policy:~~

~~Policy F-222 – Management of School District Property~~

~~F-300 – Use of School Facilities~~

*School Act:*

Section 85.1 - Policies respecting child care programs

Section 85.2 - Boards may provide child care programs

Section 85.3 - Child care programs provided by others

Section 85.4 – Use of Board property for child care programs

**Ministerial Order 326/20 – the Child Care Order**



**Committee Info Note**  
**Education-Policy Committee Meeting**  
**January 8, 2024**  
**Agenda Item 6a: Middle School Lacrosse Academy**

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Background: This program seeks to develop a recreational and skill development opportunity in the sport of Lacrosse. Included in the proposed programming are skill development, physical conditioning and leadership skills. This program would cover all elements and facets of learning about, and participating in, the sport of lacrosse. The program is designed to operate after school as an opportunity for all District Middle Schools.

Rationale: Currently, we do not have a Middle School Lacrosse Academy program in SD 62. Parents, students and community members have expressed their desire to have a locally developed lacrosse program for middle school aged students. This program will allow students to participate in a recreation and skill development Academy with trained coaches in the sport of lacrosse.

Context: Primary course delivery will occur at Centre Mountain Lellum where students will have access to the all-weather turf field. In addition, the lacrosse academy students may have access to the classrooms and facilities at Centre Mountain Lellum as needed.

Recommendation: That the Board of Education for School District 62 (Sooke) approve the SD62 Middle School Lacrosse Academy as a District Academy to begin in April 2024.

Respectfully,

Wayne Kelly, District Principal  
District Sports Academy Programs, PACE and Percussion Academies  
Principal, Canadian Sports School



**Committee Info Note**  
**Education-Policy Committee Meeting**  
**January 11, 2024**  
**Item 6b: Elementary Blended Learning Program**

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**Background**

- In **2020-2021** SD62 ran a **Remote Learning Program** for families who wanted a more gradual return to in-person learning during the COVID 19 pandemic.
- SD62 introduced a **Middle School Blended Learning** program for students in grades 6-8 in the **2021-2022** school year. The initial pilot year started with 1 class of 18 students which grew to a class of 26 students over the course of the school year. In 2022-2023, the program expanded to 2 classes – one at Dunsmuir Middle School and one at Journey Middle School. These 2 Middle School Blended Learning classes continue to run at Dunsmuir and Journey this year.
- **Expansion of the existing Middle School Blended Learning Program to include grade 9 and grades 4/5** was one of the goals resulting from the **2021-2022 Program Review**. An attempt was made to expand Blended Learning to include a grade 9 class for the 2023-2024 school year but was unsuccessful due to low enrolment numbers. There is a plan in place to offer Grade 9 Blended Learning for the 2024-2025 school year subject to enrolment.

**Philosophy & Connections to SD62 Strategic Plan**

- **Learning**
  - All education partners, staff and citizens in the communities we serve have a role in supporting student learning, each with distinct responsibilities.
  - Fostering diversity and actively pursuing equity by understanding the complexities that affect achievement.
  - Fostering a district-wide focus on learning, and ensuring an equitable approach to enable everyone to have the opportunity to achieve their potential.
  - Ensure our learning environments are safe, accessible and welcoming.
- **Engagement**
  - The quality of experience for students and staff should be engaging, purposeful and reflective of student/family voice and choice.
  - Develop, expand and implement inclusive and collaborative practices and processes.
  - Continue to develop and expand a culture of wellness.
  - Further the goals of the Na'tsa'maht agreement following the objectives of 'One Mind' and 'One Spirit'.
  - Universal Design for Learning\* (UDL) model, flexibility, student choice (how to show learning, content to explore when learning a skill).

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\*UDL (Universal Design for Learning) is a teaching approach that works to accommodate the needs and abilities of all learners and eliminates unnecessary hurdles in the learning process. This means developing a flexible learning environment in which information is presented in multiple ways, students engage in learning in a variety of ways, and students are provided options when demonstrating their learning.

\*\*F2F = face-to-face or in-person

\*\*\*Synchronous = real time

- **Growth**

- Managing growth appropriately to ensure that the district continues to deliver successful education programs.
- Build and maintain (*virtual & physical*) spaces and resources that support our creative and critical learning, and our culture of belonging.
- Embrace digital technologies and manage increasing complexity by leveraging the strategic use of resources.
- Strengthen organizational practices to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Expand our culture of social responsibility and implement long-term commitments that strive to support society and protect the environment.

## **Goals, Rationale**

- **Learning**

- Removing (some) barriers to/distractions from learning.
- Increased predictability as a result of smaller/more controlled learning environment.
- Connection to First Peoples Principles of Learning – learning on the land, learning takes patience and time, sense of belonging.
- Social Skills development - address specific development of Core Competencies related to Social Emotional Learning (SEL).
- Digital Skills development – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills – ties back to Career Development outcomes (Educated Citizen).
- Program based on a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach → meets the needs of student's strengths & stretches -> program customization will support student achievement.

- **Engagement**

- Providing opportunities to students who are unable to attend in face-to-face (F2F\*\*) /in-person learning settings.
- Flexibility and Voice and Choice for students and families → provides choice/potential to attract or retain students.
- Engaging students around their strengths - strength-based programming - Competency-based approach.
- Keeps kids in school and on track to graduate - regular attendance is directly correlated to student academic success - course completion (data).
- Student Safety (psychological & physical safety).
- Connection to a significant adult -> resiliency – supports their achievement.
- Supporting non-attending learners, gives schools another option to suggest that keeps students/families connect to school & district.

- **Growth**

- Re-engage students/families who are currently choosing non-SD62 schooling options.
- Space.
- Growing capacity to serve learners through an equity lens.
- Pathway to graduation.
- Losing less students during transitions (5 → 6).
- Opportunity to share learning/professional learning for classroom teachers and the system.

## **Target Audience**

- Students who are unable to attend in traditional f2f school settings.
- Families/students who prefer this non-traditional school option.
- Students who struggle in a traditional f2f school environment due to circumstances or conditions that are reduced or eliminated in a blended learning context.

- Families who are struggling to get student(s) to school.
- Anxiety (family/student).
- Flexible schedule (other commitments).
- Families who are able to provide the support (supervision, activity day transportation and technology) required for students to be successful in a blended learning context.

## Structures

- **District program within a school**
  - Families included on school newsletter.
  - Students/class included in picture day, school-wide events.
- Initially, a **pilot program with 1 (or 2) cohort(s)** for the district (David Cameron?)
  - Ideally, expanding to 1 cohort class for each family of schools.
- **Class size limit** 26 students (multi-grade class).
- Learning Management System – **Brightspace**.
- **Registration/Enrolment**
  - Referral form for School Based Teams/PVP
    - PVP will need to have a clear understanding of the program.
  - MS Forms – registration request/expression of interest form for parents.
  - Student placement
    - based on geographic location if more than 1 cohort.
    - if enrolment is greater than what can be accepted, a student placement committee will review applicants:
      - Suggested committee composition – placement school Principal, SD62 Online Principal, IES Principal or Vice-Principal, Curriculum Transformation Principal, Safe Schools Principal.
      - Criteria for placement to be established prior to selection process (if needed).
  - Intake process – conversation with family re: expectations, program.
  - TBD: Which MyEdBC school are students registered in? Suggested → David Cameron Elementary.
- **Off-Site/At Home Days** – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday
  - Mornings – synchronous\*\*\* (real-time) lessons.
  - Daily numeracy and literacy lessons/activities.
  - Afternoons – self-directed learning time, online tutorial support, scheduled small group appointments, EA/ELL/NIE support appointments.
- **On-Site/Activity Day** – Thursday
  - Drop-off/Pick-up locations provided to families in advance.
  - Supervision ratios (compliance with field trip policy/procedures).

- **Draft Weekly Schedule:**

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>9:00am - 10:10am</b>	Morning check-in & synchronous online lessons	Morning check-in & synchronous online lessons	Morning check-in & synchronous online lessons	On-Site Activity Day Drop-off 9:30am Pick-up 2:30pm	Morning check-in & synchronous online lessons
<b>10:10am - 10:30am</b>	Morning break	Morning break	Morning break		Morning break
<b>10:30am – 11:40am</b>	Online lessons (synchronous)	Online lessons (synchronous)	Online lessons (synchronous)		Online lessons (synchronous)
<b>11:40am - 12:40pm</b>	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch
<b>12:40pm – 3:00pm</b>	Self-Directed Learning time, Online tutorial support, & scheduled small group in-person appointments	Self-Directed Learning time, Online tutorial support, & scheduled small group in-person appointments	Self-Directed Learning time, Online tutorial support, & scheduled small group in-person appointments		Self-Directed Learning time, Online tutorial support, & scheduled small group in-person appointments

### Staffing

- **Program Teacher:** Qualifications/job description
  - Possibly a Position of Special Responsibility (POSR) but this would require some district level responsibilities.
  - Different than teaching online, different from in-person, high percentage of students with diverse needs, willingness to be outside, plan activities (connected to learning goals). ‘teacher makes the program’.
- **Student Engagement Facilitator (SEF) for blended learning:** There may not be the numbers but there is the need. (EQUITY LENS):
  - Ideally, SEF would be present and supporting students during on-site learning times. This would also help maintain required supervision ratios for field trips.
  - Possibly a SEF shared with the middle school blended learning classes?
- **Education assistant:** Currently there is an EA position connected to SD62 Online that supports the 2 middle school blended learning cohorts:
  - Ideally, EA support can continue to be assigned directly to the blended learning program (via SD62 Online) based on based on the EA time generated by student registrations
- **(School Based) Inclusion Support Teacher:** FTE based on the profile of students registered in the program (to work with students with IEPs and do any required level B testing for students who may potentially need/qualify for an IEP) \*not additional/separate staffing.
- **(School Based) Counsellor:** Student access to teacher counsellor via pre-arranged appointment. \*not additional/separate staffing.
- Support from **SD62 Online Instructional Designer** (existing staff).
- Support from the **Curriculum Team** (existing staff).

### Program Needs

- **District Level support and oversight**
  - Important for consistency and meeting unique needs of students, families, schools.
  - Connection to Multi-disciplinary team: Curriculum, IES, IT, Online Learning, NIE & ELL.
  - Coordination of program level supports:
    - Program budget (District level).
    - Oversight and coordination of program staff assigned to SD62 Online (EA/SEF).

- **Funding for the outdoor/off-site activities** that are embedded into the program (definitely more than "regular" classroom):
  - Current SD62 Online/district budget allocation to Middle BL is approx. \$4000/cohort.
- **Staff Technology & workstation**
  - Teacher laptop (with microphone/camera).
  - External monitor, docking station, external keyboard & mouse.
  - Document camera (or iPad/tablet).
  - EA Laptop – for virtual support meetings with students.
  - Teacher cell phone (text/talk only) – for activity days.
- **Student Technology - generally supported by family** but we need to have an **equity lens**
  - Access to Chromebooks during BL F2F support.
  - Equity Lens:
    - Ideally a district budget for some BL student technology (Chromebooks).
    - Perhaps schools could 'donate' expired Chromebooks that still work.
    - Could IT get parents a discounted/deal on Chromebook.
- **On-site day space** Flexible → school gardens, multipurpose room, playgrounds
  - Site & activity changes from week to week.
  - Schools to provide options – what my school has to offer (teaching garden, multipurpose room, art, on the land learning) Playgrounds, school grounds when school is in session, what is walking distance from your school site?
- **Teacher workspace(s)** – classroom or similar space preferred (flexibility re: f2f support times)
  - for at-home learning days.
  - for in-person student support.
- **Education Assistant workspace** – shared space with teacher should work.

**Recommendation for Motion:**

Motion Requested: That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) accept and endorse the Elementary Blended Learning Program as presented to the Education-Policy Committee meeting.

Respectfully,

Heather Lait – Principal SD62 Online & Continuing Education  
 Elementary Blended Learning Focus Group: Vicki Ives, Kendra Laidlaw, Camille McFarlane

**Committee Info Note**  
**Education-Policy Committee Meeting**  
**January 11, 2024**  
**Agenda Item 6c : Late French Immersion Consultation in the**  
**Milnes Landing Zone**

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Background

The Ministry of Education and Child Care sets student entry points for French Immersion programs in School Districts: K/1 for Early French Immersion (EFI) and Grade 6 for Late French Immersion (LFI). By Grade 8, students in Early Immersion and Late Immersion are combined in the same classes for the remainder of the French Immersion pathway towards a Dual Dogwood Diploma.

Early French Immersion Programs are available at:

- Millstream Elementary (Belmont Family of Schools)
- École John Stubbs (Royal Bay Family of Schools)
- École Poirier Elementary (Milnes Landing Family of Schools)

Late French Immersion entry in grade 6 is offered at École John Stubbs (Westshore). Historically, efforts to initiate a Late French Immersion program at Journey Middle School in Sooke have been hindered by low student registration numbers and a shortage of French Immersion teachers.

In November 2023, the Sooke School District French Advisory Committee recommended that the School District revisit the question of implementing LFI Programming in Milnes Landing at Journey Middle School to serve the students and families in Sooke.

The Concerns, Rationale

The addition of a Late French Immersion cohort beginning in Grade 6 increases French Immersion access to students living in Sooke. For a variety of reasons, when students leave the Early French Immersion pathway, dwindling numbers put budgetary pressures on block funding required for Immersion high school courses.

For context, École Poirier Elementary registers 40 French Immersion students in Kindergarten each year. However, the French Immersion Graduating class at Edward Milne Community School ranges between 12-15 students. The addition of another cohort of French Immersion students will serve to bolster these numbers and increase the number of students graduating with a Dual Dogwood in Sooke.

## Context

Provincial grants are available to school districts to support “French Immersion Program Growth.” SD62 has been a successful recipient of this grant for the past two years and hired a 0.5 FTE supplemental Immersion LST for Poirier to support student retention in Milnes Landing. The educator supports students at risk for leaving French Immersion as well as leads a French oral language *conversation café* at lunch time with English students participating; thus increasing interest in joining French Immersion at the next available entry point in middle school. Additionally, Sooke’s growing population adds to the feasibility of increased LFI student enrollment.

Currently, the only access is a single cohort of students in the Westshore. Students need to leave their community to enroll. For 2023, there was a waitlist of 14 students for LFI registration at École John Stubbs.

Additionally, the University of Victoria has begun its first cohort of French Immersion Teacher Education. We have a close relationship with UVIC and are hosting these French teacher candidates in our school district. These graduates will increase the numbers of French Immersion teachers on the South Island for staffing purposes.

## Next steps:

Staff will engage in community and district consultation exploring the feasibility of implementing Late French Immersion at Journey Middle School beginning September 2025.

Respectfully,

Denise Wehner  
District Principal