
MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC MEETING

March 31, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.

TRUSTEES: Amanda Dowhy, Board Chair
Christine Lervold, Vice Chair (online via MS Teams)
Russ Chipps (online via MS Teams)
Trudy Spiller

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, Trustee
Ebony Logins, Trustee

SECRETARY: Jenny Seal

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATIONS TERRITORIES

The meeting start was delayed to allow remote participants to connect. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by the Board Chair who acknowledged the territories of the First Nations.

2. AGENDA

2.1 Call for amendments and additional items

In the interest of maintaining decorum, the Board Chair reviewed Robert’s Rules of Order and provided procedural direction.

97. MOVED Trudy Spiller/Christine Lervold

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting agenda of March 31, 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. The Board received an update on budget development and no decisions were made.

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 Call for corrections to minutes

As per direction from the Board Chair at the February Board meeting, the minutes from the February 24th Board meeting were adopted by unanimous consent.

4. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

4.1 Board Chair Update – Amanda Dowhy

The Board Chair expressed appreciation for the CUPE staff that worked over the spring break. As the District heads into budget season, more direction from the Ministry of Education and Childcare is anticipated. No big news is expected; however, confirmation was received that previously approved projects will continue to receive funding. A reminder that the Education Committee of the Whole meeting date is changed to May 19th and will be held in person and online. Families, staff and public have been given access to a link to the budget survey, open until April 2nd. Spring represents significant transition planning. Events to prepare grades 5 and 8 students for transition to middle and secondary, as well as events to prepare students for graduation and beyond are taking place across the District.

5. **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS** – no presentations

6. **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL**

6.1 Indigenous Education Council Update – Michele Thut and Jessica Kisby

Michele Thut introduced herself as Co-Chair of Indigenous Education Council (IEC) and Administrator for T’Sou-ke First Nation. Also in attendance was Elder Jo-Ina Young, Métis Nation Representative. The IEC is made up of representatives from local nations, Métis nations, and community partners, along with District staff working together to support Indigenous students’ success. The role of the IEC is to advise the Board on Indigenous education priorities. The IEC Terms of Reference have been finalized, ensuring alignment with provincial guidelines. Upcoming work includes Indigenous grad, land-based learning opportunities and community gatherings. There is increasing pressure on IEC targeted funds and a growing risk that these funds are being used to support operational costs. On behalf of the IEC, a letter is being brought forward for the Board’s consideration, requesting operational funding to support Indigenous Educational work.

7. CORRESPONDENCE & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence – Amanda Dowhy

1. Email from Erik L. Dated February 20, 2026 RE Review of Kindergarten Placement
2. Email from Savory PAC Dated March 4, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
3. Email from Colette M. Dated March 5, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
4. Email from Gail L. Dated March 5, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
5. Email from Heather G. Dated March 5, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
6. Email from Sherry D. Dated March 6, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
7. Email from Alisha C. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
8. Email from Amanda W. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
9. Email from Beverly T. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
10. Email from Chris W. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
11. Email from Danielle V. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
12. Email from Dora S. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
13. Email from Kim K. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
14. Email from Matthew D. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
15. Email from Michele N. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
16. Email from Sarah S. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
17. Email from Shauna S. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
18. Email from Tanya S. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
19. Email from Teresa M. Dated March 7, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
20. Email from Angela B. Dated March 8, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
21. Email from Bev S. Dated March 8, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
22. Email from Shannon R. Dated March 8, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
23. Email from Skye L. Dated March 8, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
24. Email from Tiff & Chris C. Dated March 8, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
25. Email from Alexa G. Dated March 9 & 10, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
26. Email from Amy S. Dated March 9, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
27. Email from Gina & Cameron B. Dated March 9, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
28. Email from Leanne W. Dated March 9, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
29. Email from Katlin C. Dated March 10, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
30. Email from Sarah. G. Dated March 10, 2026 RE Savory Bridge
31. Email from Tyler G. Dated March 10, 2026 RE Savory Bridge

As aligned with governance practices, the above noted correspondence as listed in items 1-31 has been received.

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

STA - Rita Zeni:

The President of Sooke Teacher's Association shared a message from a teacher in

another district. This teacher is transgender, and March 31st is the International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV). This day was created to combat the doom and gloom narratives that surround transgender lives. Transgender Day of Visibility is a call to action and recognition that visibility is a privilege and a risk. With the increase of transgender visibility came an increase in proposed transphobic bills over the years. We have a duty to have hard conversations with those in our circles; compassion isn't enough in supporting this population. Teachers have the duty to incorporate diversity into our lessons.

The Board Chair expressed appreciation for the letter emphasising that as leaders, we must ensure we are doing everything we can to support transgender people in our schools at this time of increased intolerance.

The Superintendent congratulated the STA/BCTF on the successful completion of a new collective agreement.

SPVPA – Laura Lancaster and Toby Owen

The Principal and Vice Principal of Centre Mountain Lellum presented a slideshow featuring school events that bring light or joy to our days across the District.

SPEAC – Tom Davis

The President of SPEAC expressed appreciation for students returning to shiny schools and rested and refreshed staff after spring break. The next SPEAC meeting is April 15th. The SPEAC President shared a letter written as a reminder to district partners that attendance at PAC meetings should only occur when mutually discussed and agreed.

CUPE 459 – Amber Leonard

The President of CUPE 459 sent her regrets.

7.3 Other Delegations – 5 minutes each

8. FINANCE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

8.1 Resources Committee Meeting of March 10, 2026 – Cancelled due to lack of quorum

9. EDUCATION PROGRAM

9.1 Education-Policy Committee Meeting of March 3, 2026 – Trudy Spiller

Trustee Spiller read the motions included in the Education-Policy Committee report.

98. **MOVED** Trudy Spiller/Christine Lervold

That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve a Soccer Academy at Journey Middle School to begin in September 2026.

CARRIED



99. **MOVED** Trudy Spiller/Christine Lervold
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Education-Policy Committee meeting of March 2, 2026.
CARRIED

10. STUDENTS

There were no student presentations.

11. FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

Trustee Liaison Reports – Board of Education

- a. Vancouver Island School Trustee Association (VISTA) March 6-7, 2026 – Amanda Dowhy

The Board Chair provided highlights from the VISTA conference held in Cowichan Bay, also attended by Trustee Spiller. Trustees were inspired by students who stood up and spoke in Hul'q'umi'num'.

- b. BCPSEA Ratification March 6th – Trudy Spiller

As previously noted, the ratification was successful, and a new collective agreement is in place.

12. ADMINISTRATION

- 12.1 Board of Education Work Plan – Amanda Dowhy

The Board Chair provided an overview of the Board work plan from April to June.

13. PERSONNEL

- 13.1 Superintendent's Report – Paul Block

The Superintendent welcomed everyone back from spring break and expressed appreciation for the staff that worked over the break. Highlights from the report were presented by the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent Braniff and Associate Superintendents Deacon and Leclerc.

The Board Chair noted that bus registration is now open for the 2026-27 school year. Seats are allocated on a first come-first served basis. Registration closes on April 30th.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

- Good Friday – April 3
- Easter Monday – April 6
- Education-Policy Meeting – April 7
- Resources Committee Meeting – April 14
- SPEAC monthly meeting – April 15
- Non-instructional Day – April 20
- Earth Day – April 22



- Administrative Professionals Day – April 22
- Next Public Board Meeting – April 28
- National Day of Mourning (Workers) – April 29
- Education Committee of the Whole – May 19

15. RISE AND REPORT

The Board Chair reported that the Board received some information on budget development during the in-camera meeting; however, no decisions or direction were provided by the Board.


16. QUESTION PERIOD

Members of the public had the opportunity to ask questions related to agenda items discussed at tonight's meeting. There were no questions.


17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Certified Correct:



Chairperson of the Board



Secretary Treasurer