SOOKE SCHOOLS 62
Shaping Tomorrow Today

Sooke School District
3143 Jacklin Road, Victoria, BC V9B 5R1
(250) 474-9800
www.sd62.bc.ca

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC MEETING

September 29, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.

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

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 (online via MS Teams)
Steve Tonnesen, Manager, IT – Operations
David Lee-Bonar, Assistant Secretary Treasurer

SECRETARY: Jenny Seal

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATIONS TERRITORIES

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by the Board Chair who acknowledged the territories of the First Nations.

The Board Chair reviewed Robert's Rules of Order related to meeting decorum. Instructions were provided for those participating online.

2. AGENDA

2.1 Call for amendments and additional items

The Board Chair called for amendments to the agenda. None were brought forward.

1. MOVED Cendra Beaton/Christine Lervold
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) adopt the public meeting agenda of September 29, 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. MNP LLP was appointed as the District's internal audit service provider for the next three years and the IM/IT roadmap was received by the Board.

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3. MINUTES

3.1 Call for corrections to minutes

The minutes of the Public Board meeting of June 23, 2026 were adopted by unanimous consent. The report from the Resources Committee meeting of September 22, 2026 was corrected to show Trustee Chipps as regrets and Trustee Spiller as acting committee member.

4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 Board Chair Update – Amanda Dowhy

In July the Chair attended the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA) conference, which provided an opportunity to meet other trustees from across the country and compare practices. Keynote speakers were Jody Wilson-Raybould and Rick Hansen. Key takeaways from concurrent sessions included Board success being supported by creating a culture of respect, empowerment, and mutual understanding, and a reframing of how Boards approach Superintendent evaluations by shifting perspective from "evaluate" to "appreciate".

This Board contributed to the Provincial Steering Committee report that was distributed in August with an emphasis on advocating for child care space and new funding for children with support needs. Included from our submission, was acknowledgement that inflationary costs are being downloaded onto districts.

5. EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

There were no educational presentations

6. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL

6.1 Indigenous Education Council Update – Michelle Thut/Marlys Denny

A written report was included with the Board meeting materials.

7. CORRESPONDENCE & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence – Amanda Dowhy

a. Email from Clyde D. Dated June 20 2026 RE ECEs
b. Email from Janine S. Dated Jun 30 2026 RE ECEs
c. Email from Derek Y. Dated June 26 2026 RE ECEs
d. Email from Minister Beare Dated July 22, 2026 RE ARC Funding
e. Email from Karmen M. Dated July 1, 2026 RE Theatre Rental
f. Email from Karry B. Dated September 16, 2026 RE Erin's Law

Correspondence listed in items 7.1 a-f was received by the Board.

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

CUPE 459 – Amber Leonard and Dana Savage
The President of CUPE 459 read Article 14 from The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, created in 2007 to establish a framework of basic human rights.

The CUPE 459 1st Vice President shared that CUPE had challenges at the start of the year including security, communication, working alone and contractors showing up unannounced.

SPEAC – Ash Senini
The Communications Vice President of SPEAC reported that SPEAC held its first meeting on September 16th with great turnout. A school trustee all-candidates meeting is scheduled for October 13th from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Belmont Secondary School theater. A parent information session about Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be held in November or December. The next SPEAC meeting is scheduled for Oct 21st, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. online.

SPVPA – Karen Sjerven
The Principal of Hans Helgesen Elementary is celebrating 35 years in the district and is retiring in December. Highlights of events happening in schools after only 14.5 days in session were shared, including welcome picnics, PAC meetings, emergency drills, photo day, Terry Fox runs, Truth & Reconciliation events and cross-country meetings, to name a few. Hans Helgesen has a new childcare facility on site and families received tours during the welcome picnic. Acknowledgement goes to staff for the tremendous amount of work that has already taken place.

STA - Rita Zeni:
The STA President was inspired by the many different ways schools recognized the day for truth and reconciliation. Appreciation was expressed for acclaimed trustees and candidates present. The STA will endeavour to keep communication open between the STA and trustees. Concerns were shared about the number of grievances. Work continues to protect teachers' rights. The STA President requested increased communication around settlement agreements and follow-up on work safe investigations.

8. FINANCE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

8.1 Resources Committee Meeting September 22, 2026 – Christine Lervold
Trustee Lervold provided an overview of the Resources meeting.

2. MOVED Christine Lervold/Cendra Beaton
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the 2027/28 Minor Capital Plan submission as presented to the Resources Committee on September 22, 2026.
CARRIED

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3. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Resources Committee Meeting of September 22, 2026
CARRIED

8.2 2025/26 Financial Statements Approval – Christine Lervold
Trustee Lervold provided an overview of the financial statements. The surplus is at 2% and budget planning has put the District in a good position to manage risks.

4. MOVED Christine Lervold/Russ Chipps
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the 2025/26 financial statements as presented to, and recommended by, the Audit Committee at its meeting on September 23, 2026.
CARRIED

9. EDUCATION PROGRAM

9.1 Education-Policy Committee – Meeting of September 15, 2026 – Trudy Spiller
Trustee Spiller provided an overview of items discussed at the meeting.

5. MOVED Trudy Spiller/Cendra Beaton
That the Board of education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the 2025/26 Operational Plan Final Report as presented at the Education-Policy Committee meeting of September 15, 2026.
CARRIED

6. MOVED Trudy Spiller/Cendra Beaton
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) receive the report from the Education-Policy Committee Meeting of September 15, 2026.
CARRIED

9.2 Early Learning Motion – Christine Lervold
Trustee Lervold reviewed the motivation provided in the meeting materials.
Trustee Spiller requested a friendly amendment to replace the word 'direct', with 'request'.

7. MOVED Trudy Spiller/Christine Lervold
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) amend the motion on the floor to change the word 'direct' to 'request'.
CARRIED (one opposed)

8. MOVED Christine Lervold/Russ Chipps
That the Board of Education of School District No. 62 (Sooke) request staff to provide a report on the feasibility of a Board operated Early Learning program (Pre-K) to support opportunities for improved educational outcomes and strengthen transitions into the K-12 system.
CARRIED

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10. STUDENTS

10.1 Superintendent's Report – Paul Block

The Superintendent acknowledged the members of the public present tonight and the student advocacy it represents. Highlights from the Superintendent's report were summarized.

The meeting was recessed at 8:41 and reconvened at 8:50.

11. FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

11.1 Trustee Liaison Reports – Board of Education

There were no reports.

11.2 Enhancing Student Learning Report for 2025/26 – Monica Braniff

The Deputy Superintendent summarized the Enhancing Student Learning Report. Better outcomes were attributed to individualized conversations, ensuring supports are in place in a variety of ways to engage students, and honouring students' voice and choice. The increased intentional focus on numeracy and literacy is showing results. Continuous improvement has been realized by ensuring alignment between the Operational Plan and Department Plans across the District.

9. MOVED Cendra Beaton/Christine Lervold
That the Board of Education of School District 62 (Sooke) approve the September 2026 Enhancing Student Learning Report submission as presented to the Board of Education on September 29, 2026.
CARRIED

11.3 Policy Adoption: A-6 "Board Committees" – Amanda Dowhy

Ongoing Governance Committee policy work continues following support and best practice recommendations from BCSTA, BCSSA, BCASBO, and the MoECC in consultation with FNESC to create separation between purview of the Board and that of the Superintendent. This work was undertaken to provide a solid foundation for the incoming board.

10. MOVED Trudy Spiller/Russ Chipps
That the Board of Education of School District No. 62 (Sooke) adopt draft new Policy A-6 "Board Committees", including its related appendices, Committee Terms of Reference and Appointment of External Committee Members as presented at the Governance Committee meeting of September 17, 2026.
CARRIED (one opposed)

11. MOVED Trudy Spiller/Russ Chipps
That the Board of Education of School District No. 62 (Sooke) rescind Policy and Regulations A-340 "School Board Committees".
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12. MOVED Trudy Spiller/Russ Chipps
That the Board of Education of School District No. 62 (Sooke) rescind Policy and Regulations F-335 "Audit Committee".
CARRIED

12. ADMINISTRATION

12.1 Board of Education Work Plan for 2026/27 - Amanda Dowhy
The Chair summarized the Board Work Plan including the Board meeting schedule for the upcoming year. Key dates for the incoming Board in November were highlighted.

Having received notice of not having quorum for the October 6th Education Committee and October 13th Resources Committee meetings, both meetings are cancelled.

13. MOVED Christine Lervold/Trudy Spiller
That the Board of Education of School District #62 (Sooke) adopt the 2026/2027 Board and Committee Meeting Schedule and the 2026/2027 Multi-Year Board of Education Work Plan as presented at its September 29, 2026 meeting.
CARRIED

13. PERSONNEL

There were no items discussed.

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

- National Day for Truth & Reconciliation (schools closed) – September 30
- World Teachers' Day – October 5
- World Mental Health Day – October 10
- Thanksgiving (schools closed) – October 12
- SPEAC Monthly General Meeting – October 21
- Non-Instructional Day – October 23
- Next Public Board Meeting - October 27

15. RISE AND REPORT

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 online and 3 from the gallery.

1. What pre-emptive safety practices are in place right now for maintenance staff and when were those policies last reviewed?

The Superintendent confirmed there are structures in place. There are Joint Occupational Health & Safety committees on each site and protocols in place that address working alone.

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2. What are the deferred maintenance costs (sum) and how much would we need to catch up?

The Secretary Treasurer answered there is approximately $50 million in deferred maintenance.

3. SD62 is tracking 8 times above the average for grievances and severances. Who is getting severances and in what budget line is that reflected?

The question was referred to staff for future follow-up.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 p.m. The next meeting is October 27, 2026.

Certified Correct:

Chairperson of the Board

Secretary Treasurer