

# School District 72 Board News

MEETING OF  
SEPT. 7, 2021

September 9, 2021  
INFORMATION RELEASE

*Please note these are not official minutes of the Campbell River Board of Education.*

*Minutes are available from the school district website at [www.sd72.bc.ca](http://www.sd72.bc.ca).*

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You can watch a recording of the meeting on the district's YouTube channel at:  
<https://youtu.be/UD6doalRySE>

## Chairperson Remarks

Chairperson John Kerr opened the meeting by welcoming students and staff back for another school year. He expressed hope that, despite the continued difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic, students and staff have a happy, safe, and successful school year.

He continued by stating that the board was once again holding meetings in person as all members of the Board of Education and senior management team had been fully vaccinated, but that the public could only participate through livestream, in accordance with current COVID protocols.

As we enter another school year under COVID-19, Chairperson Kerr stressed that the district continues to take all necessary precautions outlined by public health and the Ministry of Education. He recognized that while some may agree or disagree with current protocols the district follows the advice of health officials and respects their expertise.

He continued by encouraging community members to get vaccinated and stressed the importance of staying home when feeling unwell as COVID-19 cases are once again rising on the North Island.

In closing, he spoke about the board's continued efforts to advocate for a new building for Cedar Elementary.

For more than six years, the replacement of Cedar Elementary has been the highest priority for the Board of Education due to the age and deteriorating condition of the school. He shared that he and Superintendent Morrow met with Chief Roberts and Chief Chickite of the Wei Wai Kum and We Wai Kai Nations that afternoon to share the board's intent to lobby the Minister of Education for the necessary funding for the construction of a new school. The district will

be starting a campaign in the next week and he encouraged interested community members to watch for materials and lend their support by sending letters to local MLA Michele Babchuk and Education Minister Jennifer Whiteside.

**Unfortunately, due to technical difficulties this segment didn't record.**

## Superintendent Remarks

Superintendent Morrow started his remarks by acknowledging the work of maintenance, operations, information technology and school board office staff for their work over the summer to prepare for this upcoming school year.

He continued by also highlighting that Summer School was once again successfully offered to 648 students under the guidance of Principal Sean McLaughlin and Vice-Principal Kelly Gage and there were no COVID exposures in any Summer School offerings.

He stated that although the district had school exposures last school year there was no confirmed transmission of COVID within our schools and that, while the district has heard varying opinions from parents about protocols, we continue to act based on the public health guidelines reflected in the Ministry of Education's K-12 protocols document.

Continuing to reflect on COVID, Superintendent Morrow highlighted that we are now in the third school year of being impacted by COVID-19 and drew attention to the increased relevance of the priorities outlined in the board's strategic plan written in 2019; student achievement, building a culture of learning and wellness, and honouring Indigenous world views and perspectives.



He continued by sharing three key goals for this school year that he has challenged staff with in direct relation to strategic plan priorities: a continued emphasis on safety, expanded beyond physical safety to also include the psychological and emotional safety of youth in our care; the implementation of and commitment to a soon-to-be introduced comprehensive and unified literacy framework which will provide universal screening for students in kindergarten to grade 3 to guide instruction, focus interventions and appropriately allocate resources so that we can improve literacy and fundamental life chances; and a deep commitment to equity and ensuring that all students in our system have equal access to opportunities.

Superintendent Morrow closed his remarks by thanking the parents in our community for entrusting us with their children, recognizing the tremendous honour and privilege we each have to work and learn alongside them and saying that he looked forward to an amazing year ahead.

Unfortunately, due to technical difficulties a section of this segment didn't record. Watch at: 0:00:04

## Physical Literacy Project to Begin this School Year

The board heard a presentation from Associate Superintendent Morgan Kyle and Georgina Knox, the new physical literacy district teacher coordinator on the School Physical Activity and Physical Literacy Project, a multi-component school-based health promotion initiative in elementary and middle schools. The new physical literacy coordinator position was able to be added with no impact to district budgets through funding from the Ministry of Health.

Physical literacy refers to the confidence, competence, and motivation to be active for life and it is developed through fundamental movement skills, such as running and throwing. According to Knox, the program is not about building athletes, but about building active individuals that will engage with activities they enjoy throughout their life to stay healthy. She went on to say that physical literacy in our schools is about increasing movement time throughout the day, in all areas of the school, not just the gym or playground.

The goals of the project are to increase the levels of confidence and competence around physical literacy for teachers in the district; to build knowledge of physical activity to support student mental wellbeing; to increase knowledge

on Indigenous perspectives of health and wellness; to increase the number of minutes during the school day where a teacher incorporates physical activity; and to provide a resource library directly linked to physical activity.

The program will support all elementary and middle schools and each participating teacher will receive hands-on learning sessions in their own classroom, gym, and outdoor spaces with and tailored to the needs of their students. Teachers will also be provided with resources and equipment to help support physical activity.

Broken down into eight sessions, the program will begin with two meetings with the teacher to assess where the students are in the class with regards to physical literacy development and to introduce the PLAYBuilder online platform, a free resource library that is curriculum linked and grade based. Sessions three through eight will then be on the job, individualized professional development.

Ongoing professional development opportunities will also be available through Indigenous workshops, eLearning courses, a summer institute and continuous support from the physical literacy district teacher coordinator.

Physical activity has been proven to play an important role in promoting mental and physical health and by adding physical activity and physical literacy in classrooms student often present better attendance, improved self-regulation, and learning ability, as well as better overall health.

The program is offered in partnership with Sport for Life and Pacific Sport.

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## Clarification on Board Process

Trustee Hagen spoke to some comments circulating about him personally and in relation to his role on the Board of Education on social media. He stated that comments about his role in the board's decision to close Oyster River Elementary and Maple Elementary are factually incorrect. Trustee Hagen recused himself from discussion and decision on the closure of Oyster River Elementary in 2016 because of a potential conflict of interest related to development interests he held within the community and was the sole trustee to vote in favour of keeping Maple Elementary open when the sitting board at the time voted to close that school

in 2002.

[Watch this segment: 0:27:08](#)

## Increasing Connection Between Students and the Board

In June, Superintendent Morrow and Trustee Shannon Briggs had the first of a series of intended meetings with a group of students from each of the middle and secondary schools, as well as Robron Centre. The meetings are part of a continued board goal to hear more directly from students and to help inform their decision-making from a student perspective. The next meeting will be scheduled for either the end of September or beginning of October.

Students have been selected in consultation with school administration because the students exhibit interest in forming policy and communicating with trustees around improvements and supports for public education.

[Watch this segment: 0:29:36](#)

## Update on COVID Protocols

Associate Superintendent Philip Cizmic and Paul Reid, operations and safety supervisor provided the board with an update following the August 24 revised COVID protocols for K-12 schools from the Ministry of Education and Provincial Health Officer.

While the Ministry of Education issued new protocols for K-12 settings, the key mitigation strategies of mask wearing for all staff and students in grades 4-12, daily health checks, ensuring that people stay home when they are ill, respiratory and hand hygiene, and enhanced cleaning remain in place.

Associate Superintendent Cizmic spoke about the Ministry's new requirements to no longer use cohorts. He highlighted that the transition of the district's two secondary schools from a one-eighth model last year to a quarter model this year still provides much smaller cohorts compared to the usual semester model. He also emphasized that because the district established cohorts last year through a simple pairing of classes the district is well poised for a quick transition, should it be necessary.

Operations and Safety Supervisor Paul Reid explained that the district has had a pandemic committee comprised of both unions, senior management and health and safety since the

start of the pandemic to review requirements and stay on top of the latest health guidance. Joint occupational health and safety committees have also been used to identify and address health and safety concerns within schools quickly. Barriers, sanitizing units, health checks and other similar measures implemented last year remain in place. This week 5,000 reusable masks were purchased and distributed to students and another 1,000 went to staff on top of the disposable masks that district continues to make available.

Associate Superintendent Cizmic also spoke to the district's ventilation systems. MERV13 filters are required in the Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 Settings for systems that use recycled or recirculated air. All the school district's systems use fresh-air ventilation systems, which have at minimum MERV10 filters and the average air exchanges increased. As an added measure the district is flushing the air intake systems for two hours before the start of each day and still transitioning to MERV13 filters as quickly as possible.

[Watch this segment: 0:31:03](#)

## Board Accepts Schedule of Reserves

Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Patrick presented the board with the schedule of reserves for 2021-2022 as the financial statement audit and reporting for the 2020-2021 fiscal year is nearing completion. With a variance of actual results to the district's budgeted deficit, unrestricted and restricted operating reserves have decreased to \$4,572,656 from \$5,832,679.

The board agreed to use surplus funds to increase the annual IT budget to support future evergreen replacement of the technology; renovate the Robron conference room to support district meetings, student events/gatherings, and as an alternate board meeting facility; cover additional COVID expenses not currently funded; replace the Phoenix totem; and improve fencing at Cedar Elementary to address a health and safety concern.

As part of the board's discussion, trustees passed a motion to write letters to the provincial and federal governments demanding that they maintain last year's level of funding to mitigate COVID-19 in our school district.

[Watch this segment: 0:42:17](#)



## Board Begins Advocacy Campaign for a New Cedar Elementary School

The board, through a subcommittee comprised of Trustees Richard Franklin, John Kerr and Joyce McMann, are increasing their advocacy efforts for a new building for Cedar Elementary School. For over six years the top priority of the district's capital requests, and a key element of the district's 10-year facility plan has been the replacement of Cedar Elementary.

At the end of June, the board's Cedar replacement committee met with local MLA Michele Babchuk to discuss the board's intent to lobby the Minister of Education for funding to allow for the construction of a new school building. In July, a letter was also sent to Education Minister Jennifer Whiteside requesting a formal meeting, but one has not been scheduled yet.

Chairperson Kerr shared that he and Superintendent Morrow had recently met with local Indigenous chiefs, Chief Roberts and Chief Chickite, to share information on the campaign, which will officially roll-out at the end of this week.

A website, video, information handout and form letters to the Minister of Education have also been created and will be shared through the district's website, a social media campaign and local media.

Trustees spoke to the need for community support and expressed their hope that community members will add their voices to the call for a new Cedar Elementary and support the board's efforts by taking the time to complete one of the form letters and send it to the Minister of Education and local MLA.

You can find more information on the board's vision for a new Cedar Elementary School at [www.sd72.bc.ca/newcedar](http://www.sd72.bc.ca/newcedar).

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