



School District No. 59 (Peace River South)

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 59 (PEACE RIVER SOUTH)

11600 – 7TH Street, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4R8

Open Board Meeting Minutes

DATE & TIME: February 19, 2025 – 1:00 PM

PLACE: School Board Office – Dawson Creek, BC

PRESENT: Trustees:
C. Anderson (Chair)
R. Gulick (Vice-Chair)
C. Hillton
S. Mounsey
A. Schurmann
C. Wards
T. Jones

C. Fennell, Superintendent
K. Morris, Secretary-Treasurer
R. Schwartz, Recording Secretary

REGRETS: Nil

Called to Order – 1:00 PM

The Board Chair acknowledged that we share this territory with the people of Treaty 8.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Additions: Nil

Deletions: Nil

(2025-02-007)

MOVED/SECONDED – Hillton/Schurmann

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) approve the February 19, 2025 Regular Board Meeting agenda as presented.

CARRIED

1.0 ITEMS FOR ADOPTION

R1.1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes – January 22, 2025

The Chair asked for any corrections to the minutes.

(2025-02-008)

The Chair declared the minutes of the open meeting January 22, 2025 approved as presented.

R1.2 Excerpts of Closed Board Meeting – January 22, 2025

(2025-02-009)

The Chair declared the excerpts of the closed board meeting January 22, 2025 approved as presented.

2.0 BUSINESS ARISING

3.0 ESSENTIAL ITEMS

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

R4.1 Early Learning Program – M. Manuel & D. Bassendowski

Mary Manuel and Dianne Bassendowski presented the Early Learning Programs in the District.

SD59 has 6 StrongStart Programs. StrongStart is an Early Learning program designed for 0 to 5 years working in partnership with parents/caregivers, ECE/Facilitators and community partners. Curriculum is based on Early Learning Framework integrated with other philosophies and pedagogy of practice.

The Early Learning Hub housed the first early learning indoor playground in the province. The StrongStart program at Tremblay Elementary School also has Munchkinland incorporated in the space which offers specific learning centres for children to role play. Schools include the StrongStart students in many of the school events and activities. StrongStart Programs can also have field trips out into the community.

Ready Set Learn and Welcome to Kindergarten are big events in our district. The Early Learning Department works closely with Kindergarten teachers to prepare the young learners for their transition into Kindergarten.

A JustB4 Preschool program is offered at Tremblay Elementary School. The program offers an introduction into 'school life'. The students are involved in the school community and sets the young students up for a successful transition into school. The Ministry provided initial start up funding for this program for a 3-year period. Ministry funding will no longer be offered for the 2025-2026 school year; however, the district is committed to continuing with this successful program.

The Early Learning department also promotes and supports the early childhood education programs by offering class presentations and mentoring of practicum students.

Many events and activities are held throughout the year:

- Family Fun Day is offered on every Saturday from 9 am – 12 pm.
- The Baby Welcome Party celebrate babies born the previous year.
- Positive Discipline Parenting Workshop is offered for free to parents. The classes are 1 hr a week for 6 weeks. Child minding is offered to parents to allow them to attend the class.
- Participate in National Child Day in November of each year.
- Created and participates in the Dawson Creek Child Care Task Force.
- Early Development Instrument – data collected from Kindergarten teachers focussing on physical well being, social emotional learning.
- Partnership with YMCA to offer before and after school care programs. Currently 4 programs are operating.
- Actively involved in the New child care spaces capital projects.
- Early Years Health Fair 2025 – 53 families attended the event.

Building Learning Together Society is a partnership between the school district and community partners to support all things early learning.

Trustee Wards left the meeting at 1:45 pm.

5.0 CORRESPONDENCE

6.0 REPORTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

R6.1 School/Student News

The Superintendent reported school/student news:

- Don Titus Montessori students are using math manipulatives to increase their literacy skills.
- As part of the Champions in the Classroom program, Parkland Elementary School students are learning about goal setting and working together to set school wide goals.
- Schools are participating in the Bear Mountain Downhill Ski Program.
- Ecole Frank Ross' library is set up for their book tasting event where students have the opportunity to 'taste' a variety of books. The Social Justice Club created Stop Bullying pins for Pink Shirt Day on February 26th. Some classes went bowling with their buddy classrooms. Students had fun making snow sculptures as part of La Tire activities that all EFR students participated in for French Immersion celebration week.
- The Tremblay Elementary Curling Team, Cool Beans, have had a great year and will be participating in the Elementary Curling League Bonspiel on March 1st. Tremblay students are also practicing Numeracy and Science skills.
- 100s Day was recently celebrated. At Tremblay Elementary Students and staff dressed up as if they were 100 years old and enjoyed a pancake and sausage breakfast.
- On February 14th Northern Lights College hosted the Regional Skills Competition event. The Try A Trade event and Women in Trades conference was held in conjunction with the skills competition. Gold medal winners in the junior and senior skills competitions are invited to compete at the provincial competition held in Abbotsford, BC on April 16th.
- Chetwynd Secondary School and Dawson Creek Secondary School teamed up for a ski trip to Jasper, AB.
- Students at Pouce Coupe Elementary School were challenged by the school's Leadership Team and Social Justice Club to create a logo design for Pink Shirt Day. Students worked hard at creating designs that promoted kindness and anti-bullying.

Congratulations to Maddison Terkilsen on your winning design! The school is purchasing pink shirts with Maddison’s design for all students and staff to wear on February 26th.

- At Devereaux Elementary, Wayne Lariviere is helping students create a mural to compliment the Buddy Bench that they created last year. Monthly assemblies are fun at Devereaux Elementary as they always play a minute-to-win-it game. This month the students played a game called Sticky Face. The students had one minute to stick as many sticky notes as possible to their partner’s face!
- Julie Hamilton has been appointed as acting vice-principal at DCSS Central Campus.

R6.2 K-12 Literacy Supports – Professional Learning Grants Update

In February 2025, the District was awarded a professional learning grant in the amount of \$238,867 to better support students’ literacy development in the K-12 school system. The grant is to be used to provide professional learning for teachers and support staff in the area of evidence-based approaches to literacy development and literacy information/resources for parents and caregivers. The funds are to be fully expended by June 30, 2027.

7.0 REPORTS FROM THE SECRETARY TREASURER

R7.1 Monthly Financial Report – January 2025

The Secretary Treasurer presented the monthly finance report for January 2025. The report now reflects the amended budget. Substitutes filling in for regular position staffing vacancies are now being reported in regular salary budgets instead of substitutes to better align the budget.

R7.2 2024-2025 Amended Annual Budget & Bylaw

The Secretary Treasurer presented 2024-2025 Amended Annual Budget. Overall, the amended budget increased by \$4.3m, representing an overall increase of 6.4%.

(2025-02-010)

MOVED/SECONDED – Hillton/Gulick

THAT the School District No. 59 (Peace River South) Amended Annual Budget Bylaw for the fiscal year 2024-2025 showing the estimated revenues and expenditures and the total budget bylaw amount of \$72,096,425 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year be read a first time.

CARRIED

MOVED/SECONDED – Gulick/Hillton

THAT the School District No. 59 (Peace River South) Amended Annual Budget Bylaw for the fiscal year 2024-2025 showing the estimated revenues and expenditures and the total budget bylaw amount of \$72,096,425 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year be read a second time.

(2025-02-011)

MOVED/SECONDED – Gulick/Jones

That the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) move into committee of the whole.

CARRIED

The Board Chair made a recommendation to move out of the committee of the whole.

(2025-02-012)

MOVED/SECONDED – Gulick/Hillton

THAT the School District No. 59 (Peace River South) Amended Annual Budget Bylaw for the fiscal year 2024-2025 showing the estimated revenues and expenditures and the total budget bylaw amount of \$72,096,425 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year be read a second time.
CARRIED

(2024-02-013)

MOVED/SECONDED – Jones/Mounsey

THAT, the Board allows the third reading of 2024-2025 Amended Budget Bylaw to occur in this meeting.

CARRIED

(2024-02-014)

MOVED/SECONDED – Schurmann/Hillton

THAT the School District No. 59 (Peace River South) Amended Annual Budget Bylaw for the fiscal year 2024-2025 showing the estimated revenues and expenditures and the total budget bylaw amount of \$72,096,425 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year be read a third time, passed, and adopted.

CARRIED

R7.3 2025-2026 Budget

a) Enrolment Projections

The Secretary Treasurer presented 3-year enrolment projections. The 2025-2026 projections will be considered in developing the 2025-2026 annual budget. Overall, the district is projecting a slight increase in enrolment of 21.399 FTE to total 3,669 FTE.

b) Budget Survey

A budget survey is available for public input on the 2025-2026 annual budget. The consultation process allows for input on priorities and considerations in the budget development process. The survey is open until March 4, 2025. [2025-2026 Budget Survey Link](#)

R7.4 Capital Projects Report

Crescent Park Elementary School Expansion

Since January 22, 2025, the following have occurred:

- Tender closed - 4 bids received with prices ranging from \$3.1 to \$4.9 million and Fort Modular was awarded the contract for the modular portion of construction. [Our Completed Projects | Case Studies | Fort Modular](#)
- Project kick off meeting with Fort Modular, Engineer and SD59 project team, including Principal Richer.

ChildcareBC New Spaces – Tremblay & Tumbler Ridge Elementary

Since January 22, 2025, the following progress has occurred:

- Architect and Engineer continued working on civil and structural drawings.
- Architect completed costing for stick building the childcare facilities.
 - Tumbler childcare stick build cost \$ 5.6m
 - Dawson childcare stick build cost \$ 5.0m

- Architect and project team met to discuss costing and next steps. Architect still awaiting modular build costing to compare to stick build.
- Project team begins licensing applications with Northern Health for both locations.
- Architect and Director of Operations met with the City of Dawson Creek to discuss fire hydrant requirements and next steps in the building permit process.

Updates are available on the district website at [Capital Projects | School District 59 \(sd59.bc.ca\)](https://www.sd59.bc.ca/Capital-Projects).

R7.5 Secretary Treasurer's Report – February 2025

The Secretary Treasurer's report for February was provided for information.

8.0 TRUSTEE ITEMS

R8.1 BCSTA Update – R. Gulick

Trustee Gulick presented the latest news and events from the BCSTA.

Trustees attended the Northern Interior Branch meeting held in Prince George on February 7 & 8, 2025. The meeting focussed on motion development for the BCSTA AGM which will be held in Vancouver from April 24-26, 2025, as well as an engaging MLA forum.

Trustee Gulick will be attending the Provincial Council online, Saturday, February 22, 2025.

R8.2 Draft Letter to Minister of Education – C. Anderson

Trustees approved to send a letter to the Minister of Education and Child Care outlining some barriers to education that are a priority of the board to see addressed. In the letter, the Board noted the following: the need for an online/hybrid teacher education program and specifically the advancement of the UNBC Northern Cohort Bachelor of Education Program; interprovincial credential recognition to lessen unnecessary TRB/TQS costs and delays; streamlining of the Letter of Permission process; and reducing and coordinating provincial travel for meetings to relieve the higher costs and travel time for northern and remote districts to attend provincial meetings.

(2025-02-015)

MOVED/SECONDED – Schurmann/Gulick

THAT, the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) approve the letter to the Minister of Education and Child Care as presented.

CARRIED

9.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

R9.1 Indigenous Education Councils

Trustee Hillton reported the Chetwynd Indigenous Council was presented with the How Are We Doing? Report. Council also reviewed the Bill 40 changes.

Trustee Jones reported the Dawson Creek Indigenous Council will be meeting on February 25, 2025, where the How Are We Doing? Report will be presented.

R9.2 Policy Committee

The Policy Committee revised Policy and Regulation 4585 Media in Schools and is recommending circulating both the policy and regulation for feedback.

(2025-02-016)

MOVED/SECONDED – Gulick/Schurmann

THAT, the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) approve to circulate Policy and Regulation 4585 Media in Schools for feedback for a minimum thirty days.

CARRIED

Revised Regulation 5170 Reimbursement of Expenses (Staff) was presented to the board for information.

10.0 DIARY

11.0 NOTICE OF MOTION

12.0 QUESTION PERIOD

A question-and-answer period was provided.

13.0 FUTURE BUSINESS

R13.1 - Regular Board Meeting – March 12, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

(2025-02-017)

MOVED – Hillton

THAT the Regular Board Meeting of February 19, 2025 be terminated. (3:21 PM)

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Original Signed By: _____
C. Anderson, Board Chair

Original Signed By: _____
K. Morris Secretary Treasurer