



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: January 21, 2026 – 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 – 1:06 PM

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Additions: Nil

Deletions: Nil

(2026-01-004)

MOVED/SECONDED – Wards/Hillton

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) approve the January 21, 2026 Regular Board Meeting agenda as presented.

CARRIED

1.0 ITEMS FOR ADOPTION

R1.1 Regular Board Meeting Minutes – December 10, 2025

The Chair asked for any corrections to the minutes.

(2026-01-005)

The Chair declared the minutes of the open meeting December 10, 2025 approved as presented.

R1.2 Excerpts of Closed Board Meeting – December 10, 2025

(2026-01-006)

The Chair declared the excerpts of the closed board meeting December 10, 2025 approved as presented.

2.0 BUSINESS ARISING

3.0 ESSENTIAL ITEMS

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

5.0 CORRESPONDENCE

6.0 REPORTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

R6.1 School/Student News

The Superintendent reported school/student news:

- Tremblay Elementary held a Christmas Musical which was so well received it may just become a new tradition at the school! A Christmas Elf visited the Kindergarten class to share some magical facts and play games with the students. The school is continuing the 7 Teaching Spirit Awards that are awarded at the Monday assemblies, and the grade 5,6,7 class surveyed the school to see how many different countries/origins make up the school community. Students created the survey, organized, sorted and graphed the results and then flags were ordered for all the countries that represent families at the school.
- Dawson Creek Secondary School – Central Campus wishes Cynthia Percy a happy retirement and welcomes Joanne Malkinson as the new Principal as of January 1st. The school is focusing on projects that include frog dissections, rebuilding small motors, outdoor education, sewing stuffed animals, pajama pants and shorts, and spaghetti bridge building. The school entered READBowl, a global reading competition hosted by former NFL player Malcolm Mitchell's Share the Magic Foundation. The competition began on January 12th and continues through Super Bowl Sunday on February 8th. The four-week, football-themed challenge invites K-12 classrooms, groups, and individuals to compete for the title of "World Champion of Reading" by logging the most reading minutes. Central is also excited to announce they received a \$5,000 donation from CNRL to use towards sport activities.
- Moberly Lake Elementary School is enjoying outdoor activities, singing for practicing literacy, learning about the beginning, middle and end of stories, how to tell time, and students are building spears to get ready for Trapper Days.

- Dawson Creek Secondary School - South Peace Campus received a \$10,000 donation from CNRL to use towards dual credit and career programs.
- Chetwynd Secondary students have been busy building electricity circuits using lego.
- At Tumbler Ridge Secondary School, students are using graphic design applications to create a design then using an app to make them come to life. The staff hosted a welcome back breakfast in January for students.
- Mr. Parr's class at Canalta Elementary is reading popular fairytales and then building the structures that go with the stories to help solve the problem in each tale. Other students are learning how to play various card games to practice their math skills.
- Parkland Elementary students had fun crafting clay ornaments, and the RC club is very popular with students.
- The library at Little Prairie Elementary is having a reading contest with students enjoying hot chocolate and cookies.
- Devereaux Elementary is enjoying the outdoors with snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- McLeod's primary students are completing the snap numeracy assessment and learning all the different ways to demonstrate the number 10. Students are also enjoying cross country skiing.
- Schools throughout the District are enjoying field trips to the local downhill ski hill. Students receive a lesson and instructions before they hit the slopes.
- The district Student Voice group held their second session in early January. The group revisited the Compassionate Systems Iceberg Model and Generative Social Fields. They also learned about the four-player model, they completed a challenge where they had to work in the 4-player model and then identify the role they played in the model. Student Voice will be going out to other schools.

R6.2 2026-2027 Proposed School Calendar (DRAFT)

The 2026-2027 proposed school calendar was presented. The proposed calendar reflects the current collective agreement language around start, end, and break times with special provision for the two-week spring break.

A consultation period is required and allows for public feedback before the calendar is adopted by the board and submitted to the Ministry of Education and Child Care before March 31st.

Written feedback will be accepted until February 26, 2026.

(2026-01-007)

MOVED/SECONDED – Gulick/Hillton

That the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) approve the circulation of the proposed 2026-2027 school calendar for feedback.

CARRIED

R6.3 Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Program Update

Teachers and early childhood educators were officially added to the federal student loan forgiveness program as of December 31, 2025. The program targets teachers (including early childhood educators) working in rural or remote communities, specifically defined as population centres with 30,000 or fewer residents. Eligible teachers can receive up to \$30,000 in federal loan forgiveness over a maximum of five years.

There is a requirement that applicants must have provided in-person services for at least 10 consecutive months and at least 400 hours in an eligible school which due to the requirement for 10 months of consecutive work, therefore, new teachers that started positions in September 2025 would have to wait until the end of the school year to apply.

7.0 REPORTS FROM THE SECRETARY TREASURER

R7.1 2025-2026 Budget Change Report

The Secretary Treasurer presented the 2025-2026 Budget Change Report, indicating changes from the Preliminary Budget approved in April 2025. The Operating Grant recalculation is down 60 students which brings enrolment revenue down; however, there has been an increase in category claimed students which has resulted in an overall increase.

R7.2 Monthly Financial Report – December 2025

The Secretary Treasurer presented the monthly finance report for December 2025. As of December 31st, 12-month budgets should have 50% left and 10-month budgets should have 60% of their budget remaining.

R7.3 Capital Projects Report – January 2026

Crescent Park Elementary School Expansion

The Secretary Treasurer reported the decision to delay the civil work until the spring was due to the higher risks involved in the winter months; therefore, the occupancy date has been moved to the summer 2026.

Further updates included the Notice of Substantial Completion was issued to Fort Modular and the Director of Operations and Secretary-Treasurer met with engineer to review and update the project budget and discussed a plan to remediate current deficiencies.

ChildcareBC New Spaces – Tremblay & Tumbler Ridge Elementary

The project team met with Ministry staff regarding the resubmission of their application for additional funding for both Dawson Creek and Tumbler Ridge childcare projects due to the escalation of costs since the initial application was submitted to the Ministry of Education and ChildCare in 2023.

Key points from the discussion included:

- Projects cannot be combined if additional funding is not approved for one or both;
- If a project does not receive additional funding and the facility is not constructed, 100% of the funding must be returned to the Ministry. It is not allowable to return the residual after design costs are spent (To date SD59 has spent \$432,927 on the two childcare projects combined which is offset by interest revenue of \$100,000+);
- Scope may be adjusted if no additional funding is provided (i.e. the facility would be downsized in scale and service in order to meet the constraints of available funding).

The two applications for additional funding have progressed through the initial review and will move on to the next level of approval. No decision date was provided.

Full updates on the capital projects are available at <https://www.sd59.bc.ca/district/capital-projects>.

8.0 TRUSTEE ITEMS

R8.1 BCSTA Update – C. Anderson

Chair Anderson presented the latest news and events from the BCSTA.

Upcoming BCSTA Events:

BCSTA Northern Interior Branch Meeting – January 23-24, 2026 (Prince George)

BCSTA Provincial Council – February 20, 2026 (virtual)

BCSTA AGM in spring – April 9-11, 2026 (Vancouver)

R8.1 Northern Interior Branch Advocacy – C. Anderson

Trustees will be travelling to Prince George to attend the Northern Interior Branch (NIB) meeting from January 23-24, 2026. The Board discussed key advocacy issues they would like to discuss at the regional meeting.

Key topics included:

- Regional Board Representation
- Childcare Program Funding
- Continued Staff Shortages – K-12 Workforce Plan
- Rural and Remote Network to continue
- Pre-employment Incentives to continue
- Teacher education in dual credit options

9.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

R9.1 Indigenous Education Partners' Advisory Councils

Trustee Hillton reported the Chetwynd Indigenous Education Council met on January 20, 2026. Discussions included updates on LEA staffing, budget, and the Enhancement Agreement.

Trustee Jones reported the Dawson Creek council meeting will be held on January 26, 2026. The focus of the December meeting was to come together to share a meal and celebrate with each other.

R9.2 Policy Committee

The Policy Committee is reviewing a number of policies. Most revisions are updating to current language and practices of the District.

(2026-01-008)

MOVED/SECONDED – Gulick/Wards

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) circulate the following policies for feedback for a minimum of 30 days:

- 3150 Teacher Absences
- 3210 Political Activities

CARRIED

(2026-01-009)

MOVED/SECONDED – Hillton/Wards

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) adopt the following policies as presented:

- 2060 Legal Requirement

- 4320 Custody of Students
 - 4535 Response to Unexpected Health Emergencies
 - 4615 Employee Records
- CARRIED

The following two policies still are currently out for feedback for consideration of repeal until February 12, 2026:

- 3020 Employment of Summer Students – no longer reflects current SD59 practices
- 3080 Retirement – retirement provisions are addressed in collective agreements

10.0 DIARY

11.0 NOTICE OF MOTION

12.0 QUESTION PERIOD

A question and answer period was provided.

Nil

13.0 FUTURE BUSINESS

R13.1 - Regular Board Meeting – February 18, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

(2026-01-010)

MOVED – Hillton

THAT, the Board of Education of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) Regular Board Meeting of January 21, 2026 be terminated. (2:13 PM)

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Original Signed By:
C. Anderson, Board Chair

Original Signed By:
P. Neale, Secretary Treasurer