



**Trustees:**

Ken Clarkson (Chair), Susan Carr, Mike Huber, Eleanor Palis (Vice-Chair), Stepan Vdovine, Kathie Ward

**Executive:**

Jan Unwin (Superintendent), Stewart Sonne (Deputy Superintendent), Wayne Jefferson (Secretary Treasurer)

**Presentations**

Parent Dr. Samantha Boutet made a presentation to the Board outlining her concerns around the use of WiFi in schools. She presented data which she said showed the dangers associated with exposure to WiFi. She said that parents should have the opportunity to give informed consent if their children were to be exposed to WiFi, that a WiFi-free school should be available and that parents should have a means of reporting if their children were exhibiting symptoms of EHS (Electrical Hypersensitivity Syndrome).

**Local teacher bargaining**

The Board approved a recommendation brought by Chair Clarkson that the Board “support the expansion of bargaining on a local level” with teachers, and that district staff meet with the MRTA (Maple Ridge Teachers’ Association) early in March to explore bargaining protocols. The Board also approved a letter to be sent to The BCTF (British Columbia Teachers’ Federation) and the BCPSEA (British Columbia Public School Employers’ Association) calling on both parties to meet to negotiate the expansion of local bargaining.

**Second quarter financial statements**

The Board received second quarter financial statements. Secretary Treasurer Jefferson said that the District budget was balanced and remained on track to stay that way.

**Amended Budget Bylaws approved**

The Board approved recommendations to amend budget bylaws thereby allowing trustees to approve the amended budget in three sections, one for each major employee group. By dividing the amended budget into sections, trustees who considered themselves to be in conflict could excuse themselves while still leaving the Board with a quorum. Amended Budget Bylaw No. 1 (teachers) states that “all decisions taken by the 2010/2011 Budget Committee during its deliberations regarding teacher costs totaling \$78,185,303...be approved by the Board for implementation. Two similar bylaws relate to unionized support staff (costs totaling \$22,150,105) and “other” employees (costs totaling \$28,725,421).

**French Immersion registration report**

The Board received a report outlining steps taken to accommodate parents wishing to register their children for French Immersion. Superintendent Unwin said that additional classes would be added to Eric Langton, Laity View and Pitt Meadows elementary schools in order to accommodate all requests. She said that if this year’s numbers became a trend district staff would need to discuss future directions for the program and address the issue of imbalance between French and English enrolments at some locations.

Superintendent Unwin also provided figures showing the numbers of students who withdraw from French Immersion at each grade level. The figures showed that more withdrawals occurred towards Grade 12.

### **Pilot school year calendar changes to be proposed**

Superintendent Unwin updated the Board on research being done around bell schedules and said that options for a pilot school year calendar would be outlined at the March 9 Board meeting and then made public prior to Board consideration on April 13.

The Superintendent also updated the Board on the recently completed kindergarten registration process which she said showed 100 more children registered than at the same time last year. She said that all parents wishing to register children in their own catchment schools would be accommodated and that staff were looking at possible refinements to the registration process aimed at eliminating the need for lineups.

### **Budget timelines approved**

The Board approved the 2011-2012 budget timelines and directed that the timelines be published on the district website along with a means for individuals to add their input to the budget process.

### **Off-leash parks**

The Board received a report on the creation of two off-leash dog parks created in fenced off areas bordering Davie Jones and Laity View elementary school grounds. Secretary Treasurer Jefferson said that he is not aware of any unresolved issues and believes the two areas have worked out as expected.

### **BCSTA Ad Hoc Committee report**

The Board received a report from Trustee Ward in her role as BCSTA (British Columbia School Trustees' Association) Provincial Councilor on the work of the BCSTA Ad Hoc committee, which is currently reviewing the association's constitution and bylaws.

The Board also provided Trustee Ward with direction on how they wish the councilor to vote on five items that will be debated by the BCSTA Provincial Council.

### **Good News items**

Trustees and staff noted the following good news items: a very successful presentation on social media organized by the Pitt Meadows Community Policing Committee; Grade 10 interviews at Pitt Meadows Secondary School; and wonderful things going on at Whonnock including efforts to expand its music program and a children's book created by one of the school's teachers and her students.

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be on Wednesday, March 9  
at 6 PM in the District Education Office.**