



**Trustees:**

Mike Murray (Chair), Eleanor Palis (Vice-Chair), Lisa Beare, Susan Carr, Korleen Carreras, Ken Clarkson, Dr. Dave Rempel

**Executive:**

Sylvia Russell (Superintendent), Laurie Meston (Deputy Superintendent), Flavia Coughlan (Secretary Treasurer)

**Presentation: Building Safe and Caring School Communities**

Safe School Counselors Sherri Skerrat and Sherri McKinnon presented their annual report, which provided an overview of the implementation of the Board’s *Safe and Caring Schools Policy*. Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows schools are making great progress in developing the culture of care envisioned by the Board policy, Sherri Skerrat remarked, noting also that the Safe Schools team’s next step will be to begin building a framework for a universal common language. Strong crisis intervention protocols are currently in place at school and district levels, the team reflected, with community service providers often assisting in cases where additional supports are required. The guiding commitment is building safe, caring, and socially responsible school environments in which all learners can achieve academic excellence, personal growth and responsible citizenship.

**Presentation: Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fraser Valley**

Jessie Walker and Cassie Silva presented to the Board on the *Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fraser Valley* mentoring network. The organization, Walker explained, has been around for many years. It has enjoyed great success in program outcomes, which include improved academic performance and a greater sense of engagement with and connection to school life on the part of the child benefiting from the mentorship. Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows schools currently participating in this program include Webster’s Corners, Davie Jones, Alexander Robinson, Highland Park and Blue Mountain. Afterschool programs focus on balanced eating, positive image building, and a community-based mentoring program. Participation numbers, Walker and Silva noted, are down this year, with a two-year waitlist for mentorship matches in the case of young boys. The Board suggested the local Rotary Clubs may be an excellent resource, both for the recruitment of volunteers and for increased funding support.

**Budget Process**

The Board approved the following proposed *2015/16 Preliminary Budget Process* timeline:

<p><b>Wednesday, February 11, 2015</b>  <b>DEO</b>  <b>6:00 pm</b></p>	<p><b>Board Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation and approval of the Proposed Budget Process/Timeline</li> <li>• Presentation of Projected Enrolments for 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18</li> </ul>
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<b>Wednesday, February 25, 2015</b> <b>DEO</b> <b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation and Board Approval of the 2014/15 Amended Annual Budget</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday, February 25, 2015</b> <b>DEO</b>	<b>Budget Committee of the Whole</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the 2015/16 preliminary cost pressure estimates</li> <li>• Partner groups consultation on budget balancing options</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday, March 25, 2015</b> <b>DEO</b>	<b>Budget Committee of the Whole</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner groups presentation of the 2015/16 budget balancing options</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday, April 8, 2015</b> <b>DEO</b> <b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the 2015/16 Preliminary Budget</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday, April 15, 2015</b> <b>MRSS</b> <b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Budget Committee of the Whole</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and partner groups input on the Proposed 2015/16 Preliminary Budget</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday, April 29, 2015</b> <b>DEO</b> <b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of the 2015/16 Budget Balancing Proposals</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday, May 13, 2015</b> <b>DEO</b> <b>6:00 pm</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of the 2015/16 Preliminary Budget Bylaw</li> </ul>

This process, Secretary Treasurer Coughlan explained, is similar to the process outlined in the previous year.

#### **Graduated Adult Funding Change**

Superintendent Sylvia Russell presented a report on Graduated Adult Funding change, prepared by Principal of Continuing Education, Kim Bondi. In the report, Mr. Bondi explains that registration for the current term is high, since this is the last semester these courses are available to students at no charge. Beginning May 1, 2015, however, the Ministry of Education will no longer provide funding to school districts for tuition-free upgrading courses for adults who already hold a high school diploma. Registration in the program is expected to drop dramatically (from 20 students to an estimated 5 or 6) once the funding removal goes into effect, though the precise extent of the impact is as yet unclear. Superintendent Russell reflected that this removal of funding is a loss to the community, while the Board voiced its collective concern that the policy change creates barriers for adult learners needing to upgrade their skills. Trustees resolved to send a letter to the Ministry, asking for clarification on how the redirected funding of approximately \$9M will be dispersed to Boards of Education.

### Superintendent's Update

The Superintendent's Updated included the following long list of highlights:

- Two students in the Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District have won Loran Scholarships, worth \$100,000 each. Congratulations to Joanne Banh of Maple Ridge Secondary, and Emerald UnRuh of Westview Secondary;
- 10 students in the Alternate Program received forklift training with the support of the Tzu Chi Foundation bursary program;
- 2 new playgrounds were opened in the school district with the help of school PACs and the Rotary – one at Maple Ridge Elementary, and one at Glenwood Elementary;
- The IT department announced the introduction of the Adobe Academy, which will be a school-based program available to students across the district;
- Samuel Robertson Technical's senior basketball team has experienced great success at the Saint John Brefeuf Tournament, which they entered as defending champions and completed as champions;
- Laity View Elementary participated in the Global Play Day last week, while the Maple Man came to three of our French Immersion schools to share Quebecois traditions with students;
- Fairview Elementary is celebrating reading month with RED (Read Every Day) initiatives;
- Edith McDermott has developed a classroom as a primary exploration space;
- 21 Maple Ridge Secondary students attended the Vancouver Model United Nations Conference, while the school's Senior Jazz Band was preparing to perform at the Envision Jazz Festival in Surrey;
- Trades Information Night is coming up on Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> at Thomas Haney Secondary.

### Enrolment Projections

Secretary Treasurer Flavia Coughlan presented on District enrolment projections for 2015/16, 2016/17, and 2017/18. These projections, which must be submitted to the Ministry of Education by February 13, 2015, will form the basis of Ministry's operation grant for the Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District.

The projections anticipate a decline of 59FTE regular school age students for 2015/16, followed by an additional decline of 53 FTE in 2016/17 and an increase of 59 FTE in 2017/18. Graduated student enrolment is anticipated to decline by 15 FTE due to the Graduated Adult Funding policy change, while Aboriginal student enrolments are expected to decline in 2016/17 by 40 FTE and in 2017/18 by 30 FTE. Increases of 5 FTE are expected for level two students with special needs each year, and 10 FTE each year for English Language Learners. Finally, International Education enrolments are increasing by 24 FTE from projections.

### Good News

Trustees noted the following good news items: trustee Rempel spoke about the Tzu Chi annual celebration, which he had attended with Superintendent Russell and Board Chair Murray; Chair Murray reported on his involvement on the *Salvation Army Community Council*, which provides considerable support to underprivileged students and families throughout the year, and spoke also about his attendance at the Montessori PAC meeting;

trustee Carr attended an information meeting about the possible expansion of the CyberSchool and Environmental School programs, and spoke also about the upcoming *Your Kids and Drugs Parent Forum* hosted by Alouette Addiction at Pitt Meadows Secondary School on February 18, 2015.

**The next Board of Education meeting will be at 6 pm on February 25, 2015 in the District Education Office.**