



Board Meeting Highlights November 27, 2013

Trustees:

Mike Murray (Chair), Susan Carr, Ken Clarkson, Kathy Marshall, Eleanor Palis (Vice-Chair), Dave Rempell

Executive:

Jan Unwin (Superintendent), Laurie Meston (Deputy Superintendent), Flavia Coughlan (Secretary Treasurer)

Presentation: International Education

Manager of International Education, Michael Polan, spoke to Board about the school district's International Education program. Mr. Polan noted that the program is on target with its financial projections for the 2013/14 school year, and that ambitious recruiting efforts are planned for 2014/15. SD42 currently has 137 new and extending international students from countries that include South Korea, China, Mexico, Germany and Japan.

Mr. Polan explained that Canada's reputation in the international community suffered this past year because of a six-month labour dispute that impacted the issuance of student visas. Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows nevertheless continues to be perceived as a good place to study, said Mr. Polan, because the community is friendly and small, while the quality of education and the quality of homestay are both high.

Read more SD42 International Education program at <http://inted.sd42.ca/>

Capital Plan Amendment

The Board adopted a capital plan amendment to incorporate building envelope improvements for Maple Ridge Secondary School in response to the Ministry's indication that these types of repairs will be prioritized.

Information Technology Policy

The Board received the following draft policies and procedures for information and continuation with the consultation process:

5780 Policy: Information Technology and Communication Systems - Appropriate Use

5780.1 Procedure: Social Media Guidelines

7210 Policy: Workplace Discrimination or Bullying and Harassment Policy

7210.1 Reporting Procedure

7210.2 Investigation Procedure

These draft policies are posted for review and public input at <http://www.sd42.ca/node/2008>

BC Hydro Rates Increase

The board discussed the recently announced increase in BC Hydro rates. Secretary Treasurer Coughlan noted that BC Hydro had set aside funding to support energy saving upgrades and to offset in this way the increased costs.

Good News

In the good news portion of the evening, Superintendent Jan Unwin announced that the Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District received its graduation rate figures for the 2012/13 school year from the Ministry of Education, and that the news is very good. The District's 6 year graduation rates have risen from 77.1% in 2008/9 to 83.5% in 2011/12. For 2012/13, SD42 grad rates have jumped to an amazing 90.7%, which is well above the provincial average of 83.6%.

Graduation rates for Aboriginal students have also risen, said Superintendent Unwin, though they are still not where District staff would like to see them. These rates have climbed from 58.6% in 2008/9 to 67.4% in 2011/12. For 2012/13, Aboriginal grad rates came in at 74%, which again is well above the provincial average of 57%. Superintendent Unwin attributed this continuous improvement to the work of dedicated teachers and to the District's solid community relationships.

The next Board of Education meeting will be at 6 pm on December 11, 2013 in the District Education Office.