

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF  
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 37 (DELTA)

DATE, TIME, AND PLACE: January 9, 2024 7:30 p.m.  
District Administration Building

PRESENT: Trustees: V. Windsor, Chairperson  
J. Muego, Vice-Chairperson  
E. Beard  
N. Daula  
A. Dhillon  
M. Gooch  
N. Kanakos  
  
D. Sheppard, Superintendent of Schools  
N. Christ, Secretary-Treasurer  
D. Duff, Director, Facilities & Planning  
J. Duffin, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer  
J. Maranda, Assistant Superintendent  
A. Mascati, Director of Human Resources  
N. Stephenson, Director, Learning Services - Education Programs  
K. Symonds, Director, International Student Programs  
R. Sonsalla, Executive Assistant

ABSENT: B. Bauman, Assistant Superintendent  
P. Klassen, Director, Learning Services - Inclusive Learning  
C. Tucker, Director of Communications

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

Chairperson Windsor opened the meeting by acknowledging the traditional territory of the Tsawwassen First Nation and Musqueam Indian Band and of all the Hun'qumi'num speaking people who have been stewards of this land since time immemorial, and also offered her respect to all the Elders who have gone before us and to all Canadians who are on the journey of Reconciliation.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

M/S Trustees Dhillon / Beard  
**THAT** the agenda be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

Chairperson Windsor introduced the following education partners attending the meeting:

- John Mann – DPVPA
- Niels Nielsen - DPVPA
- Daun Frederickson – President, CUPE Local 1091

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- Susan Yao – President, DTA
- Alison Roche – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, DTA
- Kathy Macfarlane – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, DTA
- Jeanie McKay – Pro D Chair, DTA
- Sandra Cadez – Health & Safety Chair, DTA

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS STRATEGY PRESENTATION

Altaf Mascati, Director of Human Resources, introduced Nicole Braid, District Principal, Employee Services.

Ms. Braid provided an overview of the Employee Wellbeing Advisory Committee; who the members are, what the goals of the Committee are, and when they meet. The Committee have identified three key factors in the goal to ensure thriving employees:

- Self – The importance of being a healthy individual
- Site – Purposeful and collaborative workplaces
- System – Having the resources and support to be successful in your work

In February 2022 a Mental Health and Wellness survey was conducted with all employee groups. Based on information received from 924 respondents, the committee has worked to create goals and actions in each of the three focus areas of Self, Site and System. Ms. Braid spoke further about each of the three categories to identify areas that require the least and most support, as well as where the highest need for improvements lay. In each of the three key areas, she provided a list of focused actions that have been or will be implemented to improve overall employee wellness, such as the “Walk & Talk” series, Peer Support programs, and Leadership programs and training sessions. The Committee will continue to work with all groups to ensure the wellness of employees continues to be a priority.

Trustee Kanakos thanked the Committee for their work. He recognized the importance of ensuring that staff are happy, as that ultimately transfers down to our students’ wellbeing.

Trustee Dhillon acknowledged Ms. Braid’s work and commented on how thoughtful and mindful the process is.

Chair Windsor thanked Ms. Braid and the Committee for their good and important work.

Mr. Mascati left the meeting at 8:02 p.m. after the Employee Wellness Strategy Presentation.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM NUMBERS

Karen Symonds, Director of International Programs, provided the Board with an update on International Student Programs, in particular, the current student enrollment numbers. She began with a brief overview of student testimonials, and shared that overall, students enjoy their learning experiences in Delta.

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She provided a presentation that outlined the headcount comparison from January 1, 2023, where Delta had 593 students vs. January 1, 2024, where Delta has 630 students. It appears enrollment is rebounding after the dip during COVID, and numbers are slightly up this year overall. Homestay is in recovery mode in Ladner and Tsawwassen which should help boost the intake numbers as we see an increase in Homestay availability. There is an increase in students arriving with a Graduation path, which is encouraging as these areas were hit hard during the COVID years. Ms. Symonds provided an overview of the Top 16 countries of origin, other source countries, as well as information on where students are living when they study in Delta (Homestay vs private arrangements). Some of the positive trends they are seeing is increasing numbers of students applying for longer term studies (graduation), increased interest in our Summer ELL Program, high demand for activity programs and specialty PE classes. Ms. Symonds gave an overview of the various initiatives International Programs is taking to attract students, which include education conferences/exhibitions/fairs, meetings with agent partners, homestay orientations, pre-departure orientations and school tours. Overall, the trend for International Student Programs is on the uprise and shows positive trends going forward.

Chair Windsor commented on the process and thanked Ms. Symonds and her staff for all the work being done in International Programs.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

M/S Trustee Gooch / Vice Chair Muego

**THAT** the Minutes of the Regular meeting of December 12, 2023 be approved.

CARRIED

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

Trustee Gooch reported on the following:

- November 20 – Attended and sat on the interview committee for the position of Elementary Principal. There were many talented candidates and she is confident in the capabilities of the successful incumbent.
- November 23-25 – Attended the BCSTA Trustee Academy. She particularly enjoyed the presentation by Michael Kusugak, who told stories about his traditional upbringing, imparting the importance of storytelling in culture.
- December – Attended, as a parent, the Winter concert at South Park Elementary School. It was a wonderful concert and well attended by the community. The students had such enthusiasm and were full of holiday spirit.

Trustee Kanakos reported on the following:

- December 12 - Attended the playground opening at Richardson Elementary. Enjoyed seeing the happy faces on the children enjoying their new playground.

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- December - Attended the South Park Elementary Winter concert. He enjoyed the enthusiasm and hard work that went into the event.
- December 19 – Attended the Oratona Dinner for the Seaforth Highlanders Cadets at Seaquam Secondary School.

Vice Chair Muego reported on the following:

- December 20 – Attended the Beach Grove Elementary Winter concert. He enjoyed it immensely and never gets tired of seeing the joy in the parents and students during these events.

Trustee Dhillon reported on the following:

- December 20 – Attended the Christmas Concert at Pinewood Elementary School. She was impressed by the variety and ingenuity displayed throughout the performance and hopes to make it a yearly tradition.
- Has been working as the Grant Chair with the Delta Community Foundation to identify emergent needs in the district. They were able to commit \$4000 from their Community Grant Program towards the North Delta Starfish Backpack program, which addresses the rising rate of food insecurity experienced by families in our community.

Trustee Daula reported on the following:

- December 7 – Attended the DYAC Meeting at South Delta Secondary School. The meeting focused on Mental Health and Connectivity in Schools. Students shared wonderful ideas that included writing positive messages on school boards, having Global games days, and establishing wellness clubs in schools. Overall, she was very encouraged to see students wanting to help each other.
- December 17 – Attended the Guru Nanak Food Bank fundraiser event to raise money for Make-A-Wish Foundation and Ronald McDonald House in Vancouver. There was also a 50-50 draw worth \$2,620. The winner of the draw donated his share to the food bank, who in turn donated the full amount to the Delta School District's lunch program. She recognized and thanked the organization for their generous donation.

Trustee Beard reported on the following:

- December – Attended the South Park Elementary Winter Concert. It was absolutely wonderful, and she was particularly impressed with the music and dance.

Chair Windsor reported on the following:

- December 19 – Attended the Sunshine Hills Elementary Winter Concert. She loved attending it and was especially impressed with the sign language performance alongside the singing of a Christmas carol.

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IB FEES

Judy Maranda, Assistant Superintendent, advised that there is no recommendation to increase the International Baccalaureate fees that students pay to be in the program. The fees were released last year and will remain the same for this year.

M/S Trustees Beard / Dhillon

**THAT** the Board of Education approve the proposed IB fee schedules.

CARRIED

REVIEW BUDGET DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS AND RELATED  
DATES

Nicola Christ, Secretary Treasurer, provided a brief introduction of the 2024/25 Budget development process and timeline. She reviewed the meetings, their dates, and the purpose of each meeting as follows:

Public Board Meeting –February 20th at 7:30 pm

- Consultation with Education Partners on the 2024/25 Budget
- Approval of 2023/24 Amended Budget

Public Board Meeting – March 12th at 7:30 pm

- Public 2024/25 Engagement Process Update

Ministry announcement of Delta funding for 2024/25 – March 15th

Public release of Budget Recommendations – April 18th

Special Public Board Meeting – April 23rd at 7:30 pm

- Board receives delegates regarding Budget Recommendations

Public Board Meeting – April 30th at 7:30 pm

- Adoption of 2024/25 Budget Bylaw

Dates and more information on meetings will be posted on our website, and on social media.

DMEC MULTIPURPOSE ROOM RENOVATION

Nicola Christ, Secretary Treasurer, provided Trustees with information regarding the renovations to the aging and undersized DMEC Multipurpose Room. She advised that the upgrade is intended to primarily eliminate the need to incur external venue costs when hosting large meetings within the district. The cost of renovations will require a transfer of \$150,000 (consisting of \$120,000 in construction costs and a \$30,000 project contingency) from one-time district unrestricted reserve

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funds to a restricted reserve line item. In order to provide the funding for this project, Ms. Christ is requesting a change in the 2023-24 Operating Reserves to allow for the transfer of the funds.

M/S Trustees Dhillon / Daula

**THAT** the request to make funding available from unrestricted reserve funds for the DMEC Multipurpose room be approved, as requested.

CARRIED

QUESTION PERIOD

Kathy Macfarlane asked about the numbers for International Programs and how they impact the class size and composition for teachers. Doug Sheppard responded and indicated that students are placed based on space availability and extra staffing is provided if and where it is needed.

Jeanie Mackay asked how Homestay placements affect the school placement. Karen Symonds responded by advising that the school placement happens first and then the Homestay is filled accordingly once space has been found in a school.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

February 20, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

M/S Trustee Daula / Vice Chair Muego

**THAT** the Delta School Board meeting of January 9, 2024 be adjourned.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT: 8:46 p.m.

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Chairperson

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Secretary-Treasurer