

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

April 29, 2025

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DATE, TIME AND PLACE: April 29, 2025, 7:30 pm
District Administration Building

PRESENT: Trustees: J. Muego, Chairperson
V. Windsor, Vice-Chairperson
E. Beard
M. Gooch
N. Kanakos

D. Sheppard, Superintendent of Schools
B. Bauman, Assistant Superintendent
N. Christ, Secretary-Treasurer
F. de Dios, Director, Facilities & Planning
D. Duff, Director of Human Resources
J. Duffin, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
J. Gray, Assistant Superintendent
C. Tucker, Director of Communications

ABSENT: Trustees: N. Daula
A. Dhillon

C. Bromley, Director, Information Technology Services
P. Klassen, Director, Learning Services - Inclusive Learning
N. Stephenson, Director, Learning Services - Education Programs
K. Symonds, Director, International Student Programs

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Muego called the meeting to order at 7:29 p.m.

Chair Muego started the meeting with a speech acknowledging the tragedy that occurred at the Lapu Lapu festival in Vancouver on April 26. He is a Filipino-born Canadian who expressed a deep understanding of the emotional impact of the weekend's tragic events have on Filipino families, acknowledging both their pain and their resilience rooted in culture and faith. He also expressed concern about the continuous cycle of loss, hoping those affected will receive lasting support. Reflecting on their near life-long residence in the Lower Mainland, the speaker mourned the loss of collective innocence, noting how such tragedies have become normalized due to media and quick responses that fade too quickly. They contrasted this with the Canadian way of remembering rare tragedies, like the École Polytechnique de Montréal tragedy, which remains part of the nation's fabric even after 36 years. He emphasized that how Canadians support, love, and internalize the loss in the days to come will define the nation's character. A quote from Cormac McCarthy was shared, urging the remembrance of lost loved ones. He concluded by inviting a moment of reflection.

He proceeded 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 offered his respect to all the Elders who have gone before us and to all Canadians who are on the journey of Reconciliation.

He also welcomed the education partners, thanked them for their participation and introduced them to the audience. There were 2 representatives from the DTA – 1st VP Kathleen Macfarlane and TTOC Chair Louise O'Brien, and 2 representatives from the DPVPA – President John Pavao and Jim Hope who is the DPVPA representative for this

year's budget committee. He noted that due to a conference, the CUPE team were not able to send a representative to this meeting.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

M/S Vice Chair Windsor / Trustee Kanakos
THAT the Agenda be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/S Trustee Gooch / Vice Chair Windsor
THAT the Minutes of the Regular meeting of April 22, 2025, be approved.

CARRIED

M/S Trustee Kanakos/ Trustee Beard
THAT the Minutes of the Special Budget Input meeting of April 22, 2025, be approved.

CARRIED

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

Trustee Gooch reported on the following:

- April 22: Attended the CYC Collaborative meeting online, which focused on the strength and resiliency of students with challenging mental health needs. It was emphasized that when these students have a strong, cohesive team supporting them, they can thrive.
- April 24-26 BCSTA AGM: Participated in the BCSTA Annual General Meeting (AGM) over the weekend with fellow trustees, enhancing understanding of Indigenous education, data collection, trends, and resources in education in BC.
- April 28: Attended an online advocacy meeting with Minister Beare with a discussion focused on district-specific needs and inequities, addressing key challenges faced within the district.

Trustee Kanakos reported on the following:

- April 28: Also attended the online advocacy meeting with Minister Beare

Vice Chair Windsor reported on the following:

- April 24-26 Attended the BCSTA AGM, a valuable learning opportunity for trustees. The inclusion of student voices and performances was appreciated, especially the Student Success session, where students shared insightful perspectives.
- April 28 DPAC Meeting at Hellings Elementary: Neil Stephenson, Director of Learning Services, presented on K-12 Literacy Supports. Key points included the Ministry's two-year funding initiative to promote

literacy through building capacity in teachers and support staff for evidence-based instruction, supporting K–3 literacy screening and providing information to parents and caregivers.

Chair Muego reported on the following:

- April 24–26 BCSTA AGM: Attended the three-day BCSTA Annual General Meeting in Vancouver alongside fellow trustees.
- April 28 National Day of Mourning: Joined Leigh Bartlett and Daun Frederickson from CUPE 1091, along with District Executive and Senior Staff, for the flag-raising ceremony in recognition of the National Day of Mourning.
- April 29 Vice Principal Interviews: Participated in Vice Principal interviews held at the School Board Offices.

2025-26 BUDGET WITH ACCUMULATED OPERATING SURPLUS

Nicola Christ, Secretary Treasurer, provided information regarding the Budget Bylaw, which is being presented for adoption. She stated that an amount of \$5.6 million in Reserve funding, as presented at the Regular Meeting on April 22, has been incorporated into the 2025/26 Budget. Ms. Christ advised that input was received from the public on April 22. Based on the Budget Recommendations that were published on April 17th and the deliberations that took place after the April 22nd Special Input meeting, a final budget document has been prepared for Board approval.

M/S Trustee Gooch / Trustee Kanakos

THAT approval be given for three readings at one meeting of the Annual Budget Bylaw for the 2025/26 fiscal year.

CARRIED

M/S Trustee Gooch / Trustee Kanakos

THAT the Annual Budget Bylaw specifying a total budget bylaw amount of **\$240,729,105** for the 2025/2026 fiscal year be given three readings and approved.

CARRIED

M/S Vice Chair Windsor / Trustee Beard

THAT the Annual Budget Bylaw specifying a total budget bylaw amount of **\$240,729,105** for the 2025/26 fiscal year be given a **FIRST** reading.

CARRIED

M/S Trustee Gooch / Trustee Kanakos

THAT the Annual Budget Bylaw specifying a total budget bylaw amount of **\$240,729,105** for the 2025/26 fiscal year be given a **SECOND** reading.

CARRIED

M/S Trustee Beard / Vice Chair Windsor

THAT the Annual Budget Bylaw specifying a total budget bylaw amount of **\$240,729,105** for the 2025/26 fiscal year be given a **THIRD** reading.

CARRIED

Trustee Kanakos expressed his appreciation to the Budget Committee for their time and commitment in presenting a balanced budget. He extended particular thanks to the Secretary-Treasurer Nicola and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Jonathan, acknowledging the ongoing nature of the budgeting process and recognizing the challenges faced by other districts in achieving balanced budgets. He commended the work of the district's budget committee in this regard. He also noted that while there are always elements in any budget that may be subject to second-guessing, the Delta School District maintains a strong policy of fiscal responsibility. He emphasized that education dollars are managed with the utmost care. Considering the current economic challenges, he voiced his support for the budget as presented, in compliance with legal requirements for a balanced budget.

Trustee Beard expressed appreciation to the team for their work on the budget. She acknowledged that achieving a balanced budget reflects both the skill and dedication of staff. She noted that she is proud to work alongside such committed individuals and appreciates the peace of mind this brings.

Trustee Gooch extended thanks to Secretary-Treasurer Christ for her hard work in preparing the budget and for clearly communicating the financial details. She emphasized the importance of continued advocacy for increased funding and remarked on how fortunate she feels to work with such a dedicated group of colleagues.

Vice Chair Windsor thanks the diligent efforts of the staff as the district is currently facing a shortfall of \$188,000. This shortfall stems from an outdated funding formula based on a 2002 contract between the employer and the teachers. While the issue is complex and long-standing, it has resulted in funding discrepancy across districts. Unfortunately, Delta finds itself among the districts with fewer resources, limiting the ability to access the same funding that nearby districts receive. As a result, the district continues to carefully evaluate every dollar spent. From her perspective as a teacher, local association president, and trustee, she is deeply aware of how frugal this district has been in its budgeting. Despite these financial constraints, the dedicated staff and administration continue to provide a high-quality education to the students.

There was acknowledgment and expression of gratitude towards the Secretary-Treasurer's office their efforts in balancing the budget. There was emphasis on a realistic and conservative approach taken to ensure that the budget supports students effectively today. The budget team was well-prepared and utilized all available financial tools.

Some disappointments were concerns regarding the funding for Educational Assistants (EAs) and mentorship programs, but these issues are complex and will require thorough study to be fully addressed. Staff are encouraged to collaborate with partners to carefully approach and address funding concerns. EA funding was identified as one of the top three priorities in the funding list. Discussions with Minister Beare have been held on this matter. The role of Secretary-Treasurer Christ was highlighted as being critical in providing mentorship to staff, particularly in navigating complex issues like these.

2025-26 MULTI-YEAR BUDGET REPORT

Nicola Christ, Secretary-Treasurer, presented the 2025/26 Multi-Year Financial Report as prepared by Jonathan Duffin, Assistant Secretary Treasurer and Cathryn Tucker, Director of Communications to the Board of Education for approval so that it may be provided to the Ministry of Education along with the 2025/26 Budget before June 30, 2025. Nicola Christ gave an overview of the material covered in the 2025/26 Multi-Year Report.

Following the April 29, 2025, Board meeting, this document can be found on the district website.

M/S Vice Chair Windsor / Trustee Beard

THAT the 2025-26 Multi-Year Budget Report be approved as presented.

CARRIED

QUESTION PERIOD

No questions relating to agenda items were presented.

DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

At the call of the Chair, the next scheduled meeting of the Delta School Board is June 17, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

M/S Trustee Kanakos/ Trustee Gooch

THAT the Delta Board of Education Regular Board meeting of April 29, 2025, be adjourned.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT: 7:57 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary-Treasurer