

MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD IN PUBLIC
MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025

Board:

D. Lang, Chair (*via video conference*)
J. Bremner, Vice Chair (*via video conference*)
M. J. Blackmore
S. Chew
K. Etheridge (*via video conference*)
A. Gribbin
S. Nazaroff
M. Shunter
L. Trenaman

Student Trustees:

T. Solarik, LVR (*via video conference*)

District Staff:

T. Smillie, Superintendent
C. MacArthur, Secretary-Treasurer
L. Carriere, Director of Aboriginal Education
B. Eaton, Director of Instruction - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
D. Holitzki, Assistant Superintendent
C. Kerr, Director of Operations
C. Singh, Director of Human Resources
S. Bruskowski, Executive Assistant

Guests:

Nil

Regrets:

Nil

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

2. Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Territory

3. Changes to the Proposed Agenda

Item 12B: Approve Policy for field testing was removed from the agenda.

Item 11D: Letter Regarding Ferry Strike was added to the agenda.

4. Consent Package Questions

A letter from the Ministry of Education and Child Care regarding learning outcomes of Indigenous students will be provided as a handout to this agenda.

5. Adoption of Agenda

UPON a motion duly made and seconded it was **RESOLVED:**

24/25-049

THAT the Agenda for this April 8, 2025 meeting **BE ADOPTED**, as amended.

The motion carried unanimously.

6. Receiving Public Presentations – Nil

7. Comments or Questions from the Public regarding items on this Agenda

In response to a question, Superintendent Smillie explained that Item 12A was removed to allow further refinement of the policy wording before seeking approval for field testing.

8. Adoption of Minutes

UPON a motion duly made and seconded it was **RESOLVED:** 24/25-050

THAT the minutes from the March 11, 2025 Meeting of the Board held in public **BE**

ADOPTED, as circulated.

The motion carried unanimously.

9. Future and Action Item Tracking – Nil

10. Education – Reports from the Superintendent

A. Cultural and Identity Development Continuous Learning Report

Director of Indigenous Education and Learning Services, Carriere, presented the Cultural and Identity Development Continuous Learning Report that highlights School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake)'s strategic focus on Cultural and Identity Development, emphasizing continuous assessment and adaptation to enhance educational outcomes for all students. It underscores the district's commitment to inclusive, equitable, and diverse learning environments, aligned with its mission to support every learner's success and well-being. The report outlines the district's initiatives and action plans aimed at promoting a positive sense of identity among learners, particularly focusing on inclusivity, truth and reconciliation, and the integration of Indigenous worldviews.

Superintendent Smillie and Director Carriere responded to Trustees' questions on anti-racism and inclusive education practices. SD8 applies a human rights-based approach to ensure equity, belonging, and support for all students. The student-led Anti-Racism group is developing a survey to gather data on students' experiences. In terms of representation, hiring practices and onboarding documents have been reviewed to align with the Anti-Racism Policy, and staff continue to receive implicit bias training. SD8 is also expanding learning resources that reflect the diversity of its population.

B. National Day of Mourning

Superintendent Smillie informed the Board about the National Day of Mourning on April 28th, emphasizing remembrance for those affected by workplace tragedies and reaffirming the commitment to enhancing workplace health and safety.

11. Operations and Finance – Reports from the Secretary-Treasurer

A. Preliminary Budget Report 2025-2026

Secretary-Treasurer MacArthur presented the preliminary annual budget for the 2025-2026 school year for School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake). The presentation outlined the process which is based on enrolment projections and the funding allocations from the Ministry of Education and Child Care, which form the basis of the district's operating funds. In alignment with the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act and the School Act, the preliminary budget is focused on enhancing educational resources in alignment with strategic priorities, while considering the expected enrolment changes in order to maintain a balanced budget.

Secretary-Treasurer MacArthur addressed Trustees' questions regarding enrolment and budget planning. Declining enrolment is due mainly to larger graduating cohorts compared to incoming kindergarten students. One Trustee expressed appreciation for prioritizing classroom funding, with Superintendent Smillie adding that efficiencies were achieved by realigning workplans instead of backfilling exempt positions. The importance of climate action was highlighted, noting that related initiatives and procurement shifts are being supported within existing budgets through reprioritization. Trustees thanked staff for maintaining strong educational assistant staffing, careful financial planning, and alignment with the district's strategic plan.

B. School Fees

Secretary-Treasurer MacArthur presented the proposed school fees for the 2025-2026 academic year to the Board. In alignment with the BC School Act, fees were determined by school principals with educational partner input to support additional activities and materials, with financial hardship provisions ensuring equitable access for all students.

UPON a motion duly made and seconded it was **RESOLVED:** 24/25-051

THAT the 2025-2026 school fees **BE APPROVED** as proposed.

The motion carried unanimously.

C. Capital Budget Bylaw 2025-2026

Secretary-Treasurer MacArthur presented the proposed minor capital projects under Annual Capital Bylaw No. 2025/26 CPSD08-01 for School District No. 8, including various upgrades across schools to be completed by March 31, 2026, totaling \$1,337,500. Funding for electric buses will be identified later through an amended Capital Plan Response Letter.

UPON a motion duly made and seconded it was **RESOLVED:** 24/25-052

THAT the Board of Education proceed to conclude three readings in one evening for the School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) Capital Plan Bylaw No. 2025/26-CPSD8-01.

The motion carried unanimously.

UPON a motion duly made and seconded it was **RESOLVED:** 24/25-053

WHEREAS in accordance with section 142 of the School Act, the Board of Education of School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (hereinafter called the "Board") has submitted a capital plan to the Minister of Education (hereinafter called the "Minister") and the Minister has approved the capital plan or has approved a capital plan with modifications,

NOW THEREFORE in accordance with section 143 of the School Act, the Board has prepared this Capital Bylaw and agrees to do the following:

- (a) Authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to execute a capital project funding agreement(s) related to the capital project(s) contemplated by the capital plan or the capital plan with modifications;

(b) Upon ministerial approval to proceed, commence the project(s) and proceed diligently and use its best efforts to complete each project substantially as directed by the Minister;

(c) Observe and comply with any order, regulation, or policy of the Minister as may be applicable to the Board or the capital project(s); and,

(d) Maintain proper books of account, and other information and documents with respect to the affairs of the capital project(s), as may be prescribed by the Minister.

NOW THEREFORE the Board enacts as follows:

1. The Capital Bylaw of the Board for the 2025/26 Capital Plan as approved by the Minister, to include the supported capital project(s) specified in the letter addressed to the Secretary-Treasurer and Superintendent dated March 25, 2025, is hereby adopted.

2. This Capital Bylaw may be cited as School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) Capital Bylaw No. 2025/26- CPSD8-01.”

READ A FIRST TIME the 8th day of April 2025;

READ A SECOND TIME the 8th day of April 2025;

READ A THIRD TIME, PASSED the 8th day of April 2025.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. Letter Regarding Ferry Strike

Trustees expressed appreciation to the Chair for submitting the letter provided in the consent package to the Ministry of Education and Child Care and acknowledged the efforts of the school district and school staff in managing a challenging situation. Superintendent Smillie noted that on Friday, April 4, 2025, she sent a second letter to Western Pacific Marine (the employer), the BC General Employees' Union (BCGEU), and the BC Labour Relations Board. As both staff and students rely on the ferry to meet graduation requirements, the district has implemented extensive accommodation in response to cancelled sailings, including additional bussing over the pass and around the lake, water taxi service, and overnight accommodations for staff. Due to the significant impact on students and staff, the Superintendent has formally requested that the ferry be designated an essential service. The letter will be included as a handout to the agenda for this meeting.

12. Governance and Policy

A. Policy Approval

- Policy 112: Governing Principles

Superintendent Smillie presented a revised version of Policy 112. The role of the Vice Chair was added to the policy to provide further clarity on the role and its responsibilities.

UPON a motion duly made and seconded it was **RESOLVED:** 24/25-058
THAT policy 112 **BE APPROVED.**

The motion carried unanimously.

13. Human Resources – Nil

14. Trustee Verbal Reports

A. Student Trustees

- LVR (Student Trustee Solarik)
Student Trustee Solarik reported that Biology 12 students recently visited Hume Elementary to serve as judges for an intermediate science fair. The LVR Jazz Band is preparing to travel to Kelowna next week to participate in the Interior Jazz Festival. Student Council is currently advocating for increased outdoor seating and more e-bike-friendly parking options on campus. In addition, LVR students will be competing in the B.C. Jump Rope Provincials next week.
- MSSS (The report was provided by Chair Lang on behalf of Student Trustees Gretchen and Metcalf)
The Mount Sentinel Student Trustees reported that student trustees organized several key events including educational workshops, community service activities, and school-wide competitions to enhance student engagement and learning. They also focused on sustainability initiatives, launching an environmental awareness campaign that included recycling drives and promoting energy conservation practices. Additionally, the report highlights the establishment of new clubs and support groups aimed at fostering inclusivity and mental health awareness among the student body.

B. Trustees

- Trustee Chew reminded the Board that the upcoming BCSTA Annual General Meeting is an opportunity to engage in provincial-level advocacy and connect with colleagues across the Kootenay Boundary Branch.
- Vice-Chair Bremner reported working on policy review since the last meeting and highlighted several upcoming Earth Week and community events taking place in Nelson.
- Trustee Etheridge attended the School Food Gathering in Creston, hosted by Farm to School BC. The initiative focuses on increasing access to local farm food in schools.
- Trustee Trenaman noted a scheduling conflict with the April 22 budget meeting due to her attendance at a BCSTA-related commitment.

C. Chair

Chair Lang attended the Policy Review Committee meeting and, alongside Vice-Chair Bremner and SD8 staff, participated in a meeting with representatives from the BC Ministry of Transportation and Transit, the BC Ministry of Labour, as well as MLA Brittny Anderson and their staff. Chair Lang noted that the group felt heard and that the feedback received helped inform the second letter sent by Superintendent Smillie on the previous Friday.

D. British Columbia School Trustee Association (BCSTA) – see above

E. British Columbia Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA)

Chair Lang reported that provincial bargaining was underway and noted that updates would be shared as developments occur.

F. District Parent Advisory Committee (DPAC) – Nil

G. Other – Nil

15. Comments or Questions from the Public

Superintendent Smillie, Assistant Superintendent Holitzki, and Secretary-Treasurer MacArthur addressed public questions on equity, diversity, and anti-racism.

Chair Lang thanked everyone for their input and confirmed the Board will continue working with the Superintendent on next steps.

16. Meeting Schedule and Reminders

A. Board Meetings

The next Meeting of the Board held in Public is scheduled for May 13, 2025.

17. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.



Board Chair

Secretary-Treasurer