

MINUTES

**OPEN MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE
NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN SCHOOL DISTRICT (NO.58)**

**PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025, 6:00PM**

Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow

Present:	Chairperson	G. Swan
	Vice-Chair	L. Ward
	Trustees	J. Jepsen J. Kent-Laidlaw E. Hoisington J. Chenoweth (Virtual) D. Rainer
	Student Trustees	M. William S. Pioquid
	Superintendent	C. Lawrance
	Assistant Superintendent	J. Kempston
	Assistant Superintendent	M. Sheldon
	Secretary Treasurer	M. Friesen
	Assistant Secretary Treasurer	L. Rusnjak
	Executive Assistant	K. Buckland
	Executive Assistant	S. Chenoweth

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES AND METIS COMMUNITY

MINUTES

25/126 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT the minutes of the Open Meeting held June 11, 2025, be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

Report of the Closed Meeting held June 11, 2025.

PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Michael Goetz (Zoom)

The Mayor of Merritt, Michael Goetz, addressed the Trustees regarding the potential impact of a school closure on the City of Merritt. He highlighted that an influx of businesses expected in the next year or two could create 200-300 jobs. Michael Goetz expressed his desire to meet with the Board and Council to discuss the city's growth plan and patterns. The Board will meet with the Mayor and Council on November 4th to deliberate on the potential coming to Merritt and what that means for the foreseeable future.

2024/25 Audited Financial Statements (Virtual Presentation, BDO Canada)

Trustees were provided with a presentation of the 2024-2025 Audited Financial Statement by the Board's Auditor, Mario Piroddi, of BDO Canada LLP. Trustees were requested to make a motion to approve the Audited Financial Statement and submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

25/127

It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board of Education approve the 2024-2025 Audited Financial Statement and submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

MOTION CARRIED

AUDIT AND FINANCE

2024/2025 Financial Statement Discussion & Analysis Report

The Secretary Treasurer provided Trustees with a summary presentation of the Financial Statement Discussion and Analysis (FSDA) Report for the fiscal year 2024-2025. Once approved, staff will submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care and publish the report on the School District's Website.

25/128

It was moved by Trustee Hoisington and seconded by Trustee Chenoweth

THAT the Board of Education approve the 2024-2025 Financial Statement Discussion & Analysis Report and submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

MOTION CARRIED

Multi-Year Financial Plan report

The Secretary Treasurer provided Trustees with a summary presentation of the Multi-Year Financial Plan for the three-year period July 1, 2025, through to June 30, 2028. Trustees were requested for a motion to approve the Multi-year Financial Plan for submission to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

25/129

It was moved by Trustee Jepsen and seconded by Vice-Chair Ward

THAT the Board of Education approve the Multi-Year Financial Plan, July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2028, and submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

MOTION CARRIED

Carry Forward Targeted Funds

The Secretary Treasurer provided an overview of revenue and expenses for Indigenous Education targeted dollars, finishing the 2024-2025 school year with a surplus of \$36,476 as of June 30, 2025.

Trustees were requested to make a motion to submit a letter to the Minister of Education and Child Care, seeking permission to underspend Indigenous Education dollars by \$36,476 for the 2024/25 school year and carry forward the targeted funds into the 2025/26 school year.

25/130

It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board of Education request permission from the Ministry of Education and Childcare to underspend Indigenous Education dollars by \$36,476 for the 2024/25 school year and carry forward the targeted funds into the 2025/26 school year.

MOTION CARRIED

EDUCATION

Student Trustees

Chair Swan introduced the newly appointed Assistant Superintendent, Misty Sheldon.

Assistant Superintendent Sheldon informed the Trustees that she has been tasked with finding two Student Trustees from both Merritt Secondary School and Princeton Secondary School. Assistant Superintendent Sheldon then introduced the Princeton Secondary School Student Trustees, Mathew Williams and Sophia Pioquid.

Student Trustee, Mathew William, introduced himself to the Board, mentioning that this will be his third year as a Student Trustee.

Student Trustee, Sophia Pioquid, introduced herself to the Board, mentioning that this will be her second year as a Student Trustee.

We are deeply appreciative of our Student Trustees' commitment to both the Board as well as to representing student voice across the District.

Framework for Enhancing Students Learning Report

Superintendent Lawrance presented the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Report to the Trustees, emphasizing the District's high participation rates for FSAs, significant increases in Sense of Belonging, and improved graduation rates for both Dogwood and Adult Dogwood across all student groups. Superintendent Lawrance noted areas for growth, including improving Literacy and Numeracy results, addressing the decline in Post-Secondary Transition Rates, and the low results for "Feeling Welcome."

Indigenous Education Report

Superintendent Lawrance presented the written report submitted the District Principal of Indigenous Education Angela McIvor, noting that progress has been made in defining the roles of Indigenous Student Advocates. Staff reviewed their roles, examined placements, and adjusted to better leverage the strengths of the ISAs.

Inclusive Education, Early Learning and Child Care Report

Superintendent Lawrance presented the written report submitted by Director of Instruction – Inclusive Education, & Early Learning/Child Care Adriane Mouland, highlighting that Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) Training will be in all schools to help staff prevent, deescalate, and safely respond to challenging or crisis situations with students.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Lawrance circulated her report and spoke about the events that have taken place across the District since the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year.

OPERATIONS

2026-2027 Capital – Minor Capital Plan Submission

Trustees approved the 2025-2026 Minor Capital plan for submission during the public meeting held June 11, 2025. The deadline for submitting the Minor Capital Plan is September 30, 2025. Trustees were presented with a copy of the Minor Capital Plan that was updated throughout the summer and were requested for a motion to approve and submit the revised 2026-2027 Minor Capital Plan.

Once Submitted, the Ministry of Education and Child Care will review all Capital Plan submissions throughout the Province, providing a Capital Response Letter to the Board for approved projects early in the spring.

25/131

It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT the Board of Education approve and submit the 2026-2027 Minor Capital Plan for submission to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

MOTION CARRIED

Potential School Closure (Initiate Process) – Merritt Central Elementary or Collettville Elementary School

The board discussed motion to initiate a community discussion about potential school closure options due to declining enrollment, with Trustee emphasizing the need to explore this option given the financial implications.

25/132

It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Vice-Chair Ward

THAT the Board of Education initiate the process to consider the possible closure of one of Merritt Central Elementary School or Collettville Elementary School.

MOTION CARRIED

Letter of Support – RE: Princeton Transit

Chair Swan mentioned that the Mayor of Princeton has requested the School District to write a letter of support for public transportation in the town of Princeton.

25/133

It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board of Education approves to write a letter of support for Princeton's transit initiative.

MOTION CARRIED

POLICY

First Reading

3.42 Selection of Learning Resources

25/134 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 3.42: Selection of Learning Resources, for first reading and send out for consultation.

MOTION CARRIED

Second Reading

6.51 Disposal of Land or Improvement

25/135 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 6.51: Disposal of Land or Improvement, forward for second reading.

MOTION CARRIED

Third Reading

3.50 Nsyilxcən and Nl̓eʔkepmxcín and Culture

25/136 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 3.50: Nsyilxcən and Nl̓eʔkepmxcín and Culture, forward for third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

6.20 Signing Authorities

25/137 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 6.20: Signing Authorities, forward for third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

6.30 Expense Reimbursement

25/138 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 6.30: Expense Reimbursement, forward for third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

6.40 Public Use of Facilities

25/139 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 6.40: Public Use of Facilities, forward for third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

6.60 Video Surveillance

25/140 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 6.60: Video surveillance, forward for third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

6.70 Student Transportation

25/141 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board approve Policy 6.70: Student Transportation, forward for third and final reading.

MOTION CARRIED

Policies Recommended for Repeal

None.

Trustee Reports:

Student Trustee Reports

At the beginning of the Board meeting both Student Trustees were introduced by Assistant Superintendent Sheldon. A discussion was held with the Student Trustees on how their first week of school went.

P.A.C. Reports

Trustee Hoisington reported that Nicola Canford Elementary PAC meeting will be held next Monday.

Trustee Rainer reported that John Allison Elementary had not had their PAC meeting yet.

Trustee Chenoweth reported that SCIDES PAC meeting date has not be set yet and Collettsville Elementary PAC meeting will be held on September 25th.

Trustee Kent-Laidlaw reported that Princeton Secondary School PAC meeting will be held Tuesday September 23rd.

Trustee Jepsen reported that Merritt Central Elementary PAC meeting will be held on Wednesday September 24th and Diamond Vale Elementary PAC meeting will be held on Tuesday September 16.

Trustee Ward reported that Vermilion Forks Elementary PAC meeting will be held on Tuesday September 16th.

Chair Swan reported that Bench Elementary PAC meeting will be held later September and MSS PAC meeting was held yesterday. Chair Swan also reported that there was a Board Chair meeting held last week.

October Branch Meeting (Kamloops)

Vice-Chair Ward announced that this year's branch meeting for all Board Trustees in the Thompson Okanagan region will be held in Kamloops October 17 & 18.

Other Reports:

NONE

CORRESPONDENCE:

NONE

PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

Questions from Central Elementary parents

- Will any of the School Board members be eliminated alongside the school closure?
- Have you considered why some parents don't want their students in the brick and mortar schools?
Why are people choosing to homeschool over public schools?
- What is the difference in the amount of money that the school gets for a student that is coming into school physically verses online schooling?
- When the district does renos at a school or maintenance in Princeton, what budget does that come from?

Questions from the public in PSS Board room

- With transportation for the Indigenous students, is that within the 5km walking distance?
- **Stefanie Archie (Education Coordinator for Coldwater Indian Band)** - raised concerns about the potential closure of Central School, noting that it would affect many Indigenous students and create unfair optics given recent funding requests.

The Board acknowledged these concerns and committed to consulting with First Nations communities, including visiting Coldwater and Upper Nicola to discuss potential school closures. The Board also mentioned ongoing budget challenges and the need to explore all options to address funding shortfalls.

- **Trina Moulin** - The Board passed a motion in February to strike an Ad Hoc Committee this fall to review the school calendar for the upcoming year. She would like to gather feedback from all stakeholders regarding the process for placing or scheduling professional development days within the calendar. She is wondering if she has missed any information and what that process looked like.

Vice-Chair Ward mentioned that Trustee Chenoweth and Vice-Chair Ward are considering possible dates moving forward. Vice-Chair Ward also acknowledged that the Princeton Teacher Union and the Pro-D Committee would like to be involved.

ADJOURNMENT

25/142

Motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT the Open Board meeting be adjourned at 8:09pm



Chairperson



Secretary Treasurer