

**MINUTES**

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

**PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL, BOARD ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2026, 6:00PM**

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*Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow*

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

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES AND METIS COMMUNITY**

**AGENDA**

26/064 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw  
THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the open meeting held on April 8, 2026, will be presented for approval at the next meeting on June 10, 2026.

**Business Arising from the Minutes**

None.

## **PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD**

### **Collettsville French Immersion – Quebec Trip**

Students from Collettsville presented a slideshow of pictures from their Quebec trip.

### **Princeton Secondary School – Travel Club**

Lauren McKenzie and Sophia Pioquid, students from Princeton Secondary School presented a slideshow of pictures from their trip to Europe.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Indigenous Education Report**

The District Principal of Indigenous Education presented virtually and introduced Jo-Anne Mansfield, one of the District's language teachers, along with Lisa Nelson-Smith, coach, who has supported the language teachers and program throughout the year.

### **Inclusive Education, Early Learning and Childcare Report**

The Superintendent presented a written report from Adriane Mouland, Director of Instruction – Inclusive Education and Early Learning/Child Care, highlighting work in early literacy, safer schools, and strengthening protective factors for students. Trustees were also advised of ongoing challenges in recruiting an ICY (Integrated Clinical Youth) counsellor due to the competitive market and difficulties attracting candidates to rural communities.

### **Strategic Plan Development – Harold Cull**

Harold presented an update on the strategic plan refresh, including work completed on the vision, mission, and values statements and next steps to develop goals, strategies, and performance measures, with a conceptual framework to be presented to the Board in June.

### **Superintendent's Report**

The Superintendent circulated her report and spoke about the various events that have taken place across the School District over the past month.

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Board Meeting Dates**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen presented the proposed 2026/27 board meeting dates to the Trustees; the Board approved proposed dates.

### **French Immersion Program Relocation Update**

Superintendent Lawrance updated the Trustees on the French Immersion program relocation to Central, including classroom assignments, library arrangements, a \$5,500 investment in library resources, staffing changes, and farewell events.

**School Name Change – Merritt Central Elementary School to École Merritt Central Elementary School**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen informed the Board that with the relocation of the elementary school French Immersion program to Merritt Central Elementary School effective September 1, 2026, the district is seeking to change the name of Merritt Central Elementary School to École Merritt Central Elementary School.

26/065

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

THAT the Board approves the name change from Merritt Central Elementary School to École Merritt Central Elementary School.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Amendment Notice – Bylaw 2.23**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen advised the Board, in accordance with clause 1.2 of Bylaw No. 2-23, Procedural Bylaw, of a proposed amendment to add clause 11.5, which would allow the Board to suspend delegation presentations between the start of the trustee election nomination period and general voting day. The proposed amendment will be brought as a bylaw to the Board's Open meeting in June 2026.

**Trustee Remuneration**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen advised the Board that, under Board Policy 1.70 Trustee Remuneration and Expenses, trustee remuneration is adjusted each January based on the December Consumer Price Index (CPI), and that the adjustments for 2025 and 2026 have not yet been applied. The December 2024 CPI was 2.40% and the December 2025 CPI was 2.10%, which will be used to recalculate trustee remuneration. Trustee positions will be adjusted to January 1, 2026, effective immediately and appropriate retro pay will be applied back to the respective dates.

**AUDIT AND FINANCE**

**2025-2026 Q3 Quarterly Financial Update**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen provided a copy of the quarterly financial updated for the period, July 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026. An overview of the report was given following by an opportunity for questions and discussion.

**2026-2027 Budget Development Memo**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen presented a comparison of the 2025/26 Amended Budget and the proposed 2026/27 Preliminary Budget, noting reduced revenue, lower staffing, and higher supply and service costs.

**2026-2027 Annual Budget Bylaw – First Reading**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen presented the 2026-2027 Annual Budget with a total budget bylaw of \$40,573,111.00, built on the enrolment projection and estimated funding grants provided by the Ministry of Education and Child/Care.

26/066

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

THAT the 2026-2027 Annual Budget Bylaw total budget of \$40,573,111.00 be moved for first reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **POLICY & ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

### **Second Reading**

#### **1.31 Role of the Superintendent**

25/067

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

THAT the Board approved Policy 1.31, Role of the Superintendent, forward for second reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **1.32 Role of the Secretary Treasurer**

25/068

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

THAT the Board approved Policy 1.32, Role of the Secretary Treasurer, forward for second reading.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Trustee Reports:**

#### **Student Trustee Reports**

Student Trustee Sophia Pioquid presented earlier in the meeting; therefore, no Student Trustee report was provided this month.

#### **P.A.C. Reports**

Trustee Hoisington reported on Nicola Canford Elementary School PAC.

Trustee Rainer reported that John Allison Elementary PAC.

Trustee Chenoweth was absent.

Trustee Kent-Laidlaw reported on Princeton Secondary School PAC.

Trustee Jepsen reported on Diamond Vale Elementary and Merritt Central Elementary PACs.

Trustee Ward reported on Vermillion Forks Elementary PAC.

Chair Swan reported on Bench Elementary and MSS PACs.

### **Other Reports:**

- Vice-Chair Ward reported on the recent BC School Trustee Academy (BCSTA) AGM meeting.
- Trustee Rainer reported on the recent BCPSEA meeting regarding the provincial framework agreement.

### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

### **PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

- What is the school district doing to build a supportive school culture with regards to:
  - a) How to attract certified teachers
  - b) How to retain certified teachers
- What plans are in place if the senior class postings at PSS are not filled?
- Has there been consultation with First Nation Bands regarding the name change of Central Elementary?

- Would consideration be given to having a part-time maintenance employee based in Princeton?

**ADJOURNMENT**

26/069

Motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Jepsen and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Open Board meeting be adjourned at 9:12pm



Chairperson



Secretary Treasurer