***MINUTES***

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

***PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL, BOARD ROOM***
***WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2026, 6:00PM***

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*Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow*

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| Present: | Chairperson | G. Swan (Absent) |
| | Vice-Chair | L. Ward |
| | Trustees | J. Jepsen<br>J. Kent-Laidlaw<br>E. Hoisington<br>J. Chenoweth<br>D. Rainer |
| | 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**

26/112 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**OPEN MEETING HELD JUNE 10, 2026**

26/113 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT the minutes from the open meeting held June 10, 2026, be adopted as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Business Arising from the Minutes**

None.

## REPORT ON CLOSED MEETINGS

26/114 It was moved by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT the minutes of the Closed Meeting held June 10, 2026, July 7, 2026, July 13, 2026, August 5, 2026, August 14, 2026, and August 31, 2026, be adopted as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD

**2025/2026 Audited Financial Statements (virtual Presentation, BDO Canada)**

Trustees were provided with a presentation of the 2025-2026 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.

26/115 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Hoisington

THAT the Board of Education approve the 2025-2026 Audited Financial Statement and submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## AUDIT AND FINANCE

**2025-2026 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 2025-2026. Once approved, staff will submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care and publish the report on the School District's Website.

26/116 It was moved by Trustee Jepsen and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board of Education approve the 2025-2026 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, 2026, through to June 30, 2029. Trustees were requested for a motion to approve the Multi-Year Financial Plan for submission to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

26/117 It was moved by Trustee Hoisington and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT the Board of Education approve the Multi-Year Financial Plan, July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2029, 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 2025-2026 school year with a surplus of $134,430 as of June 30, 2026.

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 $134,430 for the 2025/26 school year, and carry forward the targeted funds into the 2026/27 school year.

26/118 It was moved by Trustee Chenoweth and seconded by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw

THAT the Board of Education accepts the Targeted funds report as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED**

26/119 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Chenoweth

THAT the Board of Education approves to submit a letter to the Ministry requesting that the school district underspend Indigenous Education dollars by $134,430 for the 2025/26 school year and carry forward the targeted funds into the 2026/27 school year.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## EDUCATION

### Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Report – 2025-2026

Superintendent Courtney Lawrence presented the Ministry-required FESL report, highlighting strong FSA participation rates, significant growth in Grade 4 literacy outcomes for both resident and Indigenous students, and improvements in student well-being indicators, including sense of belonging and access to caring adults. Literacy and numeracy outcomes in Grades 7 and 10 remain areas of concern, with literacy and numeracy coaches providing over 900 hours of classroom support during the year.

### Strategic Plan 2026-2030

The Board reviewed the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, which was developed through extensive collaboration with trustees, rights holders, senior administration, staff, parents, and students. Courtney Lawrance highlighted the plan's three pillars of well-being, learning, and communication, with Indigenous language integrated throughout the document. Supporting communication materials, including an AI-generated video, pamphlets, and a flip book, were created to promote the plan. Trustees commended the plan's accessibility and collaborative development process, and administration confirmed it will be shared through the district website and PAC presentations.

### Indigenous Education Report

Superintendent Lawrance the Indigenous Education the written report submitted by the District Principal of Indigenous Education Angela McIvor, highlighting the language program and the dedicated 0.4FTE coaching support for Indigenous language teachers have been a key factor in retention and program quality, credited to coach Lisa Nelson-Smith. Superintendent Lawrance also highlighted a hybrid pilot for secondary language classes, with potential to expand languages classed in Princeton virtually.

### 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 improved student supports, expanded speech-language service time for students has expanded and is now fully implemented following a successful pilot. Trustees also discussed enrollment trends, noting that economic challenges and population decline in Merritt may be affecting the transition from Strong Start participation to kindergarten enrollment, while Princeton has remained more stable.

**Preliminary Enrollment Data**

Superintendent Lawrance reported that enrollment is tracking close to projections, with approximately 1,762 students currently enrolled and final numbers expected to align with budget estimates. Lawrance also mentioned growth in SCIDES enrollment and ongoing advocacy efforts regarding the future renewal of its provincial licence.

**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

**2027/28 Capital – Minor Capital Plan Submission**

Trustees were presented with a copy of the 2027/28 Minor Capital Plan for submission.

26/120 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT the Board of Education approved and submit the 2027-2028 Minor Capital Plan for submission to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Brookmere Property**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen provided an update that two district properties being listed for sale.

**2026 Trustee Election Update**

Secretary Treasurer Friesen provided an update on the upcoming 2026 General Local Elections for school trustees. TNRD Rual Electoral areas M & N will be administered by the School District, while Merritt will be administered by the City of Merritt and Princeton will be administered by the town of Princeton.

26/121 It was moved by Trustee Kent-Laidlaw and seconded by Trustee Jepsen

THAT the Board of Education appoints Mark Friesen as Chief Election Officer and Kassandra Buckland as the Deputy Chief Election Officer.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## POLICY & ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

**Administrative Procedures**

Trustees were provided a list of new administrative procedures and discussed the proposed Purchasing Administrative Procedure. Secretary Treasurer Friesen presented Administrative Procedure 603, which outlines district purchasing processes, procurement thresholds, and requirements for quotations, tenders, and exceptions such as emergency and sole-source purchases. Trustees discussed how emergency purchasing is managed, with administration confirming that significant unforeseen expenditures are communicated promptly through established channels.

## Trustee Reports:

### P.A.C. Reports

Trustee Hoisington reported on Nicola Canford Elementary School PAC.
Trustee Rainer reported on John Allison Elementary PAC.
Trustee Chenoweth reported on SCIDES PAC.
Trustee Kent-Laidlaw reported on Princeton Secondary School PAC.
Trustee Jepsen reported on Diamond Vale Elementary and École Merritt Central Elementary PACs.
Trustee Ward reported on Vermillion Forks Elementary PAC.
Chair Swan was absent for this meeting.

## Other Reports:

None.

## CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

## PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

None.

## ADJOURNMENT

26/122 Motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Jepsen and seconded by Trustee Rainer

THAT the Open Board meeting be adjourned at 7:40pm

Chairperson

Secretary Treasurer