

# FROM THE BOARD

## Board Meeting Highlights

February 17, 2026



### MEETING OPENING

The Board of Education of School District No. 83 (K'w'salkt'néws ne Secwepemcúl'ecw) held its Regular Board meeting on February 17, 2026, with all five trustees in attendance, confirming quorum. Vice Chair Amanda Krebs opened with a welcome and acknowledged that the Board holds its meetings on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc people.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Donna Kriger provided an update aligned with the six priorities of the [District's Strategic Plan](#), highlighting ongoing work connected to the priority areas.

### EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

#### Strategic Focus Report

Kriger reminded the Board that each month, work completed across the District by staff and students is highlighted in our [Strategic Focus Report](#).

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual K-12 Environmental Expo

**WANTED:** Humans with a keen desire to protect the earth!

## SECOND ANNUAL K-12 Environmental Expo, SAS, April 30

**WHO**

- SD83 students K-12
- Educators K-12
- Community mentors
- Civic governments
- Community groups

**WHAT**

- Environmental inquiry project
- Share authentic learning
- Luke Wallace Enviro Singer Song
- Writer and Local volunteer musicians
- *Main Event April 30 -2026 SAS*

**WHY**

- To build a sense of hope, agency, and optimism
- Help protect our planet for all species
- Address curricular goals, integrate subjects, and address sustainability in the District Strategic Plan

**WHEN**

- Dec. - Jan. 2026: Start planning, exploring sustainability and conservation
- Jan. - Mar. 2026: project development and team with a mentor
- April 20 - 24: Earth week - many classes and schools implement projects
- April 30: Display and share at Expo - SAS Atrium and Foyer

**HOW**

Contact: Kim Kfullon@sd83.bc.ca or Wayne spenw4@gmail.com

Logos: SD83, Rotary Club, HCTF Education, and other sponsors.

The District's [vision](#) is "Preparing students to become educated citizens who contribute to a dynamic, sustainable, and diverse world." In alignment with our Governance and Leadership commitment to promoting environmental stewardship and sustainability, the Board received an update from Kriger on the upcoming 2nd Annual K-12 Environmental Expo.

This year's Expo will be held on April 30, 2026, at Salmon Arm Secondary. Students and mentors are invited to take part in this exciting event, which highlights innovative environmental learning and student-led sustainability initiatives across the District.

For event details, please visit the District website: [2nd Annual K-12 Environmental Expo](#).

## HUMAN & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Annual Pirate Loppet



The Pirate Loppet took place on Friday, January 30, 2026, at Larch Hills. Congratulations to South Canoe Elementary for earning the coveted pirate flag for having the highest participation rate at this year's event.

Kruger extended appreciation to the many volunteers and staff whose efforts helped make the day a great success.

For more information, visit the District website: [Annual Pirate Loppet](#).

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### The Importance of Early Learning



Ready, Set, Learn events began on Monday, January 19, 2026, offering families opportunities to explore early learning, engage in hands-on activities, and connect with a variety of local service providers. These events also strengthened partnerships with community organizations such as public health nurses, Child Care Resource and Referral, and the Shuswap Children's Association.

Kruger reminded the Board that the Ministry grant funding that has supported Early Learning programs is expected to conclude this year. Despite this change, the District remains committed to early learning as a priority. The District will continue to explore ways to sustain these valuable programs, with leadership from Director Jen Findlay and Vice Principal of Early Learning Allison de Boer, who have done exceptional work supporting smooth transitions for children aged 0-5.

The Board made a motion that the Board Chair write a letter to the Ministry of Education and Child Care indicating the challenges that come with termination of the early learning funding, plus any other applicable funding challenges.

## INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

### Registration for 2026-27

Registration for the 2026-27 school year is now open for students entering Kindergarten and for new students in Grades 1-12. Families are encouraged to register as early as possible, as fall planning depends on having accurate enrolment numbers well in advance of the new year. Registration takes place at each school's catchment area school, except for Programs of Choice, which follow a separate process. Visit the District website for registration details: [Registering for School](#).

## ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Restorative Practices Pro-D

On Friday, February 13, 2026, the District's Leadership Team, including principals, vice principals, and district leaders, participated in a full day of learning focused on restorative practices. This work directly supports District's commitment to strengthening relationships across our schools.

The session offered valuable opportunities to build collective efficacy, reduce professional isolation, and reinforce a shared responsibility for supporting students, especially when they face challenging situations. Leaders explored proactive strategies to reduce misbehaviour and thoughtful approaches to welcoming students back into their school communities with dignity after mistakes occur. The learning highlighted that strong, meaningful relationships are what truly create safer, more connected school environments.

Kruger extended appreciation to Vice Principal of Student Wellness, Tanya Harrington, and the Student Support Team for their leadership in organizing this impactful learning experience.

### Safety Protocols and Procedures in SD83 Schools

In light of recent events in our province, many families are understandably seeking reassurance about the steps being taken to keep schools safe. Our [Strategic Plan](#) commits to creating safe, inclusive, and healthy learning environments, and this remains at the centre of our work.

Kruger reported that schools follow well-established safety protocols, and school teams are trained to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies. Schools conduct regular fire, lockdown, and hold-and-secure drills, and students also have access to the *Erase It* online reporting tool to share concerns about unsafe behaviour. We continue to work closely with Safer Schools Together, whose expertise supports our work in threat assessment and monitoring worrisome online behaviour.

Families receive a [Fair Notice letter](#) each year outlining our safety procedures, and all visitors must check in at the main office. Volunteers complete criminal record checks, and schools work closely with counsellors, itinerant staff, and our District Vice Principal of Student Wellness to provide additional layers of support. Since the tragic incident in Tumbler Ridge, all exterior school doors remain locked except for the main entrance, and communities may notice an increased RCMP presence around schools. Moving forward, the District will partner with the RCMP to provide principals and vice principals with additional situational training.



Kruger concluded by acknowledging the community of Tumbler Ridge as they navigate profound grief and loss. She extended heartfelt condolences to the families, students, staff, and community members affected. Moments like these remind us of the trust families place in us each day and of our responsibility to ensure that every child is cared for, supported, and safe at school. We remain committed to fostering school environments rooted in safety, belonging, compassion, and care.

**Supporting information:** [2026 02 17 Superintendent Report](#) (PowerPoint), [2nd Annual K-12 Environmental Expo](#) (newspage), [Annual Pirate Loppet](#) (newspage), [Ready, Set, Learn Events](#) (news page), [Ready, Set, Learn](#) (webpage), [Registering for School](#) (webpage), [Strategic Plan](#) (webpage/report) and [Fair Notice letter](#).

## NEW BUSINESS

### 2026/27 School Fees

Superintendent Donna Kriger presented the proposed 2026–27 school fee structure, which requires Board approval each year. In September, staff flagged challenges related to music instrument rentals, maintenance, and cleaning, and the item was brought back for consideration in January.

Following consultation with the District Vice Principal of Music, it was noted that the historical fee for instrument rental and maintenance has been \$5 per month (a total of \$50 per school year). The District Vice Principal of Music, Michelle Honcoop, is recommending an updated rental fee of \$75 to better reflect current maintenance costs. This fee would apply to elective band classes as a flat rate for cleaning and maintenance.

The Board made a motion to approve the school fee structure as presented for the 2026-27 school year.

**Supporting information:** [2026/27 School Fees](#) (Briefing Note)

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Education Direction Committee

Trustee Marianne VanBuskirk reported that the Education Direction Committee met on February 4, 2026, where they discussed early literacy assessments; english language arts and the learning progressions for K-4; competency-based Individual Education Plans and reporting guidelines; and myBlueprint high school planning and MyBlueprint Plus.

### Finance & Facilities / Audit Committee

#### Quarterly Financial to December 31, 2025

Acting Secretary-Treasurer Jeremy Hunt provided the Board with a quarterly financial update. Revenues and expenses are tracking as expected, with teacher and other staff salaries aligning appropriately for the midpoint of the fiscal year. Benefit costs remain stable, though anticipated rate increases in January, such as CPP, WorkSafeBC, and other benefit adjustments, will impact totals for the remainder of the year.

Utilities spending has been favourable due to mild weather conditions. An unexpected dip in consumption prompted a check for a potential meter issue, but it was confirmed that the readings were accurate and reflected actual usage.

Overall, the District is currently projecting a positive financial position, with an estimated \$2.2 million surplus as of the end of December, after accounting for payroll timing adjustments. Staffing decisions approved in December, including additional time for certified educational assistants, library clerks, and position of special responsibility, and the reduction of principal/vice principal teaching time, will begin appearing in January and February expenditures.

No significant variances were noted in the detailed function and program reporting. The District expects to remain in a stable financial position as it moves toward the end of the fiscal year.

**Supporting information:** [Quarterly Financials as at December 31, 2025](#) (briefing note)

## **2025/26 Amended Annual Budget – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading & 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading**

Acting Secretary-Treasurer Jeremy Hunt presented the 2025–26 Amended Annual Budget, highlighting the District’s continued commitment to effective governance, transparent reporting, and alignment with the Strategic Plan. The amended budget reflects updated enrolment figures, revised staffing levels, provincial funding adjustments, and current-year spending patterns. The District is projecting a stable financial position, with an anticipated year-end accumulated operating surplus of \$1.58 million, including an estimated unrestricted surplus of \$897,000, slightly below the Board’s target range as per policy. As of December, revenues and expenses are tracking as expected, with utilities showing favourable results due to mild weather conditions.

The amended operating budget totals \$91.34 million, primarily driven by salaries and benefits at \$81.77 million, with services and supplies budgeted at \$9.57 million. Student enrolment increased modestly to 6,726.25 FTE, resulting in small grant adjustments. Budget reductions totaling \$69,500 and targeted increases of \$438,300 were incorporated to address program needs, including Indigenous Education, software renewals, and physical literacy initiatives. Staffing adjustments include increases of 5.9 FTE teachers, 6.0 education assistants, and 0.4 FTE principals/vice-principals, reflecting enrolment and the staffing increases approved in December. Special purpose funds total \$15.97 million, supporting programs such as Feeding Futures, Mental Health in Schools, and CommunityLINK. Capital investments total \$9.35 million, which include technology and equipment upgrades, the electric bus grant, and the Pleasant Valley Secondary School gym project. The District’s Local Capital Reserve remains stable at \$3.53 million, supporting ongoing facility and equipment needs. Overall, the District remains in a sound financial position while monitoring uncertainties related to labour settlements, technology replacement costs, and other potential budget risks.

The District anticipates that grants for Seamless Day Kindergarten Pilot and Just B4 Preschool Pilot ending at the conclusion of this year may have an impact on future viability of programs or service level.

Clarification was provided regarding the “Contracts (No WCB)” line within the Services (Instruction) budget. Acting Secretary-Treasurer Hunt explained that this category typically refers to presenters or individuals brought in to provide professional learning or specialized services who may not carry their own WorkSafeBC (WCB) coverage. In those situations, the District is required to extend WCB coverage to them while they are working in district facilities. Hunt acknowledged that the District makes every effort to ensure contracted individuals maintain independent WCB coverage; however, some one-time presenters or specialists may not carry their own, and District coverage is applied only when necessary.

A summary was provided on the benefits of implementing ridership tracking software for student transportation. The proposed software would automatically track which students board each bus, integrate with the District’s routing system, and update the parent communication app. This would allow the District to know exactly who is on a bus at any given time, improving safety and emergency response. It would also enhance the accuracy of ridership audits, which are currently based on periodic manual counts, and would support more precise budgeting and route planning. The Board made a motion to start the process of purchasing the ridership tracking software.

The Board passed the second and third readings of the 2025-26 Amended Annual Budget, which includes the additional expense for implementing the ridership tracking software.

**Supporting information:** [2025-26 Amended Budget](#) (briefing note), [2025-26 Amended Budget Presentation](#) (PowerPoint)

## February Enrolment Projections

Acting Secretary-Treasurer Jeremy Hunt provided an update on projected enrolment for the 2026–27 school year, as required annually by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. District staff, including the Ed Tech team led by Director of Instruction Reid Findlay and Manager of Information Technology Stephen Ollinger, worked closely with school administrators to compile and verify student information in MyEducation BC (MyEd BC), which forms the foundation for District enrolment projections. Final projection data was submitted to the Ministry on February 13, 2026.

Using straight-line projections, Baragar Data Systems, and local knowledge, the District anticipates a decrease of approximately 154 students for 2026–27, resulting in a projected enrolment of 6,571.5 FTE, down from 6,726.25 in the current year. While this represents a significant decline, Hunt noted that the primary factor is a demographic shift: large cohorts are graduating (approximately 600 students), while projected Kindergarten enrolment is currently estimated at roughly 400 students for next year. This 200-student gap is the central driver of the overall decline.

The District remains cautiously optimistic that Kindergarten enrolment may rise over the next several months as families complete registration. However, broader trends continue to influence enrolment, including increased participation in homeschooling and alternative learning options. Hunt emphasized that the current decline reflects long-term demographic patterns, including lower birth rates and the graduation of larger student groups.

These projections will facilitate the development of the 2026–27 operating grant estimate, expected from the Ministry by March 15, and will guide staffing and budget planning for the upcoming school year.

**Supporting information:** [Projected Enrolment Update](#) (briefing note)

## Labour Relations

Board Chair Corryn Grayston reported that there was no Labour Relations meeting in February.

## Partner Group

Board Chair Corryn Grayston reported that the next meeting is scheduled for February 26, 2026.

## Policy Committee

Trustee Brent Gennings reported that the Policy Committee met on February 4, 2026, and continued its review of Policy 310 Student Code of Conduct and the potential repeal of Policy 9050 Nutrition in Schools. Both items require further discussion and will return to the committee for additional consideration. The committee will not meet in March, with the next meeting scheduled for April 1, 2026.

## Policy 190 Financial Planning and Reporting

The Board reviewed updates to Policy 190 Financial Planning and Reporting, which has been revised to align with the Ministry's financial planning and reporting requirements intended to strengthen transparency and accountability. Minor edits were made following the Board's discussion in January. The draft policy was posted for feedback; however, no feedback was received. The Board approved the second and final reading of Policy 190.

Supporting information: [Board Policy 190 Financial Planning and Reporting](#) (Briefing Note), [Board Policy 190 Financial Planning and Reporting](#) (Board Policy)

## Committee of the Whole

Board Chair Corryn Grayston reported that the Committee of the Whole met on January 26, 2026, to review Board governance policies.

### Board Governance Policies

The Board passed motions to approve the following amended policies:

- [Policy 100 Foundational Statements](#);
- [Policy 130 Roles and Responsibilities of the Board](#);
- [Policy 131 Roles and Responsibilities of Board Chairperson](#);
- [Policy 133 Roles and Responsibilities of Individual Trustees](#);
- [Policy 134 Trustee Code of Conduct](#);
- [Policy 135 Trustee Conflict of Interest](#); and,
- [Policy 136 Trustee Attendance](#).

The Board also approved an amendment to all Board policies stating that the first reference to the Board shall appear as follows: The Board of Education of School District No. 83 (K̓wsaltktnéws ne Secwepemcúl’ecw).

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

### Ministry of Education and Child Care Inclusive Education Funding

Assistant Superintendent of Indigenous Education and Student Supports Chelsea Prince provided an overview of how the Ministry allocates Supplemental Inclusive Education Funding and how it supports students across the District.

#### The Heart Behind Our Work:

*“We believe **every child** who leaves our classrooms should know they have something of value to offer the world, they are unique and amazing, they matter, and they live in a diverse world with incredible beauty and majesty.”*

*Jennifer Katz, [Ensouling Our Schools](#)*



She explained that the Ministry uses 12 designation categories, each with strict criteria, and only the low-incidence categories, those occurring less frequently, receive funding. These include students who are

physically dependent, deaf/blind, have significant intellectual or physical disabilities, visual or hearing impairments, autism spectrum disorder, or who require intensive behaviour or serious mental-health illness.

High-incidence categories, such as learning disabilities, mild intellectual disabilities, giftedness, or moderate behaviour or mental-health needs, do not generate funding even though students often still require support.

Prince noted that 15.5% of SD83 students have designations, with higher rates among Indigenous learners, especially those living on-reserve. Funding amounts, ranging from \$12,300 to \$51,300 depending on level, are not targeted to individual students but are allocated to the District to provide a wide range of professional (e.g., school psychologists, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, learning resource teachers) and paraprofessional (e.g. certified education assistants (CEAs), family workers, Indigenous support workers, early childhood educators) supports. Because the provincial model has not changed since 2006, the District supplements Ministry funding each year with operating funds to meet increasing and complex needs. For example, during the 2025-26 school year, Inclusive Education budget equates to \$15,913,298; the District budgeted an additional \$2,267,128, from Operating, to further support the needs of the Department.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Certified Education Assistant	\$31,172	\$9,934	\$41,106	
Certified Education Assistant Personal Care	\$33,970	\$10,525	\$44,495	
<i>Based on a 27.5 hour week (5.5 hours a day)</i>				
<b>Funding</b>	<b>Funding Level</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Level 1 Inclusive Education	\$51,300	\$205,200	\$253,650	\$245,350
Level 2 Inclusive Education	\$24,340	\$12,364,720	\$11,866,510	\$11,023,080
Level 3 Inclusive Education	\$12,300	\$1,076,250	\$1,799,680	\$1,987,440
<b>Total</b>		\$13,646,170	\$13,919,840	\$13,255,870
<b>Budget</b>		<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
Inclusive Education		\$15,913,298	\$15,997,196	\$16,561,992
Supplement from Operating		\$2,267,128	\$2,077,356	\$3,306,122

Prince also addressed common questions, clarifying that no student is entitled to a one-to-one CEA, that designation funding does not follow individual children, and that it is not a practice to reassign CEAs.

She concluded by inviting families to upcoming District Parent Advisory Council roundtables in March and April, where additional information on Inclusive Education Plans, school protocols, and effective advocacy will be shared.

Supporting Documentation: [Ministry of Education and Child Care Inclusive Education Funding](#) (PowerPoint)

## **BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOL TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION (BCSTA)**

Board Chair Corryn Grayston reported that she attended the Branch Chair Call on Thursday, February 12, 2026. She will attend the virtual Provincial Council meeting and the Thompson-Okanagan Branch meeting in Oliver on Friday, February 20, 2026. On February 25, 2026, Grayston will attend the joint Sector call where they will review policies.

## **BRITISH COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION (BCPSEA)**

Board Chair Corryn Grayston reported that she attended the BCPSEA Board Chair Call on Thursday, February 12, 2026, regarding the status of bargaining. Another update call is scheduled for Friday, February 27, 2026.

Grayston also reported that she attended the half-day virtual BCPSEA AGM on Thursday, January 29, 2026.

## **QUELMÚCW EDUCATION COUNCIL**

Trustee Tennile Lachmuth reported that the next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2026.

## **TRUSTEE REPORTS**

Trustee Marianne VanBuskirk acknowledged the LASS Unplug and Play events and the upcoming Valleys. She also reported that she attended the Active Transportation Advisory Committee in Salmon Arm on February 2, 2026. RCMP and school staff are encouraging students to wear their helmets when riding scooters and/or bicycles.

Trustee Brent Gennings reported that he attended the Art Fair at Piccadilly Mall and acknowledged the devastation that the community of Tumbler Ridge is experiencing.

Board Chair Corryn Grayston reported that the Salmon Arm-Inashiki Twinning Committee is arranging for a small group of individuals to arrive in Salmon Arm in August 2026. She also reported that Director Jen Findlay joined her at the Carlin PAC meeting, at the end of January, where there was discussion about before and after school childcare.

## **UPCOMING DATES / EVENTS**

BCSTA Provincial Council (virtual) – February 20, 2026

BCSTA Thompson-Okanagan Branch meeting – February 20-21, 2026 – Oliver, BC

Pink Shirt Day – February 25, 2026

Regular Board Meeting – March 10, 2026, 6 pm

The February 17, 2026, Regular Board Meeting agenda and recordings are available on the District website:

[Board Meetings](#).