

FROM THE BOARD

Board Meeting Highlights

December 16, 2025



MEETING OPENING

The K̓wsaltktnéws ne Secwepemcúl'ecw School District No. 83 Board of Education held its Regular Board meeting on December 16, 2025, with all 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 as well as acknowledging Knowledge Keepers who work with our students.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Kriger provided an update aligned with the six priorities of the [District's Strategic Plan](#), highlighting ongoing progress and key initiatives across SD83.

Effective Governance & Leadership

The District continues to strengthen alignment between the [Strategic Focus](#) and the Board's [Strategic Plan](#). Kriger noted that the new consistent District-wide website is an important step in improving communication and accessibility.

Kriger shared highlights from the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) Conference, where Quelmúcw Education Council (QEC) members, Assistant Superintendent Chelsea Prince, and District Principal Kristen Crawford presented provincially on the strong, collaborative relationship between QEC and the SD83 Board of Education. The District has also been invited to virtually present to the Provincial Indigenous Leads on January 7, 2026, to highlight the work with QEC.



Acting Deputy Minister of Education and Child Care, Jennifer McCrae, has confirmed that the District's name change has completed the legislative process. The legislative approval recognizes the Quelmúcw Education Council-gifted name change from North Okanagan–Shuswap to K̓wsaltktnéws ne Secwepemcúl'ecw, which means *“we are all connected (people, animals, land, air, and water) on Secwepemc land.”* This formal approval acknowledges the significance of the gifted name and the relationship it represents.

Intellectual Development

The first [Written Learning Updates](#) for elementary and middle years were shared with parents/guardians on Tuesday, December 16, 2025. These reports focus on student strengths, areas of growth, and self-reflections related to the core competencies. Kriger acknowledged the hard work of teachers and principals in preparing and reviewing the updates and encouraged families to celebrate their students' accomplishments together.

Organizational Development

Teachers continue to engage in professional learning focused on literacy and [numeracy](#). Recent sessions have included UFLI, Phonics and Word Study, and “Building Thinking Classrooms” in mathematics. Kriger thanked Numeracy Helping Teachers Marlee Penner and Christine Blacklock for facilitating the opportunity for Grade 5 teachers to participate in the Building Thinking Classrooms session, as well as Director Jen Findlay for her continued support of literacy and numeracy across the District. She also acknowledged and expressed appreciation for all educators who invest their time and energy in strengthening instructional practices.

The District held further [learning sessions](#) on structured literacy, small-group strategies, and playful approaches to early reading development. Special recognition was given to Allison de Boer, District Vice-Principal of Early Learning, for her leadership and expertise in supporting early literacy across SD83.

The District received \$85,000 in Ministry funding on December 11, 2025, to expand Souper Meals and upgrade the commercial kitchen at Zest in Salmon Arm, where meals are prepared.

Families were reminded of upcoming registration dates:

- [Kindergarten Registration](#): Opens January 14, 2026, at your neighbourhood school
- [Early French Immersion Information Session](#): January 13, 2026, at Bastion Elementary
- [Outdoor Learning Information Session](#): January 13, 2026, at South Canoe (Library)
- [Late French Immersion Information Session](#): January 15, 2026, at Shuswap Middle School

Human & Social Development

Kriger congratulated the J.L. Jackson Girls Volleyball Team for placing sixth at Provincials in Kelowna—an impressive accomplishment given the team is made up primarily of Grade 10 and 11 students. Their success reflects dedication from both players and their coach, Dave Major.



Community Partnership Development

Kriger shared appreciation for the \$20,000 donation from the [Armstrong/Spallumcheen Healthcare Auxiliary](#) to support the Souper Meals program, which serves students in Armstrong, Falkland, and Enderby. The program reduces barriers to accessing healthy food and also supports local farmers.

Seasonal Message

Superintendent Kriger closed her report by acknowledging the tremendous efforts of all staff throughout the year and extended warm wishes of joy, peace, hope, and love to staff, Rightsholders, students, and families during the holiday season. She also recognized those within the community who have experienced significant loss and expressed hope for all the possibilities that 2026 will bring.

Supporting documentation: [Superintendent Report](#) (PowerPoint)

NEW BUSINESS

Transportation Department Review

Following the Board's approval of an external review of the Transportation Department, Director Elwood confirmed that School Bus Training LLC was awarded the contract earlier in 2025. The review focused on bus route efficiency, dispatch operations, mechanic shop and preventative maintenance practices, program structures, staff workload, and fee-for-service considerations.

School Bus Training LLC completed its on-site review from June 1–7, 2025. Their report emphasized that SD83 is operating a safe, efficient, and caring transportation program, noting strong community satisfaction reflected in 822 survey responses. The auditor highlighted that bus route efficiency is a key strength, and the District's shop and preventative maintenance program is exceptional, supported by a robust software system used to track ongoing maintenance tasks.

Recommendations focused largely on enhancing staff safety, communication, and workload management, with several already underway. Actions in progress include:

- A comprehensive ridership audit
- Cross-training of dispatch staff
- Extended dispatch hours (6 a.m.–6 p.m.) to better support drivers
- Alert system upgrades, regular radio check-ins, and active GPS monitoring
- Updated large fueling station spill procedures
- Planning for continued investment in shop equipment and support staff
- Strengthening leadership capacity in alignment with the Strategic Plan

The Board also received information on a ridership fob system that allows students to “tap on” when boarding the bus, improving safety and ridership tracking. The system requires a \$30,000 initial purchase and carries an annual \$6,000 operating fee. This technology supports automated analysis of bus capacity and helps the District maintain equitable, safe, and efficient transportation services.

Trustees expressed appreciation for the opportunity to view the department “through an auditor's eyes,” particularly regarding safety and behaviour on buses. The review did not recommend implementing transportation fees. Trustees acknowledged the critical role of drivers as they are often the first and last point of contact for students each day, and recognize that their strong relationships help students feel safe and supported.

The Board passed a motion directing the Superintendent to bring forward additional details on the transportation recommendations as they relate to upcoming budget planning.

Supporting documentation: [Transportation Department Review](#) (Briefing Note)

Amended Budget Priorities

The Board was presented with a number of recommendations during the 2025-26 Annual Budget process to consider implementing for the upcoming school year. At the time, the financial position of the District coupled with the uncertainty around the September 2025 enrollment projections led to a recommendation to hold off on a number of initiatives. With confirmation of stable enrolment and an unrestricted surplus of \$1,415,963 from the 2024–25 fiscal year, the Board revisited these items.

The Superintendent and senior leadership team reviewed four priority areas originally identified during the annual budget discussions:

- Reduction in principal teaching time
- Positions of Special Responsibility (POSR) at elementary and middle schools and/or substitute days
- Additional Library Clerk allocation
- Additional Certified Education Assistants (CEAs) allocation

Principal Teaching Time

The Board discussed increasing elementary principals to 1.0 FTE, noting escalating student needs, rising behavioural complexities, and the increasing difficulty for principals to manage urgent situations while also teaching. Trustees expressed strong support, and approved this request for the remainder of the 2025/26 year, recognizing the strain on sole administrators and the importance of ensuring classrooms are appropriately supervised when principals are called away.

Positions of Special Responsibility (POSR)

To acknowledge the extensive work of teacher leaders and improve school-level support, there was a recommendation to introduce POSR positions at elementary and middle schools. The Board approved up to \$48,000 for POSR staffing through June 2026, with flexibility for schools to use either POSR teachers or TTOCs depending on the need.

Library Clerk Time

Recognizing inequities in current staffing levels and the essential role Library Clerks play in supporting Teacher-Librarians, the Board supported an increase of Library Clerk time up to \$60,000 through June 2026.

Certified Education Assistants (CEAs)

A recommendation from previous Board, Committee of the Whole, and Budget Advisory meetings to add additional CEAs was presented. Although five CEA positions remain in reserve, additional staffing is required to support new students with significant needs who have arrived in schools since September. After discussion, the Board approved 10 additional CEAs for the 2025–26 school year.

Next Steps

The Board noted that these investments will help address identified capacity, safety, and workload concerns across schools. The next Budget Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for March 31, 2026, where updated financials and staffing impacts will be reviewed.

Supporting documentation: [2025-26 Amended Budget Priorities](#) (Briefing Note and PowerPoint)

Board Governance Policies

With a Board election scheduled for Fall 2026, trustees emphasized the importance of ensuring that all governance policies are current, cohesive, and prepared for the incoming Board.

One of the Board of Education's responsibilities is to provide direction through its policy process, which includes planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating policy. To support strong governance and clear organizational alignment, the Board will begin a comprehensive review of Section 100 – Board Governance and Foundation Commitments of the [Policy Manual](#). This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Board, positions of the Board, and roles and responsibilities of the Superintendent.

The Board will revise their Work Plan to schedule a meeting dedicated to reviewing policies collectively, discussing them, and refining them as needed. Recommendations arising from that session will be brought forward at a future Regular Board Meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Direction Committee

Trustee Marianne VanBuskirk reported that the next Education Direction Committee meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2026.

Finance & Facilities / Audit Committee

Vice Chair Amanda Krebs reported that the Committee discussed the Salmon Arm Secondary Trail Project, J.L. Jackson renovation plan, and monthly financials.

Salmon Arm Secondary Trail Project – Property Bylaw No. 3-2025



The Board passed the first and second readings of Property Bylaw No. 3-2025 at its November 18, 2025, Regular Meeting. The Statutory Right-of-Way (SRW) is regarding the proposed trail on the western edge of the Salmon Arm Secondary property, following the existing social trail in place and tied into the existing City of Salmon Arm trail on 20th Avenue NE.

The Board passed the third and final reading of Property Bylaw No. 3-2025. District staff will begin to work with the City of Salmon Arm staff to enter into a Right-of-Way agreement for trail use.

Supporting documentation: [Salmon Arm Secondary Trail Project – Property Bylaw No. 3-2025](#) (Briefing Note and Property Bylaw)

J.L. Jackson Secondary Proposed Renovation Plans

Director Elwood presented [preliminary proposals](#) for upgrades to J.L. Jackson, with a focus on improving safety, functionality, and accessibility in student washrooms and changerooms. The plans include renovating changerooms to create larger change areas, enhancing supervision through strategically placed office space, adding accessible showers, and improving storage solutions. Washroom upgrades feature individual floor-to-ceiling stalls with shared sinks to support privacy, hygiene, and accessibility. Each stall functions as its own enclosed room with dedicated heating and sprinkler systems.

Input from staff, students, and the PAC has been gathered to inform on the proposed designs. The District's AFG funding will be used to cover project expenses.

The upgrades are expected to improve sightlines for supervision, support positive behaviour management, and create a more welcoming and efficient environment for all students. Students have expressed that floor-to-ceiling walls contribute to feeling safe.

Plans remain under review, and further input continued to be collected. Trustees were informed that only one of the two proposed projects would proceed at a time. A final mock-up will be brought forward to the Finance Facilities/Audit Committee once refinements are complete.

Partner Group

Chair Grayston reported on the Partner Group meeting held on Thursday, November 20, 2025, with representation from NOSTA, CUPE, and DPAC. DPAC brought forward several items, and NOSTA brought forward one item. Grayston also acknowledged the development of the DPAC advocacy toolkit, which is designed to help channel and strengthen parent voice.

Policy Committee

Superintendent Kriger brought forward the Policy Committee's recommendations to the Board:

- Recommendation to repeal [Policy 4060: Accumulated Operating Surplus \(Reserve\)](#) – TABLED
- Recommendation to approve [Policy 110 Accumulated Operation Surplus](#). Policy 110 will be posted for [public feedback](#) and brought forward at the January 2026 Board meeting.
- Recommendation to repeal [Policy 1050: Pandemic Planning](#). The Board approved the recommendation to repeal Policy 1050.
- Recommendation to repeal [Policy 3020: Energy Management](#) (replaced with [Policy 124 Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability](#)). The Board approved the recommendation to repeal Policy 3020.
- Recommendation to repeal [Policy 9040: Student Access to Schools](#) (replaced with [Administrative Procedure 300 Student Registration and Student Transfer Requests](#)). The Board approved the recommendation to repeal Policy 9040.

Committee of the Whole

Chair Grayston reported that during the Committee of the Whole meeting held on Monday, December 15, 2025, the Board discussed the Transportation Review.

French Advisory

Trustee VanBuskirk reported that she attended the French Advisory Committee led by Bastion Vice Principal, Rita Tedesco, where they focused on program recruitment and budget. The next meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2026.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Regional Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Gathering

Assistant Superintendent Prince provided the Board with an overview of the recent Quelmúcw Education Council Retreat and the Regional Indigenous Education Council (IEC) Gathering, highlighting the continued growth, collaboration, and student-centered focus of Indigenous education across the district and region.

In Spring 2024, Bill 40 was added to the *School Act*, requiring every school district in B.C. to establish an Indigenous Education Council. At the time, only 40 of 60 districts had an IEC in place. New provincial funding

introduced in the 2024–25 school year, and continuing at a reduced level next year, has helped build capacity for IEC members and support districts still developing their councils. For SD83, this funding has strengthened the long-standing Quelmúcw Education Council’s work by supporting learning goals, work planning, and meaningful collaboration.

Two major learning events were held over the past year. The November 2024 retreat in Revelstoke focused on relationship building, community agreements, and shared learning on topics such as Bill 40, distinctions-based approaches, IEP processes, and inclusive practices in secondary Indigenous education spaces. This year, plans evolved to include a regional gathering, bringing together IEC members from across the Okanagan Mainline Regional Indigenous Educators (OMRIE) network. A one-day Quelmúcw Council retreat was held alongside a one-day Regional IEC Gathering at Spirit Ridge in Osoyoos. Activities included cultural learning at the Nk’Mip Desert Cultural Centre, a welcome by Chief Clarence Louie of the Osoyoos Indian Band, student drumming, and keynote remarks from Brad Baker, Superintendent of Indigenous Education for the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

The gathering also featured Learning Bursts, short sessions where districts shared promising practices including Student Summits, Youth Pow Wow, Land-based Learning, and our District’s “[Gift of a District Name Change](#)” video. Learning Together Circles gave participants opportunities for honest dialogue, problem-solving, and sharing strengths and challenges across districts.

Prince concluded by noting that the collaborative regional work strengthens the District’s ongoing commitment to reconciliation. Trustees expressed appreciation for the depth of learning, the regional partnerships involved, and the inspiring impact on students.

Supporting Documentation: [Quelmúcw Retreat and Regional IEC Gathering](#) (PowerPoint) and [2025 RIECG](#) (Video)

BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOL TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION (BCSTA)

Chair Grayston reported that she and Superintendent Kriger attended the Trustee Academy on November 27-29, 2025, which focused on trustee education in preparation for the upcoming election.

BRITISH COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMPLOYERS’ ASSOCIATION (BCPSEA)

Chair Grayston reported that she will be attending the BCPSEA AGM on January 29, 2026.

QUELMÚCW EDUCATION COUNCIL

Trustee Lachmuth reported that the Quelmúcw Education Council (QEC) presented at the First Nations Steering Committee [Education Conference](#) held December 4-6, 2025, in Vancouver. The conference offered a wide range of sessions, keynote speakers, and professional learning opportunities relevant to both educational leaders and trustees, including a provincial focus on raising attendance rates for First Nations students in B.C.

The QEC delivered two panel sessions titled Secwepemcúl’ecw – Stronger Together: The Quelmúcw Education Council in K’walsalktnéws ne Secwepemcúl’ecw (SD83) Success Factors in Implementation of Bill 40. The sessions highlighted the longstanding partnership between SD83 and QEC and described how they are aligning their governance and collaborative practices with the new legislation. Presenters shared the factors that have

contributed to meaningful, tangible progress toward implementing Bill 40, emphasizing the District’s ongoing and authentic commitment to co-governance and partnership. The sessions also featured videos created for the [District’s name change](#) and the [Indigenous Day of Learning](#), illustrating visible demonstrations of this collaborative work.

Trustee Lachmuth highlighted a presentation by BCSTA featuring Board Chair Dana Moraes (Haida Gwaii) and Trustee Diane Jules (SD73) on the recruitment and retention of Indigenous trustees. This workshop generated meaningful discussion among attendees regarding the need for increased Indigenous representation on Boards across the province.


TRUSTEE REPORTS

Trustee VanBuskirk reported attending the J.L. Jackson Fall Athletics Award Night, Shihiya School Ground Breaking ceremony, Bastion PAC meeting regarding reconfiguration, band concerts and winter concerts, and the Knowledge Keepers luncheon.


UPCOMING DATES

December 22, 2025 to January 2, 2026	Winter Break
January 20, 2026	Regular Board Meeting


Meet the Trustees




Board Chair
Corryn Grayston




Vice Chair
Amanda Krebs



Trustee
Brent Gennings



Trustee
Tennile Lachmuth



Trustee
Marianne VanBuskirk