

**MINUTES OF AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 38 (RICHMOND),
7811 GRANVILLE AVENUE, RICHMOND, BC VIA ZOOM
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2020
AT 7:00 P.M.**

Present: Chairperson	K. Hamaguchi
Trustees	S. Nixon
	N. Goldstein
	H. Larson
	D. Sargent
	R. Lee
	D. Tablotney
Superintendent of Schools	S. Robinson
Deputy Superintendent	R. Ryan
Secretary Treasurer	R. Uyeno
Assistant Superintendent	L. Archer
Assistant Superintendent	C. Brautigam
Executive Director, Facilities Services	F. Geyer
Executive Director, Learning & Business Technology	R. Laing
Director, Communications & Marketing	D. Sadler
Executive Assistant (Recording Secretary)	C. Cleary

The Richmond Board of Education acknowledged and thanked the First Peoples of the hənq̓əminəm' (hun-ki-meen-um) language group on whose traditional and unceded territories we teach, learn and live.

In accordance with Board Policy the first meeting in November is the Annual Organizational meeting of the Board. The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm and the gallery was welcomed to the meeting.

Next, the Superintendent of Schools introduced Kika West Sparrow, a Grade 11 student from the Musqueam First Nation, who provided a traditional welcome (via recording).

1. Adoption of Agenda

125/2020 MOVED BY D. TABLOTNEY AND SECONDED BY N. GOLDSTEIN:

THAT the Board of Education (Richmond) approve the Wednesday, November 25, 2020 Organizational Meeting agenda as circulated.

CARRIED

2. The Year in Review

The Chairperson reported on highlights of the past year.

For this year's report, the focus will be on the Covid-19 Pandemic and Board Business.

Covid-19

In January 2020, the first case of the Coronavirus in BC was detected. Since then, it rapidly turned into a pandemic, resulting in the unprecedented suspension of in-class learning on March 17. Much has been reported, so I won't go into great detail – but there are stories that need to be remembered and here are 5 of them:

1. Despite the suspension of in-class learning, schools continued to be an active hub providing onsite care for children of parents of essential service workers and a food distribution center, providing food hampers to our needy families.
2. Education “re-invented” itself, with the expansion of remote learning to the masses and the introduction of Transitional Learning programs to support those students whose families were not yet ready to return their child to in-class learning.
3. Sadly, we were not able to honour those, who needed to be honoured in the way we would have liked. This group included (but not limited to) the graduating class of 2020, our talented and high achieving students, our competitive athletes and our retirees.
4. In times of need, it was nice to see our community step forward to help the district. Many individuals and companies donated in various ways. The Kuo Hua Trading Company and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office donated 10,000 masks to the district. The Rotary Club of Steveston not only donated \$5,000.00 to our Feed-U-Cate program, they also funded the Summer Food Hamper Program.
5. Burnett student, Sean Uy became an overnight newsmaker by making protective face shields with his home 3D printer - sending them to his uncle, a doctor in California and hospitals in New York (the epicentre of the Covid-19 virus in the US). With the support of principal Wennie Walker, Sean and his fellow classmates expanded their production. This past month, Sean received a letter from New York state Governor (Andrew Cuomo), thanking him for the face shields and for “helping keep New Yorkers safe” from Covid 19.

But the biggest story of all is our District. Our students have been responsible, compassionate, caring and flexible under the most difficult conditions. Our parents have been as cooperative and understanding as one could expect, given all the challenges of our new Covid-19 world. Our staff have been simply amazing. Covid-19 has created a stressful and challenging working environment. I know many of our staff are exhausted and stressed trying to keep up with the everchanging landscape of public education, only to finish work and then have to deal with Covid-19 in their home life. But they do it – and they do it well. That also goes for our Superintendent, Scott Robinson, and our senior staff. The Board thanks them for their hard work, strong leadership and compassion.

One day soon the Covid-19 virus will be under control. But “things” will not go “back to normal” – it will be better. It will be better because this adversity is going to make us stronger, smarter, and more caring. And that day, can’t come soon enough!

Board Business

With everything that is going on with the Covid-19 pandemic, you would think that there is no time left to focus on anything else. Well, that’s not the case – we have been very busy this year !

Seismic News – We expect the seismic mitigation projects at Hugh Boyd Secondary, Robert J. Tait Elementary, and W.D. Ferris Elementary to be completed this December, with William Cook Elementary to be fully completed in January 2021. Construction is underway on projects at Manoh Steves Elementary, Mitchell Elementary, F.A. Tomsett Elementary, Maple Lane Elementary and James McKinney Elementary. We are awaiting final approval from the Ministry of Education for seismic upgrades at James Whiteside Elementary and William Bridge Elementary. And finally, we have included seismic mitigation proposals for John G. Diefenbaker Elementary, Alfred B. Dixon, Howard DeBeck Elementary and Blundell Elementary in our Five-Year Capital Plan for 2021, which was submitted to the Ministry for support in June 2019. The board thanks the Ministry of Education for its support and to Frank Geyer, our Executive Director, Facilities Services and his staff for their hard work and diligence in making all these projects happen.

Senior Staff Changes – This year we welcomed Christel Brautigam as Assistant Superintendent and Jane McMillan as our new Executor Director of Learning Services. We were sad to see the departure of Assistant Superintendent Wendy Lim but are happy that she will be spending more time with friends and family as she heads into retirement. Wendy has worked 37 years in the District as a teacher, school administrator, district administrator – and for the past 9 years, Assistant Superintendent. We will miss Wendy’s enthusiasm, passion and expertise, and wish her the best as she goes on her new journey.

New Mental Health Program – On Sept. 2, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Judy Darcy announced the expansion of the province’s Integrated Child and Youth Team program to our district. The new outreach program will use a multidisciplinary approach and incorporate culturally-safe practices that reflect the needs and interests of the students and members of the school community. Richmond is one of the 5 districts in the provinces selected to host this program

Public Board Meetings – After completing a one-year pilot of having one public board meeting a month during the school calendar, it was unanimously approved that this would become permanent.

Advocacy Letters – This was a very active year for the Board speaking out on behalf of our District: to the Ministry of Education, we asked that Black history learning material be included in the BC curriculum; a letter regarding allowing entry to Canada for our new K-12 international students registered to commence their studies on September 8, 2020; a request for more flexibility with the *Return to School Plan*; and a request to ask for a delay on the administration of the Foundation Skills Assessment. These advocacy letters are an important part of the Board’s role in supporting the District.

Public Board Meetings – After completing a one-year pilot of having one public board meeting a month (Sept – June), it was unanimously approved that this would become permanent.

Final Comments

I have expressed my appreciation to our students, parents, staff and senior team. The last group I want to acknowledge, is my fellow trustees. It is an honour and pleasure to work with such a wonderful group of people. We may not always agree on everything, but we respect, value and enjoy working with each other. Best of all, we all believe that it is “about” the students and public education.

And finally, although it has been said many times, this is an unprecedented year. As we struggle to see the “light at the end of the tunnel” – it is approaching. Until then, we will keep in mind the words of our Dr. Henry – “Be kind. Be calm. Be safe”.

*Thank You,
Ken Hamaguchi*

3. Appointment of Returning Officer and Scrutineer

At this point, Chairperson Hamaguchi turned the Chair over to the Superintendent of Schools. Chairperson Robinson assumed the Chair and recommended Secretary Treasurer Roy Uyeno be appointed Returning Officer and Executive Director, Business & Technology Rob Laing be appointed Scrutineer.

126/2020 MOVED BY D. SARGENT AND SECONDED BY N. GOLDSTEIN:

THAT Secretary Treasurer Uyeno be appointed Returning Officer and Executive Director, Business & Technology Laing be appointed as Scrutineer for the election of the Board Chairperson, Board Vice Chairperson, BCSTA Representative and BCPSEA Representative.

CARRIED

Prior to the election procedure, Returning Officer Uyeno noted the process for the electronic nominations for the Election of Officers. For this year, the Board had open nominations for the Officer and Representative positions. To date the following nominations were received:

Board Chairperson:	Sandra Nixon
Board Vice-Chairperson:	Debbie Tablotney
BCSTA Representative:	Heather Larson
BCPSEA Representative:	Ken Hamaguchi

4. Election of Officers

(a) Board Chairperson

Returning Officer Uyeno announced the Election of Officers would begin with the position of Board Chairperson, and that there was one nominee, Trustee Sandra Nixon. At this time, Returning Officer Uyeno asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. Seeing none, Returning Officer Uyeno announced that an election by ballot would not be required and was pleased to announce that Trustee Nixon is 2020-2021 Board Chairperson by Acclamation.

The Superintendent congratulated newly elected Chairperson Nixon and turned over the Chair position.

Trustee Nixon assumed the Chair for the election of the Board Vice Chairperson. And thanked fellow trustees for the honour to serve the Board as Chairperson. Chairperson Nixon also extended thanks and gratitude to Trustee Hamaguchi for his leadership as Board Chair over the past two years.

(b) Board Vice Chairperson

Chairperson Nixon announced that Trustee Debbie Tablotney had been unanimously nominated for the position of Vice Chairperson. As there were no other nominations from the floor, an election by ballot would not be required and it was announced that Trustee Tablotney was declared by acclamation as Vice Chairperson of the Board for 2020-2021.

5. Election - BC School Trustees Association Provincial Council Representative

Chairperson Nixon announced that Trustee Larson had been unanimously nominated for the position as BCSTA representative. As there were no other nominations from the floor, Trustee Larson was declared by acclamation as BCSTA Provincial Council Representative for 2020-2021. Trustee Goldstein will serve as the alternate.

6. Election - BC Public Schools Employers' Association Representative

Chairperson Nixon announced that Trustee Hamaguchi had been unanimously nominated for the position as BCPSEA representative. As there were no other nominations from the floor, Trustee Hamaguchi was declared by acclamation as BCPSEA Representative for 2020-2021. Trustee Tablotney will serve as the alternate.

7. Destruction of Ballots – there were no ballots

8. Committee Appointments

A list of Committee Appointments was included with the Organizational meeting agenda package for Trustees to consider and return their requests for specific committees to the Chairperson via email by Monday, November 30th. These appointments will be provided to the December 16, 2020 meeting of the Board.

9. School Liaison Trustee Assignments

The current Trustee liaison assignment list was included with the agenda package. These assignments will remain in place until the Public Board meeting on December 16, 2020.

10. Adjournment

127/2020 MOVED BY D.TABLOTNEY AND SECONDED BY H. LARSON:

THAT the Wednesday, November 25, 2020 Organizational meeting of the Board of Education (Richmond) be adjourned at 7:24 pm.

CARRIED

S. NIXON
CHAIRPERSON

R. UYENO
SECRETARY-TREASURER