

MINUTES

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

**PRINCETON SECONDARY SCHOOL, BOARD ROOM
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026, 6:00PM**

Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow

Present:	Chairperson	G. Swan
	Vice-Chair	L. Ward
	Trustees	J. Jepsen J. Kent-Laidlaw (Absent) E. Hoisington J. Chenoweth 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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES AND METIS COMMUNITY

AGENDA

25/188 It was moved by Vice-Chair Ward and seconded by Trustee Rainer
THAT the March Board meeting be moved from Princeton to Merritt.

MOTION CARRIED

MINUTES

25/189 It was moved by Trustee Rainer and seconded by Vice-Chair Ward
THAT the minutes of the Open Meeting held December 10, 2025, be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

EDUCATION

Indigenous Education Report & Indigenous Student Achievement

District Principal of Indigenous Education, Angela McIvor, reported on the “How Are We Doing” report, highlighting that the District is higher than the provincial average for the number of students in alternate programs. Ms. McIvor and the District both recognize that FNESC does have concerns about the Indigenous numbers in alternate programs, however there is a district-based team meeting before any student attends an alternate program. She also noted that FSA scores are showing Grade 4 students are 2% below provincial average in reading, Grade 7 are at provincial average and Grade 10 are below average.

Inclusive Education, Early Learning and Childcare Report

The Superintendent presented the written report from Director of Instruction – Inclusive Education and Early Learning/Child Care, Adriane Moulard, emphasizing the dedication, creativity, and countless hours contributed by teachers and staff to create meaningful experiences for students during the Christmas concerts.

2026-2027, 2027-2028, 2028-2029 School Calendars

Superintendent Lawrance presented two calendar options for the next three years, which will be distributed to parents, stakeholders, and rightsholders for public feedback. Senior administration will bring forward one recommended calendar at the February Board meeting for approval.

25/190

It was moved by Trustee Hoisington and seconded by Vice-Chair Ward

THAT both calendar options be send to parents, stakeholders, and rightsholders for feedback.

MOTION CARRIED

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.

AUDIT AND FINANCE

2025-2026 Ministry of Education Funding Announcements – Budget Update

Secretary Treasurer Mark Friesen updated the Board that the District will receive an increase of \$798,000 in funding from what was projected in the preliminary budget. At the same time, the preliminary budget has received half of the \$1.567 million of additional funding to come from new SCIDES enrolment. He also highlighted that District received additional funding for a teacher at John Allison through the Classroom Enhancement Fund, so that it would not have to come out of the operational budget.

2024-2025 Statement of Financial Information Report

The Secretary Treasurer presented the Statement of Financial Information Report (SOFI) to the Trustees for information. The report was submitted by the December 31st deadline as required by the Financial Information Act.

POLICY & ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Administrative Procedures

None.

Trustee Reports:

Student Trustee Reports

Assistant Superintendent Sheldon had assigned the Princeton Student Trustees to present their perspective on what do you believe students need to develop, experience, or learn throughout their time in school in order to be well prepared for life after graduation?

The student trustees emphasized the importance of developing critical thinking skills to navigate AI and social media, noting that students must learn to use AI appropriately as a tool rather than a replacement for learning. They also highlighted the continued need for strong social and emotional skills, especially in light of the isolation experienced during the pandemic.

P.A.C. Reports

Trustee Hoisington reported on Nicola Canford Elementary.

Trustee Rainer reported that John Allison Elementary PAC was canceled, but scheduled for February.

Trustee Chenoweth reported that Collettsville Elementary is tomorrow night and SCIDES will be rescheduled for a later date.

Trustee Kent-Laidlaw reported on Princeton Secondary School.

Trustee Jepsen reported that there has been no Diamond Vale Elementary and Merritt Central Elementary PAC meeting since last Board Meeting.

Trustee Ward reported that Vermilion Forks Elementary PAC meeting will be tomorrow.

Chair Swan was reported on Bench Elementary and MSS PAC Meeting.

Other Reports:

None.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Princeton Pickleball Association Letter

Chair Swan presented a letter that was sent from the Princeton Pickleball Association to request to reduce fees from \$25 to \$15 per hour. Trustees suggested directing community groups to seek funding from the town of Princeton or grants. The Board decided to maintain current rates as per policy.

DPAC Letter

Chair Swan presented the letter from the District Parent Advisory Council to the Trustees. Discussion focused on the unexpected comment regarding DPAC's claim of limited engagement opportunities in the budget and school closure processes. Chair Swan will meet with DPAC on January 20th to discuss their concerns.

PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

Trina Moulin (President (Local 17) PDTU) – How can the District ensure that teachers feel genuinely represented, included, and heard in the school calendar process – especially given their feedback about Pro-D distribution, recruitment and retention concerns, and the impact of proposed calendar changes compared to other districts? Teachers value professional development. Our collective agreement states that the regular school year extends to the end of June. However, when I look at the calendars, one proposal runs until June 30th, while this year we end on June 26th, with no classes offered on the 29th and 30th. Next year is also unique because Labour Day falls on September 7th, which is quite late. Since we are accustomed to 184 instructional days, could we consider adding an extra 4–5 minutes of instructional time to elementary schools next year?

CV Parent on YouTube – Please clarify if the schedule survey numbers are percent of total parents OR the percentage of parents responding to the survey. Many families chose not to complete the survey as it was confusing and seemed biased.

Tina Etchart – Gordon, are you saying that you invited any PAC or DPAC to working groups or governance meeting? We would like to know when, since this did not happen.

Tina Etchart – In fact DPAC was told they could not be on the school closure committee and could only attend the public meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

25/191

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

THAT the Open Board meeting be adjourned at 7:34pm



Chairperson



Secretary Treasurer