

**Board of Education**  
**Organizational Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, November 20, 2024 – 7:00 pm**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Floor Boardroom and via Zoom**

---

**Present:**

Chairperson	H. Larson
Vice Chairperson	K. Hamaguchi
Trustee	R. Belleza
Trustee	D. Sargent
Trustee	D. Tablotney
Trustee	A. Wong
Trustee	D. Yang
Superintendent of Schools	C. Usih
Secretary Treasurer	C. Wang
Assistant Superintendent	C. Brautigam
Assistant Superintendent	R. Laing
Assistant Superintendent	M. Naser
Assistant Superintendent	B. Thompson
Executive Director, Human Resources	T. Major
Director, Communications & Marketing	D. Sadler
Executive Assistant (Recording Secretary)	T. Lee

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.

The Richmond Board of Education acknowledged and thanked the First Peoples of the hən̓q̓əmiñəm language group on whose traditional and unceded territories we teach, learn and live.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

The Chairperson noted an addition to the agenda as item 2 – “Motion for Remote Voting” to include a motion permitting a trustee attending the organizational meeting via Zoom to vote remotely during the meeting.

**163/2024 MOVED BY D. SARGENT AND SECONDED BY K. HAMAGUCHI:**

**THAT** the Wednesday, November 20, 2024 Organizational Meeting agenda of the Board of Education be adopted as amended.

**CARRIED**

## **2. Motion for Remote Voting**

The Secretary Treasurer highlighted Board Policy 201 Bylaw Operations requires nominations and elections for Chair, Vice Chair, BCSTA Representative, and BCPSEA Representative to be conducted by ballot. She noted with increased trustee participation via Zoom, it is recommended that the Board approve remote voting for trustees attending the November 20, 2024, organizational meeting.

**164/2024 MOVED BY D. TABLOTNEY AND SECONDED BY A. WONG:**

**THAT** the Board of Education approve a trustee participating in the organizational meeting via Zoom to cast their votes remotely for any elections required during this organizational meeting on November 20, 2024.

**CARRIED**

## **3. The Year in Review**

The Chairperson highlighted accomplishments from the past year, noting that the report would be presented in sections throughout the organizational meeting.

As we approach the end of 2024, I want to take a moment to reflect on the meaningful work we've achieved together in support of our students, families, and staff here in Richmond. It's been a year filled with collaboration, dedication, and shared purpose. Working hand-in-hand with our partners, we've made strides that truly reflect our shared commitment to creating a welcoming and inspiring place for everyone in our community.

This year, we've responded to the growing need for more classroom space in our schools. Building additions at Brighthouse and Cook Elementary have increased our capacity to welcome more families in these communities. These new classrooms are part of our commitment to providing accessible, high-quality education for every student, ensuring they have the space and resources to learn and grow.

## **4. Appointment of Returning Officer and Scrutineer**

At this point, Chairperson Larson turned the Chair over to the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent assumed the Chair and recommended the Secretary Treasurer be appointed Returning Officer and Assistant Superintendent Laing be appointed Scrutineer for the election of the four positions.

**165/2024 MOVED BY D. SARGENT AND SECONDED BY H. LARSON:**

**THAT** Secretary Treasurer Wang be appointed Returning Officer and Assistant Superintendent Laing be appointed as Scrutineer for the election of the Board Chairperson, Board Vice Chairperson, BCSTA Provincial Representative and BCPSEA Provincial Representative.

**CARRIED**

#### 4. Election of Officers

##### (a) Board Chairperson

The Superintendent called for nominations, by ballot, for the Office of Chairperson of the Board.

Ballot forms were distributed. The Scrutineer collected the ballots, and he and the Returning Officer left the Boardroom to examine the ballots.

Trustee Larson continued The Year in Review report.

We completed new modular childcare facilities at Maple Lane, Manoah Steves, and James Whiteside Elementary to support our communities growing childcare needs. By adding these childcare spaces within our schools, we're helping parents and caregivers access quality childcare in their own communities, directly supporting Richmond families with safe and nurturing environments for their children.

We've also made significant strides in enhancing the structural safety of our schools. Seismic upgrades were successfully completed at James Whiteside and William Bridge Elementary. Alongside these completed upgrades, we began new seismic projects at Howard DeBeck, Alfred B. Dixon Elementary and John G. Diefenbaker Elementary School. These ongoing projects represent the next phase in our commitment to ensuring safe and secure learning environments for all.

This summer, we focused on upgrades that improve our schools' efficiency and comfort. We enhanced our electrical infrastructure, improved ventilation, added efficient lighting, and introduced new safety features — all helping to create spaces where students and staff can thrive in a healthier environment.

And I would be remiss to say that advocating for the needs of our students, families, and schools has been at the heart of our work this year. We know that a strong, well-supported public education system is essential for our community to thrive, and we are passionate about securing the resources our schools need now and into the future. With this commitment in mind, we shared our community's unique priorities with the Ministry of Education, the City of Richmond, and our local MLAs, emphasizing the urgent need for new schools in our rapidly growing city centre. These conversations have been an opportunity to ensure that our voices are heard and that our community's needs are understood. Together, we are working toward a bright, supportive future for everyone in Richmond's public education system.

As we look back on these achievements, I am profoundly grateful for the support of our partner groups, students, staff, families, and the broader Richmond community. Thank you all for the hard work you bring to this district every day. It's a privilege to work alongside each of you as we look forward to 2025.

*Thank you,  
Heather Larson, Board Chair*

Upon their return, the Returning Officer announced that Trustee Hamaguchi and Trustee Larson were nominated for the position of Chairperson. Trustee Hamaguchi accepted the nomination and Trustee Larson rejected the nomination. The Returning Officer then declared Trustee Hamaguchi as Chairperson of the Board by acclamation for a one-year term.

Trustee Hamaguchi then assumed the Chair and thanked fellow trustees for their trust and support to serve the Board as Chairperson.

**(b) Board Vice Chairperson**

The Chairperson called for nominations, by ballot, for the office of Vice-Chairperson of the Board.

Ballot forms were distributed. The Scrutineer collected the ballots, and he and the Returning Officer left the Boardroom to examine the ballots.

Upon their return, the Returning Officer announced that Trustees Yang, Sargent and Tablotney had been nominated for the office of Vice-Chairperson of the Board. Trustee Yang accepted the nomination and Trustees Sargent and Tablotney rejected the nomination. The Returning Officer then declared Trustee Yang as Vice Chairperson of the Board by acclamation for a one-year term.

**5. Election – BC School Trustees Association Provincial Council Representative (BCSTA Provincial Council Representative)**

The Chairperson called for a show of interest for the positions of BCSTA representative to the Provincial Council as well as the alternate representative. Trustees Larson and Wong expressed interest in the position of BCSTA Provincial Council representative.

Election ballot forms were distributed. The Scrutineer collected the ballots, and he and the Returning Officer left the Boardroom to examine the ballots. Upon their return, the Returning Officer declared Trustee Larson received majority of the votes and was elected as BCSTA Provincial Council representative for a one-year term. Trustee Wong will serve as the alternate representative.

**6. Election – BC Public Schools Employers' Association Representative (BCPSEA Representative)**

The Chairperson called for a show of interest for the positions of BCPSEA representative as well as the alternate representative. Trustee Tablotney expressed interest in the position of BCPSEA representative. There was no show of interest in the position of alternate representative. Trustee Tablotney was declared as BCPSEA representative for a one-year term.

**7. Destruction of Ballots**

**166/2024 MOVED BY A. WONG AND SECONDED BY D. TABLOTNEY:**

**THAT** the ballots for the offices of Chairperson of the Board, Vice-Chairperson of the Board, BCSTA Provincial Representative and BCPSEA Representative be destroyed.

**CARRIED**

**8. Committee Appointments**

Trustees were asked to indicate to the Chairperson by November 30, 2024 as to which committees they would be willing to serve on. The appointments will be announced in December 2024, and the committee members will assume their duties for one year.

**9. Authorized Signatories**

**167/2024 MOVED BY A. WONG AND SECONDED BY H. LARSON:**

**THAT** the Board of Education of School District No. 38 (Richmond) approve the following signing authorities effective immediately and until they are so changed, shall be the Board Chairperson and Secretary Treasurer except for the issuance of cheques when the required signatures shall be:

**Any** one of:

Board Chairperson  
Board Vice-Chairperson  
Superintendent

**And** any one of:

Secretary Treasurer  
Assistant Secretary Treasurer  
Manager Financial Services

Such signatures may be affixed by hand, or by cheque-writing facsimile machine in accordance with established Board policy.

**CARRIED**

**10. School Liaison Trustee Assignments**

The Chairperson will assign each trustee a group of secondary and elementary schools at the first meeting in December. The assignment shall be one year's duration unless otherwise determined by the Board. Discussion then ensued regarding the duration of trustee assignments.

**11. Adjournment**

**168/2024 MOVED BY D. SARGENT AND SECONDED BY R. BELLEZA:**

**THAT** the Wednesday, November 20, 2024 Organizational Meeting of the Board of Education be adjourned at 7:29 pm.

**CARRIED**

---

K. HAMAGUCHI  
Chairperson

---

C. WANG  
Secretary Treasurer