

Board of Education
Public Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 22, 2025 – 7:00 pm
1st Floor Boardroom and via Zoom

Present:

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

*Present for a portion of the meeting

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

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. Recognition of Visitors, Announcements, Trustees' Updates

(a) Recognition of Visitors

Nil.

(b) Announcements

Trustee Yang: On November 3, 2025, the Richmond School District will recognize the dedication and contributions of its support staff. With more than one thousand support staff roles across the district, these individuals perform essential functions that directly contribute to the overall success of our schools and the achievement of our students.

The commitment demonstrated by our support staff; whether through direct engagement with students or by ensuring the effective operation of our schools; highlights their critical role in fostering a strong and thriving educational environment.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all support staff for making the Richmond School District an exceptional place to learn and lead. Thank you for your tireless efforts and for being the backbone of our district. Your contributions are deeply valued, and we are truly grateful for all that you do.

Trustee Wong: Every year on November 11, Canadians pause in a silent moment of remembrance, reflecting on the sacrifices of those who have served and continue to serve our country, both at home and abroad. These individuals play a pivotal role in safeguarding our peace and freedom, enabling us to lead the lives we cherish today.

In recognition of our efforts as a district to commit to truth and reconciliation, we also shine a spotlight on the invaluable role of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people of Canada, who have a long and proud history of military service to our country. As many as 12,000 Indigenous Canadians demonstrated immense courage and made significant sacrifices during two World Wars and the Korean War.

This Remembrance Day, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to the memory and diverse contributions of all our veterans.

(c) **Any materials not included in packages available to the public**

The Secretary Treasurer noted all materials had been made available to the public on the district website.

2. Adoption of Agenda

166/2025 MOVED BY D. SARGENT AND SECONDED D. TABLOTNEY:

THAT the Wednesday, October 22, 2025 regular agenda of the Board of Education be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. Presentations, Briefs, Special Recognition

(a) **Presentations**

Nil.

(b) **Briefs**

Nil.

(c) **Special Recognition**

2025 Prime Minister's Award for Regional Certificate of Achievement

The Chairperson introduced May Ng, IB English, English, ELL, and LSS teacher at Richmond Secondary, who has been awarded a Regional Certificate of Achievement for the 2025 Prime Minister's Award (PMA) for Teaching Excellence and invited Ms. Ng and Principal at Richmond Secondary, Anita Kwon, to say a few words.

Trustees congratulated Ms. Ng on her award, recognizing her outstanding support for ELL students and exemplary contribution to the school community.

4. Questions from the Public

Various questions and comments were raised during the public question period pertaining to the following:

- Liz Baverstock, President, Richmond Teachers' Association on budget challenges, future planning, and partner group consultation;
- Connie Huang, President, Richmond District Parents Association, on AED and naloxone kit availability and training;
- A Richmond resident expressing support for the proposed Substance Use Awareness and Prevention Week initiative; and
- A student raising concerns regarding the professional learning time schedule, with follow-up offered outside the meeting.

5. Executive

The Superintendent recognized the dedication of Richmond's teachers, support staff, and administrators, and highlighted Ms. Ng's Prime Minister's Award. He noted the strong start to the school year, commended students for their engagement and learning, and thanked parents and families for their support. He also provided an update on the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, noting that the board is in the final stages of development with partner group input and anticipates approval early next year.

6. Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings

- (a) A record of an in-camera meeting of the board held Wednesday, September 24, 2025 was included for information.
- (b) Regular meeting of the board held Wednesday, September 24, 2025

167/2025 MOVED BY A. WONG AND SECONDED BY D. YANG:

THAT the Board of Education approve the Minutes of Wednesday, September 24, 2025 regular meeting as circulated.

CARRIED

7. Business Arising from Prior Minutes

(a) 2025/26 Enrolment Update

The Secretary Treasurer spoke to her report as included in the agenda package. Discussion then ensued regarding the decline in kindergarten and overall K–12 enrollment. She noted that the decrease is due to demographic factors, lower participation rates, federal immigration policy changes, interprovincial migration, and housing trends, and confirmed that staff are monitoring impacts on staffing and budget and will report to the board in future meetings.

The Chairperson called for a recess at 7:54 pm and the meeting reconvened at 8:00 pm. The Director, Richmond International Education joined the meeting at 8:00 pm.

(b) Richmond International Education Annual Update

The Director, Richmond International Education spoke to his report as included in the agenda package and invited a student from Turkey, to share her experience in Richmond schools.

Trustees expressed appreciation for the program's benefits to students, families, and the community, and emphasized ongoing advocacy with federal representatives to support international education.

The Director, Richmond International Education then responded to trustees' questions regarding the impacts of federal immigration policies, processing delays, and global factors on international student enrollment, program participation, student support, and learning outcomes.

Trustees recommended that the board coordinate a meeting with the new members of parliament (MPs) to follow up on Richmond International Education and the district budget.

8. New Business

(a) MOTION – Substance Use Awareness and Prevention Week

Trustee Belleza provided background information regarding youth substance use concerns and the importance of prevention and awareness programs.

Main Motion:

168/2025 MOVED BY R. BELLEZA AND SECONDED BY A. WONG:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 38 (Richmond) direct staff to identify opportunities to expand district-wide substance-use awareness and prevention initiatives, including education and healthy choices, prevention, parent and caregiver engagement, community partnership, and report back to the Board on proposed next steps.

Trustee Belleza provided rationale for the motion. The Superintendent then invited Assistant Superintendent Brautigam provide an overview of the district's ongoing work supporting staff, students, and families in substance use awareness and prevention.

Discussion on the motion ensued, and an amendment was subsequently proposed.

Amendment:

169/2025 MOVED BY D. TABLOTNEY AND SECONDED BY H. LARSON:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 38 (Richmond) direct staff to identify opportunities to expand district-wide substance-use awareness programs as part of the elementary and secondary school Physical Health and Education Curriculum and report back to the Board on proposed next steps by March 2026.

AND FURTHER THAT staff review existing and new partnerships with community organizations, including Vancouver Coastal Health, Foundry, Richmond Addictions Services Society, and D.A.R.E. BC.

A Point of Order was raised by Trustee Yang under Policy 200 – Trustee Role, Responsibilities, and Code of Ethics (Conflict of Interest), suggesting that Trustee Alice Wong, as a serving Director of the D.A.R.E. BC Society Board, may have a conflict of interest and should recuse herself from part of the discussion. The Chairperson ruled that Trustee Wong recuse herself from both the discussion and vote on this item.

Trustee Wong left meeting at 9:29 pm.

Trustee Tablotney provided the rationale for the amendment. Discussion ensued, after which trustees voted on the amendment.

CARRIED

Trustee Wong returned to the meeting at 9:59 pm and did not participate in the vote on this item.

Main Motion as Amended:

Trustees returned to the main motion as amended and voted.

CARRIED

9. Questions from the Public

Various questions and comments were raised during the public question period pertaining to the following:

- Effectiveness of current substance use awareness and prevention programs;
- Importance of early prevention versus treatment and harm reduction;
- Role of parents in supporting student education and awareness;

- Use and effectiveness of taxpayer funding for these programs;
- Comparison of substance use awareness to mental health awareness initiatives; and
- Need for accurate information and measurable outcomes to inform parents and support students.

10. Standing Committee Reports

(a) **Audit Committee**

Chairperson: David Yang

Vice Chairperson: Rod Belleza

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 3:30 pm.

(b) **Education Committee**

Chairperson: Heather Larson

Vice Chairperson: David Yang

- (i) Minutes of the meeting held on September 17, 2025, were attached for information.

A meeting was held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

(c) **Facilities and Building Committee**

Chairperson: Ken Hamaguchi

Vice Chairperson: Heather Larson

- (i) Minutes of the meeting held on September 3, 2025, were attached for information.

A meeting was held on Wednesday, October 1, 2025. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 4:30 pm.

(d) **Finance and Legal Committee**

Chairperson: Donna Sargent

Vice Chairperson: Debbie Tablotney

- (i) **RECOMMENDATION:** Trustees Expenses for the Three Months ended September 30, 2025.

Report from the Committee Chairperson attached.

The Committee Chairperson spoke to the report as included in the agenda package.

170/2025 MOVED BY D. SARGENT AND SECONDED BY A. WONG:

WHEREAS the Board of Education of School District No. 38 (Richmond) is paying for expenses incurred by the Trustees in the discharge of their duties,

BE IT RESOLVED that in accordance with the School Act, the Board of Education of School District No. 38 (Richmond) approves Trustees' expenses paid during the three-month period ended September 30, 2025, in the amount of \$1,683.60.

CARRIED

- (ii) Minutes of the meeting held on September 17, 2025, were attached for information.

A meeting was held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 10:00 am.

(e) **Policy Committee**

Chairperson: Debbie Tablotney

Vice Chairperson: David Yang

- (i) Minutes of the meeting held on September 15, 2025, were attached for information.

A meeting was held on Tuesday, October 14, 2025. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 10, 2025, at 11:00 am.

11. Board Committee and Representative Reports

(a) **Council/Board Liaison Committee**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 9:30 am.

(b) **BCSTA**

Trustee Academy is scheduled for November 27-29, 2025 at the Westin Bayshore, Vancouver. Trustee Larson noted that Trustee Wong will be attending the Provincial Council meeting on October 24, 2025.

(c) **BCPSEA**

Trustee Tablotney noted a call on October 21 for the Board Chair and trustee representatives. A synopsis of the discussion regarding bargaining will be sent to all trustees. Trustee Tablotney also noted she will be attending the BCPSEA 2025 Symposium on November 6–7, 2025.

12. Correspondence

(a) For action:

Nil.

(b) For information:

Nil.

13. Adjournment

171/2025 MOVED BY D. YANG AND SECONDED BY R. BELLEZA:

THAT the regular meeting of Wednesday, October 22, 2025 of the Board of Education be adjourned at 10:30 pm.

CARRIED

K. HAMAGUCHI
Chairperson

C. WANG
Secretary Treasurer