

Policy Committee
Public Meeting Agenda

Monday, February 9, 2026 – 11:00 am
via Zoom

<https://sd38.zoom.us/j/64093448840>
Passcode: 6000

The Richmond Board of Education acknowledges and thanks the First Peoples of the hənqəmīnəm language group on whose traditional and unceded territories we teach, learn and live.

- 1. Adopt Agenda**
- 2. Approve Minutes**
Public minutes from meeting held January 12, 2026 attached.
- 3. Proposed Policy on Renaming District Facilities (schools)**
Report from the Superintendent attached.
- 4. Policy 701.12-G: Official School Openings**
Report from the Superintendent attached.
- 5. Status of Current and Anticipated Items**
Status Update attached.
- 6. Next Meeting Date – Monday, April 13, 2026 at 11:00 am**
- 7. Adjournment**

Policy Committee
Public Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 12, 2026 – 11:00 am
Via Zoom

Present:

Chairperson	D. Tablotney
Vice Chairperson	H. Larson
Trustee Member	D. Yang
Trustee	A. Wong
Superintendent	C. Usih
President, Richmond Teachers' Association	L. Baverstock
1 st Vice President, Richmond Teachers' Association	S. Wenglowski
Vice President, Richmond Teachers' Association	F. Marsic
Vice President, Richmond Teachers' Association	S. Boljuncic
President, Richmond Association of School Administrators	N. Widdess
President, Canadian Union of Public Employees 716	S. Robinson
Chair, Richmond Management and Administrative Professionals	K. Gibson
Vice President, Richmond District Parents Association	A. Gong
Member at Large, Richmond District Parents Association	K. Ching
Executive Assistant (Recording Secretary)	J. Coronel

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 11:00 am.

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

1. Adopt Agenda

The agenda was adopted as circulated.

2. Approve Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held November 10, 2025 were approved as circulated.

3. Policy 501.8-R/501.8-G: Student Admission, Registration, Placement and Transfer

The Superintendent spoke to his report as included in the agenda package.

The President of Richmond Teachers' Association (RTA) expressed appreciation for the consideration given to RTA's feedback during the policy review, noting that the RTA has raised concerns on multiple occasions regarding the size of some city centre schools. She also highlighted RTA's feedback related to precarious immigration status, indicating that this matter should be addressed during a full review of Policy 501.8-R/501.8-G.

A trustee proposed an additional change to 501.8-R for consistency in the use of terminology:

3.1 A student **who lives within the current boundaries of a school in-catchment**, has been placed in a school or has transferred into a school will have guaranteed continuous registration in the school where he/she is currently attending. This guarantee does not apply in circumstances where a school is closed, boundaries are changed, or where a new school is opened, and the transfer of students from the closed school and/or to the new school is deemed necessary by the Board.

The committee then agreed to bring forward the following **RECOMMENDATION** to the board:

THAT the Chairperson of the Policy Committee bring forward a Notice of Motion to the Board of Education at the January 13, 2026, special public meeting that a recommendation for the board's consideration will be presented at the January 21, 2026 public meeting to approve revised Policy 501.8- R/501.8-G: Student Admission, Registration, Placement and Transfer.

4. Status of Current and Anticipated Items

A Status of Current and Anticipated Items was attached to the agenda package.

5. Next Meeting Date – Monday, February 9, 2026 at 11:00 am.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:14 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Debbie Tablotney
Chairperson, Policy Committee*

Report to Policy Committee Public

Date: February 9, 2026
From: Christopher Ushir, Superintendent of Schools
Subject: **Policy 701.11-R: Naming of Schools and District Facilities**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Policy Committee recommend to the Board of Education that revised **Policy 701.11-R: Naming of Schools and District Facilities** be referred to Partner Group Review Process for the period of February 19, 2026, to April 10, 2026.

BACKGROUND:

For several years now the issue of school renaming has surfaced with our staff and public requesting that the board develop a process for the consideration of school renaming. This issue has become more prominent nationwide over the past decade or so, and the board has been supportive of the development of a school and district facilities renaming policy. Work was initiated in 2020-2021 by the former superintendent and deputy superintendent. With board support, the work was paused to allow for the development of a district diversity, equity, and inclusion policy. On May 25, 2025, Policy 102: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was adopted by the Board of Education. It was determined that it would be important to have Policy 102 adopted to ensure alignment with a future renaming policy.

POLICY REVIEW:

Staff have conducted a broad search of renaming policies throughout British Columbia school districts. The review revealed that the majority of school districts in BC have not to date developed school renaming policies and/or procedures. There are however a few good exemplars (e.g., North Vancouver, New Westminster, Vancouver). In addition, staff reviewed district policies from Calgary and Toronto. The policies of the district listed above have informed the development of the attached draft renaming policy.

IMPORTANT POLICY ELEMENTS:

Recognizing that renaming of schools and district facilities can be controversial, it is critically important that policy development reflect a commitment to honouring diverse viewpoints while fostering a sense of belonging amongst all members of the school community. Prioritizing education, engagement, and respect for historical context, while balancing contemporary values that contribute to a positive and inclusive learning environment is the goal of an effective renaming policy.

LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATIONS:

School Act - Section 85: Power and Capacity

For the purposes of carrying out its powers, functions, and duties under the School Act, a board has the power and capacity to determine local policy.

PROPOSED TIMELINE:

Dates	Meeting	Comments
June 9, 2025	Policy Committee (In-Camera)	Proposed timeline shared with the committee.
June 18, 2025	Board of Education (In-Camera)	Proposed timeline shared with trustees.
September 15, 2025	Policy Committee (Public)	Proposed timeline shared with partner groups.
October 30, 2025		Complete review on renaming (examine best practices in B.C. and other jurisdictions in Canada).
November 10, 2025	Policy Committee (In-Camera)	Revised proposed timeline shared with trustees.
November 10, 2025	Policy Committee (Public)	Revised proposed timeline shared with partner groups.
January 12, 2026	Policy Committee (In-Camera)	Policy report (incorporating review of other district renaming policies) and draft policy shared with the committee. Opportunity for trustee feedback.
February 9, 2026	Policy Committee (Public)	Policy report and draft policy incorporating trustee feedback shared with the committee. Recommendation to place into partner group review process from February 19, 2026, to April 10, 2026.
February 18, 2026	Board of Education (Public)	Possible board approval for entry into partner group review process from February 19, 2026, to April 10, 2026.
February 19, 2026, to April 10, 2026		Partner group review process.
April 13, 2026	Policy Committee (In-Camera)	Proposed draft policy incorporating partner group input brought to the committee.
May 11, 2026	Policy Committee (Public)	Final revisions based on partner group process brought to the committee. Possible Notice of Motion for approval at the May Board of Education (Public) meeting.

May 20, 2026	Board of Education (Public)	Possible Notice of Motion for final approval of proposed draft policy at June Board of Education (Public) meeting.
June 17, 2026	Board of Education (Public)	Recommendation for approval of revised policy.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Christopher Usih
Superintendent of Schools*

Attachments:

1. *Draft rewrite of Policy 701.11-R*
2. *Current version of Policy 701.11-R*
3. *Policy research summary*

Governance

Policy 701.11-R

Naming of Schools and District Facilities

The Richmond Board of Education recognizes that schools and district facilities are an integral part of the community in which they are located. Community pride and involvement in the naming process serves to deepen the connection between the school district and community. As such, the naming of a school or district facility will be decided by the board following its commitment to robust consultation with students, parents/guardians, partner groups¹, and the community.

The Board of Education is committed to reconciliation and decolonization as outlined in [Policy 102](#).

Guiding Principles

1. The Board of Education, in its absolute discretion has the right to name schools and district facilities.
2. The relationship between the school or district facility and the land on which it is located is significant in the naming process.
3. In selecting a place-based name that acknowledges and honours Indigenous history, it is essential to seek early engagement with the appropriate rights holder(s).
4. Generally, schools and district facilities will not be named after individuals.
5. If naming after an individual, consideration will be given to Indigenous Peoples and historically under-represented communities such as visible minorities and women.
6. Schools and district facilities will not be named after a living person.
7. The Board of Education reserves the right to remove a name in the event of an exceptional circumstance. **Exceptional circumstances** are defined for the purpose of this policy to mean, *where the existing name no longer reflects the values, culture, and significance of the school population or community in which the facility is located, and/or no longer aligns with the board's core values*.
8. Existing or rebuilt schools and district facilities or parts of facilities will only be renamed in exceptional circumstances (see #7 above).
9. A school or facility name that is in use in a neighbouring district is to be avoided.
10. Following the selection of a school name, secondary schools will officially use the designation "Secondary School", while elementary schools will use the designation "Elementary School."
11. An education and communication plan will be developed and implemented to support

Adopted: 05 March 1990
Revised: 21 October 2002;

understanding of the historic significance of a new school or district facility name and to teach the proper pronunciation of the name given.

A. Naming of New Schools and District Facilities

1. When the need to name a new school or district facility arises, a Naming Committee of the Board shall be formed, whose mandate it will be to recommend to the board a suitable name for the school or district facility.
2. The Naming Committee will consist of:
 - Two Trustees - one will be the committee chairperson
 - Assistant Superintendent who will be responsible for the new school
 - Director of Facilities Services
 - Director of Communications and Marketing
 - One representative from each partner group (i.e., CUPE, RASA, RDPA, RMAPS, RTA)
 - One student advisory representative (i.e., Table 38)
3. The Naming Committee of the Board will:
 - (a) establish a communications strategy to seek input (i.e., naming suggestions and rationale) from the public. The designed communication strategy will advise the public of the following:
 - (i) that all submissions by members of the public will be held in confidence.
 - (ii) that there is no limitation as to the number or type of suggestions that will be received by the board.
 - (iii) that submissions include a rationale or explanation for the proposed name.
 - (iv) that submissions should be sent to the attention of the secretary-treasurer.
 - (v) that submissions will be received from members of the public for a period of three months. The communications strategy will state the closing date by which submissions must be received.
 - (vi) that a decision will be made by the board within twelve months of the initiation of the communications strategy, whenever possible.
 - (vii) that the decision of the board will be made by resolution at an in-camera meeting and that a public announcement will be made at the next public meeting of the board.
 - (b) receive in confidence all submissions from members of the public and provide a summary of the submissions received, or previously received, regarding the naming and will provide such summary to the board at the next available in-camera meeting after the closing date for submissions.

Adopted: 05 March 1990
Revised: 21 October 2002;

- (c) within one month of the closing date for submissions, establish a draft shortlist of names to be considered and forward all details of the shortlisted submission to the board along with a summary of all of the submissions that have been received.
 - (d) following board approval of a shortlist, the committee will undertake the research it deems necessary to provide the board with further background to the shortlisted names.
 - (e) provide the board at an in-camera meeting, within six months of the closing date for submissions, the background associated with each shortlisted submission along with its recommendation and a draft press release.
 - (f) The board is not bound by the recommendation of the committee.
4. After receiving, at an in-camera meeting, the background associated with each shortlisted submission, the board may, in accordance with [Policy 201](#) (section 7.7 Committee of the Whole), resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the consideration of the Naming Committee's recommendation.
 5. The board will, by resolution, vote in-camera on the naming of a new school or district facility.
 6. If approved, the board will announce the name of the new school or district facility at its next public meeting.

B. Naming of Parts of Board-Owned Facilities

The board may contemplate naming part of a board-owned facility on its own initiative or at the suggestion of a member of the public, at which point it will determine the necessity of asking for submissions of names from the public. If the board decides to seek submissions from the public, it may follow the same process as that listed for the naming of new schools or district facilities in section A of this policy.

C. Renaming of Schools and District Facilities

The district will consider proposals to rename schools and district facilities, only in **exceptional circumstances**. Any decision to rename a school or district facility must follow the guiding principles set out in this policy. Written proposals to rename a school or district facility can be initiated by the school administration, staff, students, the Parent Advisory Council, district staff, and community members.

1. Proposals must be submitted to the Office of the Secretary-Treasurer.
2. Upon receipt of a renaming proposal, the secretary-treasurer will inform the superintendent, who will convene a meeting with the board chairperson and vice-chairperson (or alternate), to determine if the renaming proposal is deemed to qualify as an exceptional circumstance.
3. If it is determined that the renaming proposal does not qualify as an exceptional

circumstance, then the matter will be closed, and the superintendent will inform the board at the next in-camera meeting.

- (a) The superintendent or designate will communicate with the individual or group contact who submitted the proposal regarding the process and rationale for the decision.
4. If it is determined that the proposal does qualify as an exceptional circumstance, then the superintendent will bring the proposal to the next in-camera meeting of the board for consideration of activating a Renaming Committee for further consideration.
5. If the board, by resolution, determines that a Renaming Committee will be formed, the processes set out in section A. Naming of a Schools and District Facility will be followed, with the exception (if the matter is school related) of the committee composition which will be modified with a focus on representation from the school that is being considered for renaming.
 - (a) The Renaming Committee when school related will consist of:
 - Two Trustees - one will be the committee chairperson
 - Assistant Superintendent who will be responsible for the school
 - Director of Facilities Services
 - Director of Communications and Marketing
 - One representative from each partner group with a school focus where appropriate (i.e., CUPE, RASA, RDPA, RMAPS, RTA)
 - Student representative from the school

¹ In the Richmond School District, the term "partner groups" includes our Indigenous rights holders and all officially recognized education partner representatives for Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 716, Richmond Association of School Administrators (RASA), Richmond District Parents Association (RDPA), Richmond Management and Professional Staff (RMAPS), and the Richmond Teachers' Association (RTA). Official representatives from partner groups participate on behalf of their members in committee meetings, engagements, and other activities to provide valuable input, feedback, and advice to the district. The Richmond School District values input from partner groups and voice from all members of the school community, including students, parents/guardians, and employees. Where appropriate, the Richmond School District will provide opportunities for public engagement to ensure all individuals can provide input to the district.

FACILITIES

Policy 701.11-R (previously Policy 901.11-R)

Naming of Board-Owned Facilities or Parts of Board-Owned Facilities

A. Naming of a New Board-Owned Facility

1. When planning funding is announced by the Provincial Government for the construction of a new Board-owned facility, a Special Committee of the Board shall be formed, in accordance with Board Policy 201 (Special Committees of the Board), whose mandate it will be to recommend to the Board a suitable name for the facility in accordance with policy.
2. This committee will consist of:
 - (a) Two Trustees - the first named will be the Committee Chairperson; and
 - (b) Staff member(s) as deemed appropriate.
3. The Special Committee of the Board will:
 - (a) place appropriate advertisements in the local and provincial print media seeking input of the public (public to include members of the community, parents, students, employees). The advertisement will advise the public of the following:
 - (i) that all submissions by members of the public will be held in confidence.
 - (ii) that there is no limitation as to the number or type of suggestions that will be received by the Board.
 - (iii) that submissions include, where possible, rationale or explanation of the proposed name.
 - (iv) that submissions should be sent to the attention of the Secretary Treasurer.
 - (v) that submissions will be received from members of the public for a period of three months. The advertisement will state the closing date by which submissions must be received.
 - (vi) that a decision will be made by the Board within twelve months of placement of this advertisement, whenever possible.
 - (vii) that the decision of the Board will be made by resolution at an in-camera meeting and that a public announcement will be made at the next public meeting of the Board.

- (b) receive in confidence all submissions from members of the public and provide a summary of the submissions received, or previously received, regarding the naming and will provide such summary to the Board at the next available in-camera meeting after the closing date for submissions.
 - (c) within one month of the closing date for submissions, establish a draft shortlist of names to be considered and forward all details of the shortlisted submission to the Board along with a summary of all of the submissions that have been received.
 - (d) following Board approval of a shortlist, the Special Committee will undertake the research it deems necessary to provide the Board with further background to the shortlisted names.
 - (e) provide the Board at an in-camera meeting, within six months of the closing date for submissions, the background associated with each shortlisted submission along with its recommendation and a draft press release.
4. After receiving, at an in-camera meeting, the background associated with each shortlisted submission, the Board may, in accordance with Board Policy 201 (Committee of the Whole), resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the consideration of the Special Committee's report.
 5. The Board will, by resolution, vote in-camera on the naming of Board-owned facilities.
 6. The Board will announce the new name of a Board-owned facility at its next public meeting.

B. Naming of Parts of Board-Owned Facilities

The Board may contemplate naming part of a Board-owned facility on its own initiative or at the suggestion of a member of the public, whereupon it will determine the necessity of asking for submissions of names from the public. If the Board decides to seek submissions from the public, it may follow the same process as that listed for the Naming of a New Board-Owned Facility.

Policy on Renaming of District Facilities

Research Summary

Google AI Mode was used to assist with the scanning process and resulting structural outline contained within this report. The author has reviewed and revised the output to ensure accuracy and is responsible for the final contents of this report.

Essential elements of effective school district renaming policies

Effective school district renaming policies and procedures throughout Canada are guided by commitments to reconciliation, decolonization, transparency, and broad partner group engagement.

The following essential elements are commonly part of present-day Canadian school board policies:

Guiding Principles and Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Alignment with district Mission, Vision, and Values: School renaming must support the board's mission, vision, and values, often prioritizing human rights, anti-racism, and equity.Truth and Reconciliation: Updated policies explicitly recognize Indigenous history, local First Nations' place names, and the reclamation of Indigenous languages.Inclusivity and Belonging: Renaming processes must ensure that names create a welcoming and safe environment for all and reflect the diverse demographic composition of the community.
Comprehensive Criteria for Selection	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Geographic and Historical Significance: Preference is often given for names that reference local landmarks, or historical events with positive community connections.Individual Recognition (Cautions):<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many school boards now avoid renaming schools after individuals entirely to ensure names "stand the test of time".If individuals are contemplated, they must not be living, and their contributions should be extraordinary, with consideration given to historically under-represented communities.Prohibited Names: Policies exclude corporate names, current employees, or names associated with colonialism, racism, or catastrophic events.
Structured Procedural Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Initiation and Activation of the Renaming Process: Clear guidelines for what activates a renaming process such as an exceptional circumstance, school consolidation, a major change in use, or "new

	<p>knowledge" revealing that a current name no longer aligns with board values.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Establishment of a Renaming Committee: A diverse committee led by a principal or board representative(s), including students, parents/guardians, staff, partner groups, and the broader community. c. Broad Public Consultation: A transparent process that includes surveys, public forums, and partner group input, etc., is activated. Policies often mandate a considerable amount of time for public input/feedback as it pertains to shortlisted names.
Direct Engagement with Impacted Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Indigenous Rightsholders: Consent from local First Nations is essential for using Indigenous names, often requiring the name to be "gifted" to the district. b. Addressing Harm: Effective procedures explicitly seek input from those who have experienced harm from a current school name.
Accountability and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Final Decision Authority: While committees provide recommendations and rationales, the Board of Education retains final approval authority through a public meeting. b. Post Renaming Education: Implementation plans often include a public dedication ceremony and an education plan to teach the history and significance (and correct pronunciation) of the newly selected name.

Scan of School District Renaming Policies

For the purpose of the renaming policy development process (currently Policy 701.11), a scan of provincial (i.e., New Westminster, North Vancouver, Vancouver) and national (Calgary, Toronto) school district renaming policies was conducted. The following information is provided as an overview of the 5 school districts identified.

1. Commonalities Across Districts

- a. *Public Consultation*: All five districts mandate surveys, public forums, and committees.
- b. *Indigenous Reconciliation*: Each district prioritizes names that honor local Indigenous history, language, and culture.
- c. *Final Board Authority*: The elected Board of Education retains the ultimate legal authority to approve or reject any renaming proposal.

2. Key Differences

	North Vancouver	Vancouver	New Westminster	Calgary	Toronto
Naming After People	Generally avoided; strictly posthumous only.	Allowed but discouraged; must be posthumous.	Prohibited for new or renamed schools.	Primary consideration for deceased or retired individuals.	Historically common; currently under systemic review.
Primary Criteria	Historical, geographical, or operational characteristics.	Place-based names reflecting local heritage or geography.	Mandates a "place-based" lens; priority for Indigenous practices.	Aligns with values of being safe, inclusive, and welcoming.	Driven by a "Celebrating Diversity" framework.
Renaming Activation	Requires proof of "overwhelming community support."	Formal request from the school community or board motion.	Actioned by community requests or changes in district identity.	Can be triggered by a petition with at least 5,000 signatures.	Currently Paused: Halted in 2025 due to new provincial legislative oversight.

Report to Policy Committee Public**Date:** February 9, 2026**From:** Christopher Ush, Superintendent of Schools**Subject:** **Policy 701.12-G: Official School Openings****INTRODUCTION:**

The purpose of this report is to provide background information and draft rewrite of Administrative Guidelines that address an identified need to rewrite Policy 701.12-G. For ease of public understanding, staff recommend that the draft rewrite of the Administrative Guidelines be titled School Opening Ceremony.

BACKGROUND:

[701.12-G](#) provides procedural guidance for planning official school opening ceremonies. The Administrative Guidelines have not been comprehensively reviewed since its original adoption in 2005 and contain language, protocols, and practices that are no longer relevant and do not align with current board values.

Rewriting the Administrative Guidelines will modernize language to reflect board values and inclusive practices. The draft guidelines also emphasize the establishment of a School Opening Ceremony Committee, ensuring that official school opening ceremonies meaningfully highlight student participation and community partnership.

PROPOSED TIMELINE:

Dates	Meeting	Comments
January 12, 2026	Policy Committee (In-Camera)	Draft rewrite of Administrative Guidelines shared with the committee for information.
February 9, 2026	Policy Committee (Public)	Final Administrative Guidelines shared with partner groups for information.
February 18, 2026	Board of Education (In-Camera)	Final Administrative Guidelines shared with the board for information.

March 11, 2026	Board of Education (Public)	Final Administrative Guidelines shared with the board for information.
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Respectfully Submitted,

*Christopher Usih
Superintendent of Schools*

Attachments:

1. *Draft rewrite of Policy 701.12-G*
2. *Current version of Policy 701.12-G*

FACILITIES

Policy 701.12-G

School Opening Ceremony

1. Introduction

The School Opening Ceremony Committee is essential in organizing and delivering a memorable event that embodies the district's vision, mission, and values. These comprehensive guidelines are designed to help the committee ensure the ceremony is inclusive, well-coordinated, and representative of the broader school community. The committee will hold consistent meetings to plan, monitor progress, address challenges, and maintain open communication.

2. Membership

- Principal (Chairperson)
- School Staff
- Communications Lead
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Representative
- Trustee School Liaison
- Assistant Superintendent
- Student Representative
- Other

3. Responsibilities

- Develop a comprehensive project plan with clear timelines for invitations, logistics, rehearsals, and final agenda confirmation.
- Coordinate all aspects of the event, including venue setup, decorations, refreshments, guests, and speakers.
- Assign roles and responsibilities to committee members to ensure all tasks are covered and executed efficiently.
- Hold regular planning meetings, provide timely progress updates, and promptly address any challenges or changes.
- Foster collaboration with school and district leaders, staff, families, and community partners to ensure the event's success and broad participation.
- Prepare contingency plans for potential disruptions (such as inclement weather or technical difficulties) and assign clear responsibilities for implementing these measures to ensure a seamless event experience.

4. Key Considerations

The following information is designed to assist with the planning of the official opening of schools:

- **Timing**

The date and time for the event should provide sufficient time for the Committee to plan and coordinate all aspects. It is not necessary that the school opening ceremony occur prior to students starting at the school but ideally should occur in a timely manner within 6-8 weeks after students begin attending the building.

- **Speakers**

Invitations should be sent to the following six to eight weeks before the planned event date:

- a. Board of Education
- b. Minister of Education and Child Care
- c. Members of Parliament (MP)
- d. Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA)
- e. Mayor and City Council

- **Dedication Plaque**

A dedication plaque will need to be ordered through Facilities Services at least five to six weeks before the opening event. See Board policy [701.11-R Naming of Board-Owned Facilities or Parts of Board-Owned Facilities](#) for inscription guidelines.

- **Media**

Event invitations should be sent to local media outlets and distributed using the appropriate district communication channels to ensure broad coverage and community awareness.

- **Agenda**

The agenda for the event should clearly outline the sequence of activities, including speeches and presentations. It is recommended to feature a variety of entertainment and promotional segments such as choir and band performances, drama and dance routines, as well as slide or video presentations. Student-led tours of the new school facility prior to the official start of the ceremony offer an excellent opportunity to showcase the school to guests. When planning the order of speakers, be sure to follow proper protocol by having the most senior dignitary speak last. The ceremony should open with a land acknowledgment and a welcome to all attendees.

- **Decorations**

When planning decorations, strive to showcase the diversity within the school and ensure they reflect the board's mission and values. Selecting a cohesive theme for the event can help guide decoration choices and create a unified approach. Incorporating student work throughout the venue adds a personal and meaningful touch—consider ways to represent every student in the decor to foster a sense of inclusivity and pride during the opening ceremony.

FACILITIES

Policy 701.12-G
(previously Policy 901.12-G)

Official School Openings

The following information is designed to assist with the planning of the official opening of schools. Samples of invitations, correspondence etc. from schools which have officially opened in the past few years are available at the office of the Secretary-Treasurer. Please call to view this information, or if any assistance is required.

1. Speakers

There are seven elected School Trustees in Richmond, including the Chairperson of the Board; three Members of the Legislative Assembly; one Member of Parliament; plus a Mayor and eight City Councillors within the Richmond School District. Invitations should be sent a minimum of six to eight weeks before the planned event date under the official signature of the Board Chairperson, with a follow-up phone call to confirm closer to the date. The following should be invited to speak at the official opening:

- Minister of Education (also officially opens)
- Chairperson of the Board of Education (Richmond)
- Superintendent of Schools (Master of Ceremonies)
- Member of Parliament
- Member of Legislative Assembly (for the area)
- Mayor
- School Namesake or Relative (where appropriate)
- Dedicatory Official
- Architect
- Contractor
- Principal

The Minister of Education or designate is to be invited to officially open the school. Please see Appendix "B" Invited Speakers and Guests, for a complete listing of invitees to the ceremony. In addition, others of special involvement in the building of the new school can be invited. All official invitations are to be under the signature of the Chairperson of the Board.

Where a joint facility is being opened, the school opening should be arranged in consultation and in conjunction with the other partners. (e.g. school/community center)

2. Organization

A planning committee including representatives from staff, students and the Parent Advisory Council should be formed as soon as possible after the selection of the opening date.

3. Dedication Plaque and Ceremonial Key

A dedication plaque will need to be ordered through the Manager of Facilities at least five to six weeks before the opening event.

See Board policy 701.11-R Acceptance & Naming of New Facilities for inscription guidelines. The Master of Ceremonies calls upon individuals to participate in the unveiling of the plaque. An engraved ceremonial key is ordered from a local trophy manufacturer.

Please contact the Secretary-Treasurer's office to facilitate. The key is passed from the contractor to the architect to the principal to symbolize the process of completing the facility. Each is asked to say a few words - the contractor to the architect indicating he has completed the plans provided by the architect; the architect to the principal indicating the project is complete according to the design of the school district; the principal accepts the key on behalf of the school district in recognition of receiving ownership of the building.

4. Press Coverage

Invitations to the event will be sent to the local media to be included in "upcoming events" announcements under the Chairperson's signature. Although reporters/photographers seldom attend such events, a special theme or "twist" sometimes attracts media attention.

Press releases and pictures may be sent to the local papers and local cable television before and/or after the event by the school so that coverage may be achieved without attendance by the media.

5. Community Participation

Secondary schools may wish to invite elementary feeder schools and include them, perhaps, in their entertainment program. Consideration should also be given to local community centers and businesses. Elementary schools may wish to consider inviting local preschools/daycares.

6. Invitations and Programs

A variety of invitations and programs are available for viewing at the office of the Secretary-Treasurer. Examples range from formal letters to computer-designed or student-made cards. Event programs may also be made in a variety of styles often including student artwork. A school may want to have students draw a picture on each one to personalize the paper.

7. Agenda

The agenda for the event will be dominated by the speeches but this is also an opportunity to show off student achievement. Choirs, bands, drama, dance and slide or video presentations are all effective entertainment and promotion. Student-led tours of the facility prior to the commencement of the ceremony provide an opportunity to exhibit the new school.

8. Decorations

A theme for the entire event often helps determine appropriate decorations, although student work is always a popular sight. It is a nice touch when every student is represented in the decorations for the opening.

9. Refreshments

A cake and coffee/tea/juice provided after the ceremony is usually sufficient. A special treat and/or certificate for the students, provided in their classrooms, can also be added to the evening's events.

10. Photos/Video

A person may be assigned by the school to be the "official photographer" for the opening. However, it is a good idea to have several people contribute to the taking of pictures.

11. Budget

Don't be shy to stretch the budget with contributions from the business community. A local nursery may loan greenery for the decorations; the local bakery may provide a cake for the reception. As well, the dedicatory family, the architect and the contractor may be interested in contributing to the event. Please contact the Secretary-Treasurer's office regarding budget.

12. School Dedication

The following dedication is to be used at official school openings:-

Dear God, you who are the beginning and the end of all we are and all we see, we thank you for the opportunity to continually learn with and from each other. We pray for all who will be part of this school that they will be inspired by the knowledge available to them. We pray that the Principal and staff of this school will provide excellent and sensitive leadership, and be creative in their methods of teaching our children and youth. May they be good role models for the students to follow.

May this be a safe and secure place for our students to learn. We are thankful for those who work hard to continually provide good facilities and a good education for all in our community. We pray for protection for all the staff and students in the many activities and field trips in which they will be involved. May all those who pass through this school be better prepared and able to be a positive member of our community, as well as in society, wherever they will be.

The school is invited to suggest a ministerial representative from any religious denomination within the Richmond community.

The following Action Check List may be helpful as a guideline for preparations for the opening. The list is a suggestion only - some action items may not apply to a school or situation.

Enjoy the event!

Appendix "A"

Action Check List - School Openings

3 Months Prior

- Form Planning Committee
- Contact Secretary-Treasurer's office
- Determine budget
- Determine theme
- Determine location for ceremony and guest assembly

10 Weeks Prior

- Confirm guest list
- Begin planning program
- Begin planning decorations
- Begin planning of refreshments
- Arrange for chairs
- Arrange for podium and staging
- Arrange for plaque stand
- Cancel rentals
- Make initial contacts re: donations

8 Weeks Prior

- Send invitations to speakers and guests from Chairperson
- Order plaque through Manager of Facilities
- Order ceremonial key through Secretary-Treasurer's office

6 Weeks Prior

- Arrange and check sound system
- Designate hosts for parking, welcome, ushering and tours
- Create decorations
- Send invitations to community centers/feeder schools, etc.
- Letter of invitation for inclusion in school newsletters

4 Weeks Prior

- Arrange for volunteers for reception
- Order flowers and corsages (for namesake/relative)
- Order dishes and silverware

2 Weeks Prior

- Confirm plaque, and key
- Write Principal's Welcome
- Arrange for official photographer
- Plan parking strategy if required
- Confirm agenda/program with Board Chairperson

1 Week Prior

- Print programs
- Determine guest list from RSVP's

- Obtain platform seating arrangements from Secretary-Treasurer's office
- Check sound system
- Decorate gym
- Have podium, stage risers and plaque stand delivered from Maintenance Dept.
- Create name tags for invited guests
- Confirm refreshments
- Confirm dishes and silverware

2 Days Prior

- Hold dress rehearsal
- Evaluate and make necessary revisions to schedule
- Put up signs directing guests to the main entrance of the school
- Have students ensure that classrooms and hallways are clean and tidy

Day Before

- Set up gymnasium
- Check decorations
- Set up plaque and stand
- Pick up/have delivered dishes, napkins, silverware

Day of the Event

- Check sound system
- Pick up flowers and corsages
- Assemble refreshments
- Set out name tags

- Assemble event hosts
- Assemble and brief platform party

After the Event

- Thank you letters to speakers and platform guests from the Chairperson
- Write thank you letters to volunteers and contributors
- Send write-up and pictures to local press (optional)
- Write follow-up article for inclusion in school newsletter

Appendix "B"

Invited Speakers and Guests - School Openings

1. Podium Seating

1. Minister of Education
2. Chairperson of the Board of Education (Richmond)
3. Mayor
4. Member of Parliament
5. Member of Legislative Assembly
6. Namesake/family member
7. School Trustees
8. City Councillors
9. Other elected officials
10. Dedicatory Official
11. Superintendent of Schools and Senior Staff
12. Principal
13. Contractor
14. Architect
15. Manager of Facilities
16. Project Manager

Reserved Seating/Podium (as applicable)

17. Student Council President or student representative
18. Parent Advisory Council Chairperson
19. RTA President
20. CUPE President
21. RASA President
22. RDPA President
23. Other invited guests

In some cases, space is limited on the stage. The above list may be limited/restricted to speakers and Trustees. In the case of a joint opening, the guest list would be expanded in consultation with the other party.

Seating according to protocol will be arranged by the Secretary-Treasurer's office once the attendees have responded.

POLICY COMMITTEE: STATUS OF CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED ITEMS

COMPLETED FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2025/26		
	Policy	Dates & Actions
1	Policy Refresh: Policy 311/311-R: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Policy 311-G (A): Privacy Impact Assessments Policy 311-G (B): Critical Incident and Privacy Breach Procedure Policy 311-G (C): Personal Information Management Program	Updated policy approved in September 2025
2	Policy 501.8-R/501.8-G: Student Admission, Registration, Placement and Transfer	Revised policy approved in January 2026

IN PROGRESS		
	Policy	Dates & Actions
1	Proposed Policy on Renaming District Facilities Senior Staff Responsible: Chris Usih	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public report on proposed timeline shared with partner groups (Sep 2025) • Public report on proposed revised timeline shared with partner groups (Nov 2025) • Public report with recommendation to place policy revisions into partner group review process from February 19 to April 10, 2026 (Feb 2026)
2	Policy 701.12/701.12-G: Official School Openings Senior Staff Responsible: Chris Usih	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public report with draft rewrite shared with partner groups for information (Feb 2026)

POLICY COMMITTEE: STATUS OF CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED ITEMS

ANTICIPATED		
	Policy	Dates & Actions
1	Policy 105-R: a. District Code of Conduct: How We Learn and Work Together b. Respect for Personal Public Property and Environment (i.e., District Facilities, Equipment) – Senior Staff Responsible: Cindy Wang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review after completion of the new strategic plan • Public report on draft revised policy (Feb 2021) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committee agreed that there would be more discussion and review around process for the revision to be brought back at a later date
2	Student Behaviour Policies a. Policy 502: Student Behaviour and Discipline b. Policy 502.1: Maintenance of Orderly Conduct c. Policy 502.2/502.2-R: Student Suspension or Exclusion from School d. Policy 502.3/502.3-R: Student Possession of Weapons Senior Staff Responsible: Braunwyn Thompson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update provided by Deputy Superintendent. Policies and regulations will be updated in with District Code of Conduct and brought back to the Committee for further review and feedback (Jan 2021) • Anticipate submission of revised policy to public meeting in 2025
3	Policy 522/522-R: Transportation Senior Staff Responsible: Cindy Wang/Christel Brautigam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate submission of revised policy to public meeting in 2025

POLICY COMMITTEE: STATUS OF CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED ITEMS

ANTICIPATED		
	Policy	Dates & Actions
4	<p>PHASE 3 - Policy Section 700: Facilities</p> <p>Policy 703.1 - Accident Prevention and Safety Procedure</p> <p>Policy 703.2 - First Aid and Accident Reports</p> <p>Policy 703.5 and Regulation 703.5-R - Health and Safety</p> <p>Policy 703.6 and Regulation 703.6-R - Protection of Employees from Violence in the Workplace</p> <p>Policy 705 and Regulation 705-R - Telephones</p> <p>Policy 706 - Smoke Free Environments</p> <p>Policy 703.7 and Regulation 703.7-R - Closure of Schools Due to Emergent Conditions</p> <p>Policy 707 and Regulation 707-R - Post Disaster Procedures</p> <p>Policy 708 and Regulation 708-R - Video Surveillance</p> <p>Senior Staff Responsible: Cindy Wang</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy revision <u>placed on hold</u> (Feb 2025) – for future consideration

POLICY COMMITTEE: STATUS OF CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED ITEMS

COMPLETED IN PREVIOUS SCHOOL YEARS		
	Policy	Dates & Actions
1	Policy 101: Goals and Objectives	Revised policy approved in May 2023
2	Policy 201: Board Operations	Revised policy approved in June 2023
3	Policy 311/311-R: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy	New policy approved in June 2023
4	Policy 621/621-R: Financial Planning and Reporting and Policy 631-R: Accumulated Operating Surplus and Capital Reserves	Revised policy approved in June 2023
5	Policy 402/402-R: Public Interest Disclosure Policy	New policy approved in December 2023
6	Policy 701.2-R: Capital Project Design Review Process	Revised policy approved in March 2024
7	Policy 200: Trustee Role, Responsibilities and Code of Ethics	Revised policy approved in May 2024
8	Policy 204-R: Creation and Revision of Policy and Regulations	Revised policy approved in May 2024
9	Policy 105: District Code of Conduct	Revised policy approved in June 2024
10	Policy 203-R/203-G: Trustee Stipend and Expenses	Revised policy approved in October 2024
11	Policy 400-R5: Smoking and Alcohol Consumption Policy 804.1-R: Community Use of District Facilities	Revised policies approved in October 2024
12	Policy Refresh: Policy 101/101-R: Strategic Planning	Updated policies approved in December 2024
13	Policy Refresh: Policy 103: Collaboration and Community Policy 103-R (A): Foundations for Learning Policy 103-R (B): Complaints and Appeals by Staff	Updated policies approved in February 2025
14	Policy Refresh: Policy 105/105-R: District Code of Conduct	Updated policy approved in March 2025
15	Policy 102: Diversity and Inclusion	Revised policy approved in May 2025
16	Policy 103 Bylaw: Complaints by Students, Parents & the Public	Revised policy approved in May 2025
17	Policy 201 Bylaw: Board Operations	Revised policy approved in June 2025