

Board of Education Public Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 21, 2026 – 7:00 pm
1st Floor Boardroom and via Zoom

Present:

Chairperson	K. Hamaguchi
Vice Chairperson	H. Larson
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

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

The Richmond Board of Education acknowledged and thanked the First Peoples of the hən̓q̓əmi̓nəm̓ 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 Tablotney: Every February, Canadians are invited to participate in Black History Month events that honour the legacy, achievements, and ongoing contributions of Black Canadians and their communities.

In the Richmond School District, Black History Month is an important opportunity to teach, learn, and celebrate Black Excellence by highlighting the resilience, contributions, and

leadership of Black individuals and communities. As a district our continued commitment to equity, inclusion, and meaningful representation remains central to our work.

Throughout February, students and staff will engage in learning experiences that explore Black history, culture, and contributions – strengthening our understanding, foster belonging, and honour the diversity that enriches our district.

Trustee Wong: Lunar New Year, beginning this year on February 17, is a time of celebration, reflection, and renewal for many members of our community. As we welcome the Year of the Horse, we honour the traditions, languages, and cultural practices of families and staff who observe this important festival, including those celebrating Chinese New Year.

The Richmond School District values the rich cultural diversity that strengthens our schools. Our ongoing commitment to equity, inclusion, and belonging continues to guide our work. Lunar New Year provides an opportunity for our students and staff to learn from one another, deepen understanding, and celebrate the vibrant cultural heritage that enriches our district.

We extend warm wishes to all who are celebrating. May the Year of the Horse bring good health, joy, and prosperity.

Trustee Larson: January 27 marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and is recognized globally as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On this solemn day, the Richmond School District honours the memory of the six million Jews and all victims of the Holocaust, and we pay tribute to the survivors who continue to share their stories with courage and resilience.

As a district, our commitment to equity, inclusion, and combating all forms of hate – including antisemitism – remains unwavering. We continue to foster learning environments where understanding, human rights, and respect are central, ensuring that the lessons of the Holocaust are carried forward for future generations.

Trustee Yang: January 29 marks the anniversary of the 2017 attack on the Islamic Cultural Centre and Mosque in Sainte-Foy, Québec – one of the deadliest hate-motivated attacks in Canada. Today we remember the six lives lost, honour the survivors, and hold their families and communities in our thoughts.

As a school district, our commitment to equity, inclusion, and safe, caring schools remains steadfast. We stand against all forms of hate and discrimination, including anti-Islamic hate and Islamophobia.

We continue to promote learning rooted in human rights, anti-oppression, and social justice, and we strive to ensure that every student and staff member feels safe, valued, and a true sense of belonging.

Trustee Sargent: Briefs regarding the 2026/27 Annual Budget will be accepted without prior notice at the February 18, 2026, March 11, 2026, and April 22, 2026 regular meetings of the Board.

Please note that budget updates will be made available on the District's Budget website. All budget feedback will be considered by the Board as part of the budget process which is anticipated to be completed by May 20, 2026.

(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

009/2026 MOVED BY D. YANG AND SECONDED H. LARSON:

THAT the Wednesday, January 21, 2026 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

Nil.

4. Questions from the Public

The President, Richmond Teachers' Association (RTA) inquired whether the board collaborates with other boards when bringing forward motions and expressed appreciation for the motions being presented.

The President, Richmond District Parents Association inquired about the motion on the District Student Council.

5. Executive

The Superintendent highlighted the importance of school visits and engagement with the school community, noting the strong sense of community and pride among current and former employees. He expressed appreciation for the dedication of teachers, support staff, administrators, and central office staff. He acknowledged the collective effort behind the work

presented on the agenda and thanked staff for their continued commitment to ensuring students feel safe, welcome, and supported in their learning.

6. Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings

- (a) A record of an in-camera meeting of the board held Wednesday, December 10, 2025 was included for information.
- (b) Regular meeting of the board held Wednesday, December 10, 2025

010/2026 MOVED BY H. LARSON AND SECONDED BY A. WONG:

THAT the Board of Education approve the Minutes of Wednesday, December 10, 2025 regular meeting as circulated.

CARRIED

- (c) A record of an in-camera special meeting of the board held Tuesday, January 13, 2026 was included for information.
- (d) Special meeting of the board held Tuesday, January 13, 2026

011/2026 MOVED BY D. YANG AND SECONDED BY R. BELLEZA:

THAT the Board of Education approve the Minutes of Tuesday, January 13, 2026 special meeting as circulated.

CARRIED

7. Business Arising from Prior Minutes

- (a) **RECOMMENDATION – New City Centre School Catchment**

The Secretary Treasurer spoke to her report as included in the agenda package.

Staff then responded to trustees' questions regarding student transition plans and collaboration with the City of Richmond to address transportation and traffic safety.

Trustees thanked staff for their work, care, and extensive consultation.

012/2026 MOVED BY K. HAMAGUCHI AND SECONDED BY H. LARSON:

THAT the Board of Education approve the establishment of the new City Centre elementary school catchment boundaries, based on Adjusted Scenario Two as presented, effective for implementation beginning the 2026/27 school year, and direct staff to proceed with implementation and communication.

CARRIED

(b) **RECOMMENDATION – K-7 Blended Learning Program**

Assistant Superintendent Naser spoke to her report as included in the agenda package.

Trustees thanked staff for their work and for their support of students and families.

013/2026 MOVED BY K. HAMAGUCHI AND SECONDED BY D. SARGENT:

THAT the Board of Education approve staff recommendation to discontinue the K–7 Blended Learning Program, effective June 30, 2026, due to consistently low and declining enrollment;

AND FURTHER THAT staff engage with all relevant partner groups and provide transition supports for all students currently enrolled in the program.

CARRIED

(c) **RECOMMENDATION – 2026-2030 Strategic Plan**

The Superintendent spoke to the report as included in the agenda package. He then responded to a trustee’s question regarding Strategic Priority 4: Community and Partnership.

Trustees expressed appreciation for the collaborative process and thanked partner groups for their engagement and the consultants for their work.

The Superintendent acknowledged and thanked partner groups, the Board, senior staff, and the consultants for their contributions and feedback in developing the strategic plan.

014/2026 MOVED BY K. HAMAGUCHI AND SECONDED BY R. BELLEZA:

THAT the Board of Education approve the Richmond School District Strategic Plan 2026–2030 as outlined in this report.

CARRIED

(d) **MOTION – Establishment of a District Student Council**

Trustee Belleza spoke to his motion as outlined in the agenda package and provided rationale for the motion.

015/2026 MOVED BY R. BELLEZA AND SECONDED BY A. WONG:

WHEREAS the Board of Education of School District No. 38 (Richmond) values student voice and seeks input from students, when appropriate, on decisions that affect their learning and well-being;

WHEREAS the District has two district-wide student leadership groups: Table 38 and Presidents Council, composed of student representatives from all ten secondary schools;

WHEREAS the Board is developing a new strategic plan to guide the school district in the coming years;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board direct staff to examine ways to enhance the current structures and to consider the feasibility of creating a District Student Council to further enhance student voice, leadership, and engagement at the district level, and to report back to the Board by May 2026.

Discussion ensued regarding the motion and the current district-wide student leadership groups. Following discussion, trustees voted on the motion.

DEFEATED

NEGATIVE: K. HAMAGUCHI, H. LARSON, D. SARGENT, D. TABLOTNEY, D. YANG

8. New Business

(a) MOTION – BCSTA AGM Motion on English Language Learning (ELL)

Trustee Yang spoke to his motion as outlined in the agenda package and provided rationale for the motion.

016/2026 MOVED BY D. YANG AND SECONDED BY D. SARGENT:

THAT the Board approve the following motion for submission to the 2026 BCSTA Annual General Meeting:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the BCSTA request the Ministry of Education to increase the maximum number of funding-eligible years for English Language Learning (ELL) students.

Discussion ensued regarding the motion. Following discussion, trustees voted on the motion.

CARRIED

(b) MOTION – BCSTA AGM Motion Regarding Adequate and Flexible Education Funding

Trustee Larson spoke to her motion as outlined in the agenda package and provided rationale for the motion.

017/2026 MOVED BY H. LARSON AND SECONDED BY D. SARGENT:

THAT the Board of Education approve the following motion for submission to the 2026 BCSTA Annual General Meeting:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the BC School Trustees Association request that the Ministry of Education and Child Care provide adequate and flexible funding to school districts to address unfunded cost pressures, including but not limited to those arising from the conclusion of collective bargaining, staff grid increments, potential salary adjustments for exempt staff, costs associated with benefit rate increases, and rising inflationary costs.

Discussion ensued regarding the motion. Following discussion, trustees voted on the motion.

CARRIED

(c) **Proposed District Calendars 2026/27 & 2027/28**

Assistant Superintendent Naser spoke to her report as included in the agenda package. She then responded to a trustee's question regarding strategies for parent engagement and opportunities for feedback.

9. Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

10. Standing Committee Reports

(a) **Audit Committee**

Chairperson: Rod Belleza

Vice Chairperson: David Yang

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 10, 2026.

(b) **Education Committee**

Chairperson: David Yang

Vice Chairperson: Heather Larson

(i) Minutes of the meeting held on November 12, 2025, were attached for information.

A meeting was held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 6:00 pm.

(c) **Facilities and Building Committee**

Chairperson: Ken Hamaguchi

Vice Chairperson: Debbie Tablotney

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

A meeting was held on Wednesday, January 7, 2026. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 4:30 pm.

- (d) **Finance and Legal Committee**
Chairperson: Alice Wong
Vice Chairperson: Donna Sargent

(i) **RECOMMENDATION: Trustee Expenses for 3 Months Ended December 31, 2025.**

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

018/2026 MOVED BY A. WONG AND SECONDED BY D. SARGENT:

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 December 31, 2025, in the amount of \$5,057.08.

CARRIED

(ii) **RECOMMENDATION: 2026/27 Facility Rental Rates.**

The Committee Chairperson spoke to the report as included in the agenda package. Discussion followed regarding the proposed facility rental rate increase.

019/2026 MOVED BY A. WONG AND SECONDED BY H. LARSON:

THAT the Board of Education approve a 5% increase to both non-commercial (not-for-profit) and commercial (for profit) facility rental rates for the 2026/27 fiscal year as presented herein.

CARRIED

NEGATIVE: D. YANG

(iii) Minutes of the meeting held on November 12, 2025, were attached for information.

A meeting was held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 10:00 am.

- (e) **Policy Committee**
Chairperson: Debbie Tablotney
Vice Chairperson: Heather Larson

(i) **RECOMMENDATION:** Policy 501.8-R/501.8-G: Student Admission, Registration, Placement and Transfer.

The Committee Chairperson spoke to the report as included in the agenda package. Discussion followed regarding the motion.

020/2026 MOVED BY D. TABLOTNEY AND SECONDED BY D. YANG:

THAT the Board of Education approve revised ***Policy 501.8-R/501.8-G: Student Admission, Registration, Placement and Transfer***, in accordance with Board Policy 204: Creation and Revision of Policy and Regulations.

CARRIED

(ii) Minutes of the meeting held on November 10, 2025, were attached for information.

A meeting was held on Monday, January 12, 2026. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 9, 2026, at 11:00 am.

11. Board Committee and Representative Reports

(a) Council/Board Liaison Committee

The next meeting will be held on January 28, 2026.

(b) BCSTA

BCSTA 2026 Spring Provincial Council will be held on February 20, 2026.

(c) BCPSEA

BCPSEA Annual General Meeting will be held on January 29, 2026.

12. Correspondence

(a) For action:

Nil.

(b) For information:

(i) Advocacy Letters from the Board of Education to local Members of Parliament dated January 7, 2026.

Trustees highlighted advocacy efforts with MPs regarding concerns over changes to immigration funding, noting that other Metro districts are taking similar steps and that a related motion will be coming forward to the BCSTA AGM.

13. Adjournment

021/2026 MOVED BY H. LARSON AND SECONDED BY A. WONG:

THAT the regular meeting of Wednesday, January 21, 2026 of the Board of Education be adjourned at 9:40 pm.

CARRIED

K. HAMAGUCHI
Chairperson

C. WANG
Secretary Treasurer