

Education Committee Public Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 14, 2026 – 6:00 pm
Via Zoom

Present:

Chairperson	D. Yang
Vice-Chairperson	H. Larson
Trustee Member	R. Belleza
Alternate Member	A. Wong
Superintendent	C. Usih
Assistant Superintendent	M. Naser
District Administrator	L. Chau
Principal, Mitchell Elementary	V. Carrière
Teacher Consultant	K. Canas
Teacher Consultant	K. Gamble
Teacher, Mitchell Elementary	L. Chang Dar Woon
Teacher, Mitchell Elementary	S. Dewji
Teacher, MacNeill Secondary	L. Sampson
Teacher, McNair Secondary	J. Dur
Teacher, Steveston-London Secondary	K. Laskemoen
President, Richmond Teachers' Association	L. Baverstock
Vice President, Richmond Teachers' Association	S. Boljuncic
Representative, Richmond Association of School Administrators	L. Leung
Representative, Richmond Association of School Administrators	A. Pikkarainen
Representative, Richmond Management and Professional Staff	S. Glanzmann
1 st Vice President, Canadian Union of Public Employees 716	N. Williams
President, Richmond District Parents' Association	C. Huang
Executive Assistant (Recording Secretary)	J. Coronel

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.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

1. Adopt Agenda

The agenda was adopted as circulated.

2. Approve Minutes

The minutes of the public meeting held Wednesday, November 12, 2025, were approved as circulated.

3. Staff Presentations

Assistant Superintendent Naser provided an overview of the two presentations and introduced District Administrator Chau, who then introduced staff from various schools. Staff presented highlights of French programming across the district, as well as secondary courses that support the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement.

3.1 French programming

- Kristine Canas shared the French Immersion model in Richmond and highlighted district cultural activities that support and enrich French programs.
- Valerie Carrière shared school-wide initiatives at Mitchell Elementary aimed at making French learning relevant and fun.
- Lisa Chang Dar Woon described activities in her Grade 3/4 class at Mitchell Elementary that support students in viewing French as a social language used in everyday conversations.
- Sophie Dewji spoke about the use of conversation circles in her Grade 2/3 class at Mitchell Elementary as an instructional routine to develop French language development.

Trustees expressed appreciation for the great work across the district to support French language programming.

In response to a trustee's question, Valerie Carrière noted that one of the challenges students may face is a lack of French language support at home, particularly when parents do not speak French. The President of Richmond District Parents Association inquired about the proportion of French and English instruction in schools. Valerie Carrière clarified that in Early French Immersion (Kindergarten to Grade 3), instruction is delivered entirely in French. Starting in Grade 3, instruction is approximately 80% in French and 20% in English.

3.2 Indigenous-Focused Graduation Requirement

- Karla Gamble presented an overview of Indigenous-focused graduation requirement courses
- Lenaya Sampson, English and Social Studies teacher at MacNeill Secondary, shared examples of student work from her BC First Peoples 12 class.
- Jenna Dur described learning activities in her Environmental Science 12 and English 12 First Peoples classes, including books written by Indigenous authors that guide her classes.
- Katie Laskemoen shared that learning in her English First Peoples class at Steveston-London Secondary has been largely student-led, with students actively engaging in workshops and experiential learning.

Trustees expressed appreciation for teachers' experiences and the meaningful learning taking place in Indigenous-focused courses.

April Pikkarainen, representative from Richmond Association of School Administrators, commented on how nature-based practices impact student learning. In response to a trustee's question, District Administrator Chau highlighted that the impact of Indigenous-focused education continues to be observed and measured through daily practice.

Superintendent Usih expressed gratitude and appreciation for the passion, dedication, and expertise of the district's educators.

4. Next Meeting Date – Wednesday February 11, 2026 at 6:00 pm

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

*David Yang
Chairperson, Education Committee*