



**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.54 (*Bulkley Valley*)
SEPTEMBER 23, 2025
SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE, SMITHERS B.C.**

PRESENT: Trustees: F. Farrell, L. Kearns, J. Williams, P. Michell, F. Krishan,
Trustee Regrets: J. Krauskopf, K Graham
Staff: M. McDiarmid – Superintendent
J. Fox – Assistant Superintendent
D. Margerm – Secretary Treasurer
B. Kingsmill – Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

2. TRADITIONAL WELCOME / OPENING REMARKS

- Chairperson Williams acknowledged that we are gathered on the home of the Wit'suwit'en Nation, traditional territory of the Gidm't'en – Bear Wolf Clan.
- Chairperson Williams welcomed everyone to present to the first official meeting of the year. Trustee's Krauskopf and Graham sent their regrets. Chairperson wanted to acknowledge the loss of a long-term employee this summer. Chairperson Williams wants to send the Board's condolences to the family, staff and students.
- At the beginning of September one of our trustee's had a very momentous event take place. Trustee Michelle was honoured by her Clan, the C'ilhnts'ekhyu (Big Frog), and her House Group, the Yikh Tsawilhggis (Dark House) - more specifically the Unist'ot'en, by hosting a feast to allow people to witness her naming ceremony. Trustee Michelle received her name, "Annabel", congratulations to Trustee Michell. Taking on names is of great importance in Witsuwit'en culture and their governance system. It is a significant step to becoming Dinī ze' (male hereditary chief) and Ts'akē ze' (female hereditary chief).

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION: *It was moved by Trustee Kearns and seconded by Trustee Michell.*

- Agenda Adjustment – Frank Farrell is the Policy Committee Chairperson.

"That the amended agenda be accepted as presented."

CARRIED

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- The Vice - Chairperson asked if there were any corrections to the regular meeting minutes of the June 24, 2025 or the synopsis of the in-camera meeting minutes of June 24, 2025. There being none, the regular meeting minutes of June 24, 2025 and the synopsis of the in-camera meeting minutes of June 24, 2025 were declared approved as presented.

5) **DELEGATION** – The BVTU made a brief presentation to the Board.

6) 2024 – 2025 Draft Audited Financial Statements.

- **6.1) 2024-2025 Draft Financial Statements** – The Operations committee recommended the Board approve the audited Draft 2024-2025 Financial Statements as presented.
- Mr. Steve Kietzmann from Vohora LLP provided an unqualified opinion of the 2024 – 2025 Audited Financial Statements.
- Secretary Treasurer Margerm provided a financial recap of the 2024 – 2025 school year to the Board and guests present. Mr. Margerm expressed his gratitude to Ms. Frocklage, Ms. Smaha-Muir and the rest of School Board office team for their support with the audit process this summer.

MOTION: It was moved by Trustee Farrell and seconded by Trustee Michell.

“That the Board approve the 2024 – 2025 Audited Financial Statements as presented.”

CARRIED

7) ADMINISTRATION REPORT

- Superintendent McDiarmid presented the district update to the Board. Mr. McDiarmid spoke about this year's school start up and commented that the District is in a very tight staffing situation.
- Superintendent McDiarmid presented the student achievement report to the Board. The FSA's will begin in October. Once again, the FSA's are just one snapshot of our students ongoing assessments.
- Superintendent McDiarmid presented the district-based initiatives to the Board. The District is in the second year of the Early Literacy Assessment data collection. This year the we will be promoting the Joyful Literacy Site for diverse instructional strategies. The ECEBC is operating a before/after school program at Muheim. All elementary schools except Telkwa now host third-party childcare. ECCE Dual Credit program has launched with added experiential learning in childcare centres. We continue to collaborate with the CCRR and CDC to offer an Early Learning COP. The Profession Learn Program / Teacher Mentorship program is up and running to assist new teacher in their professional learning in an ongoing basis throughout the year. Collaborative Inquiry Grant applications are now being accepted. Successful applications are inquiry based, support school and District goals. Two applications will be reserved for educators exploring numeracy learning in secondary schools. The Trades and Technology department has been very busy already this year. Career programs across the district are now underway. Semester two programs include nail technician, welding and a new digital and graphic design offering from SFU. A two-day field trip to KSM Seabridge is planned for early October for 25 students. A resource site is being developed to support AI literacy in SD54 schools. A public-facing website is also in development to help parents and stakeholders better understand SD54's direction and action regarding AI. Parent teacher meetings will be scheduled for October 22/23 this year. District Elementary Soccer tournament will take place on September 25 for our Intermediate students. National Day for Truth and Reconciliation / Orange Shirt Day is on September 30. District schools will be participating in a variety of activities to learn and about and help raise awareness of the history of residential schools in Canada.
- Superintendent McDiarmid presented the school-based initiatives report to the Board. There is a lot going on in our schools during the month of September! Terry Fox Runs, meet the teacher nights, TEK days, field trips, spirit days, athletic teams have started up and cross country running. A couple of highlights: MME students will be returning to the Zoller Farm again this year; Over a 100 students kids from Telkwa Elementary participated in the hike to Cater Lake for their annual Terry Fox Run!; Twain Elementary will take part in Art therapy again this year . Plus, much much more!

Field Trip Proposals

- The following field trips have been approved by the Assistant Superintendent:
 - **TSE** – 170 students from Twain Sullivan Elementary to travel to Owen Lake on October 3, 2025. The purpose of this trip is to develop local ecological knowledge and to learn about fall food harvesting. All Board requirements have been met for this trip.
 - **SBO** – 25 +/- students from Houston Secondary and Smithers Secondary Schools to travel to KSM Seabridge Gold Mine Site, 65 kilometers northwest of Stewart, BC on October 9-10, 2025. The purpose of this trip is to explore the wide range of career opportunities relating to the development of mines and the mining industry. All Board requirements have been met for this trip.
 - **TES** – 132 students from Telkwa Elementary to travel to Crater Lake on Hudson Bay Mountain on September 23, 2025. The purpose of this trip is to take part in the annual Terry Fox Run and build school connectedness. All Board requirements have been met for this trip.
 - **HSS** – 75 students from HSS in grades 8-9 to travel to Fulton River Hatchery on September 26, 2025. The purpose for this trip is to study land-based learning, Indigenous culture and migration patterns of salmon. All Board requirements have been met for this trip.
 - **SSS** – 12 Sr. Girls Volleyball Athletes from SSS in grades 11/12 to travel to Kamloops, BC on September 18-21, 2025. The purpose for this trip is for the Senior Girls Volleyball team to participate in a volleyball tournament at TRU. All Board requirements have been met for this trip.

8.a) OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

- Operations Committee Chairperson Kearns presented the Operations Committee's Report from the September 16, 2025 committee meeting. Three (3) items were moved to the New Business portion of the meeting.
- Next meeting date Tuesday, October 7, 2025 @ 3:30pm

8.b) POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

- Policy Committee did not meet in September.
- Next meeting date Tuesday, October 7, 2025 @ 5:00pm

8.c) TRUSTEE REPORTS

- Trustee Farrell submitted a Trustee Report highlighting the Indigenous Council event in Prince George that he attended on May 21-22.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- There is no unfinished business this month.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- **10.1) Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) Report** - Mr. McDiarmid presented the FESL report to the board. This report synthesizes, assesses and compares data sources against educational or achievement outcomes.

MOTION: *It was moved by Trustee Kearns and seconded by Trustee Farrell.*

"That the Board approve Framework for Enhancing Student Learning report as presented."

CARRIED

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- **10.2) 2026 – 2027 Minor Capital Plan** – Secretary Treasurer Margerm provided the 2026-2027 Minor Capital Plan to the board for approval

MOTION: *It was moved by Trustee Kearns and seconded by Trustee Farrell.*

"That the Board approve the 2026 – 2027 Minor Capital Plan as presented."

CARRIED

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- **10.3) Summer Capital Project Update** - Secretary Treasurer Margerm provided an update to the Board on all of the projects that took place over the summer.

MOTION: *It was moved by Trustee Mitchell and seconded by Trustee Kearns.*

"That the Board approve the Summer Capital Project Update as presented."

CARRIED

11. OTHER BUSINESS

- No other business this month.

12. READING FILE

- No reading file items this month.

13. CLOSING REMARKS

- The next regular Board Meeting will be held on October 28, 2025, commencing at 5:30 p.m. at The School Board Office in Smithers, BC.

14. ADJOURNED

- The Board meeting was adjourned at 7:23pm.

Approved by:

Ms. Jennifer Williams, Chairperson
of the Board of Education

Mr. Dave Margerm
Secretary Treasurer



**SYNOPSIS OF THE
IN - CAMERA MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.54 (*Bulkley Valley*)
JUNE 24, 2025
SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE, SMITHERS, BC**

The regular meeting was called to order at 5:02 pm and the Board resolved to go in-camera.

- The Chairperson asked if there were any corrections to the in-camera meeting minutes of June 24, 2025. There being none, the in-camera meeting minutes of June 24, 2025 was declared approved as presented by the Chairperson.
- Senior Administration reported on routine staffing items and school suspensions.

The Board returned to regular session at 5:15pm.

DRAFT

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REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION

to the
Board of Education
October 28, 2025

Innovation / Initiatives

District Based Initiatives

- **Class Size-** Now that enrollment numbers are finalized, the District is now able to review class size and composition data. Class sizes have remained relatively the same, and contractual remedy situations also remained about the same, although there are a few more remedy situations at Smithers Secondary.
- **Professional Learning Program** – Once again, SD54 has engaged with experts in education to support professional growth. Thanks to the district staff for arranging these activities.
 - **AI** – Scott Richmond, VP of Technology and Trades, provided a Professional Development session focused on exploring AI-supported pedagogy, including tools for lesson/unit planning, differentiation, and administration tasks.
 - **Mentorship** – Leone MacDonald, the District Mentorship Teacher, has been connecting with new teachers, as well as teachers requesting additional supports. She has been instrumental in supporting and building teacher efficacy. Leone is engaged in a number of collaboration initiatives such as the District PLC planning group, the District Professional Development Team, collaboration grant teams, SharePoint implementation, Literacy and Numeracy Assessment implantation, and assisting school teams to achieve their school goals.
 - **Literacy** – Cynthia Dufresne, District Principal of Learner Support, and Bev Forster, Principal of Early Learning, facilitated a gathering on Professional Development Day for teachers to view the virtual sessions of the POPEY and POPARD conference, and explore school-based behaviour support and early learning literacy instructional approaches.
 - **Numeracy** –Leone MacDonald and Sandra McAulay will be providing professional learning to primary and intermediate teacher cohorts in November to support numeracy instruction and assessment.
 - **Professional Learning Community (PLC)** – Once again, the SD54 PLC will be in operation this year. The PLC District Team has planned and organized the first PLC gathering on Monday, November 3.
- **School Improvement Plans** — Schools have been working on and will be submitting their annual plan of improvement. Schools have considerable flexibility in developing their plans providing they support the overarching District Strategic plan goals. The plans are required to be displayed on school websites.
- **Professional Development Day** – On Friday, October 24, school staff participated in the Provincial professional development day. There was a wide variety of professional learning that took place, with both local and provincial learning activities taking place.
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- **Seabridge Fieldtrip** - In early October, Seabridge Gold's KSM Project hosted 26 Grade 11 and 12 students from Smithers and Houston Secondary Schools for a two-day immersive field trip. This unique partnership between School District 54 and Seabridge Gold gave students first-hand exposure to eight mining and trades-related career paths, along with a taste of what "camp life" can be.

Students participated in hands-on learning activities, met with professionals from across the mining sector, and made valuable connections that reinforced pathways from high school to local careers. The trip highlighted how education–industry partnerships can support youth to pursue skilled and technical careers within the region. The experience was captured by a professional film crew and will form part of a forthcoming video project highlighting this first-of-its-kind education/industry career learning initiative in Canada. The School District and Seabridge are working toward making this experience an annual event for students in the northwest.

School Based Initiatives

- **District Elementary Cross-Country Run** - Our elementary schools organized and participated in this annual event held on October 16. It was a great day of physical activity with participation from all of our elementary schools.
- **District Soccer Tournament** - After several weeks of practice, school teams participated in the annual soccer tournament on October 4. This year's event was a success with many happy participants and spectators.
- **Secondary School Extra-Curricular Sports** - Soccer, volleyball, cross country running and swimming are all taking place with many students appreciating the opportunity to grow their skills and compete.

Twain Sullivan Elementary

- Traditional Ecological Knowledge Day at Owen Lake:
Learning Goal: I can recognize the role of Indigenous knowledge so that I am more deeply connected to the land and Indigenous culture. -all school attended; Indigenous knowledge focused stations led by teachers, Birdy and Ellen, and David de Witt.
- NOIIE Indigenous Impact Study: Implementing the direct teaching of social skills and the creation of lunchtime social activity groups will build a sense of belonging and diverse social connections in the larger school community. -our study continues with our focus grade seven students creating connections and a sense of belonging with HSS
- Lunch Clubs: drumming, volleyball, library, art, Witsuwit'en language -supporting a sense of belonging and social connections
- Professional Development
 - October 9 - Leone MacDonald led professional learning about guided reading
 - -October 20 - Wild Schools Forest Walks
 - -October 23 - Stephanie Capyk led a session focused on the Neuro-Sequential Model/ParaChutes & Ladders
 - October 25 - Literacy Talk Moves Strategies, BCTLA Conference Libraries are Magical!, AI, virtual conference for the Provincial Outreach Programs, Wild Schools Project Learning Tree
 - October 25 - Audrey McKinnon led Augmentative and Alternative Communication learning

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Houston Secondary

- The deer harvesting opportunity that came from a partnership with the Dze L K'Ant friendship Centre was awesome. Students were released during the day to learn how to butcher a deer. It was engaging for all that took part.
- HSS also has community connections night tonight, which is paired with parent teacher interviews. We have a number of community organizations setting up in foyer so parents can meet and find out services and recreational opportunities that are available in Houston. We will also have a student vs parent dodgeball game, a bbq and a presentation regarding grad requirements for the parents of our grade 10 students.
- For the pro-d day teachers are working on a variety of different things. People are collaborating on teacher math, meeting with Leone, using a kiln and working with glazing and finishing techniques.

Telkwa Elementary

- Mr. Anderson's local band, Scout's Honour, performed early in October for the whole school which was a big hit as all their songs are aimed at the elementary level!
- Choir is in full swing- today school performances happening from each music class in front of the entire school with preparation in mind for Remembrance Day.
- Telkwa X-country--- incredible race results as our top grade 6 boy topped all male runners by winning the grade 6/7 category, along with our top grade 6 girl placing in the top 2. Many other top 3 placings from grade 3-5!! Mr. Rode and Mr. Hersee were the coaches.
- PAC lunch is happening on Monday and Wednesday's. -- PAC are selling Telkwa Elementary Coffee from Bugwood Bean to raise money for the program, which is an obvious hit with many of our students. Brandee from Riverside is volunteering her expertise and time
- Oct 24 Pro-D: Telkwa school closed due to Power upgrade! Several teachers working on early learning at Muheim,
- A few SEAs will join Ms. McKinnon for AAC training at Muheim, some teachers will be joining Leone at Walnut park for Spaces work.

Silverthorne Elementary

- Silverthorne is inviting all our staff to work together on our Foundational Literacy Strategy, part of our school growth plan, on the October NID. We will have teachers and support staff working together to ensure we have a common language, understanding and direction for supporting students in Literacy.

Walnut Park Elementary

- We had 27 runners compete in the cross-country race last week. The students have been training for since mid-September and all competed hard and had a fantastic time.
- Volleyball practice has now started for the grades 5-7 students.
- Our intermediate teachers are all taking part in the learning series webinar "The Science of Reading". This is a yearlong pro-d initiative that staff have committed to on school based and teacher based early dismissal times as well as the first few Pro-D days. This is part of a school wide initiative to improve literacy at the grade 4-7 level. All classes in 4-7 are now doing skill based small reading groups 3x per week with targeted literacy instruction.
- Pro-D Day - we will be working on the following modules from our Science of Reading course:
 - Part 4: Fluency, Part 5: Morphology, Part 6: Vocabulary – Foundational to Reading Comprehension
 - Part 7: Comprehension

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Muheim Elementary

- Professional Development Day on Friday, Oct. 24th
 - -EA/SEAs some will be working with our SLPs at a session in the Muheim library, some CUPE staff connecting with early learning staff
 - BVTU staff will have a self-directed professional development day.
 - Some topics staff will be delving into include: restorative justice, numeracy initiatives, creating and developing literacy centers, School- Wide Inquiry Project (Living Roots Family Farm)
- Volleyball will start soon (grades 4-7)
- Current Student-Led clubs include: Theatre Club & Shrek Club
- Cross Country—¼ of school participated
- Book Fair Tuesday-Thursday
- Jordan Daviel from SSS is coming to our school at 1pm with his band and Musical theatre students to offer a performance for students, October 31st.
- Meadows Assisted Living – we have two classes going to trick-or-treat at the Meadows. We will be connecting with the Meadows residents over the course of the school year. Amanda Forstbauer/Nova Long's class as well as some older students will visit the elders and engage in sing-alongs, crafts, conversation and connection.
- Remembrance Day – Assembly on Friday, Nov. 7th around 10:50am.
- Muheim would like to thank the Zoller Family for facilitating place-based and hands-on learning experiences for our staff and students. This school year, we will have students act as mentors who will take on leadership roles. These students will support classes who are new to the experiences many of our older students have had over the past several years at Living Roots. We are excited to work on this school-wide initiative that focuses on embedding First Peoples Principles of Learning with our experiences on local land, while connecting with our community.

Field Trip Proposals

- The following field trips have been approved by the Assistant Superintendent:
 - **SSS** – 30 +/- Cross Country Running students from SSS from Grade 8-12 to travel to three separate meets as outlined below. All Board requirements have been met for these trips.

DATES	LOCATION
September 26 – 27, 2025	Quesnel, BC
October 4, 2025	Terrace, BC
October 17-18, 2025	Prince Rupert, BC

- **BVLC** – 16 +/- students in Grade 10-12 to travel to participate in four separate gold panning and fishing field trips outlined below. All Board requirements have been met for these trips.

DATE	LOCATION
September 24	Telkwa, BC
October 1	Telkwa, BC
October 8	Suskwa (Hazelton, BC)
October 15	ByMAc Park - Houston , BC

- **HSS** – 20 +/- Grade 11-12 students from Houston Secondary to travel to Prince George, BC on November 6, 2025. The purpose of this trip is for the students to take part in tours of the CNC and UNBC Campuses and receive information on post-secondary programs at each respective institution. All Board requirements have been met for this trip.

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- **SSS** – 12 Sr. Girls Volleyball Athletes from SSS in grades 11/12 to travel to Kamloops, BC on October 24-25, 2025. The purpose for this trip is for the Senior Girls Volleyball team to participate in a volleyball tournament at Duchess Park Secondary School. All Board requirements have been met for this trip.

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OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Regular

3:30 PM

October 7th, 2025

School Board Office

Voting Members	Administration
L. Kearns, Chair K. Graham, Alternate F. Krishan J. Williams (ex officio)	M. McDiarmid, Superintendent D. Margerm, Secretary Treasurer J. Fox, Assistant Superintendent
Regrets	

The meeting was conducted from 3:35 pm - 4:00 pm.

Acknowledgement: *“Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that we are gathered here today on the unceded traditional territory of the Gidmt’en - Bear Wolf Clan, home of the Wit’suwit’en Nation.”*

REPORT

1. September Enrollment vs Projected Update

Mr. Margerm updated the committee on current enrollment, as of September 30th, 2025, for the 2025-2026 school year. Current enrollment is 54 FTE (full time equivalent) below projected. This is an estimated reduction in funding of \$466,000. Any adjustments for funding protection will be recognized in the December Ministry funding update.

2. Surplus Management

Mr. Margerm outlined Surplus Management policy and briefing note. The committee discussed the policy contingency thresholds and the possible use of surplus in conjunction with minor capital applications, appropriating surplus for future projects, operations and restricted capital applications. The surplus available for consideration by the Board is currently estimated at \$ 2,023,029 (June 30, 2025 operating surplus of \$2,405,555 less expected 2025-2026 deficit of \$382,526). By policy, the expected range of surplus should be between \$1.1 million and \$3.0 million).

Motion: The Committee recommends no appropriation of surplus for additional spending by the Board the for the 2025-2026 year.

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3. Board Work Plan

Mr. McDiarmid and Mr. Margerm updated the committee on the current updated version of the Board Work Plan. Input can be provided by trustees.

Date & Time of Next Meeting: November 18th, 2025 at 3:30 pm

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POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

October 7th, 2025

5:00 PM

School Board Office

Voting Members	Administration
F. Farrell, Chair P. Mitchell, Alternate J. Krauskopf J. Williams (ex officio)	M. McDiarmid, Superintendent D. Margerm, Secretary Treasurer J. Fox, Assistant Superintendent
Regrets	

The meeting was conducted from 5:00 pm – 5:18 pm.

Acknowledgement: *“Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge that we are gathered here today on the unceded traditional territory of the Gidmt’en - Bear Wolf Clan, home of the Wit’suwit’en Nation.”*

REPORT

PREVIOUS MEETING OF September 16th, 2025

Policy	Description	Type	Status	Consultation
	<i>No Agenda Items – Cancelled meeting</i>			

NEW BUSINESS

Policy	Description	Type	Status	Consultation
1.200 New	<i>Superintendent Evaluation (McDiarmid/Margerm) Response to Unexpected Health Emergencies</i>	Revision New	In-Committee In-Committee	Yes Yes

1. Administrative Procedure 1.200-2 Superintendent Evaluation

Mr. McDiarmid recommended a few minor revisions to the administrative procedures. These changes are mainly around allowing for two separate meetings of the Board to review the Superintendents evaluation.

Motion: The Committee recommends the Board approve the presented revisions to AP 1.200-2 Superintendent Evaluation.

Type: New, Revision, Deletion
 Status: In-committee, on-going, approved
 Consultation Yes, Not required, Complete, Rejected

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2. Policy: Response to Unexpected Health Emergencies

Mr. McDiarmid updated the committee on the Ministry's direction that Boards should institute a policy, *Response to Unexpected Health Emergencies*, in order to implement AED defibrillators and Naloxone kits into all schools. The school district is waiting for specific direction concerning specific language required for this policy. High schools must have AED devices and naloxone kits installed by December 2025 and the summer of 2026 for elementary schools.

Date & Time of Next Meeting: November 18th, 2025 at 5:00 pm.

Type: New, Revision, Deletion
Status: In-committee, on-going, approved
Consultation: Yes, Not required, Complete, Rejected



TRUSTEE REPORT

2025 BCSTA Fall Joint Branch Meeting

October 17-18, 2025

Terrace, BC

On October 17-18 we attended the BCSTA Joint Branch Meeting in Terrace. There were boards from Prince Rupert to Quesnel and the Peace River District.

The drive down to Terrace was lovely, a true fall day. Due to only four of us leaving for the event Friday afternoon, we decided to carpool. The two and half hours went by seamlessly with lots of laughs and great conversations. Hot tip – if you drive with Jen, the bathroom is first door on the right.

Friday evening's event in Terrace kicked off with a great dinner and the Superintendent Panel. Four Superintendents took the stage, including our very own, Mike McDiarmid. The conversations were all about What Challenges They Face, What Keeps Them Up at Night and What Fills Their Buckets. All speakers were great.

The next day, Saturday, was focused around Retention and Recruitment. We had a few different presentations about this topic. It was both refreshing and sad all the districts in the North are facing the same or very similar issues. Again, there were some great conversations and ideas around moving forward. What are we going to do to harness the next generation of Teachers and Board Staff?

This wrapped up our weekend of meetings, discussions and learning. Recruitment and Retention is a very important topic and the conversations won't stop anytime soon. We need to keep moving in a positive direction. I was hoping throughout the weekend, Les would have found the line. There's always next time.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kristina Graham
Trustee



TRUSTEE REPORT
2025 BCSTA Fall Joint Branch Meeting
October 17-18, 2025
Terrace, BC

On October 17/18, I attended the BCSTA North West & Northern Interior Fall Branch Meeting which was hosted by Coast Mountain School District #82 and was held in Terrace.

The meeting included the following presentations and discussions:

- "Connecting the North" by the two Branch presidents, Ed Harrison and Helen Gilbert.
- "BCPSEA Directors Presentation" by BCPSEA Director Margaret Warcup.
- "Superintendents Panel" by 4 of our local District Superintendents.
- "NorthSTARR , Retention and Recruitment report by NW President Ed Harrison and Board Chairperson Julie-Anne Runge.
- "Recruitment Initiatives History" by Dr. Stephen Petrucci, Peace River North Superintendent.
- "Rural and Remote Network Update" and "Work Force Plan" by Helen Gilbert.
- "Current Trends in Northern Recruitment" by Catherine Whalen and David Litz, both from UNBC.
- "A Board's Legacy: How You Matter To Public Education" by Gordon Li, BCSTA Director of Education Services and Tracy Loffler BCSTA President.

All presentations were well done but the most interesting for me was "The Superintendents Panel". They were informative, knowledgeable, well-spoken and very positive about their work.

Respectfully submitted by,
Les Kearns
Trustee



TRUSTEE REPORT
2025 BCSTA Fall Joint Branch Meeting
Theme: Building on the Legacy
October 17-18, 2025
Terrace, BC

The 2025 Fall Branch Meeting brought together trustees, superintendents, and educational leaders from across the North West and Northern Interior regions to discuss key challenges, share strategies, and strengthen collaboration.

Event Overview

The weekend opened with a Territorial Welcome and a “Connecting the North” presentation, highlighting innovative initiatives and achievements from districts across the region. BCSTA Directors provided updates on provincial advocacy, governance priorities, and trustee development opportunities.

An evening dinner followed by a Superintendent Panel featured open and insightful discussions about the challenges facing education leaders. The conversations were all about What Challenges They Face, What Keeps Them Up at Night and What Fills Their Bucket. An optional networking social was hosted at Sherwood Mountain Brewhouse, offering participants a chance to connect informally.

Saturday Sessions – Focus on Recruitment and Retention

Saturday’s program emphasized one of the most pressing issues across northern districts: workforce sustainability. Presentations and discussions included:

- NorthStar Committee Report: Ed Harrison & Julie-Anne Runge
- Recruitment Initiatives History: Dr. Stephen Petrucci
- Rural and Remote Network Update
- Workforce Strategy Review
- Current Trends in Northern Recruitment: Catherine Whalen, Associate Professor, UNBC

These sessions examined both long-standing and emerging trends in attracting and retaining education professionals in rural and remote communities, and explored collaborative strategies to support northern staffing needs.

Summary

The 2025 NW-NI Fall Branch Meeting successfully fostered collaboration among districts, highlighted innovative northern education initiatives, and advanced collective efforts toward addressing recruitment and retention challenges. The event underscored the region’s commitment to building on the legacy of strong, connected, and resilient northern schools.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jennifer Williams, Board Chair