

**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 43 (COQUITLAM)  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**

**SPECIAL PUBLIC BOARD MEETING - BUDGET  
Virtual Meeting via ZOOM**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2022**

**Chair:**

**Vice-Chair**

**Trustees:**

Michael Thomas  
Carol Cahoon  
Jennifer Blatherwick  
Barb Hobson  
Kerri Palmer Isaak  
Lisa Park  
Christine Pollock  
Keith Watkins  
Craig Woods

**Regrets:**

**Administration:**

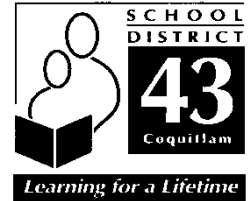
Superintendent of Schools/CEO  
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO  
Assistant Superintendents

Patricia Gartland  
Mohammed Azim  
Reno Ciolfi  
Gerald Shong  
Carey Chute  
Robert Zambrano  
Ivano Cecchini  
Randy Manhas  
Nita Mikl

Executive Director, Facilities & Planning Services  
Executive Director, Human Resources  
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer,  
Corporate and Financial Services  
Director of Instruction  
Director of Instruction  
Assistant Director of Communications and  
Community Relations  
Executive Assistant  
Recording Secretary

Paul McNaughton  
Stephen Whiffin  
  
Ken Hoff  
Jennifer Toderas  
Colleen Stavert

Michael Thomas, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.



*Our mission is to ensure  
quality learning opportunities  
for all students of all ages*

**PRESENT**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Acknowledgement of Territory was expressed by Trustee Pollock.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
OF TERRITORY**

The Chair asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda.

**ACCEPTANCE OF  
AGENDA**

**CAHOON/HOBSON moved acceptance of the agenda.**

**Question was called.**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

As the meeting was virtual introductions were not made.

**INTRODUCTIONS**  
a) Partner Groups  
b) DLT

The Board Chair reviewed the budget process, guidelines and sequence of events for the Special Public Board Meeting.

**OVERVIEW OF BUDGET  
PROCESS AND  
REMARKS FROM  
BOARD CHAIR**

The Chair delivered remarks regarding the Board's continued financial focus and decision making guided by the goals and objectives of the *Directions 2025* strategic vision document. Strong financial stewardship is the foundation that will ensure that *Directions 2025* three goals: *achieve student success, develop the educated citizen and foster a sustainable educational organization*, will be met.

The Chair commented that the Board's key budget objective is to maintain a financially healthy, stable and sustainable school district for the long-term to continue in achieving their vision and mission.

Patricia Gartland, Superintendent, commented the Board of Education and the District Leadership Team have listened carefully to the feedback of partner groups and stakeholders throughout the redesigned budget process. From that feedback, and in alignment with the district's strategic vision *Directions 2025*, Board direction has helped maintain high student achievement levels, and a stable financial position despite many challenges. The Superintendent further remarked that the Board is committed to financial transparency and accountability.

**REMARKS FROM  
SUPERINTENDENT**

The Superintendent thanked the Secretary-Treasurer and his team, the Board of Education and the District Leadership Team for their leadership and collaboration for achieving positive results from both a financial and a student success perspective.

There were no trustee questions.

## **TRUSTEE QUESTIONS**

## **STAKEHOLDER BUDGET FEEDBACK QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS**

Ken Christensen, CTA President, provided budgetary comments on behalf of the Coquitlam Teachers' Association membership (2,600 members), citing the main concerns are a balanced budget and job security for members. Mr. Christensen expressed concerns regarding reduced grant funding and consideration of increased inflationary costs. He inquired regarding the reduction of the professional development budget (page 23), the increase to "Others" in the special purpose fund (page 25), and consideration for the Classroom Enhancement Fund/CEF (page 26), which were responded to.

## **COQUITLAM TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION**

Ms. Leadbeater, parent, expressed appreciation for the increased number of EA's and LISW's however felt the increase was due to the increased number of students requiring support as opposed to the EA per student ratio. Ms. Leadbeater expressed concern about the current and future number of EA supports. She provided stories of two families with children who did not receive EA support as the support was instead provided for children who were acting out. She commented on the provincial grant funding model stating her feeling that the Ministry of Education and Child Care is under-funding school districts for additional supports. Ms. Leadbeater requested the expansion of the staffing table of student services teachers/ counsellors/Psych Ed and Learning Services professionals, a budget review to determine if more funds could be directed to learners, and for the District to ask the Ministry to increase funding for vulnerable learners. Her requests were responded to.

## **PARENT**

Ms. Dereus, elementary school counsellor, provided budgetary comments on behalf of the Coquitlam Teachers' Association and counsellors to advocate for more counsellors in schools. She commented there is a huge spike in mental health concerns for students in grades K-5 (suicide, depression, mental illness) and her feeling that counsellors are stretched very thin. She requested the ratio of assistance for students requiring supports to counsellors be re-negotiated through bargaining. Currently children need to be at the maximum level for mental health support before they receive timely assistance. Ms. Dereus' comments and inquiries were responded to.

## **COQUITLAM TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION/ COUNSELLORS**

Marvin Klassen, DPAC President provided budgetary comments on behalf of the District Parent Advisory Council regarding the maintenance of service levels to the extent possible, including existing staffing levels, school supplies, and services while addressing mental health and supports for vulnerable students.

DPAC understands that per-student funding for the coming year is not expected to increase however expressed the need to address supports for both students and staff with mental health concerns rising due to the ongoing pandemic. Concerns were also expressed regarding the reversal of \$80,000 of expenditures for Indigenous literary purchases, the District's reliance on federal funding to address air quality and safety in classrooms, and traffic safety in school zones, which were responded to.

Mr. Klassen thanked the Board and District Leadership Team for their engagement and partnership with DPAC, as well as their support of the DPAC to better support school PACs.

***A copy of the DPAC budgetary presentation is attached to the official minutes.***

At 8:04 p.m. the Chair opened the floor to questions.

Trustee questions and comments regarding the following topics were responded to:

- Inquiry if there will be space in the budget to consider where our EA support services are at once we have a better idea of enrolment.
- Inquiry if adjustments to staffing will be made in the case of declining enrolment. Enrolment projections are based on the number of students leaving in Grade 12 and the number of students coming in at the kindergarten level.
- Comment that everyone is aligned with the same concerns (staff, Board, and partner groups all want the same things for our children).
- Inquiry if Ministry mental health funding will be increased next year.
- Request for information detailing the number of EA's and LISW's this year (in relation to the number of students) compared to the past several years.

There were no questions from the gallery.

## **DISTRICT PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### **TRUSTEE DISCUSSION**

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

##### **a) Trustees**

##### **b) Gallery**

CAHOON/PARK motioned to adjourn the meeting.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***“Original Signed by”***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

***“Original Signed by”***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary-Treasurer



## District Parent Advisory Council

**To:** The Board of Education  
School District No. 43  
550 Poirier Street  
Coquitlam, BC  
V3J 6A7

Apr 14, 2022

**RE: DPAC43 Draft Budget Response for 2022-23**

### **PRESENTERS:**

Marvin Klassen, President: [president@dpac43.ca](mailto:president@dpac43.ca)  
Rosie Manhas, Vice President: [vicepresident@dpac43.ca](mailto:vicepresident@dpac43.ca)  
Jamie Manchester, Treasurer: [treasurer@dpac43.ca](mailto:treasurer@dpac43.ca)

The District 43 Parent Advisory Committee would like to thank the Board of Education and District Leadership Team for this opportunity to provide our response to the proposed budget.

### **Draft Budget Comments**

We agree that the executive summary of the multi-year fiscal plan is correct in identifying our primary concerns; the maintaining of service levels to the extent possible, including existing staffing levels, school supplies, and services, while addressing mental health and supports for vulnerable students.

DPAC43 understands that per-student funding for the coming year is not increasing as everyone would have hoped. In addition, the lack of funding coverage for inflationary pressures is always cause for concern. These elements, along with the reduction from the past year's projected growth in international students, and the anticipated decline in overall enrollment are cause for concern for the long term viability of current staffing levels. Given the situation, we commend the District's commitment to maintaining the planned increase in Education Assistants for the coming years. This is recognition of the primary concern the parent body brings to DPAC each year.

With mental health concerns rising due to the ongoing pandemic, supports for both students and staff must also be addressed. We encourage the Ministry to continue to pursue ministry support for mental health and well-being in 2022/23. Although past restrictions have been set aside for now, the pandemic has not ended and the long term effect on our community is not yet known.

In 2019 the Ministry of Education set forth new teaching standards to strengthen Truth and Reconciliation in the classroom. This vision has already shown positive developments in

understanding. DPAC noted in our pre-budget comments that the District place special focus on indigenous achievement and graduation rates. Two of the primary objectives in the Directions 2025 are *Instilling an understanding of First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous History* and *Emphasizing Success, Well-Being and Equitable Opportunities for Indigenous Learners*. Given this, the \$80k reversal of expenditures for Indigenous literary purchases is concerning.

Although it is understandable at this point that the District is relying on the Federal funding to address air quality and safety in our classrooms. This concern will continue into the future. Air quality is not just a health issue, but a budget and education issue as well. Better air quality reduces sick days for staff and lost education days for students. In some District schools, parents have already stepped forward to cover the cost of Hepafiltration systems for classrooms. DPAC urges the District to develop a five year plan for placement and maintenance of Hepa filtration systems in all classrooms in our oldest schools along with updating HVAC systems across the district.

### **Continuing Concerns**

In our February submission to the Board, DPAC noted our district wide parent concern for a focus on traffic safety. We encouraged the District to take a leadership role in bringing together our civic leadership, ICBC and traffic enforcement to focus on this issue. Unfortunately, this budget includes nothing in this regard. Parents understand that the District meets with its partners on this issue, but to date, the concerns continue. Our parents see crossing guards around schools in other jurisdictions. Our parents want them here.

### **Commendations**

In our February submission we requested that the District take steps to assure that all PAC's can return to in person meetings when appropriate, that parent organized hot lunch programs can return in an orderly manner, that parent volunteers can return to classrooms, and that parent teacher conferences can resume in-person. We are very pleased to say that the District Leadership Team has worked with DPAC to assure that parents are welcomed back into our schools, that the DPAC office is open to the public again and that our DPAC meetings are back in the Gallery Room at the Winslow Centre.

We are thankful to both the Board and the District Leadership Team for their engagement and partnership with the DPAC and look forward to further collaboration on issues of concern to our District. Specifically, thank you for supporting the DPAC to better support school PACs. It has allowed us to keep our parents connected, maintain the required technology to support our meetings and parent education sessions, invite guests to speak at our parent education sessions, allowed us to connect to many of our schools, maintain an office position with resources that all parents can access, plan for the future and develop our DPAC leadership skills.

## Closing

British Columbia continues to draw new residents year after year, many which choose to reside here in our region. The plan for new development throughout our member communities will continue to put pressure on the District to provide additional learning space, community based services and supports for vulnerable learners. No, there will never be enough to do everything that must be done. But, although this year may seem to be one of restraint and reduction, the future is looking strong. Our school populations will grow and the required services will increase. For this reason we say to the Board, be optimistic in the decisions ahead, expect the best from the investments you make today and always keep our learners in the forefront of your thoughts.

On behalf of DPAC43 thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MKlassen', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Marvin Klassen  
President, DPAC43