THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT 68
EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
TO BE HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011 – 6:00 PM
BOARD ROOM

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
   The Chair will call the meeting to order and recognizes that tonight’s meeting is being held on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw people.

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

3. DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

4. CHANGE IN ORDER

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
   6.1 Minutes
   That the Minutes of the June 8th, 2011 Education Committee meeting be approved.

7. PRESENTATIONS

8. EDUCATIONAL UPDATE - Report from Ms. Frisson and Ms. Southwick
   8.1 All Day Kindergarten
   8.2 Threat Assessment Update
9. CORRESPONDENCE REFERRED FROM THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1 Teaching the Khan Way

12. QUESTION PERIOD

Questions from the audience must be submitted in writing and given to the Board’s Executive Assistant (Cathy Kelt) for submission to the Chair. The question period is intended to enable the public to obtain clarifying information regarding a current agenda item.

*Forms are available in the information rack near the entrance of the Board Room*

13. ADJOURNMENT
THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES OF SCHOOL DISTRICT 68
MINUTES OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE
HELD JUNE 8, 2011

PRESENT:
Trustees - Voting
J. Brennan, Chair
R. Dale
D. Neary (Alternate)

Staff
M. Munro, Superintendent/CEO
F. Frisson, Assistant Superintendent
C. Southwick, Assistant Superintendent
D. Reimer, Director of Communications
C. Kelt, Executive Assistant

NOT VOTING
D. Murchie

IN ATTENDANCE
C. Lintott, NSAA Rep
H. Tarasewich, DPAC Rep

CALL TO ORDER
The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm and recognized that tonight’s meeting is being held on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw people.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA
There were no additions to the Agenda this evening.

DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA
Item 9.1 Mitchell Odyssey Achievement Success Team Report was removed from the Agenda this evening.

CHANGE IN ORDER
Item 12.2 (The Shape of your school in the Future) became item 12.1 and item 12.1 (Nanaimo Secondary School Program Revitalization Committee) became 12.2.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
Folio
E11/06/08-01

IT WAS MOVED BY Trustee Dale
That the Agenda be approved as amended.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
Folio
E11/06/08-02

IT WAS MOVED BY Trustee Dale
That the minutes of the Education Committee meeting held May 11, 2011 be approved.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Ecole Davis Road
Year of Science: UVIC Science
Winners and Odyssey of the Mind

Students from Ecole Davis Road School, along with their Principal, Doug English made a presentation to the Board’s Education Committee on Wednesday evening about activities at the school this year related to the Year of Science.

Mr. English said that the activities were undertaken as part of the school’s goal of engaging students in their learning, and in keeping with the Year of Science. There were four major initiatives:

• Science Day – University of Victoria scientists visited the school with hands-on science activities for all classes.

• Byte Camp – An after-school program for six weeks that focused on movie making, 3-D animation and Claymation. About 40 students participated in this program.

• Odyssey of the Mind – An international education program that focuses on creative problem-solving. Three Davis Road teams participated in a competition in Coquitlam.

• All Science Challenge – This competition for Grades 6-8 was held at the University of Victoria, with the Davis Road Grade 5 team taking first place, even though they were younger than all of the other teams.

PRESENTATIONS

Cilaire Elementary
Mr. Mike Ireland “Success in Using Technology to Better Meet the Needs of our Students”

Mr. Mike Ireland, Principal of Cilaire Elementary made a presentation about the way that school uses technology to support learning along with teachers Mike Silverton and Maureen Hancock.

They described the plan that the school is implementing to spread the use of technology widely throughout the school and into classrooms. Some of the technology being used includes document cameras, SMART boards, ELMOs, accelerated reader, and text-to-speech programs. This is the third year of the plan and the school is seeing increased student
EDUCATIONAL UPDATE - Report from Ms. Frisson and Ms. Southwick

Achievement and Success

Tim Davie, chair of the Achievement and Success Committee, gave an update on the committee's work. The committee includes 18 teachers, administrators, coordinators, and district staff. Over the course of the year, the committee has met 12 times and in three planning sessions discussed how the district's achievement contract can reflect the Board's goal of "Success for All." He said that over the next year the committee plans to engage with people across the district and discuss some core questions. They are:

• How do we define success in SD68?
• How can we collaborate to ensure success for each student?
• How can we nurture and inspire the healthy learning community necessary for success for each student?
• How can we support and value our diverse learners so each student is successful?
• What are the measurements that matter to support success in SD68?

CORRESPONDENCE REFERRED FROM THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

There was no correspondence from the June Board Meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Personalized Learning

This item was referred to the September Education Committee Agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

The Shape of your School in the Future - Dave Street, Principal of Ladysmith Secondary

Dave Street, principal of Ladysmith Secondary, told the Education Committee about the process used at Ladysmith Secondary School this year to
talk about the challenges that declining enrolment has created for LSS. The “Project Change” process has been underway for most of this school year, engaging all stakeholders in discussions.

He said that the focus of the discussions has been on what is best for students and what changes the school can make in its operations to support students at a time when the school is losing resources. Some of the possibilities that have been identified include clustering, combining courses, personalized learning opportunities, independent directed studies, teachers as mentors, and online courses.

Nanaimo Secondary Schools Program Revitalization Committee

R10/09/29-09 That the Board of Education of School District 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith directs the CEO to establish a Nanaimo Secondary Schools Program Revitalization Committee. This group will focus on possible configurations for course and program delivery among Nanaimo Secondary Schools. It may include the consideration of different models such as: distributed learning, a campus model utilizing specializations, academies, a different model for administration.

The Committee discussed the Board’s motion (above) that a Nanaimo Secondary Schools Program Revitalization Committee be established. The Committee, which will be established next year, will focus on possible configurations for course and program delivery among Nanaimo secondary schools, to maximize course opportunities for students.

QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY Trustee Dale

That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.
Teaching the Khan Way

The most influential teacher in North America today doesn’t have a teaching degree. He has never taught inside a classroom. But his ideas could begin to transform what happens in it.

Salman Khan is a nerdy 34-year-old American with a genius for explaining things. A few years ago, he began explaining math to his 13-year-old cousin, Nadia. Because she lived on the other side of the country, he worked with her online. Soon he was tutoring other cousins and their friends. So he started to make a series of short instructional videos that explained the basic concepts. Then he put some of them on YouTube, and they took off. Bill Gates discovered them, and began to use them with his own kids. And so the Khan Academy was born.

In 2009, Mr. Khan—who has two degrees from MIT as well as a Harvard MBA—quit his hedge-fund job to pursue his dream for online education. To date, he has turned out 2,400 low-tech mini-lectures on everything from basic addition to vector calculus and organic chemistry. They’re straightforward and conversational, with a kitchen-table feel. Mr. Khan himself never appears—just his hand, scribbling numbers on an electronic whiteboard. He has a talent for breaking down complex material into simple steps, so a student can play and replay the video until she gets it. His YouTube videos—all free—are drawing two million viewers a month.

“T’d been looking for something like this—it’s so important,” Mr. Gates told Wired magazine, which has a terrific piece on Salman Khan in its August issue. The Khan approach shows how technology can be used to truly customize education and allow students to proceed at their own pace. Kids can watch the lectures on their own time, and use classroom time for individual help and problem-solving. This means teachers can be liberated from teaching to the mediocre middle of the class, and devote their time to one-on-one coaching.

Courtney Cadwell uses Mr. Khan’s videos in her remedial Grade 7 math class in Los Altos, Calif. “It’s been amazing,” she said in an interview on National Public Radio. “I’ve seen a great attitude adjustment in my students. It’s changed their entire impression of math.” Kids earn points and badges for making an effort and for solving problems. “In the past, they were very passive learners, and now they are becoming active learners.”

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A crucial part of the system is a teacher’s tool – called a dashboard – that allows the teacher to monitor where every student is at every moment, so she can help when someone gets stuck. “I know exactly who’s struggling at what time and what they’re missing,” Ms. Cadwell says. “It takes a lot of the guesswork out of being a teacher.” Her students’ test scores have soared.

“This has the potential to supercharge what happens in the classroom,” says Mr. Khan, who is attractive, amiable and just a little geeky. His vision is to recreate the environment of a one-room schoolhouse, where students of all ages and levels learn independently but together, and have plenty of time left over to express their creativity through music or art.

Bill Gates has put up $1.6-million to underwrite the Khan Academy. His hope is that Mr. Khan’s methods can begin to improve the notoriously dismal math performance of American students. (We shouldn’t be smug. Canadian students don’t do all that well in math, either.) In Mr. Gates’s view, ignorance of basic math is a significant contributor to unemployment. “Math is the killer,” he told Wired. If you ask people why they didn’t pass this exam or get that job, he said, “math is often the reason.”

The digital revolution has transformed almost every aspect of our lives. But so far, it has left both lower and higher education virtually untouched. Teachers teach and students learn pretty much the same way they always did. But now digitally inspired innovation is breaking out all over. Millions of students are earning their degrees online. As The New York Times noted this week, online learning makes higher education cheaper, faster and more flexible. It can also make it better. Imagine what would happen, says education expert Richard Vedder, “when someone like Bill Gates creates Superstar University, finding the best professors for the 200 courses that a good liberal arts college offers, and paying them $25,000 each to put their classes online.”

Not everyone, needless to say, is thrilled about the prospect. The education industry is extremely slow to change and fiercely protective of its traditional monopoly. Teachers are terrified they might be replaced by technology. And some of them think the Khan approach to learning – which focuses on incremental, progressive mastery of skills – is all wrong. Rather than concentrating on mechanics, one critic writes, “teachers should be inspiring them to figure things out on their own.” Apart from that, it’s hard to see how a mass-education system based on a steady progression from one grade to the next could adapt to the radical idea that everyone should advance at a different pace.

But Khan fans love his stuff, even if the critics don’t. “Your organic chemistry video was a lifesaver!” gushed one grateful university student. Now the videos are being translated into 10 languages. Thanks to digital technology, high-quality learning material will soon be available to almost anyone on the planet, virtually for free. As Bill Gates says, “If you’re motivated to learn, this is an amazing time for everyone.”

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