

**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC MEETING
INFORMATION SHEET**

DATE: December 13, 2023
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Dale Burgos, Executive Director – Communications, Privacy and Community Engagement
SUBJECT: Draft Strategic Plan

Background:

On October 25, 2023, the Board of Education passed the following motion: (see [Action Sheet](#))

That the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) make the attached draft Strategic Plan goals and objectives available to the public utilizing the consultation process as per Board Governance, Section 1, 2.17 and to report back at the Business Committee on December 13, 2023.

Discussion:

The engagement period began on October 26, 2023, and ended on November 24, 2023. During that period staff, students and their families, the general public, along with our valued stakeholder partner groups had an opportunity to share feedback.

Community Engagement Plan

The DRAFT Strategic Plan was presented to the Business Committee on **October 12, 2023**.

The community engagement webpage included background information with instructions on how to participate during the consultation period: <https://www.sd68.bc.ca/board/community-engagement/>
Information on the community engagement period was:

- Emailed to all district staff
- Shared with all district staff via NLPS News
- Emailed to all families via School Messenger platform
- Shared on social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- Emailed to community partners/stakeholders

The community had until November 24, to provide feedback by:

- ThoughtExchange online discussion board;
- Virtual open-house;
- Secondary school visits with student leaders; and/or
- Email consultation@sd68.bc.ca

Timeline

Thursday, October 26, 2023

- Email to staff, families, stakeholder/partner groups
- Social media posts

Thursday, November 2, 2023

- District news for staff
- Social media reminder

Thursday, November 9, 2023

- School Messenger/Social media/District news reminder
- Virtual open house 5 – 6 p.m. (Microsoft Teams)

Thursday, November 16, 2023

- Reminder Email to staff, families, stakeholder/partner groups
- Social media posts

Session feedback notes

Stakeholder/partner group meetings [\(summary and feedback\)](#)

- [November 7: CUPE](#)
- [November 14: PVPs](#)
- [November 20: DPAC](#)
- [November 21: NDTA](#)
- [November 21: Leaders for Learning \(Indigenous learning partners\)](#)

School visits [\(summary and feedback\)](#)

- [November 8: John Barsby](#)
- [November 8: Learning Alternatives \(Woodlands\)](#)
- [November 10: Wellington](#)
- [November 14: LSS](#)
- [November 16: Island ConnectED](#)
- [November 20: NDSS](#)
- [November 24: Cedar Secondary](#)
- [November 28: Dover Bay](#)

Secondary school summaries: [\(summary and collective feedback\)](#)

- [Goal 1](#)
- [Goal 2](#)
- [Goal 3](#)
- [Goal 4](#)

Engagement numbers at-a-glance

November 7: CUPE executive (three members)

November 8: John Barsby – 25 students

November 8: Learning Alternatives – approx. 20 students

November 9: Virtual open house – zero participants

November 10: Wellington – 20+ students

November 14: LSS – 20+ students
 November 14: PVP – Elementary PVP and Secondary Principals
 November 16: Island ConnectED – 17 students
 November 20: NDSS – 20+ students
 November 20: DPAC President
 November 21: NDTA executive (three members)
 November 21: Leaders for Learning – 3 members
 November 24: Cedar Secondary – 16 students
 November 28: Dover Bay – 28 students
 Email feedback: Zero

ThoughtExchange Participation and Results



89
Participants



43
Thoughts



658
Ratings

environment that is inclusive

Understanding that you may identify with more than one of the following roles. Please select the role you identify most closely with for the purposes of this exchange.

%	Person icon	Answer
38%	(32)	An employee of the district
37%	(31)	A parent or guardian of a student in the district
15%	(13)	A student of the district
1%	(1)	A member of a partner group (Eg. Indigenous, city/town council, business owner)
5%	(4)	A member of the general community
4%	(3)	Other

Which FAMILY OF SCHOOL community do you belong to?

82
Responses

%	Person icon	Answer (Multi-select)
4%	(3)	Cedar Secondary
20%	(16)	Dover Bay Secondary
4%	(3)	John Barsby Secondary
13%	(11)	Ladysmith Secondary
24%	(20)	Nanaimo District Secondary
27%	(22)	Wellington Secondary
2%	(2)	Learning Alternatives
2%	(2)	Island ConnectED K-12
21%	(17)	Other

ThoughtExchange: Results overview (top thoughts and themes)

Answering the BIG question: ***"What are your key measures of success when considering the four Board goals presented in the Draft Strategic Plan?"***

The key measures of success include:

- Improved school facilities, ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for students;
- Increased student engagement and employee satisfaction, focusing on authentic data and meaningful supports;
- Enhanced support for diverse student populations, such as ELL students and those with disabilities/diverse abilities, through adequate resources and staff; and
- Ensuring students graduate with necessary skills and abilities to be successful, productive members of the adult community, including literacy, numeracy, life skills, and mental readiness.

The following information aims to provide an overview of the key concerns and suggestions raised by stakeholders in the school district. The main areas of focus include improving school facilities, enhancing student engagement, addressing bullying, supporting students with diverse abilities, and ensuring effective teaching practices. The report also highlights the importance of environmental stewardship, mental health support, and collaboration among school staff.

Key Findings:

- 1. Improved School Facilities:** Stakeholders have expressed concerns about the unwelcoming and unsafe conditions of some schools in the district. There is a need to invest in building upgrades to ensure a safe and conducive learning environment for students.
- 2. Student Engagement:** Stakeholders believe that student engagement is crucial for success and does not necessarily equate to graduation rates. They suggest that teacher-driven initiatives and a focus on content goal areas, such as outdoor/environmental education and indigenous education, can help improve engagement.
- 3. Addressing Bullying:** There is a call for more support for students experiencing bullying in schools. Stakeholders believe that a safe and supportive environment is essential for academic success and personal growth.
- 4. Supporting Students with Diverse Abilities:** Stakeholders emphasize the need for adequate support for students with diverse abilities, including ELL students and those with disabilities. This includes providing appropriate resources, spaces, and trained staff to help these students succeed.
- 5. Effective Teaching Practices:** Stakeholders suggest that teachers need more resources, in-service programs, and collaboration time to meet the district's goals. They also call for a review of the current grading system and the implementation of more standardized tests to ensure students are adequately prepared for the real world.
- 6. Environmental Stewardship:** Stakeholders advocate for the implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Action Plan, including increasing school gardens with native plants and sourcing sustainable paper products. They also suggest investing in sustainable buildings and renewable energy sources.
- 7. Mental Health Support:** Stakeholders believe that supporting the mental health and well-being of students, parents, teachers, and EAs is crucial for student success. They suggest integrating mental health services and community support into the school system.

8. Collaboration Among School Staff: Stakeholders emphasize the importance of collaboration time for teachers, EAs, and administrators to share knowledge and experience. They believe that this can lead to more effective teaching practices and improved student outcomes.

SWOT Analysis (based on ThoughtExchange feedback)

Strengths:

1. Diverse educational programs targeting various content areas (outdoor/environmental education, Indigenous education).
2. Focus on student engagement and employee satisfaction.
3. Emphasis on supporting students in developing a sense of self and building relationships.
4. Commitment to environmental stewardship and school gardens.
5. Focus on increasing graduation rates and post-secondary acceptance rates.
6. Support for mental health and well-being of parents, teachers, and EAs.
7. Collaboration among school staff (teachers, EAs, and admin).
8. Focus on creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students and staff.
9. Emphasis on meaningful supports to remove barriers for staff and students.
10. Focus on improving literacy and numeracy teaching practices.

Weaknesses:

1. Inadequate school facilities and infrastructure.
2. Lack of support for teacher-librarians and school libraries.
3. Inconsistencies in measuring student success and authentic data.
4. Limited resources and support for teachers to meet district goals.
5. Low morale among district employees due to lack of support and trust.
6. Lack of transparency and communication with parents about classroom content (e.g., SOGI).
7. Insufficient collaboration time for school staff.
8. Inadequate support for students with disabilities.
9. Reliance on a modern grading system that may not accurately reflect student performance.
10. Absence of designated school nurses.

Opportunities:

1. Investment in building upgrades and sustainable infrastructure.
2. Increase support for ELL students and their teachers.
3. Enhance mental health services and community support integration in schools.
4. Provide funding grants and release time for staff to work on school-wide or multi-class projects.
5. Improve communication with parents about classroom content and address misinformation.
6. Implement more standardized tests to better measure student success.
7. Reintroduce traditional grading systems in high schools.
8. Reinstate designated school nurses to address students' mental health and well-being.
9. Encourage educator feedback and ensure their voices are heard.
10. Take reports of bullying seriously and hold schools accountable for creating a safe environment.

Threats:

1. Political agendas interfering with the primary purpose of education.
2. Teacher burnout due to high demands and lack of resources.
3. Anti-SOGI movements targeting uninformed parents and causing division.
4. Ineffective literacy practices being used in schools.
5. Students using the "can't fail" mentality as an excuse not to strive for better.
6. Inadequate support for students with diverse abilities, leading to unequal opportunities.
7. Insufficient adult support for students, leading to gaps in learning and development.
8. Discrimination against minority groups, leading to feelings of unsafety and exclusion.
9. Inadequate support for school gardens and environmental stewardship initiatives.
10. Reliance on graduation rates as the sole measure of student success, rather than focusing on competency and life skills.

Next Steps

The next steps in the process of the renewal of the Strategic Plan will be for trustees and senior staff to meet in a working session to review the feedback in more depth. Specifically, to determine whether the Board would like to make changes to any goals, or perhaps more likely to ensure that the objectives align with or include sufficient focus on the concerns and opportunities raised in the consultation process.

When that is complete, the Strategic Plan document with supporting background information will be completed by staff for presentation to the Board to put to the community for another opportunity for consultation. This will be followed by final passage of the Strategic Plan that will include a communications and learning plan on how the Strategic Plan will be promoted and supported in our schools.

Finally, it should be noted that the District's operational plans will be crafted with the draft Strategic Plan in mind. If and when changes are made to the goals – but more likely objectives – operational plans will also align. Notably, this alignment and realignment will continue for the life of the Strategic Plan in response to data and prioritizing and reprioritizing aspects of the Plan.

With respect to timeline, the goal is for the final renewed plan to be approved at the April 2024 Board meeting.

