

**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUSINESS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
ACTION SHEET**

DATE: December 11, 2024
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
SUBJECT: Committee Structure and Trustee Professional Learning

Recommendation:

The Business Committee recommends that the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) approve the temporary suspension of the Business Committee and Education Committee to be replaced with a single once a month public Committee of the Whole entitled “Strategic Directions Committee” and a monthly Board working session entitled “Professional Learning Working Group” effective January 2025 and that the Board review the temporary structure in May 2025.

Background:

Recently, staff brought a proposal to change the structure of the Board’s meeting structure. The Board requested that the matter be brought for consideration at a later time.

Subsequently, the interim Superintendent in consultation with the new Superintendent, have determined that a new structure could have significant benefits for the District. This action sheet outlines the proposed temporary changes, rationale and the process to institute the changes. It will also outline the review process.

Discussion:

New Structure and Rationale

The proposed new structure would create a new Committee and Working Group:

1. Strategic Directions Committee; and
2. Professional Learning Working Group.

Strategic Directions Committee

The Strategic Directions Committee (“SDC”) will be an amalgamation of the Business Committee and Education Committee. It will have co-chairs who will rotate month to month in the role of Chair. The co-chairs shall be the currently elected Education and Business Chairs. The meeting will be the second Wednesday of the month from 5:00 -8:00 pm with a set end time of 8:00 pm so that partner groups and staff have a consistent schedule. The meeting would be online so that it is more accessible for committee members, partner groups, Right’s Holders, and the community to attend.

The agenda will begin with staff directed action sheets that require Board motions. It will then deal with information items which will have corresponding information sheets. If all action items are not dealt with

by the 8:00 pm finish, the SDC may extend the time of the meeting by motion. In the event that information items are not discussed, trustees may request that item be added to a future meeting.

With the exception of the hard finish and the priority order of action items, Policy 2.6 will apply to SDC meetings. If questions are submitted for question period and are not addressed due to time, responses will be posted.

SDC will be the main forum for Board business to proceed and allow for robust feedback from stakeholders.

Professional Learning Working Group

The Professional Learning Working Group (“PLWG”) is intended as a purposeful planned but less formal mechanism for Trustees to learn. Currently, the structure of the Business and Education Committee provide limited flexibility for free-flowing conversation facilitated by staff or third parties or partners on issues of importance outside of the specific oversight mechanism of the Board (e.g. FESL and other reporting).

The PLWG would have two Trustees who would facilitate sessions on a rotating month to month basis. The co-facilitators shall be the currently elected Education and Business Vice Chairs. The sessions would be more informal and Roberts’ Rules would not apply. The session agenda would be set with the Chair of the Board, the co-facilitators of the PLWG and the Superintendent. The PLWG would take place in person, from 4:00 – 6:00 pm, the first Wednesday of the month.

From a structure perspective the agenda would have up to three items with a set time of 45 minutes each. The topics may range from governance issues to District structures to emerging topics in education. Given that the PLWG is not a Board meeting, it is not the intention for Board business to proceed and debate should not occur. For instance, if the topic was District boundaries the issues would be generic as it is important the Board’s business is subject to public scrutiny and senior staff will provide guidance on this issue as it arises.

The intention would be to have trustees, the Superintendent and appropriate District staff and/or outside experts attend. The meetings would have an agenda but not minutes.

PLWG will allow for more open discussion and learning of topics and allow for a yearly learning plan that will focus on areas that will serve trustees without the pressure of immediate action and/or the formal structures of Robert’s Rules of Order.

Process to Institute Changes and Review

The recommended motion, if supported by the Board, is sufficient for staff to create temporary policy changes which will include minor changes to Policy 2.5 and Policy. These changes can be completed in time for Board consideration at the December Board meeting and will be based on information in this action sheet.

If supported, the structure would be in place for January 2025.

Finally, the Board’s workplan would be amended to include a review in June of 2025 and include consultation with partner groups and Right’s Holders to either make the changes permanent, revert to the current structure and/or make additional changes.