



**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 46 (SUNSHINE COAST)**

**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE NOTES
Held on Thursday, December 19, 2013 at 12:30 p.m.
At the School Board Office – Gibsons, BC**

PRESENT: TRUSTEES: Dave Mewhort, Chair; Greg Russell; Lori Pratt; Betty Baxter.
STAFF/OTHERS: Nicholas Weswick, Secretary-Treasurer; Rob Collison, Manager of Facilities and Transportation; Paul Bishop, Principal; Phil Luporini, District Principal, Allyson Fawcus, DPAC; Erica Reimer, Recording Secretary; Carolyn Smith; Judith Hammill; Lesley Barnett; Jolene Chinnick; Keith Bosworth; Katheryne Hunt-Spicer; Barry Janyk; Nancy Leathley; Rachel Watson; Glenn Allen.

The meeting was called to order at 12:35 p.m.

1) Facilities Plan: West Sechelt Elementary Catchment Area

Secretary-Treasurer Weswick provided a rationale for the need for catchment area changes and explained the process to date. He indicated that the district has added one portable to West Sechelt Elementary and will likely need to add another in the next school year. The committee discussed proposed catchment adjustments, including one submitted by Allyson Fawcus. It was noted that the most aggressive proposal would result in a reduction of approximately 70 students to the school population.

Area residents presented the following concerns:

- Bus transportation to Kinnikinnick is not well suited for Kindergarten and younger students.
- Residents with children approaching school age may not be aware of the proposed changes.
- Families living 1.1 kilometer from the school will be bussed 6 kilometers to a different school.

A suggestion was made that the district revisits the proposal to change West Sechelt Elementary to a K-5 school, with grade 6 and 7 students attending Kinnikinnick Elementary.

Secretary-Treasurer Weswick agreed to report back with registration information from the StrongStart program at West Sechelt to determine how many students would be affected by catchment adjustments. Secretary-Treasurer Weswick also agreed to report back with student data based on Allyson Fawcus' proposal.

Trustee Mewhort indicated that further information would be brought to the January committee meeting and that a recommendation would be made to the board so that changes could be in place prior to the beginning of kindergarten registration. He noted that if the committee could

not come to a consensus on a single recommendation, alternate options would be brought forward for the board to discuss.

2) Wi-Fi

Trustee Russell introduced the agenda item, indicating that the board had received several submissions on the topic of Wi-Fi in previous months, including a petition requesting the removal of wireless technologies. District Principal Luporini provided information on the district's current internet access connections, including both wired and wireless access. Secretary-Treasurer Weswick noted that the district follows guidelines from Health Canada, who have determined that there is no risk associated to wireless technologies (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/radiation/cons/wifi/index-eng.php>). It was noted that the district has recently reduced the number of wireless access points, which were installed and checked by professionals.

Members of the audience cautioned that information from Health Canada might be biased or not properly researched. Audience members further suggested that the district evaluate research submitted from outside agencies and provided alternate views regarding the safety of wireless technologies.

Trustee Baxter indicated that while the board did not see a compelling case to limit wireless access at schools, that members of the audience should consider addressing their concerns with Health Canada and the Provincial Government directly.

Next meeting (January 23, 2014):

- Facilities Plan: West Sechelt Elementary Catchment Area

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.