

SCHOOL DISTRICT 63 (SAANICH)  
EDUCATION DIRECTIONS COMMITTEE  
**Report to the Board of February 11, 2026**

Committee Members:	Trustee Silzer, Chair Trustee Vandall Trustee VanWell - regrets
Staff Support:	Helena Takhar, Director of Instruction, Learning & Innovation Melanie Paas, Assistant Superintendent
Partner Representatives:	Kelly de Klerk, SAA Leila Sinclair-Wise, SAA STA – Shannon Toronitz CUPE – regrets COPACS – regrets
Other Attendees:	Chair Dunford, Trustee Elder, Trustee Hickman, Assistant Superintendent Peter Westhaver

**Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, February 2, 2026

**A. PRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

1. Fall Student Voice Sessions

Director Takhar shared the findings from the fall student voice sessions which focused on School Plans and was conducted with our middle and secondary schools, including ILC and SIDES. The presentation highlighted that students were highly engaged and thoughtful, providing clear perspectives into what is working well and where they see opportunities for growth within their learning environments. This work reinforces the value of authentic student voice as a key driver in shaping responsive, relevant, and inclusive school plans. The depth and consistency of student feedback will directly support schools in aligning goals, strategies, and actions with learner needs and experiences. Most importantly, these sessions affirmed our collective commitment to partnership with students as active contributors to continuous improvement.

**B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

No Items.

**C. ITEMS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

No Items.

**D. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

No Items.

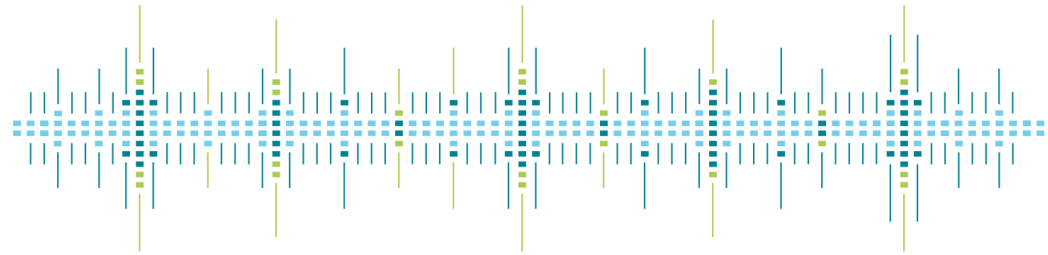
**E. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Marine Program (Mar/Apr)
- Data Sharing around Strategic Plan Goals – ongoing
- Student Voice Feedback – ongoing
- Benefits of International Student Program

# Student Voice – Fall 2025

Ed Directions - January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026





Saanich School Plans center around feedback and the voices of our students. School plans aren't static; they're living documents that grow and adapt with input from staff, families, and community partners. Authentic, ongoing data collection helps us make informed and timely adjustments, so our schools stay responsive to what students need most.

# Bayside



## Literacy

**Strengths:** Students see literacy as foundational for success and growth.

**Stretches:** Students would like more tailored support for their learning.

“It’s important to learn literacy because it opens a different part of your brain and learning how to read and write is so important and it will help you with your career.”



## Mental Health and Wellness

“I know three people who have gone to counsellors after having the school talk about mental health and how it's important to let your feelings out and now all three are in a better place than they were before.”

**Strengths:** mental health supports and flexible PHE options are valued and having choice and strong relationships has boosted engagement.

**Stretches:** Students feel there is an ongoing concerns about bullying, racism and homophobia.

# North Saanich



## Literacy & Numeracy

**Strengths:** increased engagement due to consistent expectations and student choice.

**Stretches:** learners desire more differentiated instruction multi-level work for students who aren't there yet or who are underchallenged.

"We appreciate how literacy and numeracy overlap in so many classes. We like it when teachers make it fun."

"Sometimes when you need help, adults bring you a planning sheet adults bring you a planning sheet. This puts learning in smaller steps and helps you understand better."



## Sense of Belonging

"Accessible students have a hard time sitting with friends in the gym because there is no way to sit in the bleachers."

**Strengths:** access to two adults (teachers, counselors, support, student teacher)

**Stretches:** Inclusion gaps for ELL, students with disabilities.

# Royal Oak



## Literacy

**Strengths:** improved vocabulary and writing. Subject specific vocabulary helps learning transfer.

**Stretches:** infuse student voice and choice in literacy activities and assessment.

“Literacy has helped increase my vocabulary and grammar.”

“Making specific vocabulary lists for different subject areas is very helpful.”



## Sense of Belonging

“We need to dig deeper in areas such as depression and not child-proof topics. We need to be provided more information about what to do with it. We need small groups and more details for people to take it seriously.”

**Strengths:** the focus on trusted adult connections and safe spaces is valued by students.

**Stretches:** Mental health Mondays feel superficial and child-proofed. Large assemblies are intimidating and students want personalized instruction and digging deeper on topics such as burnout social media, academic anxiety. Inclusion gaps continue to surface – authentic infusion year-round)



What is the most important factor in supporting young people's mental health?

The word cloud features the following terms (among others):

- mental health
- support
- young people
- factors
- important
- supporting
- mental
- health
- young
- people
- factors
- important
- supporting
- mental
- health

A word cloud of 100 terms related to social-emotional learning. The words are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner, with colors ranging from purple to green. The most prominent words, shown in larger fonts, include 'safety', 'clubs', 'resources', 'mental health', 'engagement', 'access', 'positive', 'diverse', 'clubs', 'safety', 'resources', 'mental health', 'engagement', 'access', 'positive', 'diverse'. Other visible words include 'clubs', 'safety', 'resources', 'mental health', 'engagement', 'access', 'positive', 'diverse', 'clubs', 'safety', 'resources', 'mental health', 'engagement', 'access', 'positive', 'diverse'.



# Royal Oak



## Next Steps:



### Bayside

- Desire for an anonymous suggestion/reporting opportunity to surface issues safely and in a timely manner.
- Continue to strengthen anti-racism and bullying education. Provide stronger consequences.
- Expansion of mental-health resources.
- Increase differentiated instruction.
- Interactive and engagement focused literacy practices.

### NSMS

- Continue to expand mental health education.
- Continue to strengthen inclusion for ELL and Inclusive Ed, with specific focus on accessibility.
- Continued support for educators to provide differentiated instruction.
- Increase student driven activities.
- Continue to provide professional development for educators to invite differentiated instruction.

### ROMS

- Refine mental health delivery smaller groups and action-oriented sessions.
- Infuse student voice in topics around diversity, academic enhancement and literacy engagement activities and topics.
- Diversity and inclusion year-round
- Expand safe spaces, ensure every student has a trusted adult, quieter classes.

# Secondary Student Voice



## Claremont

- Respected and valued learners
- Impact of cell phones on self-esteem, relationships and school engagement

## Parkland

- Attendance, mental health and anxiety
- Connection and belonging

## Stelly's

- Attendance and lost learning
- Wellness days

## SIDES

- Literacy
- Mental health and wellness

## ILC

- Connection
- Indigenous culture and perspectives

“The teachers help you feel accepted. There’s always someone in the school for each kind of kid which helps people build connections and life skills.

Claremont Student

“What might help students who struggle with attendance? Honestly, some handholding.... Ask “Why are you out of class?” or “Can I walk with you?”

Parkland Student

“The phone policy alone is changing the environment at school, it makes temporary hardships for us adapting to the policy, but we (most of us) feel it’s a good change as well.”

Claremont Student

“Attendance and anxiety can be concerning but a quick “Hey I see you, I noticed this, know that this is a safe place” could save someone’s life. Sit down and break bread. Get to know that student.”

Parkland Student

“The Wellness Days are great! Sessions on learning strategies, how to learn independently, neurodiversity and ADHD would be good to add.”

Stelly's Student

“ I can confidently say that even though I have high functioning autism, I have never been felt left out. The SLP groups, PISE Fun & Fitness, Science Club, Hiking Club, and more have helped me build friendships with my peers and get to know my teachers.”

SIDES Student

“ At ILC our staff latches on with both students and their health. They slowly pick us up from the lot to the middle or the highs of our lives.”

ILC Student

“There are limited opportunities to connect with students in other programs at ILC. This is a challenge for extroverts, coming from a big school to a small campus.”

ILC Student

## Next Steps:



Claremont	Parkland	Stelly's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a feedback system for teachers that students feel is valued</li><li>• Increase access to counsellors</li><li>• Secure phone hotels</li><li>• Consider refining phone policy to allow for music during breaks (calming)</li><li>• Provide clear guidance on AI use to support learning without replacing critical thinking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase access to counsellors</li><li>• Make PALS space more welcoming (students in segregated spaces lack broader peer connections)</li><li>• Increased gender-neutral washrooms</li><li>• Increase awareness of clubs and activities (beyond the announcements)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand Wellness Day offerings (allow for choice, smaller groups, more interactivity)</li><li>• Improve washroom conditions (privacy, maintenance)</li><li>• Make 1<sup>st</sup> block more engaging</li><li>• Address inconsistencies in phone policies</li></ul>

## Next Steps:



### SIDES

- Continue to increase opportunities for students to feel connected (virtual check-ins, more interactive opportunities)
- Continue to offer assignments or projects that are open ended and allow for choice.

### ILC

- Increase meaningful culture inclusion (Black History Month, Red Dress Day)
- Display a public calendar of events and cultural holidays
- Increase opportunities to connect with other ILC students (clubs or social activities)
- Consider more workshops (carving, arts, foods, bone game)

