

The Highlighter

May 1, 2018

Recognition and Delegations

Students representing the Cowichan Music Festival at the Provincial Performing Arts Competition – The Board was treated to a performance by “The Acafellas”, a group of Cowichan Valley Students who are among 50 students selected by the Cowichan Music Festival to represent the Cowichan Valley at the 2018 Performing Arts BC Provincial Festival. Music Festival Board members and conductor Sheila Johnson were in attendance.

Skills Canada National Competition Participants – Trustee Spilsbury introduced two students who won gold at this year's Skills Canada BC Provincial Competition and are advancing to the Skills Canada Nationals in Edmonton, Alberta in June: Taylor Walters from Frances Kelsey Secondary School won a gold in public speaking in the secondary competition, and Lawson Wallace, a VIU/SD79 Dual Credit student, student who won gold in refrigeration at the post - secondary level. Trustees congratulated the students and wished them well as they represent our district.

Cowichan 2050 – Bev Suderman, Senior Planner at the Cowichan Valley Regional District, gave a presentation on Cowichan 2050, a regional, integrated planning strategy that will create a new level of consultation and collaboration between local governments and communities in the region. The strategy will provide a comprehensive overview of the social, environmental and economic forces shaping the region, as well as providing insights into how local governments within the Cowichan Valley can best collaborate with regional stakeholders and partners to better manage the changes these forces will bring, including anticipated growth. Trustees thanked Ms. Suderman for her presentation and will discuss the Board of Education's involvement.

Board of Education

Education

Mill Bay Nature School Update – Kim Ondrik, originator of the Vernon Community School, has been hired as Principal of Mill Bay Nature School and will be joining the district within the next week. Registration has begun and is steady. More information on the school can be found at www.sd79.bc.ca/parents/mill-bay-elementary-nature-school/



District Update – The Superintendent reported on the following items in the District:

Youth Action Day – High School students gathered at Quamichan Campus on April 20th. This year it was formatted in a conference-style with workshops for students.

Try a Trade – Grade 7 students are participating in Try-A-Trade, which gives them an opportunity to try carpentry, electrical and plumbing.

Ready, Set, Learn – Ready, Set, Learn is being held on May 2nd at the Duncan Community Lodge. It is a free, drop-in education and health fair for children aged 2 – 5 and their families.

Transportation Department Open House – School District 79's Transportation Department invites families to their open house on Wednesday, May 16th from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Hotdogs and snacks will be available, buses will be on-site for students and parents to tour, and staff will be there to help with new registrations and any changes families need to make. For information on the NEW registration process, please visit <http://sd79.bc.ca/services/transportation/>

Metis Camp - This year's Metis Camp is being held during the week of May 7-11 from 9:30am to 1:30pm at the Glenora Trails Head Park. The following schools will be taking part:

May 7th - Alex Aitken

May 8th – Alexander

May 9th – Bench

May 10th – Tantor

May 11th – Lake Cowichan

As well, this year a session for teachers is being held on May 4th as a Pro-D option.

SD79 Mini-O Elementary Track Meet - The 4th Annual SD79 Mini-O Track Meet is being held on May 18th from 9:30am to 1:00pm at the Cowichan Sportsplex. This is an opportunity for all elementary students in grades 3 to 7 with a Special Education Designation to put on their school jersey, to participate in the joy of competition with their peers, and to have a fantastic day together.

Concours D'Art Oratoire District Winners - This year's Concours d'art oratoire district competition was held at Ecole Mount Prevost on April 10th and it was a great success. As a district, we are sending six student representatives to the provincial Concours, which will be held in Richmond in early May.

District Primary and Intermediate Science and Drama Challenge - This year's Primary and Intermediate Challenges for Grades K-7 took place at George Bonner Elementary on April 24, 2018. There was a Primary Science Challenge, an Intermediate Drama Challenge and an Intermediate Science Challenge. The Intermediate Science Challenge was for Grade 4 & 5 only as the Grade 6 & 7 students participated in the gravity car/bridge building. Over 300 students from 14 schools participated in the event this year.



Education, continued

Medal winners are:

Science

Primary K-3	Gold – Discovery Silver – Ecole Cobble Hill Bronze – Palsson
Intermediate Gr. 4-5	Gold – Crofton Silver – Bench Bronze – George Bonner

Drama

Intermediate Gr. 4-5	Gold – Ecole Mt. Prevost Silver – Ecole Cobble Hill Bronze – Bench
Intermediate Gr. 6-7	Gold – Drinkwater Silver – (Tie) Ecole Cobble Hill and Maple Bay Bronze – Alex Aitken

District Elementary Chess Tournament - 94 students in Grades 2-7 from 13 schools participated in the annual District Elementary Chess Tournament held at Bench Elementary on March 5, 2018. The results are as follows:

Primary	1. L'Ecole Cobble Hill 2. L'Ecole Cobble Hill 3. George Bonner
Grade 4	1. L'Ecole Cobble Hill 2. Drinkwater 3. Alex Aitken
Grade 5	1. Drinkwater 2. L'Ecole Mt. Prevost 3. Bench
Grade 6	1. L'Ecole Cobble Hill 2. Alex Aitken 3. (tie) L'Ecole Cobble Hill and Bench

Thanks to Jenny Ingram, our District Tournament organizer, and the coaches/teacher sponsors from all schools involved!



Education, continued

Hector McIntosh Student Speaking Competition - Students from the school district participated in the Semi-Finals of the annual Hector McIntosh Student Speaking Competition on May 1st at Brentwood College. Finals will be held on May 14th at the Ramada Inn.

Chemainus Secondary – National Remembrance Day Legion Competition, Wrestling Nationals - Chemainus Secondary student Sue Youn Kim won 2nd place at National in the Remembrance Day Legion Poster competition. In wrestling, Chemainus Secondary students Hannah Tuplin, Luther Tidder and Emily Reid went to Nationals. Luther finished first in his division and Hannah finished in third.

Bench Elementary – Leaders of Tomorrow Award, Robotics - Dailynn Middlemiss, a student at Bench Elementary, has won a Leaders of Tomorrow Award.

The students of Bench elementary placed in the finals at the Skills Canada BC's Sumo Bot Provincial Competition on April 18th. The Bench students and staff continues to dedicate their time and effort to creating a culture of robotics with the school and district. Students from grades 4-7 have been learning how the use of VEX Robotics kits can promote active engagement with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) content. Students have been tasked to design a robot and learn a combination of block and text-based programming in order to autonomously control their creations. Bench staff is planning on holding a day of coding and learning for students and teachers alike during early June in order to develop and foster a culture of coding and robotics throughout the district.

Voices of Nature Project - Palsson Elementary participated in a Voices of Nature project with the entire body of K-3 students. Participants learned a program of eco-themed songs. The songs reflected the environmental education students at Palsson are involved in. The music provided great and enlivening connections to science, social studies, fine arts and social responsibility.

Artist Response Team - Holly Arntzen and Kevin Wright, of the Artist Response Team (ART) came to the school to give a 4-day music residency and rehearse with the students. The culmination was an evening concert for the school families and community. The focus of the project was to put the students in leadership roles to share and celebrate their ecological learning and to inspire positive action in their families and community for conservation and restoration of the watershed, its waterways, forest and wild salmon.

Nourish Cowichan Art Contest - Nourish Cowichan has partnered with a Canadian company that produces eco-friendly school lunch gear to support waste-free lunch programs, called Funkins. Funkins and Nourish Cowichan is hold an art contest in local schools to create a lunch bag and cloth napkin design. The profits from the sale of this bag will be donated to Nourish Cowichan to support their work. More than 450 students at about 10 of our schools are working on a design this week. The winner will receive a lunch bag with their design, and lunch for their entire school courtesy of Nourish Cowichan. The winning design will be selected next week.



Education, continued

Spuptitul – The Annual Spuptional is being held on Thursday, May 3rd from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm at the Duncan Lodge.

District Scholarships – District Scholarship presentations are being held at Valley high schools during the week of May 14th.

Shelley Moore – Shelley Moore is in the District on May 15th and 16th at the Duncan Curling Club, continuing her presentations on diversity and inclusion in schools.

Poetry Slam – A Poetry Slam is being held on May 23 at the Quamichan Library. A visiting poet from Vancouver, John MacRae, has been to the elementary schools talking to students. Students have been working on their own poems and they will present them at the Poetry Slam.

Harvard Visit - On May 8, 9 and 10 Amelia Peterson from Harvard University is returning to the District to continue her research on transformation in education. She will be accompanied by Jal Mehta, who is Harvard professor and focuses on Deeper Learning.

Business

BC Summer Games Update - Preparations for the BC Summer Games are well underway and the Torch Lighting Ceremony was well-attended. The Summer Games is a showcase of sports and talent of students and the entertainment is fantastic.

New Playground Equipment Program Submission – The Secretary-Treasurer advised that the Ministry of Education announced \$5 million provincially for playground replacement and our District was allocated 3 structures. A proposal for new, fully-accessible structures for Mill Bay Nature School, Alexander Elementary and Alex Aitken Elementary were submitted.

Policy and Administrative Procedure Review – The Superintendent advised the Board that significant work took place with consultants Leroy Sloan and Terry Gunderson to review and rewrite the District's Administrative Procedures manual. He is expecting to have a final package ready for the June 5th Board meeting, when the new Board Policy Manual will be presented to the Board.



Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

Event	Date/Time	Location
DSAC Meeting	May 9, 10:00 am	CSS, Quamichan Campus
Board Planning Session	May 10, 4:00 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
Advisory Committee Meeting	May 15, 4:30 pm	Inspire Room (Annex)
DPAC Meeting	May 17, 7:00 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
Board Education and Business Committee Meeting	May 22, 4:00 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
Closed Board Meeting	June 5, 3:30 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
Open Board Meeting	June 5, 4:30 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)

Board of Education Trustees

[Candace Spilsbury](#), Chair
[Barb de Groot](#), Vice-Chair
[Elizabeth Croft](#)
[Randy Doman](#)
[Rob Hutchins](#)
[Cathy Schmidt](#)
[Joe Thorne](#)

