



Cowichan Valley School District

## OPINION EDITORIAL

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June 6, 2017

For Immediate Release

### CELEBRATING GRADUATION IN THE COWICHAN VALLEY

COWICHAN VALLEY, BC – Graduation is upon us, with many learners across the Cowichan Valley School District preparing to celebrate their success with friends, classmates, and families. Over the past few weeks, we have celebrated student accomplishments through district scholarships, sport competitions, capstone projects, and award presentations.

Graduation is a significant milestone in a young person's life, and it is one that leads our young learners to an exciting world of possibilities and opportunity—whether that be post-secondary training, work, travel, or another adventure that awaits. It is also a wonderful time to reflect on our accomplishments in achievement across the school district, and take a moment to celebrate our successes as an education system.

We are very pleased that in 2015/16, our school district reached a six-year completion rate for Aboriginal learners of more than 60%. While we still have much work to do to support Aboriginal youth so they reach graduation, we are very proud that in one year we have increased the rate by 7.3%. We remain committed to keeping this momentum going, and doing more to support the success of Aboriginal learners in the Cowichan Valley.

We are also proud that our six-year completion rate for students with special needs increased 3% to 63.6% in 2015/16. We recognize that all learners—including those with unique learning needs—should have the opportunity to graduate with a B.C. Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma) when possible, and we will continue to focus on opportunities to support these students in doing just that.

Finally, we are thrilled that in 2015/16, our overall six-year completion rate for all learners in the district rose by 5.6% to 82.1%—which is the second highest completion rate in southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, next only to the Greater Victoria School District. This is an incredible accomplishment that speaks to the capabilities of both our students and teachers.

We wish all of our graduating students much success in the next phase of their journey, and thank the many teachers, support staff, administrators, families, and friends who have supported them all throughout the years.

Candace Spilsbury  
Board Chair

Rod Allen  
Superintendent

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## BACKGROUND

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### 2015/16 SIX-YEAR COMPLETION RATES

COWICHAN VALLEY, BC – The six-year completion rates for schools captures the proportion of students who graduate with a B.C. Certificate of Graduation or a B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma, within six years of enrolling in Grade 8. The following charts show how the Cowichan Valley School District compares provincially, and with neighbouring school districts.

SIX-YEAR COMPLETION RATES						
<i>(Source: Ministry of Education)</i>						
	2015/16		2014/15		2013/14	
	All Students	Aboriginal	All Students	Aboriginal	All Students	Aboriginal
Provincial*	83.6%	63.8%	83.9%	63.0%	84.2%	61.6%
Cowichan Valley	82.1%	60.6%	76.5%	53.3%	77.9%	54.4%
% Change Over Previous Year						
Cowichan Valley	5.6%	7.3%	-1.4%	-1.1%	-2.5%	-2.6%

SIX-YEAR COMPLETION RATES		
<i>(Source: Ministry of Education)</i>		
	2015/16	
	Overall	Aboriginal
Provincial*	83.6%	63.8%
Cowichan Valley	82.1%	60.6%
Neighbouring School Districts		
Nanaimo-Ladysmith	72.6%	56.4%
Gulf Islands	63.0%	82.1%
Saanich	71.3%	45.7%
Sooke	76.1%	75.0%
Greater Victoria	87.2%	56.0%

*\*Note: The provincial average includes public and independent schools.*

For more information on the six-year completion rates, or other education data, please visit:  
<https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/school.php>

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