

# The Highlighter

## April 2, 2024

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### Recognition:

**BC Winter Games Gold Medalists:** The Board recognized three students who won gold medals at the BC Winter Games, held February 22-25 in Quesnel.

- Grayson Magee from Chemainus Secondary competed in Archery and won gold medals in both Boys' Aggregate Barebow, and Boys' Match Play Barebow;
- Elijah Ludlow, a student from Quamichan School, earned the gold medal in the Boys' 66 kg Judo competition;
- Maika Jay from Frances Kelsey Secondary competed in artistic gymnastics and was part of the gold medal winning Women's Artistic Gymnastics team.

### Education

**Principal/Vice-Principal Transfer Process 2024/2025:** An announcement of Principal/Vice-Principal assignments for the 2024-2025 school year will be made on or about April 25.

**National Day of Mourning – April 28, 2024:** Flags at schools and the School Board Office will fly at half-mast on April 28 to honour those injured or killed in workplace accidents, and to renew our commitment to improve health and safety in our schools and workplaces.

**Earth Day – April 22, 2024:** The School District is committed to continuing to work towards environmental sustainability. In recent years the Board declared a climate emergency and established a Climate Action Advisory Committee.

**National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S), also known as Red Dress Day - May 5, 2024:** Red is worn on this day, or red clothing displayed, to honour and remember the missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people.

### Superintendent's Update:

#### Acknowledgements/Appreciation:

- Thank you to staff who worked during the Spring Break including Payroll, Finance, Human Resources, Operations and Technology.
- Administrative Professionals' Day on April 24 is a day to acknowledge the contributions of the District's administrative support which keeps the learning community operating smoothly.

Autism Awareness: April 2 is World Autism Awareness Day, a day to raise awareness about autism. The month of April is Autism Awareness Month, a time to identify the contributions, challenges and successes of people with autism.



**COWICHAN VALLEY**  
School District

Half-Masting of Flags for the late Right Honourable Brian Mulroney: Flags at all Cowichan Valley School District schools and the School District Office were flown at half-mast for the designated time to honour the memory of the late Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, who passed away on February 29, 2024.

Provincial Assessments: Grade 10 Literacy and Numeracy and Grade 12 Literacy assessments will be held from April 15 to 19 and from June 10-14. Students must complete these assessments in order to graduate.

Skills Canada: A total of 298 students (235 junior and 63 secondary) from the Cowichan Valley School District competed in Skills Canada Regional events held at a variety of venues including District schools, VIU and Camosun College. Events included Gear Bots, Senior Robotics, Sumo Bots, Cabinet Making, Photography, Graphics, Wind Turbine, Electronics, Professional Cook, Welding, Carpentry, and Hairstyling. Twenty-eight students will represent the District at the Skills Canada Provincial Competition on April 17 in Abbotsford. Students who win gold at Provincials will advance to the Nationals in Quebec May 30-31.

Youth Work in Trades Award: Our Careers Department was very proud to hand out \$1,000 cheques to 70 students working in trades on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Child Care and SkilledTradesBC. To be eligible for the award the students had to register with SkilledTradesBC as apprentices, graduate, successfully complete four Work in Trades courses, and report to SkilledTradesBC that they worked a total of at least 900 hours as an apprentice in a trade by January 31 of the school year they turn 19. The award is intended to help apprentices pay for tuition or purchase tools or supplies. The Careers Department has 109 apprentices signed up with 310 Youth Work courses completed so far this year.

Inclusive Events:

- Orientation for Trail Riders: On March 27 an orientation was held at the School Board Office on accessibility and mobility devices for wilderness areas.
- Sledge Hockey: On April 4 a Maple Bay Elementary class trip to the Cowichan Arena will be supported by Victoria Sledge Hockey, who is providing two sledges to make the field trip accessible to the whole class.
- Wheel Kids: On April 9 Wheel Kids will bring ten wheelchairs to Lake Cowichan School for an inclusive PHE activity.
- BC Blind School Sports Day: May 29 has been tentatively scheduled for BC Blind School Sports Day at Ecole Mount Prevost. More info to come.

Catalyst Update:

- District Chess Tournament will be held April 10 from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at George Bonner.
- District Drama Challenge will take place at Quamichan on May 2, from 8:30 a.m. until noon.

Dates of 2SLGBTQIA+ Recognition:

- **International Trans Day of Visibility** on March 31 is intended to recognize the experience and voices of the transgender people in our community, and to ask yourself how you can be an active ally for Transgender members of our community;
- **International Day of Pink** on April 10 seeks to raise awareness about the need to stop all forms of bullying, particularly those targeting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. On this day people around the world stand together against homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- June is **Pride Month**. The Cowichan Valley School District celebrates Pride Month as one way to bring awareness to the historic and ongoing marginalization of members of the LGBTQ2S+

community and to acknowledge current attempts to remove protected rights from this group. Everyone is invited to join the Cowichan School District group, which will have flags, stickers and a big banner to walk behind, at the *Cowichan Walk and Festival Pride Parade* on Sunday, June 23 at 10 a.m.

Long Service Recognition Tea on March 7 was an opportunity for the Board to recognize the significant work milestones of our employees who have reached 25, 30 and 35 years of service.

Non-Instructional Day (NID) on April 15, 2024: The morning will focus on Literacy and Numeracy, with school teams working on their Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) in the afternoon.

Mental Health Week – May 6-10, 2024: This year the Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) Mental Health Week is centered on the healing power of compassion.

## Secretary-Treasurer

**2024-25 Budget Process Update:** Our grant for 2024-25 will increase due to the projected enrolment increase of 71 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students and to cover 3% wage increases, but we will not receive funding for inflation or our increased benefit costs. Ninety percent of the District's expenditures are related to wages and benefits, with the remaining 10% spent on services and supplies. The 2022/23 budget was \$94M when adopted, and grew to \$97M throughout the year. The 2023/24 was \$105M when adopted and is projected to be \$109M by the end of the school year. The draft 2024/25 budget has expenditures of \$111.6M and revenue of \$108M, leaving a shortfall of \$3.574M. Options to address the shortfall will be presented at the April 11 Special BEBC Meeting.

**2024-25 Five-Year Capital Plan Response Letter:** The Ministry approved the following minor capital projects which were included in the District's 2024/25 Annual Five-Year Capital Plan:

- Phase 2 of the HVAC upgrade at Quamichan School for \$675K (School Enhancement Program);
- Tansor HVAC upgrades for \$900K (Carbon Neutral Capital Program);
- \$200K for kitchen equipment and upgrades for Alex Aitken, Bench, Crofton, Drinkwater, Mill Bay, Palsson, Ecole Cobble Hill and Ecole Mount Prevost through the Food Infrastructure Program.

No playgrounds were approved this round.

The Board will also receive funding to replace three school buses. No funding amount is attached as it will depend on the type and brand of buses the Board wishes to acquire. There have been some challenges with the District's electric buses as they are unable to run on many of our longer routes, seat fewer students, and are not able to do out-of-town field trips. While diesel buses have a lower cost, they produce more emissions.

## Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

MEETING	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Climate Action Advisory Committee	April 5, 12:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Board Planning	April 9, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
DSAC Meeting (Trustee Sousa)	April 11, 10:00 a.m.	Frances Kelsey Secondary
Special BEBC Meeting	April 11, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Advisory Committee Meeting	April 16, 4:30 p.m.	Inspire Room
DPAC Meeting (Trustee Croft)	April 18, 6:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
BCSTA AGM	April 18-21	Westin Bayshore, Vancouver
BEBC Meeting	April 23, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Special BEBC Meeting	April 25, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Special BEBC Meeting (if required)	May 2, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Early Learning and Child Care Meeting	May 7, 11:00 a.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Closed/Open Board Meetings	May 7, 3:30/4:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Chemainus Secondary District Scholarships	May 14 (morning)	
Cowichan Secondary District Scholarships	May 15 (morning)	
Frances Kelsey District Scholarships	May 16 (morning)	
Open Learning District Scholarships	May 16 (afternoon)	
Lake Cowichan School District Scholarships	May 17 (morning)	

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