**The Highlighter**

**February 4, 2020**

**Recognitions and Delegations**

**Recognition of Monroe Grobe, Lonnie Shermerhorn, and Jason Sandquist** – The Board recognized retired Director of Operations Monroe Grobe, Capital Co-ordinator Lonnie Schermerhorn, and Secretary-Treasurer Jason Sandquist for their many years of hard work to secure the replacement of Cowichan Secondary School. The new school will forever change the landscape of the Cowichan Valley. The Board is proud of the work they have done and continue to do for the benefit of the District’s students, staff and community.

**Delegation: For Our Kids** – Matt Price, Coordinator of For Our Kids, Nik Richardson, representing the Cowichan Valley Teachers’ Union, and Ellie Barnhart, a Grade 10 student at Cowichan Secondary School, gave a passionate presentation to Trustees on the climate crisis and recommended measures that could be undertaken by the District. The Board passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and will review the actions recommended by the delegation at their upcoming Board Education and Business Committee meeting.

**Board Chair**

**Strategic Plan Announcement** – Copies of the newly-completed Strategic Plan were given to Trustees. The District is in the final phase of the Plan’s development, which is to formalize, celebrate and action the strategic vision and foundational plan. The community launch will take place February 5, and a website is being produced to showcase the Plan.

**Nova Scotia School Boards** – Boards of Education in Nova Scotia have been reinstated after having been disbanded two years ago.

**Canadian School Boards’ Association Conference, July 2020** – Trustee Spilsbury plans to attend the Conference and support Trustees from other provinces who are facing the elimination of Boards of Education.

**Cowichan Secondary School Focus Groups** – In response to the community’s interest in having a health and wellness centre, mini-theatre or centre for innovation and technology included in the new Cowichan Secondary School replacement, focus groups in these three areas have been formed. Meetings are also underway regarding possible centres for child care and Indigenous language and culture. A public meeting will be held to allow the community to bring forward their ideas.

**Mill Bay Nature School Plaque Unveiling** – Trustee Spilsbury and several district staff members attended the unveiling of the plaque commemorating the official opening of Mill Bay Nature School.

**Education**

**Temporary Director of Instruction (Secondary) –** The Superintendent introduced and congratulated Larry Mattin who was recently appointed Temporary Director of Instruction (Secondary).

**Foundry Initiative –** Associate Superintendent Tom Longridge presented Trustees with an overview of the Foundry Initiative, which provides access to primary and mental health care, substance use and social services, youth and family peer supports, and connection to online-tools and resources for youth ages 12 to 24 years. Each of the province’s Foundry centres is operated by a lead agency that brings together local partners, service providers, young people and caregivers. There are currently eight centres in operation across BC, with three more sites in development. Vancouver Island’s two Foundry locations are in Campbell River and Victoria.

**Kindergarten Registration/District Choice Lottery** – On January 24th lotteries were held for kindergarten seats at Mill Bay Nature School, Ecole Mount Prevost, and Ecole Cobble Hill. Kindergarten registration took place at the remainder of the District’s schools from January 27 – 31.

**Strategic Plan** **– Next Steps** – Staff is working with Principals and Vice-Principals to build operations and support the Strategic Plan in its development and moving forward. Staff will be working on multi-year plans for Human Resources and Technology over the next few months.

**Cowichan Secondary School Replacement** – Trustee Spilsbury and members of the District’s senior management team have been on the road to tour four secondary schools: ten-year-old Alberni District Secondary School, Royal Bay and Belmont Secondary Schools in Sooke (both five years old), and two-year-old Ecole Salish Secondary in Surrey. The team appreciated the gracious hospitality shown to them at each of the schools, and the opportunity to see the powerful design elements incorporated into the buildings. At Ecole Salish Secondary they were able to see 21st century learning concepts in action by educators who used learning spaces to transform education for their students.

**Parent Learning Fair** – The District and the District Parent Advisory Committee are co-sponsoring an evening of learning for parents. Parents can choose four ten-minute session from a selection of topics. The Fair will take place from 6:00-7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 2 at Quamichan School’s multi-purpose room.

**Changing Results for Indigenous Learners/Changing Results for Young Readers** – These two workshops will be presented by literacy and learning expert Faye Brownlie. Unfortunately the weather forced her to postpone her first sessions last week, but presentations are scheduled February, April and May.

**International Student Program Trip** – From March 17-21, 2020 students from the International Student Program will travel to the Rocky Mountains on a cultural enhancement program.

**Superintendent’s Update:**

* **Acknowledgements**:
  + Staff from Operations, Transportation and Payroll did great work on behalf of students and staff during and following the school closure days due to snow and inclement weather.
  + Lake Cowichan Fire Department and staff who quickly identified and put out a small fire in a garbage can at Lake Cowichan School. Their efforts to extinguish and clean up the resulting mess allowed students to return to classes the following day. The great work by the Director of Communications handling the media/social media was also acknowledged.
* **Ignite & Bite:** On January 21 the third session in the series was held. The final session will be held in April.
* **Deeper Learning Dozen:** Associate Superintendent Sheryl Koers and Principals Darcy Hoff and Nicole Boucher represented the District at the Deeper Learning Dozen session in Monterey, California from January 22-24. The trio will share their learning around equity and supporting our learners at a dinner learning series for Principals, Vice-Principals and the District Leadership Team.
* **Gravity Cars:** The third annual Gravity Car event took place last week at the Motorsport Circuit. It was a great joy to watch the children participating. Two winning students rode around the track in an electric Porsche.
* **Youth Apprentices:** On January 28 cheques for $1,000 were presented to 48 youth apprentices who were part of the District’s Careers Program.
* **Shelley Moore** returned to the District to talk about inclusive learning with Principals and Vice-Principals, and at an after-school session with parents, educators and pre-service teachers. She will return on February 27 for sessions with Principals and Vice Principals and the District Learning Support Team.
* **Pink Shirt Day** (anti-bullying) is coming up on February 26.

**Secretary-Treasurer**

**Amended Annual Budget** – The Secretary-Treasurer presented the Amended Annual Budget. Enrolment growth resulted in an additional $2.7M in funding. Several factors contributed to an increase in expenses, including the additional teachers required to support the enrolment growth and continued implementation of the Class Size and Composition language, wage increases for staff, implementation of the 1.95% Employer Health Tax and increases to employee benefit premiums. The Board adopted the 2019-2020 Amended Annual Budget in the amount of $106,322,139.

**Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events**

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| **MEETING** | **DATE/TIME** | **LOCATION** |
| Board Planning Session | Feb. 11, 4:00 p.m. | Yuxwule’ Eagle Room (Boardroom) |
| DSAC Meeting | Feb. 12, 10:00 a.m. | CVOLC |
| BCSTA Leadership Series | Feb. 13, 9:00-4:00 | Victoria |
| Early Learning Committee Meeting | Feb. 14, 3:00 p.m. | Smayaqw’a Ladybug Room |
| DPAC Meeting | Feb. 20, 7:00 p.m. | Yuxwule’ Eagle Room (Boardroom) |
| Advisory Committee Meeting | Feb. 18, 4:30 p.m. | Inspire Room (Annex) |
| BCSTA Indigenous Education Council | Feb. 20-21 | Vancouver |
| BCSTA Provincial Council | Feb. 21-22 | Vancouver |
| Vaping Committee Meeting | Feb. 24, 1:00 p.m. | Yuxwule’ Eagle Room (Boardroom) |
| Board Education and Business Committee | Feb. 25, 4:00 p.m. | Yuxwule’ Eagle Room (Boardroom) |
| Pink Shirt Day | Feb. 26 |  |
| BCSTA Leadership Series | Feb. 27, 9:00-4:00 | Campbell River |
| VISTA Spring Conference and Business Meeting | March 6-7 | Nanaimo |
| BCSTA Leadership Series | March 10 | Nanaimo |
| BCSTA AGM | April 16-19 | Vancouver |