

The Highlighter

January 8, 2019

Recognition and Delegations

DSAC Backpack Project – Trustee Spilsbury recognized the District Student Advisory Committee (DSAC) which, for the past 11 years, has filled backpacks with toiletries, winter warmers, school supplies and other necessities. Since 2007 the Backpack Project has filled and distributed 712 backpacks to the Cowichan Valley's homeless and needy youth. Trustee Spilsbury also recognized Pierce Jones, DSAC Chair, and Michelle Gitaari, DSAC Vice-Chair, for their hard work and for being student leaders in the district.

Board of Education

Meetings with Local Governments – The Board has been in contact with local leaders from the Municipality of North Cowichan, City of Duncan, Town of Lake Cowichan, and Cowichan Valley Regional District who all expressed an interest in working together with the Board.

Meetings with First Nations – The Board looks forward to meeting individually with all local First Nations and will be meeting with the Stz'uminus First Nation in February.

Student Travel – The Board of Education gave final approval for an International Student Program Spring Break trip to Varadero, Cuba from March 11 to 20, 2019. The Superintendent advised the Board of Chemainus Secondary School's upcoming exchange student trip to Yellowknife.

Education

District Update – Superintendent Rod Allen reported on the following items in the District:

School Fundraising Events - Many of our schools undertake fundraising events during the winter months. Here are some of the fundraising initiatives that our schools and students have been involved with:

District Wide

- DSAC filled 70 backpacks for distribution to youth in need in the Cowichan Valley.



West Schools

- The Lake Cowichan Lakers took on the Cowichan Capitals in a fun game supporting the local food bank with a cash donation of \$350 as well as a half truck of food.
- Lake Cowichan School also had an angel tree where they adopt families within the school and purchase presents for families in need. They had an Elf Store where children who couldn't afford to get presents could go to pick from donated presents for not only themselves but for their siblings too. They also created several food hampers.
- Palsson Elementary supported a "giving tree" which was supported by Cowichan Lake Community Services, and had an Elf Store with donated gently used or new items where students could "shop" for family members.

North Schools

- Chemainus Secondary fundraised for non-perishable items for Harvest House food bank.
- Crofton Elementary put on a Cozy Christmas Fundraiser to promote gender equality and combat child marriage through the United Nations Population Fund to End Child Marriage. After all their hard work, more than \$660 will be donated to the cause.

Central Schools

- Students at Alexander Elementary School raised money for Warmland and the new Women's Shelter through purchasing candy canes each day (\$0.25) each.
- Students at Drinkwater Elementary helped Juice FM Stuff the Truck and spent the previous weeks collecting 1,388 items of food to help the local food bank.
- Maple Bay Elementary created two holiday hampers and collected 767 non-perishable food items. 175 gently used stuffies were collected to be shared with Alexander School.
- Quamichan School participated in the Festival of Trees in Victoria, decorating a tree at the Bay Centre. The theme of the Quamichan tree this year was "Hope - Kids helping Kids." As part of this project, students are raising and donating \$1000 to BC Children's Hospital.

South Schools

- Students at Ecole Cobble Hill sought out community donations and created more than 370 Kindness Care Packages to be distributed throughout the Cowichan Valley.
- George Bonner Elementary collected non-perishable items for their local food bank.
- Discovery Elementary collected non-perishable food items and toiletries for the CMS Food Bank Society Mill Bay.
- Students and parents of Discovery Elementary divisions 13 and 14 participated in a Heart to Heart Market. One class raised \$174.50 for the Mill Bay Food Bank and the other raised \$207 in total with half going to the Mill Bay Food and the other half to the local SPCA.
- A student at Discovery Elementary who is concerned about homelessness proactively decided to collect items at the school to donate to the Warmland House in Duncan.
- Students in Division 3 at Bench Elementary have taken on WE School campaigns planned for the New Year.
 - One student who was very inspired at WE Day has designed her own campaign combining her excellence in running and passion for sports with raising funds for soccer balls for children. The student has signed up for a running event at the end of January and taking pledges for her campaign.
 - A group of four students are planning a Rafikki campaign for the end of January for Valentines Day with proceeds going to a global WE pillar.



- Three other students focused on poverty in our community, have planned a coin drive and would like to donate the proceeds to Nourish Cowichan.
- Two other students have combined their passions and are planning a 'book 'n bake' drive in February. They would like to support girls globally who have limited school supplies or limited access to school.
- Another group is organizing a "walk for water" in May.

Transportation Department Shines During Recent Windstorm – The bus drivers and Transportation Department Staff did an amazing job ensuring students were safe and cared for and getting everyone safely home that night in challenging circumstances. The Board joined the Superintendent in recognizing the exemplary work done by all employees in the Transportation Department.

Lake Cowichan Warming Centre – The windstorm created significant power outages in our community for some long periods of time and the Lake was one of those hardest hit. Lake Cowichan School Principal Jaime Doyle stepped up and created a community warming centre, and with support from District employees Tara Brooks, and Monroe Grobe, and in coordination with the CVRD, opened the school as a place for coffee, showers, and laundry. It was an opportunity for folks to come and get warmed up and was appreciated by the community. The Superintendent and the Board thanked staff for their wonderful job opening up the school to the community.

Audit – The District has gone through a detailed audit of all categories of students with special needs. Three students were moved to different categories, but no students were taken off our rolls, which is an incredible result for such an extensive audit. Many thanks to the District's Learning Assistance/Resource teachers, Principals, Vice-Principals and staff who stepped up and provided a wealth of information to the audit team.

Business

2019-2020 Budget Process – The Secretary-Treasurer advised that as the Ministry has delayed implementing the new funding model, the funding formula is expected to remain the same for the next school year. The 2019-2020 Budget Process was presented. [LINK](#)

Amended Operating Grants – An enrolment increase of approximately 210 students resulted in an additional 1.5 million dollars of student-based funding. Special needs funding increased as well, resulting in a funding adjustment of 2.3 million dollars.

Year-End Projection – Revenue is very close to projection. There has been an unprecedented number of employee absences this year resulting in projected replacement costs of \$500,000 over budget. Last year we had difficulty replacing absent staff due to a staffing shortage. Increased casual staff numbers has meant we are able to cover more absences, which combined with higher absentee numbers resulted in this unexpected expenditure. Utility costs are under projections due to the unseasonably warm weather.

BC Tripartite Education Agreement – A renewed BC Tripartite Education Agreement has been signed setting the foundation for further growth and changes to support the growth of the BC First Nations education system. Those changes include new funding commitments, new First



Nations education commitments from Canada and BC, continuation of a Special Education Program, and important Nominal Roll changes. Transportation plans approved by the First Nation and Board of Education are required by February 28, 2019 in order to apply for special transportation grant funding. When fully implemented this agreement provides additional supports and structures that are aimed at improving educational outcomes for First Nations students.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

Event	Date/Time	Location
Chemainus/Crofton Community Conversations	January 12, 10:00 a.m.	Chemainus Secondary School Multi-Purpose Room
Board Planning Session	January 15, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
DSAC Meeting	January 16, 10:00 a.m.	Quamichan School
DPAC Meeting	January 17, 6:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
Advisory Committee Meeting	January 22, 4:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
BCPSEA AGM	January 23 – 24	Vancouver
BCPSEA / BCSTA Trustee Orientation	January 25-26	Vancouver
BEBC Meeting	January 29, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
Chemainus/Crofton Community Conversations	January 29, 6:30 p.m.	Chemainus Secondary School Multi-Purpose Room
Closed Board Meeting	February 5, 3:30 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
Open Board Meeting	February 5, 4:30 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Boardroom)
VISTA Spring Conference	March 1 - 2	Host District TBD
BCSTA Leadership Conference	March 7 - 8, 8:30 – 3:30	Nanaimo

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