

The Highlighter

March 5, 2024

Recognition:

Quamichan Wrestling - Provincials: The Board recognized Quamichan Lightning Wrestlers Aoife Mann, Beatrix Klatt, Mason Martin, Rheo Loiselle, Team Manager Maddison Campbell and Coach Ryan Yewchin. The Quamichan Lightning wrestlers, in the school's first ever school season of wrestling, won berths to advance to and compete in the 2024 BCSS Wrestling Provincial Championship at the PNE Forum in Vancouver February 23-24. The Quamichan Grade 8/9 wrestlers spent their last two tournaments competing against students in Grade 10, 11 and 12. These four wrestlers qualified through Island Championships to compete at Provincials where they came away with wins, memories, goals and a great experience. Each of these wrestlers was able to walk out of the PNE Forum with a win - an amazing accomplishment for these young wrestlers. Aoife Mann came away with a 1-2 record at Provincials in the 54kg Girls class and experienced wrestling against a provincial champion. Beatrix Klatt finished with a 3-2 record at Provincials in the 64kg Girls weight class with all her wins coming via pin. Mason Martin battled to a tough 1-2 record at Provincials in the 51kg Boys class. He was explosive and offensive throughout the entire tournament. Rheo Loiselle did extremely well, coming away with a 1-2 record in the 66kg Boys class at his first ever Provincial championship. Madison Campbell was a great Team Manager supporting the Coach. She organized singlet sign out and return, filmed matches, ensured athletes were warmed up and on time. The Board is proud of these young wrestlers' hard work and accomplishments and was pleased to recognize Aoife, Beatrix, Mason, Rheo, Madison and Coach Ryan with a token of its thanks.

District Psychologists: District Psychologists Lila Boulet, Kelly McManus, and Rhonda Geres-Smith were recognized by the Board for the extensive work they completed to become Licensed School Psychologists under the College of Psychologists of BC, all while continuing to provide great support to schools and learners. School Psychologist credentialing in BC is changing in May 2024, and all three psychologists have successfully completed the two-hour written jurisprudence exam on the knowledge and science of law pertaining to legal and ethical requirements for Licensed School Psychologists. The Board recognized them with a token of its thanks.

Education

Staff Introductions to Trustees:

- Ixchel Bradley began her role as Principal of Chemainus Elementary/Thetis Island Elementary on February 26 and comes to us from the Surrey School District;
- Nicole Davey, who joins us from Bulkley Valley School District, started her role as Temporary Principal of Maple Bay Elementary on January 31;
- Chris Baker, Capital Manager, returned the District February 22 after a short absence.

Personnel Updates:

- Penny Butler has been appointed Temporary Vice-Principal at Frances Kelsey Secondary;
- Lindy Thompson has been appointed Temporary Vice-Principal at Cowichan Secondary.



COWICHAN VALLEY
School District

Principal/Vice-Principal Transfer Process 2024/2025: The Superintendent is in discussions with Principals and Vice-Principals regarding next year's assignments. An announcement of placements for the 2024-2025 school year will be made at the end of April.

Proposed Three-Year Calendar: We are in the last year of the previously-approved calendar. The proposed three-year calendar was made public at the January 30, 2024 BEBC Meeting and the February 6, 2024 Board Meeting before going through a public consultation process. The Board was briefed on the feedback received at the February 27, 2024 BEBC Meeting. The Board passed a motion approving the three-year calendars as presented and directing staff to prepare the final documentation to submit to the Ministry of Education by March 31, 2024.

Superintendent's Update:

Acknowledgements/Appreciation: Cowichan Valley Teachers' Federation, Cowichan Valley Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association (CVPVPA) and Canadian Union of Public Employees were acknowledged for organizing and holding their professional development on the February 16 non-instructional day. The CVPVPA Executive was also acknowledged for leading their Association on "Time for a Change."

Skills and Trades Update:

- The Superintendent had the great opportunity to go to the Skills Canada Regional Competition at VIU Nanaimo on February 29 to see our students compete in carpentry, welding, culinary arts and hairdressing. Winners from the Regional Competition will have the opportunity to compete in the Provincial Competition in Abbotsford on April 17.
- The Careers Department has organized Skills Canada Competitions for Gear Bot (students use their computer programming skills to maneuver a robot around a map efficiently without hitting various obstacles) and Sumo Bot (competitors use their prebuilt remote-controlled robots to try to push their opponent out of a sumo ring) at CVOLC on March 6.
- On April 16 thirty students will be attending the Women in Trades Training event at Camosun College, which offers a variety of hands-on activities in trades and career options.
- On February 14 twenty eager high school students from across the District started their Early Childhood Education (ECE) 130 course (Principles and Practices of Wellness) at VIU Cowichan Campus. On completion of this course, students can work as Early Childhood Assistants or continue schooling to complete their ECE diploma after graduation. This course has been offered to our students for the last three years as part of an ECE expansion pilot project from the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Early Learning Events:

- Ready, Set, Learn are community-based events sponsored by the Ministry of Education and Child Care which will be held at four locations throughout the Cowichan Valley between April 2-30. The theme this year is dinosaurs.
- Ready, Set, Go are school-based events held in May for incoming Kindergarten students. This year's theme is frogs.

BC Student Learning Survey: The survey is available online from January 8 to May 3 for students and parents in Grades 4, 7, 10 and 12, and all staff in BC public schools. The evidence collected from the survey informs decisions in the District.

French Immersion: From February 4-10 Ecole Mt. Prevost recognized French Immersion Celebration Week by sharing fun facts about French Immersion and Francophone culture. They also came together to prepare for their annual Winter Carnaval which they celebrated February 20-23. The children, parents, and staff of Ecole Cobble Hill celebrated Carnaval February 5-9, coinciding with French Immersion Celebration Week. Highlights included Carnaval Opening Ceremony assembly, canoe races in the gym, wear plaid day, Carnaval games, Potluck, French-Canadian Film Festival, and an end of Carnaval Parade on the Friday.

International Women's Day: March 8 is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also raises awareness of the progress made towards achieving gender equality and the work remaining to be done. The theme for 2024 is "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress."

CUPE Spring Break Professional Development Opportunity: Inclusive Education is offering Understanding Autism for 30 participants from March 18-22.

Field Trips: The Superintendent approved an out-of-province field trip for students in the International Student Program to participate in a bus tour of the Rocky Mountains from March 18-21. Two international trips which have previously been approved by the Board will be underway shortly. Cowichan Secondary's international student exchange to Lyon, France will take place from March 9 to April 6. Cowichan Secondary's educational tour to Spain and France will take place March 10 to 21.

Administrative Procedures Update: New AP 169 – Identity, Belonging and Connection was developed to support Policy 25 – Identity, Belonging and Connection. AP 354 - Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students was revised to align with current practices and Ministry guidelines, and to align with current District non-violent response practices.

Long Service Tea: A recognition tea honouring long-service staff members who have 25, 30 or 35 years of service will be held March 7.

Youth Action Day: On March 8 an event co-developed by the Cowichan Intercultural Society and District students will be held for students from across the District on anti-racism and global awareness.

Secretary-Treasurer

Closure of Cowichan Secondary School: On June 6, 2023 the Board passed a motion putting Cowichan Secondary into the closure and disposal consultation process. Over the following six months the Board held a public meeting (November 14, 2023) and issued a public survey which received over 200 responses. The data was consolidated and brought to the Board and made available to the public on our website. Feedback was also received from students via the District Student Advisory Council, and from partner groups at an Advisory Committee Meeting. There is little impact if the school is closed following the opening of the new Quw'utsun Secondary as the closure wouldn't impact catchment areas or change programming. The Board passed a motion closing Cowichan Secondary effective December 31, 2024, which would provide a buffer for transition to the new school.

Disposal of Cowichan Secondary: Having passed the School Closure Bylaw, the Board was able to determine whether to maintain the facility or apply to the Ministry for approval to dispose of it. The guidelines set out by the Ministry direct Boards to consider the future enrolment growth (including K-

12, adult, and early learning), alternative community use of surplus space in school buildings and other facilities, and to consider community input. In addition to the public consultation process, the Board also consulted with local governments. Feedback through the survey and public meeting indicated that about 2/3 of respondents felt the Board should dispose of the property as data didn't indicate any enrolment growth in the central zone, and due to the high cost of seismic repairs required for safe occupancy. The new Quw'utsun Secondary is designed for a 400 capacity addition if enrolment increases. The Ministry's disposal application process is lengthy and includes another phase of local government consultation, and if there's no interest then it becomes available for public procurement. The Board passed a motion determining that Cowichan Secondary School is not required for future educational purposes, and a motion to apply to the Ministry for approval to dispose of the school.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

MEETING	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
District Closure/Spring Break	March 11-22	
BEBC Meeting	March 26, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Closed/Open Board Meetings	April 2, 3:30/4:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
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
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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