

The Highlighter

May 2, 2023

Board Recognition:

Identity, Belonging and Connection Policy Development Working Group – Members:

- Cowichan School District Staff - Robyn Gray, Jason Sandquist, Dolly Sylvester, Mike Russell, Mary Peter, Hannah Morales, Mike Greenslade, Kerra Michel
- Cowichan School District Students - Jordanna White, Camille Fraser
- Cowichan Tribes - Sophia Elliott
- The Discourse - Shalu Mehta

The Board offered sincere thanks to the members of this working group for their incredible contributions, connections and reflective practice that led to the creation of Policy 25: Identity, Belonging and Connection. On behalf of the community and the Board, this working group developed a policy that lays out a roadmap for the Board and District to follow to ensure our schools and worksites are safe, welcoming, and caring places, and provide equitable, inclusive, and diverse educational opportunities free of racism, marginalization and discrimination for all students and staff. The Board recognized members of the working group with the presentation of a certificate and a token of their thanks.

Education

Principal/Vice-Principal Assignments 2023-2024: The following Principal/Vice-Principal changes will be effective August 1, 2023:

- Alexander Elementary: Principal Ann Kissinger, Temporary Vice-Principal Kelly Girvan
- Chemainus Secondary: Vice-Principal to be announced
- Cowichan Secondary: Vice-Principal Jennifer Merrett
- Crofton Elementary: Principal Craig McLeod
- Discovery Elementary: Principal Dani Morrow, Vice-Principal Brenda Lee
- Distributed Learning/The Grove: Principal Sian Peterson
- Ecole Cobble Hill: Principal Ian Zibin
- Ecole Mount Prevost: Principal Rhonda Cizeron
- Frances Kelsey Secondary: Vice-Principal Tim Ylagan
- Khowhemun Elementary: Vice-Principal Madelin Rocheleau
- Palsson Elementary: Principal Fiona Somerville
- Quamichan School: Vice-Principal Darren Hart
- Tansor Elementary: Principal Brent Ranger

The following District assignments were effective May 1, 2023:



COWICHAN VALLEY
School District

- Associate Superintendent Margaret Olsen
- Manager of Human Resources (Teaching) Jen Christenson

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S), May 5, 2023: This day is also known as Red Dress Day, where red is worn or red clothing is displayed to honour and remember missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people. CUPE was recognized for distributing pins to members to acknowledge the day.

Moose Hide Campaign Day, May 11, 2023: The Moose Hide Campaign is a grassroots movement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and boys working together to end gender-based violence. Grounded in ceremony and Indigenous values, the Moose Hide invites all Canadians, to stand up against violence towards women, children, and all those along the gender continuum. Wearing a moose hide pin is an outward sign of your commitment to honour, respect, and protect the people in your life and to stand up against violence.

District Scholarships Update: This year the District received 78 District Scholarships, each worth \$1,250, to be shared between its four high schools, CVOLC and The Grove. Trustees are invited to join staff from schools during the next few weeks to judge students on their achievement in an area of non-academic study, commitment to the non-academic area, general proficiency in other subject areas, involvement in community/extra-curricular and citizenship, and their overall ability to prepare and perform a presentation.

School Fees and Deposits Schedule: There are no changes to standard District fees for 2023-2024. The specialty value added PE Soccer course at Frances Kelsey has been replaced by a new Soccer Academy. Changes to Academy Fees/New Academies include:

- New Soccer Academy at Frances Kelsey Secondary with fees of \$300/year;
- Performing Arts Academy at CVOLC fees will increase to \$425/month (\$4,250/year);
- Ice Hockey Academy fees at Frances Kelsey Secondary will increase to \$450/year;
- New Outdoor Adventure Academy at Frances Kelsey Secondary with fees of \$1,100/year;
- New Equestrian Academy at Frances Kelsey Secondary with fees of \$3,000/year.

Pride Month: In recognition that June is Pride Month, the Board passed a motion that the Pride flag be flown at the School Board Office from May 31 through the end of June to symbolize its support of diversity and inclusion.

Superintendent's Update:

Acknowledgments/Appreciation:

- Human Resources staff was acknowledged for all of their work around the Easy Connect Electronic Dispatch System which is now dispatching TTOCs;
- Thank you to everyone involved in organizing and providing leadership for the April 17th Non-Instructional Day;
- Appreciation was expressed for all school, Operations and Transportation staff as they work together to provide exceptional year-end activities for our students, including celebrations, field trips and other large scale community events.

New Administrative Procedures: These five new Administrative Procedures are available on the District's website:

- **AP 158 – Corporate Identity** updates our corporate identity after our rebranding in 2019, and sets out procedures for using the logo and wordmark and provides a link to the District Brand Standards;
- **AP 168 – Cedar Cleansing/Brushing Ceremonies** provides the process and communicates local cultural protocol for Cedar Brushing in the District;
- **AP 204 – Learning Resources** sets up a process for reviewing school-based learning resources when there is a concern regarding the appropriateness of a particular resource;
- **AP 514 – Management of School Based Grant Generated Funds** sets out a process for both the school and the District to track funds generated through grants;
- **AP 551 – Memorials in Schools** sets out guidelines for use when a student or staff member passes away.

Surveys and Assessments: The Student Learning Survey (previously known as the Satisfaction Survey), an annual province-wide census of Grades 4, 7, 10 and 12 students, their parents and staff in public schools, has been extended to May 12.

Parent-Child Mother Goose Spring 2023: These playful experiences for children from birth to five years and their adults include activities to enrich parent-child relationships based on rhymes, songs and storytelling. Sessions will continue until the end of June at the Cowichan Library, Discovery Elementary and Maple Bay Elementary. Contact Learning Links for more information or to register.

Catalyst Update: The Young Authors Conference, which is held every two years, will take place May 3 at VIU's Cowichan Campus. Almost 100 students from Grades 5-12 will have the opportunity to attend writing sessions with local published authors as well as hear authors read from their works.

Careers Department Update:

- Seventeen students from the District competed in the 2023 Skills Canada BC Provincial Competition which was held at the Abbotsford Trade and Exhibition Centre on April 19th. Our students did an amazing job, and achieved the following results: Levi Gary placed 3rd in Refrigeration Air Conditioning Mechanic; the Kelsey Gear Bot Team placed 2nd in Gear Bots; Tayden Ross placed 2nd in Carpentry, Cynthia Barry placed 2nd in Culinary, Haruki Ikemura placed 3rd in Cabinet Making, and the Kelsey Robotics Team placed 4th in Robotics.
- April 20th was the annual Women in Trades and Technology Day at Camosun. A bus load of District students who identify as female travelled to Camosun to explore a variety of trades and technology areas through hands-on activities.
- This month the Careers Department was very proud to hand out \$1000 cheques to 56 recipients of the Youth Work in Trades Award. To be eligible for the award the students must have graduated, worked 900 hours as an apprentice in a trade, and completed four Work in Trades courses. The award is given on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Industry Training Authority to students working in the trades.

George Bonner: On the April 26th Professional Learning Community (PLC) Day, staff had a great session with Hannah Beach, author of 'Reclaiming our Students - Why Children are more

Anxious, Aggressive and Shut Down Than Ever - And What We Can Do About It' and celebrated educator and specialist in the field of emotional health. The staff learned about the growing crisis in children's emotional functioning, and the need for children to move from mad to sad feelings and to have space and a place to feel their feelings. They are looking forward to Hannah's return at the May PLC to continue their learning. George Bonner students in Grades 4-7 put on an amazing performance of Peter Pan on April 27.

Bench Elementary: The School is celebrating its 150th birthday in 2023! Students and staff have been learning how the school has grown and changed over the past 150 years, and how the experiences of the students and staff at the school are different through the decades. They have invited the community to share photos and hear stories about their time at Bench. Students have also had opportunities to look at artifacts from the school and community in partnership with the local Museum and Archive Society. Celebrations will be held the week of June 12th - 16th and they will welcome the community into the on June 15th where they will share some of the learning the students have done and give a chance for alumni and old friends to reconnect and come and see what the school looks like today. A new sign that celebrates the history of the school and a new refurbished logo designed by Stuart Pagaduan that incorporates Coast Salish elements will also be unveiled.

Ecole Mt. Prevost Reading Link Challenge: A team from Ecole Mount Prevost competed against other Cowichan Valley school teams in the Reading Link Challenge, a voluntary program promoted by the Vancouver Island Regional Library Association. Students worked very hard, with many reading the assigned novels multiple times. The Ecole Mount Prevost team will be representing the District at the Regional Island Challenge later this month.

Drinkwater Elementary: Teacher Tamara Hansen recently received the REACH Award and \$3,000 to help her continue with her action research project titled "*Hearing Our Students' Voices: An Exploration of Young Adolescent Students' Perspectives on Inclusive Teaching Practices.*" The REACH award celebrates excellence in academics, and supports creativity and research for an individual to complete an independent research project. Drinkwater Elementary staff and school community are proud of her and wanted to share her success.

5th Annual Cowichan Valley Junior Rugby Jamboree: After a hiatus due to COVID 19, the 5th flag rugby, non-contact Jamboree will be held at the Cowichan Rugby Football Club (CRFC) fields on Thursday, May 25th, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Families are encouraged to come out to enjoy the action and cheer on their youngsters. Twelve schools (public and private) from the Valley have already signed up to compete, and over 200 young athletes in Grades 5-7 are expected to participate in the co-ed games. We are grateful to Robin MacDowell of MacDowell Rugby for supporting this event again this year. Many of the young players from our High School Rugby Academy will be volunteering their time at the event to referee, and there will be some professional rugby players coming out to promote this fantastic sport as well. As always a huge thank you to all the coaches who have stepped up to provide this opportunity for young people to enjoy one of the world's most popular team sports.

Non-Instructional Day (NID) on April 17, 2023: The morning focus was on Literacy and the Mental Health Framework. During the afternoon, school teams worked on their Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL).

Ministry of Education and Child Care Peer Review: Representatives from the Ministry of Education and Child Care, along with representatives from a variety of Districts across the province spent a day and a half at the District April 25-26 performing a peer review of the District's FESL. The team provided feedback on the District's strengths, and considerations for moving student learning forward in relation to strategic planning, alignment, and the use of evidence.

Presentation at BC School Trustees Association (BCSTA) Annual General Meeting: On April 28 the District Team of Superintendent Robyn Gray, Secretary-Treasurer Jason Sandquist and Director of Communications Mike Russell presented on Policy 25 - Identity, Belonging and Connection at a concurrent session.

Transportation Registration: May is Transportation Registration month. Information is being sent to parents and is available on the School District website under "Transportation." Registration for the 2023/2024 school year can be completed online between May 1-31, 2023. Parents can also print and email in registrations.

Mental Health Week: May 1-7, 2023 is the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Mental Health Week, and this year's focus is *#MyStory – Within our stories is the mental health care we all need*. Last week the Health and Wellness Manager sent out this year's CMHA Mental Health Week poster and key messages to District staff. Additional information from the CMHA will be sent out each day this week.

Reporting and Assessment Ed Camp: The District and Vancouver Island University co-hosted a Reporting and Assessment Ed Camp on May 1st at the VIU Cowichan Campus.

Deeper Learning Dozen (DLD) Convening in Revere, Massachusetts May 3-5, 2023: The DLD, which focuses on equity principles, is holding its final convening of the school year. The District's team in attendance was Sheryl Koers, Jeff Rowan, Darcy Hoff, Nicole Boucher and Jennifer Calverley.

Jointly Convened Annual Meeting Spring 2023: The Cowichan Valley Team, consisting of Robyn Gray, Jeff Rowan from the District and Chris Thompson from Lyackson First Nation will be attending the fourth Jointly Convened Annual Meeting, hosted by the Ministry of Education and Child Care, and First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) in Vancouver on May 25, 2023. The central purpose of meeting is to support the success of First Nations students in BC public schools. Key agenda topics will include the new Indigenous-focused grad requirements as well as outcomes and attendance for First Nations learners attending public schools.

All Superintendents Meeting: Robyn Gray will be attending the All Superintendents Meeting in Vancouver on May 17, followed by a Superintendents Year 3 Framework Calibration Meeting on May 18.

BC Child and Youth in Care (CYIC) Week - May 29 to June 4, 2023: Proclaimed by the province in 2011, BC Child and Youth in Care Week is a time to support and celebrate our province's incredible, diverse young people in government care. The week was created after youth envisioned acknowledging and celebrating the unique strength of young people in care.

Secretary-Treasurer

2023-2024 Annual Budget: The 2023-24 Annual Budget in the amount of \$126,431,654 was passed by the Board. Major impacts to this budget include inflation, changes in enrolment, and wage increases. The budget includes increases for mental health supports (now \$100,000), student assessments (now \$80,000), an additional \$30,000 for Inclusive Education and \$20,000 for climate passion projects. The budget was balanced using \$2.32M of the 2022-2023 projected surplus, leaving \$3.06M available in contingency.

2023-2024 Annual Facilities Grant: Associate Superintendent Koers and Director of Operations Richard Dyble held extensive consultation with schools to hear their needs for minor capital repairs and prioritize projects. An expenditures plan was developed and reviewed. The plan becomes dynamic and changes based on pressures and needs that come up through the year. The Board approved the plan, which is required prior to the Ministry releasing funding.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

MEETING	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Board Planning	May 9, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Special Board Planning	May 10, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
DSAC (Trustee Croft)	May 11, 10:00 a.m.	Chemainus Secondary School
Advisory Committee	May 16, 4:30 p.m.	Inspire Room
DPAC Meeting (Trustee Strachan)	May 18, 7:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room/Zoom
BEBC Meeting	May 23, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Climate Change Committee Meeting	May 26, 12:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Closed/Open Board Meetings	June 6, 3:30/4:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Board Planning	June 13, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Advisory Committee	June 20, 4:30 p.m.	Inspire Room

Graduation and Year-End Events

MEETING	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Frances Kelsey District Scholarship Presentation	May 9, 10:00 a.m.	FKSS Dome
Open Learning District Scholarship Presentation	May 10, 10:00 a.m.	CVOLC
Cowichan Secondary District Scholarship Presentation	May 11, 9:00 a.m.	CSS Library, Room 220
Chemainus Secondary District Scholarship Presentation	May 19, 9:30 a.m.	Chemainus Secondary School
Lake Cowichan District Scholarship Presentation	May 19, 9:30 a.m.	LCS Library
Cowichan Secondary Scholarship/ Bursaries	June 5, 6:00 p.m.	Cowichan Secondary
Frances Kelsey Awards Ceremony	June 7, 10:00 a.m.	FKSS Gym
Frances Kelsey Scholarship/Bursaries	June 7, 7:00 p.m.	FKSS Gym
Indigenous Grad Ceremony	June 8, 4:00 p.m.	Tl'upalus (Cowichan Bay Canoe Shed and Beach)
School District Retirement Reception	June 12, 5:00 p.m.	Arbutus Ridge
Lake Cowichan School Scholarship Night	June 15, 6:00 p.m.	Lake Cowichan School
International Program Year-End Celebration	June 16 (during the day)	Camp Imadene
Open Learning Graduation	June 22: 4:00 p.m. for Satellite sites; 6:30 p.m. for CVOLC grads	CVOLC Gym
Frances Kelsey Graduation Ceremony	June 23, 6:30 p.m.	FKSS Gym
Chemainus Secondary Graduation, Scholarship/Bursaries	June 23, 7:00 p.m.	Chemainus Secondary Gym
Lake Cowichan School Graduation	June 24, 12:30 p.m. (doors open 11:30)	Lake Cowichan School Gym
Cowichan Secondary Graduation	June 29, 6:00 p.m.	Cowichan Secondary

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