

The Highlighter

November 2, 2021

Board Chair

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair - The Board of Education reinstated Trustee Candace Spilsbury as Board Chair, and voted Trustee Johanne Kemmler as Vice-Chair for the upcoming year.

BCSTA Meeting of Board Chairs, October 14: The Board Chair advised that the meeting included a presentation on the role of data in supporting student equity. Deborah Jeffrey, Executive Director of First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) was adamant about the importance of equity for Indigenous students. She talked about how the collection of data through the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) is crucial for equity and Indigenous student success. Minister Whiteside informed Trustees of their ability to create a vaccine mandate for staff. The Board will discuss this in closed session once it receives research on the implications.

Joint Partner Liaison Meeting, October 15: The meeting began with opening remarks and readings from BCSTA President Stephanie Higginson and Minister Whiteside. The meeting covered a wide range of topics including equity for Indigenous students, the "How Are We Doing" report, BC Tripartite Agreement, *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA), Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL), and the importance of having an equity framework. The Chair reported that Superintendent Robyn Gray gave an outstanding presentation on student voice at the afternoon's "Equity in Education" section.

National Principals' Month (October): Trustees delivered banners to the Principals and Vice-Principals at their liaison schools to show appreciation for all their exceptional work.

Meetings with Local Governments: The Board Chair, Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer held meetings with the Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Chief Administrative Officers of the Municipality of North Cowichan and City of Duncan. The meetings were held to continue to develop relationships, and to discuss the processes for undertaking capital projects.

Board Retreat: On November 6 the Board, members of senior management and facilitator Gordon Li of the BCSTA will meet on the topic of Board Performance.

Nourish Cowichan/Starfish Cowichan: The Board Chair shared a graphic that was created to highlight the important work being done to support our kids and the community through the partnership between Nourish Cowichan, Starfish Cowichan and the School District. Last year 333,850 meals were provided (200,160 through food hampers; 59,840 through weekend bags, and 73,850 through school meals and snacks).

Indigenous Education Council: The Board passed a motion directing the Chair to meet with the Cowichan Valley's First Nations' Chiefs and Councils regarding the creation of a Board Indigenous Education Council as a way to support Indigenous students.



COWICHAN VALLEY
School District

Education

Personnel Updates: The Superintendent congratulated two administrators whose positions were changed from temporary to continuing status effective November 1:

- Alison Keple, District Principal, International Student Program;
- Camila Bhandari-Arscott, Vice-Principal, Frances Kelsey Secondary.

District Student Enrollment: District enrollment is 407 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) over projection, and 216 FTE higher than last year.

Draft Reporting Order: A graphic was shared showing the District's current methods of communicating student learning along with the future methods included in the Ministry's draft reporting order. The District has been working with Principals, Vice-Principals and school staff to share the draft reporting order and gather feedback. The Ministry has asked that feedback on the draft be submitted by November 5, and intends to release the finalized Reporting Order by January, 2022.

Equity in Action: The District is working with the Ministry of Education's Indigenous Education Branch to create an equity scanning tool to identify barriers that may impact our Indigenous learners. On November 8 the Ministry will be providing training on the tool to three Trustees, members of the District's senior management, staff and DSAC students, and representatives of our partner groups.

Superintendent's Update:

Acknowledgements:

- CUPE Pro-D Committee: Thank you to the CUPE Pro-D Committee (Adam Clutchey, Kelsey Scholz, Mary Souter, Scott Mitchell, Erin Egeland, Breanne Heslop, Cheryl Fotos, and Jen Christenson) for organizing an excellent learning opportunity for CUPE staff that featured a highly-impactful keynote presentation by Alvin Law.
- Transportation Department: Thank you to the Transportation Department and all the drivers who organized and held bus evacuation drills on the October 21st afternoon run. These important safety drills help prepare our students and staff in the event of an emergency.
- Halloween Fun: There was a lot of Halloween spirit in the air on October 29, with staff across the School Board Office complex dressing up and holding a costume contest.

All Superintendents Meeting: Superintendents from across the province met on October 14 to discuss topics including the draft reporting order, reconciliation, and the Ministry's anti-racism strategy. The Deputy Minister announced that Denise Augustine has been seconded to the Ministry of Education for up to three years as the Superintendent of Indigenous Education.

Assessments: The Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) are being administered from October 11 through November 12. Some secondary students are also taking their Literacy 10, Literacy 12 and Numeracy 10 assessments.

The Great BC Shakeout: Many schools and the School Board Office took part in the Great BC Shakeout at 10:21 on October 21st.



Connecting Leaders Conference: On October 22 the Superintendent and some members of senior management joined the District's Principals and Vice-Principals at the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association's Connecting Leaders Conference, which focused on equity and reconciliation.

Jointly Convened Advisory Meeting (JCAM): The Superintendent, Director of Instruction Larry Mattin, and Indigenous Education's Principal Charlie Coleman and Vice-Principal Mary Peter participated in the BC Tripartite Education Agreement's JCAM meeting on October 27 and 28, which featured discussions on equity for First Nations learners, Local Education Agreements, transportation agreements, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act (UNDRIP) and the First Nations Anti-Racism Strategy.

BC School Superintendents' Association (BCSSA): On October 28 and 29 the senior team members were in Victoria at the BCSSA Island Chapter meeting. The meeting featured discussions on the BC Superintendents' Leadership Competencies and the reporting order, and included a sharing session for all the Districts.

School Visit: The Superintendent visited Bench Elementary, which has recently opened a new out-of-school care program.

Business

Amended Ministry Response to the Five Year Capital Plan: Subsequent to the passing of the Five Year Capital Plan Bylaw in May 2021, the Board has received an additional \$60,000 to apply towards the purchase of the two recently-ordered electric school buses.

Five Year Capital Plan: The Board approved the Five Year Capital Plan which included requests for:

- additional classroom spaces at Maple Bay , Palsson, Tansor and Alex Aitken Elementary Schools, which are beginning to near capacity;
- funds to cover the demolition of AB Greenwell and Stanley Gordon Elementary Schools, which reside on Crown property;
- seismic upgrading at Alexander and Mill Bay Elementary, Quamichan School and Chemainus Secondary;
- funding for new schools in the Bell McKinnon, south zone and Maple Bay areas, which are expected to have increased enrollment demands in the future.



Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

MEETING	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Board Retreat	Nov. 6, 9:00 a.m. – noon	Arbutus Golf Club
Equity in Action	Nov. 8	Arbutus Golf Club
Board Planning	Nov. 9, 4:00 p.m.	Via Zoom
DSAC Meeting (Trustee Hutchins)	Nov. 15, 10:00 a.m.	Lake Cowichan School
Cowichan Secondary Replacement Public Unveiling	Nov. 15, 5:30-7:00 p.m.	Cowichan Secondary gym
Advisory Committee Meeting	Nov. 16, 4:30 p.m.	Via Zoom
DPAC Meeting (Trustee Kemmler)	Nov. 18, 7:00 p.m.	Via Zoom
BEBC	Nov. 23, 4:00 p.m.	Via Zoom
BCSTA's 2021 Trustee Academy	Dec. 2-4	Westin Bayshore
Closed and Open Board of Education Meetings	Dec. 7, 3:30/4:30 p.m.	TBA

Board of Education Trustees

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