

# The Highlighter

October 4, 2016

## Education

**World Teacher Day** – Acting Board Chair Barb de Groot thanked teachers for everything they do for kids in the schools – “You put kids first every day!”.

**Next Steps – Area Issue** – While the amount of drug paraphernalia has dropped significantly over the past month and student safety is being addressed, Trustees are concerned with the number of school-aged individuals who are homeless and living in the School Board Office area. They passed a motion requesting staff to contact various community partners to meet regarding the homeless issue and that the purpose be to help those affected move forward. Community partners to be contacted include the City of Duncan, Municipality of North Cowichan, CVRD, Ministry of Children and Families, RCMP and Warmland House.

**Around the District** – The Superintendent reported on the following activities around the district:

**Cops for Cancer – Tour de Rock** - Schools and students greeted the cyclists on the Cops for Cancer “Tour de Rock!” as they rode through the Cowichan Valley earlier today (Oct 4<sup>th</sup>). Scheduled stops so far at SD79 schools this year included Chemainus Elementary, Lake Cowichan School, Palsson, Drinkwater, Tansor, and Maple Bay. They will also be stopping at Frances Kelsey Secondary tomorrow morning (Oct 5<sup>th</sup>).

**Peace Parade** - Several of our central zone schools took part in a Peace Parade on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Students from Tansor Elementary brought peace flags to Ecole Mount Prevost. The peace flags were tied together and a group of grade 7 students from Ecole Mount Prevost then transported the peace flags to Drinkwater Elementary where they were tied together and a delegation from Drinkwater Elementary went to the Cowichan Peace Pole ceremony and joined students from Khowhemun. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to connect with one another.

**Orange Shirt Day** - Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> was Orange Shirt Day. Orange shirts were worn that day to honour the children who survived the Indian Residential school system and to remember those who never made it home.

## Education, continued

**Great BC ShakeOut Drill** - To date eight schools in the district have registered to participate in the "Great BC ShakeOut" earthquake drill on October 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:20 am. Participating schools so far this year include: Alex Aitken Elementary, Bench Elementary, Drinkwater Elementary, Ecole Mount Prevost Elementary, Frances Kelsey Secondary, George Bonner Elementary, Palsson Elementary, Tansor Elementary and the School Board Office.

**École Cobble Hill Elementary – Performance at Government House** - On Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, students from École Cobble Hill grades 4 and 5 performed their song "C'est Mon Canada," to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Last year the students won the Lieutenant Governor's song contest. Her Honor Judith Guichon came to École Cobble Hill and was so impressed by the students that she invited them to the Government House to perform their song for the Royal couple at a reception hosted by the province of British Columbia. The teachers, Eric Desaulniers and Cecily Dhami who fueled the students' creativity and Lise Pagé, principal of the school, accompanied the students to this significant event. Their song was a great success: during the rap part of it, most people at the reception picked up the beat and participated in the song, which made the Royal couple smile. It was clearly entertaining for everyone. The Lieutenant Governor's photographer took pictures of the event.

**George Bonner Elementary - Garden House Foundation charity book sale** - For the fourth year, the Garden House Foundation is partnering with George Bonner Elementary School's senior students to hold a giant charity used book sale in the school multipurpose room on October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. (book sale hours: Saturday Oct 15<sup>th</sup> 9am-3pm; Sunday Oct 16<sup>th</sup> 9am-2pm). Each year hundreds of people have attended the sale, which has raised thousands of dollars for the Foundation. All profits from the sale go to the Garden House Foundation, which provides annual grants in perpetuity to organizations in the Cowichan Valley that support families in crisis and animals in need (Cowichan Family Life, Cowichan Women Against Violence and the Duncan S.P.C.A.).

**CVOLC** - In May teens from all over Vancouver Island entered a creative writing contest. *In Our Own Voice 2016* is the resulting anthology. SD79 student Rayne Hankins from CVOLC had a short story published in the book. There will be a book launch and reading at the Cowichan Library on October 15<sup>th</sup> from 2-4pm.

**September Enrolment – Teacher and Education Assistant Hiring** – The Superintendent advised Trustees that to date, we have over 7,600 students, up approximately 200 from the previous year. The most growth was realized in Kindergarten and Grade 3. This has resulted in hiring 10 new teachers, additional time added to some Student Support Services positions and to a Career Coordinator position. The District is also in the process of hiring a number of new Education Assistants to meet the needs of students.



## Education, continued

**Meeting with Minister Bernier** – The Board Chair and Senior District Staff were invited by the Municipality of North Cowichan Council to join them in a meeting with the Minister of Education to present their rationale on building a new Cowichan Secondary School. Following that meeting, they met with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation to inform him about district programming for Aboriginal students and how it could be incorporated into a new high school.

**Louisiana Department of Education Delegation November 14 – 16, 2016** – The Superintendent was one of 28 education professionals invited to join in a summer meeting of the Aspen Institute, an education think tank based in Washington DC. The topic of their discussions was the future of professional learning. While there, he met with educators from Louisiana, who are sending a delegation of 6 – 8 superintendents and principals to our district to observe the success and world-renowned quality of our teachers and BC school system.

## Business & Operations

**Transportation Department Update** – The Director of Operations advised that with the removal of bus fees, registrations are currently at 3,142 students (2,896 students in 2015-2016) and he is projecting 3,300 – 3,400 students once registration is complete. The current bus fleet is managing the task of transporting the additional students and staff are prepared to adjust routes should there be overloads. Two new replacement buses have been ordered and are expected to arrive shortly.

**Policy Review** – After an extensive review of the School District Policy Manual, Trustees passed a motion put forth by the Board Education and Business Committee, recommending the deletion of policies that are either covered by the School Act, other legislation or are obsolete. To view the policies to be deleted, click <http://sd79.bc.ca/documents/2016/10/2016-policy-manual-review-schedule-a-deletions.pdf>

They then passed a motion forwarding policies identified as needing revision to staff for review and subsequently to be sent to the Advisory Committee for discussion. Click <http://sd79.bc.ca/documents/2016/10/2016-policy-manual-review-schedule-b-revision-needed.pdf> to view policies to be reviewed.

# Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

Event	Date/Time	Location
Advisory Committee Meeting	October 18, 4:00 pm	Inspire Room (Annex)
Board Planning Session	October 20, 4:00 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Trustee Retreat	October 21, 6:00 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Trustee Retreat	October 22, 8:30 am	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Board Education and Business Committee Meeting	October 25, 4:00 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Closed Board Meeting	November 1, 3:30 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Open Board Meeting	November 1, 4:30 pm	Yuxwule' Eagle Room

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Cowichan Valley School District