

# The Highlighter

## September 6, 2022

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### Recognition

The Board of Education recognized **Larry Mattin**, Director of Instruction, who has been named as a finalist for the **2022 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Education**, in the District Leadership category. These Premier's Awards honour public, independent and First Nations school teachers, principals, vice-principals, school and district leaders, and support staff who go above and beyond to make life better for K-12 students in B.C. Award winners will be announced at a ceremony at Government House in Victoria on October 14th. The Board congratulated Larry on his selection as finalist, and expressed pride for his work and dedication to the District, its students, and community.

### Board Chair

**Legacy Wall:** In March 2019 the Board passed a motion directing staff to establish a public location in the School Board Office for a Board of Education Legacy Wall. The COVID pandemic delayed the unveiling of the Legacy Wall which was revealed at this meeting.

**Indigenous Day of Learning:** Last April our Board participated in the Indigenous Day of Learning, which took place during the BCSTA AGM. The Board is partnering with DPAC to provide a similar day of compassionate, necessary learning in our community. Dinner will be provided by Hungry Bubba's food truck. It will be very exciting to spend time with our communities, families and neighbours.

**Local Education Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding Celebration and Inaugural Meeting of the All Nations Education Council, September 28, 2022:** A celebration to commemorate the signing of LEAs/MOUs, as well as the inaugural meeting of the All Nations Indigenous Council, is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 28, 2022 at the Ramada Duncan.

**Student and Family Affordability Fund:** The District will receive approximately \$880,000 from the Ministry to improve student access to meals and offset the costs of school supplies. While the Board will undertake a significant consultation process to determine how best to allocate the funds, some immediate needs at schools have been identified. A motion to provide base funding of \$2,000 per school location (increased for population and tiered school needs) to address these needs while the balance of the funds are allocated was passed by the Board. The Board will write a letter of thanks to the Ministry for the funding.

**Meeting with Minister Whiteside:** The Chair will be meeting with the Minister to discuss seismic upgrading, and will provide more information when available.

### Education

#### Personnel Updates:

- Superintendent Robyn Gray introduced the following new staff members to Trustees:
  - Sarah Foster recently joined the District as the Early Learning and Child Care Manager. Sarah brings with her a wealth of knowledge from 23 years working in child care, in the non-profit sector.



**COWICHAN VALLEY**  
School District

- Kim Darbyshire, who was a successful candidate in the Vice-Principal pool posting last school year, was recently appointed District Vice-Principal of Inclusive Learning. Kim had a number of leadership roles in her previous district.
- Sarah Simmons, who was another successful candidate in last school year's Vice-Principal pool posting, has been appointed Temporary Vice-Principal at Quamichan School.
- The Board was advised of the following adjustments to Principal/Vice-Principal assignments which took place over the summer:
  - Camila Bhandari-Arscott, Temporary Principal, Palsson Elementary
  - Madelin Rocheleau, Temporary Vice-Principal, Frances Kelsey Secondary
  - Brenda Lee, Temporary Vice-Principal, Discovery Elementary
  - Lisa Leclerc, Principal of both Ecole Cobble Hill and Mill Bay Nature School.

**Child Care Centres and Out-of-School Care Updates:** Associate Superintendent Koers advised Trustees that last year's out-of-school care pilot program at Bench Elementary has expanded to Drinkwater Elementary, Mill Bay Nature School, George Bonner Elementary, and Ecole Cobble Hill. The program at Bench Elementary has doubled in size to accommodate 24 students. There is already talk of expanding the program to other locations due to need.

Four of the District's new modular child care centres are in place. The operators of the centres near CVOLC and Palsson have signed contracts and should be opening soon. Contract negotiations for the Chemainus Elementary site are ongoing, with the hope the site will be able to open October 1. The District is looking at partnering with Aboriginal Head Start to operate the centre at Khowhemun Elementary. Work continues with the Municipality of North Cowichan and City of Duncan to finalize drawings for the fifth centre, at the new Cowichan Secondary Site.

**Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL):** A Ministerial Order requires boards of education to prepare and submit a report by September 30<sup>th</sup> each year providing an overview of board accomplishments. Staff is working on the draft report which will be brought to a Special Open Board meeting later in the month.

**International Student Program (ISP) Update:** The ISP summer program had 24 students from Japan and China who took part in a number of activities including robotics, fine arts, science, exploring the Cowichan Valley, and day trips to Victoria and Vancouver. Enrolment for September is approximately 170 students (110 FTE), most of whom are here for the entire year with some just for a semester. Additional students will arrive in January, which will see the 2022-2023 enrolment at approximately 220 students, which is similar to last year.

### **Superintendent's Update:**

#### **Acknowledgements:**

- Thank you to the Operations, Custodial, Transportation, Purchasing, Human Resources, Payroll and other staff members who worked hard during the summer to prepare for the upcoming school year. Thank you also to Principals, Vice-Principals and Clerical staff who worked diligently to get schools ready to welcome students back for opening day.
- Custodians were acknowledged for their excellent work over the past 18 months keeping our schools clean and safe.
- Operations staff were thanked for their great job preparing and refreshing buildings for the upcoming school year.
- Thank you to Secretary-Treasurer Jason Sandquist, Associate Superintendent Sheryl Koers, Cowichan Secondary School Principal Darcy Hoff, Director of Operations Richard Dyble, and

Director of Communications Mike Russell, for spending so much of their summer working with the Chief Project Officer on the Cowichan Secondary School replacement project.

Howhemun Video: The video "Hiihwuwul'stuhw tu. Hul'q'umi'num' – Bringing the Hul'q'umi'num' to Life," which was filmed at Howhemun Elementary as a way to share with the community the learning that is going on inside the school, was played for Trustees. The video can be viewed at <https://sd79.bc.ca/hiihwuwulstuhw-tu-hulquminum-bringing-the-hulquminum-to-life/>.

Orange Shirt Week begins on September 26 (the District recognizes the entire week).

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation September 30th is a time for learning and reflection, and we are hopeful that many of our staff will take advantage of the opportunity to participate in community events.

Non-Instructional Day on September 26 will be an Indigenous-focused day of learning. The morning will feature keynote speaker Monique Gray-Smith, with a number of workshops offered in the afternoon. Trustees are welcome to come to attend. Thank you to the organizers and the staff and community members who will be leading the workshops.

A Summer Learning Opportunity for adult learners in the District took place on August 31 at Quamichan School, focusing on literacy, numeracy and collaborative technology. Thanks to the Learning Coordinators who put on the day of learning, and the 75 people who took time during summer holidays to participate.

Indigenous Student Transition into Schools: 22 Indigenous Education staff members worked last week to help transition Indigenous students into 12 schools, through home visits, calls home, meetings with families, school tours, assisting with school supplies, supporting student schedule adjustments and food delivery.

Deeper Learning Dozen: The District is continuing its partnership with Harvard University as one of the 12 districts across North America participating in an initiative which focuses on equitable access to deeper learning experiences and outcomes for all students and adults through changes in leadership, school and district systems, adult learning and pedagogy. Some members of the District's seven-person team, made up of four members of the senior management team and three Principals, will attend this year's three convenings which will be held in Kentucky, California and Massachusetts.

British Columbia School Superintendents' Association Summer Leadership Academy: Members of the senior management team participated in the academy where they met with the Ministry of Education and Child Care to work on leadership and hear about Ministry's priorities of reconciliation, child care, and equity, anti-racism and mental health.

## Business

**Election Process Update**: Chief Election Officer Bob Harper has been keeping office hours in the Board Office to review nomination paperwork with potential candidates. The nomination period will close at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9, at which time there will be a Declaration of Candidates. The campaign period will run from September 17 through voting day on October 15, 2022.

**Mental Health in Schools Grant**: The Board has, as in previous years, received a \$52,000 Mental Health in Schools Grant from the Ministry which, combined with the \$70,000 the Board allocated in the

2022-2023 Budget, is a total of \$122,000. In addition, some unspent funds from last year's Mental Health budget will be rolled over at the end of the month.

### Schedule of Upcoming Meetings and Events

MEETING	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
DPAC (Trustee de Groot)	September 15, 7:00 p.m.	TBA
Advisory Committee	September 20, 4:30 p.m.	Inspire Room
Early Learning and Child Care Committee	September 22, 2:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Orange Shirt Week	September 26 - 30	
Cowichan Valley Indigenous Day of Learning: From Grief to Medicine – Moving Forward with Good Hearts in the Cowichan Valley	Sept. 26, 5:30 p.m.	S'amuna' Longhouse
Audit Committee Meeting	September 27, 3:15 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Board Room)
BEBC	September 27, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Board Room)
Special Closed and Special Open Board Meetings	September 27, time TBD	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Board Room)
Local Education Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding Celebration and Inaugural All Nations Council Meeting	September 28, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Ramada Duncan
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	September 30	
Board Closed/Open Meetings	October 4, 3:30/4:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Board Room)
Board Planning	October 11, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room (Board Room)
DSAC (Trustee Croft)	October 13, 10:00 a.m.	TBD
Advisory Committee	October 18, 4:30 p.m.	Inspire Room
BEBC Meeting	October 25, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Inaugural/Open Board Meeting	November 8, 4:30 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
Advisory Committee	November 15, 4:30 p.m.	Inspire Room
BEBC Meeting	November 22, 4:00 p.m.	Yuxwule' Eagle Room
BCSTA's Academy and New Trustee Orientation	December 1-3	Westin Bayshore, Vancouver

#### Board of Education Trustees

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