
For immediate release

3 December 2019

Indigenous students in the Valley continue to graduate at a rate higher than the provincial average

Results for the 2018 – 2019 school year set a new five-year record for the District.

Comox Valley, B.C. – The upward trend in the six-year graduation rates for Indigenous students in the Comox Valley reaches a new level higher than in previous years.

Results for the 2018 – 2019 school year topped last year’s results with an 83 percent completion rate, significantly higher than the provincial average of 69.4 percent.

In the 2017- 2018 school year, the rate for Comox Valley Schools reached 77 percent while the provincial average was reported at 70 percent.

The Ministry of Education released the 2018 – 2019 graduation rates November 29 reporting that over the past two years, the six-year school completion rate is at historically high levels for Indigenous students; up 8 percent overall since 2013-14.

One of the contributing factors leading to this success in Comox Valley Schools is the fact that the District embraces Indigenous ways and knowing in the curriculum and has identified it as a key priority in the Board of Education’s Strategic Plan.

“Our Indigenous education staff are instrumental in enhancing school programs, events and activities that encourages teachers and students to celebrate our rich cultural heritage and history,” said Tom Demeo, Superintendent of Schools. “We are always seeking out more opportunities to embed Indigenous ways and knowing into the classrooms and this is also due in large part to the strong partnership we share with the Indigenous Education Council and our school Elder-in-Residence program.”

Demeo explains that ultimately the goal is to set all students up for success with an education system that focus on inclusivity, diversity, equity, and empowerment.

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“We aim to deliver an educational program that is entrenched in a value system based on respect and acceptance of all learners, which is fundamental to the success of all students,” explained Demeo. “Investing in the holistic needs and well-being of the student first and foremost is our goal and this is probably a leading reason why we are seeing completion rates steadily climb each year.”

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For more information on the K-12 completion rates visit <https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/more-bc-students-completing-k-12-education-than-ever-before>

Image (Source: Comox Valley Schools): Indigenous educators celebrated *Rock Your Mox Day* at Courtenay Elementary School November 15. The day focused on cultural teachings and dance. Enhancing education with Indigenous ways and knowing is a key strategic priority and recognized as a contributing factor to the increasing Indigenous graduation rates experienced in the Valley.

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