

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY



## Educational Excellence

### Goals

Optimize innovative practices and learning opportunities

### Actions

Provide ongoing professional development

Encourage and support staff innovative practices in education

Foster a climate that supports real-world connections with learning

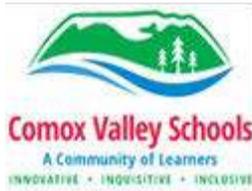
Include Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into teaching and learning

## **EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

### **GOAL: OPTIMIZE INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **Actions:**

- **Provide ongoing professional development**
  - District wide Pro D with an Indigenous theme with Mike Downie of the Downie/Wenjack Foundation. The entire district participated via a live zoom call with Mike. It was a very powerful session.
  - Collaborative inquiries from last year have been approved to continue for all teachers who have agreed to pursue their inquiry work.
  - Teachers continued to access mentorship program money and work with peers to improve learning.
  - The Peer Tutor Program ran this year with four peer tutors. The CDTA reports that it has been an effective program.
  - SEY2K and CR4YC programs continued this year as well as many Early Learning initiatives.
  
- **Encourage and support staff innovative practices in education**
  - Collaborative Inquiries have been awarded for the year, unfortunately, most schools did not pursue collaborative inquiries due to Covid-19 protocols and health and safety measures.
  - Staples recycling boxes were issued to all schools for recycling pens, mechanical pencils, markers, and highlighters as a sustainability initiative.
  - Archery training was completed at all secondary and middle schools in the district.
  - Partnership with the Courtenay Fish and Game club stalled because of Covid-19. This will partnership continue in the 2021-2022 school year.
  
- **Foster a climate that supports real-world connections with learning**
  - Continued to with initiatives designed to listen to students, receive their input and continue making strides toward sustainable practice in our school district.
  
- **Include Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into teaching and learning**
  - At all meetings and events there is acknowledgement of the traditional territories of the Comox First Nation.
  - All schools completed Downie/Wenjack projects for the 2020-2021 school year.
  - BCSSA meetings focused on reconciliation and reconciliACTION.



- There were several Kevin Lamoureux presentations throughout the year.
- There are two large scale maps that are circulated across the district.

## **At the Schools:**

### **Airport Elementary**

Strengthened students' phonemic awareness and developed an association of sounds to the spelling of words and further developed student automaticity and fluency with reading and spelling.

- Primary teachers built phonemic awareness using decodable books and the Jolly Phonics program. Intermediate teachers taught phonemic awareness as part of their spelling programs. Implemented "Raz-Kids" at early primary by all primary teachers.
- Intermediate teachers received Kathryn Grace's book and they used the program in their classrooms in cooperation with the learning support teacher.
- Decodable books were a main resource for teaching early reading in all primary classrooms. The school has an up-to-date collection of decodable books available for student use.

The staff learned from Dr. Jody Carrington about how to connect with children more efficiently.

### **Arden Elementary**

Implemented the Tattum Project, to monitor our progress of reading. Our Learning Support teachers completed PM benchmarks this June to compare results from February and September.

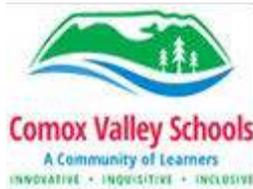
Extensive lessons were delivered with ISW support in collaboration with teachers, utilizing storytelling, field trips (fish traps, Water Keepers Program at Comox Lake, plant walks), creative arts (tipi making, Metis plant making, Cedar roses, button blankets, Coast Salish art, animal canoe art), Bannock making & drumming. We now have an elder as part of our school, who was regularly in the building connecting with kids.

### **Aspen Park Elementary**

Real world connections with learning were made through a school wide license to Mystery Science to help with inquiry-based learning in the classroom, ADST Instruction, Survival training in the park.

Indigenous knowledge and perspectives were included into teaching and learning:

- Every class created a large orange t-shirt with positive messages for Orange Shirt, Every Child Matters Day
- Aspen Park is a Legacy School.
- School Celebrations took place during the week of March 15 – 19: Indigenous Curriculum Support Teachers, taught our staff the story of The First Salmon Ceremony. Storyboards were loaned to us and permission given for us to tell this



story to our students. The salmon cared for by students through our Stream to Sea Program were released back into the Puntledge River. Classes participated in various salmon activities during the week, smoked salmon and cream cheese on crackers was served to all Aspen Park staff and students.

- Elder in Residence (Ni'noxola) - Edna Leask, writes letters and sends emails to our students. When a particular topic is being studied, teachers contact her to share information from her perspective.
- A lot happened in the classrooms around reconciliation.

### **Brooklyn Elementary**

Healthy Self, Healthy Community: Continued to recognize the need for our students to internalize effective social emotional learning and recognized the benefits from a better understanding of SEL teaching strategies. With the opportunity to participate in a professional development session put on by POPEY.

Refined our school identity "The Brooklyn Way" and built collaborative and shared ownership of our school identity through monthly celebration assemblies and regular use of language

### **Courtenay Elementary**

Built positive and clear communication by speaking, listening, viewing, sharing, questions and representing across subject. Phonemic Awareness from K to Grade 5.

Taught 6 Cedars Wolf Communication competency, tied to Core Competencies.

Focused on PBIS, Communication strategies created purposeful and meaningful communication for students, eportfolios, Outdoor education.

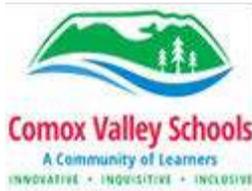
Rebuild 'the Courtenay Way' using ORCA. O= Own it, R= Responsibility, C= Caring, A=Aspire

### **Denman Island Elementary**

Encouraged staff to use inquiry-based learning practices:

- Indigenous elder from our community worked with classes.
- Class embarked on a cross-curricular inquiry into Life in the Canadian Arctic.
- Story Workshop with Teacher followed through with lesson on story creation.
- Teacher Librarian introduced "Blue Bots" to K-3
- ADST Teacher facilitated "Escape Room" activities

Provided opportunities for Teachers and students to work around coding and robotics.



## **Ecole Puntledge Park**

Fostered a climate that supports real world connections with learning effective communication and self-regulation strategies through Social Thinking.

- In collaboration with the staff it was determined that we would continue to support social thinking curriculum. The LST purchased the social thinking program to further expand the exciting structure and add capacity through the system.
- Students worked with the administration to create video morning announcements.
- Carnaval de Quebec is a traditional annual winter celebration designed to warm the hearts of the participants.

Included Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into the teaching and learning:

- Honour National Indigenous day.
- Cedar Weaving.
- Primary classes had a one-hour, outdoor storytelling session with Joanne Restoule.
- Kiki Van DerHeiden, artist was the illustrator for a book called Taans Moons, which explores the Haida moon cycle and observing the changes in our environment through the seasons.

## **Ecole Robb Road**

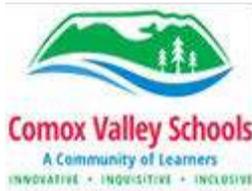
Focused on Personal Awareness and Social Responsibility to build mental well-being and school community.

- Kindness mail.
- Good deed tree.
- Rainbow Alliance club was implemented and managed by the TL, counselor and teachers.
- Safe and inclusive environment for all students grades 4-7.
- Different volunteer roles around the school- classes helping with recycling, delivering fresh veggies, putting out the recess equipment bins, making morning announcements, garden club, picking litter, etc.
- Bringing awareness and self-reflection for this competency.

Classroom lessons about residential schools, reconciliation, orange shirt day and Downie Wenjack path activities took place.

Place based and outdoor learning focus for classrooms, including:

- Field trips.
- Partnership with LUSH Valley for our garden. Many classes growing / eating their own food from seed.
- Classrooms contributed veggies to our salad bar volunteers for consumption by students.
- Outdoor learning continued for grades K, 1,2,3,4,5,6 classes.
- All grade 4 and 5 students participated in x-country ski lessons.



- Outdoor learning ideas shared / teacher and cohort collaboration daily / weekly throughout the year. We have invested in providing resources in our outdoor shed, garden area for class use.

### **Hornby Island Community School**

COVID 19 has led to the ability to access a greater variety of Professional Development opportunities.

Connected with a Cultural Presenter to allow to plan relevant and culturally accurate events and teachings for students and staff to learn more about Indigenous culture and ways of being and knowing. Learning includes:

- Building a model longhouse
- Button blankets
- Storytelling
- Games
- Planting with an Elder

### **Huband Park Elementary**

All students participated in outdoor learning and in communicating with the community:

- Three incubators hosting chicken and duck eggs. Hatchlings in class for a while. Students learned about life cycles and animal care.
- Lush Valley worked with four classes about gardening and life cycle of plants.
- Rhubarb harvested from school garden; all classes made rhubarb crisp.
- 220 seedlings were planted by students either at their home or on the school grounds.

All classes attempted to incorporate indigenous perspectives in their learning:

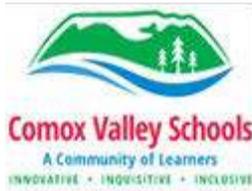
- Orange Shirt Day.
- Downie Wenjak walk in the fall for all students. (Guided station learning)
- Do traditional greeting at the start of each Outdoor Education class.
- Gr 3 class created an animated stop motion movie about Fatty Legs and then presented it to all classes.
- Legends of the West Coast blog.
- Wanda Crowder is working in every classroom and in some, helping teachers plan indigenous integration activities.

### **Miracle Beach Elementary**

How are we improving and expanding students' knowledge, skills and attitudes in the area of Literacy (reading)?

Reading Strategies:

- Library-Miracle Beach reading club is a new program. The goal of the program is to read 20-chapter books to earn a prize bag.
- Students are also challenged to retell the main ideas of the book they read which helps with comprehension.



- To date there have been over 400 books read by those students participating in the reading club.

### **Queneesh Elementary**

Through the Downie-Wenjack fund and organization ongoing efforts to make the school a welcoming and safe caring place for Indigenous families and students. Teachers have worked with InEd staff to deliver lessons and activities around reconciliation and understanding.

Monthly "professional learning team" meetings, groups learning together.

### **Royston Elementary**

Elf Trap School Wide Challenge:

- All students involved in an Elf Trap Build.
- December Celebration of video - sent to families.
- Find the Elf in the classrooms and common spaces in the school daily in December.
- High engagement - introduction to the Raven Trickster.

What is kindness? School Wide Challenge

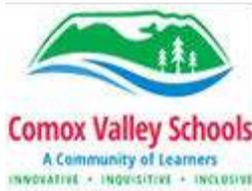
- Leaving your heart print everywhere
- Friendship group
- Cards for the seniors at Cumberland Lodge
- Coasters Art Project for residents at Berwick
- Kindness is and looks like
- Class Kindness Book
- Superkids booklet
- True Colours – song and shirt design for Pink Shirt Day
- Kindness quotes, personal kindness (daily gratitude booklets)
- Kindness Quilt
- Kindness Hotseat – posters in cloak room
- Raindrops for kindness

### **Valley View Elementary**

Taught the We Thinker Program to primary grades to promote inclusion and group thinking.

Learning Resources Teacher Committee selected resources (books and manipulatives) to support numeracy K-7.

Many real-world connections were made throughout our classrooms with the tragic news from the Kamloops Residential School. 215 Feather displays. 215 Hearts made for the local Komoks Band Office.



### **Lake Trail Middle**

Supported Inquiry Learning Teams within our school and in our Family of Schools. Data collected about the students for planning and decision making.

Increased our connections within our school - Inclusion for all. Teacher teams successfully created and then used class profiles to guide instruction, supports, and effective learning programs for all students.

### **Cumberland Community School**

Collaborative Inquiry Projects were:

1. Using First Peoples Principals of Learning in the classroom.
2. Using Six Cedars to self assess and reflect on learning of Core Competencies.
3. How before and after school events can engage families and develop a sense of belonging?

### **Glacier View Secondary Centre**

Provided training opportunities to students to increase chances of gaining employment:

- Fully Funded Healthcare Assistant Program Training is coming to Courtenay for Indigenous Peoples”.
- The job readiness program is a new initiative at Glacier View designed with the goal to better prepare our students for finding and securing employment in our community.

Offered Indigenous Workshops and Art:

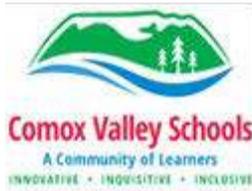
- Jam Making Workshop
- Indigenous Masks
- Indigenous Education Cultural Enhancement Grant
- Talking Circles

Supported the school counsellor to attend an interactive workshop in suicide safety.

### **Highland Secondary**

New course offerings this year included District Robotics program for students grade 8-12, Metalwork/Jewelry 8, Criminology 9/10, Blended Learning Versions of Pre-Calculus 11, Human Geography 12, English Studies 12, 20th Century History 12 and Genocide Studies 12.

Continued to lead in the area of Blended Learning. Teachers continued to develop their course materials in a manner which integrates online learning with the best elements (practice) of face-to-face instruction. The result is courses that easily accessible, allow students to work at their own pace and own level, allows for enrichment and adaption and allows the teacher the freedom to target direct instruction where and when it is needed. Teachers have now had a part or all of their course on Canvas and the majority have embraced a Blended approach to teaching and learning.



## **Mark R. Isfeld Secondary**

Students from SOGI participated in the "World Community Development Society Queer and Allied Club.

Try-A-Trade: Sandwick Technical Educational School. 15 Isfeld students spent the day experimenting with a variety of community trades.

Senior foods classes are working in partnership with Lush Valley to prepare all their vegetables for the community's hot soup programs.

Salmon Smoking: Our indigenous education workers used the school smoker to teacher classes the process of smoking salmon and the role this played in the history and livelihood of Indigenous families in the Comox Valley.

Students organized a "Spirit Week" to enhance school culture.

- Monday: Festive Hat - wear your craziest hat
- Tuesday: Pajama Day - sleep attire
- Wednesday: Twin Day - dress as your twin
- Thursday: cozy attire day - dress in your comfy clothes
- Friday: Christmas door decorations

## **G.P. Vanier Secondary**

Students participated in the Student Vote campaign, mirroring the provincial election.

Inquiry Learning included the following:

- Inquiry 8 added as one of the grade 8 rotations in our Exploratory classes.
- Creative Collective (shared partnership between art, electronics, metalwork and woodwork) allowed students to follow their passions and design their own projects.
- Social Justice 10 consisted of 12 classes to take on passion projects.
- Human & Physical Geography 12 classes take on an inquiry project for their final assessment.

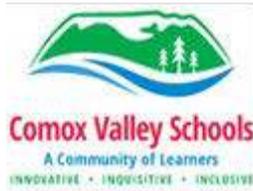
## **Navigate/NIDES**

Increased sharing of individual passions and project learning, to increase student engagement in their own learning (HLC)

FAe and Compass programs provided a ski trip and a Tribune Bay trip for students.

Created meaningful, lasting learning connections with the following activities:

- Jump Rope for Heart
- School wide "Imagine" song rewrite into own lyrics.
- Online Variety Shows and Showcases where parents are invited to view from home. and which serve as a celebration of student learning and achievement.



- Weekly blog posts by teachers to inform parents.
- Weekly program update emails from admin.
- Older cohort specific -- at least one email or phone call each week to share positive news on how a child did at school that week.
- 4 times throughout the year teachers meet for spark meetings with parents to discuss student progress and achievement as well as the home learning plan. Meetings occur online for about 45 minutes each.
- Working on improving the functionality of the school garden as a learning space by removing vegetable beds and creating more open space for classes to work in.