

BOARD BUSINESS

December 2023



Everybody Deserves a Smile celebrates year 20!

BOARD MEETING IN REVIEW

Comox Valley International Student Program thriving

Greg Kochanuk, District Principal of the Comox Valley International Student Program provided an overview explaining that the program has recovered after a brief slowdown during the pandemic. The program is currently hosting approximately 242 students from 24 countries and is now running at full capacity. There are two streams, the fee paying stream and non-revenue generating stream. In addition to hosting students from around the world, students in Comox Valley Schools can access cultural exchanges in countries such as Thailand, Germany and Italy. In these exchanges there are reciprocal schools in other countries who host our students in one for one exchanges. There are currently 140 active homestay families in the Comox Valley. Homestay families host international students and provide them with a safe place to live along with everything else you would normally provide a child, including meals, emotional support and other necessities. An international student can study in the Comox Valley International Student Program from one (1) week to twelve (12) months. The majority of students come for a full school year which is ten (10) months; September to June. International students are eligible for homestay from grade six (6) to grade twelve (12). Students are carefully screened by the District Principal of International Education or designate to show they have the academic and social potential/maturity to be successful.

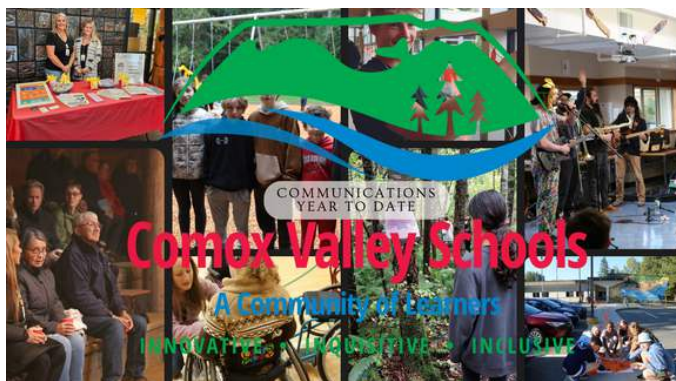
The Board of Education acknowledges that we are on the traditional territories of the K'ómoks First Nation. We would like to thank them for the privilege of living on their land and the gift of working with their children.

International Education Update

Communications Year to Date

SD 71 Communications Year to Date

You can view the SD 71 Communications slide show for this school year to date here:



**WATCH
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BOARD
MEETING**

DECEMBER 2023

BOARD BUSINESS



Comox Valley Schools

A Community of Learners

INNOVATIVE • INQUISITIVE • INCLUSIVE

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Board Chairperson Update

Board of Education Chairperson, Michelle Waite - ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ



As we move closer to the finish line in 2023, it is an opportunity to reflect on the work we have accomplished together here in our district. It has been just over a year since our trustees were elected and affirmed our Oath of Office to abide and uphold the School Act. In this period, supporting a growing district and an engaged community has been immensely rewarding, marked by significant learning and numerous vital conversations. Moving forward we recently launched our annual Board Working plan, Focused Strategic Plan and are building the foundational planning work for our future Strategic Plan. We remain focused on previous motions of the Board regarding student health and sustainability. Our new Board office renovation is progressing well and when complete, will help with adding much needed spaces for our growing district.

Over the past year, presentations to the Board and community have covered a range of topics, from school programs and district supports to initiatives for children in their early years. The community's input on various relevant issues has been invaluable, and while we often receive more requests than time permits, we appreciate your patience as we center our efforts on children's needs.

Recently, trustees participated in the BCSTA Academy's 2023 themed, "Guiding a Healing Journey." Additionally, several trustees engaged in regional and provincial First Nations Education Steering Council conferences.

December brims with music and joy, as our schools host winter concerts. Many thanks to our dedicated staff and supportive families for making these events so enjoyable to attend.

With the school winter break in sight, may you move forward into the new year with gratitude and kindness and hopefully some time to recharge in a way that brings you joy.

Gilakas'la



December 2023

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EDAS distributes over 1660 care packages

It was year-20 for Everybody Deserves a Smile and its the 12th year Comox Valley Schools is participating in this remarkable initiative. 1661 care packages were packaged plump full (161 more than expected) and over 1200 "Care packages of Hope" have been delivered to 20 soup kitchens, shelters and support agencies by our students and staff. Throughout its impactful journey, over 26,000 care packages have been distributed to those in need. Thank you to Madame Chantal and EDAS team!



Comox Valley Schools holds successful Careers and Related Activities Week

Comox Valley Schools recently held a very successful Careers and Related Activities Week, aligning with the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan. The week-long event featured a series of interactive and educational activities aimed at expanding students' knowledge of career possibilities and the skills required in various professions.

Highlights of the week included classroom presentations by local business leaders and parents, sharing insights into their career pathways and the competencies needed in their fields. The events were tailored for students from kindergarten to Grade 12, ensuring an inclusive and comprehensive educational experience.

Significant activities across the district included:

- Career exploration activities at Glacier View Secondary.
- A job fair with various presenters at Highland Secondary.
- Learning and exploration tables at Mark R. Isfeld Secondary.
- Classroom presentations and job fair at GP Vanier Secondary.

These initiatives provided students with valuable exposure to a diverse range of high-demand careers and fostered a deeper understanding of the connection between school learning and real-world applications. Comox Valley Schools is committed to preparing students for future success by highlighting the many different career opportunities available to them. Many thanks to the SD 71 Careers Department and all the participants who contributed their time and energy for our students.



December 2023

SD 71 shines at North Island Regional Drama Festival

Students from Comox Valley Schools recently had outstanding performances at the North Island Regional Drama Festival in Campbell River. Comox Valley Schools will be represented at the National Theatre ABCDE Provincial Drama Festival for the second consecutive year, following G.P. Vanier's phenomenal performance at the North Island Regional Drama Festival. The school's production of "Trap" by Stephen Gregg, directed by Lori Mazey, was selected as the outstanding production, with Nanaimo's NDSS finishing as runner-up. G.P. Vanier also earned accolades in several categories including acting, ensemble work, stage management, directing, costume coordination, and lighting design. While awards are not the sole motivation for students, the recognition was an honor, reflecting their commitment to excellence in theatre arts. Highland Secondary School's "Scent of Honeysuckle," directed by Lisa Williams, was another highlight, bringing the audience to tears with its powerful narrative and performances. The school won awards for directing and other theatrical aspects, with actors Ava Bayers, Gisella Parsons, and Olivia Parsons recognized for outstanding achievement in acting.



Wrestlers off to fantastic start!

The Comox Valley wrestlers made a triumphant return to the mat at the QMS Christmas Classic Tournament in Duncan, marking the start of the season for the elementary division with a spectacular show of skill and sportsmanship. In an event that saw ten wrestlers from the team clinch gold in their respective divisions. Leading the victory march, Kane Acton and Max Korthuis of Cumberland once again demonstrated their prowess by securing titles in their divisions. They were joined by Kylie Cameron-Patterson from Vanier, along with first-time tournament participants Unya Hollmayer and Jacob Price from Vanier, who also claimed gold medals. Adding to her accolades, Unya Hollmayer showcased her remarkable talent by winning her weight class at the SFU War on the Floor on Sunday, qualifying her for multiple BC and National events later in the season. The elementary division was not far behind in their achievements. Huband Park Elementary celebrated a successful outing, with Inga Hollmayer, Thea Spragg, and Mathew Martin emerging as champions. Lily Martin added to Huband's medal tally with a silver. Puntledge Park Elementary's Oscar Stehura clinched first place, while Abel Emery fought hard to earn a silver medal. Stella and Helen Stehura from Aspen Park Elementary rounded out the winners, taking home second and third place honors respectively.

The Comox Valley Wrestlers are now gearing up for their next challenge as they prepare to compete at the Discovery Cup in Vancouver. Good luck!

December 2023

