

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, January 30, 2024**  
**7:00pm**

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**Attendance In Person:**

**Trustees:**

Michelle Waite, Board Chair  
Susan Leslie, Vice Chair  
Chelsea McCannel-Keene, Trustee  
Cristi May Sacht, Trustee  
Janice Caton, Trustee  
Sarah Jane Howe, Trustee  
Shannon Aldinger, Trustee

**Staff:**

Dr. Jeremy Morrow, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Russell Horswill, Acting Secretary-Treasurer  
Sean Lamoureux, Associate Superintendent  
Dr. Vivian Collyer, Associate Superintendent  
Jay Dixon, Associate Superintendent  
Craig SoroChan, Manager of Communications

**Regrets:** None

**Recording Secretary:** Marlene Leach, Sr. Executive Assistant

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**1. Call to Order**

Board Chair, Michelle Waite called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

**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.**

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) adopt the January 30, 2024 Regular Board Meeting Agenda as presented.*

*[Howe/Leslie]*

**CARRIED**

**3. Board Meeting Minutes**

Pages 1-4

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) adopt the December 19, 2023, Regular Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.*

*[May Sacht/Howe]*

**CARRIED**

**4. Unfinished Business – None**

**5. Record of In-Camera Meetings / Reports**

Page 5

- December 19, 2023 – Regular In-Camera Meeting
- January 16, 2024 – Special In-Camera Meeting

**6. Board Chair's Report – Written Report**

Page 6

The Board Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. She recognized the District upcoming Professional Development Day and acknowledged all the hard work that is being done to make it a great day.

**7. Presentations / Delegations**

Pages 7-17

**i. Kindergarten Registration Enrolment – Briefing Note, Lisa Petersen-Skene, District Principal, Early Learning and Child Care**

Lisa Petersen-Skene answered the Board's questions.

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) accept the Kindergarten Registration Enrolment Briefing Note as presented.*

*[Aldinger/May Sacht]*

**CARRIED**

**ii. Draft Feeding Futures Report to Superintendent – Kyle Timms, Principal and Yolanda Lehton, Vice Principal**

Pages 18-43

Yolanda Lehton and Kyle Timms answered the Board's questions.

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) receive the Draft Feeding Futures Report as presented and refer the report to a Special Committee of the Whole meeting on February 20, 2024 for further discussion with internal partners and rights' holders.*

*[Caton/Howe]*

**CARRIED**

**8. Open Committee of the Whole – For Information Only**

**Next Open Committee of the Whole Meeting:**

**TOPICS:** TBD  
**DATE:** February 13, 2024  
**TIME:** 7:00 pm  
**LOCATION:** School Board Office, Board Room

## 9. Strategic Direction

### A. Superintendent

#### i. Superintendent District Report - Verbal

- The Superintendent thanked the staff for their presentations.
- It is the first day of the second semester for high school students, particularly, the final semester for grade 12 students in our district; we wish these students a safe and successful semester.
- The Strategic Plan Working Group - Sr. Education staff and Trustees, had a two-day session earlier this month with consultant Lisa McCollough who will support the Board to develop the next Strategic Plan. Both sessions focused on learning. The process and timeline will be refined and there will be community input.
- The Provincial Government recently introduced legislation limiting the use of cell phones in classrooms. The province will be working with school districts over the next few months to ensure all schools have policies in place that will restrict cell phone use in the classroom.
- The Provincial Government has also committed to ensure more digital literacy education is available to students, to increase their tools and knowledge, to protect themselves and become good digital citizens with a healthy relationship with technology.
- The Superintendent thanked the Maintenance department staff for all their work and expertise, especially on snow days, ensuring all schools are safe by taking care with the clearing of ice and snow.

### B. Secretary-Treasurer - None

## 10. Board Standing Committee Reports

### A. Open Committee of the Whole – January 16, 2024

Pages 44-73

#### **Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) receive the January 16, 2024 Open Committee of the Whole Report as presented.*

*[May Sacht/Howe]*

**CARRIED**

## 11. Board Business

#### i. Trustee Written Report: Indigenous Education Committee (IEC) – Susan Leslie

Page 74

Trustee Leslie reviewed items in the report, including some changes to the *School Act* regarding Indigenous Education.

**12. Board Correspondence - None**

**13. Public Question Period**

An emailed query containing two questions involving the Feeding Futures Report was shared in the meeting. The Chair noted that they wouldn't be able to answer the questions until after the upcoming Special Committee of the Whole meeting on February 20, 2024 that includes rights' holders and stakeholder groups.

Guests attending the meeting had questions about the Feeding Futures Report and Kindergarten Registration. The questions were directed to and answered by the staff presenters.

**14. Meeting Adjourned – 8:02 pm**

**MOTION:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) adjourn this meeting.*

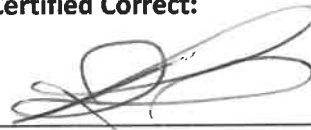
*[Caton/Howe]*

**CARRIED**

**Board Approved on:**

February 27, 2023

**Certified Correct:**



Dr. Russell Horswill, DBA  
Acting Secretary-Treasurer



Michelle Waite  
Board Chair



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, December 19, 2023**  
**7:00pm**

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**Attendance In Person:**

**Trustees:**

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Susan Leslie, Vice Chair  
Chelsea McCannel-Keene, Trustee  
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Shannon Aldinger, Trustee  
Sarah Jane Howe, Trustee

**Staff:**

Dr. Jeremy Morrow, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Russell Horswill, Acting Secretary-Treasurer  
Jay Dixon, Associate Superintendent  
Craig Sorochan, Manager of Communications

**Regrets:** Janice Caton, Trustee

**Recording Secretary:** Heidi Bell, Sr. Executive Assistant

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**1. Call to Order**

The Board Chair, Michelle Waite called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

**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.**

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) adopt the December 19, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes as presented.*

*[Leslie/May Sacht]*

**CARRIED**

**3. Board Meeting Minutes**

Pages

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) adopt the November 28, 2023, Regular Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.*

*[May Sacht/ Howe]*

**CARRIED**

**4. Unfinished Business – None**

**5. Record of In-Camera Meetings / Reports**

Page

- November 28, 2023 – Regular In-Camera Board Meeting

**6. Board Chair's Report – Written Report**

Pages

Board Chair Waite welcomed everyone to the meeting. 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.

**7. Presentations / Delegations**

**i. Education – International Student Program**

Greg Kochanuk, District Principle of International, Younhee Edmonds, Homestay Supervisor and Josie Jiang, Senior Manager

View the presentation using the link below:

[International Presentation December 2023](#)

**8. Committee of the Whole – For Information Only**

**Next Open Committee of the Whole Meeting:**

**TOPIC:** Library Education  
Technology – Sustainability Report  
Lake Park Society  
**DATE:** January 16, 2023  
**TIME:** 7:00 pm  
**LOCATION:** School Board Office, Board Room

**9. Strategic Direction**

**A. Superintendent**

**i. Superintendent District Report**

- Communications Year-to-Date Presentation, Manager of Communication, Craig Sorochan

- 

View the presentation using the link below:

[Communications Year-to-Date Presentation](#)

**B. Secretary-Treasurer**

- i. **Statement of Financial Information (SOFI) – Briefing Note, Director of Finance, Candice Hilton**

Pages

The Acting Secretary-Treasurer spoke to the Statement of Financial Information.

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) receive the Statement of Financial Information for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, as presented.*

*[Leslie/May Sacht]*

**CARRIED**

**10. Board Standing Committee Reports**

**A. Open Committee of the Whole – No Meeting in December**

**11. Board Business**

- i. Trustee Report: Indigenous Education Committee (IEC) – Written Report, Susan Leslie, Trustee (Town of Comox)

Page

Trustee Leslie spoke to the report.

- ii. Trustee School Liaison List 2023-2024

Page

There are no changes from last year. The board may be looking at adjusting the time of year when changes are made.

- iii. Board Committees 2023-2024

Pages

The Board Committees have been updated to reflect the changes made at the November Board Elections.

**12. Board Correspondence - None**

**13. Public Question Period – None**

The District Parent Association Council thanked the Board of Education for their time and commitment in attending District Parent Association Council meetings as well as their work in the district.

**14. Meeting Adjourned – 8:03 pm**

**MOTION:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) adjourn this meeting.*

*[McCannel-Keene/Howe]*

**CARRIED**

**Board Approved on:**

January 30, 2023

**Certified Correct:**

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Dr. Russell Horswill, DBA  
Acting Secretary-Treasurer

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Michelle Waite  
Board Chair

DRAFT

**RECORD OF IN-CAMERA MEETINGS**

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**TO:** Board of Education **DATE:** January 30, 2024  
**FROM:** Office of the Acting Secretary Treasurer  
**RE:** Record of In-Camera Meetings

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**RECORD PURSUANT TO SECTION 72 OF THE *SCHOOL ACT***

**Matters discussed and decisions reached at the Special and Regular In-Camera meetings held since the last such report:**

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**December 19, 2023 – Regular In-Camera Meeting**

1. Receipt of and updates on one land/property matter
2. Receipt of and updates on one legal/personnel matter
3. Receipt of and updated on three other matters

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm and adjourned at 7:00 pm.

**January 16, 2023 – Special In-Camera Meeting**

1. Receipt of and updates on one legal/personnel matter

The meeting was called to order at 4:31pm and adjourned at 4:52 pm.

**January 16, 2023 – Closed Committee of the Whole Meeting**

1. Receipt of and updates on one strategic direction matter
2. Receipt of and updates on one finance and operation matter
3. Receipt of and updates on one policy matter
4. Receipt of and updates on one governance matter

The meeting was called to order at 5:01pm and adjourned at 6:56 pm.

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As we conclude the first month of 2024, our communities have welcomed much-needed precipitation, including several snow accumulations leading to two school closures. With each passing day, we look forward to more daylight, and we appreciate everyone's careful navigation on the roads, especially around school areas where children are present.

In early January, our trustees and senior leadership team spent a productive Friday evening and Saturday with Lisa Bernoties McCullough, laying the groundwork for our strategic planning process. This process will be rooted in the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning, the School Act, the Educated Citizen, the BC Curriculum Core Competencies, and student data, guiding the development of the Comox Valley School District's strategic plan. Additionally, a small working group is drafting terms of reference for the Gender-Based Violence Committee, which will be presented to the Board at an upcoming meeting. As usual, January saw our trustees actively participating in various committee and parent advisory meetings, as well as local government and community events.

The January Open Committee of the Whole meeting featured presentations from the Lake Park Society, and two from our District: Library Learning Commons in SD71 and Information Technology Sustainability. We extend our gratitude to all the presenters for their engaging and informative contributions.

Congratulations to our grade 12 students who have completed their studies at the end of Semester 1!

Looking ahead to February, it is shaping up to be a month filled with significant events and opportunities. On February 9, the Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, and Board Chairperson will attend the annual Partner Liaison Meeting with the Ministry of Education and Childcare. February 16 marks our District Professional Development Day, themed 'Valuing Place, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.' This day will feature a mix of in-person school-based and virtual events, providing an opportunity for us to come together to listen and learn. We thank the Professional Development Committee, and everyone involved for their dedication and thoughtful planning of these essential teaching and learning events for our District teams.

We look forward to seeing you at our next Public Board Meeting scheduled for February 27!

**Gilakas'la**

**BRIEFING NOTE**

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**TO:** Board of Education

**DATE:** Tuesday January 30, 2024

**FROM:** Lisa Pedersen-Skene, District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care

**RE:** Kindergarten Registration & Transition Update

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**Background**

Kindergarten registration was moved to early January last year in order to provide multiple opportunities for learners and their families to build positive connections and foster a sense of belonging with schools. When learners and their families feel accepted, valued, and supported, it contributes to a positive learning experience and a smoother transition.

**1. Kindergarten Choices – please see program information sheets**

- a. Neighbourhood School
- b. Indigenous K/1 (Ecole Puntledge Park)
- c. Early French Immersion (Ecole Puntledge Park and Ecole Robb Road),
- d. Montessori (Queneesh and Courtenay Elementary)
- e. Fine Arts eCademy and Compass (Navigate)

**2. Registration**

- a. Indigenous K/1, Montessori and Early French Immersion Programs registration began Tuesday January 16<sup>th</sup>
- b. Neighbourhood School registration began Tuesday January 23<sup>rd</sup>
- c. Navigate (NIDES) Fine Arts eCademy and Compass Programs registration begins Wednesday February 7<sup>th</sup>

**3. Supporting Kindergarten Transitions**

- a. District-wide Transition Form
- b. Welcome Letters: School and Indigenous Support Workers
- c. Welcome to Kindergarten
- d. Strengthening Early Years to School Transitions (Cumberland and Courtenay Elementary)
- e. Variety of other school-based opportunities
- f. Early Years Dinner Series with Child Care providers, Child Care professionals, Teachers, and Principal and Vice Principals

**Recommendation**

“THAT the Board of Education of school District No. 71 (Comox Valley) receive the Child Care and Early Learning - Kindergarten Registration and Transition Update as presented.”

## Neighbourhood Kindergarten

*At the school nearest you*



*“Children are strong, capable in their uniqueness and full of potential.”*

*-BC Early Learning Framework*



At the school nearest you there is a Kindergarten ready to welcome your child.

Your neighbourhood Kindergarten has all the features of play-based, engaging learning environments. Our teachers are skilled at creating communities of learners and nurturing friendships.

A typical day in kindergarten will include times for stories, songs, conversation and discussion, play-based choice time, snack and lunch time. Students will partici-



pate weekly in music class as well as have opportunities to develop gross motor skills in the gym and visit the library. Often there is outdoor play and exploration, or walks as a class, or even spending time in a nearby forest. Noticing our neighbourhoods and outdoor environments helps children become aware of their community and develop curiosity and care for the natural world. A full day play-based program has long term benefits for children's academic and social skills.

We look forward to welcoming your child in September!

**Bussing:** Bussing may be an option for your Neighbourhood Kindergarten. This link has information about that: [Student transportation](#)

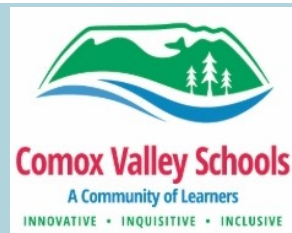
**Where is my neighbourhood school?** Use the [School locator](#) to find the school nearest you.





## Indigenous Kindergarten

*Gilakas'la. Welcome to the Indigenous K/1 Program at Ecole Puntledge Park.*



*Our program covers the BC Curriculum while embedding the First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous ways of knowing and being.*



We are grateful to be living and learning on the unceded traditional territory of the K'omoks First Nation. In this program, we follow the seasonal rounds; we learn about the plants and animals of this territory and how to help take care of the land and each other.



### Core Values of the Indigenous K/1 Program:

*We are connected to our cultures.*

Through talking circles, drumming, story telling, art and language learning, we learn about our Indigenous Cultures. We are grateful to the Elders and Cultural Presenters who support us on our cultural learning journey. We want all students to be proud of who they are and where they come from.



*We are connected to the land.*

Our school is surrounded by lush forest, the Puntledge River and many animals which we observe and explore daily. Nature is a beautiful classroom full of wonders, creativity and fresh air.

*We are connected to each other.*

Being a two year program, we are able to build strong relationships with students and families. We are passionate about meeting students where they are at in their learning to ensure they have the skills and confidence to continue on their educational journey.

## Montessori

### Queneesh Elementary & Courtenay Elementary Community School



*“Through stories and inquiries, students are presented with a big picture of the world in which they live ....”*

For students in the Montessori kindergarten classes, days are consumed with learning the skills to organize themselves, consolidate their understanding of literacy and numeracy fundamentals, and establishing the social order necessary to carry them through their school years.



The lower-elementary classroom is where skills begin to take shape. The development of reading skills is nurtured through a sequentially designed language program, which includes manipulative word work with letters (Moveable Alphabet), pictures, and objects. Word work, spelling rules, and phonics lessons are often included in a Montessori reading program. Writing skills are fostered through a comprehensive grammar program, spelling work, sentence analysis, and research skills.

Materials which make abstract concepts concrete, aid skill development in mathematics. The sequence of mathematics materials allows children to progress at their own pace. The full complement of mathematics materials covers everything from place value and operations to fractions and geometry.

Cultural studies (science and social studies) are the heart of the Montessori program. Through stories and inquiries, stu-

dents are presented with a big picture of the world in which they live and opportunities to ask and answer questions about it. The Great Lessons are the hub of the cultural wheel, taking students back in time and beyond the place in which they reside and bringing their big-picture learning right back to the ground beneath their feet. As respected Montessorian Michael Dorier said, “stories have the powers to illuminate, elucidate, motivate, spark the creative imagination, and touch the spirit of the children.” Additional activities found in cultural studies include Puzzle Maps, the Botany Cabinet, and nomenclature cards, which support research. Many cross-curricular activities are explored through cultural studies including art, mathematics, and language arts.

The upper elementary classrooms build again on what has come before them. With the requisite organizational skills and subject matter fundamentals in place, students can expand upon and deepen their understanding of content through self-driven inquiry and group work. Students should leave the program primed for high school.

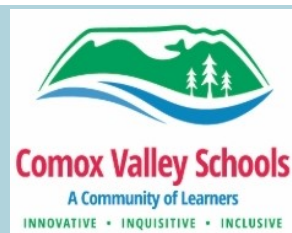
All the lessons and learning presented in the Montessori classrooms are informed by the B.C. curriculum as well as the scope and sequence of the Montessori curriculum.

Queneesh [Montessori](#) website  
[CV Montessori Society](#) Facebook page



## French Immersion Kindergarten

*Ecole Robb Road & Ecole Puntledge Park*



*“THEY’RE LEARNING FRENCH BECAUSE WE WANT THE WORLD FOR THEM.”*

The early French Immersion programs are at Ecole Robb Road in Comox and Ecole Puntledge Park in Courtenay. A French Immersion program is intended for non-French speaking students who would like to learn how to communicate effectively in French and in English. Families are not expected to be able to speak French, yet some do. This program is designed in a way that teachers provide all resources for families to help at home. You will have access to songs and games in French, by the end of the program you will know all the catchy songs as well.



The French Immersion program mirrors the English program in the sense that we use the BC curriculum, yet it differs slightly as the language arts portion of our curriculum focuses on building French vocabulary in addition to reading and writing. An early French Immersion program celebrates the love of language and French culture. French is introduced in Kindergarten through playful activities.

A play-based setting promotes creativity, individuality, and imagination. Although our lessons are done in French, the big conversations involving safety or concerns are in English to ensure a student understands.

**What does that look like?** Kindergarten to grade 3 is taught primarily in French, then starting in grade 4 students learn 80% of their subjects in French. Graduates from our program move on to Mark Isfeld High School where they obtain a bilingual Graduation Certificate as well as the provincial Dogwood certificate. "

[Ecole Puntledge Park](#)

[Ecole Robb Road.](#)

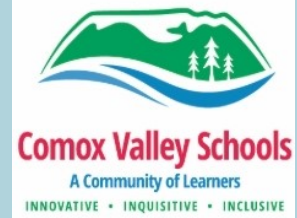


*“Young children are capable of learning multiple languages... and early childhood is the optimum time for them to begin.”*



## Fine Arts eCademy (FAe) & Compass

### *Tsolum Campus, Navigate NIDES*



*What gives you joy and energy? When does life feel rich and full with purpose and hope? What unique gifts do you possess that make the world a better place?*

FAe and Compass are blended learning programs offered at our Tsolum campus. These programs offer students the opportunity to participate in both shared and personalized learning experiences. The FAe program (Fine Arts eAcademy) integrates learning through a fine arts focus with daily engagement in a variety of artistic pursuits. If your child is naturally expressive and creative, this program might be a good fit for your family.

Students in the FAe program attend three days each week and the other days are dedicated to



home learning. In the Compass program, students attend two days of face-to-face learning with one day in the classroom and the other out in the community. Both programs are organized around multi-age grade groupings.

There are some unique aspects to both the FAe and Compass programs. As they are blended learning programs, parents play a significant role in their child's education. This can be both very rewarding and challenging; be prepared for both. Our blended learning programs are programs of choice in the district and there is no district bus service available to our Tsolum campus.

If you would like to register your child for Kindergarten at NIDES, please visit our website at [www.navigatenides.com](http://www.navigatenides.com)





**Comox Valley Schools**

A Community of Learners

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# Kindergarten Registration & Transition Update

Presented by Lisa Pedersen-Skene,  
District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care  
To the Board of Education January 30, 2024

# Kindergarten Choices in SD71

## Neighbourhood Indigenous K/1

- École Puntledge Park Elementary

## Early French Immersion

- École Puntledge Park Elementary & École Robb Road

## Montessori

- Queneesh & Courtenay Elementary

## Fine Arts eCademy & Compass

- Navigate

### Neighbourhood Kindergarten

At the school nearest you



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-BC Early Learning Framework



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We look forward to welcoming your child in September!

**Bussing:** Bussing may be an option for your Neighbourhood Kindergarten. This link has information about that: [Student transportation](#)

**Where is my neighbourhood school?** Use the [School locator](#) to find the school nearest you.



### Fine Arts eCademy (FAe) & Compass



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Students in the FAe program attend three days each week and the other days are dedicated to home learning. In the Compass program, students attend two days of face-to-face learning with one day in the classroom and the other out in the community. Both programs are organized around multi-age grade groupings.

If you would like to register your child for Kindergarten at NIDES, please visit our website at [www.navigatekids.com](#)

### French Immersion Kindergarten



École Robb Road & École Puntledge Park

*"THEY'RE LEARNING FRENCH BECAUSE WE WANT THE WORLD FOR THEM"*

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[École Puntledge Park](#)

[École Robb Road](#)

*"Young children are capable of learning multiple languages... and early childhood is the optimum time for them to begin."*



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**Kindergarten**  
Registration

**KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION  
OPENS ONLINE**

**JANUARY 16 @ 6 PM  
INDIGENOUS  
FRENCH IMMERSION  
MONTESSORI**

**JANUARY 23  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
SCHOOLS (MOST  
STUDENTS)**

**OPEN FEBRUARY 7  
NAVIGATE/NIDES  
FINE ARTS ACADEMY  
COMPASS**

Registration questions:  
[kindergartenreg@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:kindergartenreg@sd71.bc.ca)



# Supporting Kindergarten Transitions



## Welcome to Kindergarten Transition Form 2024/25



Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like us to know to best understand your child? (strengths, challenges, personality, fears, goals, talents, how they learn best, etc.)

Do your child have friends coming to kindergarten? If yes, who?  
Yes ☐ No ☐

Has your child participated in any previous experiences? (dance, art class, music, soccer, etc.)  
Yes ☐ No ☐







**Comox Valley Schools**  
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# Kindergarten Registration & Transition Update

Presented by Lisa Pedersen-Skene,  
District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care  
To the Board of Education January 30, 2024

**DRAFT**  
**FEEDING FUTURES**  
**DISTRICT SCAN**



**Comox Valley Schools**

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 71**  
**(COMOX VALLEY)**  
**December 2023**

Written by Yolanda Lehton and Kyle Timms

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## Introduction

In 2023 the British Columbia provincial government committed \$214.5 million in operating funding over three years to make sure all students are fed and ready to learn, by expanding existing school food programs in districts and schools that already have them and creating new ones in districts and schools without. When the Feeding Futures School Food Programs Framework was introduced across the province by the Ministry of Education and Child Care in April 2023, the Comox Valley School District was allocated \$1.14 Million. SD71 initiated this district-wide scan of current school food practices, challenges, and opportunities. The process of completing this scan included connecting with a multitude of school food providers around the school district including school food coordinators, school administrators, community schools, partner organizations, parent volunteers, and of course students. In all these conversations it became clear that we have a passionate and dedicated food community surrounding our students and families.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care's commitment through the Feeding Futures Framework is to ensure students are properly fed for learning; to enhance academic success and healthy outcomes. The ministry's 2023 budget has committed to three years of consistent and sustainable food funding and human resources for schools. The Comox Valley School District food scan provides recommendations for next steps and ongoing processes in our schools and district. In this scan we have compiled data from past initiatives, information from the Province's Feeding Futures leadership team, and from our school food community.

There are many overlapping and interrelated issues when discussing school food programs which we will summarize in each section of the report below.

## Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we live, work, play, and learn on the traditional unceded territory of the Pentlatch, leeksen Sahtloot, Sasitla and Xa'xe peoples, who are collectively known as the K'ómoks Nation. They have been the stewards and protectors of the land and have provided food for their people and guests for generations.

## Feeding Futures Mandate

The Province of British Columbia, through the joint work of the Ministries of Education, Health, and Agriculture has allocated approximately \$70 million per year over the next three years to provide healthy local food to support families who face food insecurity. They are calling on school districts to use these funds to feed a minimum of 20% of students and use at least 30% BC grown or processed food. There is a provincial advisory council supporting districts regionally in finding the best way to achieve these goals.

The Ministries' feeding futures criteria:

- Feed the students who need it most by increasing the number of students served
- Focus on providing programs that are stigma-free, flexible and respect student privacy
- Increase the nutrition of food provided and where possible use B.C. grown/produced
- Program delivery may include culinary arts programs, expansion of existing contracts, and third-party service providers

The ministry has funded flexible staffing for a full-time equivalent School Food Coordinator or to offset the cost of existing School Food Coordinators. To meet the feeding futures commitment, the coordinator's role may include coordination and delivery of the program including building community connections and partnerships and working with local groups such as First Nations and Indigenous partners.

In the foundational year of this framework, the ministry has provided funding for food services equipment and small appliances to help prepare food. It also outlines that the initial funds are to be used to support the continuity of the Student and Family Affordability Fund including grocery cards, food for weekends and school closures.

The feeding futures scan is integral to the school district reporting process because it outlines the Ministries mandate to report out on our decision-making processes regarding the funding. Specifically, we are looking at how our school district identifies students who could benefit from this funding, and how we are currently supporting these students and families.

## School District Demographics

Our school district currently serves around 10 300 students across 22 "brick and mortar" schools and facilities within the Comox Valley. We serve a very diverse group of neighborhoods spread from Hornby Island to the Oyster River. There are 3 high schools, 3 alternate learning programs, one middle school, 15 elementary schools and 5 StrongStart facilities. In this report we have amalgamated data into daily numbers to try to paint a picture of a day in the life of our district. The school year comprises approximately 180 school days, allowing an easy extrapolation to a year of food services in our schools.

It is important to recognize that the great majority of the food that comes into a school is provided by families and packed directly into their child's backpack. Parents who have the financial capacity to provide this food generally do, and schools have varying systems to provide food for those families who are unable. Elementary-aged children eat in their classrooms with their peers and supervised by their teachers as part of "instructional time". Most secondary-aged students have flexibility to eat unsupervised around the school and off campus in the community. Our schools have not been built with large-scale cafeterias or large group eating areas. Building capacity issues from increasing student enrolment also adds to pressure on school facilities.

Schools have found creative ways to feed students who do not come to school with their own food. In the next sections we will show a snapshot of a day in the life of these students who need school support for food.

## Breakfast

Over 700 students around the district start their day in school with a free breakfast. Of all the sections of this scan, breakfast is the most consistent from school to school. In most schools, breakfast is made available to any student or family who wants it. It usually includes items such as fresh fruit, yoghurt, eggs, bagels, and muffins and is prepared by school volunteers, education assistants and other CUPE staff.

These employees are given between 30 and 60 minutes of extra paid time to prepare, serve, and clean up, which is processed as an "add to pay" and currently paid with Feeding Futures grants. Many staff and volunteers also spend this time preparing the free lunches for later in the day. In our school visits we observed that breakfast is a crucially important factor in increasing a sense of school community, and developing healthy, positive connections with a caring adult, and of course nutrition.

## Lunch

Lunches are the foundational meal within schools. Each school uses a variety of methods to provide food to students. Some examples are premade sandwiches and wraps, soup programs, salad bar, hot lunch, and catered meals. Schools also provide a significant number of grab and go items such as veggies, fruit, milk, and granola bars to supplement student lunches. There are numerous other ways lunches are served in schools on subscription and fundraising basis. All versions of paid lunches include an opportunity for students to receive food at a reduced price or no cost. Some examples of paid lunches are:

- Salad bars (some are free to all students)
- Fundraisers organized by parent advisory councils and other school groups.
- School cafeteria programs run by community school organizations or school staff.
- Indigenous Education Healthy Student Meals Program (soup program) facilitated by the Indigenous Education department and supported by LUSH Valley

**Table 1:** Daily free breakfasts and lunches served in schools

	School	Population	Daily Free Breakfast	Daily Free Lunches	Meals per day	Meals served by population
Elementary Schools	Airport	204	10	6	16	8%
	Arden	234	30	12	42	18%
	Aspen	404	9	30	39	10%
	Brooklyn	384	15	13	28	7%
	Courtenay	244	10	28	38	16%
	Cumberland	703	17	50	67	10%
	Denman Island	49	0	20	20	41%
	Ecole Puntledge Park	515	33	25	58	11%
	Ecole Robb Road	465	0	12	12	3%
	Hornby Island	54	10	22	32	59%
	Huband Park	376	30	30	60	16%
	Miracle Beach	258	35	20	55	21%
	NIDES	130	20	20	40	31%
	Queneesh	426	28	35	63	15%
	Royston	281	37	13	50	18%
	Valley View	378	20	8	28	7%
Secondary Schools	Lake Trail	413	110	70	180	44%
	Nala'atsi	21	21	20	41	195%
	Highland	824	55	50	105	13%
	Isfeld	993	100	15	115	12%
	Glacier View	170	35	80	115	68%
	Vanier	1291	100	95	195	15%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8817</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>16%</b>

*Note: "Meals served by population" includes breakfast and lunch. Some students receive 2 meals each day, for example at Nala'atsi serves breakfast and lunch to almost all students daily so it counts as 195%.*

Table 1 shows a school-by-school breakdown of free meals provided across the district daily. This does not include the many other paid or not daily hot lunches, salad bars, or other programs in schools.

**These weekly programs and options contribute to reaching more than the 20% of students with food insecurity the Feeding Futures program is intended to support.**

## Snacks

Students need the flexibility to access food throughout the school day beyond the regular scheduled meals of breakfast and lunch. All schools have arrangements to support these students. Most snacks are

provided in a grab and go style that supports stigma-free and flexible access to students. Some examples of the food offered are granola bars, fresh fruit, and fresh veggies. The BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Program is also a significant asset to many schools as they provide large amounts of easily accessible fruits and vegetables that can be distributed widely across the school population.

## Salad Bars

Over the last 5-10 years, salad bars have been a promising and exciting way to provide schools with nutritious and affordable meals. In all these schools, students rush to line up and fill their plates with healthy and fresh ingredients. There are currently 8 salad bars around the district, and each of them has its own variations. Farm to Cafeteria Canada has been a valuable support to these salad bar programs through grants, sharing of information and resources and collaboration. Thanks to the Student and Family Affordability Fund and now Feeding Futures funds, many salad bars are offered free of charge to all students. The salad bar program provides hands-on learning for students and encourages skill development in producing healthy food together with the school and community partners.

Each salad bar requires a crew of passionate and dedicated staff and volunteers to be a success. Salad bars also support community connections and food literacy through their collaboration with local farms and producers. LUSH Valley has supported salad bars through aggregating local food, purchasing pantry staples and providing a custom order service for all school salad bars. This free service provides schools support to make salad bars easier to use local farm produce and pass on bulk purchase savings. This in-kind service is estimated to cost \$15 000 annually. The salad bar programs are looking forward to increased support to source local, fresh products.

## Indigenous Education Healthy Student Meal Program

One promising program that should be celebrated is the Indigenous Education Healthy Student Meal Program, which is commonly known as the soup program. Most schools currently get delivery of a bag of vegetables and supplies to enable Indigenous support workers or teachers to make soup and snacks with a group of students. Support from LUSH Valley has been integral to the successful operation of this program as they facilitate the aggregation of local fresh food and distribute it to the schools. The students are fed healthy, local food, and most importantly, working with the Indigenous Support Worker fosters a personal, cultural, and mindful relationship with food and nutrition. The program currently requires \$60 000 to run per year. \$30 000 comes from LUSH Valley's BC gaming grant, \$10 000 comes from Indigenous Education and other funds are provided in-kind through LUSH Valley.

## Weekends and Evenings

The school district realizes that students and families need support in feeding students outside of the school day as well. Beginning in 2022, LUSH Valley was contracted to supply 300 school district families with "good food" boxes every second week which includes fresh, local vegetables, fruit, and eggs. These boxes can be picked up at the LUSH Valley facility. Initially, families were chosen by schools and the



available boxes were claimed very quickly. Families can also apply to the Good Food Box Program through LUSH Valley’s online application and as students age out of the school system or leave SD71, new families are added to the program. There is a need to expand this service to more families, make a variety of sizes of boxes and possibly make the boxes available for pick up at schools.

Many schools also started a food pantry program. They stocked shelves and closets with non-perishable food items and encouraged families to select what they needed. These served as smaller versions of a food bank distributed across the district, offering a more convenient option for parents, however it is not being well-accessed by students and families.

Other important food support systems in place at many schools include giving families grocery cards, providing grab and go meals, and creating school family hampers.

## Food and Nutrition Education

Elementary schools deliver nutrition and health lessons in science, careers, physical education, and health curricula. The Ministry’s curriculum documents can be found at <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>. These classroom lessons are augmented in many places by involvement in other food programs. For example, at many schools, intermediate students have the chance to volunteer in salad bar or baking programs. In most elementary schools teachers are in classes while students are eating as part of the classroom instructional time. This allows teachers to know what students need support and can educate them about nutrition and food. Students from grade 8-12 across the district have access to foods electives in teaching kitchens, and at Vanier, in the culinary arts program. Our high schools do an excellent job in preparing students for careers in the food industry.

There is an abundance of research and knowledge around the importance of food, food preparation and sharing meals together in creating culture and making meaningful and healthy connections through food. In a recent CBC podcast on Unreserved, chefs Chandra Maracle and Teri Morrow from Six Nations commented that “food is more than sustenance for the body — it is tied to culture and community. And in Haudenosaunee communities like Six Nations, women hold a sacred responsibility of passing down food knowledge to honour ancestors and preserve culture.” In moving forward with the Feeding Futures mandate it is essential to recognize the fundamental value of increasing food literacy in our schools. It will be important to ensure we are connecting with the local Indigenous food resources, garden-based learning, and discussions around sustainability of our food sources and services.

## Fundraisers

In many schools, food is a major part of how funds are raised for school events, resources, and activities. Most schools call this “hot lunch”. These are usually run by parent volunteers through the parent advisory council (PAC). In our survey of hot lunch and salad bar coordinators, we learned that most elementary schools have a weekly or bi-weekly fundraiser where food is ordered by parents through an online system and delivered to classrooms. The food is sold by local restaurants such as Subway, White spot, Pita pit, various pizza restaurants, Quality foods, and local caterers. The price per meal of most of

these meals is between \$5 and \$8. While most of these lunches are paid for directly by parents, there are also systems in place to support families who cannot pay. The funds raised go back into school programs, field trips, events, and provide additional supplies to schools.

School PACs give away many free meals per week, and students are usually identified by teachers, school administrators and office staff. Some schools have the option for parents to donate a free lunch as part of the ordering system.

The issues to be addressed with these “hot lunch” fundraisers are the nutritional value of the food, the cost per meal, and the issue of balancing fundraising and providing free healthy food. We also found that parents appreciate the option to purchase a meal and not have to provide a homemade lunch once a week.

These programs mostly run on the power of volunteers and there is no central coordination. It would benefit all schools to have a way to connect and coordinate with vendors and have a consistent way to provide free meals to families with insecurity. “Hot lunch” fundraisers can be part of the solution to meeting the Feeding Futures mandate on the days it is available.

## Facilities

There is a wide array of food facilities across schools that are as diverse as the students in them. Please see below for pictures showing a sample of the facilities across the district. The smallest are simple kitchen spaces with sinks, refrigerators, stoves, dishwashers, storage, and some counter space. Some schools have converted former classrooms into kitchens. Through the Student and Family Affordability Fund most schools have purchased commercial dishwashers, refrigerators, stoves, and basic cooking supplies. The largest facility is the Vanier cafeteria which is a full teaching kitchen. Schools without dedicated cooking facilities are often limited in space and expansion of these kitchens is not always practical or cost effective.

**Airport Elementary**



**Courtenay Community School**



### Vanier Culinary Arts Program



### Cumberland Community School



## Staffing

The majority of the staff looking after food in schools are CUPE members (education assistants, youth and family support workers, and indigenous support workers). In most elementary schools an EA, YFSW, or ISW is given extra hours daily before school to prepare breakfasts and lunches. These have been paid in the past through Community LINK or SFAF funds. We estimate that across the district there is 1254 minutes or approximately 15 hours a day of food preparation being funded by Feeding Futures or Community LINKs. The annual cost of this is approximately \$75 000 across all our schools.

These caring educators provide a safe place for many students to start their day with a healthy meal or snack. At every school, students have access to free breakfast if they need it. School administrators provide leadership and budgeting, and often hands-on help, and school administrative assistants support the paperwork and accounting. Extra food is usually kept at the office or a central location for students who arrive late. Most schools also give their support staff paid time to shop each week for ingredients and supplies. Each school has developed over time a system that works for their students and community.

## Shopping and supplies

Each school is procuring their own supplies for the food programs. Most of this is being done by CUPE staff with extra paid hours outside of the school day. Our estimate is that 20 hours per week are being paid to do the shopping, which adds up to \$25 000 in costs. A large portion of school breakfast and lunch program food is being purchased at Costco with school credit cards using individual Costco membership cards. As a result, the district is not seeing the benefits of corporate membership.

Schools are also shopping at local grocery stores when those are more convenient or more affordable. Most of these stores are providing food at reduced cost, donating items, and collecting points for schools. There are advantages to localized shopping, such as getting just what is needed, knowing what students like, developing a relationship with managers, and the potential for a delivery option. A centralized shopping and delivery model would greatly increase efficiency of time and money. It is

difficult to determine the amount of school food being produced or processed in BC, however it is a factor that has been considered and needs closer look with the new mandates. We have so many local farms and producers in our community that we hope to make closer connections to.

School salad bars have been successful in connecting with local farmers and producers. Through LUSH valley they can pick up and aggregate local food. With the Feeding Futures goal of using 30% BC grown or processed food, a system of tracking will be essential for both store-bought and locally sourced food.

## Community Schools

Our five community schools have the unique ability to provide food for their students on a larger scale. The school and community school society at each location have a variety of approaches to how they achieve this. Community school societies are given targeted funding of approximately \$20 000 through Community LINK grants to support the society, and they often receive grants and other outside funding to run food programs.

**Cumberland Community School** has a coordinator and daily food ordering service that makes lunches 5 days a week, including salad bar once a week, and their PAC provides a fundraiser once a week. Parents order these lunches through the community school website and the cost per meal is \$5 for a small meal and \$5.50 for a regular meal. These meals are delivered to classrooms in their unique reusable containers. Last year the program averaged 200-300 student meals per day in the program and served an astonishing 40 920 meals over the year. 18% of the meals were provided free to low- and modest-income families. CCS offers a breakfast program that serves about 25 students a day, grab-and-go snacks during the day and snacks for afterschool programs. CCS also supports families with Healthy Food Boxes, the food pantry, and the Comox Valley Farmer's Market coupon program. CCS is looking at expanding their onsite kitchen facilities and is in support of a consistent funding model.

**Lake Trail Community School** also uses a partnership to provide lunches daily. The community school society provides a weekly salad bar and a weekly "snack plate" which are both free to all students. The other 4 days a week are managed by the school's food service worker, which is funded by the school district. They charge \$2.50 per serving and average 150 meals per day, with 25% of these provided free of charge. Parents add funds to their accounts at the office and students order when they want the lunch, making it stigma-free.

**Courtenay Community School** started a new food program last Spring providing lunches for approximately 80 students per day. They have a food service worker working with the community school society to prepare and serve the meals out of a converted classroom. The cost per meal is \$4 with 40% of students getting the lunches at no cost. Parents can order a month in advance and there are a wide variety of options being served.

**Hornby Island Community School** has a four-day week which starts with muffin Mondays where students and PAC volunteers make muffins for the whole school. Tuesday is salad bar and Wednesdays and Thursdays are hot lunches. The salad bar is prepared and served by Hornby Island Education Society staff, a volunteer and 4 students. Muffin Mondays and salad bars are both free for all students and staff as they are using Feeding Futures to fund the cost. Wednesday and Thursday lunches are also free and

are a combination of parent volunteers, HIES staff, high school students and a partnership with the Co-Op kitchen. Before this year, the school would have collected funds to offset the cost of hot lunches. The school also provides snacks for programs, gift cards and food for Friday Club. Hornby Island School works hard to source food locally to avoid the minimum 4-hour commute to town for food. Hornby school has 3-phase power and their oven takes 25% longer to warm up and cook food and due to their distance from the Comox Valley, they are unable to access many district food programs.

**Denman Island Community School** has a weekly soup and salad bar program that is free for all students and staff. All salad bar planning and shopping is done by the administrator as they live in Courtenay. The program goals are to use fresh, local food from the island and school garden weekly. Students work with Denman Island Community School staff and a PAC volunteer to make the soup and salad bar in a learning environment that is also focused on zero waste. Snacks and meals are provided daily as needed to students in addition to snacks for all afterschool and parented programs. Denman Island School has also developed a framework for Indigenous focused learning around food and the seasonal rounds that incorporates garden and land-based learning about the 3 Sisters, wild foraging, and teas as well as salmon life cycles. The framework is called “Full Circle Learning Through Food” and they are beginning their 4<sup>th</sup> year of the cycle.

## Indigenous Education

The Healthy Student Meals Program is growing and is distributed to almost every school in the district. Indigenous Support Workers in each school take the ingredients and snacks that are delivered and prepare the soup and share it with students and classes in a culturally rich way. The soup program has been an excellent means for reaching out to our Indigenous students and creating community in our schools. Originally this program started at Vanier with Indigenous Education staff, and it has now grown to include substantial support and funding from LUSH Valley. As described earlier, Indigenous Education staff organize the schedule and school deliveries in collaboration with LUSH Valley who aggregates the fresh, local produce and delivers it to schools. The program costs approximately \$60 000 a year of which the district contributes \$10 000 and LUSH Valley uses a BC gaming grant to cover \$30 000 and other funds are provided in-kind. The program feeds approximately 1000 students a week and contributes to feeding 27 000 meals a year. A few schools such as Hornby, are unable to access the program due to delivery issues.

Food is a very important aspect for cultural connection and one of the ways our Indigenous Support Workers relate with students and families is through snacks and shared meals. Recognizing Indigenous connections to culture, community, land, and language through food and promoting local Indigenous foods and traditional food processing methods is integral to our reconciliation journey and to support decolonizing our diets.

Some schools are using Feeding Futures funds to support food purchases for Indigenous programs and other staff are using their program funds. We feel it is important to recognize the value and significance of food in our Indigenous programs and the challenge and added cost associated with sourcing culturally specific food. This is an area that should be financially enhanced with additional funds so ISWs can use their program funds for cultural materials, and it is separate from food funding.



## StrongStart Centers

In our StrongStart Centers, we see approximately 120 children aged 0-4 each day. There are currently StrongStarts at Cumberland, Courtenay, Brooklyn, Queneesh, Miracle Beach, and Royston. Facilitators prepare and serve snacks to children aged 0-4 while they learn with their parents. The food is purchased with Strong Start supplies accounts and managed by each school. These will become our students and should also be supported. Currently the StrongStart facilitators are spending between \$175 - \$250 per month on food. They can use more support in coordination and funding.

## Partnerships

There are a variety of external not-for-profit organizations that support school food. Each partnership has been independently created by schools, and many are dependent on annual grants.

- **BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Program** provides deliveries of fresh fruit and vegetables to almost all our schools, and milk to many elementary schools. These are distributed by school staff as snacks for students during the day. Each year, individual schools must apply for this support.
- **Breakfast Club of Canada** provides grants to several schools to purchase food, including coupons for eggs and gift cards to grocery stores. Much of their funding comes from Walmart fundraising drives.
- **Food banks** often provide free food to schools when they have surplus to their needs. Courtenay Elementary and Cumberland Community School both work closely with their respective food banks. Food banks also assist with aggregation and delivery of hampers.
- **Backpack Buddies** is a relatively new program that provides bags of non-perishable food to go home with students on weekends. The bags are pre-packed and arrive at schools Friday and are distributed to students who require them
- **Vancouver Sun Adopt-a-School** Program is a grant opportunity that about half of our schools receive. It provides up to \$5000 for school food or community activities.
- **Bread of Life Food Share** is a Food Bank that runs in the Black Creek and Merville communities. They donate food to Miracle Beach Elementary on most Wednesdays throughout the school year. The food consists mostly of sandwiches and bread. Often including gluten free bread. This year they have been given \$5000 to help support this ongoing service.
- **LUSH Valley** is a local non-profit organization that for over 20 years, has been a catalyst for food-related projects and an advocate for community food security. The organization is devoted to helping the Comox Valley community gain food-systems tools, engage in just and resilient local food systems, and receive equitable access to nourishing food. LUSH has collaborated with the Comox Valley School District for many years to support the Healthy Student Meals Program, the Good Food Box Program, Salad Bar Support, and a Hot Meals Program. In the past, LUSH Valley has also run the Young Cooks Program and supported school gardens. LUSH Valley

aggregates and distributes about 770 meal kits for the Healthy Student Meals Program annually which serves approximately 27 000 portions. The Good Food Boxes provide fresh fruit, vegetables, and eggs to 300 school district family households every week and 2 800 boxes a year. LUSH Valley aggregates local food and pantry staples that schools can order through a custom order service for salad bar programs. Finally, LUSH Valley also provides made-from scratch hot meals that are delivered in bulk or individual servings to schools.

## Parents

Parents across the district are obviously the largest provider of school meals. They either pack them at home or purchase them through school cafeterias, hot lunch programs, or salad bars. In consultation with DPAC representatives, parents are wanting the Feeding Futures support to ensure that schools can support families who require it in a stigma-free system and provide healthy local food. Parents who usually pack a lunch at home for their children appreciate the hot lunch or salad bar days as an affordable alternative. The DPAC representatives were also closely involved in these programs and see a need for central coordination of these programs. It is a challenge to consistently rely on volunteer parents to coordinate and run salad bars and hot lunches.

## Unique practices

There are some schools and programs that do not fit the “most schools” category in how they provide food to students.

- Glacier View alternate school serves approximately 170 students in grades 7-12 who have come from other schools around the district. They have a converted classroom set up as a teaching kitchen and for making soup, snacks, and lunches. It is run by EAs, and food is offered free to all students.
- Rural Schools such as Miracle Beach, Hornby Island, and Denman Island have challenges of transportation, sourcing local and infrastructure issues such as 3-phase power on Hornby
- Navigate online and Heartwood learners are a challenge to support as funding has not traditionally covered these students although there is often significant need for support to these rural and remote learning environments and families.

## Recommendations

We have found that the school district is currently doing an excellent job in providing healthy food options to students and families. The staff and volunteers involved should be commended for their commitment and dedication to making Comox Valley School welcoming places for all. We are close to meeting the 20% target, and we should focus on improving our coordination, efficiency, and quality of the programs. Our recommendations are:

### Staffing

The Feeding Futures mandate allows for 1.0 FTE staffing for a school food coordinator and other staffing at each school. Some of the skills required are leadership capacity, understanding of school systems, knowledge of food processes, budgeting, ministry reporting, and coordinating with community resources. We recommend immediate steps to hire or appoint:

- **0.5 FTE school administrator** time allotted to overseeing school-related aspects of Feeding Futures, responsible for creating a vision and mission for school food, supporting schools, supervision of staff budgeting, staffing, attending provincial and regional meetings, communication between schools and community, and completing the required reports to District and Ministry. This could be filled by an expression of interested process.
- **0.5 FTE food coordinator** hired or contracted to manage sourcing, production, and delivery of food to students.
- **1-2 hours of CUPE** staffing per day for each school to prepare and/or distribute food to students to be added hours for our current CUPE staff members. This will be dependent on the needs and demographics of each school.

### Centralizing food production, procurement, and delivery

For those schools who do not have the capacity, staffing, or space, the district should contract out the production and delivery of healthy food. Using Feeding Futures funds, we recommend contracting an external organization or organizations to provide the following services:

- Purchase and aggregate food for schools with a priority for BC grown and produced foods
- Deliver snack and breakfast supplies to all schools that request it, including StrongStart centers
- Deliver pre-made lunches to schools that require them, initial planning to cover 20% of student lunches daily and adjust as needed
- Increase support for the Indigenous Education Healthy Student Meal Program (soup program) with ingredients and recipes delivered weekly to all schools.
- Provide an expanded healthy fresh food hamper for families as requested by families and schools. Provide flexible and barrier-free pick-up options for families. Multiple access points for families to sign-up for support including self-identified or through school referral
- Provide “take home” family meals, fresh or frozen, that schools can provide to families if requested
- Provide flexibility in dietary options such as vegetarian, vegan, GF if needed



### **Supporting best practices and unique schools**

There is not a one-size-fits-all system our district could implement to satisfy all school food needs. Due to the differences in facilities, location, and current practices, each school should be consulted about the best way to support them. Some schools need centralized food preparation, some might need coordination and shopping. A district food coordinator can support these schools by creating consistent, barrier and stigma-free access to food, ensuring schools are following healthy food guidelines, and creating a tracking system to maintain that 30% of food is local to BC. Every school community also has unique socio-economic requirements and the number of meals provided for each school would be determined by student and family needs so that the 20% of students supported would be averaged over the district.

### **Supporting BC and local food**

The target given by Feeding Futures is that 30% of the food provided be grown or processed in BC. We have an abundance of local farmers and producers in and around the Comox Valley, and the new coordinators should work closely with these producers to source local foods and distribute them in a coordinated way to our schools.

### **Important Considerations moving forward**

The Feeding Futures program and leadership team should consider the following important factors:

- Removing stigma for students and families receiving food and support
- Minimizing waste and the environmental impact of food storage, delivery, and packaging
- Improving systems of identifying students in need of support
- Recognition of Indigenous connections to culture, community, land, and language through food and promoting local Indigenous foods and traditional food processing methods
- Ensuring food education and healthy living concepts are incorporated into the delivery of food services
- Continue to collaborate with PACs and hot lunch providers to ensure students have barrier-free access to school meals.

### **Keeping the community engaged**

Because of the complexity of the challenges involved in Feeding Futures, a working group should be led by and support the district administrator to define the values, vision, and missions of Feeding Futures in the district to continue to improve our processes and structures. This working group could be led by a district coordinator and involve school staff, community leaders, indigenous leaders, and parents. Our community has a strong history of engagement with local not-for profits, local farms, and interested citizens and parents. With Feeding Futures resources, we can build upon the collaboration and interest that has already supported our school food programs.

## Feeding Futures at a Glance

The district was given 1.14 M in Feeding Futures grants from the Provincial Government, which will continue for 2 more school years. The key ideas behind the funding are to support food in a barrier-free way for the approximately 20% of students who are facing food insecurity with at least 30% food coming from BC producers.

Yolanda Lehton and Kyle Timms were tasked with completing a “district food scan” during the Fall to determine how to best allocate Feeding Futures Funds. They visited every school facility and program and met with principals and other staff, as well as community school societies and external groups like LUSH Valley and DPAC. They found:

- Approximately 1400 free meals, (approximately 16% of the district) are given out daily in our schools every day and a variety of paid food programs running as well.
- Each school has created their own system organically over many years, each designed to best support their community with the resources available.
- Many students and families can access food to take home through hampers, backpacks, and pantries
- Weekly soup, hot lunch and salad bar programs augment daily food provided
- Partnerships like community school societies and LUSH Valley are integral to feeding students

Some of the issues to be addressed moving forward are:

- Increasing and ensuring the nutritional quality of food in schools
- Improving coordination and inefficiency in food procurement and prioritizing the amount of BC produced food
- School staffing to support food services and delivery
- Identifying students and families requiring support
- More thorough tracking and reporting on funds spent and food provided to schools
- Creating a unified vision and mission for school food, and coordinate ongoing consultation with schools, parents, and community partners

The following recommendations come from the scan:

- Expression of Interest for approximately **0.5 FTE school administrator** responsible for creating a vision and mission for school food, supporting schools, supervision of staff, budgeting, attending provincial and regional meetings, communication between schools and community, and completing the required reports to the District and Ministry.
- Post a new position of approximately **0.5 FTE food coordinator** supervised by the district administrator, to support implementation of food services around the district, and work directly with schools and outside agencies.

- Support schools to meet the feeding futures mandate of 20% students and families supported and 30% BC produced products while giving schools the option to access a centralized system
- Put out a **request for proposals** to provide centralized food aggregation to schools in a variety of ways:
  - Shopping and food procurement for all schools, including “soup program”
  - Preparation of school lunches for some schools as required
  - Preparation of “good food” hampers for more families to access
  - Twice-weekly delivery of groceries, prepared lunches, and family hampers
- Provide **funding for 1-2 hours per day of support staffing** at each school to organize, prepare, and distribute food to students
- Continued conversations between the district and partner groups to assess the program annually and development of capacity within the district staff

## Proposed Feeding Futures Budget 2023 – 2026

*\*Note: These are rough estimates to be managed and adjusted by the school district administrator appointed to lead Feeding Futures*

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
<b>2023 - 2026 Feeding Futures allocation</b>	<b>\$ 1,140,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,140,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,140,000</b>
<b>BRIDGING (amount allocated in September 2023 before scan)</b>			
Amount already allocated to schools	\$ 349,204	\$ -	\$ -
Community school societies	\$ 148,000	\$ -	\$ -
External Providers	\$ 169,000	\$ -	\$ -
Administration	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -
<b>January 2023- June 2026 (estimate)</b>			
<b>Food and services</b> for supporting schools continuing with current plans	\$ 120,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000
<b>Food and services</b> provided by external contract	\$ 225,000	\$ 460,000	\$ 460,000
1.0 FTE School Administrator	\$ 35,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000
0.5 FTE Food coordinator	\$ 20,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
Holdback		\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
In-school staffing (1-2 hours per day depending on school)	\$ 30,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
Supplies and replacement of equipment	\$ 18,796	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
Community School societies	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,140,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,140,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,140,000</b>

# Feeding Futures

District Scan 2023-24

Yolanda Lehton and Kyle Timms

1

## Provincial Feeding Futures Mandate

- 1.14 Million dollars a year with a three-year commitment
- Feed the students who need it most
- Stigma-free, flexible and respect student privacy
- Increase the nutrition of food provided
- Where possible use B.C. grown/produced
- Funded flexible staffing for a full-time equivalent School Food Coordinator

2

## Highlights of the scan

1400 free meals a day

Healthy soup and salad bar programs

Successful partnerships

Caring staff and volunteers

Everyone welcome!

3

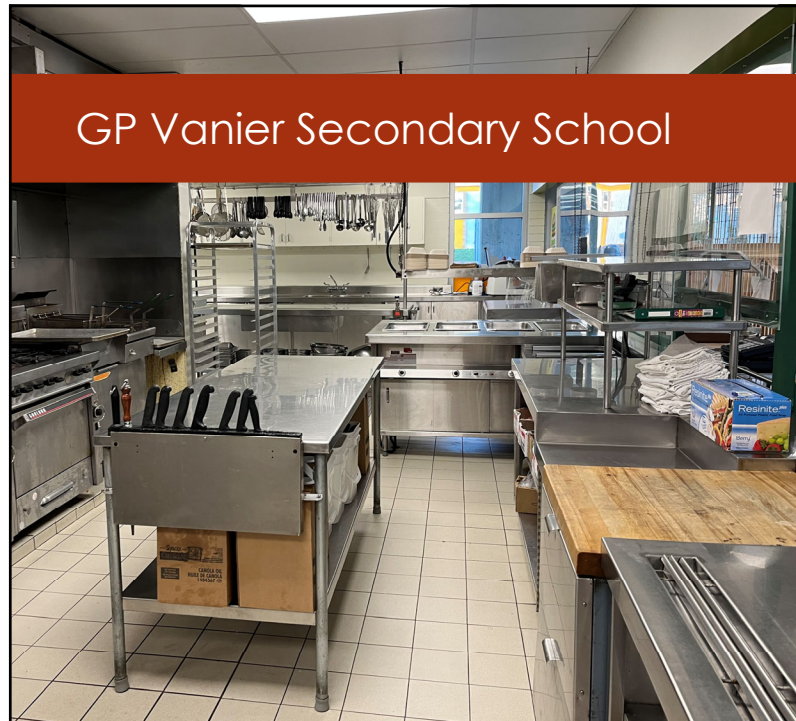
## Cumberland Community School



- Meals available to order every day – up to 600 students a day
- Less than ideal kitchen space
- Most parents pay, many are free
- Community School model
- Food services worker
- Sustainable food delivery

4

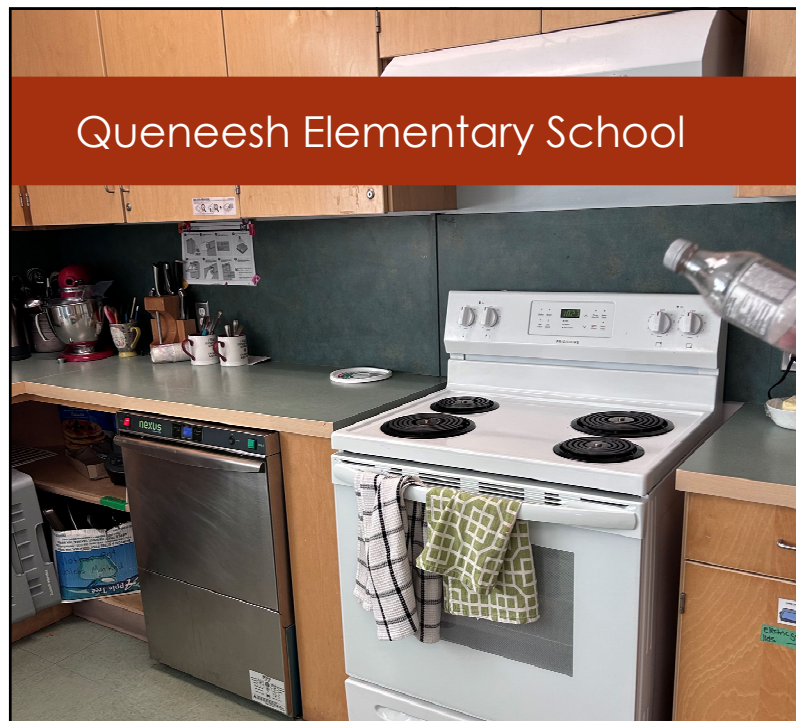




## GP Vanier Secondary School

- Diverse service options in and out of "cafeteria"
- System reduces stigma and barriers
- Serve 195 free meals a day

5



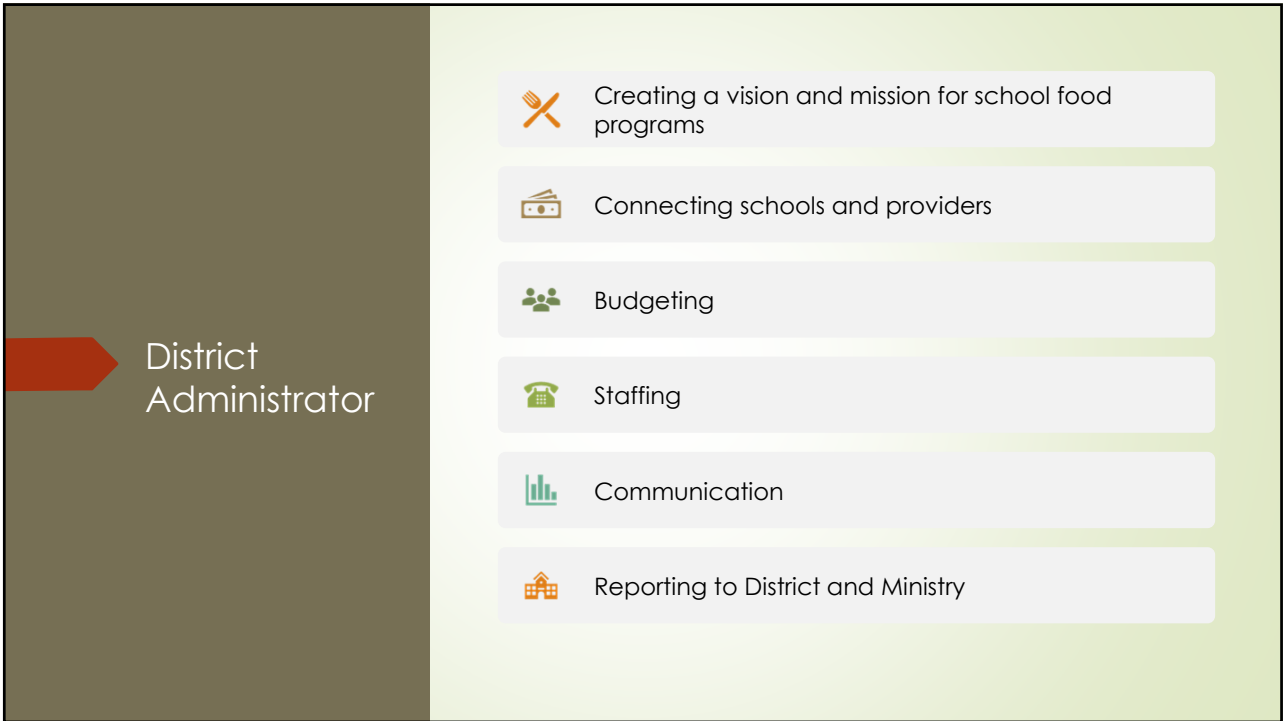
## Queneesh Elementary School

- A family-style breakfast
- Fresh free lunches to go
- 63 free meals per day
- Indigenous healthy soup program made WITH classes
- Hot lunch from PAC weekly

6



7



8



A presentation slide with a dark brown left sidebar and a light green right main area. The sidebar contains a red arrow pointing right and the text 'District food coordinator'. The main area contains a bulleted list of three items.

 District food coordinator

- Managing the sourcing, production, and delivery of food to all schools
- Building community connections
- Working with First Nations and Indigenous partners.

9



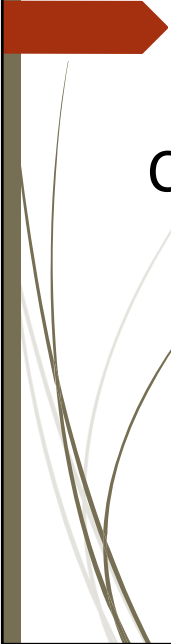
A presentation slide with a dark brown left sidebar and a light green right main area. The sidebar contains a red arrow pointing right and the text 'School-based food staffing'. The main area contains a bulleted list of five items.

 School-based food staffing

- All schools have found their way so far and have systems that work for their unique community
  - 1-2 hours at each school
  - Ordering and sourcing food
  - Making connections with kids and families
  - Food delivery to students
- A coordinator will help those schools improve quantity, quality, and efficiency

10





## Centralizing food production, procurement, and delivery

- Food aggregation
- Delivering prepared meals and supplies to schools
- Indigenous healthy food program
- Family healthy food hampers
- Provide “take home” family meals

11



## Supporting BC and local food

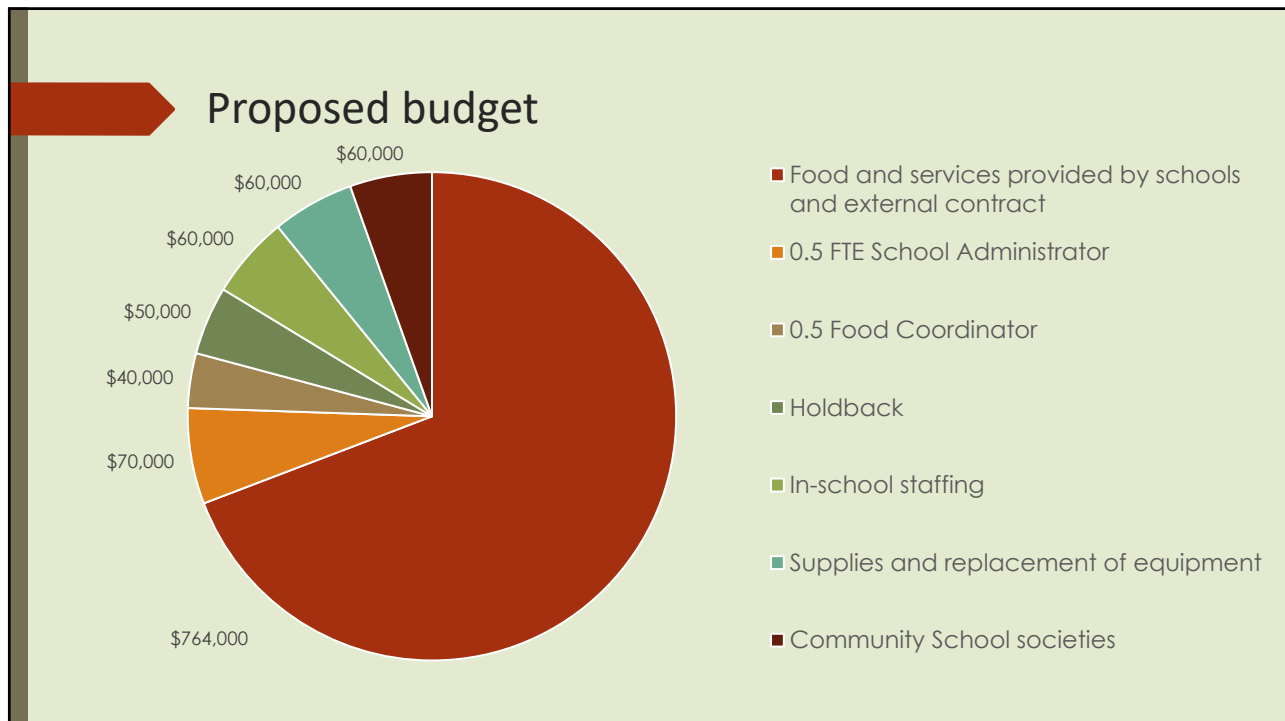
- The Province has set a target of 30% BC grown or processed food
- Sourcing locally improves quality of relationships and food
- Collaborating with local farmers and producers

12

## Keeping the Community Engaged

- Include Indigenous leaders and K'omoks First nation
- Maintain and capitalize on the energy of community partners
  - Parents,
  - PACs,
  - Community school societies,
  - food banks,
  - local farmers,
  - school food advocates

13




14



## Next Steps

-  Filling the position(s) of district administrator and coordinator
-  Communication with school communities
-  Request proposals for external provider(s) of food services

15



## Thank you for your time and support of feeding our learners.

16

## Open Committee of the Whole Meeting Report to the Board January 16, 2024

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### In Attendance at Meeting:

#### Trustees:

Michelle Waite, Board Chair  
Chelsea McCannel-Keene, Trustee  
Cristi May Sacht, Trustee  
Janice Caton, Trustee  
Sarah Jane Howe, Trustee  
Shannon Aldinger, Trustee

#### Staff:

Dr. Russell Horswill, Acting Secretary Treasurer  
Dr. Jeremy Morrow, Superintendent

Regrets: Susan Leslie, Vice-Chair

Recording Secretary: Marlene Leach, Senior Executive Assistant

---

### 1. Welcome

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

### 2. Call to Order

Board Chair, Michelle Waite called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

### 3. Adoption of Agenda

*THAT the agenda be approved as presented.*

[Howe/May Sacht]

**CARRIED**

### 4. Information Item - None

### 5. Presentations/Delegations

Lake Park Society - Genevieve Burdett, Executive Director, and Stuart Higgs

Pages 1-12

Teacher Librarian Presentation - Lila Armstrong, Teacher Librarian & Sarah Coull,  
Teacher Librarian

Pages 13-20

Dr. Vivian Collyer, Associate Superintendent introduced the Teacher Librarians.

Technology Sustainability - Josh Porter, Director of IT

Pages 21-29

The Committee thanked each presenter group and asked questions.

The presentations can be viewed at:

<https://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/committee-of-the-whole/>

**6. Adjournment – 8:15 pm**

*THAT the meeting be adjourned.*

[Aldinger/Howe]

**CARRIED**



1

## OVERVIEW

In this presentation we hope to:

- Introduce Lake Park Society and our school programs,
- Highlight our alignment with SD71's strategic objectives,
- Dream big for future collaborations.



2



---

## LAKE PARK SOCIETY

- Mission: To create wonder and connection through outdoor experiences
- Values:
  - Inclusivity
  - Community
  - Nature appreciation & education
  - Ecological stewardship



3



4

## SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### FOREST FRIENDS

- Grade 1
- On shore, forest-based
- Focus on nature connection, ecological literacy and forest ecosystems



5



**“I loved the depth of content, the respectful First Nations components, the ties to the land, and environmental stewardship. Thank you for this powerful learning day.”**

**“**

— Colleen Devlin, Ecole Puntledge Park Elementary School

6



## SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### FOREST FRIENDS

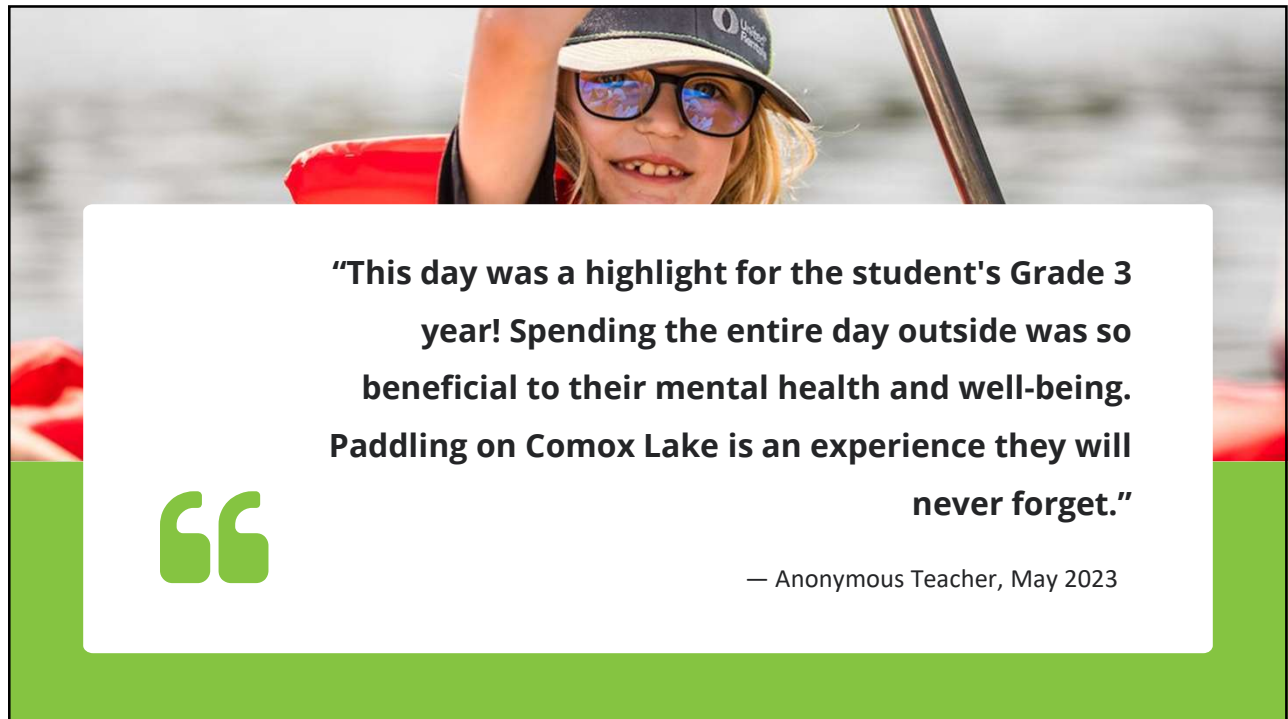
- Grade 1
- On shore, forest-based
- Focus on nature connection, ecological literacy and forest ecosystems

### WATER KEEPERS

- Grade 3
- “voyageur style” big canoes
- Focus on watershed stewardship, Indigenous knowledge and storytelling



7



8

## SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### FOREST FRIENDS

- Grade 1
- On shore, forest-based
- Focus on nature connection, ecological literacy and forest ecosystems

### WATER KEEPERS

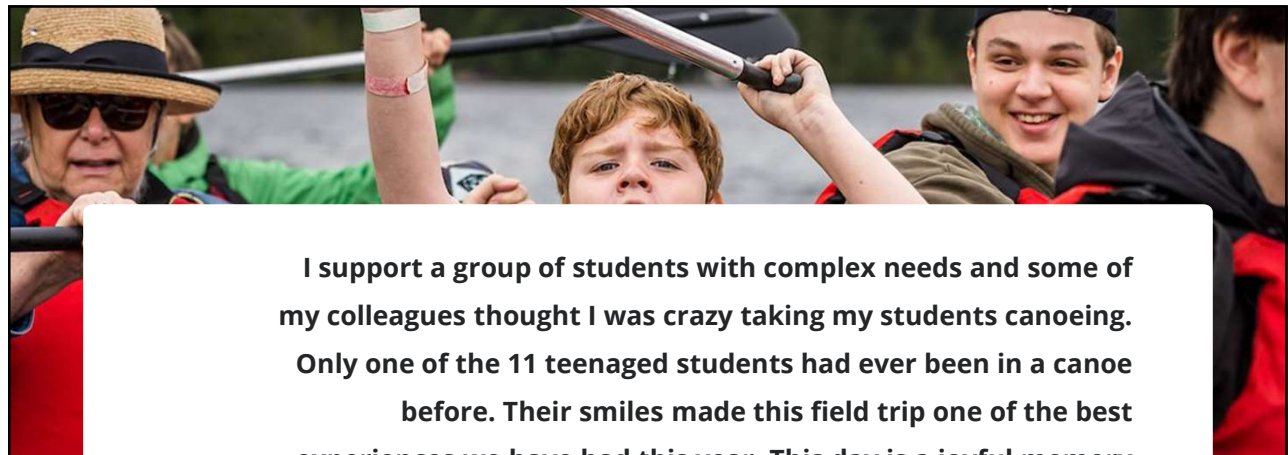
- Grade 3
- “voyageur style” big canoes
- Focus on watershed stewardship, Indigenous knowledge and storytelling

### FLOATING CLASSROOM

- Elementary and secondary
- “voyageur style” big canoes
- Flexible content depending on student needs



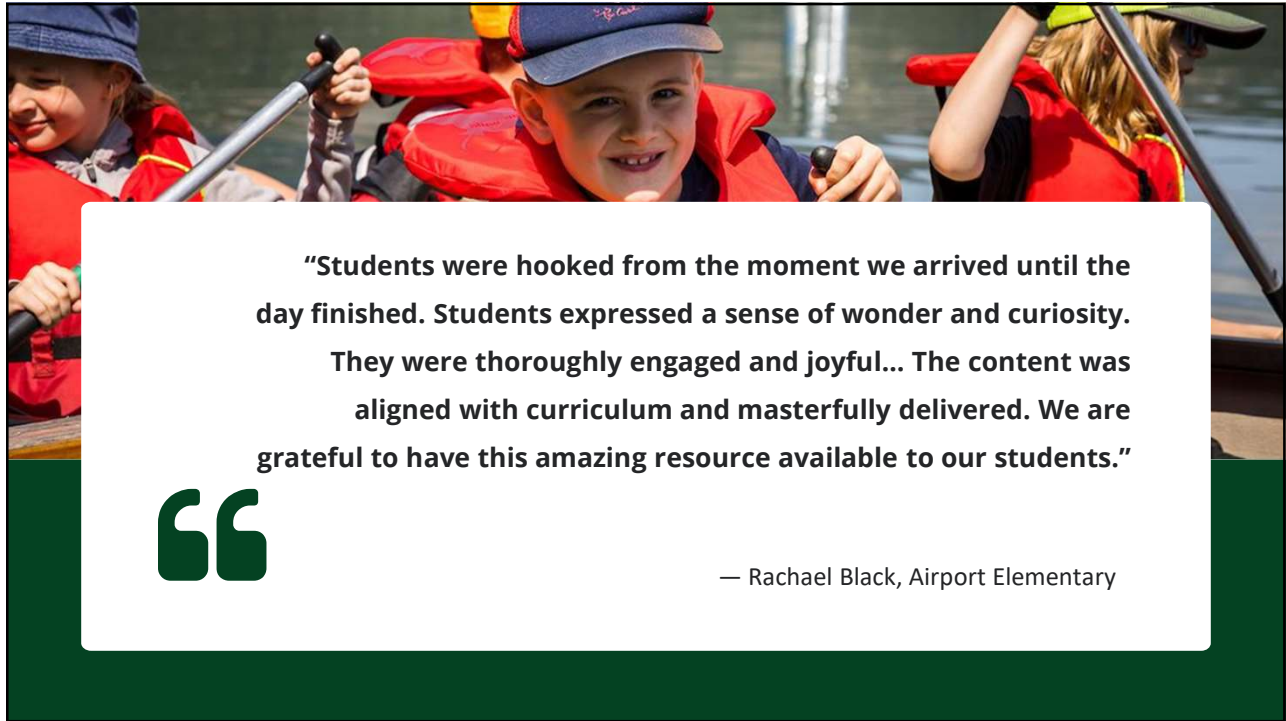
9



**I support a group of students with complex needs and some of my colleagues thought I was crazy taking my students canoeing. Only one of the 11 teenaged students had ever been in a canoe before. Their smiles made this field trip one of the best experiences we have had this year. This day is a joyful memory we will talk about for years to come.**

— Sarah Dakin, Lake Trail Community School

10



11

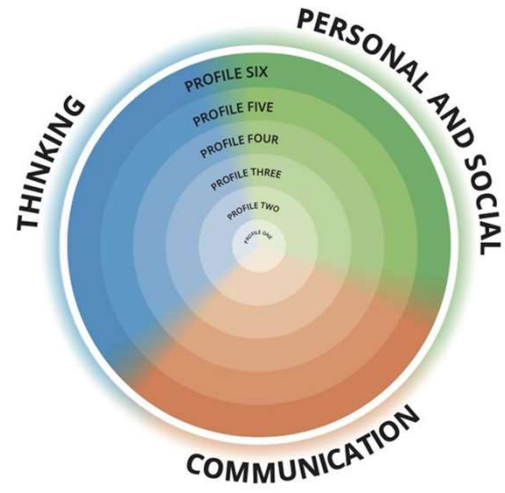


12



## PEDAGOGY & VALUES

- BC Curriculum aligned



<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies>

13

## PEDAGOGY & VALUES

- BC Curriculum aligned
- Oriented to Indigenous pedagogy and epistemology

**FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING**

Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the family, the community, the land, the spirit, and the ancestors.

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, reciprocity, reciprocal relationships, and a sense of purpose).

Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.

Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

14

## PEDAGOGY & VALUES

- BC Curriculum aligned
- Oriented to Indigenous pedagogy and epistemology
- Coordinated with community
  - Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre
  - Strathcona Park Lodge
  - Project Watershed
  - Powell River Outdoor Learning Centre



15

## 2023 SUMMARY

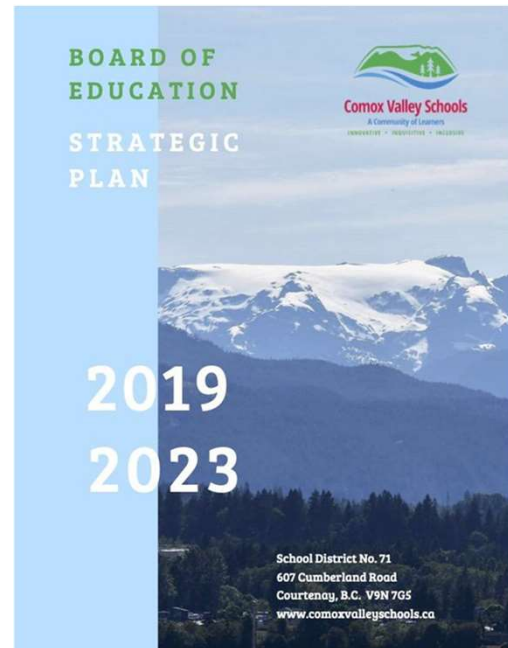
- Provided full-day programs to 38 different classes from 19 different schools
- 36 of the 38 classes received subsidies
- \$15,000 in subsidies provided
- Over \$50,000 in subsidies provided since 2015



16

## ALIGNMENT WITH SD71 STRATEGIC PLAN

- Fostering real world connections with learning
- Deepen integration of indigenous ways of knowing
- Foster relationships with community partners
- Foster environmental stewardship
- Physical health and mental well-being



17

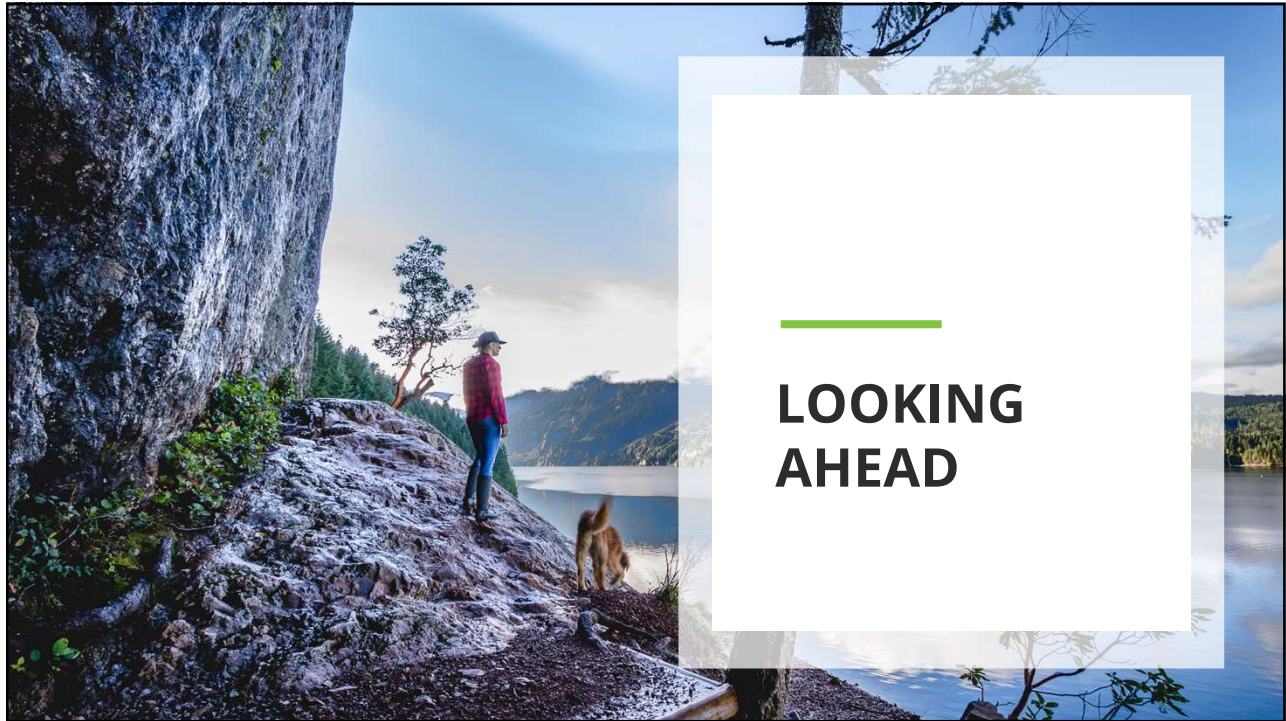
## SUPPORT

- Verbal support
- Written support:
  - Letter of Support for BC Gaming Grant
  - Named in SD71 strategic plan
- Transportation support



18





19



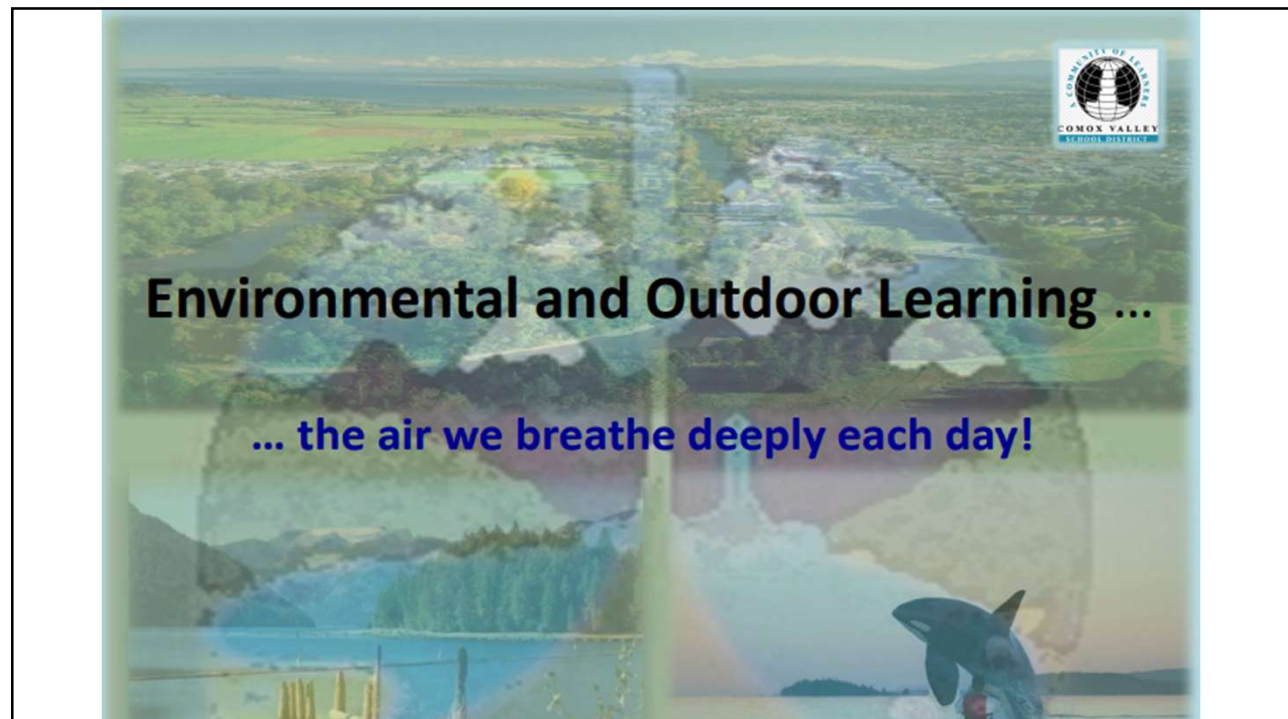
20

## POSSIBILITIES

- Qathet School District (SD47) funds schools for the following:
  - Two visits to Powell Lake Outdoor Learning Centre per class, per year
  - Third visit (teacher-led) with pre-developed curriculum
  - Includes bussing costs



21



22



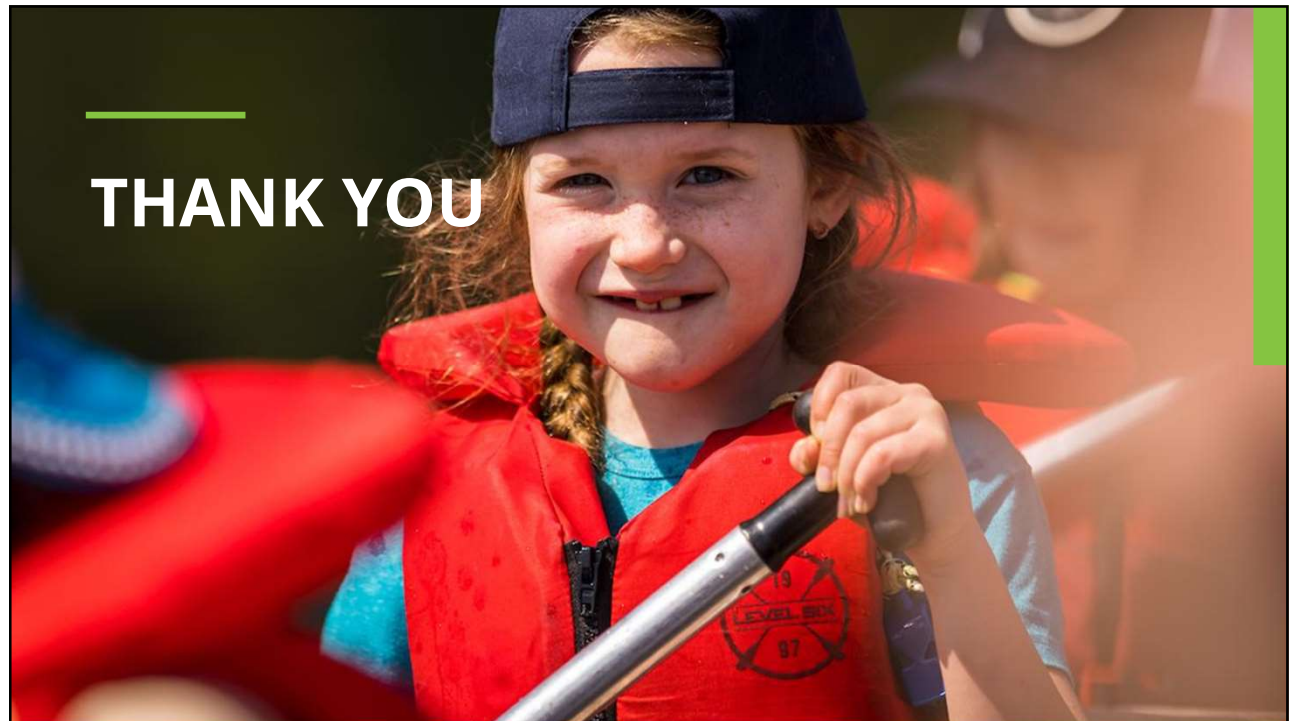
## What are the risks?

(the board must consider in making any decisions about this program)

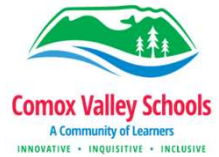
- Is it possible / realistic to embed the funding needs for EOL into the budget over the long term?
- Will we find the champion(s) that can lead us forward?
- Will we add undue and unsupported workload to some teachers as we roll out EOL?
- Will this review process set up untenable expectations on the School District?

*If we do not act now, our local society and community members will lose trust in our ability to fully educate our youth and to model respect for the land and all peoples.*

23



24



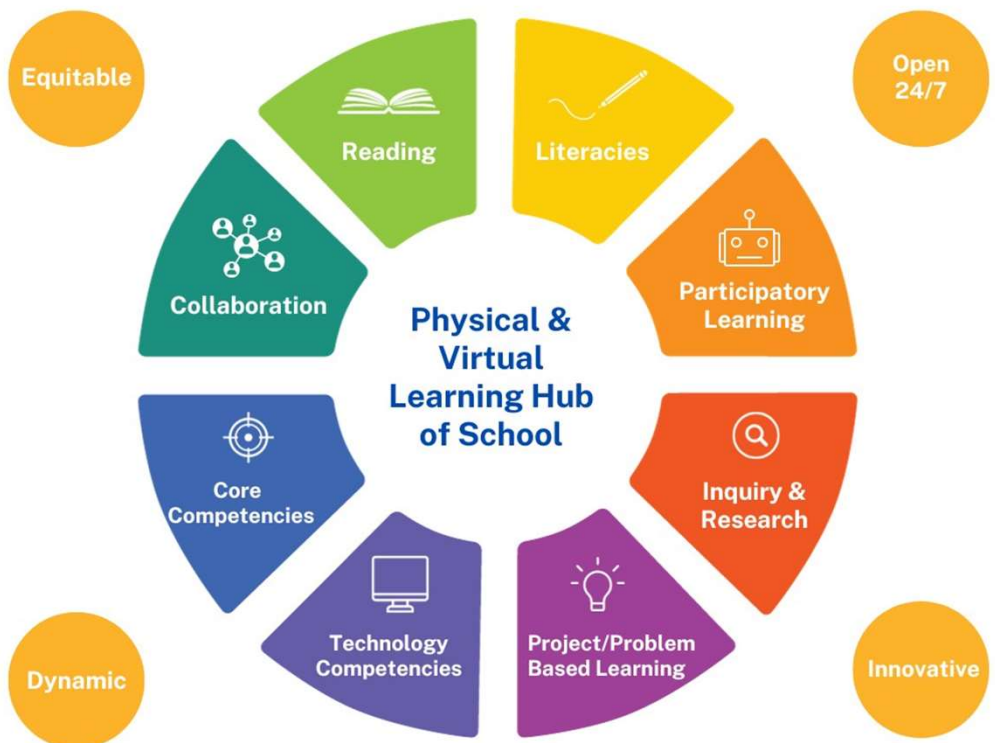
# Teacher Librarians Supporting Student Success

A Vision for Library Learning Commons in SD71

Lila Armstrong and Sarah Coull

1

**What is a  
Library  
Learning  
Commons  
(LLC)?**



2





## Participatory Learning in LLCs Across SD71

3



## Participatory Learning in LLCs Across SD71

4





5



6

## What guides our practice?



7

## Continuous growth model



Themes		Growth Indicators				
		EXPLORING	EMERGING	EVOLVING	ESTABLISHED	LEADING INTO THE FUTURE
<b>Literacy Leadership</b>	How might the LLC support and model literacy development within the whole school community?		Library Learning Commons (LLC) leadership team supports traditional literacy (reading, writing, listening, speaking).	LLC leadership team fosters multiple literacies (information, media, digital).	LLC leadership team designs and applies learning experiences to nurture all literacies.	LLC leadership team leads the school community in designing learning for transliteracy.
				SEE IT IN ACTION	SEE IT IN ACTION	SEE IT IN ACTION

8



## Continuous growth model



### District Administration and District LLC Program Leader Partnerships

How might a system-wide approach to LLC development benefit the whole district learning community?



### Teacher Collaborative Role

How might we work together with teachers to maximize the potential of the LLC for teaching and learning?



### Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being (First Nation, Métis and Inuit Ways, Traditional Skills and Knowledge)

How might we build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect?



### Literacy Partners

How might the LLC work collaboratively with others to advance literacy goals within the school and district?

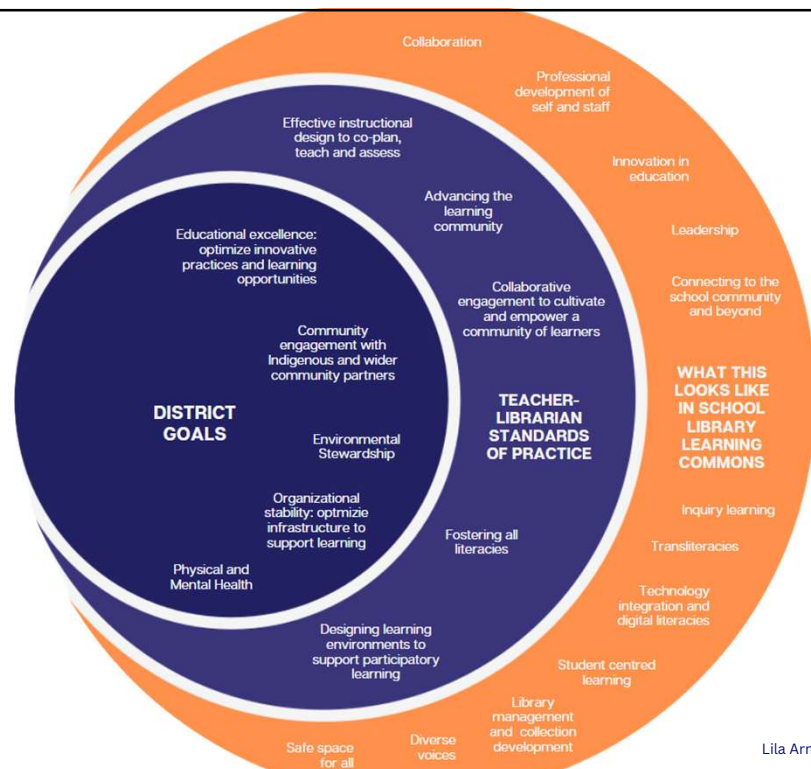


### Designing for Student Well Being in the LLC

How might we ensure the emotional, physical, mental and academic safety of students within the LLC?

9

## How does our work support District goals?



Lila Armstrong 2024

10



## Foundations for School Library Learning Commons in Canada: A Framework for Success



11

## Equity for students



12

## SD71 Teacher-Librarians



Airport Elementary .4  
Aspen Elementary .6  
**Kari Mathew**

Courtenay Elementary .5  
Royston Elementary .5  
**Rick Appel**

Brooklyn Elementary .7  
NIDES Navigate .2  
**Sarah Coull**

Huband Elementary .7  
Hornby Island Elementary .2  
**Nicola Kuhn**

Lake Trail Middle .8  
Denman Island Elementary .2  
**Tonya Lowe**

Arden Elementary .5  
Miracle Beach Elementary .5  
**Erika Spearman**

École Robb Road .8  
Valley View Elementary .7  
**Emily Pontus**  
**Lesley Johnson**

Cumberland Community 1.0	École Puntledge Park Elementary 1.0	GP Vanier Secondary 1.0	Highland Secondary 1.0	Learning Resource Centre 1.0	Mark Isfeld Secondary 1.2	Queenesah Elementary 1.0
<b>Denise Anderson</b>	<b>Kim Marks</b>	<b>Ken Errico</b>	<b>Tami Jerome</b>	<b>Joan Pearce</b> <b>Lila Armstrong</b>	<b>Lila Armstrong</b> <b>Tracy Richards</b>	<b>Deb Gardner</b>

13

## What Changes Might Move Us Forward Together?



Full Time  
Teacher-  
Librarians at  
Every Site



District  
Leadership



Strong  
Policy



Communication  
Strategy in place

14

To be a librarian is not to be neutral,  
or passive, or waiting for a question.  
It is to be a radical positive change  
agent within your community.

~ R. David Lankes

# Information Technology Sustainability

January 16, 2024

## PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

- Acceptable Use
- Security
- Hardware Refresh
- PAC/School Funded Technology
- Technology Equity
- Software
- Feature Events
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Future Considerations

## Acceptable Use

- All users of SD71 technology systems are bound to this policy (AP 140)
- Includes use of personal technology (BYOD)
  - Additionally included in AP 145



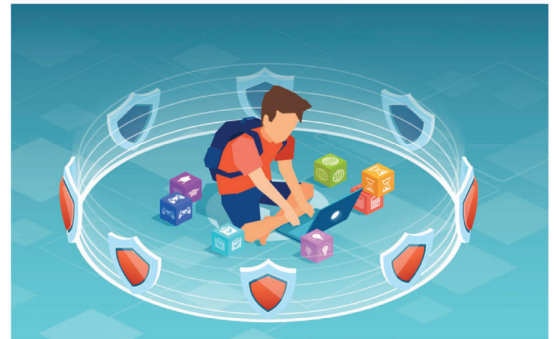
## SECURITY

- Next Gen Firewalls
- Training & Testing
- Grade 4 teacher training for digital literacy



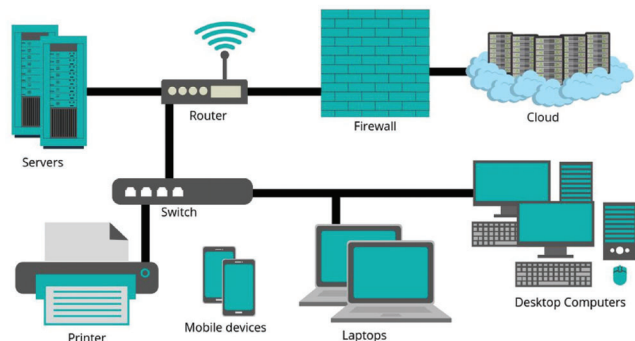
## SAFETY

- Automatic SafeSearch
- Monitoring tools for chat and email
- erase BC reporting tool
- Web filtering for all networks



## IT CAPITAL REFRESH PLAN

- Printers, projectors, network
- 8 year planning model
- Staying current
- Growth
- Equity



## PAC/SCHOOL FUNDED TECHNOLOGY



- One-time funds (e.g. grants)
- Not part of IT capital refresh
- Can lead to inequity between schools
- Software and maintenance is additional

## TECHNOLOGY EQUITY



- 3:1 ratio target
- School/one-time funded equipment not included
- Educators provided laptop
- Standard classroom equipment
  - Interactive display (TV or projector)
  - Teacher laptop
- Wireless network coverage & access

## SOFTWARE

- Standard suite
  - Microsoft 365
  - Brightspace LMS
  - MyEducation BC
  - Portfolio
- Procured centrally with a district-lens
  - Equity
  - Industry-standard software

## APP/SERVICE VETTING

- App vetting protocol
- Approved Apps List
- Recommended Apps
- Committee review





- 



## <Hackergal>





# RESOURCES

**LEARN71** Comox Valley Schools

HOME COMOX VALLEY SCHOOLS

Home You are here: Home

Type here to search for resources... Find

Assessment & Reporting

Curriculum Resources

Mental Health & Wellness

Integrating Technology

LRC/Library Learning Commons

Indigenous Resources

Careers

Inclusion & Diversity

Minecraft Challenge

Research Databases

Assistive Technology

Enviro. & Outdoor Ed.

Kara's Techie Corner

MyEducationBC Resources

MySite Help

Learning at Home

**ShareEdBC**

- Classroom resources
- Parent/Guardian resources
- Collaborative approach

# FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS



- AI
- Continued Growth
- Equity
- Security



# Questions?



**INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL TRUSTEE REPORT  
JANUARY 2024**

---

The Indigenous Education Council had a full day working session on January 18, 2024.

Much discussion was generated regarding the recent changes to the *School Act* requiring all boards to establish an Indigenous Education Council (IEC) in their school district, ensuring Indigenous people have input into decisions affecting Indigenous students.

This legislation was collaboratively developed with FNESC and reflects commitments in BCTEA and the Declaration Act Action Plan, including actions 1.6 (LEAs), 4.3 (IECs) and 4.4 (school of choice).

The changes to the *School Act* also state that membership and function of IECs will recognize and reflect the local First Nations in whose territories the board operates. "IECs will support boards in the provision of ongoing, comprehensive and equitable education and support services for Indigenous students, including providing Indigenous perspectives for the benefit of all students, and advice on and approving the board's spending plans and reports in relation to Indigenous education-targeted funds."

Also included in the Declaration Act Plan, is the new school-of-choice provision which will enable First Nations to decide which school First Nations students who live on reserve, self-governing or Treaty Lands, will attend.

Action 1.6 regarding Local Education Agreements speaks to the importance of the agreement being much more than a purchase of services; it is to establish a foundation for a positive relationship between First Nation and Boards of Education. Comox Valley Schools signed a new, comprehensive Local Education Agreement in August of 2022.

Other topics discussed were:

- Annual Indigenous Education Recognition Ceremony
- Student voice
- Indigenous Support Worker remuneration
- Roaming IEC representatives
- IEC Elections
- New Associate Superintendent (Indigenous Education) interview process

Respectfully,

Susan Leslie,  
IEC Liaison  
Vice Chair Comox Valley Schools