

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING AGENDA**  
**Tuesday, March 12, 2024**  
**7:00 pm**

A copy of the Public Board Meeting Agenda is available on the School District website at:  
<http://www.comoxvalleyschools.ca>

Alternatively, copies are available on request from [marlene.leach@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:marlene.leach@sd71.bc.ca)

**Public Board Meetings are recorded and live streamed on the School District's YouTube channel.**

Question items regarding agenda items can be submitted to [boardmeetings@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:boardmeetings@sd71.bc.ca).  
As per Board Procedural Bylaw, questions relating to any matter connected with the business of the current board agenda may be put to the chair. The chair may respond or redirect to another board member or executive officer of the board for response.

**1. Call to Order**

**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 March 12, 2024 Board Meeting Agenda as presented.*

**3. Board Meeting Minutes**

Pages 1-5

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) adopt the February 27, 2024, Regular Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.*

**4. Unfinished Business - None**

**5. Record of In-Camera Meeting Minutes**

Page 6

- February 27, 2024 – Regular In-Camera Meeting

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

Page 7

## 7. Presentations / Delegations

- i. **Critical Incident Response** – Briefing Note  
Sean Lamoureux, Associate Superintendent and Tara Ryan, Vice Principal,  
Inclusive Education

Page 8

### **Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) receive the Critical Incidents briefing note as presented.*

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

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

TOPIC: Strategic Plan  
DATE: April 09, 2024  
TIME: 7:00 pm  
LOCATION: SBO, Board Room

## 9. Strategic Direction

### **A. Superintendent**

- i. Superintendent District Report – Verbal Update
- ii. Feeding Futures District Scan Recommendations – Briefing Note and Presentation

Pages 9-30

### **Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) approve the Superintendent Recommendations contained herein.*

- iii. Three-Year District Calendar – Presentation
- iv. Strategic Plan - Verbal Update
- v. Volunteer Code of Conduct – for Information Only  
a) Updated AP 490 – Volunteers in District Schools  
b) Updated AP 490 Appendix A – Criminal Record Search - Volunteers  
c) Updated AP 490 Appendix B – Volunteer Code of Conduct

Pages 31-35

### **B. Secretary-Treasurer**

- i. 2024-25 Budget – Briefing Note

Page 36

### **Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) approve the budget timeline as outlined.*

**10. Board Standing Committee Reports**

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

**11. Board Business - None**

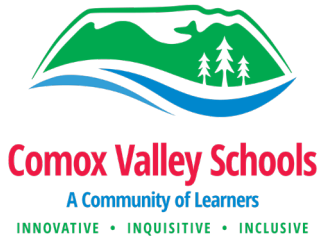
**12. Board Correspondence – None**

**13. Public Question Period to the Board – max. 15 minutes**

**14. Adjournment**

**Motion:**

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



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, February 27, 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  
Jennifer Nelson, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer  
Candice Hilton, Director of Finance  
Craig Sorochan, Manager of Communications

**Regrets:** None

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

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**1. Call to Order**

The Board Chair, Michelle Waite called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 February 27, 2024 Board Meeting Agenda as presented.*

*[Leslie/Aldinger]*

**CARRIED**

**3. Board Meeting Minutes**

Pages

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No.71 (Comox Valley) adopt the January 30, 2023, Regular Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.*

*[Howe/May Sacht]*

**CARRIED**

**4. Unfinished Business – None**

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

- January 30, 2024 – Regular In-Camera Meeting
- February 13, 2024 – Closed Committee of the Whole Meeting
- February 20, 2024 – Special Closed Committee of the Whole Meeting

**6. Board Chair’s Report – Written Report** Pages

The Board Chair reviewed the topics of her written report.

**7. Presentations / Delegations - None** Pages

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

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

**TOPIC:** TBD  
**DATE:** April 09, 2024  
**TIME:** 7:00 pm  
**LOCATION:** SBO, Board Room

**9. Strategic Direction**

**A. Superintendent**

**i. Superintendent District Report - Verbal Report**

- There have been many recent student accomplishments including athletics teams, improv students, Skills Canada participants, robotics students, and many actors for the upcoming musical, Something Rotten. Thank you to all the students and volunteers who donated their skills and time.
- Pink Shirt day tomorrow. A history of its establishment in Canada in 2007 by two Nova Scotian students was provided. This is an opportunity to reflect on the ways that we can make a positive difference, a call to action.
- March 1<sup>st</sup>, Staff Appreciation Day - deep gratitude for the amazing people that make up the SD71 team.
- Next week, Carrie McVeigh will be welcomed to the Secretary-Treasurer role. We extend deep appreciation to Dr. Russell Horswill who has been very supportive and helped our district through a time of change and transition. Thank you on behalf of myself and the Board of Education.

**B. Acting Secretary-Treasurer**

**i. Finance - Amended 2023/24 Operating Budget Bylaw**

**Motion 1:**

*THAT Amended Annual Budget and Bylaw 2023/24 be given first reading.*

*[May Sacht/Howe]*

**CARRIED**

**Motion 2:**

*THAT Amended Annual Budget and Bylaw 2023/24 be given second reading.*

*[Aldinger/Leslie]*

**CARRIED**

**Motion 3:**

*THAT in accordance with Section 68 (4) of the School Act, all three readings of Amended Annual Budget and Bylaw 2023/24 be given at tonight's meeting.*

*[McCannel-Keene/May Sacht]*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Motion 4:**

*THAT Amended Annual Budget and Bylaw 2023/24 be given third and final reading.*

*[Leslie/Aldinger]*

**CARRIED**

*The Acting Secretary-Treasurer provided a PowerPoint presentation to report on the amended and balanced budget and reviewed sections of the briefing note, including page 10, the Budget Bylaw document for the Board to approve at this meeting. He noted appreciation to the finance team who do a majority of the budget work.*

**ii. Capital – Major Project Status Update – Briefing Note**

The Acting Secretary-Treasurer reviewed the Director of Operation's briefing note with the Board.

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of receive the Capital Projects Update briefing note as information.*

*[Leslie/Aldinger]*

**CARRIED**

**iii. Policy – Public Interest Disclosures Act – Verbal Update**

- a. Public Interest Disclosure Act: Policy Toolkit
- b. Policy 27 – Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle Blower Protection)

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) approve the amendments to Board Policy 27 – Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle Blower Protection) as presented;*

*AND THAT the Board of Education receive as information changes to Administrative Procedure 403 – Public Interest Disclosure (Whistle Blower Protection) as presented.*

*[Howe/McCannel-Keene]*

**CARRIED**

Referring to the attachments, the Acting Secretary-Treasurer provided a verbal update on PID (Whistle Blower Protection) to the Board and the recommended changes to adjust the policy as Trustees are not considered staff under the legislation. Thus, the policy, previously approved in November 2023, had to be amended. The administrative procedure has been adjusted to reflect this change as well.

**10. Board Standing Committee Reports**

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

**11. Board Business**

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

Page

Vice Chair Leslie reviewed her written report with the Board.

**ii. BCSTA Advocacy to Increase Capital Funding to Retrofit Existing Buildings and Reduce GHG Emissions - Shannon Aldinger**

Pages

**Motion:**

*THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) approve and submit the proposed motion, as presented in the attachment, at the BCSTA Annual General Meeting April 18-21, 2024.*

*[Aldinger/May Sacht]*

**CARRIED**

Trustee Aldinger reviewed her recommended motion to present at the BCSTA Annual General Meeting. The Board provided their support and appreciated Trustee Aldinger's work and resources that were put together for this recommended motion.

**12. Board Correspondence - None**

**13. Public Question Period – max. 15 minutes**

There were not any questions.

**14. Meeting Adjourned – 7:42 pm**

**MOTION:**

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

*[McCannel-Keene/Aldinger]*

**CARRIED**

**Board Approved on:**

March 12, 2023

**Certified Correct:**

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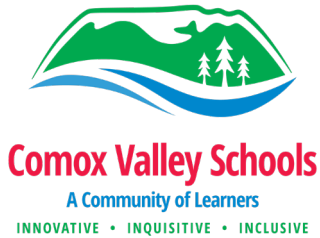
Carrie McVeigh  
Secretary-Treasurer

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Michelle Waite  
Board Chair

DRAFT





# Comox Valley Schools

School District No. 71  
Office of the Secretary Treasurer

## RECORD OF IN-CAMERA MEETINGS

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**TO:** Board of Education **DATE:** March 12, 2024  
**FROM:** Office of the 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:**

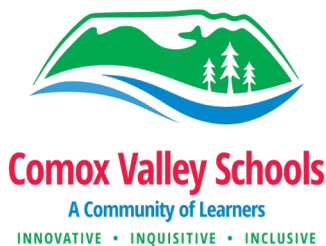
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#### **February 27, 2024 – Regular In-Camera Meeting**

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm and adjourned at 6:55 pm.

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I am pleased to present our report for March, a month marked by significant contributions and engagement within our school district.

Our journey towards a brighter future for Comox Valley Schools is underway, with our Strategic Plan Survey remaining open for feedback until March 14. This plan is our roadmap for the coming years, aiming to enhance educational experiences, support student well-being, and foster an environment of innovation and excellence. Your thoughts and insights are invaluable to us, ensuring our direction aligns with the community's aspirations and needs. We encourage everyone in our school community to contribute, helping shape the future of education in our district.

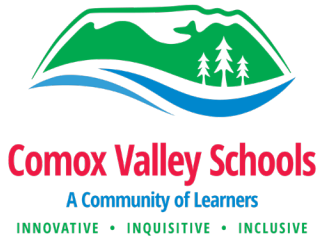
In our continuous effort to plan effectively for the success of our students and staff, we have released draft calendars for the next three school years. These drafts are a reflection of our commitment to educational excellence and operational efficiency, taking into account important dates, holidays, and professional development days. We invite your feedback on these proposed calendars, as your input is crucial in making decisions that best support our students' learning journey and our staff's professional growth.

Over the weekend, we celebrated the culmination of the District Musical, "Something Rotten!", a spectacular production that ran from March 5-9 at Highland Secondary. This comedic musical brought together students from across our district, showcasing their incredible talents and hard work. The success of this event is a testament to the dedication of our teachers, volunteers, and students, who together created an unforgettable experience for our community. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone involved for their passion and commitment to the arts.

As we approach the last two weeks of March, the anticipation for Spring Break grows. This period of rest and rejuvenation is a well-deserved break for our students, staff, and families, offering a chance to recharge before the final term of the academic year. We wish everyone a safe Spring Break, hoping it brings joy and relaxation to all.

March has been a month of engagement, reflection, and celebration. As we move forward, we remain committed to fostering an environment where every student can thrive, supported by the collective efforts of our dedicated staff and the valuable feedback from our community. Thank you for your ongoing support and involvement in Comox Valley Schools.

**Gilakas'la**



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**TO:** The Board of Education **DATE:** March 12, 2024  
**FROM:** Sean Lamoureux, Associate Superintendent and  
Tara Ryan, Vice Principal, Inclusive Education  
**RE:** **Critical Incidents**

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**Background**

School Districts never want to experience a critical incident; however, they need to be prepared for any event that negatively impacts the normal flow of a school's daily routines. The intent of the presentation is to introduce the Critical Incident Response Team and explain the response process when an incident occurs.

**1. Critical Incident Defined**

A critical incident can be defined as any event that negatively impacts and/or interrupts the normal flow of a school's daily events.

**2. SD71 Critical Incident Response Team**

- a) The team utilizes the "Traumatic Response System" – SD71 staff have been trained by Kevin Cameron (CTIP: Executive Director of the Trauma Informed Practices).
- b) District Team: Primary and secondary members
- c) School Team

**3. Critical Incident Response Process**

- a) District manual
- b) Principal's checklist for gathering information
- c) Quick reference guide
- d) Templates and resources

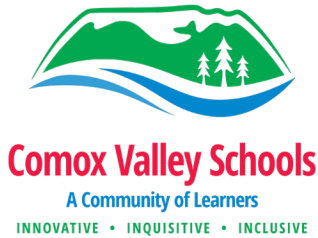
**Recommendation**

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) receive the Critical Incidents briefing note as presented.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sean Lamoureux*

Sean Lamoureux, Associate Superintendent



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**TO:** Board of Education **DATE:** March 12, 2024  
**FROM:** Jeremy Morrow, Superintendent of Schools  
**RE:** **Feeding Futures Food Scan (Public)**

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## Background

The Ministry of Education and Childcare provided Affordability Funding (\$980,354) in the 2022/23 school year and Feeding Futures Funding (\$1,141,562) in the 2023/24 school year. Additionally, ongoing funding has been provided through CommunityLINK. CommunityLINK funding is provided to all 60 school districts to support the academic achievement and social functioning of vulnerable students. Programs and Services can include breakfast, lunch and snack programs, academic support, counselling, youth workers and after-school programs. All three funds are accounted for as Special Purpose Funds (trust accounts) limiting the expenditures to the stated purpose. The SD71 formula to provide grants to schools, district programs, and community support organizations consider the number of students being served, the individual school Social Service Index established by the Ministry of Education and Child Care, and unique community factors. Attached is a summary of the funding allocated over the past two years.

The 2022/23 Affordability Funding was utilized in the following main areas:

- Staffing: food service workers to shop, prepare, organize, and cook.
- Food Support: daily food and snacks for students, evening & weekend meals for students/families, take home grab bags, family hampers, entertainment nights, community school parent breakfast and lunch events.
- Food Infrastructure: fridges, dishwashers, stoves, washers, dryers
- Student Support: additional field trips, classroom clothing, raincoats, rubber boots, winter clothing, haircuts, dentist checkup and vision checks. Independent living bags (food, blanket, toiletries), small appliances - toasters, cutlery, plates, cups, augment fees.

Capital bylaw funding totaling \$105,500 was received from the 2023/24 Capital Plan to pay for food related equipment previously charged to Affordability Funding, which will be allocated back to the special purpose fund and used in accordance with the stated funding rules. Capital funding to support infrastructure improvements in schools totaling \$195,000 was received from the 2024/25 Capital Plan.

The 2023/24 Feeding Futures allocation to schools includes the Carry Forward Affordability Funding from the prior year, an allocation for food support, and funding for two staff positions (Lake Trail and Courtenay EI). Funds have been provided to service providers (Lush Valley and Black Creek) as well as program support from the CommunityLINK budget. Feeding Futures funding has been retained to support the implementation of the Feeding Futures District Scan report. Funds available that have not yet been allocated total \$550,096. Attached is the Feeding Futures District Scan report submitted to the Superintendent of Schools.

## Considerations

The Board of Education hosted an engagement session with internal partner groups and rights' holders to consider the Feeding Futures District Scan report and recommendations. Four specific areas were discussed with the following themes identified:

- Staffing Considerations: Discussion on the need for dedicated staff like a food coordinator with deep food experience and less emphasis on administrative roles to ensure more resources are directed towards feeding families. The importance of involving educators and students in the program and ensuring the individual hired understands the school system as well as food safe practices. Many voices indicating preference for one position rather than two part-time positions.
- Community Coordination: Stressed the importance of including diverse community voices, as well as local farmers/growers in the program, with a focus on Indigenous perspectives and land-based learning. The discussion included how to engage students with diverse needs and backgrounds, ensuring the program is inclusive and reflects the community's cultural diversity as well as nutritional and foods services expertise.
- Food Procurement: Challenges such as the carbon footprint of food procurement, the need for centralized refrigeration for farmers, and barriers to accessing funds for food procurement were discussed. The importance of food literacy and involving students in food preparation was also noted.
- Stigma-Free Access: Emphasized the need for accessible, inclusive approaches to ensure no student feels stigmatized when accessing food. Ideas included pay-it-forward cards, anonymous ways for parents to contribute, and creating supportive, safe environments for all students to access food without judgment.

Over the past two fiscal years, two separate forms of funding have been provided by the Ministry of Education and Child Care to school districts to address vulnerable student needs. Targeted federal and provincial funding was provided to school districts during the COVID 19 pandemic period. The recent 2024/25 Provincial Budget announced a further grant adjustment to also address affordability. The funding focus from the Ministry has been:

2022/23	Affordability Funding (\$980,354)
2023/24	Feeding Futures (\$1,141,562)
2024/25	Feeding Futures plus Student Affordability (Amounts to be announced)

At the May 2021 Regular Board Meeting, the following motion was passed:

*THAT the Board of Education for School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) refer to the Superintendent to investigate the feasibility of a long-term food strategy, incorporating the focus on food security, hands-on learning, and the opportunity to connect with community partners and report back to the board.*

While the Feeding Futures District Scan was not created to address this Board resolution, it is hoped that the recommendations herein will address the intent of this direction. The Advisory Committee will over time consider all aspects of the resolution components.

## Superintendent Recommendations

The Feeding Futures District Scan includes specific recommendations that parallel the provincial standards pertaining to: 1) Staffing; 2) Centralizing food production, procurement, and delivery; 3) Supporting best practices and unique schools; 4) Supporting BC and local food; 5) Important considerations moving forward; and, 6) keeping the community engaged. Working from these recommendations, the following recommendations are provided by the Superintendent of Schools:

1. Staffing – Hire a 12-month, full time excluded Food Services Coordinator. The Food Services Coordinator shall work closely with Inclusive Education, Indigenous Education, and school-based Administration to establish best practices for identifying students with food security concerns. The Food Services Coordinator will be supervised by the Secretary-Treasurer as a Business Services Department member.
2. Advisory Committee – that a Feeding Futures Advisory Committee be established with representation from internal partner groups, rights’ holders, and invited external community members/organizations. Community School representation shall be included as an internal partner group. An Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will be developed over the coming months and presented to the Board at a future Regular Meeting, which will include Indigenous perspectives, consideration of the specific Feeding Futures District Scan recommendations, Garden-Based learning framework, and land-based learning.
3. Funding – staff shall allocate the remaining 2023/24 funds (\$550,096) on the following basis:
  - a. Staffing cost to June 30, 2024 (estimate \$20,500)
  - b. Advisory Committee budget (\$10,000)
  - c. Indigenous Education top-up to June 30, 2024 (\$9,000)
  - d. Other Programming (LUSH Valley Food Action Society) maintain funding support to June 30, 2024 (\$65,000)
  - e. Remaining funds to schools and Community School programs (Estimate \$445,500).
4. Food Procurement – The Food Services Coordinator shall consult with the Advisory Committee to present an integrated food procurement strategy. Recommendations shall consider existing infrastructure limitations and shall follow best provincial practices pertaining to Request for Proposals, buying local, and food nutrition.
5. Budget Development – the Food Services Coordinator shall consult with the Advisory Committee on the program budget allocation for the 2024/25 school year. Staff shall present a final recommendation for the Board’s consideration at the June 2024 Regular Board Meeting.

## Board Motion for Consideration

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) approve the Superintendent Recommendations contained herein.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jeremy Morrow*

Jeremy Morrow  
Superintendent of Schools



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



**Comox Valley Schools**

**A Community of Learners**

**INNOVATIVE • INQUISITIVE • INCLUSIVE**

**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>



**School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)**

**Budget Allocation Summary - Food and Program Support (CommunityLINK, Student Affordability & Feeding Futures)**

School / Program	Student Affordability Fund 2022/23 - Actual Expenses							Carry Forward to 2023/24	Feeding Futures 2023/24 Budget Allocation					Capital Bylaw Funding	Total Funds Available	
	Community LINK 2022/23	Food & Program Support	Salary & Benefits	Supplies / Goods	Food	Field Trips / Fees	Equipment		Community LINK 2023/24	Program Support	Food	Salary & Benefits	Service Provider	Food Equity Scan	2023/24 Equipment Recovery	2022/23 Food and Program Support (Including Carryforward and Excluding Equipment)
<b>Schools</b>																
Navigate/NIDES	500	3,466	2,383	9,296	691	-	2,695	125	14,431	-	-	-	-	-	19,031	17,251
Indigenous Education	5,000	-	1,271	10,710	-	-	2,981	-	7,019	-	-	-	-	-	19,962	10,000
Ecole Robb Rd	-	2,484	2,202	5,794	253	929	15,033	-	3,992	-	-	-	-	-	25,766	19,025
Airport	2,000	-	4,017	1,257	-	6,527	1,939	500	4,455	-	-	-	-	-	9,213	6,894
Brooklyn	2,300	2,327	100	6,985	125	6,340	10,295	575	5,875	-	-	-	-	-	22,132	16,745
Royston	2,300	1,869	2,012	5,787	-	7,429	3,573	575	8,872	-	-	-	-	-	15,541	13,020
Miracle Beach	2,300	-	222	1,906	-	8,162	8,700	575	11,300	-	-	-	-	-	13,128	20,575
Valley View	2,300	659	8,016	6,876	597	2,563	6,098	575	12,667	-	-	-	-	-	24,546	19,340
Huband	2,300	2,978	2,820	4,071	691	8,381	5,764	575	7,067	-	-	-	-	-	18,624	13,406
Arden	3,000	1,825	2,373	10,373	109	11,390	2,529	750	15,336	-	-	-	-	-	20,209	18,615
Aspen	3,500	1,837	4,116	4,072	470	1,045	13,465	875	8,236	-	-	-	-	-	27,460	22,576
Denman	5,500	-	924	951	-	1,526	615	1,375	13,610	-	-	-	-	-	7,990	15,600
Hornby	5,500	-	-	1,048	-	-	2,562	1,375	13,548	-	-	-	-	-	9,110	17,485
Lake Trail	7,500	-	5,667	17,607	1,000	-	17,036	1,875	24,524	28,649	-	-	-	-	48,810	72,084
Cumberland	8,500	3,352	13,543	345	181	2,478	18,170	2,125	16,088	-	-	-	-	-	44,091	36,383
Ecole Puntledge Park	8,500	1,979	5,480	8,096	1,230	9,064	6,760	2,125	14,711	-	-	-	-	-	32,045	23,596
Queneesh	9,700	9,962	464	8,180	101	19,126	10,028	2,425	23,113	-	-	-	-	-	38,435	35,566
Courtenay El	11,500	220	5,871	4,332	1,634	-	11,464	2,875	20,077	28,649	-	-	-	-	35,021	63,065
Ecole Mark Isfeld	1,500	5,421	6,299	11,831	6,925	18,567	24,092	375	28,533	-	-	-	-	-	56,068	53,000
Nala'atsi	2,000	-	293	-	-	-	5,232	500	2,000	-	-	-	-	-	7,525	7,732
Glacier View	4,000	3,833	6,005	9,110	108	-	6,924	1,000	18,756	-	-	-	-	-	29,980	26,680
Highland	5,000	2,827	-	13,807	-	5,599	23,578	1,250	21,663	-	-	-	-	-	45,212	46,491
GP Vanier	7,500	-	1,234	43,254	-	2,643	5,654	1,875	52,031	-	-	-	-	-	57,642	59,560
<b>Total - Schools :</b>	<b>102,200</b>	<b>45,039</b>	<b>75,312</b>	<b>185,688</b>	<b>14,115</b>	<b>111,769</b>	<b>205,187</b>	<b>24,300</b>	<b>347,904</b>	<b>57,298</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>627,541</b>	<b>634,689</b>
<b>District, Community Schools, Other Programs</b>																
DISTRICT BOARD OFFICE FUND	-	-	-	46,947	1,465	43,846	- 23,014	-	-	18,750	-	467,610	105,500	-	69,244	463,346
LUSH VALLEY FOOD ACTION SOCIETY	-	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000	150,000
LAKE TRAIL COMMUNITY EDUCATION SOCIETY	-	-	-	20,000	-	-	-	10,000	30,000	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	40,000
CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SOCIETY	-	-	-	25,000	-	-	-	10,000	35,000	-	-	-	-	-	25,000	45,000
COURTENAY ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL SOCIETY	-	-	-	20,000	-	-	-	10,000	30,000	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	40,000
HORNBY ISLAND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY (HIES)	-	-	-	27,000	-	-	-	20,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	27,000	20,000
DENMAN IS. COMMUNITY EDUC SOC	-	-	-	27,000	-	-	-	20,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	27,000	20,000
BLACK CREEK	-	-	-	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
<b>Total - District, Community Schools, Other Programs :</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>320,947</b>	<b>1,465</b>	<b>43,846</b>	<b>- 23,014</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>95,000</b>	<b>18,750</b>	<b>155,000</b>	<b>467,610</b>	<b>105,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>343,244</b>	<b>783,346</b>
	<b>102,200</b>	<b>45,039</b>	<b>75,312</b>	<b>506,635</b>	<b>15,580</b>	<b>155,615</b>	<b>182,173</b>	<b>94,300</b>	<b>442,904</b>	<b>76,048</b>	<b>155,000</b>	<b>467,610</b>	<b>105,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>970,785</b>	<b>1,418,035</b>
				<b>Funds Spent :</b>		<b>798,181</b>			<b>Total Funds Available - Food Equity Scan Initiative :</b>					<b>550,096</b>		
				<b>Funds Allocated :</b>		<b>980,354</b>			<b>Funds Available :</b>					<b>1,141,562</b>		

Note: 2023/24 School Allocation does not include Food Equity Scan funds to be allocated post Board Direction

## VOLUNTEERS IN DISTRICT SCHOOLS

### Background

Volunteers can be of valuable assistance to school staff in support of school activities. Involvement of volunteers is, therefore, encouraged in activities for which the volunteer is qualified, and which do not interfere with or replace employees performing their regular duties.

### Procedures

1. The establishment of a volunteer program shall be at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with the staff in each school.
2. Teachers wishing to participate in a volunteer program shall notify the Principal.
3. Before they can begin to work in a school, volunteers shall be required to provide a Criminal Records Search by the RCMP, good for 3-5 years. (See AP490 Appendix A) ~~as well as a complete and sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct (AP 490 Appendix B).~~
4. Volunteers will abide by the District's Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- 4.5. Volunteers shall be subject to the authority of the Principal and the staff member with whom they are working. The degree of supervision, direct or indirect, to be provided by the staff member shall be determined by the staff member and the volunteer, subject to the approval of the Principal.
- 5.6. Volunteers may be asked to discontinue their service if their help is no longer needed, if they prove to be counter-productive, or if they fail to keep their commitment.
- 6.7. Parents, volunteers, teachers, other staff members and students are to fully understand the function of volunteers in the school. Volunteers shall not, in whole or in part, perform work that falls within the scope of a bargaining unit.
- 7.8. Principals using volunteers shall provide appropriate orientation training as required, and ongoing supervision.
  - 7.18.1 The staff of the school shall define in general terms and the supervising staff member in specific terms those tasks to be assigned to volunteers.
- 8.9. If volunteers deal with children they shall follow protocols developed by teachers.
- 9.10. Basic insurance coverage for volunteers will be provided under the District's blanket insurance policy for injury sustained while and in consequence of performing regular and assigned duties of the volunteer occupation with the District, while under the direction and control of the District.

~~10.11.~~ Volunteers are to be regarded as an integral member of the team working with students, but they may not undertake tasks requiring educational decisions.

~~11.12.~~ Volunteers can not be paid/employed or receive any compensation (including self-fundraising) by third party organizations to volunteer in schools in Comox Valley School District.

~~12.13.~~ Any volunteers who publicly display or communicate a belief contrary to beliefs of the School District as outlined in either a District Policy, Administrative Procedures or the School Act may be asked to discontinue their service pending an investigation into said concerns.

~~13.14.~~ Volunteers will not promote or recruit students or staff for any specific ideology or religious belief.

Reference: Section 7.1, 17, 20, 22, 26.1, 65, 85 School Act  
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Adopted: May 19, 1992

Amended: June 25, 2019, February 2023, March 2024

## CRIMINAL RECORD SEARCH - VOLUNTEERS

### Background

Volunteers who fall into one or more of the following groups will be asked to complete a criminal record check through the Criminal Records Review Program as directed by the Principal.

- Non-parents – those who do not have children attending the school where they will be volunteering;
- Long-term volunteers – those who have volunteered to take part in activities with students which will extend over a significant period of time (in excess of one month);
- Independent volunteers – those whose activities would have them working with students without the direct supervision of a teacher or other authorized District employees.

### Procedures

1. The Principal will adjudicate questions about whether or not a volunteer is to be required to have a criminal record check.
2. The Principal of the school involved will receive in confidence directly from the law enforcement agency conducting the search all criminal record check results, which will indicate whether or not the individual is cleared for volunteer work.
3. The criminal record check will be valid for ~~three~~-five years. If there are any changes to the volunteers CRS status in the ~~3~~-5 years, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to disclose the changes to the Principal.
4. If an individual has not been cleared for volunteer work, they may request a meeting with the Principal.
5. If the law enforcement agency levies a fee for performing the criminal record check, the Principal will reimburse the volunteer upon submission of a receipt.

Reference: Section 7.1, 17, 20, 22, 26.1, 65, 85 School Act  
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Adopted: March 5, 2002

Revised: June 25, 2019, September 2022, March 2024

**Administrative Procedure 490 – Appendix B**

**VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

This document defines the District’s expectation for all school volunteers.

Name (please print)	Date
Address	Home Phone
Work Phone	Cell Phone
Email Address	

As a volunteer, I agree to abide by the following code of volunteer conduct:

1. I agree only to do what is in the best personal and educational interest of every child with whom I come into contact.
2. I will maintain confidentiality outside of school and will share with teachers and/or school administrators **any** concerns that I may have related to student welfare and/or safety.
3. I will not disclose, use, or disseminate student photographs or personal information about students, myself or others without permission from the principal.
4. I agree not to exchange telephone numbers, home addresses, e-mail addresses or any other home directory information with students for any purpose unless it is required as part of my role as a volunteer. I will exchange home directory information only with parental and administrative approval.
5. I will not contact students outside of school hours without permission from the students’ parents and/or the principal.
6. I agree to never be alone with individual students who are not under the supervision of teachers and school authorities.

~~7.~~ I agree to not transport students without the written permission of parents or guardians or without the expressed permission of the school or District and will abide by District Administrative Procedure 260-02 (Volunteer Driver Application).

~~7.~~

8. Immediately upon arrival, I will sign in at the main office or the designated sign-in station.

9. I will wear or show volunteer identification whenever required by the school to do so.

10. I will not be involved in or assist in the promotion or recruitment of any student or staff for any specific ideology, political organization or religious belief.

11. I have read, understand, and agree to abide by:

- Policy 17 – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)
- Policy 24 – Equity and Non-Discrimination
- Administrative Procedure 170 - Equity and Non-Discrimination
- Administrative Procedure 490 – Volunteers in District Schools

(The above Policies and Administrative Procedures are found on our District Website under the Parent Information Tab – Volunteers Section)

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**~~I agree to follow the Volunteer code of Conduct at all times.~~**

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Name (please print)

Date

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Signature

Name of School

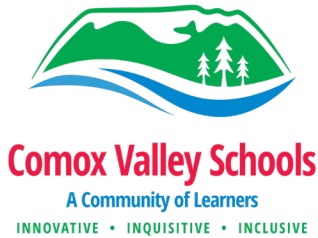
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Principal Signature

Date



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**TO:** Board of Education **DATE:** March 12, 2024  
**FROM:** Carrie McVeigh, Secretary Treasurer/CFO  
**RE:** **2024-25 Annual Operating Budget Development Timelines & Process**

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**Introduction**

Annually, School Districts are required to submit a balanced budget to the Ministry of Education and Childcare by June 30<sup>th</sup>. The annual budget will be compiled and submitted on the specified form and containing the content as required by the Ministry of Education and Childcare.

**Background**

Each year, at the March public Board meeting, the Board will approve the Annual Budget timelines which will include a process and schedule for engagement with the local community and educational partners. The main consultations for the Annual Budget will be conducted within the Open Committee of the Whole (CoTW) structure so the entire Board, educational partners (SD71 Leadership Team, IEC, CDTA, CUPE 439, DPAC) and public are aware of the input that has been considered in the budget development.

The proposed timeline is attached to this briefing note for consideration.

**Recommendation**

THAT the Board of Education of School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) approve the budget timeline as outlined.

Respectfully submitted,

*Carrie McVeigh*

Carrie McVeigh  
Secretary Treasurer

Appendix A: 2024-2025 Budget Timeline

## BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

### 2024-25 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET TIMELINES & PROCESS

March 15	Preliminary Operating Grant Announcement
March 18 – April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Spring Break
April 9 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Budget - Open Committee of the Whole Meeting <i>Budget process overview</i>
April 23	Regular Board Meeting <i>Discuss and consider the implications of the Preliminary Operating Grant Announcement, any funding model changes, and any potential budget shortfall or enhancement.</i>
April 24 – May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Public Budget Consultation Process <i>Public Budget Consultation process for 24-25 will include a budget development feedback opportunity, advertised and posted on the District website.</i>
	<b><i>*Note-The meetings on April 9<sup>th</sup> and April 23<sup>rd</sup> are open to the general public. As always, any Comox Valley resident is welcome to attend public board meetings.</i></b>
May 14	Annual Budget - Open Committee of the Whole Meeting <i>To share input from Public Budget Consultation process and consider preliminary balancing options. Opportunity for District Staff and Partner Group presentations. Partner Group feedback welcome.</i>
	<b><i>Ongoing work and adjustments by management team to refine budget options and ensure that priorities connect to the district's core business (student success) and adhere to Ministry policy and guidelines.</i></b>
May 21	Special Committee of the Whole Meeting (if required) <i>To review recommendations to balance the 2024-25 Annual Budget.</i>
May 28	Regular Board Meeting <i>Tentative approval 2024-25 Annual Budget Bylaw.</i>