
For immediate release

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After careful consideration Comox Valley Schools will not re-open Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre

Comox Valley, B.C. – After an extensive and collaborative review process with our partners in the Qualicum School District and BC Parks, Comox Valley Schools’ Board of Education has made the difficult decision not to pursue re-opening the Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Centre (TBOEC). This decision was made with careful consideration of the district’s strategic priorities, financial resources, and staffing capacity.

Located within the Traditional Territories of the K’ómoks First Nation, Tribune Bay has deep cultural and historical significance dating back thousands of years. Since Comox Valley Schools first began operating the permit in partnership with the Qualicum School District in 1985, the centre has provided students with unique outdoor learning experiences in a beautiful natural setting.

The Board recognizes and deeply values the special place that Tribune Bay holds in the lives of our students, staff, and community. The centre has long provided cherished outdoor learning opportunities and meaningful experiences for generations.

Unfortunately, recent assessments revealed a decline in the centre’s infrastructure quality, and extensive upgrades would be required to ensure safety, accessibility, and modern standards. The Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Society’s inability to continue operating the Centre earlier this year and Qualicum School District’s decision not to renew its permit with BC Parks underscored the district’s need to re-evaluate its role in operating the centre. The review indicated too much financial risk for the district to re-open the Centre.

“Tribune Bay holds a special place in the hearts of our students, staff, and the broader community,” said Michelle Waite, Chairperson of the Comox Valley Schools Board of Education. “However, given the significant financial investments and staffing resources required to make the Centre operational again, it became clear that continuing with the permit process would not be in the district’s best interest. Our primary responsibility is to support the well-being and learning needs of all students across Comox Valley Schools.”

The Board of Education extends its deepest gratitude to longtime caretaker Gord Campbell and his wife, Allison, whose dedication to Tribune Bay has been invaluable. Their years of service, along with the support of countless volunteers and community donors, created lasting memories for students and brought community-based investments to the centre’s infrastructure and programs.

Comox Valley Schools supports BC Parks and the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship in seeking a new permit operator for the centre, hoping that future plans will bring new opportunities for Tribune Bay while preserving its legacy.

As part of the district's commitment to outdoor and nature-based educational opportunities, Comox Valley Schools will continue to integrate land and nature into student learning experiences, reflecting the district's values of inclusion, equity, and reconciliation.

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