



BOARD BUSINESS

January 2025

Action packed Towhee Tournament at GP Vanier

BOARD MEETING IN REVIEW

Jessie Everson starts January meeting off in a good way

The evening began in a good way with Jessie Everson, the new Indigenous Engagement and Knowledge Specialist for Comox Valley Schools starting the meeting with a land acknowledgment, welcoming remarks and a beautiful song. Jessie, whose traditional name is Kwa'kwaxolas, is a member of the K'ómoks First Nation and has roots in many First Nations. Jessie brings profound local knowledge of Indigenous history, culture, ceremony, song, and story that has been passed down and upheld through many generations. The board and superintendent expressed their excitement about having Jessie beginning his new important role for the district.

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.



Comox Valley Food Policy Council Presents to Board

The Comox Valley Food Policy Council (CVFPC) delivered an insightful presentation highlighting the importance of food security, sustainability, and nutrition in schools. Naomi Robert, Co-Chair of the CVFPC, and Taylor Hartwig, CVFPC Member, emphasized the role of local food systems in supporting student well-being and learning, showcasing initiatives that promote healthy eating habits, farm-to-school programs, and community partnerships. Trustees engaged in a meaningful discussion on how schools can further integrate food education and access to nutritious meals into their daily practices. The presentation reinforced the district's commitment to fostering a sustainable and resilient food culture within Comox Valley Schools. You can read their latest report here:



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**WATCH
JANUARY 28
BOARD
MEETING**



**Comox Valley
FOOD POLICY
COUNCIL**



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BOARD MEETING IN REVIEW CONTINUES

Food Advisory Committee Update

Thea Cockerton, Comox Valley Schools Food Services Coordinator, delivered a presentation highlighting the district's recent initiatives in enhancing student nutrition and promoting food security. Appointed in August 2024, Ms. Cockerton has been instrumental in implementing the "Feeding Futures" program, which focuses on integrating locally sourced foods into school meal plans, educating students on healthy eating habits, and establishing sustainable food practices within the schools. Her efforts have led to the development of school gardens, partnerships with local farmers, and nutrition workshops, all aimed at fostering a healthier and more informed student body. The Board commended Ms. Cockerton's dedication and the positive impact of her work on the school community.



Board gives the Comox Valley Regional District approval to move forward with arena business case

Trustees approved Option 1 regarding the Business Case for a potential third arena located on school district property next to GP Vanier. This decision allows the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) to move forward with a comprehensive business case study to examine the project's scope, costs, and potential funding strategies. The findings of the business case will help determine possible next steps in addressing the region's growing need for additional ice and sports facilities. The board will now await the findings from the business case.



Exciting new Primary Learning Community program coming to Airport Elementary

Lisa Pedersen-Skene, District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care, provided additional insights into the upcoming Primary Learning Community (PLC) program at Airport Elementary School. Comox Valley Schools is launching a new K-3 Primary Learning Community program at Airport Elementary School, starting in the 2025-2026 school year. This innovative program blends school, place, and home-based learning to provide a holistic, flexible educational experience for young students from across the district. It emphasizes play-based and place-based learning, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and engagement with the local environment through outdoor and hands-on activities. Key features include multi-age learning cohorts, where students remain with the same teacher and peers over several years, creating a nurturing environment for social, emotional, and cognitive growth. The blended schedule incorporates home-based learning on Mondays, indoor and outdoor activities at Airport Elementary from Tuesday to Thursday, and off-site learning across the Comox Valley on Fridays. This initiative will offer a unique opportunity for students to thrive in a flexible and enriching learning environment.

www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/airport-plc

AIRPORT ELEMENTARY
PRIMARY LEARNING COMMUNITY (K-3)

The Primary Learning Community (K-3) at Airport Elementary provides young learners with a multi-age, flexible learning environment that centres relationships with cohort peers and their teacher over time.

Through play-based and place-based learning, students experience growth in their learning achievement and competency development in addition to a deepened sense of community.

The program is a blended learning opportunity that integrates the environments of school, place, and home. It's open to learners from throughout the district.

Learn more: www.comoxvalleyschools.ca/airport-plc

Kindergarten to Grade 3



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BOARD BUSINESS

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - JANUARY 14

Flexible Learning Environments and the Paperless Classroom at Mark R. Isfeld Secondary

The presentation by Brian Mcaskill, Principal, Kim Murcheson, Teacher (Calculus 12, Pre-Calculus 11 & 12, Economics 12, Accounting 11 & 12), and Jay Dixon, Associate Superintendent highlighted Mark R. Isfeld Secondary's integration of technology to enhance education. The school has adopted flexible learning environments that use digital tools to support diverse learning styles, fostering collaboration and critical thinking. Paperless classrooms reduce reliance on paper through digital platforms, improving sustainability and accessibility. Various technology tools are embedded across subjects to enhance engagement and personalized learning, while ongoing professional development ensures educators effectively integrate these tools into their teaching. A student-centered approach empowers learners through interactive and adaptive platforms. The presentation also addresses challenges, such as ensuring equitable access to technology and maintaining engagement, and discusses strategies to overcome these obstacles. Overall, Isfeld is committed to a dynamic, tech-enhanced learning environment that prepares students for the digital age.

Accessibility Committee Progress Update

The presentation by Tara Ryan, District Vice-Principal, Inclusive Education and Sean Lamoureux, Associate Superintendent provided an overview of Comox Valley Schools Accessibility Committee and its initiatives to enhance inclusivity. The committee works to identify and remove barriers for students, staff, and the community. Its key focus areas include ensuring accessible employment practices, improving service delivery, enhancing the built environment with features like ramps and better acoustics, expanding accessible communication and technology, addressing transportation challenges, and promoting mental health and diversity education. The committee actively gathers feedback through various channels and has conducted accessibility audits in multiple schools to assess and improve conditions. The committee comprises a diverse membership, including individuals with diverse abilities and Indigenous representation, allowing for multiple perspectives to inform decision-making.

Board Members

Michelle Waite, Chair (Lazo North)
Susan L Leslie, Vice Chair (Town of Comox)
Janice Caton, Trustee (City of Courtenay)
Shannon Aldinger, Trustee (City of Courtenay)
Sarah Jane Howe, Trustee (Village of Cumberland)
Chelsea McCannel-Keene, Trustee (Baynes Sound, Hornby & Denman Islands)
Cristi May Sacht – Trustee, Trustee (Puntledge, Black Creek)

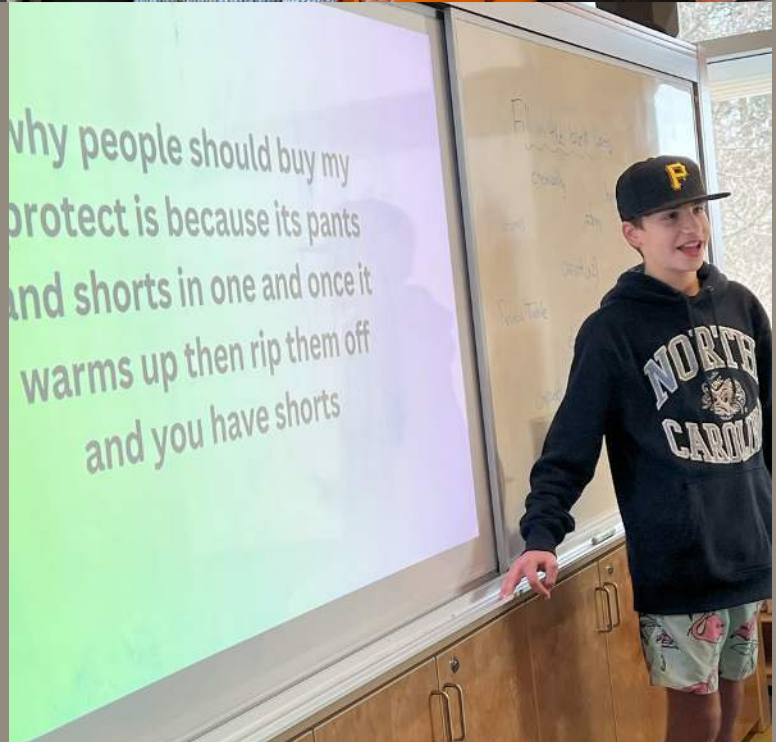


DISTRICT NEWS

January 2025

Lake Trail Grade 7 Students Embrace Entrepreneurship with Their Own Dragon's Den

Creativity, innovation, and business acumen were on full display at Lake Trail Community School as Ms. Punter's Grade 7 class took part in their own version of Dragon's Den. As part of their Entrepreneur Workshop, students worked diligently to develop unique product ideas, refine their pitches, and present them with confidence. Among the standout concepts were Spray Gum, a product designed to extend the flavor of chewing gum; custom fishing gear tailored for avid anglers; and high-end mouth guards that blend both style and functionality. Each idea showcased the students' creativity, problem-solving skills, and understanding of business fundamentals. The initiative not only encouraged entrepreneurial thinking but also introduced students to key aspects of business development, including market research, product design, and persuasive pitching. Congratulations to all the students who participated in this inspiring event! Your enthusiasm, confidence, and innovation prove that the next generation of entrepreneurs is already thinking big. Keep dreaming and creating!



Important Accessibility Committee work underway

The Comox Valley Schools' Accessibility Committee has recently undertaken significant initiatives to enhance accessibility and inclusion within our district. Recently, the committee hosted a "think tank" session, bringing together students from across the district who have lived experiences of disabilities. To maximize accessibility, a sign-language interpreter and a sound field system were provided, ensuring that everyone could fully participate in the discussions. During the session, students shared their personal experiences and insights on accessibility, inclusion, and belonging. They discussed the environments, supports, and tools that have helped them succeed in school, as well as the barriers they have encountered academically, socially, physically, and emotionally. In a subsequent session, a diverse group, including members of the accessibility committee, the accessibility audit team, and representatives from Indigenous Education and parents, engaged in guided discussions about the tools, environments, and supports needed to improve accessibility in our schools. To visually capture the essence of these discussions, SPARC BC provided an artist, Melissa Kendzierski from Drawing Change, who created a graphic representation of the conversations. These artistic pieces are currently on display in the Board Room at Inclusive Ed, and we invite community members to view them in person. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this important work.



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DISTRICT NEWS



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Comox Valley Wrestlers Shine in Back-to-Back Tournaments

The Comox Valley Wrestling team recently made a triumphant return to the mat, hosting the highly anticipated Comox Valley Invitational Tournament at Highland Secondary. This marked the first time in several years that the team competed in front of a home crowd, and they did not disappoint! The home team delivered an incredible performance, earning an impressive 11 first-place finishes, drawing cheers and excitement from spectators.

The tournament was a celebration of community spirit, with many volunteers stepping up to ensure the event's success. A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who contributed their time and energy to make this tournament possible. From setting up the venue to cheering on the athletes, the support was instrumental in creating a memorable experience for all involved. Just days later, the Comox Valley Wrestlers continued their momentum, competing at the Campbell River Invitational on Saturday, January 18. Local athletes shone brightly, with GP Vanier's Nathan Kratz being named Most Valuable Wrestler of the tournament—a prestigious honor that reflects his hard work and dedication to the sport. The Campbell River event featured a strong showing from the Comox Valley athletes, showcasing their skill, determination, and sportsmanship in a highly competitive field.

These back-to-back tournaments highlight not only the talent of the Comox Valley Wrestling team but also the strength of the wrestling community in the region. The ability to host a home tournament after several years and compete so successfully demonstrates the resilience and commitment of the athletes and their coaches.



53rd Towhees Basketball Tourney at GP Vanier

The 53rd Annual Towhee Basketball Tournament took place from January 14 to 16 at G.P. Vanier Secondary School, featuring competitive matchups among high school teams from the Comox Valley and beyond.

Mark R. Isfeld Senior Boys finished a strong second place, losing a hard-fought match to Wellington in the finals. GP Vanier Senior Boys closed the tournament out with a victory over Kwalikum Secondary in the bronze medal game. In their final game of the tournament, Highland's Senior Boys had a strong game and defeated Chilliwack handily.

Comox Valley Schools extends its gratitude to all the athletes, coaches, volunteers, and supporters who contributed to the success of this year's tournament. Your dedication and enthusiasm continue to inspire and uphold the proud tradition of this great tournament in our district.



January 2025