



**K'ómoks First Nation &  
School District 71 (Comox Valley)  
Local Education Agreement (LEA)  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, June 25, 2025**



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**Attendance In Person at KFN Boardroom:**

**Members:**

Dr. Jeremy Morrow, Superintendent of Schools  
Joe Heslip, Associate Superintendent  
Lelaina Jules, Acting District Principal, Indigenous Education  
Erin Higginbottom, Education & Capacity Development Coordinator - K'ómoks First Nation  
Natasha Rainkie, K-12 K'ómoks First Nation Student Success Teacher

**Guests:** N/A

**Regrets:**

Jay Dixon, Associate Superintendent  
Susan Savoie, Councillor, K'ómoks First Nation  
Candace Newman, Councillor - K'ómoks First Nation

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

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1. **Welcome and Traditional Territory Acknowledgement** by Erin Higginbottom

2. **Call to Order** by Erin Higginbottom, called meeting to order 11:42 am

2.1 **Approval of Agenda – June 25, 2025** – Approved as presented

2.2 **Approval of Meeting Minutes – May 21, 2025** – Approved as presented

3. **New Business**

**3.1 Student Success and Data Review**

- **Student Success - Natasha Rainkie**

- Erin thanked Natasha for joining the LEA meeting and going forward, Natasha will be invited to all of these meetings.
- Via PowerPoint, Natasha provided an overview of her position; to support the roles and commitments of the LEA among other items, and importantly, provide communication and relationship building. Natasha travels to eleven district schools. Most of her time is spent on rationality; students, parents, staff, teachers, administrator's, administrative teams, community, and providing supports. Student specifics supports include academic, identity, transportation, social emotional, transition, advocacy, and graduation. Social emotional supports include therapeutic riding, girls drumming, lunch/recess visits, forest groups, body breaks, assisting with access to counselling, restorative justice circles, self-regulation activities, and confidence-building activities. A big highlight this year was witnessing cultural curiosity and pride through several activities and gatherings. The KFN canoe paddle at Comox

Lake, though the weather did not permit getting the canoe out on the water, there were about 35 students showing lots of pride.

- How to move forwards as a district?
  - Teacher evaluations and cultural safety.
  - Ensure teachers are doing what they are supposed to be doing.
  - The Superintendent is discussing working together with CDTA on Standard 9.
  - How to support teachers more.
  - Ongoing professional growth plans and have shared conversations.
  - Opportunities to grow, huge gap right now.
  - Accountability can be empowering.
  - A lot happening in classrooms, need to shift, encourage teachers to do their own learning.
  - There is a need for more cultural safety.
- Path forward – where can we do better?
  - More supports for priority students (disengaged students).
  - Nala'atsi Junior program – hope to see this, strengthening capacity.
  - Meaningful relationships across all schools.
  - Explore an additional Success Teacher to share workload with Natasha.
- On a good note, Natasha has seen a lot of growth and success in many of the children. Some key points – build community of wrap-around support, meeting families, see that community develop more. This is in transition now. Add this to 7,8,9's. There needs to be some targeted academic support as well.
- Joe commented on Natasha's advocacy role and appreciated that she reaches out to him when needed. Natasha appreciates Joe's support.
- **Data Review – Joe Heslip**
  - Joe provided a PowerPoint on the Supports – Accountability Survey, a snapshot of all of the supports in the 2024-25 school year, specifically, for the "Students on Reserve" category. This information is necessary to share with teachers and principals moving forward. Some key points:
    - 13.97% conversation with student was the largest piece of the pie chart.
    - 805 instances of small group academic support.
    - 23 types of support were represented.
    - Natasha's top 3 supports: academic, social/emotional, small academic group work.
  - An attendance snapshot was provided with the average absence rate. Categories were all elementary students, Indigenous other, KFN on reserve, and non-Indigenous.
    - The highest absence rate was KFN on reserve.
    - Secondary – KFN on reserve could not be tracked for privacy reasons.
    - Message: shows a lack of sense of belonging in the system.
    - Correlation in the work that Natasha does.
    - Noticing academic supports increasing towards the end of the school year.
    - New K-4 literacy framework, where we can do more?

- As far as preventative work, crafting a position before early literacy for Indigenous learners.
- A pivotal role working along colleagues; it is a system – changing behaviors of an entire system.
- Sometimes we can bring someone in and defer some of our own work
- Nala’atsi reflects a system failure, can happen with the best of intentions.
- Complexities, respond at the moment without delaying the system change.
- No easy fixes, we need to monitor monthly.
- Interconnectedness of all departments, IEC, KFN, Inclusive Education etc. How to work together to support the students, start these dialogues.
- Interesting how interconnected the story and data was - Natasha’s presentation and Joe’s data.

### **3.2 2025-2026 Meeting Calendar**

- This group met 5 times this year. The LEA loosely states when to have meetings. The June meeting was a good way to wrap up the year and have a better understanding of the supports data going up to the year end. Working meetings helps to get action items going. Aligning information sharing systems, for example the KFN meetings, then report out at LEA meetings. Working meetings bolster the oversight meetings too. Have 3 oversight meetings to align with KFN. Set first LEA meeting in late November, prior to that have a couple of working meetings.
- Meetings set:
  - Wed. Nov. 19 – 1-2:30 at KFN Boardroom
  - Wed. Feb. 25 – 1-2:30 at KFN Boardroom
  - Wed. Jun. 17 – 1-2:30 at KFN Boardroom
- **ACTION** - Joe and Erin to connect regarding working meeting dates for 2025-26 school year.

### **3.3 Nala’atsi, Aspen Park Program discussion**

- Discussed above.
- Joe understands that KFN’s interest is that Nala’tsi, could in the future expand to include grades 7, 8, and 9 and would assume that KFN would like the current K, 1, and 2 program at Puntledge move to Aspen Park where the majority of KFN children are. Erin mentioned the possibility of expanding the program without removing the existing program at Puntledge. Puntledge is limited to space for expansion purposes. With Aspen Park’s new addition, there could be room for the programs’ growth at Aspen Park. Joe mentioned that it would be helpful to have a conversation in the fall with the IEC and thinks it is on the IEC agenda.

### **3.4 SD71 Interview Questions**

- Erin mentioned that there had been discussions around the VP Indigenous Education interviews.

- Joe shared that the candidate question was high level and added on the fly. The question was, “What is your knowledge or familiarity with LEA’s?” Some suggestions were:
  - Add why LEAs are important and necessary.
  - Add what do you do to uphold this.
  - Change job posting – add strategic plan and LEA knowledge. Then as a question around those, they share their practice. Joe will need to speak to the Education Committee as well.
  - This knowledge should be a responsibility of the people coming in.
  - No excuse to not be familiar. Should be a familiarity, with an importance of local.
- Erin, doing some more evening information sessions about the LEA, school website and more. Erin will work with KFN communication team and maybe SD71 communication team.
- Joe mentioned that the LEA meeting minutes are and will be posted to website. **ACTION:** Marlene to post minutes to website.

**4. Old Business**

**4.1 Review of LEA and Model LEA**

- Not covered

**4.2 Seeking KFN Member to contribute/advise SD71 onboarding process and local signage in schools**

- Not covered

**5. Next Meeting and Adjournment – 1:04 pm**

- Next meeting: Wed. Nov. 19 – 1-2:30 at KFN Boardroom