



Comox Valley Schools
A Community of Learners

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

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.

Our Vision

Compassionate, connected and personalized learning for all.

Truth and Reconciliation Commitment

We are deeply committed to learning, unlearning, and relearning and taking action for lasting Truth and Reconciliation

Values

LEARNING - Centering learning in all we do.

EQUITY- Leading with diversity as a strength and inclusion as a right.

RELATIONSHIPS - Connection, compassion, and respect in all that we do.

SAFETY - Learning communities where all feel safe and belong.

INTEGRITY - High ethical standards through transparency, honesty and accountability.

Design Principles

Decolonizing and Indigenizing, Inclusion, Personalized Learning, Student-Centered Assessment, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Experiential Learning, Flexible Learning Environments, Digitally Enhanced Learning, Land-Based Learning

comoxvalleyschools.ca/our-strategic-plan/

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Board of Education Update - Board Chair Michelle Waite

Executive summary

- This report highlights key governance decisions, board learning, public engagement, and local, regional, and provincial connections trustees pursued, all with a continued focus on student well-being and success.

Governance highlights

- Approved: School District No.71 (Comox Valley) Cumberland Community School Electrical & Telecommunication Distribution Right-of-Way Bylaw, 2025.
- Approved: School District No.71 (Comox Valley) George P. Vanier Secondary School Electrical & Telecommunication Distribution Right-of-Way Bylaw, 2025.
- Approved: In collaboration with CUPE Local 439, the development of a district-operated before- and -after school childcare pilot.
- Approved: 2025-26 Amended Annual Budget Bylaw.
- Notice: Commencement of Superintendent Performance Appraisal Plan.
- Completed: Ministry of Education and Childcare deadline met to ensure requirement for a 'response to unexpected health emergencies' policy through revision of Administrative Procedure 167, Unexpected Health Emergencies.
- Received: Equity Scan update, Indigenous Education Council Terms of Reference, Revised AP 212 – Early French Immersion, Safe Schools Report, 2026 CCTV/Video Surveillance Report.



Pic: Student Voice members share their insights

Board learning sessions

- Equity scan: A session to review the district's current Equity Scan and implications for board priorities.
- Student Voice: Moderated session with CVS student panel, trustees, IEC, DPAC, CDTA, CUPE, CVPVPA. (continues)

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Board of Education Update - Continues

Connecting with local government and partners

- Elected Officials Forum: Trustees attended a January forum hosted by the CVRD regarding the CVRD Reconciliation Advisory Table and Regional Field Allocation & Fees.
- Collaboration Corner: The Board Chairperson/Vice Chairperson attended meetings with local mayors, the CVRD Chair, senior representatives from CFB Comox (19 Wing), RCMP leadership, and NIC leadership to explore collaboration opportunities.

Regional and provincial trustee engagement

- Several trustees engaged in virtual sessions and represented the Board of Education in roles with BCPSEA and BCSTA, contributing to provincial conversations and decision-making.

Comox Valley Schools community involvement

- Trustee learning opportunities: Trustee participation alongside educators in a SOGI Masterclass for Teachers; trustees attended sessions at the Feb. 17 Professional Development Day.
- Ongoing community roles: Trustees continue to serve on local boards and committees including the Comox Valley Social Planning Society, CV Food Policy Council, and CVRD Recreation Commission.
- School and district presence: Trustees regularly attend school events, Indigenous Education Council events and meetings, Parent Advisory Committee and District Parent Advisory Committee meetings, Student Voice sessions, and various committee meetings.



Pic: SOGI Masterclass with Mischa Oak

Closing note

- This quarterly snapshot continues to reflect the Board's commitment to centering students while strengthening governance, advocacy, and community partnerships.

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Superintendent's Update - Dr. Jeremy Morrow

As I reflect on the past few months across Comox Valley Schools, I am reminded that while reports like this highlight initiatives and programs, the real story of our district lives in the daily work happening in classrooms, school offices, and learning spaces across the valley. Every day, staff create welcoming, safe, and engaging environments where students feel a sense of belonging and are supported to grow as learners and people. I want to begin by recognizing and thanking our educators, support staff, administrators, and operations teams whose dedication makes this work possible.

This time of year also marks the beginning of our annual budget planning process. The district has begun consultation with Rightsholders, staff, partner groups, and the broader community to help guide priorities for the 2026–2027 school year. While this year's enrolment was higher than initially projected, current forecasts suggest we may see a slight decline next year, reflecting trends across the province. Planning in this environment requires thoughtful dialogue as we work to balance fiscal responsibility with our commitment to strong learning environments for students. I am also pleased to welcome Harold Cull to the school board office as Secretary-Treasurer.

Alongside this work, we continue to focus on our commitments to equity, reconciliation, and inclusion. Our collaboration with K'ómoks First Nation through the Local Education Agreement remains an important foundation for supporting First Nation student success and strengthening understanding of the dynamic local cultures and knowledges across our schools. We are also continuing important work through our district Equity Scan. As the data from the scan is organized and analyzed, it is leading to a deeper understanding of the experiences of students, staff, and families and will guide actions we take to strengthen inclusion and belonging across our learning communities.

Professional learning remains an important part of this work. I would like to thank Kiesha Everson and Mischa Oak for their recent sessions with educators and staff that helped deepen understanding of inclusive practices and the experiences of students and families. I would also like to acknowledge the recent CUPE Professional Development Day, which provided valuable learning and connection opportunities for support staff.

Throughout the district, we continue to see inspiring examples of student engagement and creativity. From hands-on learning opportunities in our careers programs to student leadership and arts initiatives across our schools, students continue to demonstrate curiosity, creativity, and resilience.

Thank you to our staff, students, families, trustees, and community partners for your continued commitment to public education in the Comox Valley. Together, we remain focused on supporting learning, strengthening relationships, and ensuring every student feels valued and connected in our schools.

District Progress Report Winter 2026



SECRETARY TREASURER UPDATE

2025/26 Financial Update

- The Financial position for the district continues to track as budgeted with similar trends as the previous year at the same time. Quarterly financial updates are presented to the Board in October, January, April, and June each year. Below is the latest operating financial update to December 31st and represents 50% of the fiscal year and 40% of the school year. The projected operating surplus (deficit) reflected in the actuals are only due to timing of revenue received and expenses recorded at a particular point in time. The next financial update will be provided at the April, 2026 Board meeting and will provide forecasts to the end of the school year.

OPERATING FUND UPDATE - Q2				
As at December 31, 2025				
	2025-26 ANNUAL BUDGET	2025-26 ACTUAL Revenues & Expenditures to Dec 31st	2025-26 Actual % Collected or Spent to December 31st	2024-25 Actual % Collected or Spent to December 31st
OPERATING FUND				
REVENUE				
Provincial Grants				
Ministry of Education	128,669,494	52,413,064	41%	41%
Other	197,600	75,600	38%	36%
Tuition	3,326,500	2,944,047	89%	98%
Other Revenue	571,117	461,665	81%	75%
Rentals and Leases	170,000	112,025	66%	67%
Investment Income	600,000	370,875	62%	74%
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	133,534,711	56,377,276	42%	43%
EXPENSES				
Salaries				
Teachers	53,560,228	22,300,156	42%	41%
Principals/Vice-Principals	7,215,735	3,463,102	48%	52%
Educational Assistants	8,548,248	3,218,272	38%	40%
Support Staff	12,089,412	5,242,738	43%	47%
Other Professionals	5,101,372	2,491,945	49%	53%
Substitutes	4,475,957	2,065,608	46%	48%
Total Salaries	90,990,952	38,781,821	43%	43%
Employee Benefits	23,444,452	10,289,731	44%	45%
Total Salaries and Benefits	114,435,404	49,071,552	43%	44%
Services and Supplies				
Services	4,441,208	2,388,662	54%	53%
Student Transportation	3,159,892	1,043,272	33%	39%
ProD and Travel	1,116,677	409,290	37%	44%
Rentals & Leases	230,000	87,723	38%	35%
Dues and Fees	110,000	80,618	73%	60%
Insurance	270,300	261,981	97%	108%
Supplies	5,735,043	2,405,360	42%	41%
Utilities	2,399,000	700,328	29%	31%
Total Services and Supplies	17,462,120	7,377,234	42%	44%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	131,897,524	56,448,786	43%	44%

2025/26 Amended Budget

- The Board adopted the 2025/26 Amended Budget on January 27, 2026 based on actual September enrolment, which was up 274 additional FTE students than was projected. This increase is related to online student registration and resulted in increased revenue for the district that was largely offset by the additional staffing needs to support the increased student enrolment and unique student needs. The full report on the 2025-26 Amended Budget can be found on the district's [website here](#). All future financial updates to the Board in the 2025/26 school year will provide comparisons to the Amended Budget. (continues)

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SECRETARY TREASURER REPORT - CONTINUES

2026/27 Budget Process Update

- The 2026/27 Annual Budget process is well underway and the Board is currently wrapping up the initial consultation phase which included meetings with the IEC and Partners, surveys, and a public engagement session. Staff are currently working on compiling known cost pressures and implications of the Ministry Grant Announcement once received.
- The next 2026/27 budget update to the Board is scheduled for April 28, 2026 and will provide a summary of the preliminary operating grant revenue implications based on estimated September 2026 enrolments. All 2026/27 budget information will be regularly updated on the District's budget webpage as the process evolves.
[Annual Budget 2026/2027 - Comox Valley Schools](#)

EDUCATION SERVICES

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - ELEMENTARY LEARNING

Strategic Guidance

- Decolonizing and Indigenizing
- Inclusion
- Student-Centred Assessment
- Personalized Learning
- Experiential Learning
- Land-Based Learning
- Social Emotional Learning
- Flexible Learning Environments

Highlights

- Grade 4-9 teachers on three school teams are engaging in the Middle Years Collaborative Inquiry process this year, focusing on the following question: How do we foster core competency development through student inquiry?
- The district literacy team is collaborating with teachers in K-2 classrooms across all schools to enhance current instructional practices and routines, including demonstration lessons, team teaching, consultation, and providing resources. Feedback from teachers has been positive.
- 11 teachers participated in the literacy workshop about Cedar School Decodables which is a series of 20 books written by a Mi'gmaq author that support young readers in developing phonics skills progressively over time. The session included discussion about decolonizing and Indigenizing literacy instruction and the role of Indigenous storytelling, and teachers were excited to bring decodable kits back to their schools to try with students.
- The district Numeracy Framework's problem-solving assessment packages for Grades 3 and 5 is nearing completion. Teachers are invited to try them with students and provide feedback. (continues)

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - ELEMENTARY LEARNING CONTINUES Highlights

- Elementary/middle school teachers continued to collaborate with the district numeracy support teacher, including learning about the new Pi Day learning resource. Grade 3-8 teachers focused on effective instructional strategies to teach fraction concepts with Susan Robinson, Math consultant, during the February Pro D Day.
- Before Spring Break, Grade 3-8 teachers across the district will participate in a full-day professional learning session to strengthen capacity in equity, diversity, inclusion, facilitated by Mandart Chan, former Anti-Racism Curriculum Lead with the Ministry.
- In February, elementary principals and vice principals participated in the second session of the Leading Learning series, continuing discussions about student-centred assessment and the pedagogy of play.
- Core French: Elementary teachers participated in the 5th annual Core French learning session on Jan. 30, and thus, most upper intermediate teachers have now been offered this professional learning opportunity. Core French teachers from all middle/secondary schools gathered for a day of collaboration and learning on Feb 27.

French Immersion (FI):

- Grade 4 and 5 teachers in both FI schools are launching their learning rounds projects, focused on implementing and enhancing small-group literacy centres.
- During the first week of March, Élémo, a Montreal rapper, performed shows and provided workshops for students in all three FI schools. This cultural experience was a collaboration with Canadian Parents for French, École Au-Coeur-de-l'île and the Campbell River School District. (continues)



Pics: Rapper Élémo performs for students in French at Isfeld in early March

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - ELEMENTARY LEARNING CONTINUES

- SOGI: In the 2nd of 3 district-wide events, 40 students from secondary GSAs and Rainbow Clubs across the district gathered together in February to connect, learn and celebrate. In addition, Get REAL is visiting secondary schools in the first week of March, presenting to grade 8s and 9s about 2SLGBTQ+ inclusivity and allyship.
- In February, school-based SOGI leads met to debrief and build on learning from Mischa Oak, sharing resources and discussing strategies to build staff capacity to support 2SLGBTQ+ students and families.

Food Programs:

- This quarter, universal lunch programs across schools have served over 51,000 meals, including 16,300 provided at no cost to families – an average of 970 per day!



Pics: Valley View Elementary launched universal food offerings in January

- Valley View Elementary launched its universal lunch program in January 2026. Participation has been strong from the start, with 91% participation rate in February and 2,953 lunches ordered.
- Work is nearing completion on a compost collection service for our universal lunch programs. Once implemented, this system will divert food scraps from the landfill and support our district's broader sustainability goals.
- At Mark R. Isfeld Secondary, weekly Chill & Chew sessions continue to offer Indigenous students a welcoming space to share lunch, connect, and build meaningful relationships.

Challenges

- Kindergarten and Grade 2 teachers must manually record their district Literacy Assessment results this year, due to the continued delay in the development of apps. As such, elementary schools do not yet have readily accessible local, early literacy data to inform their school growth plans.
- The district was hoping to offer the BC Lions' Team Up to End Racism program to Grade 10-12 students this school year, however are currently waitlisted for this popular program and unsure about whether we will be able to offer the program this spring.

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - MIDDLE AND SECONDARY LEARNING

Strategic Guidance

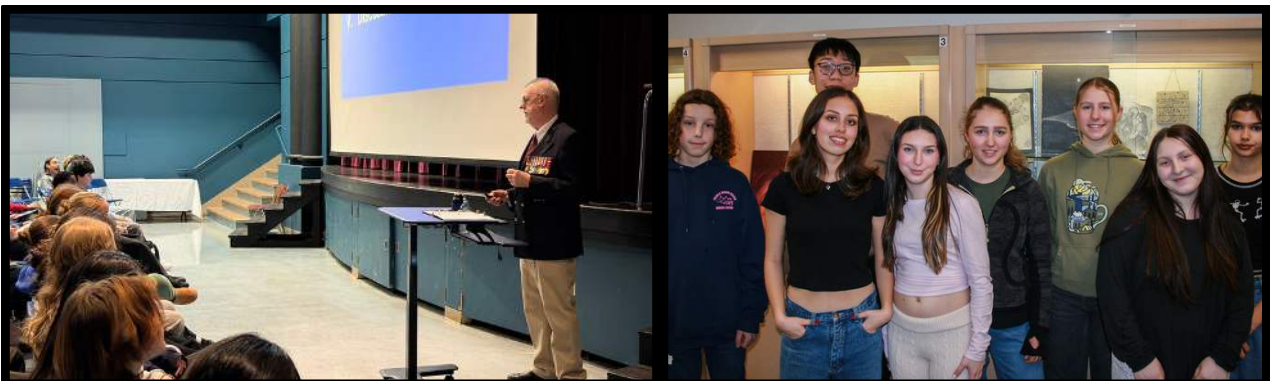
- Safety and Well-Being: Enhanced threat and risk assessment training strengthens our capacity to protect students and staff.
- Student Success: Expanded career pathways and personalized learning opportunities support improved graduation and post-secondary transition rates.

Highlights

- **Middle & Secondary School Growth Plan Projects Overview (2025–2026)** - The 2025–2026 Middle and Secondary Growth Plan proposals reflect strong alignment with district priorities in learning, equity, relationships, safety, and integrity, emphasizing personalized learning, inclusive practices, consistent assessment, and student agency. Schools submitted focused plans tailored to their specific contexts, with clear strategies to improve engagement, well-being, and instructional coherence. Primary focus areas include: enhancing online course quality at NIDES, increasing engagement in PHE and strengthening UDL/RTI practices at G.P. Vanier, deepening authentic assessment and ethical AI use, improving Humanities assessment clarity, and expanding classroom management supports at Cumberland.

School Highlights:

- **Mark R. Isfeld Secondary Humanities Week** - This event provided students with a dynamic range of interdisciplinary learning experiences tied to the theme “Raise Your Voice!” Throughout the week, students engaged with professionals from fields such as law, urban planning, economic development and digital media through Living Library sessions and the Multilogue Speaker Series. Activities included humanities-focused career exploration, a student Poetry Slam, introductory Model United Nations programming for Grades 8 and 9, and Fine Arts Friday featuring guest artists.



Pic: Humanities Week at Isfeld and artists launch Comox Youth Council Art Show

- **Comox Youth Group Exhibits Exceptional Student Art** - The Comox Youth Council held a new exhibition of exciting, original artworks by Mark R. Isfeld and Highland Secondary students. Displayed at the Comox Community Centre, this event provided an excellent opportunity to showcase local youth talents to a wider audience. (continues)

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - MIDDLE AND SECONDARY LEARNING

- **NIDES Compass Program** - This quarter, the Compass Program strengthened its flexible and personalized learning approach through hands-on, cross-curricular experiences. Students completed interdisciplinary design projects, including robotics builds and the construction of fold-up wooden chairs. Community-based learning included sewing, hiking, beach exploration, and climbing at WIP, helping students build connections and confidence through real-world experiences.

Career Education

- The Careers Department continued to broaden hands-on career exploration across the district. The team collaborated with Mark R. Isfeld Secondary to launch a semester-long Health Exploratory Program for Grade 11 students, including a pilot partnership with VIHA that provides hospital volunteer placements and opportunities to learn directly from local health professionals.
- To support younger learners, the department delivered Career Focus Days that introduced middle years students to pathways in automotive, carpentry, guiding and tourism, plumbing, and industrial design. Partnerships with K'ómoks First Nation led to Lunch and Learn events for Indigenous learners, highlighting opportunities in Trades, Tourism and Entrepreneurship, and Health and Education. Work also continued on the e-Prentice Hairdressing Program, which will enable participating students to earn their Level 1 SkilledTradesBC certification.



Pic: Career Education and K'ómoks First Nation trades focused career day

- The Careers team further expanded experiential opportunities by bringing SPARK events to schools across the district in collaboration with Indigenous Tourism and Experience Comox Valley. In addition, middle years students were supported through job-shadow experiences designed with local employers, including certification options that help build résumés and prepare students for their first jobs. (continues)

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - MIDDLE AND SECONDARY LEARNING CONTINUES

School District Calendar Committee

- The School District Calendar Committee brought forward two key items this quarter. First, the Board of Education approved a Non-Instructional Day on May 15, 2026, dedicated to Indigenous learning for all staff. Second, the district has launched public consultation on the proposed school calendars for 2026–2027, 2027–2028, and 2028–2029.
- Developed collaboratively by representatives from Senior Leadership, CVPVPA, CDTA, CUPE, DPAC, and a Trustee, the draft calendars outline Instructional Days, Professional Development Days, Non-Instructional Days, vacation periods, and statutory holidays in alignment with Ministry requirements. Community feedback is being collected from February 11 to March 14 via the district's online survey.

Erase Training:

- On March 11, 2026, district representatives will participate in Advanced Threat & Risk Assessment (Level 2) training offered through the ERASE initiative. This session builds on the Basic Threat & Risk Assessment model and strengthens staff capacity in advanced Digital Threat Assessment (DTA), strategic interviewing, and language analysis, while deepening understanding of factors that influence threat assessment at each stage.
- The training includes interactive case scenarios and tabletop exercises to support practical application. Schools are asked to register one principal or vice-principal and one school counsellor to ensure multidisciplinary participation.
- On November 4, the district also hosted a Critical Incident Response & Management course facilitated by ERASE. This training equipped district and school critical incident teams, administrators, educators, counsellors, Safe School Coordinators, and community partners with the skills to respond effectively to school-based critical incidents using a trauma-informed, unified, and equity-focused approach.
- The session highlighted how trauma, school climate, and systems thinking shape decision-making and clarified the roles of school and district response teams when managing complex situations such as multi-site events, cultural considerations, media attention, and police involvement.

Challenges

- One ongoing area of focus is ensuring parents and students are aware of the information, resources, and supports available through the [ERASE initiative](#) and our district's [Emergency Preparedness](#).
- We encourage parents to sign up for our Crisis Notification Network. Parents can be informed of emergency situations via the School's [Crisis Notification Network](#) (phone or electronic notifications).

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INCLUSIVE LEARNING UPDATE

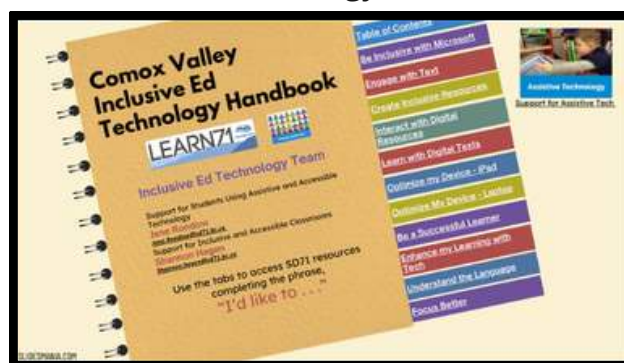
Strategic Guidance

- **Inclusion:** The work of the Inclusive Education department is guided by all design principles of the Strategic Plan to create and develop inclusive, wholistic, and personalized learning environments. The specific focuses to highlight this quarter is the work in the areas of social emotional learning and student-centred assessment for our diverse and exceptional learners.



Highlights

- The Inclusive Education department has introduced a new logo that reflects the vision of inclusive practices throughout the district. The multiple colours represent the diversity of all learners. The arrangement of the figures in a circle represent unity, collaboration, and belonging. Further, the circle acknowledges Indigenous values of equality, dynamic knowledge, and the interconnectedness of all things. The arms of the figures are posed in an embrace, fitting with our vision of embracing diversity.
- Several Counsellors have recently benefited from Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid. ASIST teaches participants to recognize when someone may have thoughts of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety.
- The Inclusive Education assistive technology teachers are continuing their workshop series "Enhance Student Learning with Inclusive Tech Tools". This team has also created an Inclusive Ed Technology Handbook.



- District teachers have presented to the Competency Based IEP Provincial working group on piloting an AI agent for supporting the creation of learning goals and objectives. This initiative has been well received at the provincial level and our work will continue throughout this spring. (continues)

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

INCLUSIVE LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

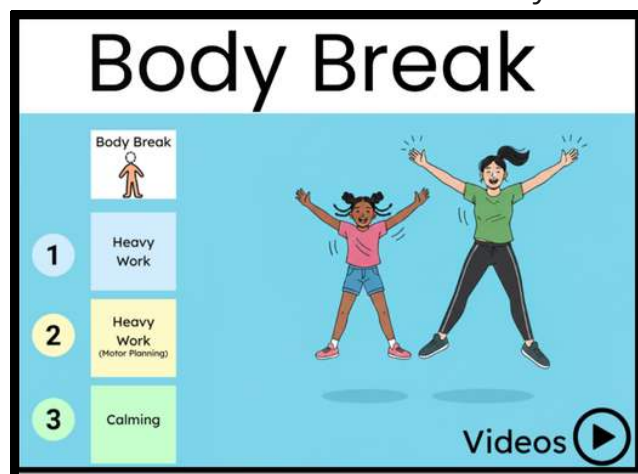
Highlights

- The end of February marked the launch of the Inclusive Play Program where students across the district come together to play and learn with physical activity once a week in a supported fun environment.



Pic: Inclusive Play program at Comox Recreation Centre

- In collaboration with our Assistive Technology Team, our Occupational Therapists (OTs) have created a video series to demonstrate body break activities.



- BCPSEA and PSEC provided approval for the district to proceed with a Labour Market Adjustment to increase the wage for an ASL Interpreter. We are hopeful that the increased competitive rate will encourage qualified applicants.
- Fine Motor kits have been designed and created for our developmental early learners. The materials for these kits will be easily accessible and downloadable through Learn 71. This was a collaborative project between our OTs and Courtenay Elementary Learning Support. (continues)

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

INCLUSIVE LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

Highlights

- We are currently running our third series of EA training sessions where EAs are provided with opportunities to learn from our Inclusive Education Department staff in a variety of areas over a 12-week period.
- Erin Higginbottom, K'ómoks First Nation Manager of Education and Keisha Everson, Indigenous Education Council Chair were guests at an Inclusive Education Department Staff meeting where the opportunity was presented for a reciprocal sharing of information.



Pic: Keisha Everson offers perspectives on sharing information

- The UBC's Dr. Carly Christensen recently provided half-day workshops inviting school administrators and teacher-leaders to reframe how student behaviour is interpreted and addressed, using a lens that is both equity-driven and disability-affirming.
- The February count to submit to the Ministry of Education and Child Care has recently been completed showing a continued increase in student designations.

Challenges

- We continue to have two psychologist vacancies. We are keeping up with assessment demands through our consultation process and through contracting for services.
- We are actively working on hiring for an ASL Interpreter position with our newly established criteria and wage.
- We have filled all EA positions, however we continue to advertise and hire for casual/on call and medical vacancies are difficult to replace.
- Limited physical spaces in some of our schools makes it challenging at times to provide flexible learning environments.

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

INDIGENOUS LEARNING UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

LEA Guiding Principles:

- Put in place practices which will ensure K'ómoks student success.
- Promote a common understanding of K'ómoks cultural values and traditions by school and Board staff.

Design Principles:

- Decolonizing and Indigenizing and Land Based Learning

Enhancement Agreement:

- To increase every Indigenous student's sense of belonging, cultural identity and self-esteem.
- To Increase the academic success of all Indigenous students through personalized learning.
- To increase the awareness and understanding of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit history, traditions and culture for all students.
- To increase Indigenous students' skills, qualities and confidence in leadership.

Equity in Action

- Following the Equity Scanning Team meetings in October and December, where emerging themes from the collected data were reviewed, an opportunity to deepen the analysis was identified. This created space to invite Gerald Morton to join the circle in February. As a recently retired Director of Data Use with the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Gerald brought deep knowledge and experience to support the work. Gerald presented data sets and themes to support further discussion, and the team began shaping an action plan to guide the next steps. This Scanning Team is taking the time to do this work in a culturally safe way, alongside a commitment to more detailed and ongoing analysis of the data. (continues)



Pic: Click to watch video about the Equity Scanning Team

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

INDIGENOUS LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

Local Education Agreement (LEA)

- K'ómoks First Nation Student Success Teacher, Natasha Rainkie, partnered with KFN and SD71 Career Education to host the first of three Indigenous Lunch and Learn sessions focusing on trades career pathways. Indigenous students from around the district came together on January 15th to meet local professionals and community members, with trades backgrounds, to talk about the many pathways available for future careers. A second event focused on health care pathways is planned for March.



Pics: Trades focused career event in January at KFN

- Nala'atsi school gratefully hosted Karver Everson, Junior Henderson, Jalen Henderson-Price, and Mathew Everson as they practiced their ancestral knowledge through carving a totem. Staff and students participated in circle, sharing and talking about identity and intergenerational learning with the carvers. Students had opportunities to join the carvers and learn about traditional and modern techniques while watching the totem take shape over four weeks. Courtenay elementary staff and students were also able to come and meet the carvers for this hands-on learning opportunity. (continues)



Pics: Nala'atsi students have been learning from master carvers on-site at school

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

INDIGENOUS LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

- The Indigenous Education Council hosted an engagement event at Glacier View School that welcomed a total of 35 participants, including Indigenous youth, families, and community partners. The gathering focused on literacy, Indigenous books, and physical literacy, and featured Carla Voyageur, a Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw and Nisga'a author, who read her children's book *The Princess and the Pants*.



Pic: Carla Voyageur reads to families at Glacier View



Pic: The Indigenous Education Council hosted an engagement night at Glacier View

Challenges

- Despite considerable recruitment and retention efforts, we continue to experience ISW staffing gaps. Further, we continue to search for an additional Indigenous Student Success Teacher position.
- Competing priorities can naturally add complexity to the important work of Indigenous Support Workers. The primary mandate of Indigenous Education is to serve and support Indigenous students and their families in meaningful and enhanced ways. At the same time, Indigenous staff are frequently relied upon, informally and formally, to offer individual, school-level, and systemwide guidance on decolonizing and Indigenizing practices. While this guidance is deeply valued, it often extends beyond the core responsibilities of the ISW role, adding additional layers to an already dynamic and complex workload.

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

EARLY LEARNING UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Decolonizing and Indigenizing
- Land-Based Learning
- Experiential Learning
- Social Emotional Learning
- Flexible Learning Environments
- Inclusion
- Personalized Learning



Pics: Dr. Sarah Aiono speaks on importance of play and Airport PLC Fresh Air Fridays

Highlights

February Professional Development Day

- 75 educators participated
- Full – day learning with Dr. Sarah Aiono, from Longworth Education, NZ
- Focus: The Power of Play – Reclaiming Joy, Connection and Neuro-affirming Practice in a Post-COVID Classroom

Pedagogy of Play Primary Inquiry

- 45 educators participating
- 11 school teams involved
- Includes 3 release-time inquiry afternoons
- Celebration of Learning scheduled for May

Pathways Learning Community (Formerly Primary Learning Community)

- Second K-3 cohort begins September 2026
- Program currently has waiting list
- Community days (Fridays) strengthen connection, inquiry and place-based learning (continues)

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

EARLY LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

Highlights

Child Care on School Grounds – Lunch & Learn Series

- 4 Lunch and Learn Sessions held
- Topic covered:
 - SD71 Strategic Plan – Lisa Pedersen-Skene, District Principal Early Learning and Child Care
 - Inclusion Policies – Lindsay Friis, CVCDA
 - Welcoming Immigrant Families, Ran Dickman, SD71 ELL/Multicultural Family Support Worker
 - Licensing – Candy Anderberg, Regional Senior Licensing Officer

StrongStart

- Participation continues to grow.
- This growth demonstrates families' need for accessible, play-based early learning opportunities for their children.
- Supports connection, relationships and belonging in the school.



Pics: StrongStart learning with structures at Airport and creating art in Cumberland

Challenges

- Uncertain over Ministry funding for the District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care position next year is creating challenges for long-term planning, sustaining initiatives and supporting early learning programs.
- Increasing participation in StrongStart makes intentional family engagement more complex and may create capacity pressures in program spaces.

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Values: Learning, Relationships, Safety, Integrity
- Design Principles:
 - Experiential Learning
 - Inclusion
 - Decolonizing and Indigenizing



Pics: Inclusive education climbing event for K-7 students with type 1 diabetes

Highlights

- Communications work this quarter supported district priorities through storytelling that highlights student learning, inclusive programming, Indigenous knowledge sharing, and community partnerships. Particular focus was placed on experiential learning opportunities, career exploration initiatives, and Indigenous cultural learning taking place across the district.

Strategic Plan Visibility & Storytelling - Indigenous learning and experiential education

- A highlight this quarter was a visit to Nala'atsi School, where students had the opportunity to witness the carving of a new totem pole.
- This story was shared through district social media and generated strong engagement, reaching more than 17,000 views, with over 300 reactions and 39 shares.
- Additional Indigenous learning and student voice story shared this quarter included:
 - Voices of Truth student project from G.P. Vanier Secondary – video posted to socials.
 - Coverage of the K'ómoks First Nation and Comox Valley Schools Careers Event, which focused on careers in the skilled trades. (continues)

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE CONTINUES - HIGHLIGHTS

Program Registration Campaign (2026–2027)

- December and January brought extensive communications work to prepare and launch the district’s kindergarten and program registration campaign for the 2026–2027 school year. Work included:
 - Updating and rebuilding web materials for registration information
 - Preparing program-specific promotional materials.
 - Launching a coordinated communications timeline including news releases, web stories, and social media posts.
 - Producing and launching promotional videos for the Pathways Learning.
- Registration for kindergarten and other programs opened in early January and ran through late February, concluding with NIDES program registration. Engagement and registrations across programs are up compared with the previous year, reflecting strong interest from families in district programs and learning pathways.



Pic: Click the picture to watch a video of our ENTER program visit.

2026–2027 Preliminary Budget Consultation

- Communications worked closely with the Finance Department to launch the district’s 2026–2027 preliminary budget consultation process. Communications actions included:
 - Development and updating of budget consultation webpages.
 - Launch of four separate surveys to gather input from staff, families, and the broader community.
 - News release announcing the consultation process.
 - Email notifications to parents and staff.
 - Web and social media promotion to increase participation.
- Survey participation was up by over 70 percent compared with last year, reflecting increased engagement in the district’s budget consultation process. (continues)

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE - CONTINUES HIGHLIGHTS

Three-Year School Calendar Consultation

- The district launched consultation on draft school calendars for the next three school years. Communications support included:
 - Development of the online survey tool.
 - News release and website content explaining the calendar options.
 - Promotion through school newsletters and district communications channels.
 - Message distributed to all families.
- The survey was open from February 12 and until March 14.

Crisis Communications

- Communications supported senior leadership during the Tumbler Ridge incident, providing timely and coordinated messaging to staff and families. Actions included:
 - Drafting and distributing initial communications to families and staff.
 - Preparing follow-up messages as more information became available.
 - Coordinating with district leadership to ensure consistent messaging and support for the school community.
- This work highlighted the importance of rapid, clear communication during sensitive situations affecting school communities.

Good News Stories

- Positive news stories continue to be shared to highlight student success and district initiatives. Recent highlights include:
 - Feeding Futures program profile, celebrating the district's efforts to support student nutrition and well-being.
 - Promotions and coverage for districtwide events such as the District Musical, Skills Canada North Islands, wrestling and basketball successes.



Pics: Brooklyn students at Skills Canada and Comox Valley Wrestlers Island Medalists

Challenges

- High volume of concurrent initiatives: Winter months included several major communications initiatives running simultaneously, including registration campaigns, budget consultation, calendar consultations, and crisis communications.

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

BUSINESS SERVICES

FINANCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Finance continues to strive to improve financial reporting and planning for potential risks and challenges to ensure business continuity.

Highlights

- The Accounts division continues to support the schools, departments, programs and other employees with recurring services and needs as they arise. A presentation of Financial Administrative procedures was offered at the CUPE support staff Professional Development Day 2026.
- The internal school accounting review site visits took place at both Lake Trail Community School and Ecole Mark R. Isfeld Secondary. Calendar year-end reporting for payroll and benefits was completed, as well, all employee T4's were issued.
- Several financial reports were completed during the time period along with work relating to the 2025-26 Amended Annual budget completion and initial 2026-27 Annual Budget preparations:
 - 2025/26 Event Driven Reporting
 - 2025 Pension Reporting
 - 2025 T4 & T4A Reporting
 - 2025/26 Q2 Board Financial Report
 - 2025/26 Amended Annual Budget
 - 2025/26 Q2 Employment Data and Analysis Report (EDAS)
 - 2025/26 Ministry Feeding Futures and National School Food Program expenditures
 - 2026/27 Enrolment Forecasting

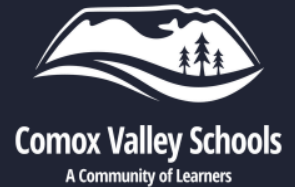
Challenges

- The Finance department continues to be challenged with supporting employee changes at schools and departments and has been operating below capacity due to staff reductions (employee medical leaves). Unfilled Senior Leadership roles and temporary adjustments to senior staff responsibilities has also been impacting financial operations and ability to provide timely financial information.



Pic: Preliminary Budget planning for 2026/27 runs through spring

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)



OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Learning: Facility and systems upgrades support inclusive, holistic, and personalized learning environments that enhance student development.
- Accessibility improvements and culturally responsive space enhancements reflect the district's commitment to equitable, inclusive learning environments where all students feel seen and valued.
- Safety: Continued preventative maintenance, inspections, and upgrades to support safe, reliable school environments.
- Integrity: Long-range planning and transparent energy reporting demonstrate accountability and responsible stewardship of district resources.
- Relationships: Ongoing collaboration with community partners to support shared initiatives across the Comox Valley.

Highlights

- Awarded consultant and began work on the District's Long-Range Facilities Plan.
- Continued partnership work on a Regional Sports Field Allocation Policy.

Accessibility & Safety

- Safe & Active Schools Project (with City of Courtenay) – Ongoing data gathering and consultation for Courtenay Elementary, École Puntledge Park Elementary, and Valley View Elementary.
- District-wide – Annual roof cleaning, portable inspections, and renewal of operating permits.
- Phase I Commercial Oven Ventilation Upgrades – Arden Elementary, Courtenay Elementary, and École Puntledge Park Elementary.
- Arden Elementary – P.A. System Upgrade.
- Lake Trail Community School – Install of second door in Indigenous Education space.
- Mark R. Isfeld Secondary – portable access upgrades.

Environmental Improvements

- Aspen Park Elementary – stepped wall, invasive species removal, and drainage improvements; ongoing.
- Courtenay Elementary – 'Nature Park' planning stage (BC Parks Foundation Grant); ongoing.
- Collaborating with Food Service staff to provide compost collection at 'Universal Lunch Program' sites; ongoing.
- Annual tree remediation; ongoing. (continues)

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)

OPERATIONS UPDATE - CONTINUES

Building, Space & Grounds Enhancements

- G.P. Vanier Secondary – Relocation & install of two portable classrooms.
- École Puntledge Park Elementary – Washrooms remediation & upgrade.
- Courtenay Elementary – front drainage improvements; ongoing.
- Highland Secondary – addition of flexible tables in pods.
- Indigenous Education – cedar wall installation.
- Navigate/NIDES – hallway paint.

Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

- Navigate/NIDES – Phase II Building Envelope Upgrade; ongoing.
- G.P. Vanier Secondary – Replacement of X3 Make-Up Air Units; ongoing.
- District-wide – School Energy Report Cards.
- Operations Quarterly Energy Management Performance Update.

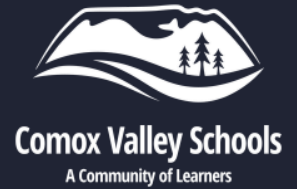


Pic: Example of School Energy Report Card

Challenges

- Staffing: Ongoing difficulty maintaining custodial and maintenance staffing levels due to medical leaves and retirements; recruiting skilled full-time employees remains challenging.
- Demand Repairs: Increased need for reactive repairs in aging buildings and systems – diverts resources away from proactive improvements.
- Modernization Constraints: Mid-20th-century facilities limit the district's ability to create flexible, 21st-century learning spaces without major capital investment, resulting in slow, incremental upgrades.
- Capital Funding Limitations: Provincial capital funding is both limited and highly competitive, reducing SD71's capacity to advance modernization, enhance accessibility, and align facilities with evolving learning needs real-time.

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Flexible Learning Environments & Digitally Enhanced Learning.
- This quarter focused on initiatives that strengthen the district's technology strategy and future-ready capabilities.
- We initiated the implementation of a new centralized data-warehouse platform, which will unify access to district data and support modern analytics.
- At the same time, we continued advancing our cybersecurity posture, aligning our practices with industry standards and reducing risk across the organization.

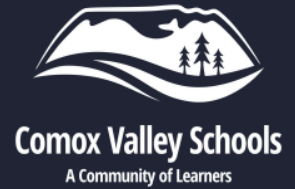
Highlights

- IT Services is now fully staffed across all positions.
- Most technical support work from Inclusive Education has been transitioned to IT Services. This change is intended to improve efficiency in device deployment, annual refresh processes, and overall school support.
- Completed district-wide rollout of multi-factor authentication (MFA) for all staff, adding an essential layer of protection against unauthorized access and credential theft.
- The MAPLE (Management and Analytics for People, Learning, and Education) data-warehouse project advanced through early design phases, and foundational environment setup is now in progress. The initial launch of MAPLE is expected later this spring.
- This year's staff laptop refresh will run Windows 11, with full district transition on track for completion by September 2026. The Windows 11 transition positions us to support modern learning applications and accessibility tools.
- Two schools experienced internet outages. Backup satellite internet was deployed, allowing us to validate and fine-tune these redundant systems while services were restored.

Challenges

- Inflationary pressures have significantly impacted technology procurement. Early 2026 has seen steep price increases in computers and smartphones.
- Hardware costs have risen approximately 20% and are expected to continue climbing.
- Supply delays have also resurfaced, echoing pandemic-era constraints. Current projections indicate that cost and supply stabilization may not occur until 2028.

District Progress Report (Winter 2026)



HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Values: Learning, Equity, Relationships, Safety and Integrity

Highlights

- We are in the process of creating an internal Restorative Justice Resource Group to help guide discussions and planning for how restorative practices can be integrated into our district.
- We have partnered with CUPE to plan a Support Staff dedicated professional development day with keynote speakers aligned with our Strategic Plan and workshops designed to offer something for every classification.
- We have partnered with the CDTA on a Wellness Committee. Our first initiative was a focus on Kindness in February. The committee will provide a theme each month and volunteers at the schools will promote the theme at their schools and it will be echoed in the information shared on the Employee Web Centre. The committee will expand to include representatives from the CVPVPA and CUPE for the start of the 2026/27 school year.
- HR has completed in-person visits to all but the island schools, meeting teachers to walk through the staffing process, provide clarity on timelines and expectations, and address any questions or individual circumstances raising during the visit.
- Preparations for spring staffing are underway with seniority calculations and reports being updated and finalized this quarter.

Challenges

- Support Staff collective bargaining process has been paused until such time that the provincial table concludes.
- HR capacity is limited due to a critical vacancy and a team of newly onboarded HR representatives who still require significant training and support, limiting the department's ability to drive strategic initiatives across the organization
- While the district is not feeling the impact of the teacher shortage to the degree they are in the lower mainland and in northern communities we are struggling to find well qualified and experienced secondary math and science teachers.