

BOARD MEETING IN REVIEW

The Board of Education for Comox Valley Schools held its Regular Public Board Meeting on May 26, 2026 online due to an emergency impacting water infrastructure in Comox and Courtenay.

Board Chairperson Update - Michelle Waite

Board Chairperson Michelle Waite opened the meeting by reflecting on the district's Indigenous Brilliance Day of Learning held earlier this month, describing it as a powerful and meaningful professional learning experience for staff across the district. Chair Waite also highlighted the strong work taking place through school growth plans across Comox Valley Schools, noting the energy, collaboration and innovation she witnessed during recent school presentations.

Chairperson Waite also spoke about the district's expanded budget consultation process this year, which included earlier engagement with students, rightsholders, partner groups and the wider community. She thanked everyone involved for supporting a process designed to better align financial decisions with the district's strategic priorities.



Superintendent's Update - Dr. Jeremy Morrow

Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Morrow began his remarks by thanking students, staff and families for their flexibility and support during the temporary water-use restrictions earlier in the day connected to the Comox Valley Regional District sewer leak response.

Dr. Morrow then highlighted several recent celebrations and accomplishments across the district, including the graduation of 25 international students representing 11 countries, the district's Indigenous Brilliance Day of Learning, and the third annual Inclusive Sports Festival, which welcomed 135 students in Grades 3 to 7 and brought together families, volunteers, Educational Assistants, staff and community partners in support of inclusive recreation and connection.

Additional highlights shared during the Superintendent's report included congratulations to Jennifer Johnson from Airport Elementary's StrongStart program, who was recognized by Métis Nation British Columbia with the Child Care Provider Honouring Métis Culture in Early Learning Award; continued Big House visits for students and staff at the Kumugwe Big House on K'ómoks First Nation territory; and congratulations to the Mark R. Isfeld Secondary senior girls soccer team, which advanced to provincials with an undefeated 20-0 season. Dr. Morrow also recognized the recent Hackergal 2026 Hackathon hosted at the Board Office, where approximately 40 girls and gender-diverse students explored coding, teamwork and innovation. Special congratulations were extended to Aspen Park students Kina and Aaron, whose project was selected as a national Hackergal winner.



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BOARD BUSINESS

May 2026

Board meeting highlights continue

Budget Bylaw for 2026-2027 approved by Board

During the meeting, trustees approved the 2026-27 annual budget bylaw in the amount of \$173.4 million following months of consultation and engagement. Board and staff discussions also focused on long-term financial planning, future operational reviews and continued collaboration with rightsholders and partner groups as the district prepares for ongoing financial pressures tied to flat enrolment and rising costs.

Board approves school fees for 2026-2027

Trustees also approved the 2026-27 school fee schedules for secondary schools and reaffirmed the district's financial hardship policy to help ensure students are not excluded from courses, programs or activities due to financial barriers.

Indigenous Education Council Update

Trustee Cristi May Sacht shared updates from the Indigenous Education Council, including the upcoming first District Indigenous Graduation Celebration at the Filberg Centre on June 6 and the upcoming unveiling of Highland Secondary's new logo designed by former Highland graduate Karver Everson.

Committee work underway

Several policy initiatives also moved forward through the Ad Hoc Policy Committee process. Trustees approved revisions to the district's Equity and Non-discrimination policy and advanced draft Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct and Sanctuary Schools policies for partner and rightsholder feedback in June.

The Board also received an accessibility update highlighting work underway through the district's Accessibility Committee. Staff shared updates on accessibility audits completed at seven schools in partnership with Spark BC, ongoing consultation with students, families and community members, and efforts to prioritize future accessibility improvements across district schools and worksites.

The next Open Committee of the Whole meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2026.

Board Members

Michelle Waite, Chairperson (Lazo North)

Sarah Jane Howe, Vice Chairperson (Village of Cumberland)

Cristi May Sacht (Puntledge, Black Creek)

Susan L Leslie (Town of Comox)

Janice Caton (City of Courtenay)

Shannon Aldinger (City of Courtenay)

Chelsea McCannel-Keene (Baynes Sound, Hornby & Denman Islands)





COMOX VALLEY SCHOOLS DISTRICT NEWS

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Indigenous Brilliance Day of Learning bring all-staff together at GP Vanier



Earlier this month, staff from across Comox Valley Schools gathered for the district's Indigenous Brilliance Day of Learning, a district-wide professional learning day focused on learning alongside Indigenous knowledge holders, educators and community members. The day opened with a powerful keynote from Carolyn Roberts and featured a wide range of workshops, cultural teachings and learning opportunities grounded in Indigenous perspectives, relationships and ways of knowing.

Sessions explored topics connected to language, culture, land-based learning, storytelling, wellness, Truth and Reconciliation, and Indigenous approaches to teaching and learning. Staff also had opportunities to learn directly from Indigenous facilitators, knowledge keepers and community members from across the region, helping deepen understanding and strengthen relationships throughout the district.

District leaders shared appreciation for the many Indigenous presenters, facilitators, organizers and volunteers whose teachings, experiences and leadership helped make the day possible. The event reflected the district's ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and to creating meaningful learning opportunities that support Indigenous brilliance, voice and ways of knowing across Comox Valley Schools.

StrongStart educator honoured with award

Congratulations to Comox Valley Schools' Jennifer Johnson on being recognized by Métis Nation British Columbia as the recipient of the Child Care Provider Honouring Métis Culture in Early Learning Award.

Jennifer was recognized for creating a welcoming and inclusive StrongStart environment at Airport Elementary that celebrates Métis culture while helping children and families feel connected, valued and supported. In addition to her work with young learners and families, she has also helped build a partnership with Highland Secondary's Child Development class, providing students with valuable hands-on learning experiences.

Jennifer will also be recognized this October at the Métis Early Years Conference in Victoria. Congratulations, Jennifer, and thank you for the care and connection you bring to children and families across our district.





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Hackergal brings together girls to code and Aspen's team wins national award!



The energy in the room was electric at the recent Hackergal 2026 Hackathon hosted at the Comox Valley Schools Board Office. Approximately 40 girls and gender-diverse students from across the district came together for a full day of coding, creativity, collaboration and problem solving as they explored how storytelling and technology can spark change.

Working in teams, students in Grades 6 to 9 used Scratch coding to create interactive games and stories focused on social impact. Throughout the day, students supported one another, shared ideas, overcame challenges and built confidence in a welcoming and inspiring environment. Students also had the opportunity to develop their presentation and “pitch” skills while strengthening communication, teamwork and leadership abilities.

Adding to the excitement, a team of students from Aspen Park Elementary was recently named a national winner in the Hackergal Hackathon. Chosen from hundreds of submissions across Canada, the students were recognized for their thoughtful and well-developed coding project by the national judging panel. Comox Valley Schools extends thanks to the district’s teacher-librarians, district staff and the Hackergal team for helping create such an inspiring and empowering learning opportunity for students.



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Isfeld Sr. Girls soccer team off to Provincials after 20-0 season



The senior girls soccer team at Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School is heading to the BC AA Girls Soccer Provincial Championships after completing a remarkable undefeated 20-0-0 season. Throughout the season, the team captured several major accomplishments, including winning the UVic Team Sales Tournament and the Carihi Investors Group Challenge Tournament for the first time in school history while competing against many of the province's top AAA programs.

The team also claimed the AA North Islands Championship for the fourth consecutive year and earned the AA Islands Championship for only the second time in school history.

Comox Valley Schools extends congratulations to the players, coaches and the entire Isfeld school community on an incredible season and wishes the team the very best at provincials in Kamloops.

2nd annual Enduro race brings riders to Cumberland

Comox Valley Schools recently hosted its second annual Enduro Mountain Bike Race in Cumberland, welcoming approximately 130 student riders from 18 schools across Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast. The event brought together students in Grades 8 to 12 for a day of competition, connection and outdoor learning on Cumberland's renowned trail network.

The race highlighted not only athletic skill and determination, but also the strong partnerships that help create meaningful experiential learning opportunities for students. Comox Valley Schools extends thanks to staff, volunteers and community partners, including United Riders of Cumberland, Mosaic Forest Management and the Village of Cumberland, for helping make the event possible.

