



Comox Valley Schools
A Community of Learners

District Progress Report (Spring 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 Chairperson Michelle Waite

Executive summary

- This quarterly 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:** 2026/27 Capital Bylaw; 2026-27 Annual Budget Bylaw
- **Approved:** Policy template for Board policy format consistency
- **Approved:** Revised Policy 24 Equity and Non-discrimination
- **Approved:** 2026-27 School Fee Schedules
- **Approved:** Three Years District Calendars (2026/27, 2027/28, 2028/29)
- **Received:** How Are We Doing Report, Local Education Agreement Update; 2024-25 Enhanced Student Learning Report Ministry Response, Major Capital Projects Update; Financials – Q3; Accessibility Report; Response to Gender-based Violence Working Committee Report; 2026 May Enrolment Update; 2025 Carbon Neutral Action Report Update
- **Received:** draft new policies – Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct; Sanctuary Schools



Pic: Student Voice 2025-2026 met throughout the school year

Regional and Trustee engagement

- Trustees attended the spring Vancouver Island Trustees Association (VISTA) session, hosted by Cowichan and Gulf Islands School Districts.
- Trustees attended annual BC School Trustee Association learning sessions and annual general meeting. This opportunity focuses both of governance of the association and sets provincial advocacy actions and direction.
 - Trustees engaged in sessions and represented the CVS Board of Education in roles with BCPSEA and BCSTA, contributing to provincial conversations and decision-making.

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Board of Education Update - Continues

Board learning sessions

- **Long Range Facilities Plan:** Partner session with trustees, IEC, DPAC, CDTA, CUPE, CVPVPA.

Public Engagement

- **Budget Consultation Session:** In-person opportunity to review Budget Survey Feedback & Enrollment Projection and Impact.

Comox Valley Schools community involvement

- **Trustee learning opportunities:** CVS Professional Development Day, Indigenous Brilliance; cultural learning opportunities at Kumugwe alongside student and alongside educators; School growth plan learning celebration.
- **Ongoing community roles:** Trustees 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 CVS committee meetings.



Pic: Carolyn Roberts keynote for Indigenous Brilliance Day of Learning

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 we reach the end of another school year, I continue to be inspired by the learning, growth and connections taking place throughout Comox Valley Schools.

This spring has been marked by many moments that reflect the values and priorities of our district. From innovative learning opportunities and student achievements to meaningful community engagement and important conversations about the future of our schools, it has been a busy and rewarding season.

One of the most significant initiatives this spring has been our ongoing budget consultation process. We expanded opportunities for engagement and heard from more members of our school community than ever before. I want to sincerely thank the many students, families, staff and community members who took the time to participate in surveys, attend engagement sessions and share their perspectives. Your feedback plays an important role in helping us make informed decisions that support student success. I would also like to thank our staff teams across the district whose dedication and thoughtful work help bring the budget process to life each year.

This spring also provided an opportunity for staff to come together for our Indigenous Brilliance Day of Learning on May 15. We were honoured to welcome author, educator and Indigenous leader Carolyn Roberts, along with many Indigenous knowledge holders and facilitators who shared their teachings, perspectives and experiences. The day reflected our ongoing commitment to learning, relationship-building, and advancing Truth and Reconciliation through meaningful action.

Another milestone this year was the district's Indigenous Graduation Celebration, held at the Filberg Centre. It was a privilege to celebrate Indigenous graduates alongside their families, supporters, Elders, staff and community partners. The event was filled with pride, culture, connection and joy, and it represented an important step forward in honouring Indigenous student success within our district. I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to our Indigenous Education team, Indigenous support workers, the Indigenous Graduation Committee and the many volunteers and partners who worked together to create such a meaningful and memorable celebration.

Throughout this report you will see many examples of the remarkable learning taking place across Comox Valley Schools. Whether through Indigenous learning, career exploration, athletics, the arts, outdoor education, inclusive programming or academic achievement, our students continue to demonstrate curiosity, resilience, creativity and leadership.

As another school year comes to a close, I also want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the graduating Class of 2026. Whether your next step is post-secondary education, training, employment or a new adventure, we are proud of all you have accomplished.

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SECRETARY TREASURER UPDATE

2026/2027 Budget

The Board passed the 26/27 Annual Budget Bylaw at their May 26th meeting. This year's budget process was a lengthy and focused on collaboration and transparency with staff, rightsholders and partner groups. The bylaw can be summarized as follows:

	2027 Annual Budget	2026 Amended Annual Budget
Budget Bylaw Amount		
Operating - Total Expense	139,287,542	139,537,355
Operating - Tangible Capital Assets Purchased	375,000	375,000
Special Purpose Funds - Total Expense	22,111,618	22,456,614
Capital Fund - Total Expense	9,953,490	9,761,519
Capital Fund - Tangible Capital Assets Purchased from Local Capital	1,718,854	2,633,173
Total Budget Bylaw Amount	173,446,504	174,763,661

With flattening enrolment in our schools and inflating costs, the District will continue to be required to make difficult financial decisions over the next several years. In the Fall, staff will conduct several internal program/departments reviews to ensure resources are effectively and efficiently aligned with the Board's strategic direction. These reviews will help inform the 27/28 budget process that will kick off in early 2027.

2026-27 Annual Budget Development Process

Comox Valley Schools



Ad Hoc Policy Committee Updates

The Board's Ad Hoc Policy Committee has been busy over the last several months creating and updating policies and bylaws for the Board's review and consideration. The Committee has been working on the following:

1. Gender-Based Violence & Sexual Misconduct
2. Sanctuary Schools
3. Equity and Non-Discrimination
4. Role of the Board
5. Role of the Superintendent
6. Delegation of Authority
7. Board Committees
8. Trustee Election (bylaw)

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EDUCATION SERVICES

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - ELEMENTARY LEARNING

Strategic Guidance

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

Highlights

Literacy Learning:

- Numeracy Framework field-testing of the district's problem-solving assessments for Grades 3 and 5 is completed, and updates informed by feedback from participating teachers have been incorporated. These assessments are now finalized and will be ready for use in the Fall of 2026.
- The recently developed LRC Math Fair kit includes 10 interactive math activities for families and can be borrowed by schools to use for after school math events that are both engaging and helpful to better understand hands-on numeracy learning. Two schools have hosted successful math fairs this year.
- Many teachers in Grade 3-7 participated in the recent SNAP numeracy assessment workshop, learning about how to interpret student results to inform next steps in teaching and learning.

French Programs:

- This year, 18 students completed the DELF (Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française), an international certification of French proficiency for non-native speakers. This French certification option is available to Core French and Immersion students in all SD71 secondary schools.
- Many engaging French-speaking events are happening across schools, including the ProfAqua hosted French 'magic show', the Big Buddy story book creation collaboration between Isfeld Grade 11 and Robb Road primary students, and Brooklyn's carnival for Core French students.
- The annual year-end French Advisory Council meeting was held on June 15.

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - ELEMENTARY LEARNING CONTINUES Highlights

- **Racial Equity:** A key highlight has been the expansion of anti-racism learning opportunities across the district through classroom collaboration, educator support, community engagement, and professional learning. This included developing anti-racism resource kits and educator guides, creating and supporting lessons on identity, representation, harmful language, belonging, and diversity, and partnering with schools on inquiry-based learning projects. The work was strengthened through participation in district and provincial professional learning opportunities, including equity-focused networks, conferences, and workshops, as well as connection and collaboration with families and community partners, such as the DPAC anti-racism committee and the Comox Valley Jewish Society. Additionally, efforts were focused on development of a district anti-racism resource webpage for educators and continuing to support schools in embedding equity and inclusion throughout teaching and learning.
- On May 19, educators gathered for the Introduction to Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL) session with Joanne Schroeder, CSL facilitator and Director of Strategy and Innovation at UBC's Human Early Learning Partnership. This framework can help educators build personal well-being, strengthen relationships, and apply systems thinking tools to facilitate the ongoing shift toward a more equitable education system. Feedback is being gathered from participants about how CSL can support staff in moving forward with anti-racism work, in addition to potentially other areas, next year.
- On May 25, the district's annual Learning Celebration and Showcase included sharing and networking among numerous collaborative inquiry and school growth plan proposal teams. This event focused on how school teams are taking up implementation of the Strategic Plan for Education and deepening student agency and learning through play- and inquiry-based approaches.



Pics: Learning Celebration and Showcase bring educators together to collaborate

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - ELEMENTARY LEARNING CONTINUES SOGI

- Many schools are celebrating Pride Month with rainbow spirit days, awareness campaigns and events celebrating diversity throughout June.
- Over 45 students in Grades 6-7 from rainbow clubs across the district gathered for the first elementary rainbow celebration to recognize Pride Month and make connections with students in other schools.
- The district partnered with Transparencies to host Roots to Wings, an event for families of trans and gender non-conforming youth, and the event was well attended.

Food Programs

- This quarter, our universal lunch programs served more than 60,000 meals across eight participating schools, continuing to improve equitable access to nourishing food for students throughout the district.
- In April, a commercial compost collection service was introduced, helping divert food waste and pizza boxes from the landfill and supporting more sustainable school food practices.
- Highland Secondary launched its universal lunch program in May, providing a diverse menu of meals five days a week and expanding access to healthy, inclusive food options for secondary students.
- Seventeen schools participated in the Great Big Crunch with 5,390 apples distributed to students in Kindergarten to Grade 7 in celebration of healthy eating, connection, and the shared experience of enjoying fresh, crunchy food together.

Teacher Mentorship Program:

- This year, the new Welcomer role was introduced in schools to ensure that every teacher new to a building is connected with a colleague upon arrival. This support includes an initial welcome email, a school tour, and ongoing check-in and guidance to help new staff feel supported and integrated into the school community. In addition, over 150 teachers engaged in mentorship opportunities through the Onward book club, mentor release time, and classroom observation partnerships.

Challenge

- Although steady progress is being made, ability for school teams to analyze their district literacy and numeracy assessment results to inform their school growth plan goals continues to be a challenge, due to the ongoing slow down in the development of apps and the district database.

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - MIDDLE AND SECONDARY LEARNING

Strategic Guidance

- This spring, the department continued to prioritize professional learning, student engagement, and career exploration through innovative programming and strong community partnerships.

Highlights

- The Teacher Dinner Series that was hosted in collaboration with the CDTA, which created a unique and informal professional learning environment for educators across the district. These gatherings provided meaningful opportunities for staff to connect, share instructional practices, and engage in thoughtful dialogue around teaching and learning. The collegial nature of the series which brought in Tom Schimmer, a speaker with expertise in assessment, fostered stronger cross-school relationships and supported deeper professional reflection, reinforcing the value of relationship-based professional development.
- The Careers Department has also maintained strong momentum in delivering hands-on, experiential learning opportunities for students at all grade levels. A major highlight was the return of the district-wide career exploration event, now reintroduced as "Grade 7 Career Explorations." Throughout the month of May, nearly all Grade 7 students participated in this large-scale initiative, engaging in a wide range of interactive stations designed to build practical skills and spark interest in potential career pathways. Activities included soldering, plumbing, cooking, baking, forestry, guiding and orienteering, metalwork, music, design, and first aid. Feedback from students, staff, and community partners has been overwhelmingly positive, with strong interest from industry partners to continue supporting and expanding the event.



Pic: Grades 7s learned hands-on skills during the Careers Explorations sessions

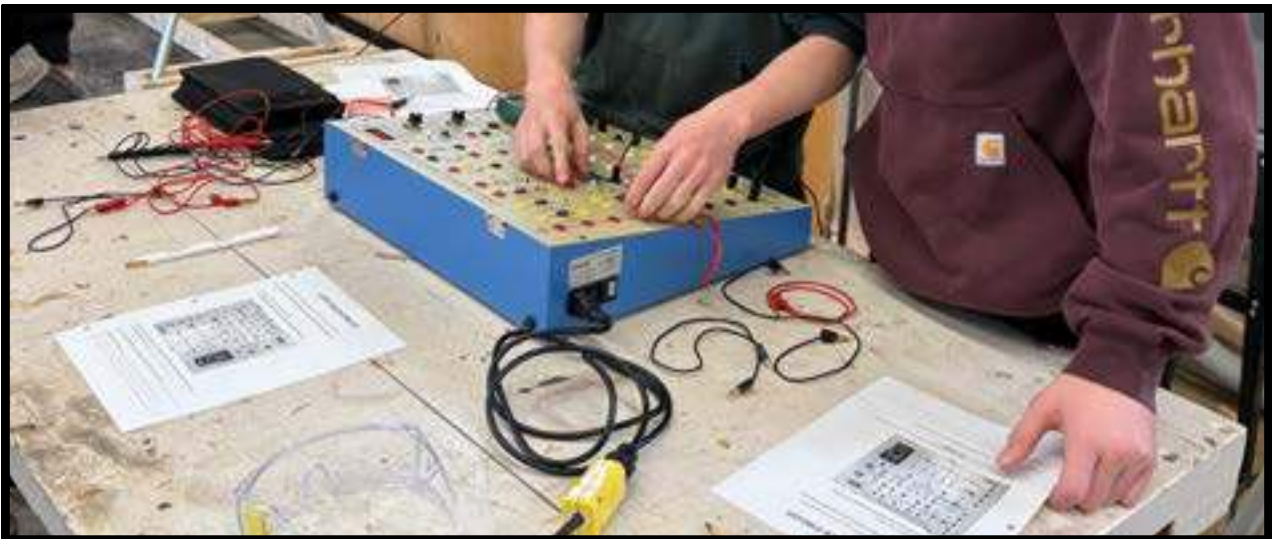
- The Student Biodiversity "Spark Grants" are nearing completion: Grant projects at schools included bird houses, planters, bug hotels, nesting boxes, tools, plants, trees, seeds, green learning spaces and more. To learn more about these projects by visiting this link [Learning by Nature | Healthy by Nature](#)

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - MIDDLE AND SECONDARY LEARNING

- The district continues to expand skilled trades pathways for secondary students. This year, Grades 9–11 students participated in four hands-on sessions at Sandwich Continuing Education School, exploring welding, carpentry and electrical work while earning certifications to support future employment. These sessions help introduce students to the district's high-demand construction, transportation and metalwork sampler programs, which attract more than 100 applicants annually for 45 available seats.
- Interest in trades pathways remains strong in senior grades, with more than 60 students applying to Level 1 programs at North Island College and Camosun College, while more than 45 students are participating in Youth Work in Trades placements with local employers. Looking ahead, the Careers Department has secured two significant grants for 2026–2027 that will support climate-focused employment pathways and expand Grade 12 dual-credit opportunities through a six-district partnership.
- Community-connected learning was also highlighted through Cumberland Community School's annual Bean Dinner on May 1. Five classes (Grades 4–9) and the CCS leadership group worked with the Cumberland Museum and Cumberland Community School Society to create history projects that were showcased to the community, while student leaders helped support event logistics and food preparation.



Pic: Grade 9-11s learned some electronics skills at Sandwich Technical School

- The district also continued to strengthen professional learning through a Secondary School Growth Leads session on May 25. Representatives from G.P. Vanier, Glacier View, NIDES, Isfeld and Highland shared progress on their School Growth Plan initiatives. This work aligns with the broader 2025–2026 Middle and Secondary Growth Plans, which focus on personalized learning, inclusive practices and core competencies.

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE - MIDDLE AND SECONDARY LEARNING CONTINUES

- Student leadership and cross-grade learning were also showcased through a Model United Nations event hosted by G.P. Vanier Secondary at the school board office. Organized by the Vanier Model UN Club, the event welcomed approximately 45 elementary students from across the district to participate in a simulated international forum.



Pic: Students representing different countries assemble at Isfeld Model UN

Challenges and areas of focus

- While strong progress has been made, opportunities remain to strengthen consistency and coherence across middle and secondary schools. Continued focus will be placed on clear communication, building staff capacity, advancing assessment practices, supporting cross-school collaboration and creating opportunities for staff learning. Balancing innovation with sustainability will be key to maintaining momentum while supporting staff and student well-being.

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INCLUSIVE LEARNING UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- **Inclusion:** The work of the Inclusive Education department is guided by all values and design principles of the Strategic Plan to create and develop inclusive, wholistic, and personalized learning environments. The specific focuses to highlight this quarter are Personalized Learning and Flexible Learning Environments.

Highlights

- This spring, students from multiple schools were brought together to build peer relationships, foster a strong sense of belonging, and work toward shared goals such as increasing food tolerances and developing self-care skills. Within the Mawhinney House/Isfeld group, students engaged in structured, play-based learning focused on personal hygiene and daily living skills, with consistent emphasis on dignity, routine, and sensory supports. Central to this work is the development of friendship skills, through shared routines, meals, and “spa day” experiences, where students demonstrated growing confidence, connection, and independence within a supportive, inclusive community.
- Inclusive Education advanced its commitment to functional literacy for students with FASD and complex needs through a POPFASD Collaborative Innovative Research Bank (CIRB) Grant. Work focused on building staff capacity at GP Vanier Secondary by exploring shared approaches to literacy instruction with students. The team created a report and a collaborative video which have been shared with POPFASD. [Comox Valley SD71 POPFASD CIRB video 2025 2026](#) By embedding direct, explicit literacy instruction within daily classroom routines and leveraging assistive technology, this work is promoting greater student independence, engagement, and success in real-world and literacy tasks.
- During Child and Youth Mental Health Week, May 4 – 8, schools across Comox Valley Schools recognized National Child and Youth Mental Health Week through activities and conversations focused on connection, kindness, well-being and belonging. Students took part in mindfulness activities, yoga, outdoor play, wellness workshops, creative projects, classroom discussions and school-wide connection events led by counsellors, youth and family peer workers, staff and student leaders.



Pic: Students do yoga for Child and Youth Mental Health Week

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District Progress Report (Spring 2026)

INCLUSIVE LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

Highlights

- Public facing documents around school completion pathways and transition planning have been created and will be available on the school district website under Inclusive Education.
- Every year, the Provincial Outreach Program: Deaf and Hard of Hearing (POPDHH) hosts DHH Proud, a powerful three-day event that brings together Deaf and Hard of Hearing students from across British Columbia. Held in Burnaby, the event invites students to connect, learn, and celebrate their identities through the Spotlight speaking competition, the ASL Poetry competition, and the annual Friendship Day. This year's theme, "Not a Disability, but a Difference," inspired thoughtful reflection, personal storytelling, and meaningful dialogue among participants. The Comox Valley School District was proudly represented by four students in the Spotlight category, and one student in the ASL Poetry competition.



Pic: Comox Valley student Finley A. (3rd from right) won 3rd place in the ASL Poetry competition

- Planned and executed Series 3 and 4 of our training opportunities for EAs in positions in the district. Thanks to Comox Valley Schools and the Support Staff Education Committee (SSEC), we were able to provide an add-to-pay for EAs in attendance as workshops occurred outside of school hours. When space was available, EAOCs and practicum EAs were also invited to attend. EAs who attended the entire series were given a certificate of completion and gifted an EA toolkit, organized by EA Mentor Penny Kampen.
- District Low Arousal Trainers have now trained 202 SD 71 staff members in Day One of the program and 44 staff members in Day Two to support our work in managing distress behaviours. We look forward to continuing to train our administration, teachers, and support staff using the Low Arousal approach.

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INCLUSIVE LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

Highlights

- May 20th was the third annual Inclusive Sports Festival. This special day continues to grow each year serving students from grades 3 to 7 who have a diagnosis of a developmental disability, autism, or a physical disability. This year we had over 140 participants and even had students from neighbouring school districts attend and represent. A huge thank you to Matt Zadvorny, Jina Taylor, and Amanda Lange who spent countless hours organizing this special day. Thank you as well to all of the administrators who volunteered and accompanied their athletes. It was inspiring to witness the students thrive in a welcoming space where they felt successful, celebrated, and proud of their participation.



Pic: The 3rd annual Inclusive Sports Festival was the biggest yet!

Challenges

- We continue to have two psychologist vacancies but continue to keep up with assessment demands through our consultation process and through contracting for services. Assessments will occur into the summer.
- We currently have Youth & Family Program worker vacancies at the elementary level. We continue to post and are hoping these positions will fill prior to the 26/27 school year.
- We continue to see and increase of student complexity in our schools and strive to provide robust district inclusion support to ensure positive and equitable experiences for all.

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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

- The Equity Scanning Team met in May to review and share feedback on the recently completed Final Report. The group provided direction for staff at this meeting which reflected on this two year journey. In the coming days, weeks, and months the report will be shared with all Rightsholders and partner groups. This work will inform the next steps towards equity for all students in our schools.



Indigenous Brilliance - May 15

- After speaking with Indigenous community members and reviewing our Indigenous Brilliance exit survey, it appears that our in-service day of learning was a success. The following are a few responses that articulate the importance of this day. "I learned so much, my eyes are becoming more open. I will make sure all students are represented in the learning materials, with opportunities to feel valued, seen and heard. I need to remain curious. I am committed to holding up local First Peoples' knowledge. We should have much more Indigenous learning like this! How do we further decolonize our education systems from within?"

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District Progress Report (Spring 2026)

INDIGENOUS LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES



Pics: Jessie Everson and Shelley Joseph Indigenous Brilliance Day

Districtwide Indigenous Graduation Ceremony:

- The first annual SD71 Indigenous graduation celebration was held on June 6th, 2026 at the Filberg Center in Courtenay. The grad planning committee met monthly to plan all of the important details, from honouring territory and personally inviting local hereditary leaders, to hiring an Indigenous caterer and supporting local creators, vendors, and companies. A lot of care and intention went into creating and planning a space that was welcoming and meaningful for students and their families. A cedar house front was painted by K'omoks artist Sean Frank and unveiled as part of the celebration. Each graduate received a copper paddle pendant made by Namgis artist Val Lancaster. The paddle was chosen to reflect the journey the students are experiencing as they move into the next chapter of their lives.



Pic: The first Comox Valley Schools Indigenous Graduation Ceremony - June 6

District Progress Report (Spring 2026)

INDIGENOUS LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

Paddling Together

- A partnership between SD 71 Indigenous Education and Lake Park Society, hosted five classes at Pentlatch (Comox) Lake. Students learned the importance of canoes, how to show up in a good way to the canoe, and how to be in good relationship with self, each other, and place through shared Indigenous knowledges and paddling together.



Pic: Students in district canoes St'ixim (Sun) and Spilus (Moon)

Kumugwe Learning

- In-service for all teachers teaching Indigenous-focus grad credit course in Kumugwe Big House for half a day learning with knowledge holders from KFN Keisha, Trevor and Jessie. The focus was on identity through origin stories, history, and the power of oral tradition and story expressed through what we may see as art.
- Grade 11 Big House experience saw all grade 11 students in the district who are currently enrolled in English First Peoples sit around the fire to listen deeply to the power or story and identity with Keisha Everson. Students were able to hold and learn more through her regalia.

Challenges

- Despite the excellent mentoring and retention strategies employed by the team, we continue to have challenges with unfilled ISW positions.
- We continue to break down silos so that supporting Indigenous students becomes a shared responsibility across the system, strengthening relationships and enabling us to provide more responsive, enhanced services.
- Since the Cowichan decision there is a considerable increase in online anti-Indigenous hate. This negatively impacts the students, families and communities we serve, and also negatively impacts staff.

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EARLY LEARNING UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

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

Highlights

Spring Welcome to Kindergarten Events

- Welcome to Kindergarten events were held this spring, providing families and children with engaging opportunities to connect with their future school communities. Activities included scavenger hunts, play-based learning experiences, classroom exploration, and opportunities to meet school staff. These events helped foster positive transitions to kindergarten while showcasing the importance of play in early learning.

Spring Provincial Leadership and Knowledge Sharing

- Vivian Collyer (Associate Superintendent) and Lisa Pedersen-Skene (District Principal of Early Learning and Child Care) had an article titled Transforming the System Through Play published in the Spring 2026 BCSSA magazine.
- The article highlighted the district's work to advance play-based learning and inquiry across schools. The article showcased the collective efforts of educators and leaders to bridge the knowing-doing gap, build shared understanding, and create sustainable change in practice. This recognition provided an opportunity to share SD71's learning journey with educational leaders across the province and contribute to broader conversations about transforming learning through play.
- Lisa will be presenting this work at a Provincial ELCC meeting in June, showcasing 4 years of collaborative work to support play in learning environments.

Island Networks (Literacy, Numeracy & Early Years) Meeting

- Representation from every district on the Island (57 participants)
- Focus: The Power of Play. Participants engaged with a variety of provocations and learning invitations, experiencing the power of play firsthand.
- Through collaborative discussion and reflection, educators identified the Literacy, Numeracy, and Core Competencies embedded within the play experiences, highlighting the rich curricular learning that naturally occurs through purposeful play.
- The session strengthened shared understanding and reinforced the role of play as a meaningful and effective approach to teaching and learning for all ages of learners.

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District Progress Report (Spring 2026)



EARLY LEARNING UPDATE - CONTINUES

Highlights

Comox Valley Early Years Fair

- StrongStart educators participated in the Comox Valley Early Years Fair, which welcomed more than 200 families from across the region.
- The event provided an opportunity to connect families with early learning resources, community supports, and information about StrongStart programs.
- Through interactive activities and conversations, StrongStart staff strengthened relationships with families and community partners while promoting the importance of early learning and positive transitions into school.

Pedagogy of Play Primary Inquiry Showcase

- 10 School teams participated in the Primary Inquiry Showcase, highlighting rich, student-centered learning through inquiry, play, and exploration.
- The showcase demonstrated how educators are deepening their understanding of inquiry-based practices and creating meaningful opportunities for students to think critically, collaborate, and share their learning. The impact of this work is evident in changing classroom practices and increased engagement across primary learning environments.

Child Care on School Grounds - StrongStart

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

Challenges

- Child Care Staffing Shortages – Recruiting and retaining qualified Early Childhood Educators and child care staff continues to be a significant challenge both locally and provincially. Staffing shortages can impact the ability of child care programs located on school grounds to operate at full capacity and respond to increasing demand from families seeking before- and after-school care and 0-5 child care spaces.
- Limited Space for Child Care Expansion – As student enrolment and school space pressures increase, identifying and maintaining appropriate space for child care programs remains a challenge. Several schools are experiencing competing demands for instructional and child care space.
- StrongStart - Budgetary pressures have impacted the outreach hours that StrongStart Program workers have been able to use in the past.

District Progress Report (Spring 2026)

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

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

Overview

- Communications activities this quarter supported district priorities through public engagement, student and staff storytelling, Indigenous learning initiatives, career-connected learning, inclusive education programming, and timely operational communications. Significant efforts were also dedicated to long-range planning engagement, budget consultations, emergency communications, and graduation celebrations.

Indigenous Learning and Reconciliation

- Covered and participated in Indigenous Brilliance Day of Learning, highlighting professional learning opportunities with Indigenous knowledge holders and community partners.
- Attended and documented visits to Kumugwe Big House, showcasing authentic learning experiences grounded in local Indigenous culture and teachings. - Attended and promoted Highland Secondary's new logo unveiling ceremony, celebrating culture, learning and community.
- Attended and shared coverage of the district's Indigenous Graduation Celebration and other graduation ceremonies across the district.



Pics: Grade 4 and 11s visited Kumugwe Big House and Indigenous Grad was a success

Budget Consultations

- Supported 2026–2027 budget engagement sessions through news releases, website content, family communications and social media promotion. Continued public engagement activities throughout the consultation process.

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District Progress Report (Spring 2026)



COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE CONTINUES - HIGHLIGHTS

Inclusion and Student Well-Being

- Participated in and promoted the Inclusive Education Play Program at the Comox Recreation Centre, a pilot initiative supporting elementary students through inclusive recreation and movement opportunities.
- Covered the third annual Inclusive Sports Festival, which welcomed 135 students and celebrated belonging, participation and connection through inclusive recreation opportunities.
- Supported communication efforts related to National AccessAbility Week and other inclusion-focused initiatives.

Long-Range Facilities Planning

- Developed and launched a dedicated Long-Range Facilities Planning webpage.
- Prepared and distributed news releases, promotional materials and survey communications.
- Supported community engagement efforts that generated more than 600 survey responses and informed future district planning.

School Calendar Development

- Supported consultation and communication related to the development of school year calendars for 2026–2027, 2027–2028 and 2028–2029.
- Prepared survey materials, family communications, web content and final approval announcements following Board adoption.

Emergency & Operational Communications

- Issued districtwide information updates regarding school emergency procedures and crisis notification processes.
- Supported communications related to a recent Canvas LMS security incident, including notifications to families and staff.
- Worked closely with school and district leadership to support communications during a Hold and Secure at Miracle Beach Elementary, including family notifications and follow-up messaging.
- Supported district emergency communications during the regional Comox Valley sewage leak event.
- Continued development and refinement of emergency communication resources and protocols.

Challenge

- This quarter included simultaneous public engagement projects related to budget planning, long-range facilities planning, school calendar development and registration initiatives.
- The volume of district events and initiatives continues to grow, creating increased demand for storytelling and event coverage.

District Progress Report (Spring 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 internal school accounting review results regarding the site visits that took place this winter were documented and communicated to both Lake Trail Community School and Ecole Secondaire Mark Isfeld Secondary School, as well the audit committee reporting on these results was prepared. The 2026-27 preliminary budgeting process and multi year financial planning took significant time during this quarter, as well the accounting preparation work required for the financial year-end and audit planning began.
- Teacher retroactive pay resulting from the most recent bargained teacher contract was calculated and paid by the payroll team who also supported in the completion of BCPSEA requested exempt compensation information.
- Several financial reports were completed during the time period along with work relating to the 2026-27 Annual Budget preparations:
 - 2026/27 Event Driven Reporting
 - 2025/26 Q3 Ministry Government Related Entity (GRE) – quarterly
 - 2025/26 Q3 Board Financial Report
 - 2026/27 Annual Budget & Bylaw
 - 2026-2029 Multi Year Financial Plan
 - 2025/26 Q3 Employment Data and Analysis Report (EDAS)

Challenges

- The department continues to be challenged by the administrative work resulting from staffing moves and changes, in addition there were some unanticipated bereavement and sick leaves experienced within the finance management team. Changes within senior leadership roles and temporary adjustments to senior staff responsibilities continues to impact financial operations.

District Progress Report (Spring 2026)



OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Learning: Facility expansions and upgrades increased student capacity while supporting flexible, functional learning environments.
- Equity: Accessibility and site improvements improved equitable access to safe, inclusive, and welcoming spaces for all students.
- Safety: Ongoing maintenance, system upgrades, and infrastructure improvements enhanced the safety, reliability, and performance of school facilities.
- Disciplined planning, procurement, and reporting practices ensured responsible stewardship of district resources.
- Relationships: Ongoing collaboration with municipalities, partners, rights holders, and school communities supported coordinated planning and strengthened shared initiatives across the district.

Highlights

- Completion and opening of major projects at Aspen Park Elementary and G.P. Vanier Secondary. Engagement with the Board, partners, rights holders, and the public advanced the Long-Range Facilities Plan, aligning with district priorities and community needs. Participation in the Comox Valley Growth Planning Session contributed to a regional understanding of population trends and long-term development pressures, informing future facility and infrastructure planning.

Accessibility & Safety

- Phase 2 Commercial Oven Ventilation Upgrades – Airport Elementary, Cumberland Community School, Glacier View Secondary School, Lake Trail Community Middle School, Valley View Elementary.
- Courtenay Elementary – Interior door hardware upgrades.
- Various Surfacing Projects – Design and tendering.
- École Puntledge Park Elementary – Portable access upgrades.
- Mark R. Isfeld Secondary – Powder coating booth upgrade.
- 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 – Kindergarten School Bus Orientation.

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District Progress Report (Spring 2026)

OPERATIONS UPDATE - CONTINUES

Environmental Improvements

- Royston Elementary – Brush clearing.
- District-wide – Field Irrigation start-up, garden bed maintenance, tree-bag watering program.

Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

- Submission on the annual 'Climate Change Accountability Report'.
- Various Energy Efficiency Projects – Design and tendering.
- Operations Quarterly Energy Management Performance Update.
- Operations Continuity Planning – ongoing.

Building, Space and Grounds Enhancements

- Completion and opening of Aspen Park Elementary Prefab Addition.
- Completion and opening of G.P. Vanier Secondary Child Care Centre.
- Play field improvements – Cumberland Community School, Brooklyn Elementary, Queneesh Elementary, Mark R. Isfeld Secondary.
- District Track – Partial bleacher seating replacement.
- District-wide – Annual tendering for summer maintenance programs.
- Annual implementation of the four-month Student Grounds Labourer program.



Pics: Isfeld playing fields before and after improvements

Challenges

- Staffing: Ongoing difficulty maintaining custodial and maintenance staffing levels due to medical leaves and retirements; recruiting skilled full-time employees remains challenging.
- Increased Demand: Growing community use of district facilities during non-operational hours has increased strain on building systems.
- Cost Increases: Continued escalation in the cost of materials, supplies, and contracted services.
- Drought Conditions: Reduced annual rainfall continues to impact the health of trees and landscaping, increasing maintenance requirements. Earlier seasonal irrigation start-ups and increased watering of all-weather fields have also contributed to higher water usage and costs.

District Progress Report (Spring 2026)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Flexible Learning Environments & Digitally Enhanced Learning.
- This quarter continued with a focus on initiatives that strengthen the district's technology strategy and future-ready capabilities. Several small artificial intelligence (AI) related projects have kicked off to continue our explorations into how AI can support learning in the classroom and introduce further efficiencies in our business operations. Security and privacy continue to be a priority as we plan several related projects for the summer break.

Highlights

- Continued development of a district technology skills framework to support teachers' capacity-building and consistent digital practices.
- Comox Valley Schools once again hosted a large Hackergal Hackathon event on April 23, 2026 with over 35 students in attendance along with several attendees from the Hackergal team.



Pic: Students from throughout the district gathered for Hackergal

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District Progress Report (Spring 2026)

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT UPDATE - CONTINUES

Code Quest Arcade

- Another successful event was hosted on May 13, 2026 at Lake Trail where students came together to share their projects created to teach players something or learn/practice a skill using technology.



Pic: Lake Trail hosted another successful Code Quest Arcade

Highlights

- The Windows 11 upgrade initiative is well underway, with more than 25% of district Windows devices successfully transitioned. This work ensures device security, compatibility, and long-term vendor support.
- The MAPLE (Management and Analytics for People, Learning, and Education) data-warehouse project development is now complete. IT Services is now working with multiple departments to identify reporting needs and practical use cases that will support instructional, operational, and strategic decision-making.

Challenges

- Inflationary pressures continue to have a significant impact on technology equipment procurement. We continue to experience steep price increases in computer hardware - driven largely by global demand for memory, storage, and processors. Supply delays have also resurfaced, surpassing pandemic-era constraints. Current projections indicate that cost and supply stabilization may not occur until 2028.

District Progress Report (Spring 2026)



HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

Strategic Guidance

- Values: Relationships

Highlights

- The annual Spring Staffing process for Support Staff for 2026/27 has been completed. The Education Assistant Expression of Interest process resulted in 210 EA placements, with 197 employees receiving their first-choice location. Six summer students have been hired to support the Operations Department, and all remaining vacancies have been posted externally on Make a Future.
- Consultation with CUPE regarding the Learning Improvement Fund (LIF) has concluded. A new EA School Support Lead role will be piloted at two schools to enhance support for students, school teams, and EA colleagues. Six additional positions will be funded through LIF, and remaining resources will be allocated equitably to provide additional EA hours for student needs and school-based activities, ensuring flexibility across sites.
- The provincial framework agreement has now been approved by both the K-12 Presidents' Council and the BCPSEA Board of Directors which means we will now have local table money to support ongoing services and learning improvements in addition to labour market adjustments.
- The spring staffing process for Teachers started with school meetings to review enrollment projections and staffing requirements for the upcoming school year.
- The district has signed a Letter of Understanding around instructional minutes with the CDTA to cover the increased instructional minutes to have all professional development days within the school calendar, a two week spring break and meet ministry instructional time requirements.
- We have consulted with CUPE and the CDTA to increase the required number of On-call days per year from 1 day to 10 days per year.

Challenges

- The Support Staff collective bargaining process has been delayed pending completion of the provincial framework agreement, recent changes to the employers' bargaining team, and limited availability within the CUPE bargaining team. Bargaining is now planned to resume in the fall, once staff have returned from summer break and our new Executive Director of HR is fully oriented.
- We continue to be in a situation where we have more teachers than classrooms, specifically at the elementary level.
- There have been regular failures to fill TTOC dispatches. We will be posting for TTOCs in August for the first time in two years.