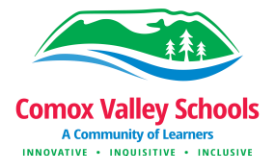




**K'ómoks First Nation &
School District 71 (Comox Valley)
Local Education Agreement (LEA)
Meeting Minutes (as amended)
Wednesday, June 17, 2026**



Attendance In Meeting:

Members:

Dr. Jeremy Morrow, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Joe Heslip, Associate Superintendent
Lelaina Jules, District Principal - Indigenous Education
Keisha Everson, Indigenous Education Council Chair
Erin Higginbottom, Education & Capacity Development Coordinator - K'ómoks First Nation

Guest: Jesse Everson, SD71 Indigenous Knowledge Holder & Specialist/K'ómoks First Nation Member

Regrets:

Natasha Rainkie, K-12 K'ómoks First Nation Student Success Teacher
Simone Compton, KFN Education Council
Trish McPhail, Post Secondary and Advanced Skills Coordinator
Suzanne Savoie, Councillor
Candace Newman, Councillor

Recording Secretary: Kim Richards, Sr. Executive Assistant

1. **Traditional Territory Acknowledgement** by E. Higginbottom.
 - Welcome and Opening Circle
 - E. Higginbottom provided an overview of the agenda and topics to be discussed.
2. **Call Meeting to Order**
 - E. Higginbottom called the meeting to order at 1:38 pm.
 - 2.1 **Approval of Agenda – June 17, 2026** – approved as presented
 - 2.2 **Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 25, 2026** – approved as presented
3. **LEA Priorities**
 - 3.1. **Accountability Report**
 - 3.1.1 **Student Success and Data Review**
 - J. Heslip spoke to the success of an Indigenous student's Independent Direct Study (IDS) 12 Course - Indigenous Stewardship and Identity through the K'ómoks Guardian Watchmen.
 - Recommendation: Use IDS course to incorporate language.
 - Committee members independently reviewed the handout *KFN Student Success Team Meeting High Level Information* provided by J. Heslip.
 - Strengths and stretches of KFN students were identified.
 - Positive key elements noted: Self-advocacy, pride, a strong sense of identity (in sharing the Traditional Territorial Acknowledgement), leadership skills, and courage.

- L. Jules reported that a 0.4 FTE has been added to the ISW support at Aspen Park Elementary.
- Aspen utilized a very specific, positive, classroom placement process for KFN students and a *Student Summary* document was created to support successful transitions.

Action: E. Higginbottom to inquire with N. Rainkie if the *Student Summary* document could be shared between teacher/parent.

Guest J. Everson entered the meeting at 2:02 pm.

- J. Heslip shared the slide *Supports – Accountability Surveys* and provided a handout identifying the most frequent supports for KFN on reserve students.
- Current and previous year's stats were compared.
- Monthly and yearly trends were identified by comparing pie charts.
- Discussion was held as to why these trends exist.
- E. Higginbottom requested that the stats be broken down to reflect elementary, middle and secondary independently. Purpose > dig a little deeper; do supports need refined?
- Do inequities exist across the whole district, not just for Indigenous students?
- Attendance statistics were reviewed and discussed > SD71 is below the average > absenteeism reasons vary.
- Chronic absenteeism is also lower than the norm; the province determines what chronic absenteeism is.
- Attendance is an issue in every district as society is shifting.
- Recommendation: Have more specific absence codes added to MyEd BC to more accurately reflect Indigenous students' cultural absences.
- How we respond to chronic absenteeism is important; can be punitive to the student/family.

Action: J. Heslip to reach out to the Manager of Information Systems and Security to break down the supports stats by elementary, middle and secondary.

3.1.2 EOI Process and Reflection (slide)

- J. Everson provided an overview of the EOI process.
- Current and proposed projects were shared including the Cedar House Front, Aspen Park Elementary mural, the SD71 Framework logo, and the workshops at the Indigenous Brilliance Day.
- Relationships make this work so important.
- The EOI process has created opportunities for many KFN members and has helped to bridge the gap between KFN, the school district, and the community.
- J. Heslip commended J. Everson for his work in this position.
- Feedback – Artists being asked for digitized copies of designs is a barrier.
- J. Everson spoke of new and anticipated projects.
- E. Higginbottom requested a list of artists and projects completed to date to add to the next KFN newsletter to recognize the artists and their achievements.

Action: J. Everson to provide a list of artists and projects completed to date to E. Higginbottom.

3.2 LEA Priorities 2026-2027

- E. Higginbottom provided a handout outlining the breakdown of priorities aligned with the Local Education Agreement. This was developed in collaboration with Natasha Rainkie.

- The 3 core pillars include:
 - 1) Community and Connection
 - 2) Language and Cultures
 - 3) Governance
- The first core pillar, Community and Connection, was reviewed in depth.
- Due to time constraints the discussion ended at School Support.
- The remainder of the pillars to be discussed at the next meeting.

4. Old Business

- Discussion postponed to next meeting.

5. Next Meeting and Adjournment

- TBD (early fall)
- The meeting adjourned at 3:48 pm