SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 71 (COMOX VALLEY)
Regular Board Meeting (Public) AGENDA
Tuesday, February 23, 2016
7 pm

Pg

1. **ATTENDANCE**

The Board of Education acknowledges that we are on the traditional territories of the K'ómoks First Nation.

2. **CALL TO ORDER**

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
Circulated earlier in draft form for Board approval.

1. **Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda**

Recommendation:
THAT the Board adopt the February 23, 2016 Agenda.
OR
THAT the Board wave the 48-hour notice period required under the Procedural Bylaw in order to consider additions to the Agenda, and adopt the Agenda as amended, the amendments to consist of ...

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

5 - 9 a. **Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes** -- January 26, 2016

10 b. **Human Resources**, *Retirements and Resignations*

11 c. **New Hospital Construction Update**, Briefing Note, Ian Heselgrave, Director of Operations

12 - 13 d. Correspondence: Tonia Frawley, Highland PAC Chair on behalf of Highland PAC, Secondary Boundaries

Recommendation:
THAT the Board approve the Consent Agenda items.

5. **REPORT ON IN-CAMERA MEETING**
School Act Section 72 (3) In-Camera Meetings:

December 14, 2015:
Human Resources -- Personnel

January 26, 2016:
1. In-Camera -- move in-camera pursuant to School Act and Procedural Bylaw
2. Minutes -- Adoption of December 15, 2015 Minutes
3. Acting Secretary Treasurer Appointment - effective February 1, 2016
4. Property
5. Governance

6. **PRESENTATION/DELEGATION**

a. No Presentations or Delegations

7. **EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT**
Report from Committee Chair: Janice Caton

14 1. Minutes of February 9, 2016 Education Committee Meeting attached for Board information.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 12, 2016 (No March 8, 2016 meeting)
Time: 6:30 pm
Location: TBC

Recommendation:
THAT the Board receive the Education Committee Report.

8. **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

Strategic Priority Items:
Strategic Priority 1 - Education Evolution –
To Strive for Educational Excellence for All
Strategic Priority 2 - Community Engagement -
Cultivate Community Engagement in Public Education
Strategic Priority 3 - Organizational Sustainability -
To Ensure that our Financial, Human, Physical Resources Support Student Success

1. **Acting Superintendent Reports**, Tom Demeo

15 - 17 a. **District News**

Board Information

b. **Phase 5 Macro Boundary Consultation Report, Recommendation**
Handout at Board Meeting

Recommendation:
THAT the Board accept the Phase 5 Macro Boundary Consultation Report as presented.

18 - 25 c. **Board Authority Authorized (BAA) Course Offering,** Briefing Note - Outdoor Connections 11

Recommendation:
THAT the Board approve the Board Authority Authorized course as presented to be offered to students in the district at the respective secondary school.

26 - 30 d. **2016-2017 Proposed Calendar,** Briefing Note

Recommendation:
THAT the Board of Education accept the draft 2016-2017 Calendar as the proposed calendar for the next school year; AND THAT the Board accept the draft Distance Learning Navigate/NIDES Calendar as the proposed Calendar for the next school year.

31 e. **Alternative Instructional Week**, Briefing Note

Board Information

9. **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. **Finance Committee**
Report from Committee Chair: Peter Coleman

32 a. Finance Committee Minutes of February 18, 2016 attached for Board information.

Next Meeting: TBC

Recommendation:
THAT the Board receive the Finance Committee report.

10. **BOARD BUSINESS**

1. **Community Engagement Committee,** Cliff Boldt, Trustee (City of Courtenay) Motion as presented at the January 26, 2016 regular public Board meeting.

Recommendation:
THAT the Board establish a Community Engagement Committee to create opportunities for community input into public education in School District No. 71 (Comox Valley).

2. Letter from the Board of Education, School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) to

Honourable Mike Bernier, Minister of Education, **Budget Challenges**, Cliff Boldt, Trustee (City of Courtenay)

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Education write a letter to the Minister of Education regarding budget challenges.

33 3. **BCPSEA AGM Report**, Briefing Note, Peter Coleman, BCPSEA Trustee Representative

Board Information

4. **BCSTA Provincial Council** Verbal Report, Janice Caton, BCSTA Trustee Representative

Board Information

11. **SCHOOL TRUSTEE WRITTEN REPORTS**

34 - 36 1. Trustee Peter Coleman, **District Student Round Table Report**

Board Information

12. **PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD**

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 71 (COMOX VALLEY)

Regular Board Meeting—Public
January 26, 2016
7 pm

1. ATTENDANCE

Present:	**Trustees**	**Staff**
	Tom Weber, Chair	Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent
	Janice Caton, Vice Chair	Russell Horswill, Secretary Treasurer
	Peter Coleman	Candice Hilton, Director of Finance
	Sheila McDonnell	Lynda-Marie Handfield, Director, Human Resources
	Ian Hargreaves	Allan Douglas, Director of Instruction (Elementary)
	Vickey Brown	Esther Shatz, Director of Instruction (Student Services)
	Cliff Boldt	Ian Heselgrave, Director of Operations
		Debbie Page, Recording Secretary
		Sheldon Lee, Acting Secretary Treasurer

2. CALL TO ORDER -- 7 PM

Board Chair Tom Weber welcomed Sheldon Lee, Acting Secretary Treasurer (effective February 1, 2016).

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Circulated earlier in draft form for Board approval.

1. **Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda**

Motion:
THAT the Board waive the 48-hour notice period required under the Procedural Bylaw in order to consider additions to the Agenda, and adopt the Agenda as amended, the amendments to consist of ...

4. Consent Agenda Item C -- Correspondence: Nick Moore, President, Comox District Teachers Association re: **Workshops** to be moved to 10: Board Business 1.

New Item under 10: Board Business 2. Alternate Instruction Week
[**CARRIED 7/7**]

4. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes – December 15, 2015

b. Human Resources Report, Retirements

Melody Ferguson, Teacher, *Navigate*/NIDES will retire effective June 30, 2016 after 10 years of service with the district.

Cheryl Hill, EA-Elementary, Airport Elementary School will retire effective April 16, 2016 after 13 years of service with the district.

Motion:
THAT the Board approve the Consent Agenda items. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

5. REPORT ON IN-CAMERA MEETING

1. December 15, 2015
School Act Section 72 (3) In-Camera Meeting Record
1. In-Camera -- move in-camera pursuant to *School Act* and Procedural Bylaw
2. Minutes -- Adoption of November 24, 2015
3. Secretary Treasurer Replacement -- provided direction for interim replacement
4. Consultation Process -- Board Discussion

6. PRESENTATION/DELEGATION

a. No Presentations or Delegations

7. EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

a. Report from Committee Meeting: Peter Coleman

i. Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 9, 2016
Location: TBC
Time: 6:30 pm

1. Minutes of Tuesday, January 12, 2016 Education Committee Meeting attached for Board information.

Motion:
THAT the Board approve the Education Committee Report.
[**CARRIED 7/7**]

8. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1. Acting Superintendent Report, Tom Demeo

a. **District News Highlights**

- Six Year Completion and Grade 12 Graduation Rates -- 2014/15
- Updated 2015-2016 Calendar
- Kindergarten and District Programs - Registration
- Comox Valley Exchange Program Information Night, Wednesday, January 27, 2016
- Family Day, No Classes, Monday, February 8, 2016
- *Footloose* -- acknowledged the hard work from staff and students; 4 schools working together -- a wonderful evening of entertainment

b. **Board Authority Authorized (BAA) Course Offerings**, Briefing Note, Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent

- Sociology 11
- Veterinary Science 12

Motion:
THAT the Board approve the Board Authority Authorized courses as presented to be offered to students in the district at the respective secondary schools.
[**CARRIED 7/7**]

c. **Policy Revision -- Ordinarily Resident**, Briefing Note, Russell Horswill, Secretary Treasurer

Motion:
THAT the Board of Education approve the revised Board Policy 3-4 -- Ordinarily Resident as presented. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

d. **School Calendar Verbal Update**, Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent

Acting Superintendent Tom Demeo provided a verbal update for Board information.

9. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Finance Committee**
Report from Committee Chair: Peter Coleman

Next Meeting: TBC

a. Finance Committee Minutes of Wednesday, January 20, 2016 were attached for Board information.

b. **2015/2016 Amended Annual Budget Bylaw**

Motion:
THAT School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) Amended Budget Bylaw for 2015/16 in the amount of $89,068,318 receive its first reading. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

THAT School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) Amended Budget Bylaw for 2015/16 in the amount of $89,068,318 receive its second reading. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

THAT the Board unanimously agree to suspend the requirements of the School Act and Board's Procedural Bylaw 2015.2 to have the third reading of the Amended Annual Budget Bylaw at a subsequent meeting. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

THAT School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) Amended Budget Bylaw for 2015/16 in the amount of $89,068,318 receive its third and final reading. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

Motion:
THAT the Board receive the Finance Committee report. [CARRIED 7/7]

10. BOARD BUSINESS

1. Correspondence: Nick Moore, President, Comox District Teachers Association re: **Workshops**

Motion presented for Board consideration:
THAT the Board establish a Community Engagement Committee to create opportunities for community input into public education in School District No. 71 (Comox Valley).

Motion:
Postponed until the February 23, 2016 regular Board meeting. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

2. **Alternate Instructional Week**, Janice Caton, Vice Chair (Trustee, City of Courtenay)

Motion:
THAT the Board direct Senior Management to commence a consultation process to look at an alternative instructional week and to provide monthly updates at subsequent public board meetings. [**CARRIED 7/7**]

11. SCHOOL TRUSTEE WRITTEN REPORTS

1. Trustee Boldt (December 2015-January 2016 Report)

   Board Information

2. Trustee Hargreaves

   Board Information

12. PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

13. ADJOURNMENT - 8:05 PM

Chairperson

Secretary-Treasurer

Retirements:

Patti Holatko, Library Clerk, Valley View Elementary School will retire effective May 15, 2016 after 17 years of service with the district.

Grant Ashlee, Teacher, *Navigate*/NIDES will retire effective June 30, 2016 after 27 years of service with the district.

Patrisha Reader, Teacher, Ècole Robb Road Elementary School will retire effective June 30, 2016 after 24 years of service with the district.

School District No.71 (Comox Valley)

607 Cumberland Road
Courtenay, B.C., V9N 7G5
Fax: (250) 334-4472
Office of the Director of Operations Telephone: (250) 334-5516

Briefing Note
New Hospital Construction Update

February 16th 2016

The purpose of this brief note is to update the Board of Education on the progress of construction of the new hospital. It is a follow-up to the previous Hospital Construction Update dated November 19th 2015.

The Comox Valley hospital is on time, on scope and on budget. According to VIHA communications staff the project is estimated to be roughly 50 per cent complete. The hospital will be ready for move in by late 2017.

The SD 71 Director of Operations continues to meet on a monthly basis with VIHA representatives, North Island College staff and Graham Construction.

Ian Heselgrave

January 22, 2016

To: The Board of Education
Cc: Tom Weber Board Chair
SD 71 Senior Management
SD 71 DPAC
Editor of The Comox Record
Editor of The Echo

Dear Trustees,

First of all, the Highland PAC would like to thank the Board for it's consideration of moving the secondary school boundaries and share our excitement and support for this proposal that results in our school's enrolment growing over time.

We are writing this letter to remind trustees and inform new trustees about the significant changes that this district went through back in 2008, specifically Comox, as well as share our thoughts on what would happen given an alternate scenario of closing one of the district's high schools.

Comox lost two elementary schools that particular year, Village Park and Comox Elementary as well as both of its middle schools, Aspen Park and Cape Lazo. We were thrown into many different types of meetings (closure committees, public forums, transition committees,etc...) and so many of us poured our hearts and souls into them for our neighbourhood schools. Village Park was a little gem in the woods in a quiet neighbourhood and those parents fought hard to keep their school but to no avail.

The board of the time was faced with very hard financial decisions and because of those decisions to close schools, reconfigure the grades, and move the boundaries, East Courtenay also lost an elementary school and a middle school. The boundaries changed and so with that shift, along with the French Immersion programming moving from Highland to Isfeld, came the beginning of the Highland decline in enrolment.

Brooklyn Elementary was up against the next battle...there was a court case over the sale of Cape Lazo to the Francophone school district and because of the outcome of the court case Brooklyn then entered its school closure process. Again, there were many hours of meetings of all types and this time Brooklyn's building closed and lost it's beautiful piece of land with a large field, covered area, trees and the Brooklyn Creek. The Brooklyn community was relocated to the former Cape Lazo site.

In all of these cases, there were transition teams that included trustees, outstanding district and school staff members from all levels as well as concerned parents to address all of the needs of the students and staff including the conversions in the elementary schools. Our students at Highland transitioned well into a secondary school because of the adults who cared. The elementary students who entered the converted buildings transitioned well. It wasn't about the building, it was about the people in the building. It is about what you choose to make your school.

At Highland, we are hopeful that the decisions that the current board makes about the phase 5 long term facilities plan with respect to the secondary school boundary changes are beneficial to the whole of the school district. The numbers will start to come back, the secondary numbers will even out and all three secondary schools will be able to offer comprehensive, vibrant and equitable course offerings and programs.

We, perhaps more so than any other school community, recognize the challenges and unpleasantness with school closures in a neighbourhood. We know that fighting for your neighbourhood school is a natural response, however, we hope the Board carefully considers the ramifications of deviating from considering all options including the current proposal and any others that may arise. We have two of the high schools over capacity and one under capacity, as already previously mentioned, and by changing the boundaries this evens those numbers out. We are concerned that the closing of a high school could lead us on a potentially dangerous path. We would then be extremely over capacity to the point of overcrowded classes, the need for "portables", losing students between the cracks, much needed student services at a breaking point, specialty programs and programs of choice being in danger of not existing and regular core programming not being able to be met. This could mean an end to the international program which isn't just an income source to the district it is also an income source for many of our families. Bussing would increase...yet another cost to the district. It just doesn't seem like the answer to help our financial crisis.

So as you move forward with making these heart-wrenching and challenging decisions, we ask that you look at what is best for the whole district.

Sincerely,

Tonia Frawley
Highland PAC Chair - on behalf of Highland PAC

Education Committee Meeting—Minutes

Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2016
Location: School Board Office, Board Room
Address: 607 Cumberland Road, Courtenay, BC
6:30 pm

Members:

Committee Chair, Janice Caton, City of Courtenay	✓
Board Chair, Tom Weber, Area B/Lazo North	✓
Trustee, Ian Hargreaves, Puntledge, Black Creek	✓
Trustee, Sheila McDonnell, Baynes Sound (Denman/Hornby Islands)	✓
Trustee, Clifford Boldt, City of Courtenay	✓
Trustee, Peter Coleman, Town of Comox	✓
Trustee, Vickey Brown, Village of Cumberland	✓
Acting Superintendent, Tom Demeo	✓
Director of Instruction (Elementary Curriculum) Allan Douglas	✓
Director of Instruction (Student Services) Esther Shatz	✓

A G E N D A

- A group of Elementary Counsellors (Sue Diewert) presented information about how they respond to mental health issues and needs in the community and at school.
- Elementary Behaviour Resource Services (Mark Glenwright) presented information about how they work to meet the needs of elementary level students with severe mental health issues.
- Jana Buckle and Caroline Gauthier presented about work being done at the secondary schools supporting our SOGI Policy through their active GSA's.
- Gerald Fussell presented an update on work being done to develop a K-12 program for developing Resilience in our students.

Next Education Committee Meeting:

- **DATE**: Tuesday, April 12, 2016 (**No March Education Committee Meeting**)
  TIME: 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
  LOCATION: TBC

School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

District News

There are many, many things to celebrate daily in our schools. We encourage anyone with news to send items to debra.page@sd71.bc.ca so that monthly we can honour all that our schools do to support the community and world.

Huband Mural Project

Students from Huband Park Elementary were involved with painting a Salish design mural for Huband's gym. The design was created by Emily Carr University graduate, James Harry (Nexw kalus), from the Squamish Nation. James has worked with schools and communities to produce art projects reflecting Aboriginal heritage, culture and ideologies. The celebration and blessing of the mural took place on February 18, 2016 at Huband Elementary School.

Three goals for this project were:

- Student engagement
- Cultural awareness
- Student leadership

- **School District 71 (Comox Valley) – *Programs and Success Stories*** (attached)

- **Ècole Puntledge Park Elementary School – Closure / Board Public Meeting**
  Date: Tuesday, March 8, 2016
  Time: 6:30 pm
  Location: Ècole Puntledge Park Elementary School

- **Education Committee Meeting – (No March 8, 2016 Meeting)**
  Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 12, 2016
  Time: 6:30 pm
  Location: TBC

Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent of Schools

S.D. #71 CAREERS

Winter 2016

A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS
COMOX VALLEY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

LABOUR MARKET TRENDS:

Of the 985,100 projected job openings to 2022, 44 per cent are expected in Skill Level B, which normally requires a college diploma or trade certificate. Combined with the job openings expected in Skill Level A (34 %), which normally requires a university degree, more than three quarters of the forecasted job openings over the coming decade will require post-secondary education and training.
The Challenge is connecting youth with the right training or education to Labour market information.

Firefighter's Camp

Don't forget that this exciting camp will be happening during spring break! Information in the career centres.

DISTRICT ACE-IT & DUAL CREDIT

Our career program continues to grow with more students taking advantage of our ACE IT and Dual Credit programs. The following numbers reflect the diverse programs offered in our district.

Level 1 Auto Technician located at Highland Secondary. This program instructed by Jim Tattrie and partnered with Vancouver Community College, will have **13 students** enrolled in February 2016. **2 students** are also partnering with VCC for the **Auto Collision Repair** online program.

In partnership with North Island College there will be the following number of students:
Welding 8
Heavy Duty Mechanic 1
Electrical 2
Plumbing 1
Metal Fabrication 3

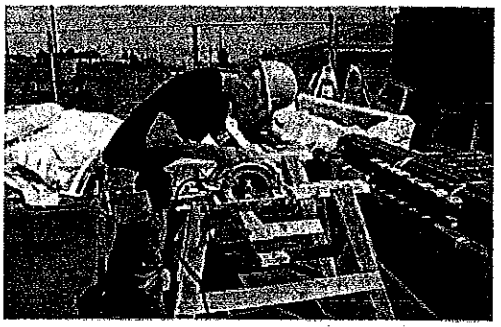
As well, there are students in University transfer courses:
English 25
Psychology 18
Business 7
Other 7

Our **Culinary Program** in partnership with Camosun College has **6 students** enrolled and will be taught one day a week at Highland Secondary by Tammy Williamson. Students leave with Level 1 Cook as well as 200 hours of work experience in a local restaurant. This program is called epprenetice due to technical studies done online.

We are thankful to our many community partners who take our students for work experience as part of their Ace-It program.

CARPENTRY PROGRAM

Ace-It Carpentry has 10 grade 11 students and 10 grade 12 students per year. It is offered at



Mark R. Isfeld Secondary School from Feb-June (second semester) each year and instructed by Rob Laird.
Last year's students are all employed in the construction industry, and most of them are employed in the Comox Valley!

For example: Mike Benisky. apprenticed by Griffith's Homes

Kyle Schleibinger. employed by Thermal Systems (new hospital)

Bryce Olsen, employed by Monterra homes

Travis Minta. employed by Thermal Systems (new hospital)

Colin Dixon. apprenticed by Muchalat Construction

Kienan Fogtmann. apprenticed by Agius Construction

Nick Jordan. employed by CCM Construction

Landon Seeley. Employed by CCM Construction

Kenton Graves, construction company in Campbell River

SSA

S.D. #71 CAREERS

Six of these students are set up for a Secondary School Apprenticeship for which they will receive a $1000.00 award. All of these students are well on their way to a successful career in the construction industry less than 1 year after graduation!!☺

FACTS & FIGURES

During the summer of 2015 there were over 30 students participating in work experience job placements.

Currently, there are approximately 100 grade 10, 11, and 12 students doing Work Experience 12A or 12B, each course being worth 4 grade 12 credits!

Of the approximately 640 grade 12 students in SD#71, 7% are involved in a dual credit program and 11% are involved in an ACE-IT program – about 119 students!

Pictured below: 2015 Graduating Class

STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

Kyle Steven graduated in 2013 from Mark R Isfeld. When he was in grade 12 Kyle thought he would try a three day work experience in auto collision. He was good at it and was given the opportunity to start his ACE-IT Auto Collision Course in January of 2013 with Reliable Autobody. They offered him an apprenticeship within weeks of him starting the course. He is presently in Vancouver taking his Level 3 and Red Seal Exam. He has approximately 900 hours left before he can attain his Red Seal and become a Journeyman. He will be 21 years old! Congratulations Kyle!☺

Currently there are two students doing the same program!

ACE IT

WE

S.D. #71 Career Centres

Highland Secondary School
- Colin Tinga - Work Experience Teacher
- Dawn Stevens – Work Experience Program Worker

Mark R. Isfeld
- Colin Cunningham – Work Experience Teacher
- Randy James - Work Experience Program Worker
- Joanne Steven - Work Experience Program Worker

G.P. Vanier
- Steve Claassen - Work Experience Teacher
- Ken Erikson - Work Experience Teacher
- Kelley Giorgianni - Work Experience Program Worker
- Anna McElwain - Work Experience Program Worker

Nala'atsi Alternate Program
Glacier View Secondary Centre
- Joanne Steven – Work Experience Program Worker

District
- Randy Grey – Career Programs Coordinator
- Murray Shold - Secondary School Apprentice Coordinator☺

School District No.71 (Comox Valley)

607 Cumberland Road
Courtenay, B.C., V9N 7G5
Office of the Acting Superintendent of Schools Fax: (250) 334-4472
Telephone: (250) 334-5521

Briefing Note –
New Board Authority Authorized (BAA) Course Offering

Course Outline (attached)

- **Outdoor Connections 11**

This course will provide a further expansion to the credit options available to secondary students at Glacier View Secondary Centre. The addition of this course increases the elective choice for students who wish to learn basic knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for safe and comfortable outdoor experiences while fostering an appreciation for the outdoors.

Recommendation:

THAT the Board approve the Board Authority Authorized course as presented to be offered to students in the district at the respective secondary school.

Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent of Schools

BAA Course: Outdoor Connections 11

District Name: Comox Valley

District Number: 71

Developed by: Sabrina Lloyd

Date Developed: January 18, 2016

School Name: Glacier View Secondary Centre

Principal's Name: Murray McRae

Board/Authority Approval Date:

Board/Authority Signature:

Course Name: Outdoor Connections 11

Grade Level of Course: 11

Number of Course Credits: 4

Number of Hours of Instruction: 120

Prerequisites: None

Special Training, Facilities or Equipment Required:

Teacher Requirements:

- Wilderness First Aid certified
- Emergency First Aid instructor for schools certified
- Experience working with and managing youth in outdoor situations
- Personal experience in outdoor activities

Equipment:

Specialized equipment and safety gear will be required for specific activities. The school will have some outdoor equipment to be used, students may have some of their own gear, or gear will be provided by a company (i.e. rock climbing gym will supply all required equipment)

Facilities:

Use of local parks, recreation areas, and recreation centres

Course Synopsis:

Students will learn basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for safe and comfortable outdoor experiences while fostering an appreciation for the outdoors. The course will have a focus on experiential and adventure based learning with weekly field trips. Curriculum organizers include: First Aid and Survival Skills, Leadership and Teamwork, Personal Skill Development, Personal Skill Development and Outdoor Pursuits, Environmental and Conservation Education, and Local Natural and Cultural History. This course will assist students in developing some of the core competencies such as creative and critical thinking, communication, personal and cultural identity, and personal and social awareness and responsibilities. Assessment will be based on students meeting outdoor skill and core competency outcomes, student participation, and student reflection on their learning.

Rationale:

Outdoor Connections is about providing challenging learning experiences, which engage students in a holistic way. A fundamental aspect of Outdoor Connections is developing a positive relationship between students and the natural environment. There is considerable evidence that outdoor education programs impact positively on youth attitudes, beliefs, and positive connections made with self, others, and nature. Other benefits include improved academic abilities, mental health, and resilience. Students will encounter and overcome challenges outside the classroom as well as create a self-awareness of the beautiful environment that surrounds our community. Activities such as hiking, rock climbing, canoeing, kayaking, snowshoeing, and orienteering provide opportunities for students to develop skills and build confidence. Students will be challenged to think about their role in the environment and encouraged to develop an environmental ethic by using the environment with minimal impact. The outdoor trips will encourage students to use their problem-solving skills and require them to learn how to work as part of a team. The course will teach valuable skills and knowledge for backpacking trips such as first aid training, navigation, survival skills, and trip preparation for safe enjoyment in the wilderness. Students will be introduced to a variety of outdoor adventure and recreation activities where they will develop the skills to participate in these activities later in life.

Organizational Structure:

Unit	Title	Time
Unit 1	First Aid and Survival Skills	20 hours
Unit 2	Leadership and Teamwork	20 hours
Unit 3	Personal Skill Development and Outdoor Pursuits	50 hours
Unit 4	Environmental and Conservation Education	15 hours
Unit 5	Local Natural and Cultural History	15 hours
	Total hours	**120**

Unit/Topic/Module Descriptions:

Unit 1: First Aid and Survival Skills **20 Hours**

Students will learn skills to keep themselves and others safe in the wilderness. They will complete an Emergency First Aid and CPR course and learn common wilderness first aid techniques and prevention. Other survival skills will include shelter construction, creating a fire, responding to emergency situations as well hazard recognition and prevention.

Curriculum Organizers and Learning Outcomes:

It is expected that students will:

- complete certification for Emergency first aid
- demonstrate common wilderness first aid techniques
- demonstrate proficiency in various outdoor survival skills
- identify safety items that should be brought when venturing into the outdoors
- demonstrate tarp and emergency shelter construction
- be able to demonstrate how to build a campfire
- be able to identify common hazards on hiking trips and how to prevent them

Instructional Strategies for the unit: Direct Instruction, Experiential learning, Scenarios, Modeling, Group and Partner work, problem solving, discussion

Assessment Strategies for the unit: demonstration of skills (checklist), self-assessment, peer assessment, participation rubric, written and practical test for first aid

Unit 2 Leadership and Teamwork **20 hours**

Students will be given opportunities for personal growth in areas such as leadership, decision making, problem solving, and group cooperation skills. They will participate in teambuilding activities and learn an understanding of leadership theory and its application.

Curriculum Organizers and Learning Outcomes:

It is expected that students will:

- be able to identify different leadership styles and elements that make a good leader
- understand the importance of followership as it applies to leadership
- have opportunities to lead their peers (group management, pacing, communication, route finding,
- participate in teambuilding activities and practice inclusiveness in all activities
- actively participate in group activities

Instructional Strategies for the unit: Direct Instruction, Experiential learning, Scenarios, Modeling, Group and Partner work, teamwork, problem solving, discussion

Assessment Strategies for the unit: demonstration of skills (checklist), self-assessment, peer assessment, participation rubric, reflection

Unit 3: Personal Skill Development and Outdoor Pursuits **50 Hours**

Students will be introduced to a range of outdoor activities that they will participate in such as hiking, orienteering, rock-climbing, and water sports. They will learn core camping skills, trip preparation skills, navigation and map reading skills, which will provide them with safe and enjoyable outdoor experiences.

Curriculum Organizers and Learning Outcomes:

It is expected that students will:

- understand how to use camping equipment properly (stoves, tents, packs)
- participate in weekly outdoor activities (rock climbing, hiking, orienteering, kayaking)
- understand how to plan and execute a food menu for a backcountry trip
- understand the equipment required for a day versus backcountry trip
- demonstrate how to safely light and operate a camp stove
- Understand the importance and methods of water purification
- Have the knowledge and skills to safely and responsibly navigate the outdoor environment
- demonstrate basic knots useful for core camping skills
- have an understanding of weather considerations for trips
- understand trip preparation (trip selection, campsite selection, gear required, how to pack)

Instructional Strategies for the unit: Direct Instruction, Experiential Learning, Scenarios, Modeling, Group Work, Problem solving, Discussion, and practical skill sessions

Assessment Strategies for the unit: demonstration of skills (checklist), self-assessment, peer assessment, participation rubric, reflection

Unit 4: Environmental and Conservation Education **15 Hours**

Students will learn about the environment and the importance of conserving it. Students will learn best practices for leaving no trace and develop a personal environmental ethic.

Curriculum Organizers and Learning Outcomes:

It is expected that students will:

- demonstrate an appreciation for minimum impact travel while in the backcountry and follow the leave no trace principals
- gain an appreciation for the significance of the local environment
- participate in a volunteer project with an conservation theme (beach clean-up, trail maintenance, invasive species removal, etc.)

Instructional Strategies for the unit: Direct Instruction, Experiential learning, Scenarios, Modeling, Group and Partner work, problem solving, discussion

Assessment Strategies for the unit: demonstration of skills (checklist), self-assessment, peer assessment, participation rubric, reflection

Unit 5: Local Cultural and Natural History **15 Hours**

Students will learn about common plants and animals in our ecosystem and will be able to identify them. In addition, they will learn how to avoid dangerous animal encounters and what to do if they do encounter wildlife. Students will also learn about local indigenous ways of life and some of the cultural history in the Comox valley and Vancouver Island.

Curriculum Organizers and Learning Outcomes:

It is expected that students will:

- be able to identify common species of flora and fauna
- learn how to be bear and cougar aware
- have an understanding of local and indigenous culture and history

Instructional Strategies for the unit: Direct Instruction, Experiential learning, Scenarios, Modeling, Group and Partner work, problem solving, discussion

Assessment Strategies for the unit: demonstration of skills (checklist), self-assessment, peer assessment, participation rubric, reflection, individual and group assignments identifying plants

Assessment Component:

Assessment Categories	Weighting
Outdoor Skill and Core Competency Checklist Based on skills and abilities demonstrated during recreation activities	60%
Participation Rubric	20%
Assignments Journal and Blog Reflections and Individual Assignments	20%
TOTAL	100%

Learning Resources:

S. John Ambulance First Aid Reference Guide

Plant and Animal Identification Guides (ie. Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast by Pojar and Mackinnon)

Additional Information:

Certified instructors and additional supervisors will be used for high-risk activities.

Board/Authority Authorized Course Form

Please complete, print, sign, scan and e-mail to: EDUCSCB@gov.bc.ca

PART A: BAA COURSE VERIFICATION STATEMENT
To be completed by district Superintendent or Independent School Principal

Prior to submitting the attached BAA Course Framework to the Board/Authority for approval, I ***Representative*** verify that I have reviewed the BAA Course: to ensure that it is fully compliant with the *School Act (if offered by a Board)*, the *Independent School Act* (if offered by an Independent School Authority), the *Board Authorized Course Order*, policy document *Board/Authority Authorized Courses: Requirements and Procedures*, and for ELL courses the ELL Guidelines: *Template for BAA Language Acquisition/Culture Courses*.

Specifically, I verify that the BAA Course:

- ☐ is not a remedial, modified or GED preparation course
- ☐ does not significantly overlap with current provincial curriculum
- ☐ name reflects the subject area and includes the grade level
- ☐ assigned grade level reflects the appropriate level of instruction
- ☐ credit value appropriately reflects the length and scope of the course
- ☐ synopsis clearly outlines what a student has gained when the course is completed
- ☐ rationale outlines the reasons for wanting to offer opportunities to study the course
- ☐ organizational structure outlines the specific topics, units or modules which include the learning outcomes, instruction and assessment components, and time allotments
- ☐ learning outcomes are assessable and observable and can be understood by students and parents
- ☐ instructional component clarifies learning outcomes and provides a range of pedagogical opportunities
- ☐ assessment component provides formative and summative opportunities to assess student achievement
- ☐ learning resources are age appropriate, support learning outcomes and diversity of learning rates and styles.

Full Course Name **Grade** Choose...

School District Choose...

Independent School **Number**

District Superintendent/Independent School Principal

Signature _____ **Date**

PART B: BAA COURSE AUTHORIZATION STATEMENT
To be completed by Board/Authority Chair or Designate

A signed copy of this document must be submitted for Ministry records by e-mail to EDUCSCB@gov.bc.ca The original document and accompanying BAA Course Framework must be retained by the district/school for submission to the Ministry upon request.

I declare that this BAA course is approved by the Board/Authority.

Board/Authority Chair or Designate

Signature _____ **Date**

(Board Authorized Course Order, M285/04, s. 3; Educational Standards Order, M41/91, s. 5 (2)(c))

PART C: FOR INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS ONLY: BAA INSPECTOR CONFIRMATION
To be completed by Inspector of Independent Schools or Designate during regular Inspection/monitoring visit.

A signed copy of this document (Parts A and C) must be retained for submission to the Ministry upon request.

The BAA course noted above is fully compliant with the *Independent School Act* and the BC Ministry of Education requirements outlined in the policy document *Board/Authority Authorized Courses: Requirements and Procedures*.

Inspector of Independent Schools or Designate

Signature _____ **Date**

(Educational Standards Order, M41/91, s. 5(2)(c))

School District No.71 (Comox Valley)

607 Cumberland Road
Courtenay, B.C., V9N 7G5
Office of the Acting Superintendent of Schools Fax: (250) 334-4472
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Briefing Note—
2016-2017 Proposed Calendar

The School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) Calendar Committee comprised of the CDTA, CUPE, DPAC, CVPVPA, Senior Staff and Trustees, have been meeting since September 2015 to look at and discuss a variety of proposals for next year's calendar.

Background Info:

The *School Amendment Act* (Bill 36), enacted in Spring 2012, established a new legislative framework for school calendars. Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, there would no longer be a standard school calendar and each board would be responsible for establishing calendars for schools in its district.

The *School Act* and the School Calendar Regulation set out the requirements for board-established school calendars. The Regulation also set a minimum number of hours of instruction that boards must offer to students during the school year.

Under the legislation, boards would now be required to consult with parents and board employees on their proposed school calendars before submitting them to the Ministry of Education. During this consultation period, the board must provide parents and board employees the opportunity to comment on the proposed calendars. Boards would be required to submit their proposed school calendars to the Ministry by March 31 of each year for the following school year.

Proposed Calendar:

Our *draft* Calendars have been on the school district website since returning from Winter Break. To date we have had 562 entries into the feedback cycle. Samples of the Feedback comments have been attached. Please note they have been vetted to protect confidentiality.

It should be noted that dates for next year do not follow a simple, traditional pattern, therefore the committee tried to be creative in terms of coming up with a solution. One example is to look at time off at Christmas and Spring Break together instead of counting them individually. This ensures that in a year everyone gets the same amount of time off, however, it may be a day more during winter break and a day less at Spring Break. This proved to be challenging for our committee.

It should be noted that when the draft calendars were published, the entire committee was in favour of either option being selected. The CDTA executive has since informed us that their membership has instructed them that they are not in favour of beginning the school year prior to Labour Day, as they do not see the link between those days and a full two week Spring Break. (See above explanation). The survey results indicate otherwise.

Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent of Schools

The committee met last week to discuss this latest development, review the recommendations and also the feedback. The committee has decided to recommend Option 1 as the calendar for next year (see attached). It should be noted that Trustees did not attend all meetings, specifically the last meeting, as they will be required to vote on the final calendar (the committee wanted to provide a sense of fairness and equality amongst all trustees).

It should be mentioned that when the calendar has been adopted for next year (which will occur in March 2016), should the need to amend next year's calendar arise, this can be done with a 30-day notice. I have included the applicable sections of the legislation for information.

Amending a School Calendar:

6 (1) For the purposes of section 87.02 [*school calendar – amendment*] of the *Act*, a board must make publicly available proposed amendments to a school calendar at least one month before making the amendments.

(2) A board must, as soon as practicable and, in any event, within 30 days of amending a school calendar under section 87.02 of the Act, provide the minister with the amended school calendar.

(3) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a board that reschedules a non-instructional day previously scheduled in a school calendar if the board gives notice of the change to

(a) the parents of the students enrolled in the school to which the proposed change is to apply, and

(b) the representatives of employees of the board assigned to the school.

(4) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a board that amends a school calendar for the 2015/2016 school year to include the non-instructional periods required under section 8(1)(b) *[designation of purpose for non-instructional days and periods]* and instead the board must, as soon as practicable and, in any event, within 30 days of amending a school calendar under section 87.02 of the Act,

(a) provide the minister with the amended school calendar, and

(b) make publicly available the amended school calendar. [am. BC Reg. 203/15, effective Nov 4/15]

<u>Recommendation:</u>

THAT the Board of Education accept the draft 2016/17 Calendar as the proposed calendar for the next school year; AND THAT the Board accept the draft Distance Learning Navigate / NIDES Calendar as the proposed Calendar for the next school year.

Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent of Schools

Sample A3

Comox Valley School District ~ School Calendar 2016 - 2017

July

1 Canada Day

JULY 2016

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

AUGUST 2016

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August

1 B.C. Day
31 Non-Instructional Day

September

1/2 Non-Instructional Day
5 Labour Day
6 First day of school for students

SEPTEMBER 2016

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

OCTOBER 2016

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

October

10 Thanksgiving
21 Pro-D

November

11 Remembrance Day (**schools** closed)
24 Parent/Teacher interviews

NOVEMBER 2016

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

st

DECEMBER 2016

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

December

22 Last day of school
23 Winter Break begins
25 Christmas Day
26 Boxing Day

January

1 New Year's Day
9 First day back

JANUARY 2017

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2017

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

February

13 Family Day

March

3 Pro-D

MARCH 2017

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

APRIL 2017

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

April

5 First Day of Spring Break
14 Good Friday
17 Easter Monday
18 First Day Back from Spring Break

May

22 Victoria Day

MAY 2017

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JUNE 2017

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

June

30 Administrative Day

Event	Dates	Four-day weeks(M-Th):
Opening/closing days (royal)		Hornby Island
Non-instructional days - pro-d or planning day (yellow)	**Subject to change**	Alternate Programs (Glacier View Secondary Ctr)
PLC days (red)	**Subject to change**	
School / government / statutory holidays (green)		**Four-Day Kgtn (M-Th):**
Winter / spring breaks (grey)		Ecole Puntledge Park El (French Imm.)
Parent / student / teacher conferences (aqua)		Queneesh El (Montessori),
Exam days for secondary (mauve)		
Administrative day (no classes, teachers attend) (peach)		

Navigate 12 Month Calendar DRAFT: July 2016 to June 2017 (186/6: As Per District Calendar)

2016

June/July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

1 Canada Day
11 Teacher
15 Counsellor

August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

1 BC Day
11 Teacher
18 Counsellor

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

5 Labour Day
6 Admin Day
20 Instr.
1 NI

NB- Sept 1 & 2 are regular DL instr. days

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	1/8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

10 Thanksgiving
21 Prov. Pro-D
19 Instr.
1 NI

November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

11 Remembrance
25 N. Pro-D Day
20

NB District P/T Int. Day is the 24th

December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

* Christmas Day
* Boxing Day
16

2017

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

*New Year's Day
17

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

13 BC Family Day
19

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

3 D. Pro-D Day
22

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	1/8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

14 Good Fri.
17 Easter Mon.
11

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

22 Victoria Day
19 N. Pro-D Day
21

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

30 Admin Day
21

	Statutory Holiday		NI/Admin Days		Holidays		Summer Teacher/Counsellor		Add. Counsellor/Lead Teacher

Notes:

1. Summer Calendar in place for July & August: Close school for all staff from July 25 to August 5th (As per Winter & Spring Break)
2. Summer Counsellor and Lead Teacher work an additional 11 days in summer to support registration and program requirements
3. All Regular Navigate teaching staff report back on September 1st. September 1 & 2 are regular instructional days instead of Pro-D Days in the regular District Calendar. Unique Navigate Pro-D Days on November 25th and May 19th replace Sept. 1 & 2 in District Calendar. These are very busy registration days for the school and DL teachers need to be able to be available to students and parents.
4. Same number of Instructional Days and NI Days as in proposed District Calendar (186/6) – Option 1
5. November 25 Navigate Pro-D Day instead of the 24th to support FAE & ENTER/E2 Learning Cycles Calendar (Tues-Thrus)

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Briefing Note--

Alternative Instructional Week Update

To date, senior management has met with the executives of our partner groups (CDTA / CUPE / DPAC / CVPVPA). Each group has received information on the alternative instructional week. Specifically, we looked at:

1. Why are we looking at an alternative instructional week?
2. How does an alternative instructional week save the school district money?
3. What restrictions/parameters do we have in terms of employment contracts and guidelines?

A sample of an alternative structure was presented and discussed. The presentation led to conversations about other alternative week structures.

In addition, all of our schools have engaged staff in alternative instructional week discussions. Many sites have used both formal and informal staff meetings to have these conversations.

The following Community Forums are being scheduled (tentative dates provided). The purpose is to provide the public with some background information on why we are looking at an alternative instructional week. A sample of an alternative instructional week will be shared, and participants will have an opportunity to engage in table talk and group discussions around a set of guiding questions.

- Tuesday March 1 – Cumberland Community School 6:30-8:00 pm
- Wednesday March 2 – Lake Trail School 6:30-8:00 pm
- Wednesday March 16 – Mark Isfeld School 6:30-8:00 pm
- Thursday March 17 – Highland Secondary School 6:30–8:00 pm

Conversations will continue in all schools, with all staff and with respective parent communities through our PAC groups.

Tom Demeo, Acting Superintendent of Schools

Finance Committee

Minutes of Meeting – Thursday, February 18, 2016
(School Board Office, Meeting Room)

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

Members	**In Attendance**
Peter Coleman (Chair)	Yes
Vickey Brown (Trustee Representative)	Yes
Tom Demeo (Acting Superintendent of Schools)	Yes
Sheldon Lee (Acting Secretary Treasurer)	Yes
Candice Hilton (Director of Finance)	Yes
Ian Heselgrave (Director of Operations)	Yes
Debbie Page (Recording Secretary)	Yes

A REVIEW PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

A.01 Finance Committee Minutes - January 20, 2016

Reviewed January 20, 2016 Finance Committee meeting minutes re: unfinished business. Minutes adopted at the January 26, 2016 regular Board meeting.

B COMMITTEE BUSINESS

B.01 **Month End Year-To-Date Finance Report**, Candice Hilton, Director of Finance

Director of Finance Candice Hilton spoke to the Month End Year-to-Date Finance Report.

C ADJOURNMENT

C.01 Meeting adjourned: 10:40 am
Next Meeting: TBA

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Briefing Note --

REPORT ON BCPSEA AGM

Peter Coleman, Trustee

The AGM was held in the Coast Hotel on Friday, Jan. 29th.

The main topics were the Association budget, 3 Resolutions, and an address by the Deputy Minister.

On your behalf I voted against the Budget which contained a 14% increase for activities and staff; voted for Resolutions (from SD42, Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows) calling for the return of Trustee Directors for BCPSEA, and for the Economic Stability Dividend costs to districts to be fully funded, and voted against a proposal that district participation in the Attendance/Wellness be voluntary. All 3 were carried, the second unanimously.

The Minister provided some interesting insights into the modest growth in student enrolments that occurred in the Province this year (although mostly not on the Island). Most of the growth was driven by economic immigration from overseas and other parts of Canada, but 25% was the result of students returning from the independent sector to the public school system.

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Report on the First and Second District Student Roundtables

Peter Coleman, Trustee

Jan. 26, 2016

The first session was held Thursday Nov 12, 4 pm, in the Mark Isfeld Library. The questions (sent to students in advance) were:

1. *What 3 words would you use to describe your school to a new student? Why did you choose those words?*
2. *We have noticed that there are quite a few transfers from one school to another - in your opinion, what are the three main reasons why students switch schools?*
3. *The district and schools try to help students plan for a good life after school is over; when you think about students you know, what helps, and what more could be done?*
4. *The province is creating a new graduation program, what are some things you hope they include in the new program and why, and what things do you hope they drop from the current program and why?*

The student volunteers said that they appreciated getting the questions in advance, and all of them had discussed them with others. The responses to Q.1 varied widely: "supportive", "stressful", and "disconnected" were memorable choices, describing different schools.

The responses to Q.2 were also diverse: most students believed that program choice was the main reason for transfers; many other more personal reasons were given, including friendships, convenience, and escaping bullying.

The responses to Q.3 focussed on Planning 10. Suggestions included broader range of topics, with some emphasis on personal finance, more flexibility in when the course is taken, and much more emphasis on mental health. This last topic was clearly of very significant interest to all the students.

Little was said about Q.4. There is some expectation that it will be on the table at future sessions. All the volunteers were hoping to attend follow-up sessions.

Personal Response to the event (Peter Coleman): I was satisfied that the students were engaged in the process, and were happy to give their opinions. I would recommend that the secondary schools treat the creation of a local version of Planning 10 as a high priority; in my opinion the course is best offered face-to-face, in a modularised form which allows for options within a range of topics. Both "personal finance – credit, budgeting, and saving", and "maintaining mental health in a stressful world" are recommended topics.

SESSION 2

The second session was at Highland Secondary School – Wednesday January 6, 2015 4:00 pm. The group contained a few new faces but the core representation by school was the same students. However, the moderator was Gerald Fussell, District Principal, Innovation and Technology from the School Board Office. (Mr. Demeo was problem-solving elsewhere, but arrived while the session was underway).

Questions:

1. Last time we met you were asked to give us words that described your school. This time could you give us a word(s) that describe(s) an ideal school?
2. What are some strengths of your school?
3. What are some unique features of your school that reflect the make-up of your community?
4. Are there 2 adults in your school who believe you will be successful in life? How do you know this?
5. When you think about what you will be doing after you leave school, what is your main worry/ main hope?
6. What things have changed in your school since it started?

Again the students were very ready to give their views. The words (and lengthier descriptions) elicited by Q.1 included "connected"; "interested"; "student-oriented"; "respectful" "goal-oriented"; "comfortable and safe"; "open-minded"; and "no exclusive cliques". Others included 'engaged', 'passionate', 'sets you up for the real world', and 'relevant'.

"Mentored learning for the world" was described as an ideal.

School strengths were listed as "sports/athletics"; "teachers" (very wide agreement on this one); "well-rounded programs"; "trades training"; "career path" (very wide agreement on this one); "on-line learning" (**virtually all the students have taken at least one NIDES course**); "community connections". These were seen as reflecting community needs/make-up, so nothing new emerged for Q. 3.

Question 4 was borrowed from a very productive session presented by Delta SD at the recent Supt.'s Conference. The researchers involved found this question to be key to assessing school quality as seen by students. Our students gave very positive responses – all stressed teacher support; a number said that all their teachers believed in them. The phrases "mutual respect", "encouraging academic learning", and "not condescending" were used to describe teacher/student relationships.

Question 5 elicited a long list of worries and a short list of hopes. These are rather anxious young people. Amongst the worries, career paths seemed central. Students talked about "being on the wrong track"; concern about "access to college/university"; not being prepared for life after school; not being happy doing the job they chose; financing post-secondary schooling; and the usefulness of getting a degree/transferability to the work world.

Question 6 responses included:

Weight room. Breakfast program.

Schooling has changed, so naturally the school has changed. Highland has been renovated. Schooling looks different, but not different enough. Using the same textbooks as were used in 86.

At Vanier, students find their parent's names in their textbooks.

There are a lot of people and nowhere to sit at lunch, but you get to meet so many people and the opportunity for anonymity is always there. Cumberland and Lake Trail intakes are often intimidated when they come to Vanier, but Vanier is more welcoming than it used to be.

GSA started, Peer support group, mental health group, coming in grade 10 has allowed her to see shifting dynamics in the school population. Bullying and intimidation is lessening. Kids are starting to grow up.

Kids used to be able to take a course over a year, field trip money is down, so less wealthy families have diminished learning opportunities.

Students did not want to get out of their comfort zone and there was no appetite to embarrass oneself in front of one's peers.

Finally the moderator threw in a bonus question: "how could your school become better?" An interesting list emerged:

- Re-evaluate what/how we learn (old curriculum and textbooks – in some cases books were used by the parents of these students – literally; some recognizable notes).
- Create more diversity of programs.
- Listen to students.
- Create more student involvement.
- Be more supportive of each other.
- Increase academic competition.
- Give students more freedom to control their own learning.
- Help students get more connected with other students.
- Get stable budgets to support schools (**I wish**).
- Create more openness.

Personal Comment: I have been struck by the quality of student participation. These students seem to me to be a good cross-section, with very varied interests and career hopes, and they were all willing and capable participants in a very intelligent discussion of the schools as they are and as they would like them to be.

Their worries are concern the future; they recognize that their schools are safe and supportive havens, and they know the outside world will be different. Perhaps this is why they all plan to work and live in the Valley, rather than elsewhere. The difficulties of pursuing the careers they plan while living in this small community seem not to have registered.

The next session is planned for March 9, at Glacier View at 4 pm. Questions have yet to be determined. I hope trustees can attend to hear student opinions at first hand, rather than through my reports.

Peter Coleman, Trustee (Town of Comox)