

BOARD BUSINESS

November 2024

Susan Aglukark visits Comox Valley Schools

BOARD MEETING IN REVIEW

Boundary Catchment Updates approved for Airport, Aspen Park, Brooklyn and Valley View

At the public Board meeting on November 26, Comox Valley Schools officially approved new boundary catchment adjustments for four elementary schools: Airport Elementary, Aspen Park Elementary, Brooklyn Elementary, and Valley View Elementary. These changes, designed to address enrollment growth and improve accessibility for families, will come into effect in time for Kindergarten registration in January.

The new catchments reflect the district's commitment to balancing enrollment across schools while maintaining walkable, safe routes and minimizing transportation needs. These adjustments will only apply to new enrollments starting in the 2025-2026 school year. Current students will remain unaffected by the changes.

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.



Highlights of the adjustments include:

- Airport Elementary: New developments along Aspen Road and parts of Idiens Way will now fall under the Aspen Park Elementary catchment, reducing busing needs for these families. Future developments along Pritchard Road past Cambridge Road will be assigned to Airport Elementary to alleviate pressure on Brooklyn Elementary.
- Aspen Park Elementary: The catchment will expand to include parts of Idiens Way and Aspen Road, aligning with planned new housing developments and providing walkable access to the school. Students in apartment buildings near Superstore will now be assigned to Valley View Elementary.
- Brooklyn Elementary: Boundary adjustments will move future developments near Pritchard Road to Airport Elementary, managing potential overcapacity and avoiding the need for additional portables.
- Valley View Elementary: The boundary will include new apartments near Superstore, offering a shorter and safer commute for families.

The approved boundary adjustments will be in place for Kindergarten registration, which opens in January.

Comox Valley Schools would like to thank all parents, guardians, and community members who participated in the consultation process. Feedback from the online portal and other engagements helped shape these adjustments to meet the needs of our growing community.



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BOARD MEETING IN REVIEW CONTINUES

Digital Safety, AI & Emerging Technology Presentation

Kara Dawson, District Information Technology Support Teacher and Shannon Hagen, Inclusion/Educational IT Lead Teacher delivered an engaging presentation on digital safety and the integration of artificial intelligence, emphasizing how these initiatives align with the district's strategic goals. They highlighted opportunities for deeper engagement through a three-part dinner series on educational technology and showcased various learning tools, including Microsoft Learning Accelerators and resources for teachers and students. Success stories, such as the Coding Arcade, Hackergal events, and the Minecraft Epic School Build-Off Challenge, demonstrated the creative and practical applications of technology in education. The presentation also introduced Grade 4 digital literacy lessons designed to equip teachers with tools to enhance student learning and featured the Parent Technology Handbook, a valuable resource available on Learn71 to help parents support technology use at home.

LEARN71 The Learn71 website provides a wide range of resources focused on supporting educators, students, and parents in the Comox Valley School District.

- Curriculum Support
- Technology Integration
- Indigenous Education
- Mental Health and Wellness
- Library & Research Databases
- Family and Home Learning Resources
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Assistive Technology Integration

Tribune Bay Report Released

The Board released the Tribune Bay Nature Education Centre Private Board Report: Business Plan, making it publicly available for review. The report can be found on [Page 42 here](#).

Board Members

- Michelle Waite, Chair (Lazo North)
- Susan L Leslie, Vice Chair (Town of Comox)
- Janice Caton, Trustee (City of Courtenay)
- Shannon Aldinger, Trustee (City of Courtenay)
- Sarah Jane Howe, Trustee (Village of Cumberland)
- Chelsea McCannel-Keene, Trustee (Baynes Sound, Hornby & Denman Islands)
- Cristi November Sacht – Trustee, Trustee (Puntledge, Black Creek)



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Singer Susan Aglukark dazzles audiences

Comox Valley Schools was very fortunate to welcome acclaimed Inuk singer-songwriter and speaker Susan Aglukark when she visited GP Vanier and Mark. R. Isfeld secondary schools.

Susan Aglukark, celebrated as the first Inuk artist to win a Juno Award, has spent over 25 years using her music and voice to share stories of her upbringing in Nunavut and to address the challenges faced by northern communities and Indigenous youth.

The events were further enriched by the presence of members of the Ni'noxsola, Elders in Residence team: Evelyn Voyageur, Bryce Mercredi, Annie Joseph, Edna Leask, and Jo Ann Restoule, whose guidance and contributions were instrumental in organizing these gatherings.

Thank you to the Wachiay Friendship Centre, for sponsoring these great shows for our students.

During her visits, Susan sang several of her iconic songs, captivating audiences with her powerful voice and heartfelt lyrics.

She also engaged in meaningful conversations with students, sharing personal narratives that emphasized the strength of Indigenous cultures and the importance of embracing one's heritage. Students from Glacier View, Nala'atsi, Isfeld, and G.P. Vanier came together to connect with Susan's messages and performances. Susan Aglukark's visit left a profound impression, inspiring students to explore their identities and recognize the strength that comes from shared stories and experiences. Her work, blending Inuktitut and English, encourages cultural discovery, self-reflection, and resilience.



North Island Regional Drama Festival comes to GP Vanier

The North Island Regional Drama Festival, hosted by G.P. Vanier Secondary from November 21-23, consisted of three days of extraordinary performances, workshops, and collaboration. Nine schools from across the North Island, from Port Hardy to Nanaimo, came together to showcase their passion for the performing arts. The festival kicked off with mainstage performances in the Vanier Multi-Purpose Room (MPR) on Thursday evening, setting the tone for a dynamic and engaging event. Friday saw students participating in a range of activities, including a Fringe Festival, a professional improv show by Victoria-based performers, and insightful workshops. Students and teachers took part in technical rehearsals, creative workshops, and community-building activities, all while supporting each other's artistic endeavors. Saturday concluded the festival with more workshops, additional Fringe Festival performances, and the final mainstage productions. The event was a testament to the dedication and creativity of North Island drama students and their teachers. A big thank you goes out to everyone who contributed to the festival's success—and a special shout out to organizer Lori Mazey from GP Vanier. November 2024

DISTRICT NEWS



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Music fills the air at the 31st Band and Choir Festival

The Comox Valley music community came alive with the 31st Annual Comox Valley Concert Band & Concert Choir Festival—a two-day celebration of talent, artistry, and the joy of music.

The festival opened with a spectacular lineup of choir performances from schools across BC. Students showcased their vocal talent and creativity, leaving audiences inspired by the range of harmonies and musical expression. Participating choirs included ensembles from Mark R. Isfeld Secondary, Highland Secondary, Cedar Hill Middle School, Oak Bay Secondary, Royal Bay Secondary, and Langley Secondary.

On the second day, the spotlight shifted to the concert bands, where students displayed their instrumental prowess. The stage at the Sid Williams Theatre resonated with dynamic performances by bands from Mark R. Isfeld Secondary, G.P. Vanier Secondary, Highland Secondary, Royal Bay Secondary, Langley Secondary, and Ladysmith Secondary. Thanks to Fine Arts Lead Teacher Jennifer Riley for once again organizing a great event.



Throughout the festival, students benefited from the guidance and expertise of adjudicators who provided invaluable feedback to help young musicians refine their craft.

The event's success was made possible by the dedication of music educators, the support of families and friends, and the tireless efforts of volunteers. A special thanks to the Courtenay Fellowship Baptist Church and Sid Williams Theatre for hosting this remarkable event. The Comox Valley Concert Band & Concert Choir Festival continues to be a cornerstone of the local arts community, fostering learning, growth, and connection through the universal language of music.



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Airport Elementary welcomes the Grey Cup

Airport Elementary students had the incredible opportunity to experience a piece of Canadian sports history—the Grey Cup! This 111-year-old trophy, emblematic of Canadian football excellence, made a special appearance at our Airport, thanks to the CFL's visit to 19 Wing Comox. Our students were thrilled to see the Grey Cup up close, ask questions, and learn about its storied past.



Ignite Climate Conference at the Filberg

The Florence Filberg Centre was abuzz with energy and optimism as students from Grades 8-12 gathered for the Youth Climate Action Summit on November 14th. Hosted by Comox Valley Schools, this impactful event, themed Ignite: Feed the Fire of Passion and Change, brought together young leaders to explore actionable solutions to climate challenges while fostering a shared commitment to stewardship and reconciliation.

The summit began with a powerful opening, setting the tone for a day filled with meaningful collaboration, learning, and connection. Participants engaged in dynamic workshops and activities designed to nurture their leadership potential and inspire hope. A key focus of the event was empowering youth with the agency to take actionable steps toward a more sustainable future while recognizing the urgency of environmental stewardship. Throughout the day, students explored intergenerational knowledge and mentorship, gaining insights into how past efforts can inform their future work. By the end of the event, participants walked away with not only a deeper understanding of climate issues but also the confidence and tools needed to spark change in their schools, homes, and communities.

The event concluded with a call to action: to carry forward the inspiration and passion ignited during the summit into ongoing efforts to care for the natural world and create a sustainable future.

Comox Valley Schools extends its heartfelt thanks to all participants, facilitators, and supporters who helped make this day unforgettable.



Former student raises \$26,000 for Lake Trail Community Education Society

We are very proud and grateful to recognize former SD 71 student Sophia Vaillant for her incredible generosity and leadership! Sophia donated her extra tickets to Taylor Swift's Vancouver Eras Tour to be raffled off, helping raise over \$26,000 for the Lake Trail Community Education Society (LTCES). The funds will go towards supporting vital community programs in the Lake Trail neighborhood, with a focus on building connections and food security. Sophia's selflessness and commitment to giving back have created a ripple of positivity and excitement, bringing Taylor Swift fans together from across BC while making a meaningful impact locally. Sophia, your generosity inspires us all. Thank you for being a shining example for our students!



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