



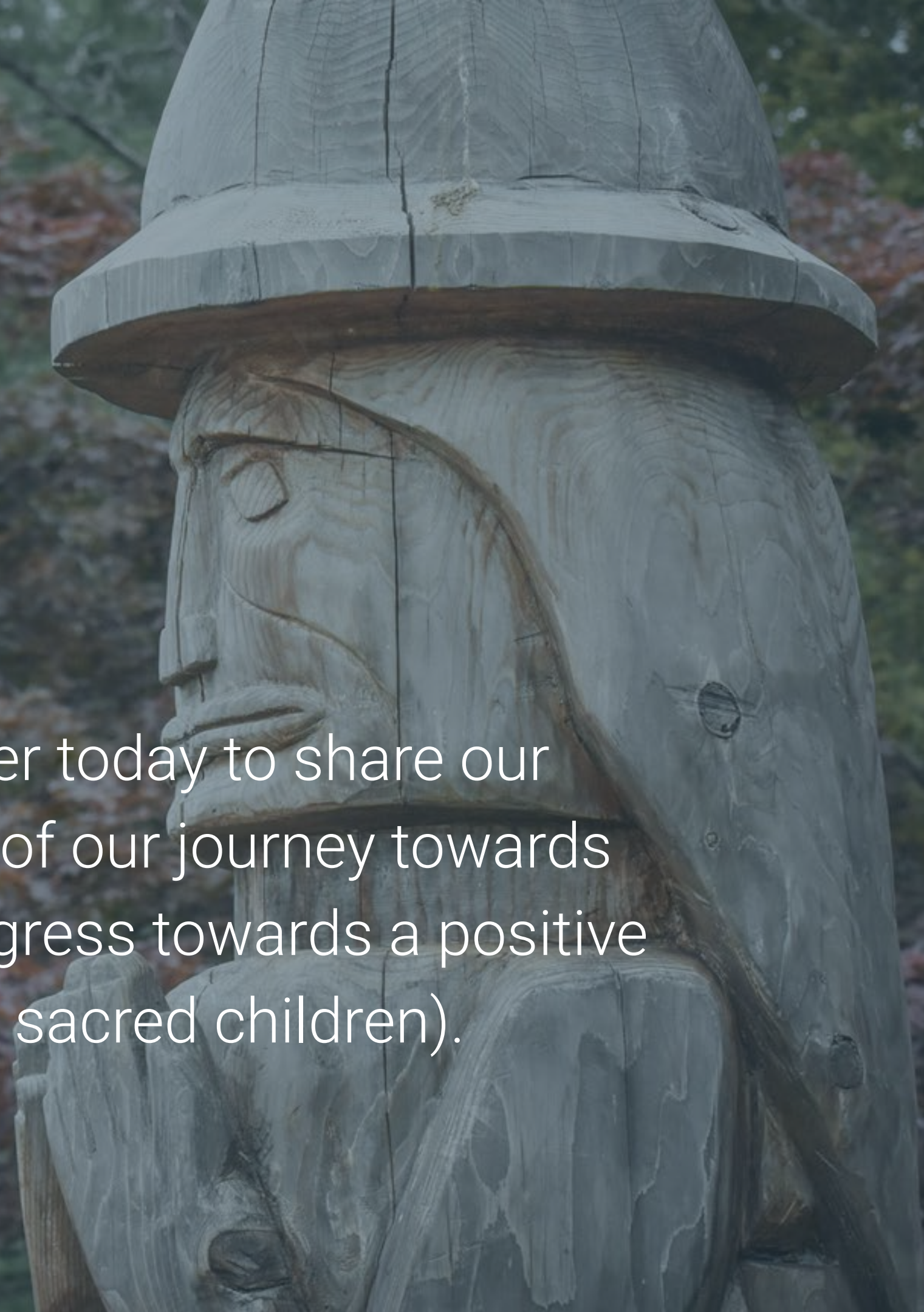
**COWICHAN VALLEY**  
School District

# **NUTS'A' MAAT SHQWALUWUN KW TSTYAAYUS**

WORKING TOGETHER WITH ONE HEART, ONE MIND, ONE THOUGHT

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful to be meeting on the unceded shared traditional territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy'əm (Musqueam), Sk<sup>w</sup>x<sup>w</sup>ú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We gather today to share our knowledge in this territory as part of our journey towards meaningful reconciliation and progress towards a positive future for the xe'xe smun'eem (the sacred children).



# WHY LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS?

An informed acknowledgement is authentic, accurate, respectful, and spoken with heartfelt sincerity. It is not a platitude. The exercise of doing the research to find out on whose land a meeting or event is taking place is an opportunity to open hearts and minds to the past and make a commitment to contributing to a better future which is the essence of reconciliation.

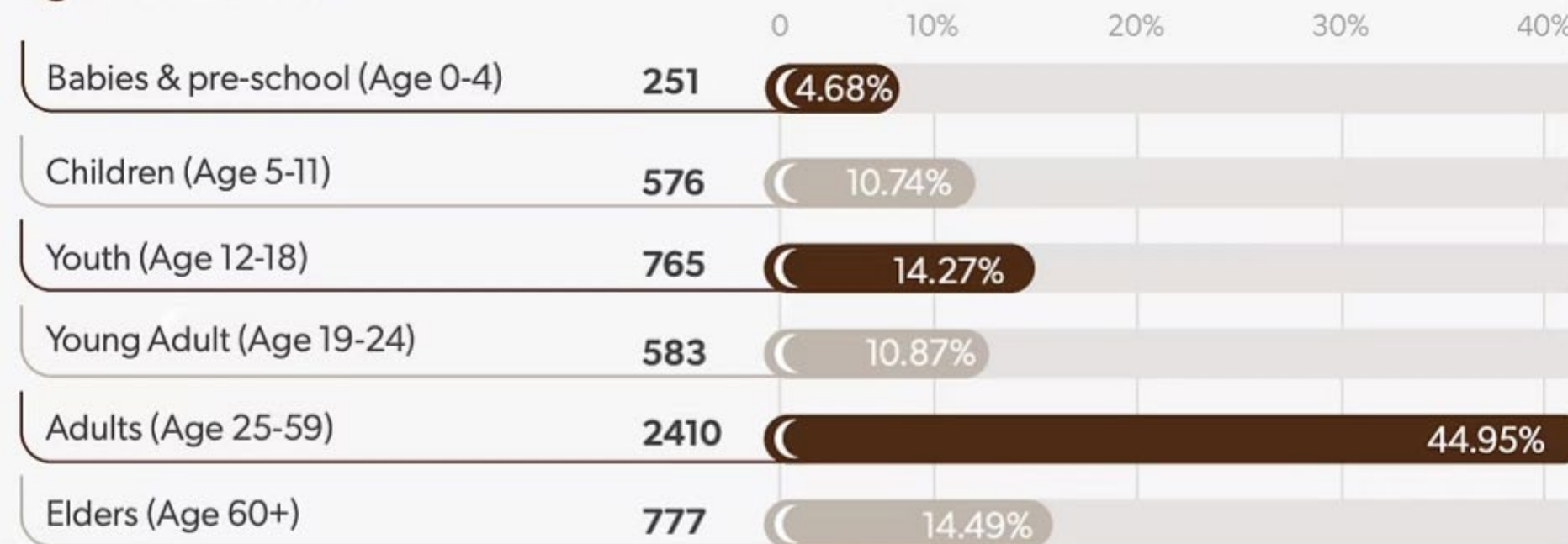
*- Bob Joseph 'Guide Book to Indigenous Protocol'*



# **COWICHAN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S JOURNEY**

ADDRESSING INEQUITIES, AND HISTORICAL WRONGS, ENSURING EACH STUDENT HAS EQUITABLE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES THAT ENABLE THEM TO THRIVE.

## Age Breakdown



## Largest First Nation Band in British Columbia by Population

Registered Population as of March 2025

# 5,538

Total Registered Population

**2,819** Total

51%



**1,331**

Registered Females  
On Own Reserve

**153**

Registered Females  
On Other Reserves

**1,335**

Registered Females  
Off Reserve

49%

**2,719** Total



**1,306**

Registered Males  
On Own Reserve

**178**

Registered Males  
On Other Reserves

**1,235**

Registered Males  
Off Reserve

(Cowichan Tribes 2024-25 annual report)

# **Youth Population – Under 24 Years of Age**

**40% of Cowichan Tribes members are under the age of 24.**

**23% of the Overall Population are under the age of 24.**

# Learning The Local Language

**“To understand Hul’q’umi’num’ is to understand the history and culture of the Quw’utsun People”**

**- Chief Chip Seymour**



# **DISTRICT ELDER**

HOW TO HONOUR AND EMBED KNOWLEDGE ACROSS THE DISTRICT

# A Personal Story from my Journey into Reconciliation



# Saint Joseph's Residential School (1891 to 1981)



# BEYOND EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2030





**EMBEDDING INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING**  
CREATING SYSTEMS CHANGE

# **Indigenous Ways of Knowing**

**Prioritize equity by deepening our  
commitment to Truth and Reconciliation in  
collaboration with rights holders and local  
community**



# RECOGNIZING A TRUTH

TAKING ACTION FOR AN EQUITABLE FUTURE



# **DECOLONIZING FINANCIAL PRACTICES**

CREATING UNDERSTANDING TO CHANGE OUR WORK



# HUMAN RESOURCES

RECONCILING WITH OUR PAST



# NAVIGATING COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

WITH INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING

# 'BEYOND EDUCATION' IN THE BARGAINING PROCESS



# LOCAL EDUCATION AGREEMENTS & MOU

FORMALIZING OUR RELATIONSHIPS AND CODIFYING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES



# POLICY AS RESTORATIVE PRACTICE



# I STAND WITH COWICHAN TRIBES



*Qwiyahwul-thw*

*S.Pagaduan*

**JUDGING A PERSON DOES  
NOT DEFINE WHO THEY ARE.....**

**IT DEFINES WHO YOU ARE.**

# IDENTITY, BELONGING, AND CONNECTION

A COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER

## NEWS RELEASE

Board of Education



Date: Thursday, February 4, 2021  
For Immediate Release

### BOARD CONVENES AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON ANTI-RACISM

Cowichan Valley, BC – At the Open Board Meeting on Tuesday, February 2, the Board of Education for the Cowichan Valley School District announced the formation of the Board's Ad-Hoc Anti-Racism committee.

The Board is committed to equity among students and staff, and strives to be a model for our community at large. The Board knows that our schools reflect the community we serve and recent world-wide and local events have shone a light on racist attitudes, policies, and practices that still occur within our communities. The Board is committed to providing each of our learners the best opportunity to create a world of their choosing and to ensure each staff member has a place to work that honours them. This commitment was the basis for the Board's 'Community of Care' pledge.

To further that goal and to add action to words, the Board is creating an Ad-Hoc Committee on Anti-Racism.

The purpose of this Ad-Hoc committee will be to:

- Critically examine our own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices that facilitate truth and reconciliation
- Create anti-racism policy for our schools and workplaces that
  - Supports a safe environment for all
  - Establishes a mechanism that supports representation of persons of colour within schools and workplaces
  - Establishes a process when responding to incidents

FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION



### Ad-Hoc Committee on Anti-Racism

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To further that goal and to add action to words, the Board is creating an Ad-Hoc Committee on Anti-Racism.

This working group will consist of:

- Board of Education Trustees
- Representatives from the District Leadership Team
- Representation from the CVPVPA
- Representation from each Union
- Representative from DPAC
- Representatives from Secondary Students
- Representatives from Indigenous Education (Cowichan Tribes)
- Representative from Community (e.g.: Intercultural society / Social Planning Cowichan / Cowichan Tribes)
- Representative from local media

The purpose of this Ad-Hoc committee will be to:

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# WHY IDENTITY, BELONGING, AND CONNECTION?

As the (Ad-hoc Anti-Racism) group worked through the policy development, they felt that defining the policy as the 'anti-racism policy' would not be truly reflective of the work undertaken to get to this final document nor the sole intention of the policy. The naming was a crucial step in aligning the policy to the foundational beliefs under the First Peoples Principles of Learning. These principles guided the foundation of the Strategic Plan and guided the work in the naming of this policy. They show that learning starts with 'Me' (individual), then the larger 'We' (family/friends), and finally 'Community.' When the working group considered these terms in relation to this policy, they aligned the terms 'Identity' with 'Me' and examined the intentionality of how this policy will create environments where individuals can form identity and be in a place where that identity can be nurtured. The working group then aligned 'Belonging' with 'We.' After the intentional creation of spaces where belonging is fostered, this policy ensures the creation of belonging for staff/students/families where they can be connected to something larger than themselves. Finally, aligning 'Connection' with 'Community' ensures that the Board and District continue to create opportunities for impact 'Beyond Education' in the community.

# REPRESENTING OUR COMMUNITY

EVERYONE PADDLING IN THE SAME CANOE



**COWICHAN VALLEY**

School District

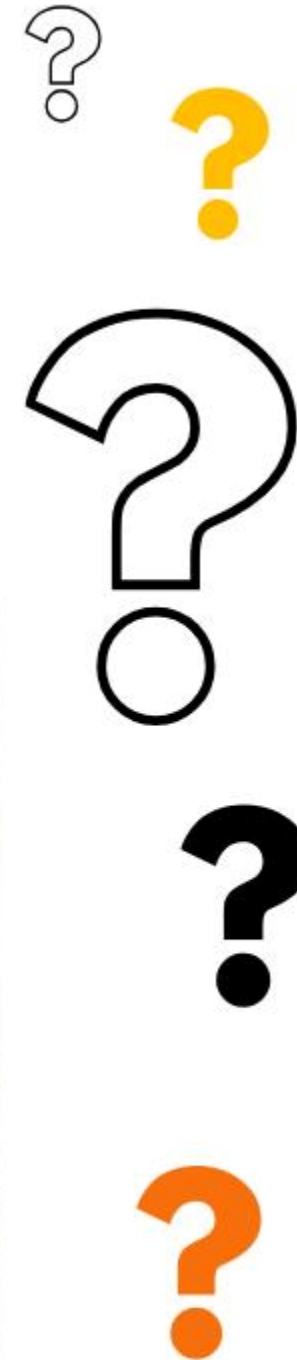


# Communications

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Cowichan Valley School District works very closely with the seven local land holding Nations; Ts'uubaa-asatx, Penelakut, Halalt, Lyackson, Malahat, Stz'uminus, and Quw'utsun, as well as the Métis Nation.

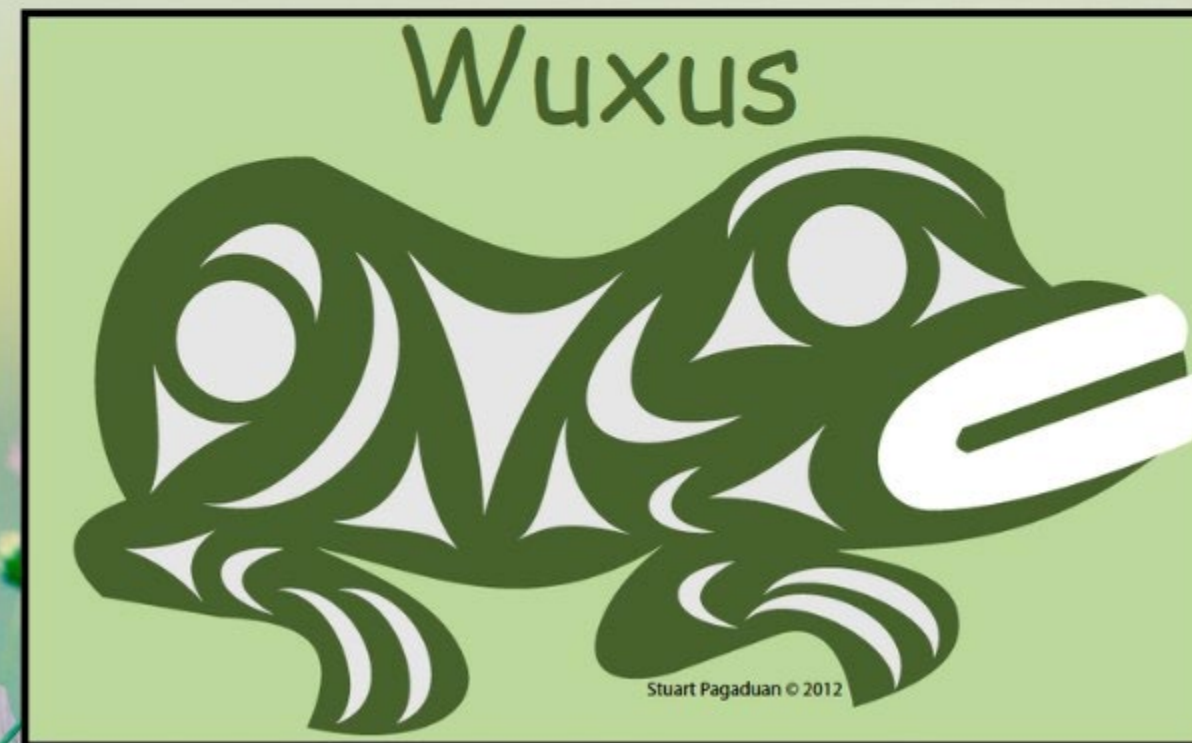
As a district, we are dedicated to working for our Xe'Xe'Smun'eem (our Sacred Children) and strive to integrate language, culture, and First Peoples Principles of Learning into daily instruction.



# Communications

## March

Wulhxus, in Hul'q'umi'num is the time of year that the wuxus (frog) returns to sing songs of the earth waking up, rebirth and the warm spring rains.



# PENELAKUT TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT

ENSURING TIMELY ACCESS TO SCHOOL AND ACTIVITIES



# Thinking About Land Ownership (Khowhemun Elementary)



# Thinking About Facility Usage (Providence Farm)



# OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL PLANNING

BUILDING OUR NEW SCHOOL AS AN ACT OF RECONCILIATION



# **Procurement Practices – Quw'utsun Secondary**

**In selecting the Design Build Team, one of the evaluation criteria required that they could demonstrate the inclusion of Indigenous workers or contractors in their past projects.**

**Cowichan Tribes' owned companies and members were deeply involved in the construction of Quw'utsun Secondary.**

# National Reconciliation Partnership Award Canadian School Board Association



Presentation of the inaugural National Reconciliation Partnership Award to Quw'utsun Syuw'entst Lelum/Cowichan Tribes and Cowichan School District.

LEFT TO RIGHT  
Carolyn Broady, Chair, CSBA Indigenous Education Committee  
Darcy Hoff, Cowichan Valley School District  
Chuck Seymour, Cowichan Tribes  
Darren McKee, CSBA Indigenous Education Committee

*On behalf of the **Underwriters for the Saskatchewan School Boards Association General Insurance Plan**, the award goes to **Cowichan Tribes and Cowichan Valley School District Board of Education** co-presented by the **Canadian School Boards Association**. The partners receiving their award and \$10,000 to further support their partnership goals.*

## **PARTNERSHIP DESCRIPTION**

In the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, the Cowichan Valley School District is privileged to enjoy a harmonious partnership with Cowichan Tribes, the largest single First Nation band in British Columbia. This partnership focuses on the xe' xe' smun'eem (sacred children), and many educational initiatives are examples of a relationship carefully cultivated over time.

The new Quw'utsun Secondary School, scheduled to open to students in January 2025, features a design that focuses on a place for children and families to feel connected to the culture, language and spirit of the land. This school is one example of the products of a valuable relationship that has worked steadfastly towards a future path of reconciliation.

As the partnership between Cowichan Tribes and the Cowichan Valley School District Board of Education continues to evolve, it is rooted in friendship and understanding. This partnership is a profound expression of love for xe' xe' smun'eem, respect for the land, and of reconciliation.

Sacred Design: How S'amuna' Gathering Place  
Preserves Cowichan Knowledge | Videos & Movies  
on Vimeo

Reconciliation in Action: The Story of Quw'utsun  
Secondary School Design | Videos & Movies on  
Vimeo

# WHAT HAVE I SAID?

- **Local Language is important.**
- **I told my personal story. Do you have one?**
- **I talked about incorporating values into Strategic Plans. Do you know what your District's Strategic Plan says about supporting Indigenous Ways of Knowing?**
- **I shared a truth and a reconciliation. Are their historical wrongs in your District that need to be addressed?**
- **I talked about Financial Practices. There are thousands of years of local financial understandings already in your community.**

# WHAT HAVE I SAID?

- I talked about Hiring Practices and Navigating Collective Agreements. How do you ensure that culture is honoured in your District?
- I talked about Local Education Agreements and whether or not we are doing our best to meet our contractual obligations.
- I told a story about how Policy development can be used as a restorative practice.
- I showed you how a logo can symbolize your District's commitment to reconciliation.

# WHAT HAVE I SAID?

- I talked about how public communication can be used to display an organization's values.
- Transportation: How can enhanced transportation services aid in providing opportunities for Indigenous Learners in your District?
- I thought about Land Ownership and how returning properties could aid in reconciliation.
- I talked about Facility Usage. Should the past influence current use?
- Finally, I talked about how Building Design can contribute to a feeling of connection to culture, language and the spirit of the land.

# **DISCUSSION AND A COMMITMENT**

KEEPING YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE

**What Indigenous Ways of Knowing can you bring into your work?**

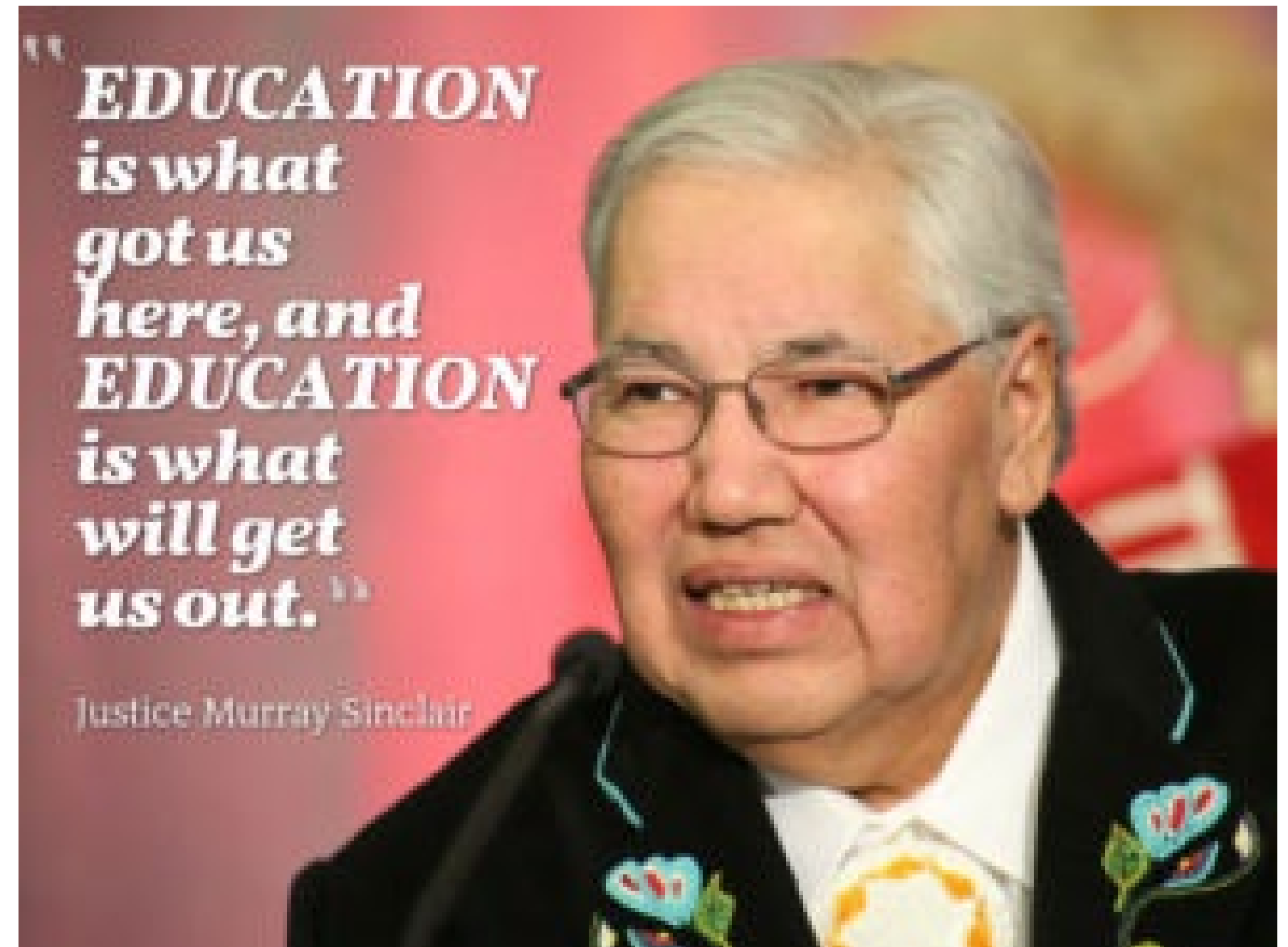
**How can you use your position to aid in reconciliation?**



## WHY DO YOUR EFFORTS MATTER?

“It is precisely because education was the primary tool of oppression of Aboriginal people, and miseducation of all Canadians that we have concluded that education holds the key to reconciliation.”

The Honourable Justice  
Murray Sinclair,  
Chair,  
Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission of Canada





**HUY TSEEP Q'U SII'EM NU SIIYE'YU**  
THANK YOU, RESPECTED FRIENDS