



**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
INFORMATION SHEET**

DATE: October 2, 2024
TO: Education Committee
FROM: Don Balcombe, Assistant Superintendent and
Jacquie Poulin, Assistant Superintendent
SUBJECT: School Start-Up

Background

This Information Sheet is intended to provide the Committee with an update on school start-up.

Discussion

Planning for school start-up begins early in the previous school year. Enrolment projections are made in February with staffing allocations provided to schools in April. Enrolment is tracked throughout the Spring. Over the summer and into the opening week of the new school year, as registrations are confirmed, additional staffing is assigned, if required, to be compliant with class size and composition requirements.

At the end of September an enrolment “snapshot” is captured. While the final document will not be submitted to the ministry until mid-October, preliminary indications are that our overall enrolment is up slightly from the previous year. This continues a year-over-year trend as our community continues to grow. Our Board’s Strategic Plan has identified three priority populations to support with intentional strategies: Indigenous students, students with disabilities and diverse abilities, and children and youth in care. All three of these populations are seeing a net increase year-over-year.

The following schools had new divisions created this September to meet class size and composition requirements: Chase River, Cilaire, Forest Park, Frank J Ney, Gabriola, and Rock City. Ecole North Oyster saw a change in their school organization that resulted in a reduction of a division in French Immersion and an addition of a division for their English-track enrolment. Most schools throughout the district were organized into classrooms by Monday, September 9th. During the first week of school, a variety of instructional approaches were utilized, including cross-grade and whole-grade activities focused on welcoming students and building community.

Secondary schools welcomed returning and new students with a variety of activities and events in September to build community and help students and staff settle into the new school year. One additional portable will be on site this year for the second semester at Wellington to address enrolment pressures.

This September saw schools implement new guidelines around personal digital devices. Schools are reporting an overall positive response from students, staff, and families.

Staff have returned to school with bright smiles and positive energy after coming off a summer of sunshine. It has been a pleasure to see and join in some of the regular September activities and events such as open-house events and Terry Fox runs while also hearing of the startup extra-curricular sports and various clubs.

As a district, we are excited to bring to life the new Board's Strategic Plan, focusing on student success, student and staff wellness, and Truth and Reconciliation. We will continue to grow and learn about the importance of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion as focal points for our work to meet the needs of our learners, staff, and families.

