

EMCS Society *Annual Report* 2010-2011

**Engaging youth and community in life long
learning and community development**





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EMCS General Information

Edward Milne Community School Society

Since June 1987, the EMCS Society Program Office has worked to build partner-ships with individuals and organizations in the community to provide life-long learning opportunities for people of all ages in the Sooke Region. The Society over-sees educational, cultural and social programs, projects and services developed to meet the needs of the community. As well as sponsoring a wide range of community education programs, the Society manages the Sooke Community Theatre, acts as fiscal sponsor for the Sooke Youth Council, the Sooke Region Literacy Program and is also a member of the Sooke Co-operative Association of Service Agencies (CASA).

Mission

It is the mission of Edward Milne Community School to partner with the students, parents, and the community to build a safe, supportive, and challenging learning environment that enables people to make a living, make a life, and make a difference.



We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia.



President's Report

President's Report

The Edward Milne Community School (EMCS) Society experienced an exciting 2010/2011 year during which several initiatives were completed whilst others are ongoing. The year began with an indication that the Gaming Funds were not to be forthcoming, which required some immediate creative business planning trying to identify and develop a fiscal plan with significantly reduced income. Eventually the Gaming grant funds were received but not until some anxious times passed.

A resolution to the future of the Maritime Program was realized with the handing over to the newly formed Sooke Classical Boating Society within the forecast timeline.

The EMCS Society continues to support the Sooke Youth Council with some of the EMCS Board members serving as steering committee members and also by acting as advisors supporting the youth initiatives.

Many thanks to all Executive and Board Members for the hard work and support during this year. I am sincerely appreciative of the professionalism and work ethic exhibited by Heather Walsh - Community School Coordinator, Rose Steele and Reta Vasey supporting the EMCS Society at all times. I am particularly appreciative of the commitment and effort given by Roberta Kubik who always finds the time to report on the EMCS School to the Society especially with her time consuming role as Principal of EMCS.

This coming AGM, and obligatory election of officers, marks the end of my 2 year term as the President with the EMCS Society Board. I have enjoyed the diversity and nature of the duties associated with the President position, which has given me further insight to the operational characteristics of the EMCS Society and the opportunity to be closely involved with the school.

I feel that there were times when I was overloaded with issues and events however I feel we got through the 2 years with success and accomplishments thanks to all the supporting members. I plan on continuing with the Board as the Past President for the coming year.

Again thanks to Heather, Rose, Reta and all those that have provided evening host roles. I believe that the EMCS Society is a community respected organization thanks to you all.

I am member of this Sooke community and proud of it!



Edward Milne Community School Society would like to thank the following groups for their generous support of our programs in 2010-2011.

Structure, Objectives, and Priorities

Executives

Roger Temple, President
Doug Agar, Vice President
Anne Bell, Secretary
Trudy Vermaas, Treasurer

Directors

Ellen Anderson
Leah Kelley
Roberta Kubik
Michael Young
Allison Watson

Liaisons

Bob Phillips (Trustee, SD#62, Liaison)
Margot Swinburnson (Trustee, SD#62, Liaison)
Maja Tait (Counsel Liaison, District of Sooke)

What is a Community School?

A community school is a model that subscribes to the values and principles of: inclusiveness, self-determination and self-help, shared resources, leadership development, life-long learning, integrated services, responsiveness, neighbourhood-based action and sustainability. In a community school, processes are in place which develop and maintain programs, services, events and opportunities to empower the neighbourhood to satisfy community needs and provide lifelong learning opportunities for everyone.

Objectives of the EMCS Society Program

To enhance school curriculum through community based learning opportunities.
To develop community oriented services at EMCS (e.g. The Sooke Youth Council, Sooke Literacy Project, nutritional support and transportation support for vulnerable students).
To expand continuing education program opportunities for students of all ages.
To access school facilities to develop educational, recreational, cultural and social programs for the community. To foster a sense of pride for Edward Milne Community School.

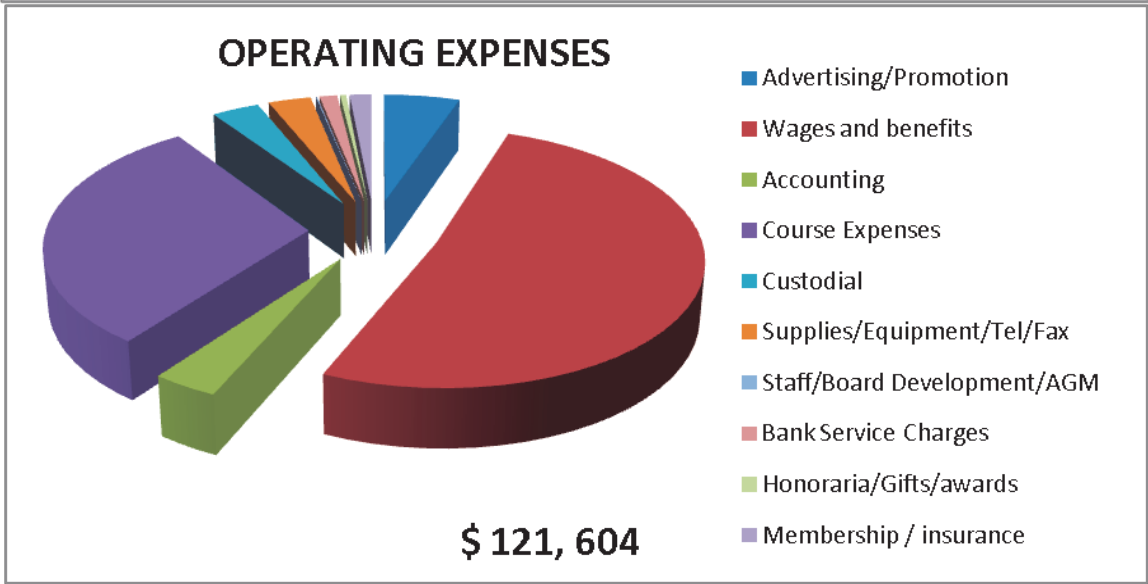
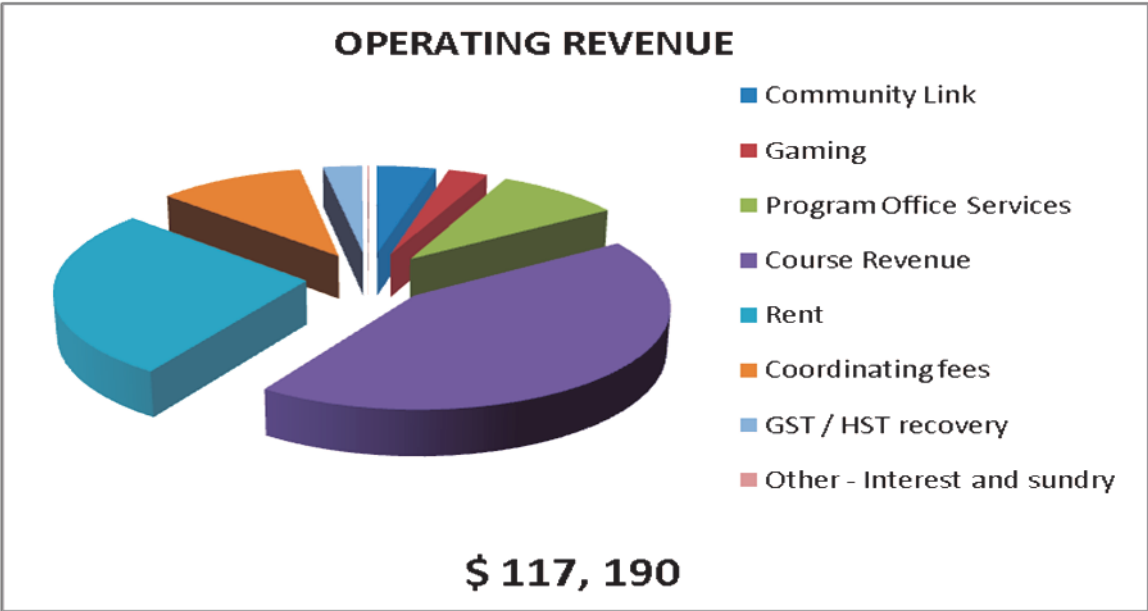
Our Priorities

Youth Engagement
Life Long Learning
Community Health
Community Development
Community Theatre and Extending Use of SD#62 Facilities



Operating Revenues and Expenditures

Finances

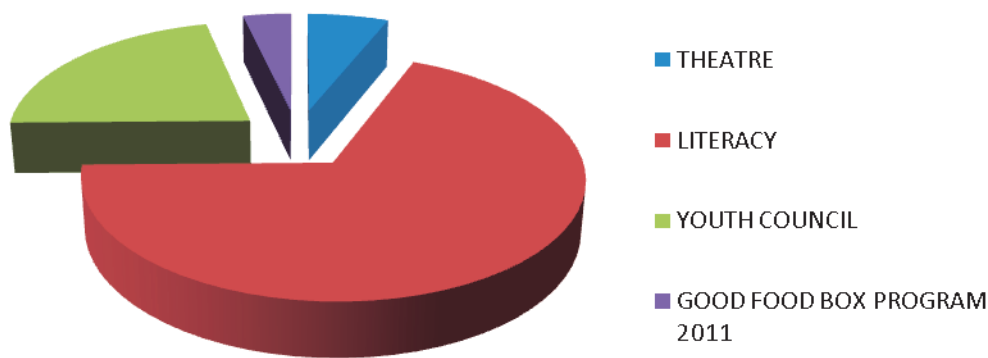




Project Revenue and Expenditures

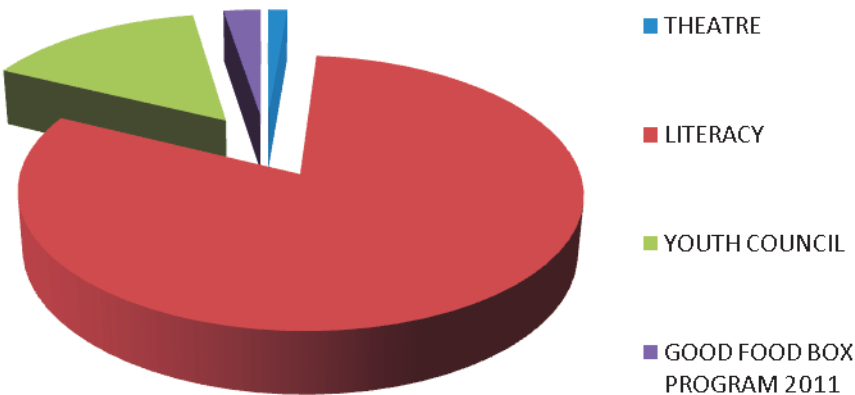
Finances

PROJECT REVENUE/GRANTS



\$115, 821

PROJECT EXPENSES



\$84,849



Community Programs:
Sooke Youth Council
Life Long Learning
Community Health
The Good Food Box Program
Literacy Program
Community Theatre

Sooke Youth Council

Sooke Youth Council

This has been another great year for the Sooke Youth Council. The SYC has completed many projects, and has many more to come. Some of the challenges that youth in Sooke face are a lack of safe, fun, pro-social activities to engage them, combined with an absence of trust and support from many adults. Historically the public perception of our community's youth has not always been positive and the youth feel that sentiment. The Youth Council took on both of these challenges by lobbying for and building relationships with adult groups such as the Lions Club, the Community Association and the RCMP to support the Youth Council in organizing a *dry* concert. The concert was a huge success by any measure. 350 youth attended a showcase of local talent and Victoria band, Current Swell; the youth were grateful for the opportunity and adults were impressed with the outcome. The Youth Council's leadership has helped to build better relationships between youth and adults and the event helped to build a great sense of pride in our community's youth.

The SYC was once again a positive and enthusiastic presence at Skate Jam, at Sooke's celebration of Canada Day at the flats, and at the Sooke Fine Arts show, where local musical talent was showcased alongside local art. In partnership with SEAPARC, the SYC continues to offer late-night, youth-oriented swims and skates; events are always well-attended, providing youth with much needed safe, low-cost hang out spaces and activities. The Youth Friendly Business Project is now in its second year running. Designed to compile a resource guide to the area's youth friendly businesses through face-to-face surveys, the YFBP also provides important employment skills to two lucky summer interns and highlights the many ways in which youth and local businesses support and contribute to one another in our community.

Upcoming...

In the fall, the SYC hopes to begin showing pre-release, family-friendly films in the theatre at Edward Milne Community School. The SYC is continuing their work to establish positive roles for youth in our community.



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Life Long Learning

Community Education Program: provides opportunities for citizens to come together as learners and as teachers. Last year we offered: 247 courses, 105 of those had sufficient enrolment to run, Involving 503 learners.

Curriculum Support: We secured a \$4000 grant to support EMCS' innovative Environmental Studies Program, which ran in the Spring 2011. This program involves a significant amount of field learning and transportation expenses for this program are not covered by Ministry funds. The grant from the District of Sooke supported a composting project at EMCS. Compost collection bins were purchased for every classroom and staff room in the school as well as larger bins for outdoor composting and compost education.

Needs Based Support for Vulnerable Students:

In partnership with the EMCS PAC and with funds donated from the Village Foods / Dairyland Milk Money program, we purchased a supply of bus tickets, snacks, lunches and breakfast foods for vulnerable students. The supplies have been distributed to school staff and administrators who regularly see vulnerable students. The Aboriginal Resources Room is a supportive and welcoming gathering space for all students where Kathy and Trish feed about 10 % of the school population who have a tendency to come to school hungry. Research has shown that universal school-based meal programs can facilitate regular attendance and punctuality, improve behaviour and confidence, increase cognitive functioning and academic achievement, and decrease irritability, anxiety and stress. The EMCS Society in partnership with the EMCS PAC aim to launch a universal breakfast and snack program in the 2011-2012 school year.



Collecting data on life in tidal pools at Whiffin Spit in Sooke.





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Life Long Learning



Play and Learn Summer Camp Planning:

In May we were notified we would be receiving grants from Van City and the Pacific Institute for Mathematical Sciences to run Literacy and Numeracy Summer camps for grade 1, 2 and 3 students who were not yet meeting expectations for their grade level. Planning and partnership building began in earnest to pull together a program which began in July. A report on the outcomes of the camp will follow in the 2011-2012 Annual Report.

Life Long Learning

A grant of \$15,000 from the Union of BC Municipalities contributed to planning and readying our organization for an adult education program in the community. The grant allowed the EMCS Society, in partnership with the Sooke Region Literacy Steering Committee to conduct an assessment of the learning needs of adults in the Sooke Region. (The results of the study will be discussed in greater detail under the Literacy Program achievements.) It should be noted that as a result of the survey's findings the EMCS Society was able to form a partnership with Westshore Centre for Learning and Training to launch an adult graduation program in Sooke starting September 2011. The adult graduation program will be supported by the Coast Capital Savings Community Grant program.



One major stumbling block to expanding our programs has been our outdated data management technology and our ability to market our programs through the website. We also received a donation in kind from Pixel sweatshop to build our website which contributed half of the costs of their labour to build a new website. We were also able to purchase a facility booking platform and web-based course registration module with the support of the UBCM funds. This new technology will go live in September 2011 and will allow us to continue our dialogue with Sooke region residents about our community's needs.



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Community Health

In partnership with Sooke Region Community Health Initiative and Integrated Health Network (CHI /IHN) we were able to expand on our health related programs. The health programs are supported through a grant from VIHA, which subsidizes the program fees for participants who have been referred by Sooke's Integrated Health Network (IHN). Those programs are also available to community members on a cost-recovery basis.

The Lean Team program was expanded to offer a second level for those who have improved their fitness and are looking for a greater challenge. The programs include 20 sessions with a personal trainer and 2 sessions with a nutritionist in a group setting with the goal of improving



The *Changeways* group psycho-educational program was designed to give participants the skills to create positive change in their lives and cope with difficulties. VIHA funding has allowed us to continue to offer this very beneficial program in the community as well as offering an additional class on Assertiveness, the ***Changeways Guide to Assertiveness Skills***.



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The Good Food Box Program

The Good Food Box program is a non-profit alternative distribution system for fresh produce operated by the Capital Region Good Food Society. The EMCS Society has become a distribution site for Good Food Boxes in Sooke. IHN clients and community members are able to purchase fresh produce, supplied by local and regional farmers, grown with sustainable practices. The price of the produce boxes are approximately 50% less than what you would pay for the same quality produce at local and chain grocery stores.

We began the pilot year of the Good Food Box program for the IHN in April 2011. Demand for the boxes has been more than double what we had estimated within 6 months of launching the program.

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Literacy Program

The Sooke Region Literacy Project's priority for 2010-11 was to raise the profile of literacy in the Sooke Region, which we accomplished by building a new website, attending community events and speaking to various groups, a bi-weekly newspaper spot, and generally connecting with the community. We also focused on creating partnerships and collaborations with existing literacy initiatives in Sooke, which involved supporting programs and reducing barriers to access.



Our Survey of Adult Learning Needs in the Sooke Region took place over several months last year, and consisted of both online and paper surveys. 140 surveys were completed, most of which were by citizens over 35 years of age. We learned that 92% of respondents had thought about upgrading their education. 69% of these wished to upgrade for better employment opportunities and 29% to qualify for other educational programs. Only 16% of respondents were satisfied with the learning opportunities that currently exist in Sooke. 73% had travelled to Victoria to take classes, and 33% to the Westshore. 83% indicated that if the class they had travelled to take had been available in Sooke, they would have preferred to have taken it there.



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Literacy Program

One of our priorities for 2012 is to create partnerships in order to better meet the needs of these adult learners. This September, evening courses began at EMCSS in both Communications 12 and Math 11, and we have 22 students currently attending. This is a good start, but the needs assessment shows that there are many more learners we could be serving in the Sooke Region.

For the coming year, we are continuing to offer direct support to early learning programs at SFRS, including a valuable new prenatal program. We are increasing activity in the realms of health literacy, working closely with the Sooke Community Health Initiative (CHI), and financial literacy. Our region also includes Port Renfrew, where our focus is to build relationships and assess what services are prioritized by the community itself.



Our partnerships are key to our success, as this literacy work is truly community development work. A big goal for this year is to continue to build relationships with T-Sou-ke Nation, with youth and with seniors in our community. Our current partners include Decoda Literacy Solutions, Sooke Family Resource Society, the District of Sooke, the Vancouver Island Regional Library, School District 62, the Read Society, and many others.





Community Programs:
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Community Theatre

Sooke Harbour Players:
 Sooke Dance Studio:
 Sooke Philharmonic Concerts:
 Sooke Options for Community
 EMCS Student productions:
 Sooke Choirs:
 Laura Dowie:
 Ride for Cancer:

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
 Nutcracker in a Nutshell
 October, December, February and June
 Living Association: Fundraiser with Hypnotist
 Final Projects fall and spring, Grad Fashion Show
 Spring Sing Out with elementary schools.
 Piano recital
 Fundraiser Concert

Sooke Philharmonic
Orchestra

The Student Techie program, coordinated by Drama teacher, Lisa MacLellan and Theatre Technical Manager, Paul MacLellan produced five fine student theatre technicians who are able to provide support for theatre productions.

The “ThUGs” or Theatre User Groups is a collaborative theatre management group made up of a representative from each of our regular users. The group has been successful in improving communication and solving problems between community groups who use the facility in the evenings, and the staff who teach classes in the theatre during the day. They have also been effective in improving safety by developing policies, standards and opportunities to collaborate on training and purchasing theatre equipment.





Edward Milne Community School Society would like to thank our partners for their generous support of our programs in 2010-2011.

Community Engagement & Partners

Extended Use of Facilities: When schools partner with community everyone benefits. Schools end up doing more than meeting the educational needs of students. They also provide public space and opportunities for learning that can accommodate many different needs for the community at large. Similarly, community facilities become great learning environments for our students.

Last year, the total use of the facility beyond regular school hours was:

EMCS Society community education and programs – **744 hours**

Extra-curricular School events and programs – **565 hours**

Community use (facilities and fields) **2755 hours**



Partnerships

Community Health Initiative

Member of Sooke Cooperative Association of Service Agencies (CASA) and Board

District of Sooke – School Community Connections

School District #62 – School Community Connections

SEAPARC Leisure Complex

Sooke Community Association

ThUGs—Sooke Dance Studio, Sooke Harbour Players, Sooke Philharmonic

School District #62 Aboriginal Education - Summer Camp planning

T'Sou-ke Nation – Summer Camp planning

Worklink Employment Centre

Sooke Family Resource Center



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and groups for their generous support of our
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Friends & Donors

Major Funders

VIHA, Integrated Health Network (Changeways, Assertiveness and Lean Team contracts)
Province of British Columbia through Gaming grant – general operating
UBCM –School Community Connections
Coast Capital Savings Credit Union – Adult Education
School District #62, Community LINK – general operating
2010 Legacies NOW – Literacy Program
Rotary Club of Sooke – Youth Council
District of Sooke – Youth Council
EMCS PAC – Nutrition and transportation support

Donors

Dr Chris Bryant Inc
Laura Purdy
ProLine Roofing
Reliable Controls
Erin Upton
Condor Properties
Park Village Mobile Homes Inc
430351 BC Ltd
0746032 BC Ltd
Scott Nijman
Janine Brooks

Please join us!

**If you are interested in becoming a member of the EMCS Society
please contact hwalsh@sd62.bc.ca or call 250.642.6371
for more information.**