



2015 - 2016

ANNUAL REPORT



ABOUT US

The Edward Milne Community School Society is a registered charity that has been serving the community of Sooke for 25 years. A community school is a gathering place for people of all ages and provides a range of needs-based programming and services coordinated through community and school partnerships.

Since June 1987, the EMCS Society Program Office has worked to build partnerships with individuals and organizations in the community to provide life-long learning opportunities for people of all ages in the Sooke Region. The Society also oversees community education, cultural, and social programs, projects, and services developed to meet the needs of the community and optimize educational outcomes for vulnerable students.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Bateman, President
Michael Young, Past-President
Christine Bossi, Vice-President
Susan Percival, Secretary-Treasurer
Lindy Philip, Director
Kate Barton, Director
Patrick Swinburnson, Director

WHAT WE DO

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-  Community Education
-  Curriculum Enhancement
-  Facility Rentals
-  Health Programs
-  Literacy Programs
-  Youth Recreation & Leadership
-  Fundraisers & Events



OUR TEAM

The Edward Milne Community School Society is a registered charity that has been serving the community of Sooke since 1987. A community school is a gathering place for people of all ages and provides a range of needs-based programming and services coordinated through community and school partnerships

Reta Vasey
Program Office Assistant

Laura Lucina & Heather Cormier
Duty Hosts

Thom Southwood
Theatre Coordinator

Stephanie Croft
Literacy outreach Coordinator

Infinity Logan
Youth Engagement Coordinator

Quinn Yates
Outdoor Literacy Coordinator

Maggie Curtis, Dan Beattie,
Angela Secourd & Shawna Goupil
Summer Camp Coordinators

Alison Sudlow & Mackayla Scharf
Summer Camp Assistants

Michaela Louie
Summer Camp Leader

BJ Voth
Communications Intern

Triston Line & Quin Johnson
Theatre Techs

Dianne Chaisson
Accountant

Ebony Logins & Anne Bell
Community School Coordinators

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY SCHOOL?

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, services, supports, and opportunities leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities.

ADVANTAGES OF A COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Provides a proven infrastructure to coordinate and integrate community services and implement sustainable prevention-based strategies for children, youth and families

Increases the use of local public school facilities

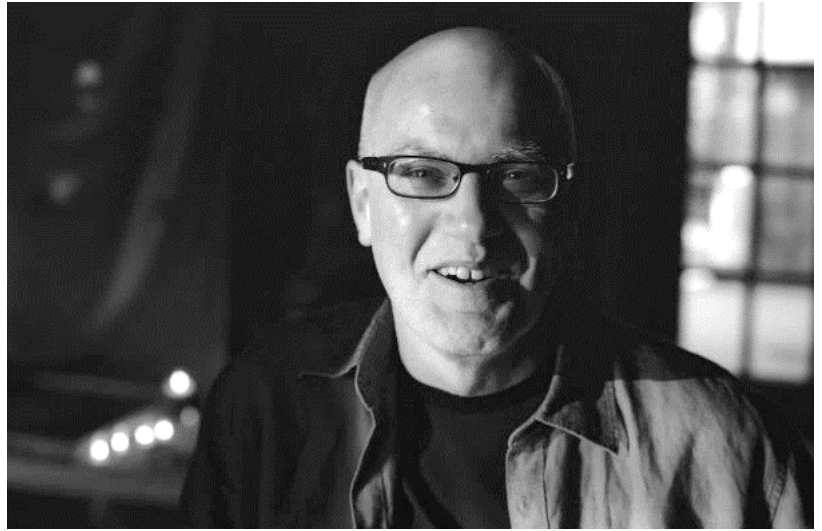
Integrates and coordinates existing public services

- Maximizes communication between school and community
- Enriches and enhances learning through formal and informal activities
- Reinforces a sense of community and improves the quality of life in the neighbourhood
- Improves communication between school and community
- Provides an opportunity for local residents to participate in community activities
- Provides an opportunity for community residents, parents, staff and students to address needs specific to their community
- Develops a means of improving economic well being of the community
- Brings additional resources into the school

The EMCS Society is a member of the Association for Community Education in British Columbia (ACEbc).

JEFF BATEMAN

BOARD PRESIDENT



I'm happy to report another solid, stable, quietly productive year around the EMCS Society board table. At this point in the Society's history, we're acting as an advisory board that plays by the book (the BC Societies Act and our own mission statement and constitution) while also offering deservedly wholehearted support to our crack office team of Anne Bell, Ebony Logins and Reta Vasey. Thank you ladies, it's for good reason we on the board commonly refer to you as our superstars.

Other boards in the past three decades have dealt with their own sets of opportunities and challenges. As the latest in a long line of volunteer stewards, our current team is truly appreciative of the work our predecessors put into building the foundations: an enduring mission statement, an evolving web of community connections, and the literal physical foundations of a modern school that, to this day, is widely recognized as a case study in how to build a warm, welcoming, user-friendly facility. The foresight of earlier boards -- combined with the gifts of the professionals involved with the school today -- make our jobs easy indeed.

Anne is our direct board liaison, and she anchors our monthly meetings, keeping us updated on the many programs and initiatives documented in these pages. In return, we deliver feedback, minor tweaks and fresh ideas while also undertaking the practical business of running a society. Present at most meetings are Principal Pat Swinburnson and SD #62 chair Bob Phillips. They're our portal to the real world of local education, and it's always enlightening to learn of their positive, proactive interactions with students, parents, teachers, board staff and the BC Ministry of Education.

My sincere thanks to our 2015/16 board: VP Christine Bossi, treasurer Susan Percival, past-president Michael Young and directors-at-large Kate Barton, Lindy Philip and Mr. Swinburnson. Cheers also to Doris Gilmans for her board service. We welcome any and all society members to our meetings, and I'd like to particularly acknowledge Willy Burroughs, Loretta Deutscher, Keegan Laur and Roger Temple. They've all freely (apart from the toonie price of society membership) shared their time, energy and expertise with us this last year.

Looking ahead, we're excited about the new United Way-funded Makerspace in the trades department and what we anticipate will be its strong appeal to Sooke handypersons of all ages. And we'll be exploring ideas raised during our SOAR (Strengths Opportunities Aspirations Results) strategic planning session in the spring. Yes, the community school is humming along very nicely. But how can the society secure stable multi-year funding for programs that support our vulnerable youth? Can we raise money for needed retrofits and upgrades to the Sooke Community Theatre? Can we keep adapting to our town's ever-changing social, recreational, cultural and educational needs? All are worthy ongoing challenges and they're certain to keep this and future boards focused in the year ahead.

PATRICK SWINBURNSON

EMCS PRINCIPAL



We have had a smooth start to the 2016/2017 school year. Now that the enrolment dust has settled, we see that our total numbers have stayed the same but our grade 9 class is smaller than what we are used to. This group was also a smaller group through the 3 years at our feeder middle school, and we lost a few of them to Royal Bay and Belmont. Our timetable is built and functioning; all students have full schedules. The school has a good tone at the moment with most students working hard and doing their best.

We are trying something new with homeroom this year. In previous years we would meet in homeroom maybe 6 times a year, all to do the business of school: hand out report cards, school pictures, notices etc. There was never an opportunity for students to develop a relationship with their homeroom teacher. This year we have put homeroom into the timetable. We meet once a week for 20 minutes on Monday afternoon. We will still do the business of school at this time but we are also using TED Talk videos to engage our homeroom students. The videos are around 10 minutes long and are on themes around how we treat ourselves, how we treat each other and how we treat the environment. So far, so good but I think the jury is still out with both students and to a lesser extent with some staff.

We continue with our goal of enhancing students' sense of belonging at EMCS. The most important factor in this endeavor is in how we all interact with each other but there are physical things you can do in your building and some of those are coming together this year. Picnic tables and benches have been installed at the front of our school, display cases for student art have been built and we continue to pursue our murals. A fierce wolverine has been added to the jump circle in the gym and a fabulous 90 foot mural has been added to the front of our building celebrating 20 years of education at EMCS. Our academic, sports and service trophies now have a good home in front of the theatre. It is great to see students, parents and visitors looking at the names on the trophies, which until this year were not discernable.

We are pursuing more outdoor gathering places for students this year. We would like to have our amphitheater completed with concrete and picnic tables. It will serve as both informal gathering as well as an outdoor classroom. This is a work in progress. We would also like to have an outdoor pit cook built for our school. We are in preliminary discussions but this would be an excellent resource for our Aboriginal Education department, our culinary arts and our home ec, all of whom are enthusiastically behind this initiative.

By the time this report is presented, our 20th anniversary celebration night will have come and gone. The evening will start with an alumni basketball game at 5, tours and appetizers from 5:30 to 6:30, presentations in the theatre from 6:30 to 7:30, and the evening will end with T'Sou-ke nation elder Shirley Alphonse performing a First Nations blessing of our building.

We are expanding our welding capacity this year with financial support from private industry. Into this new space we will also be bringing Makerspace, a member operated shared space where people come together to collaborate and share the use of tools. Makerspace will bring some valuable tools into the school which will be at our students' disposal during the school day and after school. In the evenings, the space and the tools then become available for community use, which works perfectly for us as a community school.

We had a very strong academic year last year. All 4 terms saw more than 50% of each grade on the honor roll, meaning that 50% or more students had a B average or better. 44% of our graduating class went on to post-secondary education and nearly 90,000 dollars in scholarships and bursaries were awarded. 11 of our students accepted into UVic received entrance scholarships. This year we have 9 dual credit courses with Camosun and they are all fully subscribed. We are offering 2 Chemistry 12's, 2 Calculus 12's, 2 Physics 12's and 3 Biology 12's. Our goal this year is to continue to get as close to 50% on the honor roll as we can.

ANNE BELL & EBONY LOGINS

COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATORS



Info on SOAR analysis – add as appendix

Play & Learn

Ramping for Anniversary

LAT & medical Centre

Continued work with Literacy Task Force & Royal Roads &
Sooke Region Communities Health Network, (including Age
Friendly Committee), Makerspace, ThUGs.

LITERACY OUTREACH

Books for Breakfast

This preschool story time program runs once a month in both Sooke and East Sooke from September to May. Snacks are provided and each family is given a book to take home. This last year, the program was offered in East Sooke (for the first time) at the local community hall and in Sooke at the Sooke Family Resources Centre. East Sooke had an average of 11 children per session and 8 families. Attendance ranged from 7 to 18 children and 5 to 11 families. Sooke had an average of 8 children per session and 6 families. Attendance ranged from 4 to 16 children and 4 to 9 families. This year, we have 13 families registered for the program in Sooke and four families registered in East Sooke so far. This program is supported with ongoing funding support from Ready Set Learn from School District 62.

Book Bins

The Book Bin program distributes approximately 7500 books to the community in a year. Currently, there are six bins: two at SEAPARC, two at the Sooke Family Resource Society, one at T'Sou-ke Nation Reserve and one at the Pacheedaht Reserve in Port Renfrew. The Book Bin operation was moved this last year from one lead volunteer's home to a new lead volunteer. This program continues to receive annual funding of \$600 from Sooke Rotary Club. The local Sooke Girl Guides conducted a book drive through January and February as part of their community service for a second year in a row, collecting approximately 1000 books, 70 percent of which were children's books.

Family Literacy Day

To celebrate National Family Literacy Day, the Sooke Region Literacy Project partnered with the Sooke Branch of the Vancouver Island Regional Library and the Edward Milne Community School Society, to host a free concert for families featuring Juno nominees, The Kerplunks. The free Sunday afternoon event was very well attended including 250 children, adults, volunteers and staff. For January 2017, we are looking into organizing a musical instrument building workshop for families.

Port Renfrew Literacy Camp

This summer we provided funding to support two staff positions and food for a Literacy Camp in Port Renfrew. We provided financial support to help cover the cost of wages and food. Average attendance was 12 youth, ages 6 – 18.

Play and Learn Summer Camp

The Sooke Region Literacy Project is providing seed money to support the Play and Learn Summer Camp.

Adult Literacy Programs

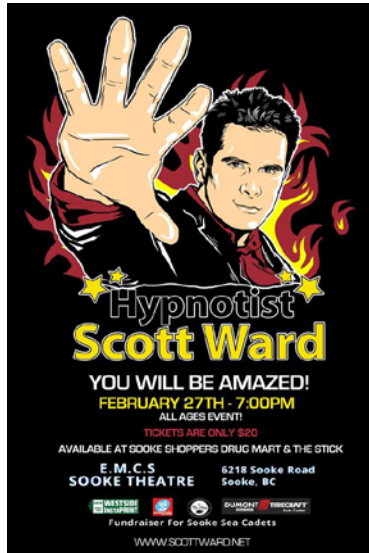
We scheduled a session with CPA Canada to offer a financial literacy workshop on Ten Healthy Habits of Financial Management, held at the library on Tuesday May 10 from 6:30 to 7:30. The public registered through the library. The event was free and refreshments were served. The CPA who conducted the workshop was a local accountant. Nine people attended the event.

In addition, one of our volunteers offered an information session on Registered Education Savings Plans to new mothers at a Mom and Baby group called Baby Talk at the Sooke Family Resource Society. This information session was attended by 10 parents and their babies.



STEPHANIE CROFT
LITERACY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

COMMUNITY THEATRE



Sooke Community Theatre Productions & Events 2015 - 2016

Sooke Harbour Players' Tommy

Federal All Candidates Meeting

Awareness Film Night

Life of Grid-Royal Roads University Lecture

Barney Bentall and the Grand Cariboo Express

Sooke Youth Show Choir Talent Show

Sooke Harbour Players' Acting Workshop

Sooke Harbour Players' Fawlty Towers

Scrabble Tournament

Sooke Elementary Choir with Norman Foote

Scott Ward Hypnotist Show

Chilliwack Concert

Carole Cave's Mini Show

Sooke Harbour Players' Annie Rehearsals

Carole Cave's Year End Revue

Sooke Youth Show Choirs' Aladdin

THOM SOUTHWOOD
THEATRE COORDINATOR



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



The Youth Engagement Program began with a social media audit that was conducted by the Society's Communications Intern. This role was funded by the Government of Canada through Volunteer Comox Valley. Small businesses do not have much time or resources to allocate to social media. The report provided information and tools to increase the Society's online presence without putting a strain on the workday. The intern also met with local community groups to assist them in improving their online presence. More information on this report is provided in the Social Media section of this report.



After many years of having a youth coordinator, the funding for this position finally ran dry in. In 2016-2017, the program will be revamped to match present-day grants. For example, this year, the Society introduced an Outdoor Literacy Coordinator to the summer staff with a focused on programs provided by HRSDC – Canada Summer Jobs. This position provided outdoor opportunities for youth between the ages of 13-29 to reconnect with nature. The coordinator did initial research into the Take A Hike! Youth At Risk Foundation program, essentially the high-school equivalent of a nature kindergarten. The coordinator also planned, implemented, and evaluated the Sooke Harbour Festival – Sooke's first event held on the waters of the Sooke Basin & Harbour. The event included free kayak tours of the Harbour and several stand up paddle board races. Musicians and vendors set up along the Ed McGregor Park Board Walk to provide a variety of activities for attendees.



Two Summer Literacy Camp Assistants and one Camp Leader was hired for the Play & Learn Summer Camp. They spent two weeks with the Youth Engagement Program to assist with the Sooke Harbour Festival. They also took part in the 16th Annual Trevor Purdy 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament. This year was the most successful in many years, with over 50 youth participating.

SOCIAL MEDIA

facebook

234



7,587



MailChimp

695

twitter



210

SOCIAL MEDIA

- 72 likes since last year
- Benchmark was 250-450 likes for 2015-2016
- 77% women & 22%men
- 34% are between 25 & 44 years old
- 138 live in Sooke , 18 live in Langford, and 37 live in Victoria

- Over 7,500 views in 1 year
- New website is easy for all staff to use
- Maintaining and operating is inexpensive
- The website is getting over 500 views/month – this can be leveraged to connect to the Society's audience on other social media platforms

- 26 online subscriptions since last year
- 44% open rate is above 28% industry average
- 10% click rate drives traffic to website

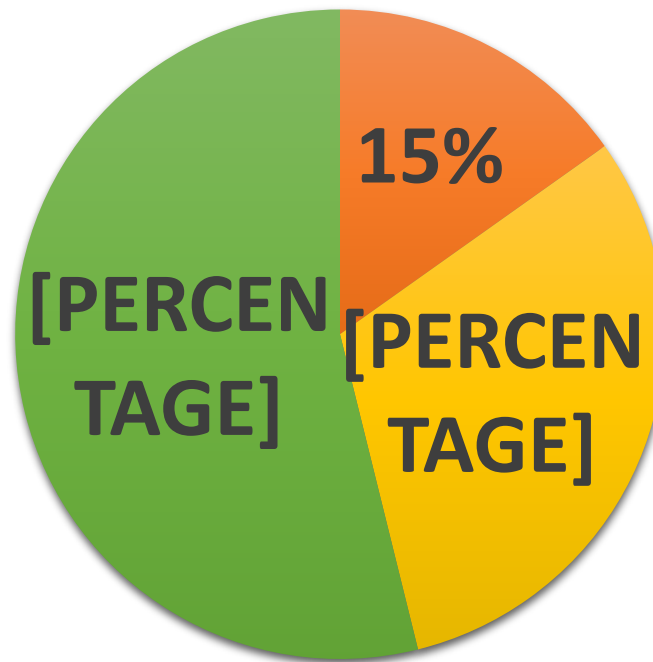
- All Facebook posts are linked to Twitter – no staff time is involved
- Sooke has yet to catch on, so little time & resources are spent here
- The Society would have to tweet and retweet at least twice daily in order to gain traction here

The Society's social media audit conducted by the Communications Intern makes the following recommendations:

- Provide incentives (discounted workshops, facility rentals, prizes with partners)
- Provide exclusive content for subscribers only (i.e. subscribe to e-news for x % off y)
- Conduct surveys and questionnaires
- Develop a standard for posts with content guidelines
- Develop a social media schedule and tracking system
- Ditch twitter – there is not enough time to focus on this platform
- Use a scheduling app to ensure regular posts on Facebook
- Almost all Facebook content is informative – change it up to offer entertainment and engaging content
- Determine your target audience and cater your posts to them
- BE CONSISTENT!
- Leverage the personal networks of your staff and volunteers
- Be social: respond to people's comments and like posts from your followers
- Promote the Facebook page with contests and giveaways
- Promote your page at your business, through phone and in-person conversations

FACILITY USE

2015-2016 = 4,931 hours



■ Society Programs
739 hours

■ School Extra-Curricular
1,529 hours

■ Community Use
2,663 hours

Facility use has dropped from 7,759 hours last year. Society program time has dropped with less courses being offered, but has remained between 14-15% of the overall use over the years/ Community use decreased as well, but percentage is up from 38% since last year.

School use down from 3,822 hours last year

\$26,333 to \$39,527 this year in revenue

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

COMMUNITY EDUCATION	Last Year	This Year
Participants	273	249
Classes Offered	47	30
Classes Ran	25	17
Participants per Class	11	15
Revenue	\$21,415	\$19,159
Expenses	\$12,760	\$10,305
Average Revenue per Person	\$32	\$



The EMCS Society partnered with Royal Roads, the Vancouver Island Library (Sooke Branch), and the Sooke Chamber of Commerce to provide high-level learning opportunities in the Sooke Region. Originally a 1-year pilot, the collaborative launched business and special interest programs. The business programs will be revamped based on surveys from the Chamber, as none ran during the pilot. There were several success stories with the special interest programs, which had high levels of enrollment.

COURSE	ENROLLMENT
Introduction to Mindfulness: Staying Grounded in Stressful Times	16
Growing & Harvesting Wild Truffles	36
Life Off-Grid: A Film Discussion with Dr. Phillip Vanini	55
Finding the Poem in Your Heart's Garden	14
Discovering Our Local Seaweeds	11
Can I Eat This Mushroom?	18

HEALTH & NUTRITION

GOOD FOOD BOX ORDERS

354

(+30)

IHN REFERRALS

164

(-19)

COOKING OUT OF THE BOX PARTICIPANTS

111



SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Munch Cards readily available
- Play & Learn Summer Camp (see camp report for details)
- Fiscal Host for aquarium maintenance
- Athletics program assistance for EMCS
- Financial assistance for EMCS Wellness Centre
- T.A.S.K. Program financial assistance for First aid & CPR
- Environmental Studies Class

