



## How to Get Involved

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## EMCS Society Annual Report 2012-2013



# Message from the Board President

It's been an exciting and, at times, challenging year for our community school and for the society.

Our community school coordinator Heather Walsh is currently on a year-long leave of absence, working with Doctors Without Borders in the Congo. We look forward to her safe return next summer. In her absence, the role of community school coordinator is being jointly filled by Anne Bell, former board secretary/treasurer, and Ebony Logins, former Youth Council Coordinator. They are now a few months into the 2013/2014 year and have done an outstanding job at keeping the program office going through this period of transition.

The financial state of the society has been precarious for the past few years. Cuts in funding, declining enrollment, and high fixed costs have resulted in the board and staff having to make some difficult decisions to help get the society back on track financially. One such decision was to eliminate the position of program office coordinator. Rose Steele filled that role for two decades and was very much the face and voice of the program office. It's been a period of change for the board as well. As mentioned earlier, Anne Bell resigned as secretary/treasurer to fill the community school coordinator role alongside Ebony Logins. Ellen Anderson, one of our longest-serving members, resigned from the board on September 1st. Phyllis Lysionek, current vice-president, will not be returning as a board member after this AGM. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of these exceptional people for their service to the board and to the society, their contribution to the community, and extend to them my warmest wishes for the future.

A number of initiatives are now underway to revitalize the community school and its course offerings. Over the next few months we will be carrying out surveys and interviews, as well as a world café, to gather input from staff, board members and instructors on how best to engage with the community and make our community school the "go to" place for learning in Sooke. These activities are part of a research project being conducted in collaboration with Royal Roads University's School of Leadership Studies. We are also engaged in discussions with potential community partners such as SEAPARC, to better align our course offerings with theirs. Finally, make sure you check out our new electronic sign outside the school! Thanks to all who worked to make that happen.

On a personal note, I'd like to express my appreciation and gratitude to our staff, board members, and instructors, and their commitment to the community school and the people it serves.

Michael Young  
President, EMCS Society

# Community Theatre Events & Productions

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|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Sooke Philharmonic Concerts              | EMCS Students                         |
| Sooke Youth Council, Movie Nights        | - Grad Fashion Show                   |
| Seaparc Acting Out Camp                  | - Final Projects Night                |
| Sooke Slow Food Cycle                    | - Student Band Concert                |
| Awareness Film Nights, Monthly           | - International Education Talent Show |
| Cougar Annie Tales                       |                                       |
| Carole Cave Dance Studio, The Nutcracker | Sooke Harbour Players                 |
| Power of Hope                            | - Alice in Wonderland                 |
| Sooke Youth Show Choir                   | - Faulty Towers                       |
| The Other Guys Theatre, Good Timber      |                                       |
| Scott Ward Hypnotic Illusions            |                                       |

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Good  
Food  
Box

37

12

Boxes Every Month "Cooks" Every Month

EMCS is a pick up location for the Good Food Box. We host the 'Cooking Out of the Box' program in partnership with VIHA for community members with chronic illnesses who are interested in learning how to cook low-cost, healthy meals with some of the

# Friends & Supporters

## *PARTNERSHIPS*

School District # 62:

- Community LINK
- Aboriginal Education
- Elementary School Principals & Vice-Principals from Sooke, Saseenos, John Muir, and Poirier

SEAPARC Leisure Complex

ThUGs:

- Sooke Dance Studio
- Sooke Harbour Players
- Sooke Philharmonic Orchestra
- EMCS Musical Theatre

## *FUNDERS*

Province of British Columbia - Gaming  
School District # 62, Community LINK  
Pacific Institute for Mathematical Sciences

Decoda Literacy Solutions  
Raise-a-Reader Foundation  
District of Sooke

Rotary Club of Sooke

EMCS P.A.C.

Andy's 2-for-1 Pizza  
Alternative Kitchen  
ParticipACTION

# What is a Community School?

A community school is a model that subscribes to these values and principles: inclusiveness; self-determination and self-help; shared resources; leadership development; life-long learning; integrated services; responsiveness; neighbourhood-based action; 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.

## About Us...

The Edward Milne Community School Society (EMCSS) is a registered charity that has been serving the community of Sooke for 25 years. A Community School is a gathering place for all ages in our community that provides a range of needs-based programming and services coordinated through community and school partnerships. The Society's main goals are to encourage lifelong learning and reduce the vulnerability of children, youth, and families in the Sooke Region. In partnership with Sooke School District #62 we have also prioritized supporting students who may be at risk in terms of academic achievement and social functioning. The students identified as needing extra support, and primarily come from less affluent socio-economic backgrounds or Aboriginal ancestry.

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

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.

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## Sooke Youth Council

The Sooke Youth Council (SYC) believes that young people should have a strong voice in their community because of their ability to inspire change. They facilitate opportunities for youth to break down barriers and demonstrate the meaning of forward-thinking youth engagement. The youth of Sooke are provided with a venue to collectively practice life skills and connect with the community. They plan, implement, and evaluate events and initiatives of their own imagination. Most importantly, they are given the opportunity to experience success and failure through experimentation in a safe environment without judgment.

During 2012-2013, the SYC was part of many local initiatives, including:

- Youth Friendly Business Project in partnership with Canada World Youth volunteers from South Africa and Quebec.
- Sooke's Youth Week Awards recognized over 20 youth ages 13 – 21 in the Sooke Region during National Youth Week in Canada.
- Guerilla Blackboard Project, in partnership with Leadership Victoria, was showcased at the Victoria Art Gallery after collecting responses from local youth.
- Adopt-A-Highway Program with the Rotary Club of Sooke.
- Mayor's Advisory Panel meetings on Health & Social Initiatives.
- Hiring 2 summer students with financial aid from HRSDC Summer Jobs.

The highlight of the year was the SYC's acceptance into the Building Inclusive Communities project - a 10-month intergenerational program development project facilitated by PeerNetBC and the Society for Children and Youth. Other participants were the City of Surrey, Frog Hollow Recreation, Town of Golden Youth Centre, and an independent programmer. Youth attended intensive weekend workshops in Vancouver where they shared their visions of intergenerational connections and learned about program successes and challenges from other participants in order to bring the ideas back to Sooke. They also learned about community-based project management, anti-oppression and power dynamics, networking with community partners, the Ladder of Youth Engagement, and more.

*"Working here all summer as the Youth Engagement Assistant Coordinator has been one of the most influential and eye opening experiences I've ever been a part of..."*

*I'd like to thank you for the amazing opportunity of letting me come out into the community and make some cool events, the opportunity of meeting tons of wonderful people, and most of all opportunities to be a leader and excel in the things I enjoy"*

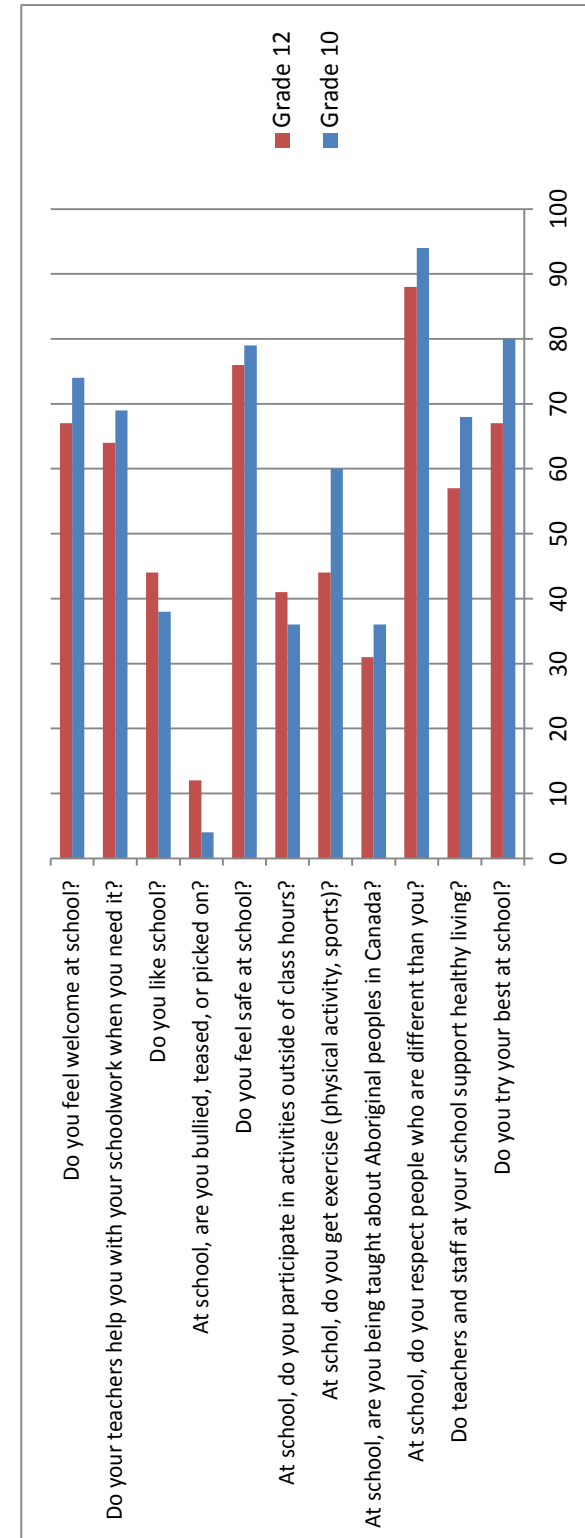
*~ Cole Thoring, SYC Summer Student*

# Our Service Delivery Plan

| Service Activity  | Target Group  | Need Served   | Funding  |
|---|---|---|--|
| Youth Recreation and Leadership Development (Sooke Youth Council) | Youth 13 – 21   | Youth initiated activities and events.<br>A voice for youth in Sooke.   | District of Sooke<br>Rotary Club of Sooke<br>Youth fundraising events<br>BC Gaming<br>ParticipACTION             |
| Building School Health  | EMCS Students grades 9 to 12  | Food and transportation support for socially and economically vulnerable youth based on need.   | EMCS Parents Advisory Council  |
| Math and Reading Summer Camp                                      | Aboriginal children, academically vulnerable children (6 – 9 years old) and their families. | Addresses achievement gap and summer learning fall off. Builds confidence to try new things; Play-based learning; Welcoming space for Aboriginal learners where their culture is reflected in the curriculum. | Van City Credit Union<br>Community LINK<br>Decoda Literacy, Rotary Club of Sooke and numerous smaller donations. |
| Health Programs   | Adults with specific, chronic health conditions.  | Empower adults through education to help them better manage their own health condition; opportunity for social interaction;   | Integrated Health Network contract   |
| Facility Rentals  | All community residents, Associations, clubs  | Local meeting space for non-profits, recreation and activity space.   | Rental fees  |
| Curriculum Enhancement  | Academically and socially vulnerable youth  | Addressed barriers to completing education and finding employment.  | EMCS Society donations   |
| Community Education programs, recreation and leisure, health      | Youth / Adults / seniors  | Social interaction<br>Fitness and health promotion, general interest, education, lifelong learning  | Province of BC Gaming  |
| Board of Directors  | Community residents, staff, parents, partners.  | Management of the community education, Literacy, youth programs and services.   |  |

## Academics at EMCS

In an effort to assess Sense of Belonging at EMCS, we will use the following sources taken from the 2012/2013 Satisfaction Survey for Grades 10 and 12, and the data collection from the 2012/2013 Effort Roll.



# Community School Usage

When schools partner with the community, everyone benefits. Community Schools provide public space and opportunities for learning that can accommodate many different needs for both the community at large and for the students.

| Use of Facility Beyond Regular Hours | EMCS Society Community Education Programs | Extra-Curricular School Events & Programs | Community Use: Facility & Field Bookings |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 5419 hrs                             | 1101 hrs                                  | 1624 hrs                                  | 954 hrs                                  |

## Sooke Region Literacy Project

Since its inception in 2009, the Sooke Region Literacy Project (SRLP) has received funding from Decoda Literacy Solutions (formerly 2010 Legacies) to provide grassroots, community-based literacy work to the Sooke Region, including Port Renfrew. The Society has been the fiscal host for the project, administering the contract for the Literacy Outreach Coordinator (LOC), Jodie McDonald, and overseeing the work of the group.

The SRLP consists of a Task Group of community members - representatives of local agencies such as the Sooke Family Resource Society, Pacheedaht First Nation, SD # 62, Sooke Council, and community members at large, reflecting demographics such as volunteers and adult learners. The Task Group plans and oversees the work of the project, which is primarily undertaken by Jodie, the LOC.

### *SRLP Programs*

The SRLP and the LOC have initiated and operated the following programs in Sooke themselves:

- Books for Breakfast: Sooke and Shirley
- Book Bin Program
- Adult Education Program at EMCS (2010-2012)
- Community Literacy Support and Promotion
- Website at [www.sookewestshoreliteracy.com](http://www.sookewestshoreliteracy.com)

### *Funded Programs*

The SRLP has used the funds received from Decoda to fund important literacy initiatives in the Sooke Region, such as:

- Prenatal Education Program (Sooke Family Resource Society)
- Sooke Stories Across the Ages (Pacific Centre Family Services Association)
- Port Renfrew Homework Club (Pacheedaht First Nation)
- Play and Learn Summer Math and Literacy Camp (EMCSS)

### *Program Support and Partnerships*

- SRLP Family Resource Programs: Young Parents Group and Family Discussion Group
- Family Literacy Day: with Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Math Mania Event, Port Renfrew: Pacheedhat First Nation

# Our Mission & Program Overview

It is the mission of the Edward Milne Community School Society 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.

Our program priority areas for 2012-2013 are:

- Academics
- Youth Development
- Family Support
- Community Development
- School as a Community Hub

## Last year, we offered...

- 137 Community Education Courses (Down 46 from last year)
- 50% of those had sufficient enrollment to run (Same as last year)
- 647 learners registered for courses (Up 103 from last year)

## 2012-2013 Board of Directors

### *Executive Directors*

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Michael Young    | President           |
| Roger Temple     | Past President      |
| Phyllis Lysionek | Vice-President      |
| Anne Bell        | Secretary/Treasurer |

### *Directors-at-Large*

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Loretta Deutcher    | Arlene Rees  |
| Patrick Swinburnson | Carole Cave  |
| Ellen Anderson      | Jeff Batemen |

# Play & Learn Summer Camp

The aim of this four week camp was on play-based learning which involved the students in literacy and numeracy activities aimed at improving their present levels of academic functioning and building their self-confidence and enjoyment in these areas. The target audience for this camp was primarily children aged six to nine years of age from low income families; Aboriginal ancestry; and who had been identified from their school as not yet meeting expectations in Literacy or Numeracy. All students were referred by the school principal and/or School Based Team.

The goals of the camp were:

- 1) To have participants involved in literacy and numeracy activities to enhance their present levels of academic functioning.
- 2) To develop self-confidence and enjoyment towards literacy and numeracy.
- 3) To integrate Aboriginal content and ways of knowing into all the components of the program.
- 4) To minimize barriers to participation by having the camp be free of charge and by being able to include lunches and snacks.
- 5) To involve parents and/or guardians in their child's learning.
- 6) To increase opportunities for positive social interactions with peers and adults and build physical literacy through recreation and structured play.

The program was funded by the Pacific Institute for Mathematical Sciences (PIMS), Vancouver Foundation, Children's Health Foundation, Rotary Club of Sooke, SD#62 Aboriginal Ed Department, and Community LINK, the Sooke Region Literacy Project and other local supporters including Andy's 2-4-1 Pizza. All of these donations enabled the camp to be offered to the families at no charge.

## NUMERACY RESULTS

Overall the results show a progression in skills in every single tested student. The average improvement was 27.33 % based on the tests given.

## LITERACY RESULTS

During the course of the Play and Learn Camp, all students tested either maintained their reading level or improved. Overall average gains were of +1.38 PMI reading levels +10% in Phonemic Awareness and +5.38 increase in sight word recognition.

*"It was so great to see kids that came into the camp not knowing how to read at all, to later watching them read a sight words book with nearly no help from us camp leaders."*

*~Infinity Logan, Summer Camp Assistant*

# Principal's Report

Enrollment for 2013-2014: 642 students (605 regular, 37 international; up 2%)  
First reporting period: Honor Roll: 34% Effort Roll: 44%  
Parent Teacher Interviews: 585 online bookings; up from approx. 400 last spring

## School Goals

1. To create a welcoming, inclusive school through positive communication, collaboration, and school-wide activities thereby promoting a sense of belonging and excellence in learning. *See page 7 for Satisfaction Survey results.*
2. To create richness in programs and courses by extending ways of representing learning, using technology in 21st century ways, and enhancing partnerships with other institutions thereby taking advantage of the growing changes in students and learning.

## School Initiatives

- Advanced Placement Courses: Now registered through Westshore so that the student in an AP class will potentially be getting 8 credits instead of 4. For example, a student in AP English 12 will get 4 credits for AP English and 4 credits for English 12.

- Dual Credit Courses: We are partnering with Camosun College to allow students taking senior academic subjects to at the same time get instruction in and receive credit for a similar first year college course. For example, a student in Psychology 12 will also be registered in Camosun College's Psychology 130. The college instructor will travel to EMCS and co-teach with the high school teacher. At the end of the course, the successful student will receive 4 high school credits towards their graduation and 3 university transferable college credits.

- Technology: Last year we mounted 6 projectors in our classrooms. This year we have purchased 3 short throw projectors and one document camera. The new school roadside sign is up and operating.

- Bistro style student seating is being built by carpentry students in our lower commons.

- "Welcome to EMCS" is being painted in our gym in 2 foot tall letters. The gym mural initiative is in the beginning stages. It is a large, expensive project for which we currently have a concept drawing and a fundraising plan.

- New additions to the EMCS curriculum: Spanish, Scholarships 12, Jewelry Making, Pre-AP Biology 11.

Patrick Swinburnson  
Principal, EMCS

