

# INNOVATIVE INKLINGS

Comox Valley School District Newsletter for Innovation

December 4, 2015



## Ministry

[Video Clips](#)  
[Out of the box?](#)  
[Blog links](#)  
[Jan Unwin](#)  
[Jan's Visit](#)

### Video Clips

[Innovation highlights from the Comox Valley— around the district](#)

[Innovation highlights from the Comox Valley— Ecole Puntledge Park](#)

[Innovation highlights from around BC](#)

[New curriculum framework—video introduction](#)

[Great resources including videos—BC's New Curriculum](#)



### Curriculum Blog Posts

Some thoughts about the [K-12 Innovation Partnerships meetings](#) by Glenn Borthistle.

Here are some [good resources](#) from Burnaby.

Here is a post with a good [Prezi](#) from [Bowen Island Community School](#).

### Jan Unwin

Jan (@jktunwin) is the superintendent of graduation and student transitions. She was here visiting our district on Wednesday and Thursday.

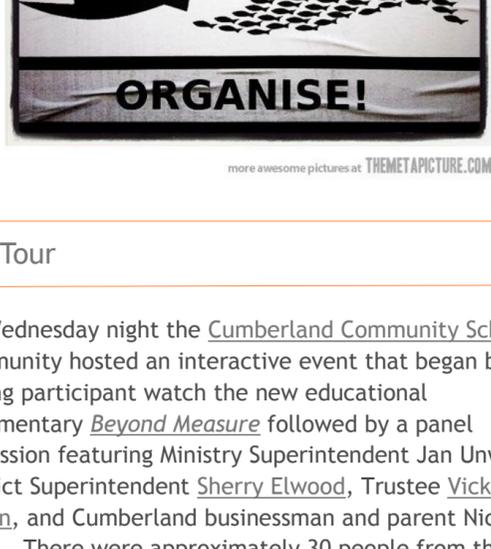
## Around the District

Innovative events and efforts from around our district

### Jan Unwin's Visit

In January, 2014, Jan Unwin was [appointed](#), by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education, to serve as superintendent of graduation and student transitions. Her work focuses on developing partnerships between post-secondary institutions, school districts, employers and government. A large part of her portfolio is supporting the development of the new grad program.

Jan is well known and respected throughout the education system for her work as an innovative principal (elementary and secondary), assistant superintendent and superintendent in the Maple-Ridge-Pitt Meadows school district. During her term as superintendent, the district was recognized nationally for such innovations as their environmental school, cyberschool, and the iPod Literacy Project.



### The Tour

On Wednesday night the [Cumberland Community School](#) community hosted an interactive event that began by having participant watch the new educational documentary [Beyond Measure](#) followed by a panel discussion featuring Ministry Superintendent Jan Unwin, District Superintendent [Sherry Elwood](#), Trustee [Vickey Brown](#), and Cumberland businessman and parent Nick Ward. There were approximately 30 people from the community in attendance including numerous teachers and Trustee [Ian Hargreaves](#).

The conversation was facilitated by former trustee and community leader [Meaghan Cursons](#) who asked engaging and wide-ranging questions. Many thoughts, observations, and ideas came up but a couple of recurring themes were the need to learn how to learn, the need to develop flexibility and adaptability, and that when we trust our students it is amazing how trustworthy they become. It is their education and we need to be guided by them and their needs.

On Thursday morning Ms. Unwin met with district and secondary school administrators to receive feedback on the draft 10-12 curriculum and to provide information about the new grad program and post-grad transitions. This is a year to get feedback and to mindfully begin looking at the new framework. The biggest changes are in the form and function, as the 10-12 programs will align with the existing K-9 programs. This will invite and create space for educators to teach kids as opposed to teaching curriculum.

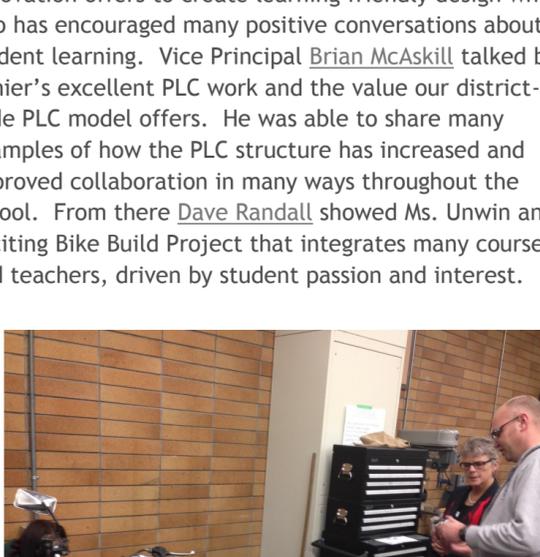
From there, Ms. Unwin went back to [Cumberland Community School](#) and was able to see the benefits of a community school in action. Principals [Tracey Croonen](#) and [David Mayert](#) described the continuing evolution of the development of the community school.

Unfortunately, for Ms. Unwin (not for the kids), the Nature Kindergarten class was away in the community forest, but she got to see [Dave Munro's](#) project-based grade 7/8 class fully engaged on their various projects. After seeing the vibrant and welcoming learning space, full of kindergarten children in the former medical building, Ms. Unwin got the opportunity to talk with Sue Loveless, the executive director of the [Cumberland Community Schools Society](#), and hear about the amazingly supportive partnerships and work the society is doing with the school.

From Cumberland, Ms. Unwin travelled to Sandwick and met with [Randy Grey](#), our Career Programs Coordinator. While there she heard about our district's work on career readiness programs, including our robust and highly successful [Ace It programs](#). She was also able to talk, albeit too briefly, with four of our tech teachers: [Jim Tattrie](#), [Alan Feustel](#), [Jared Cloutier](#), and [Chris Armstrong](#).

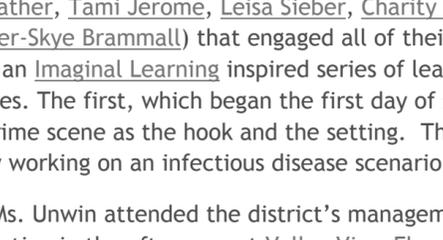
She heard clearly how our Ace It programs stretch kids who might not otherwise have such experiences or opportunities. Also, how the Ace It programs help many of our students figure out if various trades are a good fit for them or not. As she was leaving, she got to see the concrete build program in action as students were working on building picnic tables.

Next on the tour was [G.P. Vanier](#) with Principal [Darren Freeman](#) who talked about the opportunity Vanier's renovation offers to create learning friendly design which also has encouraged many positive conversations about student learning. Vice Principal [Brian McAskill](#) talked about Vanier's excellent PLC work and the value our district-wide PLC model offers. He was able to share many examples of how the PLC structure has increased and improved collaboration in many ways throughout the school. From there [Dave Randall](#) showed Ms. Unwin an exciting Bike Build Project that integrates many courses and teachers, driven by student passion and interest.



Travelling down the Lerwick Highway, Ms. Unwin visited [Highland](#) to see their [Enter](#) partnership with [Navigate](#) and the Imaginal grade 8 program. The students in the [Enter program](#), led by dynamic teacher [Roger Vernon](#), were able to demonstrate jaw dropping blended learning work and articulate the value of their learning journey. Principal [Dean Patterson](#) talked about a number of initiatives focused on student learning that teachers were working on. One that stood out was a project involving five teachers ([Alissa Mather](#), [Tami Jerome](#), [Leisa Sieber](#), [Charity Munro](#), and [Amber-Skye Brammall](#)) that engaged all of their grade eights in an [Imaginal Learning](#) inspired series of learning adventures. The first, which began the first day of school, used a crime scene as the hook and the setting. They are currently working on an infectious disease scenario.

Finally, Ms. Unwin attended the district's management team meeting in the afternoon at [Valley View Elementary School](#). Here she went through the components of our provincial renovation and answered questions openly and frankly from our management team. Three of the key takeaways were: we know a lot more now than when we designed our system/structure; this has been a grassroots change driven by teachers; and the structures need to change ('audit this').



Thank you for taking the time to read this and please direct any suggestions, questions, or inquiries to me directly: [Gerald.Fussell@sd71.bc.ca](mailto:Gerald.Fussell@sd71.bc.ca)