



Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
556 Boleskine Road, Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8
Phone (250) 475-4106 Fax (250) 475-4112

Kim Morris - Secretary Treasurer

TO: Operations Policy & Planning Committee

FROM: Kim Morris

RE: Student Symposium 2020

DATE: February 10, 2020

On February 5, 2020, a student symposium for budget was held. Student symposium for budget is an opportunity to hear directly from students about their learning. Topics are broad and are intended to draw out themes for decision makers to consider when making human and financial resource allocations for 2020-2021.

Intentions of the day were:

1. student voice
2. student learning and agency
3. engagement
4. inform decision making

54 students in grades 8 and 11 were invited and selected by their Principals. 50 students and 11 adults attended as follows:

Middle	#	Secondary	#	Total
Arbutus	4	Spectrum	5	
Monteray	3	Vic High	5	
Lansdowne	2	Lambrick	3	
Gordon Head	3	Oak Bay	2	
Rockheights	4	Mt Doug	5	
Glanford	3	Reynolds	5	
		Esquimalt	6	
Total	19		31	50

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Adults	#
Trustees	3
Administrators	2
Teachers	3
Board Office Staff	3
Total	11

Students gathered at 9 am, formed teams using an ice breaker tool to create a variety of schools' students and ages on each team. Once the teams were formed, students spent the next 45 minutes with Superintendent Green where the on-line engagement tool question: "What are the most important things we can do in the Greater Victoria School District to meaningfully support learning opportunities for students?" was asked, as well as ways that the district should consider spending in 2020-2021 based on what student need was.

Students then moved through 4 stations throughout the day:

1. Student Voice (Facilitator: Administrators Gord Mitchell and Aaron Maxwell)
2. Transitions (Teacher: Amanda Mauro)
3. Reconciliation (District Administrator, Aboriginal Nations Niemi)
4. Climate (Teacher: Dan McKean)

Facilitators were provided to draw out quiet voices to ensure everyone was heard, and to provide guiding questions if the conversation was stalling.

Trustee attended as observers and to listen to students.

Before lunch, students gathered at tables in their teams and were given a budget simulation with set revenues and expenses. With \$4m leftover as discretionary, students were asked to consider \$13.9m in requests from the community (schools, departments, unions, PVP etc). Along the 30 minutes exercise 4 emergent or new announcements were communicated to students, who then had to re-evaluate original decisions and re-calculate their budgets to balance to zero by the end.

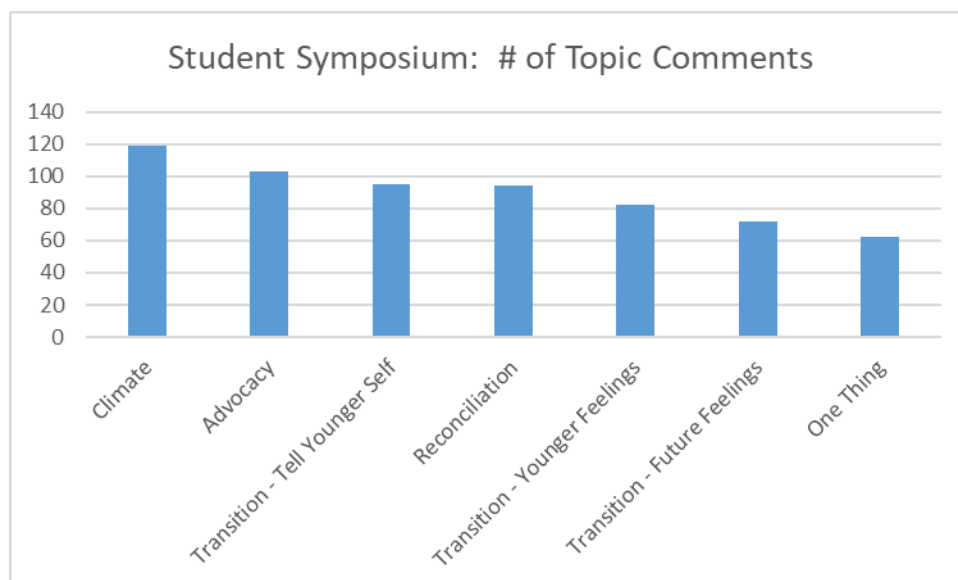
Morning nutrition break and lunch were provided. Voluntary video interviews by the Secretary-Treasurer, with some students occurred during lunch. Media release is being confirmed to determine if the videos can be shared.

The end of the day wrapped up at 2 pm with one or two takeaways from each table, as well as each adult providing their takeaways, thanks you's and closing remarks.

The agenda is attached at Appendix "A".

Throughout the day, as students moved through the sessions, they placed stickie notes on chart paper about the room, along with one additional sheets, One Takeaway for the Board (if you wanted the Board to hear one thing from you today, what would it be?).

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All of the stickie notes from each session are included in this report as raw data as Appendix “B”. Bolded comments were highlighted by the Secretary-Treasurer as impactful, but each reader should draw their own themes and conclusions from the data. Trustees should draw out themes to inform them as they consider financial decisions in April as we move to third reading of the 2020-2021 budget.

Thank you to Superintendent Green, staff in attendance, along with trustees who were able to attend for part or all of the day. Thank you to all administrators that sent students. To those schools unable to attend, we hope to see you at future events.

The biggest thank you is to students. Students took time out of high pressure, busy schedules, were honest and open about their opinions, articulated what they need for their learning, and added student voice to the 2020-2021 budget process.

This report will be shared with students at all secondary and middle schools, and will be posted on the budget resources District web page under 2020-2021 School Year Budget at <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>.

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STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

February 5, 2020

AGENDA

- 8:45 – 9:00 Arrival & Sign-in
- 9:00 – 9:30 Acknowledgement & Welcome
Opening Remarks
- Introductions
Intentions of the day
Group Formation
- 9:30 – 10:00 Group Discussion: ThoughtExchange Question
- 10:00 – 10:20 Concurrent Station 1: Climate
- 10:20 - 10:40 Nutrition Break
- 10:40 – 11:00 Concurrent Station 2: Reconciliation
- 11:00 – 11:40 Group Discussion: Budget Simulation
- 11:40 – 12:40 Lunch
- 12:40 – 1:00 Concurrent Station 3: Transitions
- 1:00 – 1:20 Concurrent Station 4: Student Voice/Agency
- 1:20 – 2:00 Takeaways from the Day
The ONE Thing
- Next steps
Closing Comments
- 2:00 - 2:15 Departure
- Throughout: Interviews/Video
Door prizes

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Facilitator Guide – Concurrent Session: Reconciliation

Open ended conversation led by Shelly Niemi, Aboriginal Nations Education Department

Facilitator Guide - Concurrent Session: Climate

Group Discussion (5-10 minutes):

How important is it?

UN sustainability goals?

Big and small changes / projects, activities or advocacy we should be considering ?

Does the climate issue impact you and how?

Individual work (5 minutes)

Stickie #1:

What are you most proud of at your school that relates to impacting environment/climate?

Stickie #2:

After hearing the discussion around the table, if you could have one thing relating to environment/Climate change in the district, what would it be?

Group Discussion (5 minutes)

What did you write?

Put stickie's up on the chart on the wall

Facilitator Guide: Concurrent Session: Transitions

Intro about making big moves in your life from one phase to another, what we worry about or feel hopeful/excited about, how to plan and prepare for a successful move in life.

Individual work:

Step 1 (2 minutes)

If you are in Grade 8, think back to grade 5 moving to grade 6.

If you are in Grade 11 think back to grade 8 moving to grade 9. Working on your own write down what you most remember or felt then (worried / anxious / excited etc) and why.

Step 2. (2 minutes)

Now that you're older and have been through that transition from elementary to middle or middle to secondary, write down something that you know now, that you tell your younger self in grade 5 or in grade 8 that would have helped you prepare and ease the stress.

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Step 3. (2 minutes)

Now you're moving from grade 8 to grade 9 or moving from grade 11 into grade 12 and beyond. Write down something you're feeling now about your next transition using what you learned from other transitions in your life.

Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Step 4. Discuss results

Step 5. Hang stickies in order (1/2/3) on chart labelled 'transitions'. Keep in order .

Secretary Treasurer Guide - Group Work: Budget

Start of Handout

It's budge time in the district

Step 1:

What is a revenue?

What is an expense?

Handout:

In this session, you'll be asked to develop the district's annual operating budget. Use the chart paper provided to do your work; make as many versions as you like. It can be messy.

Step 2:

FACTS:

Revenues

1. \$100 million from the ministry for this year to spend
2. \$1 million leftover from last year to spend

Expenses

1. You must spend \$45 million on teachers, \$25 million on education assistants and secretaries and \$10 million on custodians.
2. You must spend \$15 million on library and textbooks, computers and classroom supplies for schools.
3. You must spend \$1m to keep the light and heat on and to run the phones.

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How much do you have left?

Step 3:

You've asked the community what it would like to see in next year's budget and you have requests for (in no order of importance) the following:

• Vaping workshops and posters etc to use at the school.	\$200,000
• 10 extra teachers to focus on reading at grades k,1,2,3	\$1 million
• 10 teachers to increase course choices for students in high school	\$1 million
• Solar panels at 3 schools that can't afford to pay for them out of fundraising	\$1 million
• New chrome carts to create a ratio of 1 chrome book for every 2 students in all schools.	\$1.5 million
• 3-D printers for all schools to promote maker space, science, STEM & design/engineering at all schools.	\$1 million
• 10 counsellors for the district to help students with academics	\$1 million
• 5 counsellors for 5 schools for mental health	\$500,000
• New turf field for a school and community for soccer, rugby and other sports	\$2 million
• Energy engineer to help the district reduce its carbon Footprint	\$100,000
• Additional education assistants for all schools in the districts to help students in classrooms who are really struggling	\$1 million
• New theatres in 3 schools	\$2 million
• Pro-d/training for all teachers and education assistants	\$700,000
• Food for hungry students in the district	\$500,000
• Extra curricular trips for fine arts, sports, exchange trips and science fairs	\$400,000

Using the money you have left from Step 2, decide what to spend it on from the list above or some other priority that you know of.

Hint:

You don't have to spend all the money

You can change the amounts in the Step 3 requests above

You can hire any position in the district if you have money (Youth Family Workers, Noon hour supervisor, specialists etc)

For ease of simplicity:

A teacher costs 100,000

A counsellor costs 100,000

A custodian costs 50,000

An EA costs 50,000

A secretary costs \$50,000

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End of Handout

Emergencies:

1. 50 students have moved into the district and you have to hire 2 more teachers
2. Friday's rainfall has flooded 3 schools, you have to spend \$500,000 to fix the schools and \$400,000 to move students to other sites while their schools are being fixed
3. The Ministry has given you \$100,000 that can only be spent on mental health initiatives in the district, show how you would spend in the budget
4. There is a HUGE sale on an exchange trip to Bordeaux via Japan but only 200 students can go \$200,000. This would be a great opportunity for students and is 75% off regular price. Do you go?

At the end:

Was that easy? (intended to reveal difficulty, the Board's job is difficult, complexity, can't fulfill all the requests)

Who balanced to \$0, surplus, deficit? (intended to see if students saved any money for contingency)

How did you decide what to spend money on? (intended to seek how students prioritize issues – what is important to them?)

How did you adjust when there was an emergency? (intended to point out plans change, have to be nimble, have something in the bank for a rainy day)

Facilitator Guide – Concurrent Session: Student Voice

When you have a good idea for making things better, how do you make change?

Where is your voice at:

1. School
2. District
3. Board
4. Community though municipal councils and community groups

Step 1:

Group work (5 minutes)

Think about a project or issue you wanted to help with at your school, or about your learning, or a perceived injustice/unfairness you felt.

Step 2:

Group work (10 minutes)

What are some ways you could address the problem or promote the idea using student voice at the 4 levels? What are some tools at your disposal?

On chart paper write down the 4 levels and group thoughts/ strategies under each.

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Facilitator hints:

School: Principal, teacher, student council or leadership class

District: Grade 12 student reps attend superintendent dinner one x per month, also attend the committee and board meetings

Superintendent and Deputy/Associate Superintendents

Board: 9 elected (by your parents) trustees with three meetings a month: Education Committee, Operations Committee, Board meeting.

Also trustees are school liaisons.

Board hears public presentations on a variety of topics.

Board review letters written to them in meetings

Board goes to its provincial AGM to advocate to the Ministry

Community:

City councils – similar to Boards – monthly meeting, presentations, letters

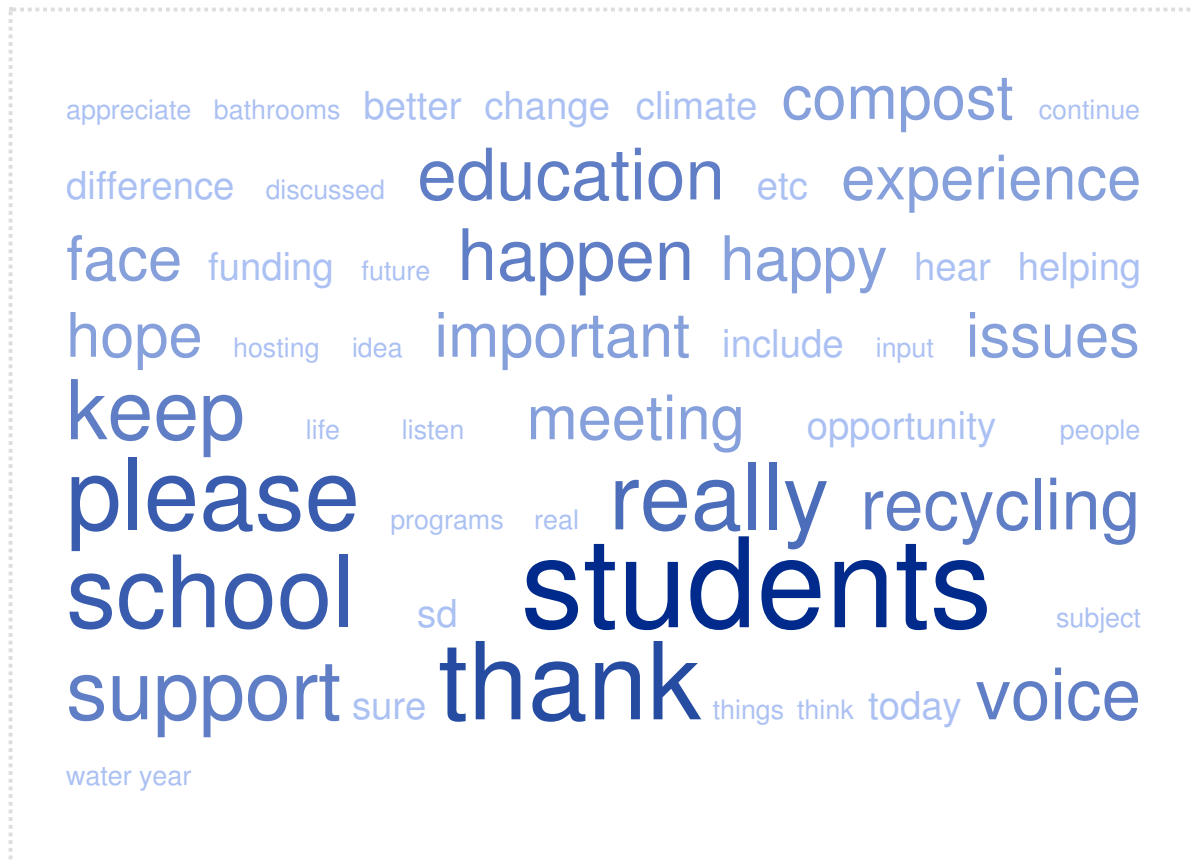
Community Groups – lots of volunteers and expertise

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APPENDIX B



ONE TAKEAWAY FOR THE BOARD – February 5, 2020

Student Symposium 2020

62 Stickies (one requested from each student)

- Thanks for everything
- Rockheights needs newer and better washrooms, water and pipes
- Please reinput funding into recycling programs (including power towers)
- Let's give Mt Doug compost!
- **It's our education and we deserve a say in every possible decision**
- Please keep having this kind of way to share student voice
- Please do more mental health and nutrition education
- Please do more of these student meetings that include other subjects
- It was very beneficial to hear from other students and also hear from trustees
- There are many issues regarding environment , reconciliation etc that need addressing
- I would like to tell the Board that student voice is extremely important
- I sincerely wish that a meeting like this could continue to happen and lead by students
- **PLEASE take us seriously. We aren't adults , we don't have the life experience you do, but we are at the centre of all these issues and I believe a group of mature students like today can ideate solutions to make a difference.**
- Thanks for this AMAZING opportunity!
- Please try funding band/arts/tech programs
- Thank you for hosting this meeting. I hope you can do this again
- More focus and initiatives in STEM
- I hope that we can actually see some the difference that we make with our discussions and that the things we talked about will actually happen
- Please educate people about what waste is doing to our planet and what really happens when it's not disposed of properly
- Thank you so much for having me today and reading all our thoughts.
- My biggest concern is the fact that every school doesn't have compost buckets in every classroom.
- Please fix the toilet paper!
- Voice of children
- Support from the adults and listening to the youth
- Provide more opportunities to students throughout their school experience to get hands on experience in different career paths
- Improve the CLE curriculum to have less in class work and more real life experience
- This is step one, let's keep supporting, learning and evolving and do this again
- Consider school spirit as an problem and what, as an administrator, they can do to help as budgeting, presentations etc. It's very important because our school really depends on our participation of population
- I would like SD61 to make schools more inclusive
- Get student input on other school projects
- **There are many things people want to change, and I know you hear them. You are doing great – thanks.**
- Limit/ban the use of single use plastics in the District.

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- Actually have the recycling arrive at the recycling plant
- Make school water fountains better (they're gross)
- We need more funding for certain clubs (Black Student Union – Vic High)
- PLEASE keep doing student symposiums!
- Thank you for supporting our ideas
- Thank you (heart)
- Just keep asking our opinions
- Education on current events and climate change is very important to keep students informed on real world issues
- **Make sure that all students/staff have a voice and make sure everyone has input**
- I think this was a really good day and we should do more of these. I feel like after this all of our voices were heard today.
- This is a good start but there is still a long ways to go. Our schools have lots of issues. Thank you for helping us solve them
- Keep bathrooms nice and maintained. I've noticed that the nicer bathrooms are, they are respected more
- Listen to the students!!! I loved this idea and I think it should be continued in the future
- I really connected with other students
- Thank you for hosting this, you picked great facilitators and this is a good direction
- Climate is the most important thing
- We really do appreciate you (happy face)! And sometimes we get annoyed or frustrated but as long as this communication is kept open we won't!! Just to talk to us please (happy face)!
- You are doing an amazing job
- Support the students as much as possible
- We need an SD61 student committee
- More ways to recycle, compost, garbage etc
- I really hope that what was discussed here by us is going to be turned into a reality.
- I really hope that this meeting happening again next year and the years coming (happy face)!
- The need for more education on the subject of climate change
- We need district-wide standardized recycling/compost system across primary to secondary schools in SD61
- Thank you for this opportunity
- Please make sure to support and encourage the environmental development
- Thank you so much for this, it was a huge step and to be honest it should have happened sooner. This need to take place in the future, hopefully about structural integrity
- More counsellors would be better for support and in high school for just helping students plan when they want to and not have to schedule an appointment
- Thank you...I really appreciate how you include us students... (happy face)

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What are the most important things can we do in our School District to support our students?

Follow up on ThoughtExchange

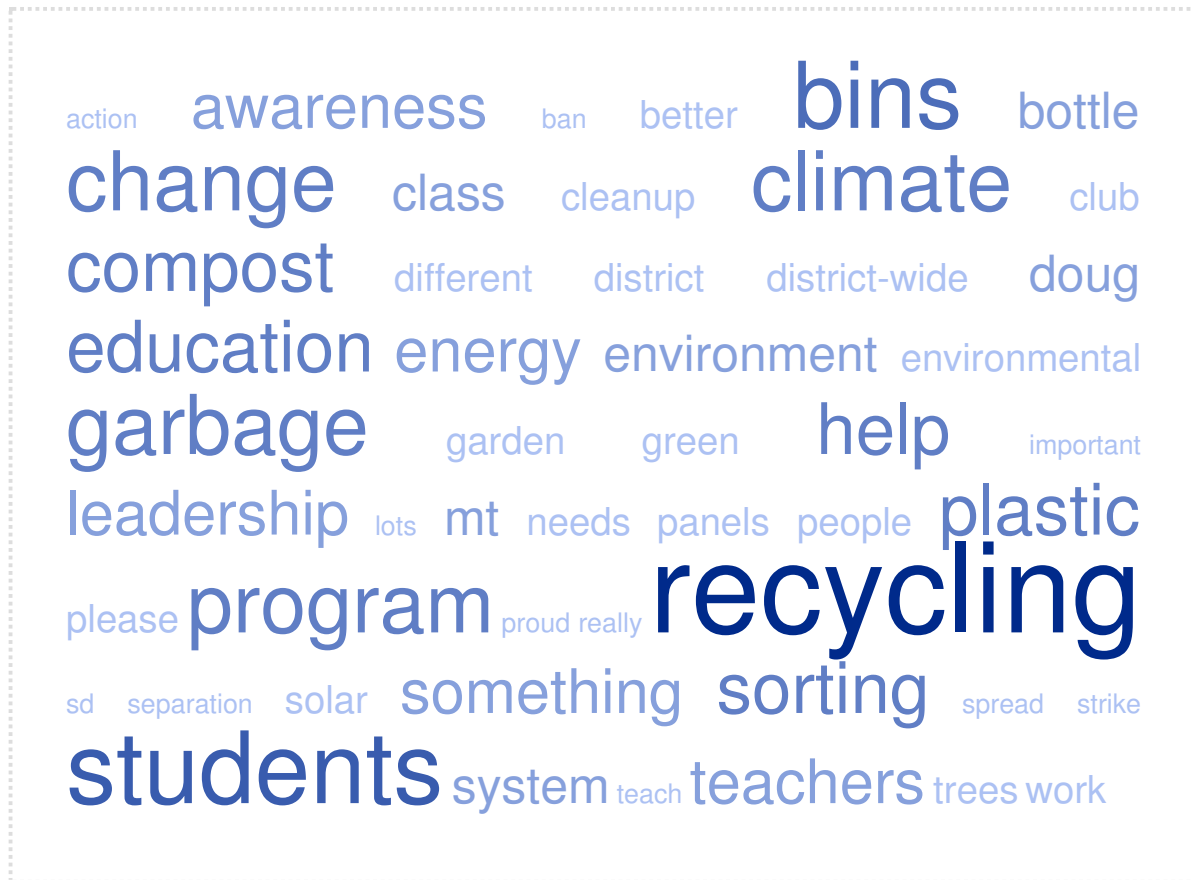
Student Symposium 2020 – February 5, 2020

- Support for students in intermediate education to prepare for secondary standardized grading systems (eg course failure)
- Learning style assessment early in education, possible middle school, group kids with people who think alike
- The District should help or have more cultural classes for people who want to learn more about their culture. Like for me, I want to learn more about Indigenous writings or more of my language
- School gardens/Saanich Planet
- Salad bar programs
- Flexible studies program
- Teachers need to be taught how to reach out to all their students
- Standardized recycling/compost system across the School District
- Smaller class sizes and education specific to each individual student
- Increased education on environmental issues
- Old books interrupts student learning
- Old books require teachers to add the updated information – it bothers students

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- Climate strikes need to be attainable for all students
- Mt Doug: Bottle collection = good
- Mt Doug: Recycling separation doesn't exist
- Mt Doug: Environmental leadership isn't terrible (eg school garden)
- Energy conserving methods within schools
- Recycling program
- Ocean cleanup program
- Not much more education on this topic is needed at Glanford
- We are always looking for ways to help the local community at Arbutus
- Something the district could do: Something that would make a large impact would be climate change education in career life education classes. That would be amazing!
- ESCAPE!! Esquimalt students caring about peace and the environment is a student run school that is recycling and trying to make a garden and solar panels
- Get heat pumps. BC province says we don't need solar panels as all the island's electricity is green already
- Please encourage biking and bussing. More bike infrastructure
- Field trips to the dump
- PLEASE RECYCLE. Esquimalt doesn't recycle. Staff and students have to. Work with CRD?
- My school has multiple clubs devoted to climate change and recycling
- Something the district can do: The power towers (soft plastics, foil lined) recycling is not properly dealt with and recycled. All of it goes in the trash. Please fund this! Thank you
- Waste reduction (energy and material)
- Paying for non-reusable packaging
- Energy efficient schools or shorting system
- Sustainable energy
- 2020 trees for 2020
- Get local food programs please
- **To help us: help indigenous peoples principles educate us because they have helpful, amazing methods**
- Mt Doug: Energy efficient schools for heating and cooling
- Bringing minds from different schools together to increase the collaboration and discussion that can hopefully lead to solutions we can apply to the community
- Mt Doug: Environmental leadership program run by Mrs. Kucher
- Glanford: On the announcements we remind others to recycle and there's money for the bottle depot
- In popular areas, there are one of each towers but outside there is none.
- Awareness and electricity
- Our school has a recycling program but it goes to leadership class. I believe that not only a couple students and teachers should volunteer their time to take care of the entire schools garbage/recycling.
- We should have somebody on the Board to handle the situation
- Ban single use plastics and styrofoam district-wide

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- The recycling at my school is rather good but I think the separation of plastics and different objects could be better
- Could be using colour code system for each object type so most people have a better understanding
- Reynolds: Gardening!
- Reynolds: the garden program
- **Going well: lots of initiative in student population. Teachers are eager to help. Give me hope.**
- Not going as well: Recycling programs are neglected and undereducated to students
- Lots of students are not aware of the climate emergency. Many are apathetic
- My school reduced garbage bins. There is only one. I don't know if this is good or bad?
- More solar panels
- Green team (happy face)
- Standardized recycling/compost system district-wide primary to secondary
- My school isn't taking direct action. There isn't even a decent recycling system
- Have more students in the school help with recycling by some sort of incentive (eg contest, extra credit, mandatory for grad etc)
- More opportunities to do helpful activities to help the environment like bottle drives
- Systemic recycling towers throughout SD61
- **I would change the rule blocking students from striking and the direct hostility from teachers and SD61 staff towards the strike. The rule stating that a student needs parent present to sign them out of school is impeding on students' right to learn.**
- Environmental science
- Recycling that actually works and is sent to the right place
- The amount of teachers who are on board with the ideas that we need to solve climate change is quite promising
- Something good: One time we went to a garbage cleanup around the neighbourhood and also weekly school garbage cleanups
- One thing I believe the district could do is provide more ways to separate recycling or plant more trees or reduce plastic such as change the garbage bags possibly to something more friendly to the environment or educating people more
- Solar panels
- More education about climate change
- Spreading the reality
- My school needs to make all the different disposal bins more frequent and easy to understand
- Our leadership program does a good job of running a recycling program but it shouldn't always fall on them
- Equal distribution of bins, always recycling and compost beside garbage
- Education about climate change is VERY important. We're at school to learn so we should learn about it too
- Environment Club
- Good amount of bins
- Spread good awareness
- Something I'm proud of is that the school tries its best to recycle
- Something I need to work on is where things go
- Ban single use plastics and non-recyclable/compostable materials

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- Better education on how to sort recycling
- More bins for recycle sorting
- Have a paper recycling/compost/plastic recycling next to every garbage bin
- Compostable bags in compost bins
- We need a system that is district-wide to handle and plan recycling
- Students don't know the science behind climate change
- Maybe it would be better for the environment if the school district could provide garbage cans and bins for plastic and can if a school doesn't have any
- Vic High: we have Green Team and the members are so positive, energetic and fun. Because they enjoy sorting and by students seeing other students working hard, we are pretty good at recycling. It wasn't like this even 2 years ago, when there wasn't such thing as Green Team
- All plates/cups etc used at school events like BBQ's and other events with food should be compostable or recyclable, paper and compostable plates/cups cost more which we should fund, we need to be an example
- **When educating about climate change we should focus on the positive, what we CAN do. Scaring people, especially young kids, is not helpful. Inspiring them to make a difference is important.**
- All schools should have multiple stations where they have all the bins
- Mt Doug has a good bottle recycling program run by Environmental Leadership but we don't do much for plastic separation
- Students knowing more about climate and how students can help to make a difference and how to recycle
- We have certain students at school who take the refundable bottles every day after lunch
- Recycling every Wednesday with a teacher
- Banning or limiting single use plastics in school
- District-wide same recycling program that actually gets the recycling in the recycling (plastic and technology) and stepping away from being dependent on electronics (energy conservation)
- Spread more awareness
- Compost bins in the classroom
- Make recycling convenient
- They should have a program in every school where all recyclables can go to the bottle depot and gain money and encourage recycling
- My school doesn't really focus much about recycling. My class has 3 bins but most have just recycle and garbage. No blue box
- We have class jobs and someone sorts the bins but there could definitely be more improvement – teaching students so they're aware of what's happening.
- Putting more bins with guides so people know where it goes
- Be taught at a younger age (eg elementary)
- More fieldtrips to the dump
- School needs to get compost bins and sorting bins for: hard/soft plastics, refundables and batteries and stuff like that
- I think the school do a tree planting program where students take action and plant trees
- I would have SD61 put solar panels on all the schools to limit the use of gas energy
- Our school needs to work on having more awareness towards climate change
- **Our school has an environmental leadership club/class and they've done a lot of good things while students are educated and get credits**

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- **Fund more student driven projects for the environment. It's really appealing to students to feel that they are responsible for an impactful project and make it happen**
- I'm proud that our school constantly _<can't read>_ about the topic of climate change
- **I'm also really proud that our teacher set an inquiry project about climate change**
- Recycling, not garbage
- Raise more awareness
- Encourage more school cleanups
- Our school lacks school spirit
- Sorting garbage is very important and should be taken seriously. Not only leadership should do it
- My school did a bake sale for charity helping the animals whose lives were risked during the Australian fires
- More recycling – teach why and how to recycle
- Climate change for curricular competency – responsibility
- Form clubs and organizations within school
- Get recycling figured out
- Teach sustainable living for life after high school
- All classes should have a global/sustainable/climate component
- Continued gardening and growing opportunities
- Canadian/national awareness of what our nation is doing
- Most school action is from teacher volunteers. Could the district employ a school environmentalist?
- Sorting is an issue – who does this?
- Better visuals on bins
- Outside spaces only have garbage cans and no compost or sorting stations

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Reconciliation – February 5, 2020

Student Symposium 2020

94 Stickies

- How can we reconcile with First Nations? I would like to learn more about their traditions
- It needs to have a safer environment to talk about the First Nations
- More hands on experiences
- Indigenous teachers/staff for my school because I don't think we have any. It would really benefit learning
- Indigenous speakers
- Positive and negative parts
- Individual stories
- Hands on
- Beliefs
- Experiential learning
- Be more involved in cultural aspect when learning
- Give meaning to the language or the art or culture in general
- Focus on local peoples
- Remove from science. Science has no cultural bias
- Storytelling and guest speakers
- The whole school, not just First Nations people
- More connectivity between English and social/history teachers to limit the repetition between grades in the Indigenous learning and just bring a deeper and wide scope to learning
- We need to learn more about First Nations people and communities, not just the history or past. We should also know more about the present First Nations communities. Many students just accept them but they don't get the chance to understand the Aboriginal peoples
- Physical, artistic, architectural influence for schools
- There should be more hands-on learning
- Everyone should have a basic knowledge and a course if you want to go farther
- **Reflecting on my school experience, my hands-on learning and talking to elders has been the most amazing and beautiful experience**
- I want to be able to experience rather than just learning. If we could go to a museum or talk to someone it could deepen the understanding
- Adding more programs for classes for education and it should be recognized in conversations
- I would love for money to be put into funding an Indigenous studies class that every student can experience the hands on learning that is essential to this topic
- I think taking the time in a class or classes to really dive deeper into topics while also having the freedom to dive into what interest you and going out and creating more experiences (hands on)
- Developing a unit to insert to English and socials curriculums for each year and make sure that it doesn't reflect the content but expanding and even diving into different topics regarding Indigenous
- More variety in learning the history
- Learning about Indigenous all year long
- I would like to learn about the food they eat, the clothing they wear, and the traditional dances and artwork make people more aware and comfortable

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One *Learning* Community

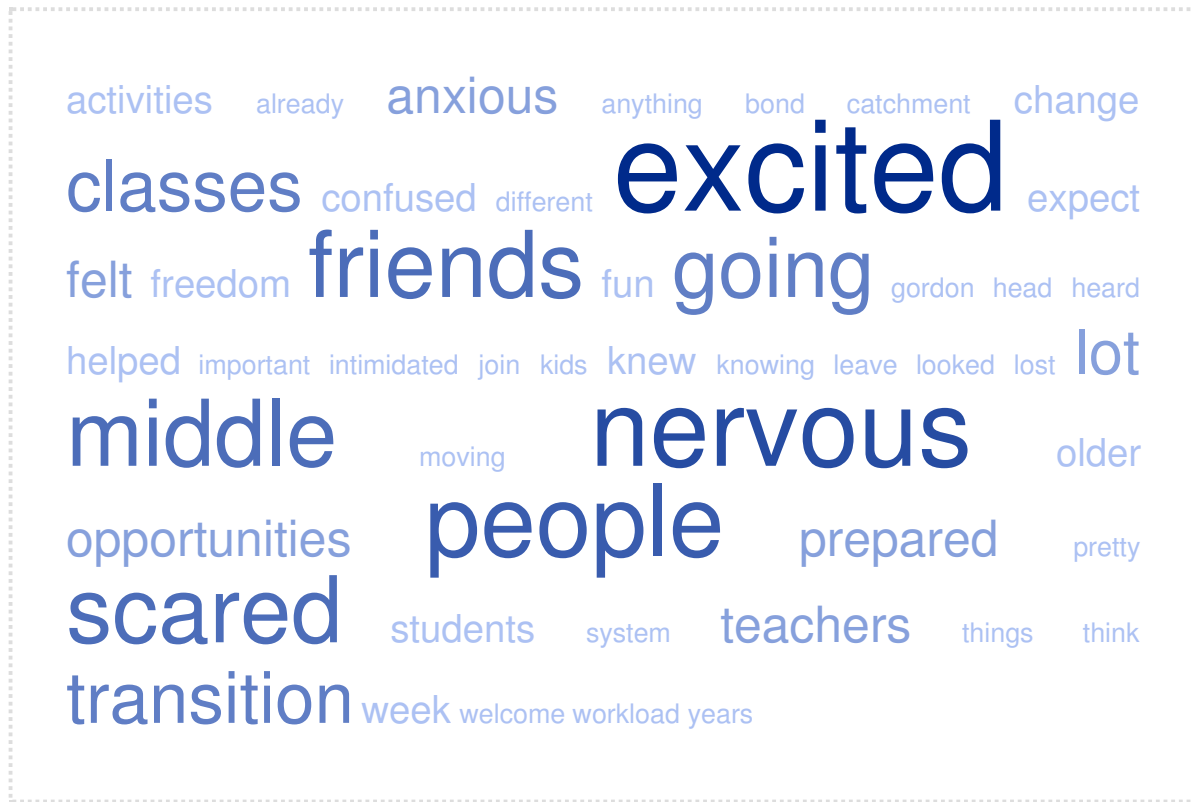


- On-line Indigenous language education
- I would love to see more hands-on experience with a traditional Indigenous person
- More authentic learning other than stuff from textbook
- I am not sure how to address this, but I don't have any Indigenous friends, or classes with visible Indigenous students
- There should be an opportunity for Indigenous students to learn their language and if Nations would like to share it with our settlers then there should be that opportunity
- Vic High: new school should have Indigenous space
- It's important that any initiative is approved and appropriate and protocol is followed with Indigenous Nations
- I would like to see more experiential learning, and invitations for Indigenous people to share their culture with us
- Having Indigenous teachers
- Reaching out to Indigenous groups to find out what they would like to share
- More information than just residential schools. More about the culture and traditions
- **We don't know the good things**
- More First Nations advisors/teachers
- There's no education or learning opportunities about First Nations culture, especially locally in middle schools
- Songhees food truck collaborating with Indigenous people instead of just observing it.
- Getting to build/collaborate on totems, drums, canoes
- **We learned the same thing in 3 classes**
- Zoom into local First Nations groups especially those who were on the land where our school is
- Field trips to museums
- More activities and guest presenters
- Being able to have at least 20 minutes to do culture practice
- Knowing more back stories about the culture
- Languages (immersion program)
- Sarah Rhude
- Blanket exercise
- More than residential schools
- Circles – not just in class, maybe during lunch
- Hands on learning really helped
- Could also integrate environmental issues (eg going on small field trips)
- We learn about the past Indigenous experiences/events, but we do not talk about what is going on now, what the government is doing for First Nations peoples today
- We should visit more exhibits and centres to learn and help out
- Learn about the beauty of their culture as well
- Balance out the good and the not so good while studying First Nations cultures.
- Learn the history behind the culture/language
- All cultures
- More presentations
- Less textbook learning and more hands on
- Too much repetition

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- More Indigenous art
- Textbooks: finding people that are fully educated and finding resources than one textbook that has less than one paragraph
- Presentations and informing students about this topic is key because ignorance about Indigenous arises when people lack this knowledge. At least if they knew more about it, they wouldn't be so ignorant
- **I'd like to have a more "hands-on" learning experience where we can actually go to their land, see their longhouses, etc to experience what life was like. It should not feel detached, we should feel more together**
- Hands on experiences
- Having First Nations come to talk to us and share the knowledge
- Other topics than residential school
- More positive
- Physical education (hoops/lacrosse)
- Hospitals
- Examples: Seklema
- Books: The boy on the railroad, Scoop, Fatty Legs
- The blanket exercise
- Seklama
- Hospitals
- Books
- I think we need to learn more about First Nations culture and how they do things like: beliefs, culture, rituals
- We should have more Indigenous people teaching us
- Further exploration of treaties and pre-colonization culture
- Territorial acknowledgements
- Balance between residential school learning and modern Indigenous culture
- At my school we only cover this topic around orange shirt day. I think we should learn this topic year round
- What's missing about First Nations: knowledge about properties, language, the story behind the symbols, territories
- Adult:
- Access to more Indigenous Education (ie Sarah Rhude)
- Access to Indigenous artists to create in schools with students
- Professional development and resources

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Transitions – February 5, 2020

Student Symposium 2020

Q1 82 Stickies / Q2 95 Stickies / Q3 72 Stickies

Question 1: Think back to Grade 5 before middle school or Grade 8 before secondary school. What did you feel?

- Excited
- Nervous
- Bigger school
- New teachers, new kids
- I felt scared that people wouldn't like me because I came from a whole new area and only 3 people I knew were going to my school, but when I got there I felt really welcomed
- Nervous because it was moving to a new school with new people as well as new teachers and just a lot of new and unfamiliar
- Anxious and excited – big new school and new people and classes
- I was nervous going into high school because there would be different people in all my classes
- Nervous – looking at higher grades (10, 11)
- Excited – more activities
- Nervous
- Excited
- Little scared
- Nervous because it was a huge change. The reason it was a big change because we've been with the same people for 6 years
- The Grade 8 also looked big
- Scared but excited
- Anxious
- Nervous about older kids
- Stopped talking because didn't know how people would react
- Took me 3 years to finally find a friend group
- Excited for fresh start, new big school and new people
- Nervous because new environment and new faces
- I felt nervous because I didn't know any friends or anything. I joined a class that went kayaking that helped me bond with peers from my school
- Very excited for high school and getting to choose my courses
- Nervous too
- I believe it was quite easy to transition but making some new connections was hard. There weren't many clubs or anything to join to meet people
- I was excited to leave because I didn't really like <my school>
- I was confused if I should go to Gordon Head Middle or Arbutus
- Nervous
- I was so glad to leave middle school but the high school was very big for me and I really was lost and confused when trying to find my classes
- Excited

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- A little nervous
- Overall really excited for the transition because I already had contacts and friends at high school
- I was scared because I was moving schools and my friends were going to a different one. It was a lot bigger but then it was fun and I made new friends
- I was nervous because I was going to a school that none of my friends were going to and I had to take the city bus
- I felt very scared. I thought the Grade 8's were going to be very dominant. I did not have many friends going into Grade 6. So I was scared to go alone
- I had a pretty structured transition because of the challenge program and therefore went pretty smooth. I think that was anxiety inducing was not knowing what was important and what was less important
- I felt excited and welcome
- Exploratory / activities / fun – memorable and meaningful
- Introduction to teachers
- Variety of opportunities
- There wasn't a lot of information given to Elementary students preparing for middle school
- Excited – I was done with middle school at that point
- Grade 8 to Grade 9 – the most exciting part was our grade bonding exercise. It helped me make friends I still have
- I came into Grade 9 3 weeks late, due to a unique transition I was going through and found it was harder to find a group because they had already been formed. I know this is the same for other students coming in after Grade 9
- I was a bit scared because during the first week of school we were split up into teambuilding classes for a week. And that was intimidating. But I was also excited because I go to have more freedom
- I was scared because there were a lot of people I didn't know
- I was excited transitioning from middle to high school because it was a new place with more opportunities
- I was also very lost because you become more independent and there is less structure guiding you
- Anxious because it was big school
- Excited for new opportunities
- Nervous but I don't remember why
- Really good and well prepared for high school. **My middle and high school have a good relationship that prepared me for the transition.**
- I knew I had friends with so it made it easier.
- It wasn't too scary or difficult to go to high school
- I was mostly excited to have more freedom
- Neutral – I wasn't really excited because I was losing friends through the catchment system, but I was excited for the new music program
- I was very happy because I really need the freedom from middle school
- Nervous – everyone is older, harder classes, more people
- Nervous because I changed catchments so I did not know anyone at the school except my twin
- Excited
- Worried about how much the workload was gonna be in high school
- Excited about classes to explore more opportunities
- Scared of the unknown

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- Going into the public school system from an independent school
- Not knowing what to expect
- New people
- Confused – I went to Gordon Head Middle and we only heard about Lambrick Park Secondary. Me and others wanted to go to other schools but were rather encouraged not to.
- Was not prepared for the high school workload
- Indifferent
- I was excited to learn elementary yet slightly scared
- Overwhelmed – because wasn't ready and I heard so many bad things about high school
- Excited – because I was ready
- Anxious
- Nervous
- Intimidated
- Didn't know what the teachers would be like, or the students
- Didn't fully know what was expected of me
- Excited. I knew what to expect because I had older siblings to help me and **my middle school had lots of transition activities with my high school**
- I was excited to have more fun things like lockers etc
- Scared – no one likes Grade 6's and didn't want to be seen like that
- Nervous – I came from a small school

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Question 2: Knowing what you know now, what would you tell your younger self?

- Don't be too stressed
- Keep on top of things: do your homework
- There are more opportunities coming
- Make good friends
- Finish your homework right away
- It is basically the same as moving up a grade with a few new things. All the teachers will be supportive
- You're good – you know your times tables (happy face)
- Just make jokes – people love laughing
- Ask questions about others – they like talking about themselves
- It's really not that big of a deal, just take one step at a time
- Be smarter about choosing courses.
- You'll meet a lot of new people and make a lot of new friends
- Friend groups will change but there's new ones too
- It's totally ok!! There are so many more classes and it's a lot more exciting
- Think Grade 9 is similar to grade 8, but has various opportunities
- Update CLE to include taxes and worker rights
- Update CLE! Working rights and taxes
- Don't worry
- The teachers are very accepting
- There are lots of choices
- Get more involved sooner
- It's the same as Grade 5
- New people/new change is a great thing – don't be scared
- Classes are harder
- People are more judgey
- Shadow days are helpful (Vic High)
- Learn more about scholarships in Grade 11
- See someone in university to talk about real university life
- Learning about taxes would be nice
- You'll make lots of friends, don't be nervous, and play sports!
- Middle is really inviting and not much harder than elementary – super straightforward
- It will be fine but like don't <can't read>
- Nothing really, it was all good
- Should be transition (shadow) day (happy face)
- Update CLE
- You'll make new friends and older kids aren't that scary
- I would tell myself it's not as bad as it seems, transitioning from schools is nerve wracking for everyone
- I was not stressed
- Keep connected with old friends
- You're not the only one going through change
- Everything will work itself out

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- I worried way too much and if I had just taken a deep breath and got myself organized, I would've been much happier
- Join anything you want because it really doesn't matter
- Don't define yourself too quickly
- I don't remember
- If I just had more info on what to expect in classes and from teachers
- You look fine
- **Care about feelings, not opinions**
- Don't be afraid to talk to people and ask questions.
- You don't need to figure everything out yourself
- Be happy
- Prepare for the unknown
- The work is harder but you are smarter so it won't be that hard
- There are options and not everything is permanent or important
- It is ok to prioritize fun over grades
- Classes are very similar
- Other grades don't care about each other
- Join more things: clubs/sports
- Everyone is in the same boat
- Get out of your comfort zone more
- Get involved early
- Be a leader in the school and community
- Stay on top of work so that it doesn't pile on
- Teachers in high school want you to do well
- You're not alone
- It's good to get involved in extra-curriculars and build connections within the community
- Don't worry about grades as long as you do your best
- Knowing that other students are scared too
- Everyone is trying to make friends
- You are not alone
- It's all about school – who cares?
- School is easy
- Try not to be a scaredy cat
- I wish I had known more about the opportunities our school offers so I could get earlier involved
- Exams are not that bad, your teachers will be helpful
- Semesters make everything easier
- Different teachers = better
- People keep to themselves; they don't really care what you do, or how you act
- Everything will turn out fine
- Everyone has and will feel nervous but everyone has overcome that and its ok
- Be confident
- Have fun
- Enjoy – its' the start of fun
- Easier than expected to make friends

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- Teachers are more approachable, understanding and caring than they are made out to be
- Get involved
- Try everything!
- You may not have time later/energy/be too scared to try something new and you'll get to make friend and create a community
- Don't be scared because you get to meet lots of new people and make new friends
- Seek out more information
- Better transition days
- Don't overthink it, you'll be fine
- People don't care as much as you think, in the best way possible
- Transition in school work and workload was a shock
- Not knowing where to go to make new friends

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Question 3: Moving forward from Grade 8 to secondary school and Grade 11 to Grade 12 and life after secondary school, what do you feel now?

- Nervous
- Hopeful that here is a better school with less problems and staff willing to listen
- Excited
- Nervous
- Ready
- Good
- I'm really uncertain but confident. I have good options ahead of me
- I'm excited to have more autonomy and be free of teachers
- I'm scared to go to high school. It seems stressful to choose my courses and I don't know if I should go to Mt Doug or Lambrick
- I'm feeling excited. My older sister is in high school so she told me the basics. I am excited for more opportunity
- **I don't think I'm that scared as long as I try my hardest**
- Nervous because this transition is a bigger one than you fully have to support your own self
- **I'm excited for this new phase of my life. 13 years of school is a long time and I'm eager to define myself outside of academic performance in my gap year.**
- I feel little more prepared than the transfer to middle because I have done it before
- Stressed, because although I have a vague idea of what I want to do, I'm not totally sure
- Worried that university will be totally different and way harder than anything I've done before
- I'm very excited for my new school because I get to see my elementary school friends and take classes I enjoy
- It's going to be a much bigger jump into university with an amount of freedom, as well as responsibility I'll have to get used to.
- Along with further schooling, I'll be working co-op and am
- This transition seems a lot more difficult. I think the transition after graduation will be very different and I wish we had more opportunities to learn about what it will be like
- Confused and scared but excited. I feel confused about what path to take and also worried that the courses I choose were not right for a path in the future
- Still totally scared to graduate because there's no clear path like before and I still don't know what I'll do
- Very nervous – I do not know if I can go through hard university life because of different environment. It's very different from the feeling when I was Grade 8 going into Grade 9
- Don't know how the university life is; **it would help to connect with the student who goes to university, talking about class, clubs, building and not just talking about courses and finances.**
- Nervous
- Excited
- A little unsure
- I'm feeling prepared because in 6th grade I had 7 teachers which is similar to high school so I'm used to having the workload
- I'm rather scared about post-secondary because there isn't much information about the experience given other than from family or friends
- Nervous/unsure – I'm not sure what I want to do, or where I want to be

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- Feeling every overwhelmed because I'm not sure if I want to go straight or take a gap year
- Excited because I've finished 12 years!
- I feel like I'm rushing to plan my life out, Worried about taking all the required sources to get into university
- I feel it will be the same as going into high school, though it probably won't be bad
- I am worried about drugs in high school
- I'm worried about finance and if I'll choose the right subject for me.
- I'll join sports teams because I usually fit in well
- People get judgmental and nobody want to talk to you
- Ahhhhhh! Very stressed about going to the next step in my education. I'm sure it will be fine as long as I'm prepared, but preparation is so important for this. Being prepared probably would've helped me in the past too
- I'm excited for Uni but **I'm a little worried about missing my parents and how I'm going to pay for Uni**
- I'm excited but kinda nervous. I know everything's going to be fine.
- I will miss my friends
- I'm nervous to be in a new school but I have lots of friends that are doing the same thing and everyone's nervous
- I am excited
- I will miss old friends
- I feel that I need more time to prepare
- I feel that I am more prepared for transitioning to life after high school. I've gotten into the habit of planning ahead and it helped ease all of my worries and anxieties
- Unsure
- Scared to commit to something too quickly
- **I have frequent anxiety breakdowns because the likelihood of me being forced to go to high school with no friends and a negative environment is very high due to the catchment system. I have no choice at all. Only chance.**
- Moving from elementary to middle was not scary at all so I am not scared to go to high school (I'm done with middle school)
- Nervous – high school is bigger, more people, different classes
- Sad
- Nervous and excited but I know a lot of what is expected of me in my transition to UVic and I know the campus well/familiar
- I'm feeling very excited and free because I really want freedom
- Feeling excited and ready because I have the support of my friends and family whom I can rely on
- I can't wait to just get a job
- Excited because I am ready to face the work and punch life's challenges in the face
- I'm slightly nervous to enter my high school years, however I'm excited for the new opportunities
- Nervous
- Excited
- Scared
- Don't know what to expect
- Don't know if I'll be accepted into the program I want

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- Very done with grade school and ready for new things to happen
- Tired
- Excited
- Going to university – it's a lot of work to apply/get ready
- Our scholarship 12 class is SUPER HELPFUL! And having it as a resource is AMAZING!
- In my case, I'm trying to do legal assistant dual credit next year and I don't find I've had much help.
- However, for Uni, I'm ok and excited to step into law
- Scared – there's a big difference between the two and it's going to be a big jump

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Student Voice – February 5, 2020

Student Symposium 2020

103 Stickies

School/District/Board/Community

- Important to have adult support
- Leadership program/groups help influence things
- Use social media to gain voice and learn from others
- Need more opportunities to come together with reps from across the district, helps get a better understanding of the big picture
- Need structures to bring ideas forward; need to be easily accessible
- Leadership classes
- Staff meetings
- Talk to staff – principals, teachers
- Connect with other students
- Not many opportunities for voice to be heard
- Leadership groups: Events, fundraisers, yearbook, community activities
- Complaints – need to have solutions
- Needs to be a process to have student voice heard
- Students need to be taken seriously
- Can connect with school staff: administrators, counsellors, teachers
- Good to have students involved in collaborative processes; can be challenging if staff change
- Important to have trusted adults to connect with
- Need to have a culture of respect that is open to variety/diversity of ideas
- Important to have staff champions
- Activities/projects get our voice heard
- Leadership groups provide opportunity for advocacy; town hall
- District opportunity to meet with reps from other schools
- Need mechanism to get your ideas to student reps; can be a challenge
- Students don't always feel heard
- Not sure if there is a bridge from school to district
- Challenging when there is staff turnover
- Not always aware of opportunities of the proper people to talk to
- +Student town hall or student council?
- +Maybe an anonymous way for raising student voice. It makes it easier to give the students a voice without embarrassing or shaming them
- +Students are aware of the problems/issues
- -The problem is to take that opinion to the district
- +I love that everyone shares their stories so that the district ...
- -Having better environment, washroom, tech, teachers
- +What we're doing, coming together is important and our voices are being heard

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- +Student councils and leadership programs help interested students influencing change in their schools
- -Informal way for people to communicating with someone from the Board that is well known and easy
- +I think people do listen to students' voice
- -More ways to express student voice
- +Today's opportunity
- -Student council available at more schools
- -More opportunity for student voices to be heard
- +People who are scared to state their opinion can share and feel comfortable
- +Allows to create an environment where students feel comfortable
- Student voice is more likely to be attracted through student-lead initiatives and movements
- School board is doing a good job trying to keep everyone happy, as they're already very busy
- It would be nice to do something like this but in individual schools
- There should be more meetings that are shorter
- Other kids need to get together more. I never talk to the French kids but I'd like to. The classes are kind of sectioned off. IF you got them together, their voice would start to show and we would all get closer
- -Sometimes people in authority don't listen because we're "just kids"
- +I like that we can have meetings like this to discuss our needs
- +Accessible ways to share ideas sounds very good
- This symposium is a good start
- +Meeting/summit like this is very very good!
- -No "middle man" for complaints or requests, makes it difficult for students to tell the people on the Board
- +More opportunity to tell people on the school board what we want
- -Option for people who are shy or don't want to say things out loud to give their opinions
- -Communication between students of all schools, like regular meetings
- +Direct approach of feelings or needs from the people (group)
- +Authentic desire
- +Leadership Groups
- **+My school did not have a very good recycling system so my friends and I started an Environmental Club. I know my voice was heard**
- +Opportunities exist for students to express and implement their ideas at Esquimalt if they are willing to work hard
- -Hardly any instances of administration/teachers asking students for input
- Supportive staff members
- -Easier way to communicate our issues, then more students would voice their opinions
- +Opportunity to go to Board meetings and present is very important if it lets the students have a voice
- -I feel there should be a clearer and more advertised process on how to bring ...
- **-Having your voice heard is meaningless unless it is taken seriously**
- Complaints you want to address
- -Starts to wear off when adult saw
- -Difficult to remember
- -Memory loss

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- -Not having a rec team for sports players that don't make it on to compete
- Teachers need to help with the motivation movement that students are taking up; it shouldn't just be student leadership jobs
- -Toilet paper needs to not be see-through (because it is!)
- -Pads and tampons available in all bathrooms
- -Better bathrooms but no one in the office has done anything about it
- -When given a note that states we have permission to leave school for climate striking we should not be ignored or brushed aside
- -Even if we do say something, the people we are talking to don't listen and ignore us
- Reach out to people who have graduated or dropped out
- Have a student committee at a few people (<10)
- Someone to represent student voice to help students so voices can be heard
- Responsible and trusted teachers
- Leadership mentors
- Having programs for leadership and having people to help you have a voice
- -Lack of easy access to support with our ideas
- Have teachers/adults be more open
- Do middle schools have a rep on the Board?
- -Adults who think they're superior
- Someone to facilitate the ideas; contact between school and district
- Show highlight programs to voice change ie leadership
- Opinions shot down when showed interest
- Who to go to?
- Need teacher support
- Know surroundings to be able to find sponsor
- VP's and student rep can be the link to Administration
- Recognition from community with clubs
- School: course advocacy through the teacher and create ways if not in class
- School: Go to Principal to talk about ideas / approachable
- Know your teachers' strengths
- Go to staff meetings to present problems when teachers care about those problems
- Smaller scale school Board meetings
- Announcements about meetings about problems, from the representatives

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Questions or Comments – February 5, 2020

Student Symposium 2020

- Do middle schools have a rep on the Board?
- Students given notes explicitly saying they can leave to participate in climate strikes should not be told they need more permission
- Who to go to? (Student voice)
- Esquimalt High School's recycling program is GREAT up until when it leaves the school! So please don't come in and change it all! Come and talk to Karmen Legge or Megan van Campen about it!
- We don't have access to pads and tampons at my school and many others
- Learn about Indigenous culture from before colonization!! There is SO MUCH valuable history being overlooked!
- Sports teams do pay for a lot (eg hoodies, personalized jerseys, partial tournament fees. A lot of the money we got comes from my coach going and asking /applying for it. We fundraise too.
- I would like to see more involvement in the teaching of study skills, because up until high school we are never really taught that and struggle to figure out how to, ourselves
- We don't have liberal access and tampons in schools
- I hope that you can afford to get an Aboriginal food truck. PS Thanks for lunch
- Don't hate on athletics!!
- Students should be dismissed from school with written parent consent for climate strikes; families can't afford to leave work to sign their kids out

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