

Memorandum to the Board of Education Open

FROM: Trish Smillie, Superintendent
DATE: December 7, 2021
SUBJECT: Creston Valley Secondary School Re-Naming

For Approval

Introduction

This memorandum will describe the process taken to determine a new name for Creston Valley Secondary School (previously Prince Charles Secondary School).

Background

On June 15th, 2021, the Board of Education for SD8 unanimously voted to approve the motion for the removal of the name “Prince Charles” from the Creston high school’s name. The motion was submitted to the board on behalf of the community and included input from students, teachers, and parents as an act of reconciliation. From that point, the school’s interim name became Creston Valley Secondary School (CVSS).

Read the Board's [resolution](#).

Information

A public engagement process was undertaken during the fall of 2021 to decide on a new permanent name for the region’s secondary school. A leadership team from CVSS initiated the next steps towards finding an inclusive name for the Secondary School in Creston. The Re-Naming Leadership Team engaged with educational partners throughout the fall to seek input into the new name. The process included an online survey that invited students, parents, staff, and the community to share their voice, focus groups, and a virtual Town Hall.

The initial stage of engagement began on November 4, 2021, with a public survey completed by 1126 respondents, 66% selected the name Creston Valley Secondary School, 13% Kootenay River Secondary School, and 6% Creston Kutenai Secondary School. The respondents of the survey included students, parents, alumni, staff, and residents. From this survey, the top two names were put forward for discussion at follow up consultations with education partners.

An open Town Hall meeting was held on November 17th, 2021. The CVSS Re-naming Leadership Team shared background information to the public on the purpose of the process, initial survey data, and the history of the CVSS school name. The thirty attendees were provided information on the top two name choices: Creston Valley Secondary School and Kootenay River Secondary School.

On November 18th, 2021, a virtual Focus Group Town Hall meeting was held with attendees from several partner groups including representatives from the Board of Education, the Lower Kootenay Band, the Town of Creston, Kootenay Lake Teachers Federation, the Creston Valley Secondary School Parent Advisory Council, Creston Valley Secondary School staff reps, student

representatives from the grade 12 BC First Peoples class, staff from the Aboriginal Education program, and school and district administrators. Focus group feedback included unanimous support for the name change. During this meeting, a concern was brought up that the historical connection to the name Creston Valley High School stating that CVSS is too similar to the name used in the past. Members of the focus group felt that using a name similar to the name used in the past would not signify this as a change as an act of reconciliation. A desire was also expressed that the Lower Kootenay Band should be reconsulted with the final two names being proposed.

Immediately after the Focus Group meeting, Principal Hamm met with the CVSS BC First Peoples class. During that meeting the students requested the survey be reopened for students as they believed that most students had not taken the opportunity to respond. The results from the reopened survey selected Creston Valley Secondary School and Kootenay River Secondary School as the top two choices again, with Creston Valley Secondary School as slightly more popular.

On November 19th, 2021, the school leadership team met with the Lower Kootenay Band Chief and Council to share the top two names and provide the feedback from the previous engagements. The group stated their acceptance of both names but stated a clear preference for Kootenay River Secondary School because of the importance of the river and connection to the land and to their creation story. It was also noted that CVSS was similar to the name used in the past and Kootenay River Secondary School would signify a new beginning.

Recommendation

As a result of an extensive public consultation process, it is recommended that the Board of Education adopt the name Kootenay River Secondary School as the school's official name.