

School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

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Media Release

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Hornby Island Community School Fire

Early Sunday morning, August 26th a fire occurred at Hornby Island Community School. Hornby Island Volunteer Fire Department responded promptly and requested mutual aid of Denman Island Fire Rescue. Fire crews are to be credited for their quick response and for extinguishing the fire quickly. Despite their incredible efforts the school sustained substantial damage. RCMP are investigating the cause of the fire.

Board Chair Janice Caton stated “The Board of Education is shocked and saddened that one week prior to the start of the new school year at the news of a devastating fire that has damaged the Hornby Island Community School, a rural island school that not only serves the many students and families of Hornby Island but the entire community.”

School district staff travelled to Hornby Island early this morning to assess the damage and will be working with the community to implement a plan to ensure the continuity of educational programs on Hornby Island for the coming school year.

School District 71 would like to thank all the first responders from Hornby and Denman Islands, Comox Valley RCMP, British Columbia Emergency Health Services and BC Hydro. Thank you also to BC Ferries staff who worked through the night to shuttle emergency crews to the island and to the residents of Hornby Island who supported the first responders throughout the event.

District staff will continue to work on a contingency plan and further information regarding school start up for Hornby Island Community School will be posted on the district and school website. A date will be set shortly to discuss with the community the educational plan for the year ahead.

Caton noted that “Our thoughts and best wishes go out to the students and staff both past and present and families of Hornby Island as we work together to determine our next steps.”