



## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release  
May 10, 2022

### **Beacon Community Services selected to deliver childcare services at Pexsisen Elementary**

**LANGFORD, BC** – The Sooke School District is pleased to share that local charity Beacon Community Services will provide licensed childcare services at the new Pexsisen Elementary School, which is slated to open in September 2022. The Board of Education places priority on partnering with childcare operators that focus on creating a culture of inclusivity, accessibility as well as honouring Indigenous education and reconciliation through their work. As part of the partnership, Beacon Community Services will reserve 10% of childcare space for children of Sooke School District teachers and staff.

“Schools are the hubs of their community and in the Sooke School District we are designing new schools to reflect the needs of our growing community and childcare is something we hear about every single day,” said Ravi Parmar, Chair of the Sooke School District Board of Education. “We know finding affordable, inclusive and accessible childcare is a struggle for families, and by including space for this purpose in our new school, we hope that more families will be able to access this critical service.”

“We’re excited to serve Pexsisen Elementary families and proud of the strong partnership with the Sooke School District which will make that possible,” said Carla Robinson, Beacon Community Services Board Chair. “Working together, we’ll help meet the community’s growing need for quality childcare and help lay a foundation for children’s future success.”

Subject to final licensing approvals, Beacon’s Nature Club will provide childcare for up to 50 Pexsisen students before and after school. During school hours, the space will be utilized for up to 20 children aged 3 to 5 as part of Beacon’s Little Stars pre-school program.

Beacon CEO Tricia Gueulette said the programs will emphasize nature-based play and learning as “research shows that’s especially important to healthy growth and development.”

She applauded the school district for recognizing the value of a nature-based approach and said Beacon will soon announce a registration process and contact information for the new programs.

#### **About Beacon Community Services**

Beacon Community Services is a community-based charity dedicated to helping people and improving lives in the Greater Victoria and Gulf Islands areas. With approximately 500 volunteers and 260 staff, the charity provides a vast array of services and programs for people of all ages. The charity has delivered quality licensed childcare services for more than 30 years and has been recognized with a Child Care Award of Excellence for Leadership in Inclusive Practices by the Province of BC.

For more information on Beacon Community Services, please visit: [www.beaconcs.ca](http://www.beaconcs.ca).

### **About the Sooke School District**

The Sooke School District is the fastest growing school district in British Columbia serving over 12,000 students from the communities of Colwood, Highlands, Langford, Metchosin, Port Renfrew and Sooke. Currently under construction on Constellation Avenue in Langford's Westhills neighbourhood, is Pexsisen Elementary and Centre Mountain Lellum Middle School. Pexsisen (PUXX/SEE/SUNG) is a Lkwungen and SENCOTEN word gifted to our district by the Songhees First Nation. It means "the opening of hands" or "to have one's hands wide open." Lellum (LAY/LUM) was gifted by Sc'ianew Nation (Beecher Bay) and carries the meaning of house and the idea of community, where we raise our children. The new schools represent an investment of over \$88 M to the school district's portfolio and add crucial capacity to keep up with our ever-growing student enrollment. Both schools are scheduled to open September 2022.

For more information about the Sooke School District, please visit: [www.sd62.bc.ca](http://www.sd62.bc.ca).

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