

Orientation for New Employees of Kyuquot Elementary Secondary School

Kyuquot Sound, on the northern west coast of Vancouver Island, is a wilderness area except for a number of logging camps. Kyuquot is a secluded coastal village southeast of the Brooks Peninsula and is only accessible by sea plane or boat. The settlement is comprised of Houpsitas First Nations Reserve, 1-kilometer-long Walter's Island, and several smaller inhabited islands, all within about a kilometer of each other. Islands and hundreds of rock shoals to the ocean-ward side of Kyuquot shelter the settlement from large ocean swells. With a population of about 250, most are of the Ka:'ya:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nation with the governing body being the Legislative Assembly. Local employment also includes fish farming, logging, silviculture, commercial fishing, and seasonal sport fishing. The largest community within an 80-km radius is Port Hardy with about 3800 residents, and Port McNeill (64 km) with a population of 2600 people. Please google "Kyuquot" for more information.

Kyuquot School is an important part of the community as it provides education, employment and community activities. There are approximately 50 Grades 1-12 students enrolled at KESS, with Kindergarten provided in the community through a partnership between the Legislative Council and School District 84. The educational and support staff work closely together in this well-equipped facility to provide all students with a successful learning experience. Computers are networked throughout and are integral to the school. Curriculum areas that continue to be a focus for development include early language experiences, First Nations language and culture, applied skills, and the senior graduation program.

The rural lifestyle and Kyuquot's beautiful natural setting attracts outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy a rugged West Coast experience. Skill in kayak or powerboat travel are an asset to new teachers, as the freedom to move on the water makes living here a richer experience. Kyuquot School has a truck and a boat that employees can make arrangements to use (see District Policy B.27). All employees operating the boat must hold an appropriate license under the current regulations of Transport Canada, at www.tc.gc.ca/boatingsafety.



Transportation

The nearest road access is Fair Harbour, where there is a government dock, a boat launch ramp, a very small store, and ample parking for vehicles. It takes about 40 minutes by boat to get to Kyuquot. Fair Harbour to Port McNeil takes about 1 1/2 hours and to Campbell River (pop. 35,000), about three hours (both trips require some travel on logging road). A scheduled freight boat - the Uchuck III, travels from Gold River to Kyuquot every Thursday (all day) to return the next day. The nearest float plane base is also Gold River and flights take about 40 minutes. The most practical form of regular transportation to and from Kyuquot is by way of Fair Harbour, which can be done in all but the worst weather.

By Road

- drive north of Woss, on Island Highway (Woss has a gas station and small café);
- turn left at junction for Zeballos (about 15 minutes north of Woss);
- drive 72 km to Fair Harbour on gravel road - about 90 minutes;
- this road passes close to Zeballos about half-way to Fair Harbour;
- gas and food bits are available at Woss and Zeballos (limited hours);
- gas is available at Fair Harbour (limited hours).

A Note About Vehicles - Although the Fair Harbour road is open most of the year, chains must be carried during the winter. A low-riding vehicle is not recommended on this road due to its roughness; a "beater" vehicle (truck or car) is also not recommended. Be sure to have good tires and a proper spare tire (not a 'doughnut'). Although 4x4 is preferable, it is not mandatory but be aware that snow and muddy conditions can make for a challenging trip.

By Boat

- Fair Harbour to Kyuquot takes about 40 minutes (18 ft boat, 115 HP motor) in calm weather;
- Insured water taxi operators include (*subject to change*):
 - Henry Jack - 250-332-5393
 - Leo Jack - 250-332-5301
 - Richie Mack - 250-332-5275
 - Vivian Sutherland - 250-332-5991
 - Archie Vincent - 250-332-5237
- price is per trip, not per person, so sharing trips with others can make travel much cheaper;
- travel to pro-d day activities, meetings, etc., is usually funded by the District or the Union, so use those opportunities to save on travel costs;
- find out when colleagues are coming and going, so that you can take advantage of sharing the travel.

From Gold River to Kyuquot:

- Take the Uchuck III freight boat from the Gold River Dock to Kyuquot, which leaves in the morning and arrives late afternoon - and phone for schedule at 250-283-2515; or,
- Take an Air Nootka float plane which offers charter flights (any day) and regularly-scheduled mail flights (Mon/Wed/Fri) - 250-283-2255; or,
- Drive - either by logging road to Woss and carry on with directions as mentioned previously, or to Campbell River and up the east coast on the Island Highway to Woss, etc.

Transportation and Movement Within the Environs of Kyuquot



By Water

The School District provides an open aluminum boat powered by a small outboard motor and use is restricted to the protected waters in the immediate vicinity of Kyuquot. See District Policy B.27 for more information. Your own powerboat, kayak or canoe can reach adjacent islands in reasonable weather and sheltered anchorage exists in the bays of many of these islands. Be aware that weather can change quickly, especially during the winter! If you are going out alone, be sure someone knows where you're going and your expected time of return.



By Land

- There is a 1-km section of gravel road between the School District property (school and teacherages) and Houspitas First Nations Reserve;
- There is a 5-km section of gravel road from the school to Clinninnick River;
- There is a 14-km section from the school to Chammiss Bay logging camp (and the deep-water dock to obtain goods from the Uchuck freight boat);
- Kyuquot School has a 4x4 crew cab truck that can be used by staff for freight and firewood hauling. See District Policy B.27 for details.

Trails:

- A vague trail extends from the Village shore about 3 km to a lagoon west of Kyuquot;
- Several trails exist on Walter's Island (besides the boardwalk on the populated side) and these are about 1 km in length;
- There are trails on Spring Island to access the south side, and on the Brooks Peninsula to access outer beaches from an anchorage site.

Beaches:

- The biggest are at Rugged Point Provincial Marine Park, a 45-minute powerboat ride from Kyuquot, and on the Brooks Peninsula, over an hour northwest across exposed waters;
- Smaller beaches exist on adjacent islands, the best being Spring Island, about 3 km away, and this island has sheltered anchorage and an old road across to the south side of the island, with also many places for exploring.

Food and Drink

- Plastic totes are the best way to haul groceries and other items to keep them dry while loading and unloading boats;
- About six totes can hold three weeks' worth of mixed fresh and dry-goods groceries;
- The deep (2/3 m) totes are not recommended due to the weight, when loaded;
- A store and post office on Walter's Island sells a small variety of fresh food, dairy products, and meat at a cost understandably higher than in larger centres;
- Friday is the best day for fresh food shopping, as the freight boat has delivered the day before;
- An account can be set up so carrying cash is unnecessary (except for postage stamps);
- Small private stores in residences exist on the Houspitas Reserve and stock milk, pop, chips, and such;
- The Kyuquot School staff will make arrangements together to share in the delivery of groceries;
- Houspitas Reserve is legally a "dry" community and open alcohol or selling of alcohol on the reserve is illegal.

Housing

- Teacherages are situated on the Kyuquot School property and have varied monthly rates;
- More information about leases, rents and photos of teacherages are available on the District's website at www.sd84.bc.ca under 'Staff Resources', 'Teacherages';
- Electricity is included in the rent (Note: plug-in space heaters are not allowed);
- Propane costs are about \$145 per 100 lb bottle;
- Oil is about \$1.15/litre;

- Freight cost for an empty tank out and full tank in is about \$40;
- Oil furnaces with wood stoves as back-up exist in all teacherages except the two duplex suites (which have propane and electric heat);
- The truck is available for firewood hauling (must be pre-arranged) and a small chainsaw is also provided - and firewood is available for sale in Kyuquot Village;
- Tenants must arrange for their own satellite/cable TV and internet;
- Rents and utilities are deducted from your month-end pay (or mid-month if you prefer);
- Leases are for one school year only, to be renewed thereafter each year;
- An inspection must take place prior to your move-in (to be organized with the Maintenance Worker/Custodian) - and prior to vacating;
- A damage deposit is required - with an additional deposit if you are bringing pets with you (permission must be given ahead of time);
- Teacherages have basic furniture - queen bed platform (no mattress), dresser, table and chairs, stove, fridge, washer, dryer, lamp;
- New tenants should bring mattress, bedding, towels, cleaning supplies, dishes/cutlery/pots, good flashlight, appropriate outer wear for gravel roads and rain, groceries, furniture, and personal items to make you feel at home;
- Kyuquot tenants may use Kyuquot School's gardening equipment and carpet cleaner, upon arrangement with the Maintenance Worker/Custodian;
- Any questions specific to your teacherage should be directed to your Kyuquot Housing Liaison Rep or the KESS Maintenance Worker/Custodian at 250-332-5253 or the School Board Office at 250-283-2241;
- The Kyuquot Housing Liaison Rep is part of the District's Joint Rental Accommodation Committee which meets usually twice a year to encourage good relations between the tenants and landlord, and to make recommendations in regard to rental accommodations in the District;
- Any housing concerns should be discussed with your Housing Liaison Rep, and any repairs needed are to be submitted to your Rep on a Teacherage Work Order Request Form (available on the District website);
- Alternate accommodation in the community is limited, especially during fishing season.

Teaching in Kyuquot School

Outdoor education, experiential learning, First Nations language and culture, and the grad program are a strong focus at Kyuquot School. Teachers have the freedom to be creative in their approach.





Getting Involved

Staff members have many opportunities to get involved in other aspects of life at Kyuquot School and in the District, such as becoming a

- Teacher In Charge
- Union Staff Rep
- Housing Liaison Rep
- Occupational Health and Safety Rep
- Professional Development Rep
- Curriculum Implementation Rep

..... and perhaps several more. You will be hearing about these opportunities from your Principal and/or your Union President.

Please remember the importance of getting involved with your new community - the elders, parents, students, and staff - and you'll find that it will greatly enrich your life in Kyuquot, it will positively influence your students and it will add to your personal success as a teacher!