



Bowen Island Community School
1041 Mount Gardner Road
Bowen Island BC V0N 1G1

November 14, 2016

Soren Hammerberg
Bowen Island Community Foundation
P.O. Box 18
Bowen Island BC V0N 1G0

Dear Mr. Hammerberg and Board of Directors,

In late August, 2016, the screws were tightened, the lines were connected, and the array of thirty solar panels on top of Bowen Island Community School began producing energy for the first time.

Each morning for the next twenty-five years, the panels will go to work, silently, cleanly and with virtually no maintenance, producing energy for the students and community members who use the community school. They may be silent but they are certainly not invisible.

The panels were designed to be visible, both to the hundreds of families that gather on the playground and fields as well as from passersby on Bowen Island Trunk Road. For adults considering sustainable solutions for energy use, the panels are a constant reminder that solar is a viable option. For students attending BICS who are trying to understand what sustainability is and to gauge how important it is, the panels provide some answers. They are a statement that sustainability is vitally important and a symbol of community organizations working together to implement positive change, and to do it quickly.

In addition to the panels themselves being visible, the energy produced by the panels is also visible to students online via a global solar installation tracking website. The panels are one out of 23 679 solar installations around the world measuring energy produced by these installations and their carbon offset.

At students' fingertips is a tremendous amount of data that can support learning from Kindergarten (learning about weather changes) to Grade Seven (the way electricity is generated and the environmental impacts of generating electricity). In addition to outcomes related to energy creation and weather, the data provides lessons on line and bar graphs. Data collection of the solar panels provides a local lens to the bigger picture, such as weather patterns and the impact of energy decisions on climate change.

We are in the first months of an investment that will benefit our community school and the environment for the next quarter of a century. Our aim is to use the panels to make energy use visible; for the data collected to provide referents for energy produced and used, and for this data to influence decisions that students and staff make, both in being mindful of limiting energy use when possible, and making decisions with sustainability in mind when it comes to energy use.

Bowen Island Community School is very grateful for the partnerships we have with the community. The cooperation among community organizations to achieve goals, big and small, is a source for optimism when considering the challenges we face.

On behalf of the students and staff of Bowen Island Community School, and in partnership with Clean Energy Canada and Solar Now, I would like to express my gratitude to the Bowen Island Community Foundation and Knick Knack Nook for their tremendous support of our school and our community to realize this project, for the benefit of our students in our schools now and twenty five years from now.

Yours truly,



Scott Slater
Principal
Bowen Island Community School
West Vancouver Schools