



Director of Instruction: Christopher Wong
Principal: Harjinder Sandhu
Vice Principal: Scott Hughes
PAC Chairperson: Holly Flauto and Miriam Maxcy
School Liaison Trustee: Preeti Faridkot



With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh Nation).

LEARNING UPDATES

Later this month, on December 16th, students will receive their first written learning update of this school year, and it will be the same format as last year.

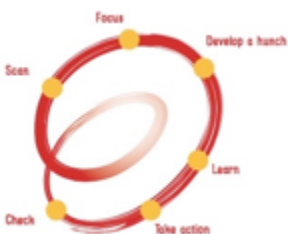
During the summer of 2022, a development team of teachers, school leaders, and families supported the Ministry in developing materials to support teachers, school leaders, and families in understanding student reporting. We are attaching the brochure that was created: [Student Reporting Brochure for Families](#). We are also including a link to the information found on the ministry website for [Communicating Student Learning Information for Parents and Caregivers](#).

This year eight of the Classroom Teachers in our school will be piloting another way of providing the formal Learning Updates. They will be using a new online educational resource called SpacesEdu. This innovative digital portfolio and reporting tool is used across Canada to enhance student learning and communication. SpacesEdu is a digital platform that is competency and proficiency-based that supports the BC Ministry's curriculum and core competencies. Teachers can document and track student learning and growth over time through various forms of evidence, such as informal notes, pictures, videos, audio and student self-assessments.

This year, these 8 classes will be part of a district reporting pilot using SpacesEdu. Eight classroom teachers (Mr. Wong, Ms. Jung, Ms. Grewal, Ms. Li, Mr. Lung, Ms. Hawksworth, Ms. Leahy, Ms. Juliene) and Ms. Mack have volunteered to learn and use all aspects of SpacesEdu (class space, portfolios and reporting purposes). Parents of these classes will receive timely updates on their child's progress, opportunities to celebrate strengths, support areas of growth, and engage in conversations with teachers. SpacesEdu ensures that all ministry and district reporting requirements are met by providing two digital informal written updates and a final summary of learning each year.

Students will take an active role in capturing evidence of their learning and working with their teacher(s) to build their digital portfolios. We are excited to be learning and using this online educational platform.

School Plan 2021 to 2024



We are in year two of the school planning cycle. Our inquiry question is: What educational practices, strategies, programs, and school wide common language might we implement to increase students' skill development in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to better self-regulate and thus be more equipped to engage in learning? How can we make First Peoples teaching and learning more authentic?

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE STUDIO PROGRAM

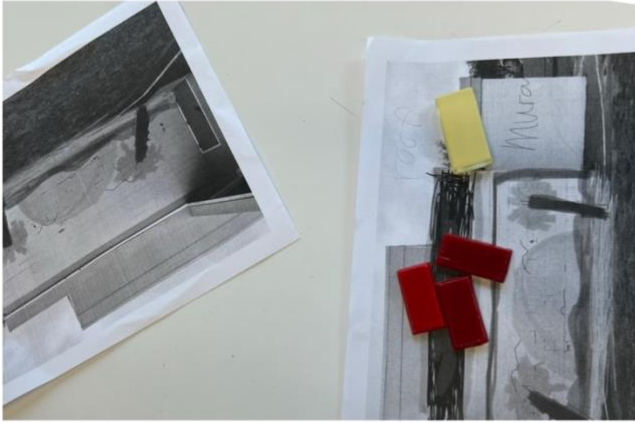
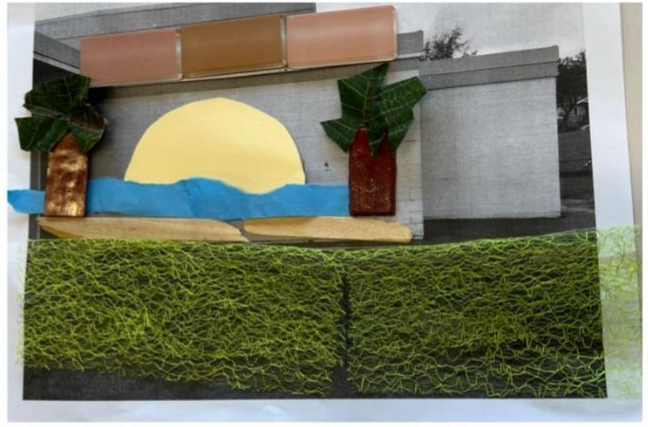
The Artist in Residence Studio Program, or AIRS, is a Vancouver-based initiative for providing equitable access to consistent, high quality and socially relevant visual arts education for children. The AIRS program works in partnership with the Vancouver School Board to create dedicated art studios within public elementary schools to enable a local, professional artist to work collaboratively with teachers and provide meaningful hands-on visual arts engagements for children across the whole school. Learning in and through the visual arts is essential for both academic development and the social-emotional well-being of all children.

This term artist, Tami Murray led Divisions 10, 11 and 12 through an exploration of how stories guide us through life, particularly during challenging times. For children aged 5-10, stories are more than just words, they are the foundation of how they understand who they are and who they can become.

During their six-week sessions together, they explored inner dialogue, discussed tools for navigating challenges, and brainstormed ideas for art pieces reflecting these themes. To conclude their time together, students displayed bravery and generosity by sharing their stories and artwork with classes. Their courage in discussing how they find inner strength during tough times was inspiring. These heartfelt discussions and their beautifully crafted clay tiles brought the Henderson community's resilience and creativity to life. For more details about the project and to view the finished pieces please check out the display in the north hallway just past the library!



This Friday, Artist Monica Cheema and Divisions 1, 2 and 3 will be screening their finished StopMotion Projects. Students had a chance to explore themes around urban design and placemaking through imaginative stop motion films. Each group has redesigned an area of the school over the last 6 weeks! Students were motivated to use their imagination and add their voices on how to fill the underutilized or unused spaces they see around the school and community shared grounds. Students used this opportunity to create spaces they would like to see for "hanging out" or "playing". We can't wait to see their final projects!



DIVISION 5's SCIENCE FAIR



Students of Division 5 completed thorough research and wrote detailed science reports to demonstrate their understanding of the planets, moons, and other celestial phenomena. After completing their reports, they were given the creative freedom to showcase their knowledge by choosing one of three options: designing a 3D model of the solar system, creating a vibrant and informative poster, or inventing an engaging board game centered on solar system facts and concepts. This project allowed students to combine research, creativity, and hands-on learning to explore the wonders of space. Students shared their projects with other classes through a science fair.

Growing Chefs in Divisions 6&7



The Growing Chefs Program pairs volunteer Chefs with elementary schools to give students hands-on experience on planting, growing and harvesting vegetables, and cooking their own meals. The staff and volunteers from Growing Chef deliver one lesson per week for four consecutive weeks, with the goal of educating young learners about edible education. Students are learning about where food comes from, reflecting on what it means to us, exploring our individual preferences, picking up some basic cooking skills, and more – all with the goal of developing a healthy understanding of food and the many important roles it plays in our lives.

Chef Jay's last lesson with the grade 5s was on pickling fruits and vegetables. They have demonstrated that you can pickle almost anything. Chef Jay talked about preservation methods as well. Students have also started to grow vegetables from seeds. Currently radishes have been planted and are growing in Division 7. Students are responsible for tending to these plants.

If you are curious about Growing Chefs and would like to learn more about what they do, check out their [website](#).



Winter Celebrations

December is a time that most families celebrate togetherness, hope, peace, and light. This is done in many ways and with many different days of significance. There are many traditions from across the globe celebrated in our community. No matter what you are celebrating this winter season, we want to wish you all the best for safe and happy celebrating. How fortunate we are to be able to experience and learn from each other about the different ways we experience things. We love to learn about and share different cultural knowledge. If your family celebrates something special in December, please let us know and we will be happy to include it in our updates. At Henderson we like to have an opportunity to learn a little about the cultures that make up our diverse community. This information helps us get to know each other better and build stronger relationships.



Hanukkah

Hanukkah which is Hebrew for “dedication”, is the Festival of Lights. Hanukkah begins four days before the new moon, which is the darkest night of the month. The celebration will start on the Hebrew calendar date of 25 Kislev and last for eight days, this year on Wednesday, December 25th at sundown and ends on the evening of Thursday, January 2nd. The first night usually includes a big family dinner with foods such as potato latkes and jelly doughnuts. After dinner, the family gathers to light the menorah candles—a new candle is lit each night for 8 nights. Blessings and songs are part of the ceremony.



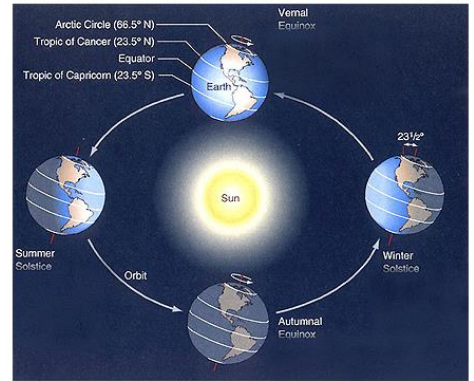
Children get to open gifts from family and friends. They play games with toys such as the traditional dreidel and eat chocolate coins, called gelt. The Meaning of Hanukkah -The holiday celebrates a miracle that took place after the Maccabees liberated the Temple of Jerusalem from the Greeks led by a brave man named Judah. After their victory Judah restored the sacred menorah. But there was almost no oil left, only enough for one day. The lamp was filled with the oil and lit. Instead of lasting only one day, it burned brighter and brighter, lasting eight days—a miracle!

Winter Solstice

The Winter Solstice marks the first day of winter. For us in the Northern Hemisphere this will occur on Saturday, December 21, 2024, this year. The winter solstice is the day with the fewest hours of sunlight in the entire year, making it the “shortest day” of the year. The days of sunlight grow longer after the winter solstice. The lengthening of our days of sunlight grows until we reach the summer solstice, the “longest day” of sunlight or the brightest day in the year, the first day of summer.

This year the summer solstice for us will be Friday, June 20, 2025. The solstice occurs when one of the Earth’s poles has its maximum tilt away from the sun. During the winter solstice there is continuous darkness or twilight around the North Pole. The word *solstice* come from the Latin word *sol*, which means “sun,” and *sistere*, which means “to stand still.” During the days before and after the solstice, the Sun’s path across the sky appears to freeze as there is little visible movement. The solstice has been celebrated since ancient times by many cultures and is marked by festivals and rituals. It marks the symbolic death and rebirth of the Sun. The importance of sunlight/daylight or seasons is significant in certain places because it heavily impacts people’s activity. Some of the festivals observed are: Dies Natalis Solis Invicti (Roman cult of Sol), Yule (German), Makar Sankranti (Indian), Yalda Night (Iranian), Dongzhi (Asian), Korochun (Slavic).

For Indigenous people across the world, the natural world is a source of teachings. An Indigenous world view recognizes the interconnectedness of all things, recognizing that the cosmos: the sun, moon, stars, and planets, affect us and are connected to us.



The solstices and equinoxes from the perspective of the Northern Hemisphere. Credit: NASA

Christmas

The origin of Christmas is a Christian holiday celebrating the advent of Christ and giving to the poor and needy without expectations of receiving anything in return. Christmas day is celebrated by most Christians on December 25th. Many of the Christmas customs we have or see around us today are based on the religious practice around the birth of Jesus Christ and others have evolved over time and include customs that are observed by people who are not Christian. There are many popular customs associated with Christmas such as gift giving, caroling, exchanging Christmas cards, going to church, having special meals, visiting Santa, and hanging up stockings. There are decorations put up too, such as: Christmas trees, lights, garlands, wreaths, mistletoe, and holly.



Karenga, center, with wife Tiamoyo at left, celebrating Kwanzaa at the Rochester Institute of Technology on December 12, 2003.

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa has its origins as an American holiday created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga to celebrate Black people, their history and culture. The name Kwanzaa is based off the Swahili phrase “mutunda ya kwanza” meaning “first fruits of the harvest.” There are seven principles of Kwanzaa or seven principles of Black Heritage to be celebrated:

1. **Umoja** (Unity): To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
2. **Kujichagulia** (Self-Determination): To define and name ourselves, as well as to create and speak for ourselves.
3. **Ujima** (Collective Work and Responsibility): To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together.
4. **Ujamaa** (Cooperative economics): To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.

5. *Nia* (Purpose): To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
6. *Kuumba* (Creativity): To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
7. *Imani* (Faith): To believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

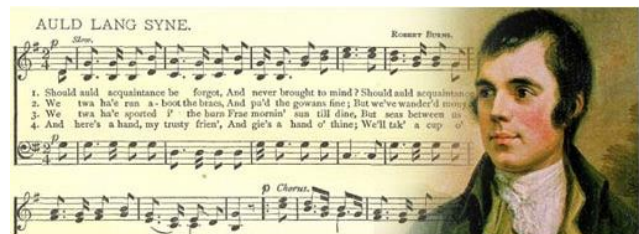


Kwanzaa celebrations begin on Thursday, December 26th and last until Wednesday, January 1st and include a communal feast called Karamu that is usually held on December 31st.

Hogmanay

Hogmanay is the Scottish New Year's Eve, and it has many important customs and traditions that have been passed down through generations. It is believed the roots of this holiday lie in the Norse and Gaelic traditions. Here are some of the most significant rituals followed:

- Preparing for the new year - Before celebrating the new year, every attempt is made to end the old when well by cleaning your home top to bottom. Emphasis was placed on sweeping out the fireplace, to rid the house and its residence of any unwanted burdens and clearing any financial debts before midnight.
- First-footing for friends and family – The moment the clock strikes midnight, lads, and lassies head to the homes of their loved ones all over Scotland to be the first-footers, the first person to cross the threshold of the home in the new year. The first visitor sets the tone for the new year and comes bearing a gift for good luck and in return for the visit the host shows hospitality by offering their guest a wee dram of whisky. Traditional gifts consist of food/drink: whisky, black bun (traditional type of fruit cake), and authentic Scottish shortbread, as well as gifts of coal representing warmth, and salt for health.
- Joining hands and singing Auld Lang Syne at midnight – A song written by Scotsman Robert Burns.
- *Saining* the house- the Highland custom of blessing the house and livestock with special water that is sprinkled in the house and drunk. Next juniper branches are burned to fill the house with smoke to cleanse it and then the windows are opened to let in the new fresh air.



There are many other many other celebrations and many other cultural practices to learn about. We share what we know from our experiences and what we have previously learned. If you celebrate events or cultural practices we might not be as familiar with or you would like to share a little more about your culture with the rest of us, please just contact Ms. Sandhu, hsandhu@vsb.bc.ca.

WINTER WEATHER-SNOW CLOSURES

As the temperatures are getting much colder this time of year, please make sure children are dressed to stay warm while outside. Students, if possible, should dress in layers, wearing warm coats, boots, mittens, and toques.

Winter is upon us and in the event of unsafe weather conditions (ex. excessive snow and ice), there may be a decision made to close schools. A CLEAR ANNOUNCEMENT stating that schools are closed will be provided by 7:00 a.m. to local radio stations.

CKNW (980 AM)
CKWX (NEWS 1130 AM)
CBC RADIO (690 AM, 105.7 FM)
BCTV/Global (cable channel 11)
FAIRCHILD Radio (CJVB AM 1470/CKHG FM 96.1)
CITY TV (cable channel 13)

If there is no announcement made, this means school sites are open and welcoming students.



In Addition, Information on snow closures will be available online at www.vsb.bc.ca

Respiratory Illness

Community rates of respiratory illness, particularly among children and youth, are going up as expected at this time of year. COVID-19 and several common seasonal respiratory viruses such as influenza, enterovirus, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are circulating in BC. There are many tools to get people through respiratory illness season. The most important is to maximize protection through vaccination. People are also encouraged to check daily for symptoms of respiratory illness, wash their hands regularly and practice respiratory etiquette. This includes wearing a mask, as a personal choice, covering coughs and disposing of tissues appropriately.

It is still important for people with symptoms to stay home when feeling unwell to reduce the spread of illness. Staff and students may return to work/school when their fever has resolved, and they are able to participate in their usual activities. As public health measures are lifted, it is important to remember that we have many tools, such as vaccines, treatments and our own actions that can protect us from the impacts of respiratory illnesses.

Remember these personal hygiene habits to help you keep healthy!



WINTER SPORTS SAFETY

How can we be safe when tobogganing, skating, skiing, and snowboarding?

- ❖ Wear an approved helmet.
- ❖ Use equipment that fits properly and is well maintained.
- ❖ Use a neck warmer instead of a scarf to prevent strangulation.
- ❖ Use sun protection (sun block and sunglasses) even on a cloudy day.
- ❖ Know your ability and experience.
- ❖ Go inside to get warm if shivering.

Staying Healthy Over the Holiday Season

- ❖ Get enough sleep.
- ❖ Eat well balanced meals.
- ❖ Take time to relax.
- ❖ Do things you enjoy.
- ❖ Enjoy your family, friends, and traditions.

Please take care of yourself. Some individuals/families experience loneliness, increased stress, or depression over the holiday season. Find more information on healthlinkbc.ca.



HAWKS Volleyball

A big thank you to Mr. Chao, Mr. Lung and Ms. Sandhu for a fun volleyball season. The Boys Senior teams will start play in the championship tournament this week at David Thompson Secondary School on Wednesday. Players on all three of our teams demonstrated a growth in their development of fundamental skills, strategy, and enjoyment of the game. It was amazing to see the players develop, and we were proud to watch them take care of each other on and off the court. Well done team! And thank you to all the parents and staff who volunteered their time to support the teams by driving and cheering!

MANAGING SCREEN TIME

Many families are worried about their screen time and want some guidelines and parameters. There is a lot of valuable information out there and with the holidays around the corner and children having more time on their hands, we are sharing a 'Live 5-2-1-0'. The recommendations in the Live 5- 2-1-0 message are evidence-based, originating from the Childhood Obesity: Assessment, Prevention and Treatment Expert Committee, and endorsed by the Canadian Paediatric Society. 'Live 5-2-1-0' is the BC- specific version of the message, developed by a team at BC Children's Hospital in partnership with several BC communities.

For more information: [Live5210 - Resources](#).








VSB Podcast: After the Bell

On the last Thursday of the month a new VSB podcast episode of [VSB: After the Bell](#) is released! After the Bell Episode 24 Navigating Digital Literacy. To discuss what responsible digital learning looks like, the VSB brought in an expert in the field. Jesse Miller, Founder of Mediated Reality, has been providing social media education in schools across the country for fifteen years. We live in a digital age where digital literacy is not only necessary for student success but can also enhance education in the classroom when used appropriately. Ultimately, it can help prepare students for the future. Have a listen to this discussion and if you enjoy this episode, please subscribe to the VSB podcast and leave a review.



Mark Your Calendars



- **December 2nd** - PAC Meeting @ 6:00pm in the library
- **December 3rd** - Arts Umbrella class performances Divisions 17 & 20
- **December 4th** - Senior Boys Volleyball @David Thompson
- **December 5th** - Grade 7 Fundraiser - Plant Pick-up
- **December 11th**- Theme Day - Pajama and Stuffy Day 
- **December 11th** - PAC Pancake Breakfast with Santa 
- **December 11th** - PAC Hotlunch - Bittersweet
- **December 16th** - **First Formal Learning Updates shared with Home**
- **December 18th**- Theme Day - Holiday Dress-Up Day
- **December 19th** - Winter Concert for families in the afternoon at  1:15pm
- **December 20th** - Last day of School before the Winter Break
- **December 23rd to January 3rd** - **Winter Break—No School**
- **January 6th** - School Opens
- **January 8th** - PAC Hotlunch Bittersweet
- **January 13th** - PAC Meeting @ 6:00 pm in the Library
- **January 14th** - Lockdown Drill
- **January 22nd** - PAC Hotlunch Pizza
- **January 20th** - Parent Body Science Workshop by Saleema Noon Educators @ 6pm
- **January 29th** - Body Science Workshops for Classes by Saleema Noon Educators
- **January 30th** - Body Science Workshops for Classes by Saleema Noon Educators
- **January 30th** - Lunar New Year 
- **January 31st** - Lion Dance Assembly
- **February 3rd** - PAC Meeting @ 6:00 pm in the library
- **February 4th** - Kind Mind Month
- **February 12th** - PAC Hotlunch BitterSweet
- **February 12th** - Parent Workshop @6pm Safer Space Online by PLEA 
- **February 14th** - Pro-D Day - **No School for students**
- **February 17th** - Family Day - **No School** - Enjoy the day with your family!
- **February 26th** - Pink Shirt Day

Kindergarten Registration for Children Born in 2020

All kindergarten applicants are required to apply to their English catchment elementary school. This includes families who wish to apply for choice programs (Early French Immersion, Montessori, Indigenous Focus School, Early Mandarin Bilingual, Nootka Fine Arts) and/or a cross-boundary placement.

The **priority** registration period for kindergarten opens on **November 1 and closes at 4 pm on January 31, 2025**. Students who apply within this priority period will be accommodated before late applicants.

Applying for kindergarten is a 2-step process:

Step 1: [Completion of an online application form](#)

Step 2: Verifying documentation.

- Contact your English catchment school office to set up an appointment to bring your supporting documentation.
- Bring supporting documentation to your English catchment school office during your scheduled appointment.

Supporting documents needed:

1. Proof of residence in Vancouver
2. Child's birth certificate
3. Immigration documentation (if applicable)
4. Immunization records
5. Court orders/documents (if applicable)

If you want to apply for a District program or cross-boundary, you must first apply to your English catchment elementary school. Applications for District programs and cross boundary placements will begin to be accepted in early 2025.

In the event there are more in-catchment applicants than available space* at the school, the following process will be used to prioritize enrolment:

Kindergarten Applications Received Between November 1 and January 31

1. **In-catchment** kindergarten applicants with siblings in attendance at the school (and who will be attending next year) will be placed first.
2. The names of all other in-catchment registrants will be entered into a **random draw** for the remaining kindergarten spaces.
3. Students who cannot be accommodated will be placed on a waitlist in the order in which their name was drawn.
4. Between January 31 and the second Friday in June students on the ordered waitlist will be accommodated as space becomes available.

Kindergarten Registrations Received AFTER January 31st

In-catchment kindergarten students who apply **after** January 31 will be accommodated if there is space. If there is no space their names will be added to the bottom of the existing waitlist.

Note: There will be **no priority** given to registrants with siblings if they register after January 31.

Applications for Choice Programs

The district offers a variety of choice programs including French Immersion, Mandarin Immersion, Fine Arts, Aboriginal Focus School, International Baccalaureate and Montessori. Further information on Choice programs can be found [here](#).

If you are planning to apply for Choice Program(s) you still need to register for kindergarten at your Neighbourhood catchment school first. The online application process for Choice Programs opens on January 7th, 2024, and closes on February 5, 2025, at 4:00 pm.

There will be a district supervised draw to select applicants for the available program space. Offers for program spaces will be made by late February. You will be given a formal offer of a space in a Kindergarten choice program or an indication of where you sit on the waitlist.

Applications for Cross Boundary Enrollment

Families who wish to apply to a school outside of their catchment area, known as cross-boundary, will **must** register their child at their neighbourhood catchment school first.

Applying for cross-boundary is a separate online process and runs from February 1-28. Cross boundary applications will only be considered after all in-catchment students have been accommodated. More information can be found on the district website, under [cross boundary registration](#).

