



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).

Welcoming in 2025!

Happy New Year and best wishes for a happy and healthy 2025! Our transition back from winter break has been relatively smooth. We have had four new staff members join us: daytime Building Engineer Mr. Jimmy Li, SSA Ms. Sydney Frelick, Supervision Aide Tammy Lin and evening Custodian Ms. Dolly Villedo.

Our teaching staff is busy planning, collaborating, and implementing a variety of learning activities for students. The start of the new calendar year is also a busy time for us in the office as we have already started thinking about the next school year. Our grade seven students and families are in the process of making decisions about high school. Registration for choice programs is in full swing and we are starting to look at the school organization for the next year. If you have a child starting kindergarten next year, you should have registered them by now to receive sibling priority. If you have not yet registered for kindergarten, please do so now. The deadline for sibling priority kindergarten registration is **January 31st, 2024**.

This term, classrooms are buzzing with learning, goal setting, and integrating calendar events that contribute to classroom learning. There are so many exciting activities happening that each month we will try to highlight the learning we see all around us. Please remember to check out the Henderson Hawks Channel on TEAMS with your child, the school website www.vsb.bc.ca/schools/john-henderson/Pages/default.aspx, and classroom communication to keep up to date. If you can't find the information you are looking for, please call us in the office and we will be happy to help. We really think it's important that you get to see and know about all the wonderful experiences that are occurring in our school inside and outside of the classrooms!



January is Tamil Canadian Heritage Month. It is an occasion to recognize and celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Tamil Canadians to Canada, and an occasion to acknowledge and enjoy the narratives and wisdom of the Tamil culture.

From many centuries to the present day, Tamils have contributed greatly to the economy of the world through food, and the restaurant industry. Many Tamil-Canadians, being new to the country, have had to give up their occupations that they did in their homeland as their qualifications and education was not recognized in Canada. The majority of them went into owning businesses and preparing food. Food is an integral part of bringing together everyone and Tamil food has a special taste and spice that a lot of people love. The theme will focus on different elements of Tamil Cuisine such as food preparation, presentation, and the hospitality industry. Throughout Tamil Heritage Month, we will be paying tribute to all workers and entrepreneurs engaged in all food related professions and industries. January 14th is Tamil New Year and Pongal.

For more information check out the Tamil Cultural Society of BC [website](#).

Robbie Burns Day – January 25th

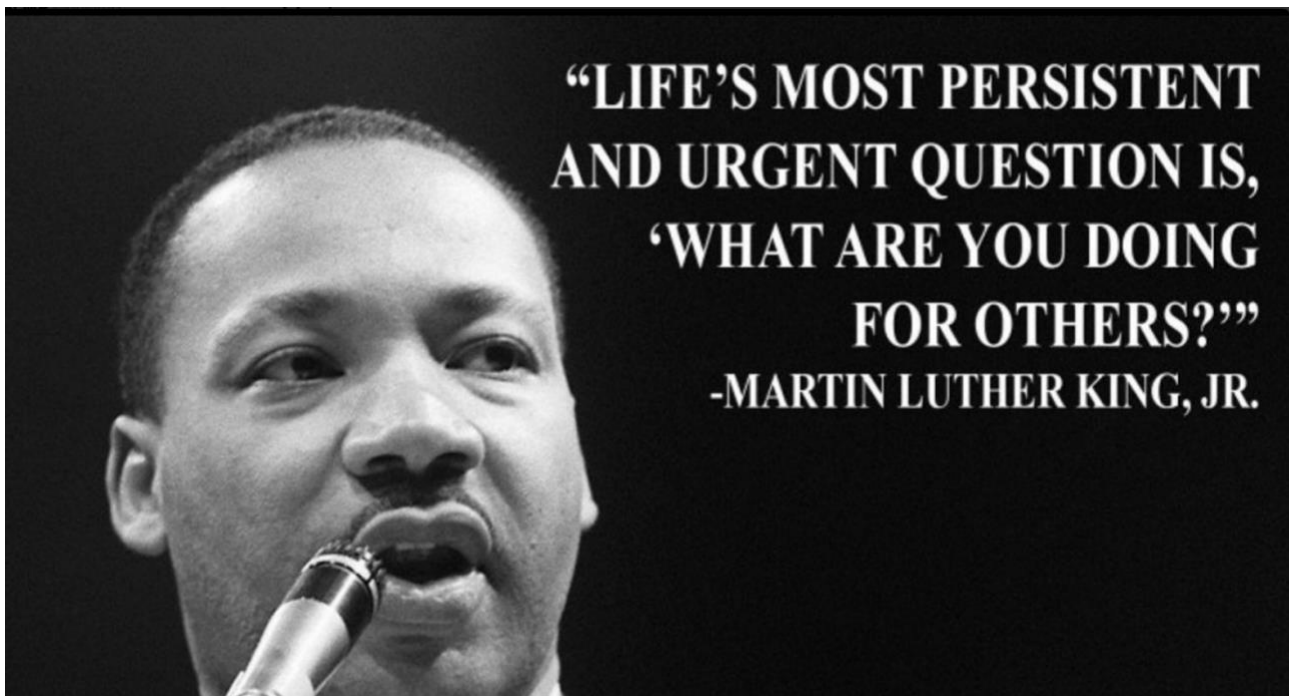
Robbie Burns Day (or Rabbie Burns Day) is named after a Scottish poet who was born on January 25th in 1759. The day celebrates Burns's contribution to Scottish culture. His best-known work is Auld Lang Syne. The day is celebrated by the reading of his poetry, toasting him and hosting Burns Suppers on or near the date of his birthday.

The traditional Burns Supper begins with a soup course. This is usually a classic Scottish soup like Scotch broth, potato soup, Cullen skink (a thick Scottish soup made of smoked haddock, potatoes and onions) or cock-a-leekie (a soup dish consisting of leeks and peppered chicken stock). The highlight of the dinner is the serving of the haggis—a traditional Scottish pudding comprised of the heart, liver and lungs of a sheep diced with onions, oatmeal, suet, spices and salt, which has been cooked in a sheep's stomach.



Check out this list of events to celebrate Robbie Burns Day all around town this year!
<https://vancouverbestplaces.com/events-calendar/january/robbie-burns-day-vancouver/>

There are 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 contact Ms. Sandhu at hsandhu@vsb.bc.ca.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Over the last couple of years, social justice movements have brought equity issues back to our attention. I bring this up now as many schools in the Lower Mainland, Henderson included, will observe Black Excellence Day January 15th. The Day was created by the Ninandotto Society to acknowledge and celebrate Black history and learn about Black stories, Black art and Black people and a day to stand in solidarity with Black Canadians. The date January 15th was selected to honour the impactful civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who was born on this day. We will continue our learning into February which is Black History Month.

January 27th is the International Holocaust Remembrance Day and January 29th is the National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia.

These events highlight the importance of ongoing work and intentional focus on the issues of racism and discrimination within our schools and our broader communities. At the Board level, several important actions have been taken to further racial awareness and redress issues of colonialism and systemic racism that exist within our larger society.

As a District, we have an intentional focus on equity within our work. As a District we have an equity statement:

The VSB will create an equitable learning environment where every child can experience a deep sense of belonging and is free to pursue pathways of learning in ways that are authentic to themselves. The VSB will achieve this by:

- having students see themselves and their communities in the curriculum and in the staff throughout the District;

- prioritizing student needs by making informed decisions and engaging in open communication with rightsholders and stakeholders; and
- actively fighting systems of oppression through relationship building, ongoing communication and transparency.

The VSB commitment to equity will be informed by humility and accountability.

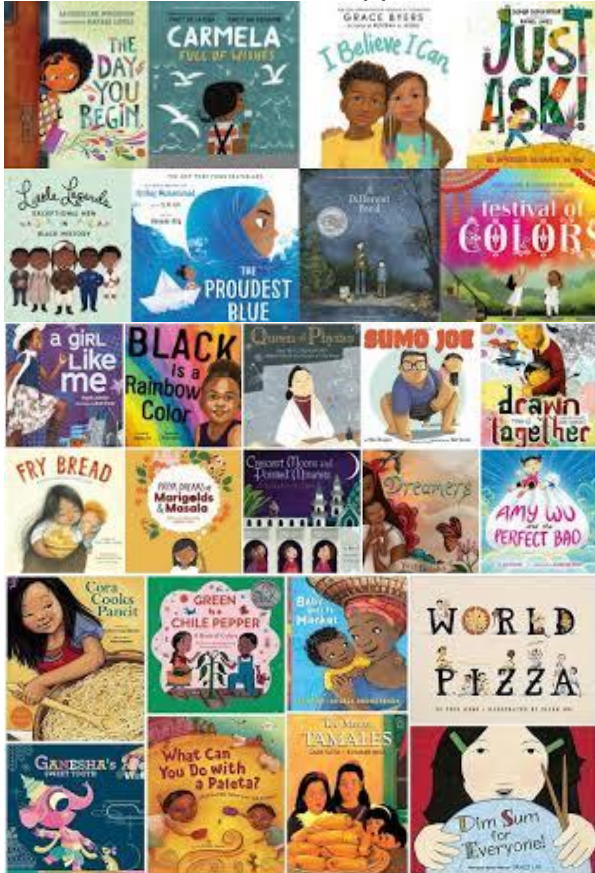
More details about the goals and objectives can be found here:

<https://www.vsb.bc.ca/page/4996/education-plan-2026>



At Henderson we work to ensure all staff and students feel safe, valued, and included. As a school community we strive to not only embrace and celebrate our diversity but work towards equity. We know that representation is important, and we are fortunate to live and work in a diverse community with a diverse staff. We know that representation matters. Students want to see role models with whom they connect and see themselves represented. We have made a conscious effort to share books with diverse characters, written by diverse authors, that act as windows, mirrors and sliding doors. Through diverse stories students gain a better understanding of themselves and others. They see different ways of being and not just one perspective, the dominant culture, as the

'normal or right way' they need to strive to be. Students learn there are many ways of being and all of them are acceptable, normal and of value. When we don't have the opportunity to learn about each other, fear, misunderstanding, and hate can take root. But the more we learn about each other, the more familiar we are with each other's stories, we are more understanding, empathetic, and supportive of each other. The more we all support each and every one of us, the better equipped we are to dismantle racism, oppression, and discrimination in our society.



Thank you for all you do and will continue to do to support and nurture the children in our care to value all human life. We will need to continue to work together to uplift each other, to obtain true equality, and heal as a society.

As we look to instill the skills of critical thinking, empathy, and compassion in our children, we want to be able to talk to them about topics that might be difficult for us or complex, to say the least. It is important that our discussions include first-hand accounts and stories from Black, Indigenous, and people of colour. We need to read these books by diverse authors from their perspectives to deepen our understanding and empathy for their experiences and histories. We want to make sure that we are not unintentionally perpetuating stereotypes and tokenism. Part of our discussion should also include questions about how we see people of colour portrayed in the media. We also need to acknowledge that we all have our own biases, based on our own lived histories. Students need to know about their own family histories. We need to be able to discuss the contributions and challenges of not only the cultural groups we identify with, but also those that make up our community. These

discussions need to be conducted in age-appropriate ways and go deeper as our students grow older, but we also know these discussions need to start early.



January 29, 2025, marks the beginning of this year's Lunar New Year celebrations for the Year of the Wood Snake. The term Lunar New Year refers to the first day of the New Year that is associated with the cycles of the moon. This holiday is traditionally a time to honour household and heavenly deities as well as ancestors. It is also a time to bring family together for feasting.

What is the Chinese Lunar Calendar?

The Chinese Calendar is a lunisolar calendar. It integrates the revolution of the Earth around the Sun and the movement of the Moon around the Earth. A month begins on the day of the new moon or invisible moon and ends on the day before the next new moon. The full moon is either on the 15th or 16th of the month. A Chinese year can have 12 or 13 lunar months.

Lunar New Year is traditionally celebrated in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore,

Indonesia, Malaysia, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Mauritius, and the Philippines. It is also celebrated in Australia, Canada, and anywhere people from these Asian countries now call home.

Traditions, customs, and ways of celebrating this holiday vary depending on where families live and have lived. Often, families gather on New Year's Eve for a large family meal. It is also traditional for every family to thoroughly clean the house, in order to sweep away any ill-fortune and to make way for incoming good luck. Windows and doors are decorated with red coloured paper banners with couplets of good fortune, happiness, wealth, and longevity. Other activities include watching traditional dance (Lion Dance), lighting firecrackers, and giving money in red paper envelopes.

2025 is the Year of the Wood Snake. The sign of the Snake is the sixth of the 12 Chinese zodiac animals to arrive in the great race. The snake is associated with wisdom, charm, elegance and transformation. 2025 is predicted to bring wisdom, adaptability and a sense of transformation. A rare occurrence, the Wood Snake year is believed to bestow unique energies on each Chinese zodiac sign. People born in the Year of the Snake are believed to be intuitive, sensitive, extremely competent, funny, diligent, imaginative, sympathetic, wise, persuasive and passionate, strategic and intelligent.

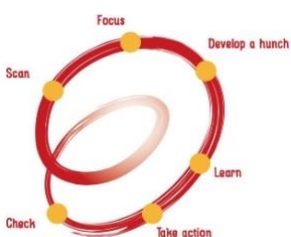
Recent/upcoming years of the Snake are: 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025 and 2037.

Lunar New Year is one of the world's most prominent and celebrated festivals. Check out how you can celebrate this year around town! <https://vancouverbestplaces.com/chinese-new-year-vancouver/>

Communicating Student Learning

The first formal Learning Update was sent home in December, informing you on how your child's learning is progressing. Hopefully you are staying engaged with what is happening in the classroom through family discussions, samples of learning sent home, visits to the class TEAMS channel, viewing student portfolios on SpaceEdu or ClassDojo. Thank you again for continuing to support your child's learning by monitoring studies at home (home reading, writing programs, math, and projects). Teachers value the home/school partnership; working together benefits student learning. Children learn best when the significant adults in their lives -- parents, caregivers, teachers, and other family and community members -- work together to encourage and support them. Schools alone cannot address all of a child's developmental needs: The meaningful involvement of caregivers, families and support from the community are essential.

The second formal Learning Update will be sent home in March. The second set of Conferences will take place April 30th and May 1st.



Social Emotional Learning

This year our school 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?**

But What is SEL?

- It's a **PROCESS**
- It's a series of **competencies** (skills)
 - Recognize and **manage emotions**
 - Developing caring and **concern for others**
 - Establish positive **relationships**
 - Make responsible **decisions**
 - Handle **challenging situations**



Please check out the following link for parents/caregivers: [Aperture Education Parent Portal](#)

Healthy Habits



The Cold and Flu season continues to be upon us so thank you in advance for keeping your children home if they show signs of illness.

Continue to reinforce good personal hygiene: hand washing, along with covering coughs, sneezing into the inside of elbows, and using a tissue to clear noses properly.



Also make sure students are dressed appropriately for playing outside in the cold and wet weather.

We encourage everyone to dress for the weather each day so they can enjoy their time in the fresh air outside. For snowy days students should dress in layers, wearing boots, hats and gloves. It is often cold, but

students tend to warm up as they are quite active, excited and engaged building, and playing outside in the snow. No one complains about being cold or wet when dressed for the weather. Our goal is to do the same for every other day. It would be great if everyone was dressed appropriately to go out in the rain. Children have fun playing in puddles if they are wearing rain gear.



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 26 Reading and Literacy. To discuss all things reading and literacy in the District are Learning and Instruction Literacy Lead, Ria Dolder and Teacher Librarian Mentor K-12, Leslie

Hunt.

Guided by our Responsive Literacy Framework, the VSB's approach to literacy is holistic, interconnected and considers how to de-colonize the literacy practice.



It is strength-based, to foster a growth mindset reflective of our current curriculum. Have a listen to this discussion and if you enjoy this episode, please subscribe to the VSB podcast.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Parents and Caregivers play an important role in the school and we encourage them to participate as much as they can. Henderson School is well supported by our PAC. The PAC provides wonderful support in many areas of the school— planning and organizing special events, fundraising for field trips and school needs, and communicating with parents, caregivers, and the school. They are always open to new members and welcome both new families and returning families to become involved. For more information you can contact the PAC Executive at johnhendersonpac@gmail.com



Upcoming meetings:

The PAC welcomes all parents and caregivers to monthly meetings throughout the school year. No RSVP is needed to attend. Meetings are on Mondays in the Nest (school library). Doors open at 6:00 and childminding is provided.

- January 13, 2025
- February 3, 2025
- March 3, 2025
- April 7, 2025
- May 5, 2025
- June 2, 2025

Mark Your Calendars



- **January 13th** - PAC Meeting @ 6:00 pm in the Library
- **January 13th** - Churchill Sec. Gr. 7 Parent Info Night French 6pm-6:45pm & English 7-8pm
- **January 14th** - Lockdown Drill
- **January 15th** - Black Excellence Day in Canada
- **January 20th** - Parent Body Science Workshop by Saleema Noon Educators @ 6pm
- **January 20th** - Martin Luther King Day (US)
- **January 22nd** - Theme Day - 90s Day
- **January 22nd** - PAC Hotlunch Pizza
- **January 29th** - Lunar New Year
- **January 29th** - Body Science Workshops for Classes by Saleema Noon Educators
- **January 30th** - Body Science Workshops for Classes by Saleema Noon Educators
- **January 30th** - John Oliver Sec. Gr.7 Parent Info Night 6pm-7pm in the JO library
- **January 31st** - Lion Dance Assembly 
- **February 3rd** - PAC Meeting @ 6:00 pm library
- **February 4th** - Kind Mind Month
- **February 5th** - Theme Day - Jersey Day
- **February 12th** - PAC Hotlunch BitterSweet
- **February 13th** - Theme Day - Red and White Day
- **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 opened on **November 1, 2024 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](#).



Girls to the Power of Math

@ South Vancouver
Neighbourhood House

FREE after-school math
programming for girls in
Grade 3



Tuesdays from 4:15 to 5:15
Starting January 14th

<https://www.girlstothepowerofmath.org/>



Girls to the Power of Math: Free STEMinist Math Program

Girls to the Power of Math is back for another season!

The program will run on Tuesdays (starting Tues. January 14, 2025 until March 18, 2025, 4:15pm-5:15pm @ South Vancouver Neighbourhood House).

Join us for a 10-week after-school program math mentorship program for all girls and non-binary students in grade 2, 3, or 4!) The program aims to increase mathematics confidence and to help familiarize students with the times-tables. Through using fun games, art, music and physical activity to teach skip counting and multiplication skills, the youth mentors will provide a unique approach to learning mathematics and help foster strong math skills starting at a young age.

Questions or want to register? Contact Kathy at kathy.do@southvan.org



Free Winter Program for Families!

Learn about healthy eating, physical activity, and building long-lasting habits as a family in Generation Health Community. This 10-week program for families with children ages 8 to 12 is FUN and interactive!

Delivered through YMCA BC starting February 2025 on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings.

Families who join this program will receive a complimentary YMCA membership.

**Register
today!**



gv.ymca.ca/generation-health-community
generationhealth@bc.ymca.ca



**University
of Victoria**

