

2023-2024 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

As an Indigenous Focus Choice School, xpeý welcomes both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from across the district. In 2017, the school was rezoned and its catchment was re-distributed to neighbouring schools. Macdonald Elementary was renamed xpeý Elementary School to honor local Indigenous communities on which the school is built, on October 23, 2017. xpeý means “cedar” in the həńqəmiñəñ language of the Musqueam People.

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) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

xpeý Elementary is located at the corner of East Hastings and Victoria Drive and currently serves 85 Kindergarten to Grade 7 students. Of those, 74 identify as Indigenous. Families are an integral part of our school community and are welcome in our All Nations Room throughout the school day. xpeý staff are committed to working with families to facilitate the intergenerational learning of Indigenous knowledge and ways of being. xpeý also works closely with several external agencies and individuals who support students’ academic, social-emotional, and physical wellbeing. xpeý hosts a Strong Start Program for children ranging from 0-5 years old and shares its grounds with Eagles in The Sky and Eaglets who provide both pre and before/after school daycare. In addition, several rotating lunch or after school programs run at xpeý such as skateboarding, basketball, soccer and Writer’s Exchange while there are also permanent programs like Kids Safe that offer programming after school and during school holidays.

xpeý celebrates its unique status as an Indigenous Focus Choice School within the VSB. Our two goals include social emotional learning, and fostering pride in and knowledge of Indigenous cultures, languages and ancestry. We move toward achieving these goals within Indigenous curricula, structures, and strategies as well as through a focus on literacy. Our vision is to foster academic excellence, strength of self, and pride in Indigenous ancestry and teachings.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

xpeý’ students are relationship-based social learners. 92% of xpeý’ students self-identify as Indigenous. Fewer than 10 students are English Language Learners and approximately 17% of xpeý’ students have ministry designations that describe and support their diverse needs. xpeý’ students learn best when adults connect with them as individuals and facilitate a school environment that accounts for how culture and trauma influence learning differences and preferences. xpeý’ students benefit from time to connect with each other, their families and school staff at the beginning and end of each day. Their natural time for focused learning is the middle portion of a school day. xpeý’ students thrive when learning through Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. They gravitate towards hands on activities and presenting their learning orally, including by storytelling. xpeý’ students who find aspects of learning challenging prefer to work on their personal skill development (i.e., reading level, writing to communicate learning and math facts) in small groups or with one-on-one support from an adult or student pairing.

Data collated from our Learning Update reports (Term 1 and Term 2) and our Summary of Learning reports (Term 3) provides further insight about learners at xpey'. For Language Arts and Math, the graphs below compare the percentage of students achieving at each performance scale indicator across the three terms (C = students who did not receive a performance scale indicator, E = Emerging, D = Developing, P = Proficient and Ex = Extending).

Term Comparison by Percentage: Language Arts

| Language Arts | Gr. 7 | | | | | Gr. 6 | | | | | Gr. 5 | | | | | Gr. 4 | | | | |
|---------------|-------|----|----|-----|----|-------|----|----|-----|----|-------|------|------|---|----|-------|----|----|---|----|
| | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex |
| Term 1 | | 36 | 57 | <10 | | <10 | 41 | 47 | <10 | | | 83 | 16.7 | | | | 50 | 50 | | |
| Term 2 | | 36 | 33 | 40 | | <10 | 14 | 57 | 22 | | 14.3 | 71.4 | 14.3 | | | | 43 | 57 | | |
| Term 3 | | 14 | 29 | 57 | | <10 | 21 | 43 | 29 | | | 86 | 14 | | | 14 | 29 | 57 | | |

| Language Arts | Gr. 3 | | | | | Gr. 2 | | | | | Gr. 1 | | | | | Gr. K | | | | |
|---------------|-------|----|----|----|----|-------|----|----|----|----|-------|----|-----|----|-----|-------|------|------|------|-----|
| | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex |
| Term 1 | | 30 | 60 | 10 | | | 12 | 56 | 11 | 11 | | | 38 | 54 | <10 | | 42 | <10 | 50 | |
| Term 2 | | 20 | 40 | 40 | | 30 | 20 | 30 | 20 | | 17 | 17 | <10 | 58 | | <10 | 30.8 | 30.8 | 23.0 | <10 |
| Term 3 | <10 | 18 | 55 | 18 | | | 16 | 42 | 42 | | | 27 | 18 | 55 | | <10 | 14 | 36 | 36 | <10 |

For Language Arts, the data between term 1 and term 3 indicates there is a slight but steady increase in the number of students achieving proficiency in most grades. Exceptions include Grades 4 and 5. In Grade 4, growth is evident between the emerging and developing indicators, suggesting these students need more time to achieve proficiency. The lack of growth in Grade 5 warrants investigation into the barriers.

Term Comparison by Percentage: Math

| Math | Gr. 7 | | | | | Gr. 6 | | | | | Gr. 5 | | | | | Gr. 4 | | | | |
|--------|-------|-----|----|-----|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|-------|------|------|------|----|-------|----|----|----|----|
| | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex |
| Term 1 | 14 | 36 | 43 | <10 | | <10 | 47 | 47 | | | | 67 | 33 | | | | 75 | 25 | | |
| Term 2 | | 13 | 47 | 40 | | <10 | 21.43 | 57.14 | 14.29 | | 14.3 | 14.3 | 57.1 | 14.3 | | | 43 | 43 | 14 | |
| Term 3 | | <10 | 43 | 50 | | <10 | 21 | 43 | 29 | | | 43 | 29 | 29 | | 12 | 25 | 25 | 38 | |

| Math | Gr. 3 | | | | | Gr. 2 | | | | | Gr. 1 | | | | | Gr. K | | | | |
|--------|-------|----|----|----|----|-------|----|----|----|----|-------|----|-----|----|-----|-------|------|----|------|------|
| | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex | C | E | D | P | Ex |
| Term 1 | | 30 | 40 | 30 | | | 56 | 22 | 22 | | | 23 | 31 | 31 | 15 | | 25 | 17 | 33 | 25 |
| Term 2 | | 20 | 40 | 20 | | 30 | 20 | 20 | 20 | | 17 | 17 | <10 | 50 | <10 | <10 | 23.1 | | 46.1 | 23.1 |
| Term 3 | | 14 | 14 | 29 | 43 | | 40 | 30 | 30 | | | 18 | 27 | 45 | 17 | <10 | 14 | 14 | 57 | 7 |

For Math, the comparative data illustrates a slight but consistent increase in the number of students achieving proficiency between term 1 and term 3 across all grades. Given that Math can be taught as a hands-on subject in reference to Indigenous knowledge (i.e., weaving and art) and everyday life (i.e., cooking), Math can be described as a relative strength for xpey' students.

The progress celebrated by the overall increase in the number of students reaching a level of proficiency in Language Arts and Math is tempered when the data is presented as percentages. In this form, the data points to the work that

needs to be done towards supporting a larger percentage of students in achieving levels of proficiency. As the data exemplifies, at every grade level, we are striving to have more students (85 % or more) achieve academic proficiency.

The results of the student learning survey (SLS) also point to the work that needs to be done towards supporting a larger percentage of students in achieving levels of academic proficiency. These results are perhaps most important because they represent student voice. Grade 7 and Grade 4 students completed the SLS on behalf of our school community. Our goal is to increase the percentage of students who agree (A) or strongly agree (SA) they are getting better at Math, Reading and Writing and that they are being taught how to improve.

Student Learning Survey Question Comparison by Percentage

| | Gr. 4 | Gr. 7 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|
| Math | 28 (SA) | 40 (A) |
| Reading | 57 (A) | 27 (SA) |
| Writing | 28 (SA) | 18 (A) |
| Taught to Improve | 28 (SA) | 54 (SA) |

As well as information about academic achievement, our SLS results provide measures about Indigeneity and social emotional learning (SEL). Again, the data provides baseline measures as percentages that call for increase. It is interesting to note how the certainty of responses changes between Grade 4 and Grade 7.

Student Learning Survey Question Comparison by Percentage

| | Gr. 4 | Gr. 7 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Taught about Indigenous knowledge, being and ways of doing. | 57 (All the time) | 45 (Most of the time) |
| SEL- self-awareness (Do you feel good about yourself?) | 42 (All the time) | 36 (Some of the time) |
| SEL - self management (When stressed there are things I can do to feel better.) | 57 (All the time) | 45 (Some of the time) |
| SEL – social awareness (When you make a choice do you think about how it might affect other?) | 28 (All the time) | 36 (Most of time) |
| SEL – relationship skills (I make new friends and meet people at school.) | 40 (All the time) | 40 (Most of the time) |
| SEL – responsible decision making (Can you explain to others how you solve problems?) | 42 (Some of the time) | 36 (Some of the time) |

AS A SCHOOL COMMUNITY, WE ARE WORKING ON THE FOLLOWING TO:

Improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and belonging

A sense of belonging is foundational to the student’s mental well-being and ability to engage with academic learning. We continue to work towards making school a positive and welcoming place for families. Throughout the day, the Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker (IEEW) welcomes students and their families in our All Nations room that is strategically located by our main entrance. Families are invited to stay for coffee on Thursdays to connect with our school counsellor who is also Indigenous. Donations allow us to offer breakfast, lunch and snacks. We are also inviting families to participate in land-based learning, such as our recent trip to Grouse Mountain, and to learn about land-based

trauma from Norm Leech who will provide information for families and professional development for staff, in September. To further support a sense of belonging and mental well-being for students, we also have spaces such as our Sensory Room, Quiet Room and Ready Body Learning Minds Motor Lab where students can connect with staff and ready themselves for learning.

Considering our data, we will make Literacy a focus next year. For Math, we will continue to develop our practice of including Indigenous ways of teaching as well as other hands-on activities as the data suggests this approach is working for xpey' students. For Literacy, we will build on our current structure of having classroom-based reading groups to having groups across classes that can be taught by a classroom or learning support teacher. In addition, we will have a story studio to support students in developing their literacy skills. We have learned that our students prefer to work on their literacy skills one on one so we will also move to increase this kind of learning opportunity through staff, student helpers, and volunteers.

Improve equity

Social Emotional Learning is the foundation of equity and learning at xpey'. We strive to foster strength of self and an appreciation of others for every student. We are proud to have a SOGI club and are committed to developing greater representation in our Library of cultures, races and marginalized groups. As a staff, we continue to develop our working knowledge of culturally sensitive pedagogy, trauma and neurodiversity through professional development and through working with our district colleagues and community partners. We also continue to update our understanding of assistive technology and other supports such as up and down regulation strategies and visual prompts that can be applied to reduce barriers to learning and help students understand themselves and others.

At xpey' we strive to Indigenize our curricula, strategies, structures and practices. Viewing every child as a gift, we approach each child's learning profile by first recognizing their strengths and then identifying and addressing barriers to their learning. One ongoing barrier for many students at xpey' is regular attendance and lateness. Differentiated Instruction (DI) within a Universal Design Learning (UDL) framework fits well for our students as they can work on their individualized assignments in one on one, small group or whole class settings and be supported by a team member (Resource Teacher (RT), Curriculum Enhancement Teacher (CET), Classroom Teacher (CT), IEEW, School and Student Support Worker (SSA or SSB), Principle (P) or peer) with whom they have a trusting relationship. Our approach respects the First Peoples' Principles of Learning, the VSB's Responsive Literacy Framework and the VSB's Responsive Tiered Intervention (RTI) Framework.

Continue on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit

Our school embodies the journey of reconciliation. We aim to foster knowledge of and pride in Indigenous cultures, language and ancestry by Indigenizing our curricula, strategies, structures and practices. For example, our Library has a dedicated section for Indigenous books that we refresh yearly, and we use a restorative circle model when meeting for planning, discussing ideas and problem solving. We also have a pipe ceremony each term to recognize the change of season and we acknowledge the moving forward of our Grade 7 students with a Coast Salish blanket ceremony. In addition, our students, families and staff join with our larger community to recognize some significant days including Orange Shirt/Truth and Reconciliation Day (Sept. 30), Red Shirt Day (May 5), and Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21). Moreover, throughout a school year, we welcome Indigenous guests and elders to share teachings in areas such as weaving, drumming, singing, graphic art, and storytelling – to name a few.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

There are several measures that will let us know we are on track in fostering academic excellence as well as a strength of self and pride in Indigenous teachings and ancestry for xpey' students. We will continue reviewing data from the Learning Updates and Summary of Learning reports and from the Student Learning Survey. Individual reading

assessments from Fountas and Pinnell and writing samples would further illustrate some specific learning needs of students as well as trends across grades that could support more students reaching proficiency levels in Language Arts. Similarly, data from the short Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) could provide more information about social emotional learning that can influence planning for individual students, classrooms, grade groupings and whole school learning. Collating data from these multiple sources will provide a more robust perspective on what is working and not working in terms of advancing student learning.

In addition, there are three indicators that will suggest we are on track in creating a sense of belonging and well-being for students and families. One is improved student attendance and lateness. Another is for the recent family participation in land-based learning and other school activities to continue at the current or an increased level. A third is for the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to maintain its current or increased membership number and its involvement with the school.