

## 2023-2024 School Learning Plan

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### SCHOOL STORY

Britannia Community Elementary School is located in a vibrant and diverse neighbourhood off of Commercial Drive in East Vancouver. Britannia Elementary has 270 students whose families come from diverse cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds. It is a proud school designated as an Enhanced Services site, on the north-east side of the city. Approximately 14% of our students meet the requirements for specialized supports for their learning needs. We have a variety of programming to support all students in the regular classroom setting.

Britannia has a full-time Youth and Family Worker, Neighbourhood Assistant, and Literacy Teacher. We also have a full-time onsite food services coordinator. We offer a breakfast and a lunch program and provide a variety of healthy snacks to all our learners. Our hot breakfast program regularly serves over 15% of our school population and the hot lunch program caters to approximately 60% of our students. Additionally, KidSafe provides out-of-school programming for a limited number of referred students during prolonged breaks.

The school shares the site with the Britannia Community Centre and works closely with community centre staff to plan after-school programs and day camps during prolonged breaks and on professional development days. The community centre also has before and after-school care, as well as a preschool program. We work collaboratively with the Community Schools Team and have many close partnerships with community groups and agencies such as the Saint James Music Academy, Red Fox Healthy Living Society and Blue Eagles Community Cadets.

Our learners come from diverse and rich cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Britannia has a significant Indigenous population with a proud connection to place and culture. We work with our Indigenous Enhancement Teacher, our Indigenous Enhancement Worker, and outside Indigenous supports to increase our knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions through a variety of cultural and historical teachings. Britannia has a strong commitment to reconciliation and works within the lens of the First Peoples Principles of Learning to guide our work.

#### Demographics

There are currently 270 students including 110 Indigenous; 10 English Language Learners, and 42 students with a Ministry designation for a diverse learning need.

#### What are our assets?

- The students, staff and parent community
- We celebrate ALL students daily - with the vision of: All children CAN learn, and ALL children WILL be successful

What is unique, and positive?

- Britannia Elementary School was originally designed and built in the 1970's as an Open Area School with interior spaces being utilized as resource centers
- Enhanced Services School which supports the complex needs of some of our students and families- Supported with enhancement-based teachers for Literacy and Indigenous Education focus
- Breakfast and Lunch Programs- breakfast by family donation, Lunch by envelope submission payment
- Family Room- encourages parent/caregiver-school relationships and parent/caregiver involvement
- Fairmont Hotel integrated curricular programming: cooking classes and garden growing
- Extra-curricular sports provided by staff throughout year from basketball to cross country - multiple sport activities for students - including morning gym time prior to school hours to support attendance and engagement
- Physical Education specialist providing diverse athletic skills and knowledge
- Connection to Community Center that provides after school programming: cooking, piano, music etc.
- Student leadership clubs/monitors: Recycling, hot lunch, library, grade 7 camp fundraisers, assembly
- Community outreach through food and clothing supports

New Initiatives for 2023-2024:

- Interior non-enrolling rooms redesigned to maximize student/teacher learning space to align with curriculum
- Addition of onsite Library/Learning Commons to enhance literacy programming, project-based learning, and community relationship building
- Indigenous Focus Room – a space for cultural enrichment
- Applied Skills, Technology and Design collaborative curriculum opportunities with Secondary School staff
- A redesigned Code of Conduct based on community feedback and Positive Behaviour Intervention Strategies
- Moderized and culturally relevant school logo inspired from student input
- Grade 7 learn to ski program

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## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

Britannia learners come from a wealth of cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Britannia students are lively and represent diversity in identity and learning. Staff work to develop and provide learning opportunities that highlight community strengths in neurodiversity, cultural awareness, athletics and the arts.

Britannia has a significant Indigenous population with a proud connection to place and culture. We work with the Indigenous Enhancement Team and outside Indigenous supports to increase our knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions through a variety of cultural and historical teachings. Britannia is committed to reconciliation and relies on the First Peoples Principles of Learning to guide our work.

Literacy

Currently, 62% of the K-4 students are reading at or above grade level (fig 1.) as assessed through the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. However, staff have observed that many of the students in intermediate grades find the critical analysis of reading materials challenging. Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System and Learning Summary data show 51% of the intermediate grade 5, 6 and 7 students are not yet proficient in English Language Arts (fig. 2). Intermediate students can decode but are not achieving grade level expectations in reading comprehension. Additionally, we noticed students display a disconnect between what they are reading and life experiences; low background knowledge (or exposure) makes it difficult for learners to find meaning in stories, concepts, and ideas taught.

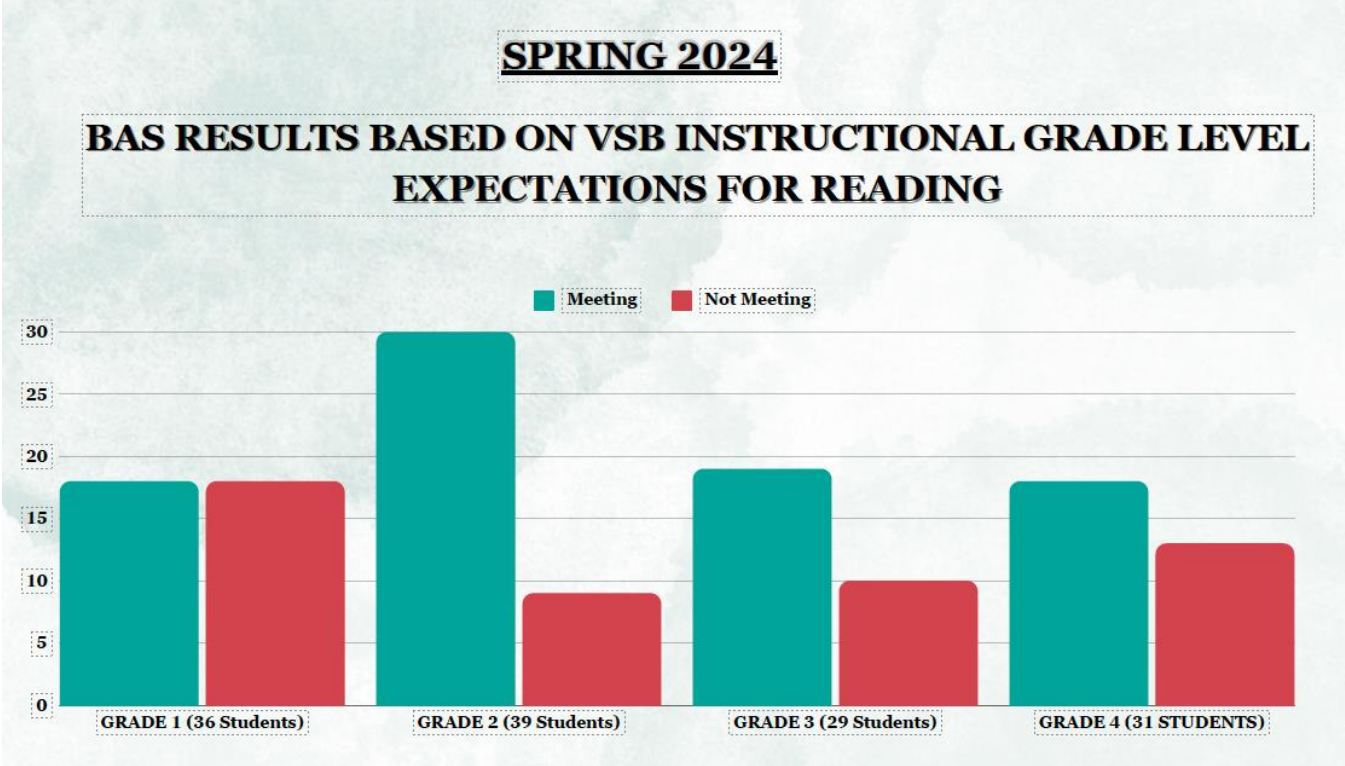


Fig 1. Primary (K-4) literacy assessment.

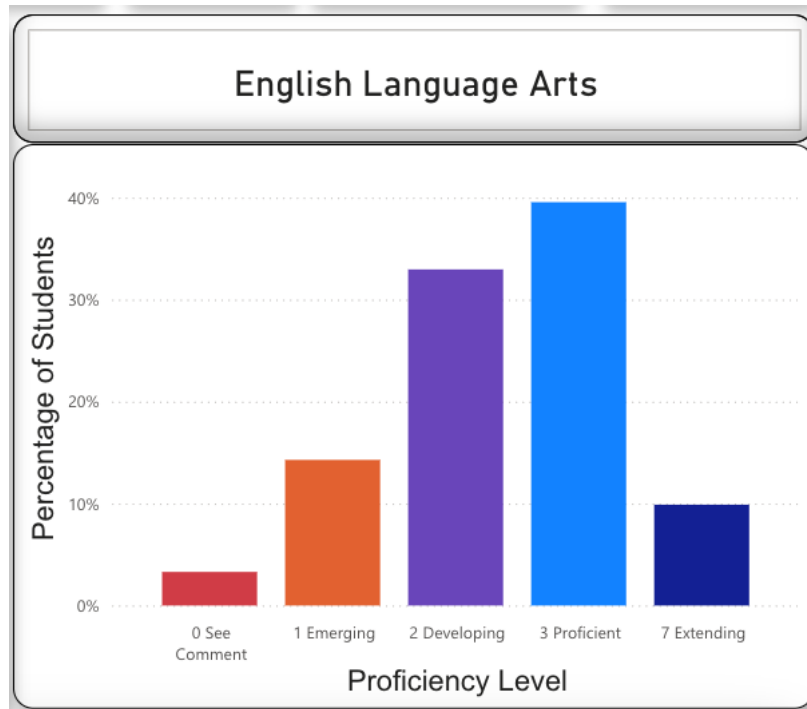


Fig 2. Intermediate (5-7) English Language Arts proficiency.

### Equity

As a Tier 1 designated inner-city school, a significant number of our families 46% benefit from food and clothing support provided by the school. We have a robust emergency pantry and provide grocery gift cards to those who need them. This program is run by our Neighbourhood Assistant and funded mostly through Vancouver Sun Children’s Fund Adopt-A-School grants and private donors.

### Reconciliation

Tracked by the Indigenous support team, all students combined, we average nearly 2000 cultural interactions annually, or about 20 different cultural projects and events throughout the year. Culturally significant practices include weaving, carving, dancing and drum-making. We seek to provide activities like these for all the students each year. Most of these opportunities are realized through grants or private donors. This year’s data (Fig 3. Culture and Community) shows our cultural interactions were down from previous years, as one of our planned school-wide events didn’t materialize.

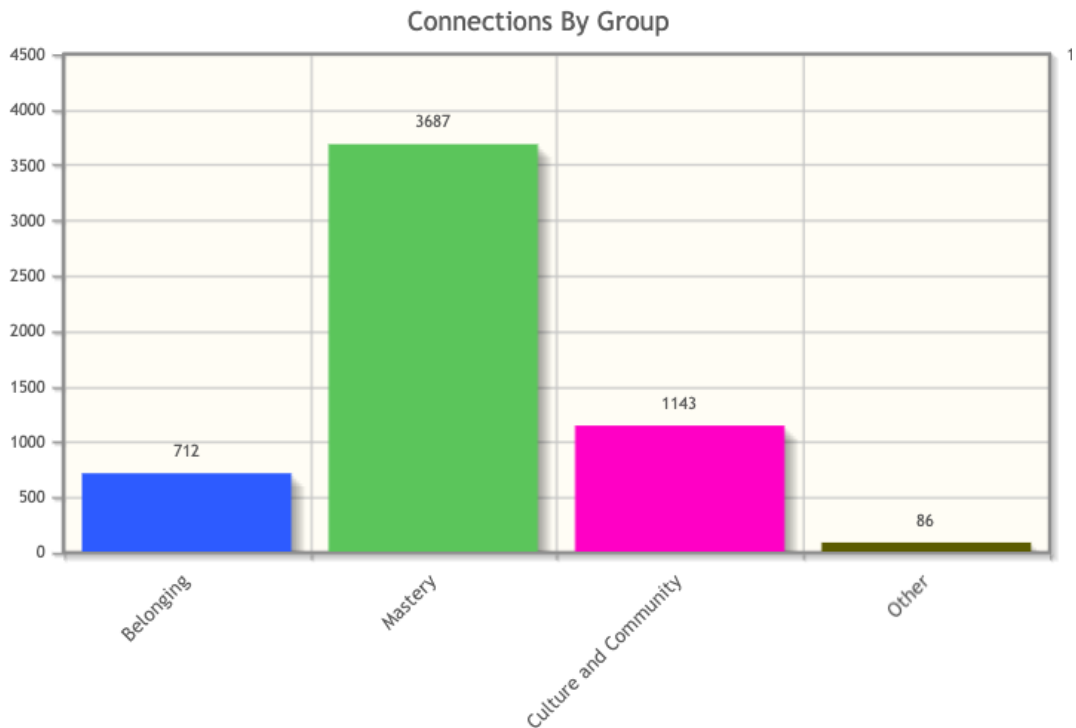


Fig 3. 2024 Indigenous Enhancement Team support data collected through Indigenous Intervention Management System (IIMS).

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## 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

Our goal is to increase reading fluency and comprehension.

As a staff, we are examining literacy strategies that introduce explicit instruction in phonics, reading, and writing. We are dedicating professional development time and resources to study best-practice strategies and implement them as a staff to increase student learning and achievement in reading.

Teachers are exploring approaches that highlight the importance of foundational skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, language, and vocabulary, with emphasis placed on these skills in primary grades (K–3) to ensure a strong foundation for reading. These goals are integral to the VSB Responsive Literacy Framework K-7. Specifically, we are monitoring reading scores through BAS assessments, creating opportunities for small-group targeted reading instruction and intervention, and exploring occasions for universal instruction as well.

This goal links to the Vancouver School Board's Education Plan to improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by ...

- *Encouraging students to reach beyond previous boundaries in knowledge and experience.*
- *Increasing literacy, numeracy, and deep, critical, and creative thinking.*
- *Ensuring the alignment among school, district, and provincial education plans.*
- *Reporting student results about performance, well-being, and outcomes to the community and using the results to improve the quality and effectiveness of the education and support provided to students.*

This goal also aligns with the First People's Principles of Learning in the following areas:

- *Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)*
- *Learning involves patience and time*
- *Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.*

Further, it connects to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement:

The Vancouver Board of Education will provide equity of opportunity for Aboriginal students and be committed to the ongoing development of best-practice strategies for instruction, improvement, and inclusion.

### **Improve equity**

We will increase the frequency of our outreach food and clothing support for next year. Focussing on essential support for families helps build a foundation for students where their basic needs are being met. Many of Britannia families require support resulting from intergenerational trauma and fractured relationships with schools. Creating more opportunities will help foster trusting connections.

We will continue to target our Literacy Enhancement Teacher support and our resource team support towards our most vulnerable learners, especially using these resources to teach our primary students to read.

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

At Britannia, we strive to increase our knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions through a variety of cultural and historical teachings. This goal aligns with the District's goals but is of particular significance in our community because many families are of Indigenous ancestry. This goal is practiced each day in a variety of ways, as we engage with community and district resources to deliver a well-rounded program which keeps the First Peoples Principles of Learning focal to all we do.

We have explored and provided a variety of experiences for students and the community:

- Orange Shirt Day – awareness of residential schools and stories of survivors
- Opportunities for learning and practicing culture
  - Weaving
  - Carving
  - Powwow dance
  - Traditional games
  - Drum and rattle making
- Indigenous acknowledgement, at whole school events, assemblies, and meetings
- Purchase of Indigenous resources/books and share with staff/students.
- Truth and Reconciliation Day Assembly
- Walk for Wenjack
- MMIW parade
- National Indigenous Peoples Day Assembly
- First Nations Principles of Learning incorporated in all inquiries.
- Indigenous garden exploration
- Development and review of Indigenous Success Plans for Indigenous students in Grades 1, 2, 4 and 6

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## HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

Through the collection of year-over-year report card data and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we created a baseline for achievement in reading scores and English Language Arts and will examine subsequent scores to analyze and gauge student learning and progression throughout the year, and year-over-year, at Britannia.

Using third term 2023 Student Report Card Data, we see that in English Language Arts marks are trending upwards since the fall, 18% of students are at the Emerging level of achievement, 32% of students are at the Developing level, 36% are at the Proficient level, and 12% are at the Extending level. When examining reading achievement using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we found that 44% of students K-7 were below grade-level expectations. The data indicates a need for targeted and consistent efforts in literacy instruction and best-practice strategies. We will continue to review this data next year.

Other sources of data we will use to gain a clear picture of the students and their learning strengths and stretches include the Student Learning Survey and Foundation Skills Assessment. These forms of data collection are supported by the Ministry of Education and Child Care and provide a snapshot of information for Students in grade 4 and 7 each year. The University of British Columbia's Human Early Learning Project (HELP) provides valuable information on the health and well-being of Britannia students through interdisciplinary research with their Early Years (K) and Middle Years (4) indexes.