

2024-2025 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliiwətał (Tseil-Waututh Nation). Established in 1908, Britannia Secondary School in Vancouver, British Columbia, boasts a storied history that intertwines with the dynamic tapestry of the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood. Originally known as Britannia High School, it emerged as one of the city's pioneer secondary institutions, responding to the evolving needs of a burgeoning population.

Throughout the years, Britannia has not only adapted to changes in educational paradigms but has also embraced the rich diversity of its surroundings. The school's commitment to inclusivity is evident in its robust Indigenous supports, acknowledging the ancestral lands upon which it stands. Britannia Secondary actively engages with Indigenous cultures and traditions, fostering an environment that celebrates diversity and reconciliation. This commitment aligns with the broader ethos of the Grandview-Woodland neighborhood, which is renowned for its multicultural makeup, with residents hailing from a myriad of backgrounds.

In addition to its cultural inclusivity, Britannia Secondary School is recognized for its academic excellence. Staff are engaged and dynamic, and despite its small size, the school offers a wide variety of programming for all learners. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Britannia provides students with a globally-focused education, emphasizing critical thinking and intercultural understanding. This initiative aligns with the school's dedication to preparing students for a rapidly changing world. Furthermore, Britannia has become a hub for sports enthusiasts, housing a hockey academy that blends academic pursuits with athletic development. The academy not only underscores the school's commitment to holistic education but also taps into the Canadian passion for ice hockey, creating a unique and well-rounded educational experience for students.

With its commitment to diverse community involvement, support for Indigenous communities, student learning and behavioural support programs (Learning Assistance Life Skills, Learning Support Program, Junior and Senior Social Development), Vancouver Alternate Secondary School partnership in alternative programming (Outreach and Streetfront), and the hockey academy, Britannia Secondary School remains a beacon of cultural diversity, educational vibrancy and community unity in Vancouver.

We offer the following student learning and behavioural support programs:

- LALS – Learning Assistance/Life Skills program is designed for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities.
- LSP – The Learning Support Program provides academic support for students with diagnosed learning disabilities.
- SSD – The Senior and Junior Social Development Programs offer small, sheltered learning communities for students with significant social-emotional and executive functioning challenges.
 - Post Secondary Transition – The Secondary Life Skills Program is a small, supportive class for adult students with autism, physical disabilities, deaf/blind or chronic health conditions or have a moderate to severe/profound intellectual disability.
 - Outreach – Located in the Britannia Community Complex above the Britannia Public Library, Outreach was created to provide a safe, welcoming, and successful learning environment to Indigenous students who face barriers and/or systemic obstacles in regular classes. Students who attend Outreach are working towards graduating with a British Columbia Dogwood Certificate.
 - Streetfront – The Streetfront program provides experiential activities for students who have had previous difficulty engaging in a mainstream educational setting. These experiences include marathon running through the Street2Peak program, which has taken students to the peaks of Patagonia, New Zealand, Kilimanjaro and Newfoundland. The grade 8 – 10 program students are also on the British Columbia Dogwood graduation certificate track. Staff were recently the recipients of the Premier’s Award for Excellence in Education for Outstanding Collaboration.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

We are a diverse community. Over 50% of our students identify as Indigenous or Black. Our students are resilient, kind, and industrious. They respond well to our staff who emphasize connection combined with high levels of support and accountability. Basic needs are required by many of our students; as a result, we have an extensive community support framework both in school and after school which endeavours to address student needs and engage students academically and socially.

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

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

Numeracy and Equity

Goal #1: Our first goal is to improve the numeracy skills of our Grade 8 and 9 students.

Numeracy has an increasingly significant role in enabling and sustaining cultural, social, economic, and technological advances. Being numerate involves more than mastering basic mathematics. Numeracy involves connecting mathematics that students learn at school with what occurs outside of school, and requires skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and logic related to applications in the real world.

Mathematics gives students access to important mathematical ideas, knowledge, and skills. Numeracy connects these skills with their personal and professional lives. When a learning institution focuses on these two key areas concurrently, equitable opportunities for students to enroll in senior math courses in high school and post-secondary increase, as well as a positive disposition towards math, occurs.

To ensure equitable skill acquisition in numeracy in students, we will begin the process of early identification of students who have struggled in Mathematics and will support student progress in math by adding an additional class of numeracy support.

Action #1:

- All incoming grade 7 students will be assessed using an online math assessment chosen by the math department.

Action #2

- Through feeder school input, and the numeracy assessment student data, we will determine which students would benefit from extra math support in grade eight. The students will be enrolled in both a Numeracy class and a Math 8 class.

Action #3:

- Data (Numeracy assessment and CSL reports) as well as a post numeracy assessment with all grade eights, will be reviewed in late spring to see if the extra math support helped students improve their numeracy.

As mathematical skills, knowledge and confidence grow, we are predicting an increase in our Numeracy 10 assessment scores which every student must take as part of graduation requirements.

Belonging and Equity

Goal #2: Our second goal is to increase engagement and sense of belonging in our students.

Attendance is an ongoing concern, but one which is complex and has many layers which cannot be resolved easily. Creating opportunities for students to express themselves in a supportive and accountable environment is pivotal, particularly with an emphasis on equity.

The school will focus on three key approaches/structures: restorative practices, motivational interviewing, and student forums.

These approaches/structures aim to provide equitable opportunities for all students to express their needs, concerns, and ideas regarding their school experience. By actively listening and incorporating

their feedback into our strategies, we seek to address barriers to attendance, especially those faced by marginalized and underserved students. This approach fosters a more inclusive environment and ensures that every student feels heard, valued, and supported.

By focusing on equity and fostering a sense of belonging, we aim to identify and address the root causes of absenteeism and empower all students to take an active role in shaping their educational journey.

Action #1:

Student forums:

- Organize student forums moderated by counsellors to ensure confidentiality while collecting authentic comments from students
- Create a safe space for students to share their experiences, concerns and suggestions

Action #2:

Motivational Interviewing:

- Provide training for staff on motivational interviewing techniques to help them engage students in meaningful conversations.
- Focus on empowering students to make positive changes and take ownership of their attendance and academic performance.

Action #3:

Restorative Practices:

- Implement a high support/high accountability approach using restorative circles.
- Emphasize working collaboratively with students, rather than doing things for them, to them, or not addressing the issue.
- Create a school community where students feel heard, valued, and responsible for their actions.

By integrating these approaches, the school aims to create a more inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students to attend regularly and participate actively in their education.

We will use attendance and student survey data (hard data) and street data (anecdotal and narrative information shared in forums and circles) to track the efficacy of the three approaches as described above.

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

Goal #3: Our third goal is to establish an Indigenous student leadership group in conjunction with the district Indigenous education department.

Of the close to 600 students currently enrolled in Britannia Secondary, over 40% of our students identify as Indigenous. Hence the need to establish a robust and active Indigenous Student Leadership group at Britannia. Whereas Eurocentric leadership emphasizes independent achievement, self-growth, and competitiveness, Indigenous leadership is much more rooted in mutual growth and development with a focus less on self and more on all relations and the wellness of others. Indigenous principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility are integral to a governance model that is reflective of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing.

One area we are particularly proud of is the Wellness Blocks for our grades eight and nine students. With the support of staff (classroom teachers, counsellors, Indigenous support staff and community support workers), students participated in a variety of land-based, Indigenous focused, and mindfulness activities at least two times a week. We began with the grade eights two years ago, but the project has been so successful that the grade nine students have also requested the continuation of the wellness blocks. The wellness project was part of a 3-year inquiry cycle through NOIE (Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education) to improve the transition of students from elementary to high school and will continue with further community funding.

Our staff also supported the creation of a new and much larger All Nations room which is inclusive to *all* students. It is a fun, safe, and caring place to be. Students regularly access the room for academic, emotional, and physical needs supports such as food and clothing.

As we focus on creating the Indigenous student leadership group, it is important for non-Indigenous students and educators to recognize that the Indigenous student leadership cohort is Indigenous led. A more impactful and equitable centering and lifting up of our Indigenous students will, as a result, take place.

Action #1

- District and School staff from our Indigenous Department and School Administration will meet to plan and implement an Indigenous Student Leadership group in Britannia Secondary in the fall.

Action #2

- Local elders will be invited to speak to the students about community leadership and will share their wisdom, experience, and stories about what is Indigenous leadership.

Action #3

- Regular community gatherings and sessions with students led by Indigenous students modelling student leadership will be established beginning in the late fall. Leadership students will share information with other students about how to be a positive Indigenous leader within the school.

The Indigenous Student Leadership group will become an integral part of the school much like the current Student council. Events will be cited in the school calendar well ahead of time so that the school staff, students and surrounding community will be aware of upcoming events.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

Throughout the year staff will seek input from the community, parents/guardians, staff, and students to determine how successful the implementation of the goals and subsequent actions as described in this SLP (School Learning Plan) have been. Some of the feedback will be data (hard data) and others will be anecdotal (street data – narratives).

Goal 1 - Improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and belonging:

- Continue to discuss and seek feedback from staff about our challenges and successes at staff meetings, Professional Development days, and collaborative times throughout the year
- Review of academic results such as CSL reports (report cards) and subject incomplete lists
- Review and tracking of Numeracy 10 assessments
- Seek student and parent/guardian feedback through PAC meetings and students through FIT sessions and student forums
- Increased student completion rates of Math 8 and Math 9 courses

Goal 2 - Improve Belonging and Equity

- Surveys – YDI (Youth Development Index), Ministry of Education Student Learning Survey, and McCreary survey
- Discuss and seek feedback from staff about our challenges and successes at staff meetings, Professional Development days, and collaborative times throughout the year
- Seek student and parent/guardian feedback through PAC Meetings, and students through FIT sessions and Student forums
- Review and closely monitor student attendance rates

Goal 3 - Continue on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit by creating an Indigenous Student Group

- Review the Indigenous success plans for each of our Indigenous students to ensure they are successful and to provide the necessary support when needed
- District and Indigenous school staff, Britannia Administration and Counselling department will seek student and parent/guardian feedback through Indigenous community meetings and students through FIT sessions and student forums
- Britannia Indigenous Education staff will meet with students and families regularly to seek feedback
- Track the number of students in Indigenous student leadership on a yearly basis
- Inclusion of Indigenous Student-led events in the yearly school calendar
- Document Indigenous students meeting with elders throughout the year