

**2023-2024**  
**School Learning Plan**

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**SCHOOL STORY**

Captain James Cook Elementary is located on the the ancestral and unceded, lands of *the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)*, *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)* & *səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)*is. *With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning as we work towards reconciliation.*

At Cook, we “Take care of ourselves, take care of others and take care of this place.” The school is decolonizing our practices. From community meetings taking place outside and in a circular fashion to a food security program that is overwhelmed with need, our literacy program has made huge strides with our reading rates and we celebrate student achievement and participation with a Hands Across the School initiative.

The Cook School community is made up of a diverse range of learners and families. There are students from a mix of socio-economic families. The community is comprised of a mixture of older and new single-family dwellings, moderate to high-priced rental units, and cooperative and subsidized housing projects. Many students speak multiple languages. At present there are over 34 home languages in our school community. Cook Elementary presently enrolls 462 students. We have 20 divisions; with 20 classroom teachers, 7 Resource teachers who work part-time and full-time, a teacher-librarian, a PE prep teacher, a Literacy enhancement teacher, an area counsellor, a Speech and Language Pathologist, 2 office administrators, 3 supervision aides, a Youth and Family Worker and a Strong Start teacher, as well as a Vice Principal and Principal. There are also 21 Student Support Workers who support students with diverse needs.

Cook is a school with students that are proud of their community. Cook students are advocates for each other and are very supportive. There are great deal of need at our school: students who live in poverty, with special needs, trauma, a large refugee population and more. The Cook community is diverse, strong and beautiful. Our students create amazing projects within our school and out in the community. We have a very active student body that loves to make our community and the world better!

The school, which has been identified as meeting District vulnerability criteria, receives Community School Team (CST) Enhanced Services, which also provides a full-time Youth & Family Worker (YFW) as well as a large number of after-school Killarney CST (KCST) programming support. Through Enhanced Services, various grants and the KCST, Cook has been able to offer additional school programs such as a Weekly Grocery program, Lunch Program, District Literacy Teacher, five One-to-One Readers, Arts Umbrella, Lego, Games and Arts & Crafts, and Kidsafe.

The school is also fortunate to have a thriving StrongStart Centre for families with children ages 0-5 that operates daily every morning at Cook. In addition, Cook practices The Early Intervention Model and Reading Recovery programming.

Learners are eager to participate in school life beyond the classroom. There have been several successful student initiatives including: Chess club, Uno club, Origami club, Art Club, multiple fundraisers and more have all been student created and run. We have highly attended sports teams: basketball, cross-country, volleyball and track and field. We also host Global Citizens, Gardening, the LEAD program, our Dance program, Library monitors, Playground Leaders, Student Leadership Committee, Buddy Classes, Daily Announcements, and much more. High participation in these areas tells us that students are eager for opportunities to be leaders in their community.

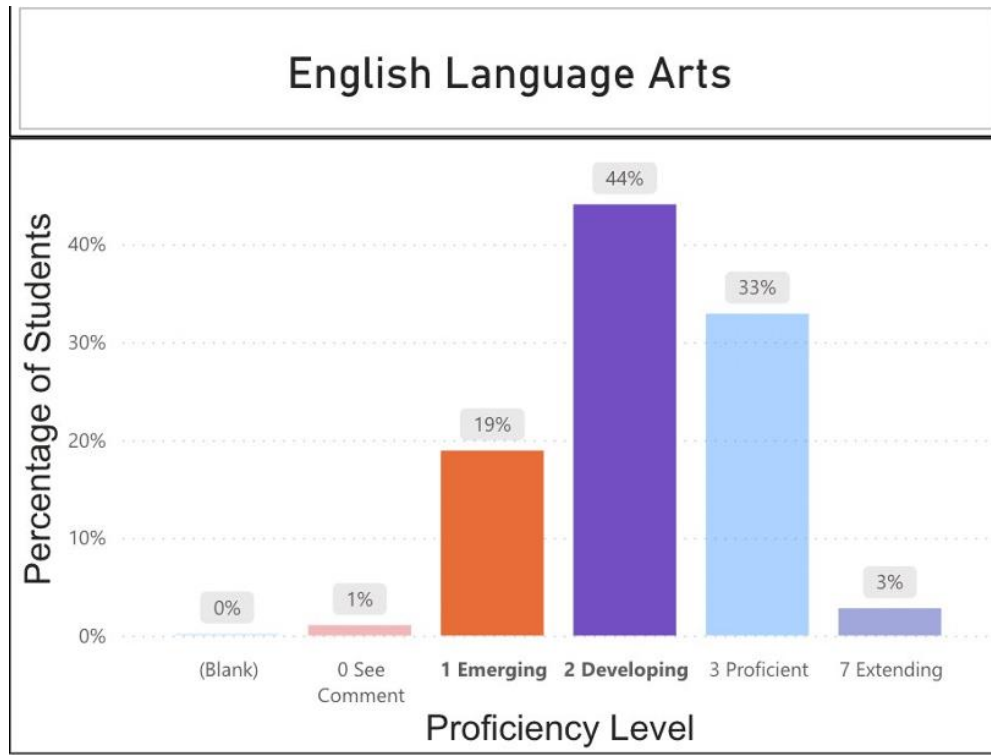
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## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

Our learners are strong, resilient and intelligent. They are creative, hard-working, collaborative and self-starters. We are a student-centered school community with countless opportunities for student leadership, participation, and action in our school. Cook boasts a very diverse population of learners, all with distinct socio-economic, social-emotional and cultural perspectives. We have welcomed dozens of new students over the last year from all over the world and have over 30 home languages represented in our school community.

Our diverse learners require both academic and social-emotional support. We view everything in our school through a lens of equity. Our community has financial needs which we try to address through our Food Security program that provides breakfast, snacks and lunch to vulnerable families in need.

The Cook staff has prioritized literacy, and our literacy intervention program supports students schoolwide in improving their decoding, comprehension and writing. The staff has worked hard to adapt the program to the current student needs, and it is evolving to serve all the students in our community. Our current assessment measures, the BAS and MAZE, show improvement in our literacy rates. We still have a lot of work to do to improve our overall literacy rates from K-grade 7. Looking to the future, we see a need for a numeracy intervention.



We track student behavioural issues with “Think Sheets” where students are encouraged to describe what happened, how they could have done something different and what they plan to do next time. These are collected and reviewed by administration to help plan our monthly community meetings. This approach ensures that students are learning from their actions, and we practice restorative justice which allows students to lead the experience.

There is an active student population at Cook. Students have initiated over a dozen clubs this past year including, Rubik’s Cube, Dungeons and Dragons, Chess, Basketball, Volleyball, Origami, Uno, Cheerleading, Art, Badminton and more. Students also participate in student leadership groups, Playground Leaders and students’ announcements. Beyond our student-led programs, we partner with the Community Schools Team (CST), who provides many opportunities for students to participate in programs they would not otherwise have the chance to, Super Science, Dance, LEAD and more.

The data from our Student Learning Survey provides insights into our student’s well-being and sense of belonging. Our grade 4 and 7 students report that over 75% of them feel that they are improving their reading. 87% of the students surveyed feel that they are welcome and a sense of belonging at Cook Elementary. We also discovered that over 30% of our students felt hungry at some time or another because there was not enough food around. However, on the other side, 70% of our students surveyed said there was healthy food available at the school when they are hungry. Finally, 81% of the students surveyed said they felt good about themselves. These responses help us to plan for how to approach our school community needs best.

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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

“Creating a space where kids feel safe means that we must create a space where we share power. One can let go of power without letting go of control.” (Minor, We Got This)

Our Cook Community has an abundance of compassion, care and creativity. We recognize the genius in each of our learners and celebrate our diversity and experiences. We also recognize that literacy is key to success for our learners. Our literacy approach is ever evolving, and we adapt to where our learners are. We are working towards bringing every learner in our school up to grade level in reading and writing.

#### Literacy

Our data points to a literacy deficit in our school, the staff has implemented a strong literacy program that supports all learners, and provides added intervention for our most vulnerable learners. “If your literacy program is not structured to get the most number of kids to the top, or to that level of society, or to proficiency, there is no equity. There can be no equity, no social justice, without literacy.” (*Kareem Weaver, The Reading League Conference, 2021.*)

The Cook staff has committed to a literacy program that services all our students. In primary we are a CELI (Collaborative Early Literacy Intervention) school, our Reading Recovery teacher supports multiple grade 1 students one to one to bring them up to grade level in their reading skills. Our staff supports our students with reading groups, targeted literacy interventions on a daily basis. Cook has become a district leader in our literacy program, welcoming staff from schools all over Vancouver to observe the initiatives we have happening. The school also has a Literacy Enhancement Teacher, who works with students, builds capacity of our teaching staff and drives our literacy program.

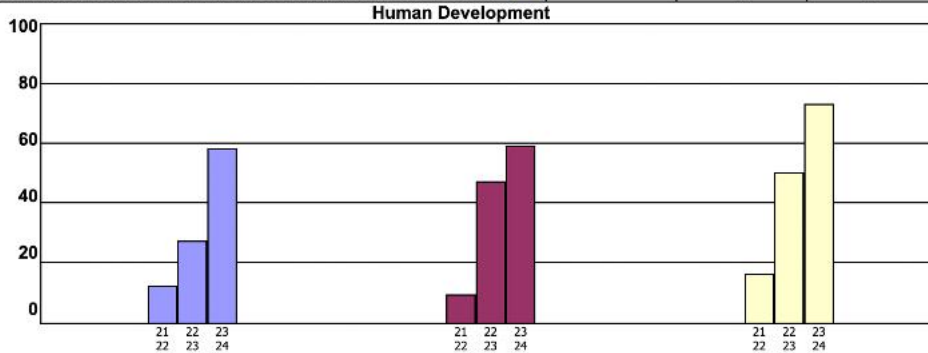
#### Physical and Mental Well-Being

We have seen growth in the numbers of students who are coming out for sports teams and clubs. Our sports teams are very well-attended and it has been notable that many students are joining sports teams for the first time in Grade 6 and 7. This points to an inclusive and welcoming environment where students are able to take risks and try new things.

The graph below demonstrates an increase, year over year, in students acknowledging that Cook has focused on students taking care of themselves and others.

**GRADE 4 RESULTS (in %), 2021/2022 - 2023/2024**

% Reporting Positive Responses			
Human Development	Captain James Cook Elementary (03939088)		
	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Are you learning how to care for your mental health?	***	28	59
Are you learning how to care for your body?	***	48	60
When you make a choice, do you think about how it might affect others?	***	51	74

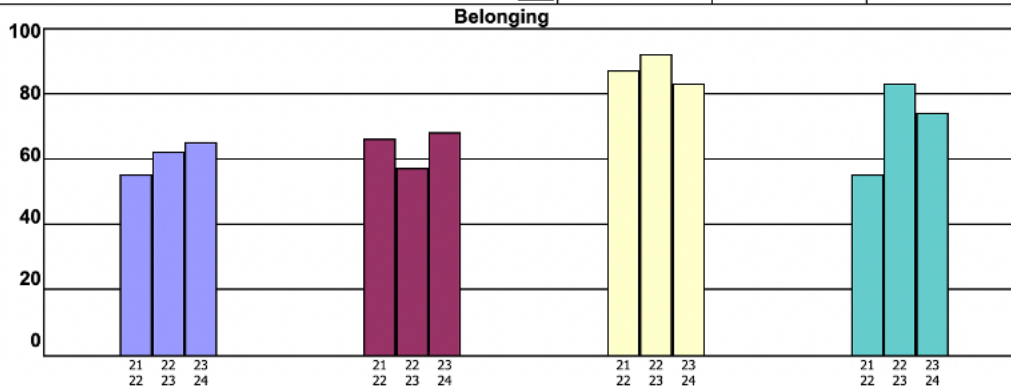


**Belonging**

Our Middle Years Development Data from 2023-24 told us that there were students who did not feel a sense of belonging at our school. The staff has taken this on and worked very hard to provide more opportunities for students to feel that they belong in our community, and for students to find other like-minded students. We've had many students come forward and create their own clubs – Dungeons and Dragons, Uno, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Origami, Skipping, Basketball, Computers, Art, and the list goes on. Through these student-led clubs we have built up the sense of belonging and ownership in our school community.

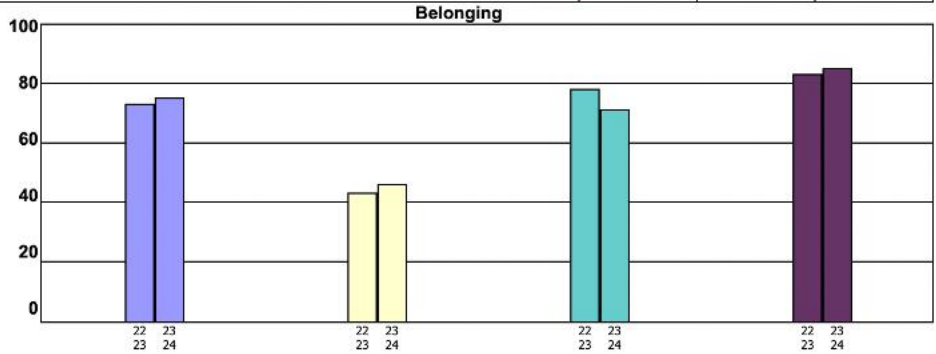
**GRADE 4 RESULTS (in %), 2021/2022 - 2023/2024**

% Reporting Positive Responses			
Belonging	Captain James Cook Elementary (03939088)		
	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Is school a place where you feel like you belong?	56	63	66
How many adults do you think care about you at your school?	67	58	69
Do adults in the school treat all students fairly?	88	93	84
Do you feel welcome at your school?	56	84	75



**GRADE 7 RESULTS (in %), 2021/2022 - 2023/2024**

% Reporting Positive Responses			
Belonging	Captain James Cook Elementary (03939088)		
	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Is school a place where you feel like you belong?	N/A	74	76
Do you see diverse sexual orientations and gender identities represented in your school or activities?	N/A	N/A	N/A
How many adults do you think care about you at your school?	N/A	44	47
Do adults in the school treat all students fairly?	N/A	79	72
Do you feel welcome at your school?	N/A	84	86



Notes:

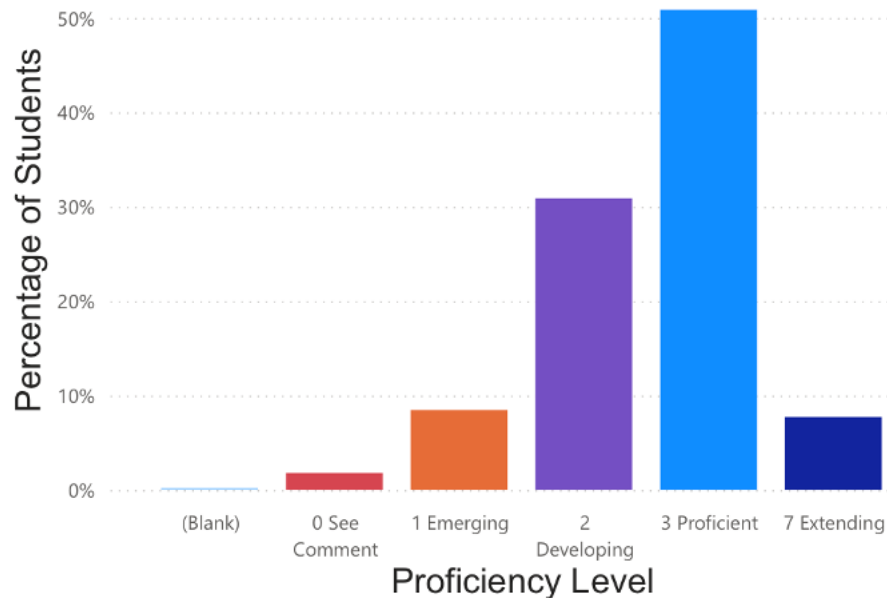
The graphs reflect the data of our school’s sense of belonging and more. We can see that we have work to do in this regard. The staff here cares deeply about students and goes to great lengths to show students that they are cared for. However, the data suggests that students are not receiving this message and so we are working on programs that reinforce these messages.

The code of conduct at Cook is “Take care of yourself, others and this place.” We use schoolwide community meetings to breakdown what these things mean and demonstrate ways of acting these out. Students present skits, songs, and other presentations to build up the abilities of all our students.

**Numeracy**

Currently our numeracy skills are good across grades at Cook. As seen in the graph, most of our students are proficient in Math. However, we are starting to see an emerging need in Numeracy. We are working to create a consistent assessment measure throughout the school so that we can track accurate data. There have been discussions about using our literacy model for numeracy as well.

## Mathematics



Our literacy focus connects to the Vancouver School Board Education Plan goals. The VSB is committed to improving student achievement, “increasing literacy, numeracy and deep critical, and creative thinking.” With improved literacy rates we are also confident that community well-being will be reflected in this improvement. Our students will gain confidence through their successes. Our literacy goal connects to the VSB goal of increasing equity by “eliminating gaps in achievement and outcomes among students”. Our most vulnerable students are often in need of literacy support as they have not had access to support. Our goal is to focus on our most vulnerable population and provide those extra supports to engage them in every subject and activity in the school.

We can identify success as we “Focus on individual student academic success through the use of Student Success Plans which are completed three times during each school year.” Our focus on reconciliatory practices in decolonizing our school will not only meet the Education Plan goals set out by the VSB but it will also aid in improving the mental health and overall health of all our students.

### Improve equity

*“Anything that abridges opportunity or compromises our responsibilities to one another is our enemy. As such, if we are not doing equity, then we are not doing education.” (Cornelius Minor, We Got This)*

Equity has been a priority focus for the staff at Cook this year. We understand that without equity we will continue to perpetuate cycles of trauma and will steal opportunities from our students who need the most support. We are proud of the growth we have made as a school team here at Cook to prioritize our most needy

members of the community and provide opportunities that some students and families would not otherwise have.

Cook is supported by the Community Schools Team (CST). Through the CST, our students are provided opportunities for Dance, Science and more. CST also offers KidSafe which is childcare during Spring Break, Winter Holidays and over the Summer for those families that have difficulties securing other childcare. These are all opportunities that are reserved for students in our community that would not normally get them.

Our food program feeds over 100 students every day. Our breakfast program supports students and families who have difficulty accessing food in the morning. Our student learning surveys showed us that 60% of our grade 4 students have “accessed healthy food at the school when they are hungry.” We are lucky to be supported by local organizations that provide our families with frozen meals every few weeks. We are also supported by a fruit and vegetable program which delivers fresh produce for our families every month. We also have a snack program at Cook, that provides morning snacks for those that need them. These programs are essential to our school success.

This year marked a small change in our field trip process. Our PAC was able to provide money to each classroom that could be earmarked for field trips. Field trips have become less accessible over the last few years with rising costs of buses and experiences. With the PAC funds classes have been able to experience many more field trips this year.

We have prioritized our most vulnerable students in many ways this year and provided equitable education. Our most vulnerable students have access to programs and supports, we are proud of the progress we are making in this regard. We have also prioritized the spaces in our school. We have an RBLM (Ready Bodies, Learning Minds) space that is for the use of our students who need proprioceptive input and output and look forward to creating more spaces for our sensory seeking students.

We celebrated our first Pride Parade at Cook Elementary this year. Our student leadership group led the way in envisioning and executing an amazing event in support of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Many families participated and cheered us on.

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

With our equitable literacy focus students can access more information to “increase knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions.”

Our literacy focus also connects to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement goals of Belonging, Mastery and Culture and Community. While we must be aware of not colonizing our practices in literacy education, improving our literacy rates schoolwide will have a ripple effect on our Indigenous education practices, as well as our Indigenous students. Our literacy efforts focus on inclusion and equity practices and will connect to improving the sense of belonging in our school community. We can utilize this improved literacy to connect with culture and community, “To increase knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions by all students through eliminating institutional, cultural and individual racism within the Vancouver school district learning communities.”

We continue to have community meetings at Cook, where all students are taught about taking care of each other and this land. These are essential in our work towards reconciliation. Our data shows that 45% of our grade 7 students and 62% of our grade 4 students report participating in ongoing Indigenous activities at school. We hope to build on these numbers.



We were lucky to host Russell Wallace this year. Russell Wallace is a traditional singer from the Lil'Wat Nation. He led 2 of our classes in a weeklong inquiry into drums and voice. The students loved it, we hope to do more programs like this in the years to come.

Our school journey towards reconciliation will continue next year. We expect an update on our name change application as we work to decolonize our school practices.

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

The Cook school community has done an amazing job of integrating many forms of data into our daily approach to education and community building. Our data collection informs our next steps and provides us with the insights we need in order to continue or pivot in a new direction. We collect data from many different sources, our BAS assessments, MAZE literacy assessments, Student Learning Survey, The Middle Years Development, The FSA and more. We will know we're on track because we can see the development on a term to term and year to year basis. Cook has put itself in a position to be able to document progress in all of the categories mentioned in this learning plan.

There are also other less formal ways of tracking data and information in the school. The principal, Ms Kong has Fireside chats with staff members at the end of the year to gather feedback and thoughts, we have class reviews twice a year, and are consistently collecting anecdotal evidence from staff throughout the year. We track student behaviour with behaviour logs. In addition to those two formal data sets, we also collect "Think sheets" where students are asked to reflect on their behaviours, explain them and think about what they would do the next time. There is also a restorative justice piece to the Think sheets where students are encouraged to address the situation with peers or adults.

Through formal data and Street data the Cook community understands where we are and where we need to go next.