

## 2023-2024 School Learning Plan

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### SCHOOL STORY

Sir James Douglas Annex is located on the ancestral and unceded territory of the x<sup>w</sup>məθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), sk̓wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Sir James Douglas Annex Elementary is situated in the Southeast area of Vancouver on the border of Sunset and Victoria-Fraserview neighbourhoods. The area is relatively dense, with various household types and living arrangements. It has an increasingly diverse population. According to statistics from the City of Vancouver, this area has a high number of immigrants, with a population identifying as a visible minority, and residents using a non-English mother tongue or non-English home language. Douglas Annex is part of the David Thompson Secondary School Family of Schools.

Douglas Annex is a French Immersion single-track school where students have instruction in French from Kindergarten to Grade 3. French Immersion is considered a Choice Program, so students come from all over the city but many live close or just outside the school neighbourhood.

There are 163 students in eight divisions. Our diverse population includes students with many different cultural heritages, those who are Indigenous, and those with special needs. When students enter Grade 4, they move to Sir James Douglas Elementary which is about six blocks away on Victoria Drive and Brigadoon.

The Douglas Annex staff is collaborative and collegial, with new members and many who have worked in the school for a long time. In addition to the classroom teachers, there is one full-time Resource Teacher and a Music Teacher one day per week. There are also two support workers who support students with special needs. The Vice Principal is onsite and teaches half the week in the library, while the principal supports the school from Douglas Elementary. The school is also supported by a Counsellor, a Speech and Language Pathologist, and a One-to-One Literacy Volunteer. Throughout the year, you may also see student teachers from nearby University programs working on their practicum teaching experience in classrooms.

Douglas Annex is invested in student learning in the classroom and beyond. It is an early intervention school with the Reading Recovery Literacy Program. Running Club, Track and Field, and Cross-country are some of the experiences offered to students outside of the classroom. Performances and other school experiences have also been carefully selected to teach students about awareness, acceptance, inclusion, and social issues.

Sir James Douglas Annex and Sir James Douglas Elementary have the same Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The PAC has supported the school by funding additional technology, field trips, in-class workshops, cultural dance workshops, school barbecues, parent information sessions, and our new gravel pathway between the entrance and the parking lot entrance.

Douglas Annex is a small school so many students and staff know each other. This creates a very safe, warm and welcoming environment. The students know the school motto to take care of ourselves, each other, and our school. A school song was created by staff members and is sung by students in at least one of the assemblies during the year. For many years the students have addressed staff members at Douglas Annex by their first

names, for example Mme Stacey, the Vice Principal, and with this practice students are respectful of their teachers. Most students come to school ready to learn and are immersed in French from the first day of kindergarten. Staff work collaboratively with other staff members but also with parents while providing an exciting academic program for their students.

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

Many of the new students who have come to Douglas Annex starting in kindergarten are siblings of those already at the two Douglas schools. At Douglas Annex students are engaged in learning French from the moment they start Kindergarten. We have students enrolled in our program that speak many different languages at home. Many of the students are learning a third language when starting to learn in French, some even are learning a fourth language.

Since students start learning French, many without any previous exposure, staff members show patience and understanding while students learn by listening first and then when ready, start to respond using simple French language. Douglas Annex is an early intervention school with the Reading Recovery Literacy Program, while many classrooms follow a structured literacy approach. Reading Recovery targets the most at-risk learners in Grade 1. Communicating Student Learning (CSL) data demonstrates clear progress in Grade 1 students which speaks to the impact of early intervention. Term 1 CSL Language Arts data shows that 31.71% of Grade 1 students were at the Emerging Level while in Term 3, this reduced to 7.5%. Alternatively, in Term 1, 12.2% of Grade 1 students were at the Proficient level in Language Arts in Term 1 and by the end of the year this number increased to 35% of the Grade 1 students. Other programs the staff currently use to support student learning, physical and mental well-being and belonging include The Zones of Regulation, Second Step, and Ready Body Learning Minds. In addition, there are sensory pathways set up in the one long hallway for students, and they are often seen jumping and following the various indicators on the floor. Together the school community celebrates having opportunities for children including Running Club, Cross-Country, Track and Field and more. The staff prioritizes Social Emotional Learning as well as communication with families. There is also an outdoor learning area and a school garden complete with both indigenous plants and a pollinator garden. Douglas Annex is also supported by the David Thompson Community Schools Team Hub who have provided programming, through community connections and support to our students in many ways. To engage the students in acts of kindness beyond the school and to support the broader community, children at Douglas Annex send thank you cards to veterans for Remembrance Day and create Holiday Cards for the patients at Holy Family in December.

The staff at Douglas Annex is dedicated to ensuring equity in our school. There has been a concerted effort by staff to ensure diversity in our library collection to reflect the diverse student and family population with representation of many cultures, SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity), and neurodiversity. Furthermore, performances have been carefully selected as an additional tool to teach the students about awareness, acceptance, inclusion, and social issues. At Douglas Annex we celebrate our diverse population.

Staff members are also committed to engaging students about the reconciliation journey and Indigenous content. We use the Indigenous acknowledgement at every assembly and before any big presentation. We have the First People's Principles of Learning posted in the school and referred to by teachers. We have an exciting collection of books that staff members use both in French and in English to share knowledge, learning and values of our First Nations, Inuit and Metis people. Students not only learn about Indigenous ways inside but also outside in our garden, on our school grounds and in our community. Staff members ensure Indigenous teachings are embedded in the curriculum and are addressed often with students.

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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

CSL data was reviewed in both Math and French Language Arts from terms one and two of this school year. From this data the staff noticed that most Douglas Annex students are at the proficient level in numeracy, however, for literacy the results were quite different, most students are at the developing level for French Language Arts, and this is an area that the staff really think we need to focus on and work on with students so improvements can be made.

The other data that was used were the results from the Student Learning Survey for our Grade 3 students, some of the CELI/CLIP data, and the results of a ten-question shortened mini-Dessa questionnaire, that was done as a baseline last June for all students in K-3.

As a staff, we then looked at the components of Language Arts and although we do not have CSL data that breaks down the components of French Language Arts, we believe reading is an area for growth. However, with further discussion, we considered that one of the important skills before reading is oral language development. This is why we decided to scaffold by first focusing on developing oral language next year with the intent of diving into reading once there has been an improvement in oral language.

We plan to:

- Have class and school-wide incentives for encouraging students to speak French
- Ensure there is social and emotional support for our students so that they can be successful. Find ways to support the reluctant speakers to have success too. The staff realizes that the lack of participation is not always a lack of ability.

Some resources/ideas we want to use/look at:

- Professional Development: share our ideas of what we are each doing in our class with each other to develop oral expression
- Prioritize French/French Canadian performances (Maple Man, Will et Seeka)
- Using Music to develop oral language
- Find ways to encourage students to share their oral language learning with their parents

### Improve equity

What have we been currently doing to address this goal?

- Ensuring that we share a variety of diverse content with our students through books, videos, plays, presentations, assemblies, dance and more. We make a conscious effort to include content that is culturally diverse, shares diverse family structures/SOGL, and expresses privilege and barriers all in hopes that students will both see themselves in this content but also have more awareness about their world around them.
- We explicitly teach about recognizing and responding to racism and discrimination
- We focus on the roots and history of pink shirt day and pride month central so that they don't become too generalized around just being friendly and anti-bullying.
- We share and teach about significant events including, Black History Month, Asian History Month, Indigenous history Month, and Pride Month

Specific Actions we will take:

- To continue to provide diverse content to all students to promote equity in our school
- To continue to question our practices in our school which may put students at a disadvantage
- To continue to learn about teaching equity as a staff and allow for time for these discussions
- To build a community and connection, intentionally inviting diverse presenters or experts into the school.
- To have even more visible signs of welcome at our school for diverse communities

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

What learning have we done at our school to support and enhance our understanding of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge?

- We had Math professional development that helped us embed Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in our teaching of Mathematics
- We had a book club this year looking at using various resources including Indigenous resources to help students become more aware of themselves
- We have identified a section in the library for our Indigenous books and the amount in both French and English has grown substantially
- We created a tree in the center of our school hallway that has all our students' hands as leaves for Orange Shirt Day
- We had an assembly to commemorate and learn about Orange Shirt Day and we had several performances this year that focusses on Indigenous learning
- We created an Indigenous Garden and students learn about Indigenous plants.

What evidence of understanding of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge have been fostered within your school community?

- Students sharing knowledge and asking questions about Indigenous knowledge and perspective, conversations with parents about what students have learned.
- The questions, comments, discussions, reactions that students have after reading, listening, or viewing Indigenous stories.
- If you walk into our classrooms, there often is evidence of Indigenous perspectives learning through various subject areas in the form of artwork on the walls/displays created by teachers/students or individual student work
- Teachers use Indigenous stories for many different subject areas to ensure Indigenous education is embedded throughout student learning

How will we sustain and enhance our understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge?

- We will continue to deepen our awareness of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge on an individual and collective basis
- We will look at ways to share our knowledge through Artwork/Mural to signal to the community our school is welcoming of all and supportive/aware of the host nations and the perspectives and knowledge that we learn and share
- Getting a plaque with Indigenous Acknowledgement/Welcome sign put up outside our school

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

For our Oral Expressive Language goal, we will review the Language Arts data from the three terms of the CSL Learning Update and the Summary of Learning. Moreover, all classroom teachers will assess their students' proficiency level for oral language and submit it to the administrator during reporting periods. This allows us to take a global look at Language Arts development and specific oral expressive language over time and track progress in these areas.

For our equity goal, the staff will continue to ask the following questions: Is what we are doing in the best interest of all our students and is what we are doing putting some students at a disadvantage? Are we ensuring diverse representation in our choices of books, performances, and in what we are teaching? We will ensure we are considering equity when making decisions for our school

For our Indigenous goal, we will continue to find ways to embed our reconciliation journey in the classroom, but we will also engage in larger school projects. We will know if we are on track by looking at the progress of our whole school ideas – assemblies, bulletin boards, outside mural, plaque outside the school. We will also have students reflect on their learning of Indigenous perspectives and collect their responses.