

## 2023-2024 School Learning Plan

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### SCHOOL STORY

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x̱m̱əθḵʷəy̱əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

Dr. A.R. Lord Elementary School is in the northeast part of Vancouver close to Hastings Park Conservancy in a diverse, hilly, green neighbourhood. Our area has not experienced high transiency. We even have a second generation of students attending AR Lord. There are fourteen different languages spoken in our community with English, Cantonese, and Vietnamese being the most prevalent.

Most grade seven students enter Templeton Secondary where they have success in academics, specialized programs, sports, and social responsibility.

The student population engages in extra-curricular learning and school service opportunities such as choir, cross-country, Dungeons & Dragons, volleyball, basketball, badminton, track & field, Templeton STEM challenge, student-led morning announcements, student lunch monitors, and student leadership with social justice projects.

Our school's enrollment has plateaued in the past two years. We enroll Kindergarten to grade seven students in nine divisions with close to 200 students. Across the street at Hastings Community Centre, the out of school care program, 'OSC' is a welcomed asset to our school community. The community centre also runs daycare and preschool programs where future classmates meet before entering Kindergarten.

Since emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic our staff have engaged in recurring conversations about how best to meet increasing and complex needs related to learning, mental wellness, family stressors impacting students, generalized anxiety, and the shifting concept of world safety. We are active partners with our School Counsellor, School Psychologist, School Speech-Language Pathologist, and the Templeton Family of Schools Community School Coordinator.

Our school team engaged with the Shanker Self-Regulation Framework™: a five-step method (and framework) to deal with stress so that we experience calm in mind and body and, from there, begin to restore physiologically, emotionally, psychologically, and socially. We worked regularly to better support dysregulation in our school community in monthly learning sessions. Dr AR Lord Elementary has many unique and positive characteristics. We are proud of how we organize a small and complex student population into an inclusive and close school community. Our school community benefits from close relationships between all ages of students, as well as between home & school.

Staff came up with the following words to describe the learners in our community.

At AR Lord Elementary, we celebrate student achievement inside and outside the classroom. Student work is displayed all over our physical space. Students and staff regularly acknowledge each other's achievements publicly and individually through morning announcements, in-person visits, P.R.I.D.E tickets, and during formal collaboration and learning sessions. The community regularly invites others to observe learning and results of project-based learning. This also creates a sense of belonging in school and community. Applying chosen skills to demonstrate learnings allows students to celebrate their strengths.

We celebrate physical and mental well-being inside and outside the classroom. Often, staff teach and support groups learning outside as well as lead direct teaching of outdoor education. We regularly make the connection between physical & mental well-being through the Self-Regulation Framework™ and other mental health and social-emotional learning curriculum such as Second Step, Open Parachute, MindUp, SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity), Zones of Regulation, Social Thinking™. Staff support students with open dialogue, gender-inclusive language (and reminder notes for guest educators), and regular teaching opportunities. We celebrate SOGI Pride and School P.R.I.D.E through our Code of Conduct. The school-wide positive behaviour support system is grounded in the P.R.I.D.E matrix: Purpose, Respect & Responsibility, Integrity, Diversity and Engagement.

Equity and Reconciliation is an ongoing practice as staff and students are unlearning prejudices and re-learning history together. We engage in acts of reconciliation together by sharing inquiry projects about Canadian history, daily land acknowledgements, and singing the Coast Salish anthem. Our school library is a common learning area where staff and students access new and culturally responsible print materials that teach and celebrate Indigenous culture.

We have an extraordinarily spacious and engaging school yard with a playground structure, garden area, 2 basketball areas, gravel field and grass field as well as several playground games painted beneath a covered, hard surface play area.

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

The learners in our community have high energy and represent diversity in identity and learning. The students are engaged and curious learners. Our staff work to develop and provide learning opportunities that highlight community strengths in neurodiversity, cultural awareness, athletics and the arts.

Scanning and student voice tells us generally:

- We need to continue to develop growth mindset and tolerance for uncertainty
- We need to provide education, support and guidance for families in the understanding of neurodiversity and the impact on self-regulation and learning

Based on a Values survey, our school culture is represented by these values:

- Students say: friendship and diversity are among the top values to represent our school
- Parents say: respect, community, diversity

### Literacy

2023/24 reporting data shows us that AR Lord students are improving their outcomes toward curricular competencies and the student learning proficiency index. Students who were achieving emerging or developing on the proficiency index were monitored throughout all 3 terms. In term 1, 64% of students were assessed in the emerging/developing category. Progressing throughout the year, in term 2, 52% of students were emerging/developing and by term 3, only 46% of students. This shows improvement throughout the year, and it

also highlights the need for continued improvement. Staff will continue to assess, monitor and adjust teaching and learning groups as required. It is important to respond to the interventions provided to all the learners in our school community.

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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**

We will continue to assess all learners using additional formative assessments (School Wide Write, BAS) to obtain schoolwide data. We will use this data to inform the classroom teaching practises as well as the Tier 2 learning support interventions. We will also use these assessments as opportunities for teachers to collaborate and calibrate proficiency to establish a common standard schoolwide.

Additionally, we aim to provide equitable access for all learners to improve literacy outcomes. We have built Tier 2 learning support groups to provide direct instruction in Literacy.

To continue to improve student physical and mental well-being, we will provide direct instruction through various Social Emotional Learning Curriculum: Open Parachute, Second Step, EASE, Little Spot Series, Zones of Regulation, Social Thinking (TM) and Ready Bodies, Learning Minds. We will continue to use Restorative Practise to build community and resolve conflict.

### **Improve equity**

To improve equity, we will continue to build a rich library of literature designed for universal access to learning. It is high interest and new and relevant literature that promotes engagement in literature circles and literacy K-7.

Our classes are designed in multiple grade groupings to increase collaboration amongst learners and classroom and resource teachers. We will continue to provide additional teacher collaboration time to support educational planning that provides access to curriculum for all learners.

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

We will continue to integrate First Peoples Principles of Learning throughout our classroom activities and routines. Our collection of Indigenous books and learning resources will continue to be a spending priority. We participate in place-based learning by utilizing our outdoor education resources such as gardening materials and tools for visual investigations; we also provide weather-appropriate outdoor wear for all learners. We collaborate with staff at the Hastings Conservancy in our neighbourhood for enriched outdoor learning.

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

- Visible and measurable progress in literacy skills as evidenced through CSL data, School Wide Write, reading assessments and the Foundational Skills Assessment
- Visible and measurable progress in Social Emotional well-being through our Student Voice Survey