

2023-2024 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

Lord Nelson Elementary is located on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). With deep respect and gratitude as a school community, we are unlearning and relearning on their shared territories. Lord Nelson Elementary School is a K-7 school with a population of approximately 480 students located in a diverse community in the northeastern section of Vancouver near Nanaimo Street and East 1st Avenue, known as Hastings Sunrise. Our students speak many languages including English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Igbo, Dari, Farsi, Hebrew, Japanese, Nepali, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese and other languages at home. Of our population, 8% are English Language Learners. We have a small population of Indigenous students. Our school community of 20 divisions is broken up into 5 learning pods (Bear, Orca, Salmon, Wolf, Alder).

Our school is a new seismically built school completed in September 2019. It has three levels, the lower two are the school with 5 communities of students with 4 classes in each community. The third level of the building houses Frog Hollow - “The Village” at Nelson Childcare Program. “The Village” is an innovative partnership with the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board. This partnership was designed to co-locate childcare with schools to help to build communities that are more walkable and family friendly. The Village offers programming for children from 3 months to five years of age and includes a school age program providing before and after school care to families. It is a great asset for the families and students here.

Generally, the strength of our school continues to be home-school relationships and our ability to meet the needs of diverse learners and provide opportunities and programs that enrich student learning. Valuing diversity, equity, and inclusion is central to everything happening in the Lord Nelson Elementary community. The teaching and support staff at Lord Nelson are actively engaged in learning with the students. They are progressive in their thinking and teaching practice and they participate in ongoing professional development to further strengthen their knowledge base around literacy, social emotional learning, indigenous education, anti-racism education, social justice issues, and topics connected diversity, equity and inclusion. The students have well developed background knowledge and are well versed in issues around social justice. The parent community is actively involved in the education of their children and has high expectations for academic achievement.

The school thrives on a collaborative model where communities work together to develop programs and support students, this is done through inquiry learning and exploration. We offer many extracurricular opportunities at Nelson including opportunities in afterschool sports programs and ADST. We also offer many school service and leadership opportunities such as School Patrol, Primary Lunch Monitors, Student Council, Student Announcers, and Assembly Leaders. Nelson students are thriving in the areas of athletics, music, fine arts, and are provided with many project-based learning opportunities.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

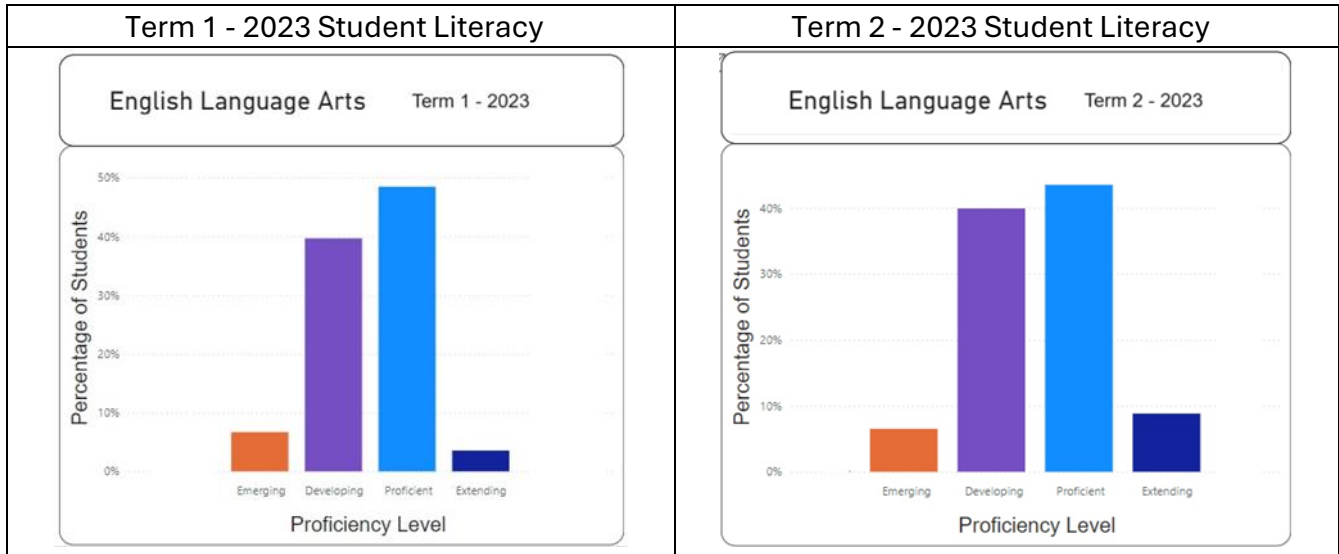
Our community of learners is very engaged and thriving with the many diverse learning opportunities we are providing as a school. These opportunities are tied to the VSB Education Plan 2026 and built on core competencies: intellectual, personal and social emotional. As a school community, our staff and our community partners are continuing to work collaboratively in deepening our partnerships that focus on core competencies through working together with a variety of working groups within the VSB and our school community such our Parent Advisory Committee, PAC Parent Garden Group, Anti-Oppression Working Group, and many other outside organizations such as Ethos Labs, TennisXL (Pickleball) as well as other people we work with directly to provide small group or school-wide learning opportunities that are grounded in diversity, equity and inclusion, social justice, and indigenous ways of learning.

Literacy

Student literacy continues to be an important area of student learning at Lord Nelson. The following 2023 literacy data is taken from Term 1 and Term 2 Language Arts

Written Learning Update data.

| 2023 Term 1 | 2023 Term 2 |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Emerging: 6.7% | Emerging: 6.6% |
| Developing: 39.6% | Developing: 40.1% |
| Proficient: 48% | Proficient: 43.1% |
| Extending: 3.5% | Extending: 9% |
| Other: 1.3% | Other: 1.2% |



The majority our student population’s literacy proficiency falls into the categories of Proficient and Developing. In Term 1, 87.6% of students were within the Proficient/Developing proficiency. In Term 2, this group represented 83.2%. What stood out between Term 1 and 2 was the 5.5% of students who improved their literacy proficiency from Proficient to Extending. The specific percentage breakdowns are indicated in the above table for each proficiency group. Nelson students come to school with a wealth of background knowledge and activate it in many aspects of their learning. They are able to make personal connections to their learning, understand many current events and social justice issues in an age-appropriate way. The staff are working hard to continue to develop the reading skills to help support deeper levels of reading comprehension and critical thinking.

EQUITY

We have built a culture of collaboration at Nelson Elementary. School-home communication is effective, and the school and PAC have a shared vision to support student learning, promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and provide community-based opportunities for students. Student engagement and learning remains the focus of the collaboration between PAC and school through initiatives that include gardening, cooking, anti-racism education, Black History Month, promotion of SOGI, and numerous Indigenous Education learning opportunities. Equity of access to all learning opportunities for students and families are in place, and the school is working to remove barriers to participation.

RECONCILITATION

The Nelson school community shares a collective responsibility to unlearn and relearn through a journey of reconciliation. First Peoples Principles of Learning are imbedded in teaching and learning opportunities for our students. School staff are learning alongside our students and are actively engaged in ongoing professional development, land-based learning opportunities, and a district led Indigenous Focus Day to further our growth in this area. Authentic learning opportunities are provided to students, and we have reached out to Indigenous leaders, elders, and community members to share their experiences and knowledge.



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

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

In alignment with the Education Plan 2026, Nelson staff placed specific emphasis on improving student learning, engagement and achievement in literacy. This includes critical reflection on our own practice, engaging and implementing aspects of district pro-d, using effective assessment tools that will help guide student instruction and improve understanding in reading, writing, and oral language skills. Collaboration opportunities and dialogue across the grades is vital in understanding the foundation of literacy skills that students have as they move through each grade, and the progression. (K Heggerty, 1-3 UFLI) We are working collaboratively with the district literacy team to refine our assessment tools, have conversations about best practices in teaching reading and writing, building consistency around assessment K-7 and building a common understanding of what aspects reading and writing receive focus in each grade. Ongoing collaboration and conversation across the grades is taking place to meet the individual literacy needs of students and we are engaging the district principal in this conversation as well as advocating for additional FTE, and refining our own resource schedule and time tabling.

SEL Transition

Improve equity

Equity of access and equity of opportunity serve as a foundation of support at Nelson Elementary. Through ongoing conversation with staff, clear communication, and relationship building with the three pillars of the community (students, staff, families), trust has been built to ensure equity is front and center in school decision making and that proper and equitable processes are followed. While maintaining the utmost respect for students and families the school identifies gaps, language barriers, cultural complexities, and other barriers to participation as factors we must address in order to provide equity of access to all educational opportunities for Nelson families.

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

Indigenous education is imbedded in day-to-day instruction and our staff are engaged to learn with the students. We have established partnerships with Frog Hollow and their National Indigenous Day celebration, and we have brought in a number of Indigenous educators and leaders to share their knowledge and teachings with our school community. This commitment and further expansion will continue in 2024-25. Experiential learning opportunities through drumming, weaving projects, singing, and outdoor field studies serve to further develop our understanding of Indigenous perspectives. The school PAC and parent community as a whole share the same feelings and are active in their participation and support of furthering Indigenous Education at Lord Nelson and continuing on an authentic and student-centered journey of Reconciliation. We have also been fortunate to bring in a number of outside organizations to engage in performance, storytelling, and hands on activities with students and staff. More specifically, we have had weaving take place with many primary divisions and a whole school assembly showcasing Indigenous Hoop Dancer Dallas Arcand Jr. Both of these activities included a demonstration/showcase component, but also an educational piece explaining the deeper meaning behind the activity. Our school continues to dialogue with a district Indigenous Enhancement Teacher about upcoming opportunities for student learning.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

Opportunities for whole school, small group, and topic focused collaboration are ongoing and will continue in 2024-25. Teachers are very reflective in their planning and implementation of literacy instruction across all grades. They are eager to continue working and learning from one another, and part of these conversations is looking at various forms of reading and writing data, to help guide instruction. Report card information provides a great wholistic picture of where students are across the grades. We have established a baseline of literacy data that can be compared year to year. Next year we will review this as a staff to determine where we need to focus our work.

We will continue to use literacy data from the written learning updates along with our ongoing teacher facilitated student reading and writing assessments to track student growth in literacy. Student learning survey data will also provide useful information connected to learning engagement, student well-being and indigenous ways of learning.