

2023-2024 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

With deep gratitude and respect, Quilchena Elementary School is honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the *xwməθkwəyəm* (Musqueam), *Skwxwú7meshÚxwumixw* (Squamish Nation) & *səlilwətał* (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). The name Quilchena comes from the Salish word meaning "*flat place near water*." Quilchena is a dual track school with approximately 315 students divided equally between the French Immersion and English tracks. Our school is located in the Kerrisdale neighbourhood in the south-western section of Vancouver. Quilchena school grounds are adjacent to Point Grey Secondary. The close proximity to the secondary school supports shared activities between elementary and secondary staff and students. To the north of us four blocks away is Quilchena Park and adjacent to the school is Kerrisdale Park and Ice Arena, where many of our classes go to appreciate nature, get active and to take part in land-based learning activities. Quilchena enrolls 14 divisions. In the English track, approximately 30% of students are English Language Learners. In French Immersion many students are learning a third or sometimes a fourth language. Of note are the different catchment areas for English and French. The catchment for English is from Larch to Granville and 33rd to 41st Avenue. We refer to this area as our 'neighbourhood'. The catchment in French Immersion encompasses the district. Although most French Immersion students live in the area, some reside in different communities across the city.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

A variety of cultural backgrounds are represented in both tracks. Inclusivity is important to the Quilchena community. It is a priority that students feel a sense of belonging and responsibility to the school and community. Older students assist younger students with fair play and inclusion and partake in leadership opportunities. As Wolves, we strive to demonstrate **Wisdom, Ownership, Leadership, Versatility, Empathy and Safety** each and every day. Our Code of Conduct is the guiding principle behind how all students, staff, caregivers and visitors will act. It provides us with guidance and language to promote positive behaviour and to address conduct that is unacceptable. The Parent Advisory Council organizes community events that provide fun opportunities for Quilchena families to connect like the Eco Fair and PAC BBQ. We are fortunate to have on-site, out-of-school care. The Shaughnessy Point Grey (SPG) out-of-school care accommodates approximately 60 students before and after school and during school vacations. It is an integral and valued part of the school.

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

Our literacy goal, is to use assessment data to help guide our instruction. Primary teachers will focus on reading and intermediate teachers will focus on writing. Primary teachers will collect baseline data on reading levels at the beginning of the year. Classroom and resource teachers will then look at the assessment data collected and use it to find ways to focus instruction. Lessons will be formulated and skills will be directly taught throughout the term. Each term reading and writing levels will be assessed to see what progress has been made. For primary students, reading is the literacy focus. We have a Reading Recovery program and also the French equivalent IPLE which both provide targeted one to one support for struggling readers in the primary grades. Teachers found this early intervention has made a difference in the reading progress of our primary students. Teachers have read alouds that ensure exposure to both fiction and non-fiction books. They also ensure students are reading properly leveled books and use phonics programs to help students learn individual letter sounds and groups of letters. We are fortunate to partner with students from Point Grey, our neighbouring high school, who run an after-school reading club for our primary students in both English and French streams on Wednesdays in the library.

For intermediate students the literacy focus is more on writing. Teachers use various spelling programs, journal writing, poetry writing, working with authors, writer's workshop, daily informal writing like brain pocket writing, Q & A's, directed writing where they learn a skill and apply it (i.e. using dialogue), practice writing fiction, non-fiction and 1st person narratives. Some of the French classes incorporate Lalilo and the Je lis Je lis littératie online program. Intermediate teachers will conduct a school wide write at the beginning of the year which will provide some baseline data. Instruction will then focus on areas of weakness in each grade/class. Teachers will work in teams at various grade levels to find strategies to teach students the skills that they need most to improve their levels of achievement in writing.

Improve equity

We are a diverse community at Quilchena and we are supportive and inclusive of all regardless of culture, language, gender or religious background. Our goal is to create an inclusive school environment where all students, regardless of their background, abilities, or circumstances, have equal access to high-quality education and opportunities for success.

In classrooms, teachers adjust expectations and modify lessons to ensure all students regardless of ability are able to participate. Teachers offer options for projects that can lend to individual student strengths and students have some options on how to share their learning to appeal to different kinds of learners. Some group projects are carefully selected by the teacher to ensure that ability levels and participation levels are balanced.

Different adaptations are made to lessons to be inclusive of all students regardless of ability. In the classroom, most students follow the same schedule even though their individual programs may look very different. The use of technology can help students with written output challenges. Whether it is using a dictation microphone or working on keyboarding skills, technology is used as an aid to provide equity within the classroom. Some students are given seating accommodations either close to the front of the classroom, close to the teacher or with a "learning buddy" to help ensure that the learning environment is optimized. In Physical Education, teachers offer assistive equipment so that all students can be successful or participate.

A group of teachers started a Diversity Club which is a great start to create a positive environment for any students who are interested in participating in making art during lunch hour. The school ensures that all students can participate in field trips, hot lunch and other school activities regardless of financial disposition.

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

Continuing on the journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities involves integrating a variety of meaningful activities into the school's curriculum and daily practices. A key ongoing activity is the daily land acknowledgment, where we emphasize the connection to the land by using different photos and stories, and involving students in delivering the acknowledgment. On Orange Shirt Day, we recognize and honor the survivors of residential schools through lessons on belonging and family, discussions on the day's significance, and wearing orange shirts. Social Studies projects play a vital role, focusing on First Nations contributions and their evolution, incorporating projects on Indigenous inventions, role models, and cultural practices. We also hold daily talking circles, providing a respectful and supportive environment for students to share their thoughts and learn from each other.

Cultural art activities such as soapstone carving and weaving are organized through workshops with local Indigenous artists or educators. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Knowledge Keepers have been invited to speak to students, either in-person or virtually, sharing their wisdom and stories. We also utilize the Musqueam Learning Kit from the Museum of Anthropology, integrating it into classroom lessons to focus on Musqueam history and culture. Outdoor education opportunities are planned, incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing through nature walks, ecological studies, and other outdoor activities led by Indigenous educators. During the school Eco Fair, we include Indigenous presenters to highlight Indigenous environmental practices and sustainable living. We create a heart garden to honor residential school survivors and their families, collaborating with students to plant and maintain the garden, and incorporating it into lessons about reconciliation and remembrance. Additionally, we continuously interweave Indigenous perspectives into all subject areas, providing professional development for teachers on integrating Indigenous knowledge into lesson plans.

As a school, our goal is to foster understanding of intergenerational trauma and its impacts and facilitate regular conversations using resources like books, articles, and guest speakers. We also aim to promote an inclusive and supportive school environment, encouraging students to be allies, support diversity, and challenge stereotypes through various classroom activities and discussions. By embedding these activities into the school's curriculum and culture, we aim to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Indigenous histories, cultures, and contributions, while actively participating in the journey of reconciliation. We hope to invite more Indigenous storytellers, guest speakers and performers next year and also hope to have more professional development for teachers to help embed this content into our curriculum.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

We will keep tracking student achievement by gathering both formal and informal feedback from staff, students, and parents. We'll continue to review student self-reflections and anecdotal evidence. We will analyze data from Foundation Skills Assessment, Communicating Student Learning Reports, Student Learning Surveys, Middle Years Development Instrument, and the Early Development Instrument. We will keep providing opportunities to enhance physical and mental well-being and a sense of belonging through activities and the development of Social Emotional skills within the classroom and school. We will celebrate our successes as a community.

By monitoring, assessing, and collecting evidence, we will know we are on track by seeing improvements in the data and receiving feedback from staff, students, and parents.