

2024-2025
School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

Where we are:

With a population of 641 students and 68 staff members, l'École Laura Secord Elementary is a large and diverse school. Our students speak various languages and our school is situated on the traditional territory of the *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)*, *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish)* & *salilwataʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)*. Offering Early and Late French Immersion as well as English programs, we support a wide variety of students, including English Language Learners. We prioritize creating a welcoming environment where students feel a strong sense of belonging and where everyone is welcomed.

Committed to reconciliation, we engage in various initiatives like place-based learning, maintaining our Indigenous memorial garden, and organizing Truth and Reconciliation activities. Located in Vancouver's culturally diverse community near Commercial Drive, our school embraces the richness of its surroundings, utilizing nearby parks and green spaces like Trout Lake for various activities.

We offer many field studies in our community throughout the year and have close relationships with Vancouver Technical Secondary School, the local ice rink and community parks and garden nearby. On our school grounds, we created a pollinator garden and a vegetable garden this year to celebrate Earth Day and we value the green space at our school and organize Indigenous plant walks, birdhouses building and learning about endangered wildlife and relationship with nature, plants and animals.

For the 2024-2025 school year, our in-school programming includes a wide array of artistic performances that reflect a rich cultural diversity. We are dedicated to offering a diverse selection of artistic, cultural, and athletic experiences to enrich our students' education.

Students and community appreciate the hours of volunteer coaching time our teachers put into our cross country, volleyball, basketball and track and field teams.

Our greatest assets at Laura Secord Elementary are the people that contribute to this dynamic learning community. When asked to describe themselves, students chose words like "inclusive, caring, artistic, athletic, kind, funny, helpful, unique and cool." When listing their positive attributes, the most frequently used word was caring. Students also report that staff are helpful, polite, careful with students, have a big responsibility, are gentle, playful and friendly. They see Laura Secord Elementary as being a safe, kind, welcoming place that is awesome and enjoyable. Teachers are keen to note that there is a strong sense of community at Laura Secord found in students, staff and parents.

We celebrate our students' success and progress. In classrooms, teachers celebrate small and large milestones through class meetings, ceremonies, open houses, conferences and conversations. As a school, we create community by celebrating multiple events, including welcoming Kindergarten students and their families to the

school community, Halloween, Winter Warmer, Spring Carnival, Sports Day, Play Day, Spirit Days, Year-End dance and Grade 7 Camp.

When you walk through the halls at Laura Secord Elementary, you will see varied artwork and projects. We are grateful for the plentiful bulletin boards throughout our school where we showcase visual arts, photos to celebrate evidence of learning and growth, student inquiry projects, mathematical thinking and social emotional learning.

Clubs, sports teams, and field trips enrich our students' experiences, fostering a holistic approach to education. Our commitment to ongoing learning is evident through staff participation in various professional development opportunities.

All students in grades Kindergarten through grade 7 at Laura Secord Elementary are also involved in social emotional learning and can benefit from increased empathy, self-awareness and self-regulation.

By focusing on social emotional learning as one of school goals for the next three years, we connect to the Vancouver School Board's Education Plan, to "create a culture of care and shared social responsibility."

We have an active parent advisory council (PAC) and parent community which strives to enhance the experience for students through a variety of activities and programs. This includes regular hot lunches, the addition of Mon Café Catering, organizing an autumn pumpkin patch, Winter Warmer Carnival and book fairs. The parents also assist in fundraising for enhanced classroom experiences, field studies, grade 7 camp and in-school programs.

Engaging with the community is a priority for École Laura Secord Elementary. We have strong relationships with some neighbouring schools. Collaborations with community partners contribute to the overall development of our students. We actively support local organizations through donations and participation in programs that promote mental health awareness and sustainability, including a soft plastics recycling program.

École Laura Secord Elementary School provides a supportive and inclusive environment for learning and community involvement.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

Through informal surveys of staff and students as well as the MDI and Power IB, we identified a common desire for increased collaboration, feelings of belonging and seeing oneself reflected in the community. From the MDI, we identified that our students have a strong sense of connectedness with the adults at our school. All of these findings together guided us towards working towards a model of collaboration. We want all students and staff to feel a strong sense of belonging, care and joy in their time here. Not only do we provide a strong academic program, we also value community-building. By introducing a platooning model, we will increase students' feeling of belonging, teachers' sense of collaboration and enthusiasm with respect to education. For year one of our school plan, we will focus on introducing collaborative instruction through various forms. Our students demonstrate collective and individual strengths in a variety of areas, including: athletics, fine arts (dance, drama, music, visual arts), choir, mathematics, writing, public speaking, social justice and technology. Our students ask insightful questions to guide the learning process and have been taught to think while they learn. They are independent and keen to succeed. Our students are reliable, both in their attendance and in their learning. Secord students tend to be confident, brave and willing to engage in new experiences. Teachers report that students come to school with strong world and background knowledge, gained from life experiences, travel and reading.

Many students at Secord participate in school-sponsored activities, including a variety of clubs, peer leaders, Yukulele, choir, athletics (cross country, volleyball, basketball, track and field, floor hockey, handball) and

volunteer as monitors (library, peer tutors). Our students need to feel included and involved. They need to communicate their likes and dislikes and passions. They need to show their learning in a variety of ways and let themselves be creative and use their imaginations. They need opportunities to practice making good choices and they need time to play. Our students need models for joy and engagement in learning and need the time and opportunity to practice interacting with members of the school community. We are a large school and each student needs to feel a sense of belonging and experience being part of a community each school day.

Our teaching staff recognizes that our students have strong relationships with their own teachers. As we revised our Code of Conduct with our previous Growth Plan, students and staff worked together to create a living document that guides our behaviour within our school community. We focused on our school motto, “we take care of ourselves, we take care of others, we take care of this place” and students generated desirable behaviours in each learning location and situation in our school. Our students need to understand and apply our Code of Conduct throughout their school experience.

Our students need to feel a greater connection to our community. As indicated in the Middle Years Developmental Instrument, 97% of grade 4 and grade 7 students recognize there is an adult at school who believes in them, but only 68% of our students indicate they have one or more important adults at school.

Teachers note that students need support and guidance in being flexible and adapting to change in routine. We also recognize that students can improve in kindness and being polite to others. Our Kindergarten students are exploring how to play and how to learn. We take pride in keeping all our students safe, especially our youngest members of our school community. Our newest kindergarten students wear colored vests when they are moving throughout the school and when they are outside at recess and lunch so the other children and the adults will be able to identify them and extend extra care and kindness. Our primary students benefit from our early literacy initiatives such as Reading Recovery and daily structured literacy teaching. Our primary classes visit the Ready Bodies Learning Minds room at least once each week, where students develop their sensory integration, motor learning and academic success through reflexive, vestibular, proprioceptive and tactile systems. Our intermediate students thrive with the diverse opportunities in athletics and leadership. Many of our classes have a buddy class, so students are establishing multi grade and multi-program friendships and relationships.

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

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

One of our primary learning focuses is on literacy, encompassing both reading and writing, integrated into daily lessons and projects. According to collected data, 53.1% of our Grade 4 students are at a Proficient or Extending level in English, compared to the district average of 47.4%. Additionally, 73.5% of our Grade 7 students are at a Proficient or Extending level in English, while the district average is 54.8%.

Furthermore, by focusing on social-emotional learning (SEL) and ensuring our school is safe, welcoming, and enjoyable for all, we create an environment conducive to learning. This allows teachers and students to focus on academic goals more effectively. All students from Kindergarten through Grade 7 at Laura Secord Elementary are involved in SEL, benefiting from increased empathy, self-awareness, and self-regulation.

By emphasizing SEL as one of our school goals, we align with the Vancouver School Board’s Education Plan, fostering a culture of care and shared social responsibility. This holistic approach ensures our students not only achieve academic excellence but also develop essential life skills.

Improve Equity

At Laura Secord Elementary, we are deeply committed to embedding equity into every aspect of our daily activities and educational practices. We believe that providing equitable learning opportunities, comprehensive support, and fostering an inclusive learning culture for every student in every classroom is essential. This approach is the cornerstone of our mission to enhance both the academic achievement and overall well-being of all our students.

By ensuring equity, we strive to recognize and address the diverse needs and backgrounds of our students, creating an environment where everyone has the chance to succeed. This involves not only fair access to resources and opportunities but also actively working to remove barriers that might hinder a student's progress.

Our commitment to equity is reflected in our curriculum implementation, teaching strategies, and school policies, which are all aimed at nurturing an inclusive and supportive atmosphere. We provide tailored support to meet individual needs, celebrate diverse cultures and perspectives, and encourage all students to participate fully in our school community.

This dedication to equity is integral to creating a vibrant, dynamic, and successful learning environment where every student at Laura Secord Elementary can thrive. We believe that by fostering an inclusive and equitable school culture, we are not only supporting individual student success but also building a stronger, more compassionate community for all.

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

Our school learning plan includes a commitment to ensuring that all learners—staff, students, and the community—continue to increase their understanding and knowledge of Indigenous history, culture, and perspectives. By fostering a sense of belonging and cultural appreciation, Indigenous students develop pride, confidence, and self-esteem through the affirmation of their ancestral identity. This holistic support contributes to improved academic performance in numeracy, reading, and writing, and facilitates their successful transition across grades. We are also integrating the Indigenous Principles of Learning across our curriculum for all learners. This approach helps everyone in our school community to deepen their understanding and respect for Indigenous history, culture, and perspectives, enriching the educational experience and promoting a more inclusive and informed school environment. Through these efforts, we aim to honor and celebrate Indigenous heritage, while equipping all our students with a broader, more empathetic worldview.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

We will know we are successful when we see a positive increase in our MDI and SLS results. We will see less anxious and unexpected behaviours during unstructured social time at school among students. Students will make better choices to solve conflicts, make connections and do their part to foster a welcoming community. We will also see increased interaction among students as well as staff with their respective peers. We will see a decrease in staff and student absences due to mental health and increased well-being and satisfaction of our staff and students. We will track the MDI questions related to optimism, prosocial behaviour, happiness, absence of sadness, self-awareness and responsible decision-making.