

2023-2024 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

Šx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown is a dynamic urban elementary school in the heart of Vancouver. It opened for Kindergarten to Grade Seven enrolment in September 2017 and now has 21 divisions and 480 students. We are the neighbourhood school for families living in parts of Yaletown, Chinatown, and the Downtown East Side. Our school population reflects this wonderful diversity of place. Welcoming brand new immigrants to Canada, as well as Indigenous students whose families have lived on these lands since time immemorial, Šx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown is a very diverse community. There are over thirty different home languages spoken, with the most common being English, Spanish, Russian, Farsi and Korean. Forty-four percent of our students speak a home language other than English.

The Šx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown community is very proud of our Henqimenum name, Šx^wwəq^wəθət [shwa quwa set], which was gifted to us by the Musqueam Nation on March 9, 2020. Elder Larry Grant gifted the name and explained its meaning: “Šx^wwəq^wəθət references a mode of transportation used by Musqueam people whereby they caught the tide as a shortcut from False Creek to Burrard Inlet. The meaning of this name is generally translated as ‘the place from which one can catch the tide.’” Since March 2020, we have been working to honour our name, learning about its meaning, spelling and pronunciation. This is an important part of our reconciliation work. We have created two sets of Indigenous hand drums and some students can be seen each morning drumming and singing to acknowledge the local Nations and to welcome the day.

As a school community, we want all students to feel included, respected and seen. We value care, community and kindness. We have a well-established school wide positive behaviour support program (PBIS), which forms part of our Code of Conduct and helps us explain expectations and problem solve when needed. We are the Šx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown CROWS – Caring, Responsible, Optimistic, Wise and Safe. Staff give CROW cards to students ‘doing the right thing’ as a way to make these values visible. Our CROWS matrix which sets out positive expectations, supports the social and emotional well-being of all students.

A key part of our school community are our parents and care-givers, including the active and supportive Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The Šx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown PAC provides additional resources, such as our library book bags, events like dances, support for our wonderful Sun Run team and much more. Many parents and care-givers, including grandparents, foster parents, aunts and older siblings, can often be seen on the playground, chatting with staff and other students before and after school.

We have valued community partnerships with Vancouver Society of Childcare Centres, which runs after school care as well as summer child care on site. In addition, the Vancouver Firefighters and Backpack Buddies provide us with valuable food support throughout the year. To help support families there is after school programming such as sports, yoga and science programs. The school itself is situated adjacent to Andy Livingstone Park, a City of Vancouver park, which serves as our playground.

Our unique location allows us access to many opportunities including ready access to the seawall around False Creek. Habitat Island is within walking distance, providing outdoor learning opportunities with a small stand of trees and shoreline environments. We also have easy access to Concord Pacific Park, Chinatown, Hogan's Alley, Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, and Science World. We have valued community partnerships with BC Place which allows us periodic access to their field as part of the Field of Dreams program.

The ƛxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown students are very enthusiastic about opportunities offered to them. The committed staff team volunteer to run a wide variety of sports teams including basketball, soccer, badminton, track and field and cross-country. Our teams are big! More than 90 students joined the track and field team and more than 100 ran cross country this year. In addition, thanks to parent volunteers, we also have a very special Sun Run team, which, at 103 registered members, won the prize two years in a row for largest elementary team. In addition to these athletic opportunities, many students are involved in caring for our roof top garden and annual events like our Talent Show and Terry Fox Run.

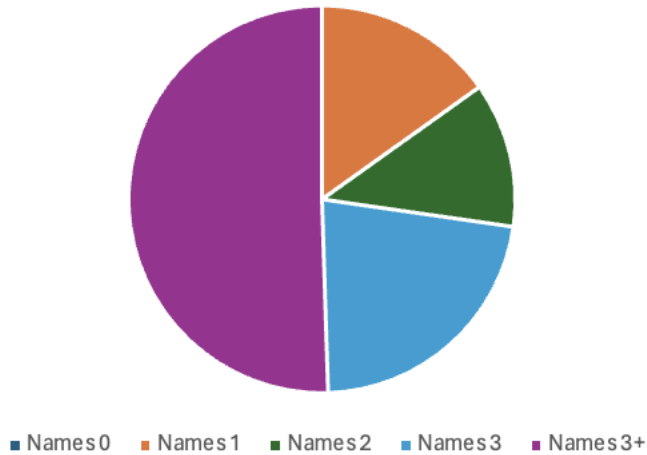
WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

There are 480 learners at ƛxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown. Of these, over twenty are Indigenous, about 30% are designated English Language Learners, with many more speaking one or more languages. In addition about 10% have a special need recognized by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. The community is dynamic, with new families joining us throughout the school year. Often these families are also brand new to Canada. We know that our learners are curious, empathetic and interested in each others' stories. We know that our students embrace leadership opportunities and have enacted several student-led initiatives, including various clubs. We value student voice.

Our collective goal is to increase students' sense of belonging by focusing on the Core Competency of Positive Personal and Cultural Identity. We believe that our diversity is a strength and we want our learners to be able to express themselves and feel a sense of belonging within this community. We use the phrase "Share Your Story" to express this goal and as celebration of individuality within community.

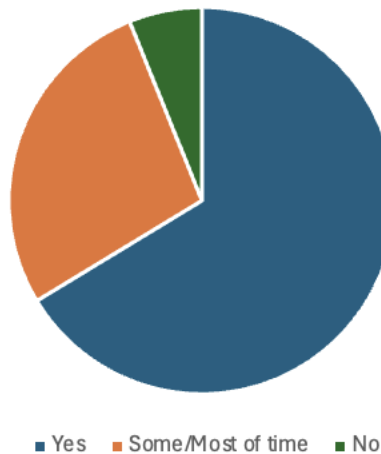
In order to learn more about our learners from the learners themselves, we conduct interviews with five randomly selected learners from each division. We ask students to name adults they believe care about them. This question helps us understand students' sense of belonging and care within the school community. The results from the interviews conducted in the spring of 2024 indicate a high sense of belonging.

Can you name adults at school who care about you?



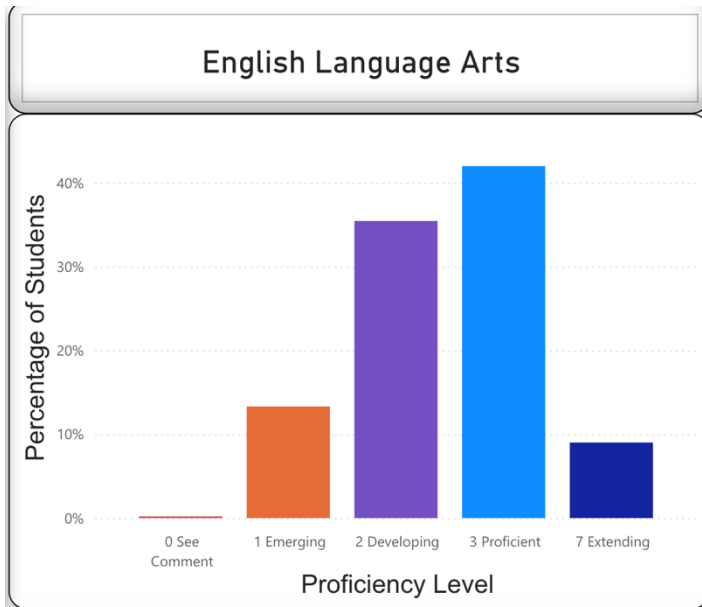
In keeping with “Share Your Story”, we are also interested in knowing if students feel listened to. This is an important aspect of equity within diversity. The results from the interviews conducted in the spring of 2024 indicate that the majority of learners feel that they are listened to by adults.

Do Adults at School Listen to You?



“Share Your Story” is concerned with different types of equity, including linguistic equity. Many of our students have a home language other than English so we work to make them have a sense of belonging. We have done things like: translating our CROWS (Caring Responsible Optimistic Wise Safe) code into multiple languages, increasing the number of classroom and library books in home languages, acknowledging a wide variety of cultural celebrations, holding Newcomer Welcome Teas for new families, and prominently displaying a world map with individual dots for students to place indicating where their story starts.

“Share Your Story” is also concerned with increasing our students’ literacy skills – to increase their ability to tell their own stories in written form. Below are the results from Term Three Summary of Learning, Kindergarten to Grade Seven. This data indicates that just over 50% of our students are proficient or extending in Language Arts. A significant portion of our students continue to to be at the developing or emerging stage, including many of our students who are learning English.



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

“Share Your Story” helps students’ well-being as we work to create a sense of trust and care. The goal connects to both oral and written literacy as students are encouraged to express themselves in different ways. This year we have also focused on structured literacy in many classes, including focused lessons on phonics and phonemic awareness. In addition, students are often encouraged to write or express themselves in their home languages and to share their language skills with newcomers.

Improve equity

We will continue to provide students with many ways to feel welcomed and to develop a sense of belonging. In addition we will continue to value student voice and will conduct a student voice survey to learn more about the students we serve. We strive to create equity by using Restorative practices when solving disputes between students, providing space and time for each student to tell their own perspective.

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

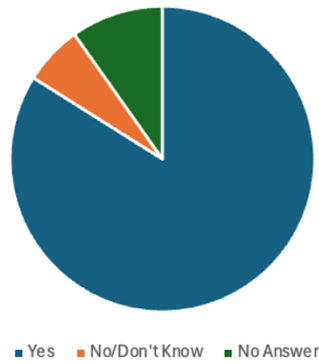


Morning circle – drumming, singing, acknowledging the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliwətał (Tseil-Waututh Nation).

We believe that our learning about Indigenous knowledge and worldviews is deeply related to the “Share Your Story” goal of increasing a sense of belonging among all students. We would like to acknowledge our Indigenous Enhancement Worker, Kim Konda, who guides and supports us in this learning and unlearning. This journey continues in a variety of ways including learning from books by Indigenous authors and hosting the Vancouver Opera production of “Flight of the Hummingbird”. In addition, some students are honoured to be learning from Elder Marr from the Carnegie Centre. We also care for an Indigenous Garden with Indigenous plants and medicines on the flour floor roof top patio. We plan to celebrate National Indigenous Day with contemporary music. It also is important to note that the First Nations Principles of Learning form a large part of our reconciliation journey, as teachers and support workers try to embed the principles throughout the curriculum and the school day.

Each year, we ask each student to tell us what they know about Indigenous peoples and cultures (contributions, stories, history, traditions, language), what they wonder and how they think this learning connects to their own life. Students from Kindergarten to Grade Seven are able to articulate their knowledge about a wide variety of topics including drumming, weaving, storytelling, Musqueam timeline, the importance of salmon and some words in Hənqimənum. The majority of our students are able to explain a personal connection to this knowledge. This listening to student voices helps us understand our teaching and how to move forward on our Reconciliation journey.

K-7 - Connection



HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

As a staff, we will continue to gather information and reflect on it together. This includes using the following tools:

- School wide assessment of literacy (DIBELS 8 for 2024-25)
- Gathering student voice in a systematic way in the spring
- Middle Years Development Instrument, Early Years Development Instrument
- Gathering information from individual students about our Reconciliation journey