

## 2023-2024 School Learning Plan

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### SCHOOL STORY

With deep gratitude and respect, Tecumseh Elementary Community is honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral, and unceded territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nation.

Tecumseh Elementary School, with its rich history and heritage, is located between the Kensington-Cedar Cottage & Victoria-Fraserview neighbourhoods of Vancouver. Specifically, near 41st Ave and Victoria Dr, Tecumseh Elementary School Community has been a central part of the community for its 113 years of operation.

The diverse learning community is represented by a student population of over 400 students who speak 35 different languages.

In addition to the 16 divisions of students (K-7) in regular enrolling, Tecumseh also hosts a District Multi Aged Cluster Class (MACC). MACC is an enrolling class for intermediate aged students who come to Tecumseh from various schools across the district to engage in the gifted learner program.

Tecumseh School routinely offers opportunities to students outside the classroom. Various staff-sponsored athletic teams and clubs are open to students, including cross-country, volleyball, basketball, badminton, and pickle ball. There is also a robust commitment to fine and performing arts at Tecumseh. Tecumseh has a school choir available to students in grades 5-7. The choir enjoys the chance to perform at assemblies, special events or gatherings, and at school-based and district events, such as Celebration of Music and the VSB Choral Festival. The choir was also a recent top ten finalist in the CBC Music Canada Program.

We are happy to celebrate student learning and accomplishments that involve acting, singing, playing various instruments, dancing and sharing work through performances shared with the community at events such as the Winter and Spring Concerts & Techella. We have an ongoing relationship with a school-based Artist in Residence Studio Program, who works with all 17 divisions throughout the school year on fine arts learning projects such as exploring self-identity through self-portraits, connection to animals, and representation with symbols and images. Students have also been able to explore Indigenous plants, learn new printing techniques, and experiment with botanical drawing. The full-time AIRS studio has been recognized and shared with parents and caregivers during learning conferences and open houses.

This year we are embarking on a Legacy Project to honour Ms. Vivian Jung, the first woman of Chinese descent to be hired by the Vancouver School Board. Through a partnership with Vivian's family, local artists, and the Artist in Residence, we created a book of student poetry and art that acted as a fundraiser for an eventual mural project. We also created the Vivian Jung Award to honour the legacy and recognize student achievements on resilience, leadership and a commitment to working for change. We are excited to continue to build off this momentum into next year with additional learning opportunities and celebrations.

Some students select to think about the craft of writing and joy of reading through work with the teacher librarians via the Red Cedar Book Club, and others enjoy volunteering school service as library monitors. We have a diverse range of school-based activity programs from groups such as Arts Umbrella, UBC Science Geering Up workshops, the Vancouver Avian Research Centre, the Burnaby Art Gallery Outreach Programs and the Junior Achievement Society.

We continue to look to increase opportunities for students to see educational performances and productions and to work with field artists in the school. A range of after-school programs are offered to students. Some examples include staff sponsored athletics, programs through the Community Schools Team from David Thompson Secondary School and the YWCA, such as the program for students in Grade 7 transitioning to high school and Red Cross Babysitting. In addition, South Vancouver Neighbourhood House supports students with after-school program offerings. We also work in partnership with the Pacific Immigrant Resource Services (PIRS), a community-based non-profit, serving immigrant and refugee women and their young children. Programs offered by PIRS include pre-school sessions for young children and language classes for adults.

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

Our learners come from diverse linguistic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Nearly half of our students are identified as English language learners (ELL), who speak a second language at home other than English. We have a variety of additional home languages that are spoken in the school community including Cantonese, Japanese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil and Vietnamese, amongst others.

As a school with a relatively high number of ELL learners, we chose to narrow our focus on reading, writing and oral language support. When looking at the data from our learners, the average school-wide achievement level for Language Arts is between developing and proficient. This data analysis allows the school staff to direct our academic focus, with the goal of elevating literacy levels and eliminating barriers to being able to proficiently read and write at grade level.

Our school also values and works hard to support inclusion. Our dedicated team of teachers and support staff workers continue to create universal supports within classrooms to make the curriculum accessible to all our learners. We also take pride in supporting behavioral, social-emotional and learning challenges identified throughout our school community and work hard to provide personalized, modified, and adapted programs for students who need them.

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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

Our overarching goal at Tecumseh is to increase reading fluency and comprehension.

Since we are entering into a new phase of the School Learning Plan, we, as a staff, decided to switch gears to have an emphasis on reading proficiency, versus the previous plan of writing proficiency. There will be content taught, and support provided for writing, in tandem with reading proficiency. As a collective, we are putting efforts and professional development into current and innovative ways of teaching students how to read and find ways to gain a better understanding of phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension. As one of the goals for the school district is improving student achievement in Literacy, we decided as a staff to align ourselves with this goal as well. The district has provided us with Literacy guides, the VSB Responsive Literacy Framework [VSB Responsive Framework media post](#). We recognize the primary years of schooling are integral to build a foundation for the rest of the student's education as reading and writing are paramount for student achievement. Our primary team are constantly re-aligning and re-imagining their practice to find ways to better support our learners.

As a staff, we analyzed data to see where there were gaps in student achievement, school wide. It was evident that we needed to bolster and find alternative pathways to providing the best possible chance for student success within the realm of reading and reading comprehension. There were many initiatives we did as a staff to plan for student success:

- Providing weekly access to school library books
- Weekly book exchange at the school library
- Providing digital content and levelled reading stories that can be read at any time with a device (tablet, computer, etc.), by purchasing licenses for each student of the school
- On Professional Development Days, staff were encouraged to attend Professional Development workshops around literacy, specifically reading
- Attending school district provided Literacy Days throughout the year
- Inviting and attending Literacy teacher mentor workshops at the school
- Refreshing the Tecumseh library with current, diverse and engaging materials to read
- Celebrating reading by having a 'Drop Everything & Read Day' & having a variety of ways to represent reading and having fun at the same time
- Standardized and streamlined our assessment practices and align ourselves so we have common language from year to year to reduce the vagueness of reading levels for students
- Reporting student results about performance, well-being and outcomes to the community and using the result to improve the quality and effectiveness of the education and support provided to students.
- Guided reading groups in the classroom
- Vocabulary enhancement programs through introduction of new words, sight words, and incorporating these into writing exercises

## Student Leadership

Additionally, many upper intermediate age students continue participating in student leadership affording new opportunities for them to grow in their development of recognizing the need for social responsibility within the school and community. We see a direct link between engagement in leadership opportunities and students' sense of belonging and increased positive social behaviors. These activities will continue to grow and expand across our school.

## Improve equity

With the advent of the VSB Education Plan, there is a focus on creating equity within the school and within the school district. Tecumseh is a school where diversity is valued, and antiracism education is practiced through classroom and school wide engagements and projects. We celebrate and honour such events as Black History Month, Asian heritage month, Pride Month, National indigenous People's Day, Diwali and other important cultural celebrations to ensure that all members of our community have the opportunity to be celebrated. These actions are having a direct impact on our students feelings of belonging and connectedness to the school. We hope that these sustained and focused actions will continue to empower students and increase their levels of engagement, satisfaction, and feelings of belonging within the school community and ultimately contribute to their social emotional learning and well-being.

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

At Tecumseh, we strive to develop staff and student understanding and appreciation for Indigenous cultures, traditions, and histories. We incorporate Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into our daily lessons and activities.

- Daily Land Acknowledgements over the PA as part of our morning messages by student announcers.
- Indigenous maps are on display in all classrooms and the library
- Several classes are using levelled early literacy books written by Indigenous authors with Indigenous themes (i.e., Eagle Crest Books)
- Posters about the "First Peoples Principles of Learning" are on display in classrooms and in the library
- Recognized Orange Shirt Day and students presented work at our assembly
- Indigenous acknowledgement made by students during announcements, gatherings, and assemblies
- June 21<sup>st</sup> – International Indigenous Day – lessons taught to educate students

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

Through the collection of year-over-year report card data and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we will create a baseline for achievement in reading scores and English Language Arts and examine subsequent scores to analyze and gauge student learning and progression over the years. We have set up a system to have student reading records filed throughout the current school year, and the classroom teacher who will have the student, will see the progress made the previous year. This will allow the teachers at the school to see gaps in learning and have targeted reading intervention when necessary. Teachers have a narrowed focus on current reading practices and assessment, using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment Systems. Data collection will be more accurate and reading assessment scores will be standardized throughout the school.

The Tecumseh staff are also committed to continue the reconciliation journey collectively together. The staff commit to enrolling in professional development opportunities available within the VSB and online. There is a strong sense of connection with the BC curriculum and the content that is being taught in the classroom, infusing Indigenous knowledge, and weaving it into the curriculum taught. Tecumseh acknowledges important calendar dates with special moments of recognition and respect. Through professional conversations and projects that are on-going, we are confident that teachers and staff will continue to enhance the Indigenous Ways of Learning and will be able to sustain this momentum and continue to transfer it into other work around anti-oppression and equity.