

2023-2024

School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

General Wolfe Elementary is a vibrant learning community of students supported by passionate educators and engaged families grateful to be located on the unceded, traditional lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

As envisioned by the Vancouver School Board Education Plan 2026, goal one (the Vancouver School Board will improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging), the Wolfe staff is committed to the development of all learners through active and engaged learning. Student learning is supported both in and outside of the classroom. Up to date library resources, learning through technology, a music program, field studies, and outdoor learning spaces, all support curriculum learning. Students are encouraged to follow their passions and explore their interests in open-ended activities such as choosing their own science fair projects, composing rhythms and melodies in music, deciding how to use their time on Play Days, writing personalized Land Acknowledgements for the daily announcements, and leading monthly school assemblies. Extracurricular sports and clubs, sponsored by staff, provide additional learning opportunities. In the spring of 2023, student initiative led to a Climate Action Fair and the formation of a Newspaper Club. This year, students are engaged in conversations to reimagine a structure for student voice. Ongoing staff professional development, which in recent years have included sessions on outdoor learning, Indigenous art, and math, provide staff with opportunities to enrich their practice to support student learning. Wolfe students take on leadership roles in the school by volunteering as Kindergarten Monitors, PA Announcers, Office Monitors, and Library Monitors. Each division has a buddy class where intermediate and primary students work together to build community bonds throughout the grades. A monthly assembly is student-led and an opportunity for all classes to share their learning with one another.

Student learning is supported by an active and generous parent community. The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) events create a larger sense of community and raise funds for school activities and resources. Recent community events have included Welcome Back Nights in September, Halloween Dances in October, Walkathons, and Movie Nights. PAC fundraising has supported activities such as skating at Hillcrest for the entire school, school performances, digital literacy presentations for intermediate students and all parents and caregivers, and additional technology resources. The PAC has also sponsored parent education nights focused on anxiety and another on anti-racism. The PAC and Wolfe staff worked together in past years on a plan for outdoor learning spaces to be funded from

the PAC Legacy Fund. The spring of 2023 saw the implementation of the plan with the addition of picnic tables, new concrete and wooden benches, and replaced wooden benches in the forest area.

Many Wolfe alumni stay connected to the school and come back to volunteer. Alumni help at Sports Days, provide leadership for special events such as the 2023 Climate Action Fair, and volunteer in classes.

In addition to the PAC, the school community is supported by the Hamber Community Schools Team and Spare Time Child Care Society which provides out of school time care before and after school and during school breaks.

The Wolfe School Code of Conduct is taught as PAWS, which reminds students to be Polite, Accountable, Welcoming and Safe. Direct teaching as well as posters, a school song, a hand sign, and a PAWS pathway outside all support students in understanding and remembering PAWS and the overall behaviour expectations.

The school facility was seismically upgraded between 2019 and 2021. In September 2021, the school community returned to the Ontario Street site after two years at the South Hill swing site.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

A diverse student population of 400 students is divided into 17 divisions, with almost even numbers in primary (K-3) and intermediate (4-7) grades. Wolfe students include Indigenous children and children with citizenship from 23 different countries. While most students speak English at home, the Wolfe community also speaks 26 other languages. At Wolfe, 18% of the students are English Language Learners. Wolfe welcomes all people and, in particular, has warmly greeted children from homelands immersed in conflict. A number of students have BC Ministry of Education special education designations. In literacy, using the new proficiency scales, students at Wolfe have improved over the course of the year. In term one over 45% of students were at proficient or extending in English Language Arts. In term two, that number had risen to 48%.

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

Wolfe School has been working to improve student achievement in literacy and belonging through story. Students have learned through both diverse stories and different story-telling genres. Diverse stories have included stories about different cultural celebrations (e.g. Diwali, Eid, Hanukkah), stories with characters from a variety of backgrounds with different world views and perspectives, and stories told in classes by students' families. Stories have been shared through literature circles, class read-alouds, memoirs, drama, puppetry, readers' theatre, song, and poetry. Students have engaged in numerous ways to tell their own stories: diary entries, daily journal writing, personal poetry, and story workshop, where students create stories using a mat and "loose parts."

A group of teachers developed, with support from the VSB Equity and Anti-Oppression Department, literacy lessons to support student learning through stories with themes of equity and anti-oppression.

The Wolfe library is the hub of literacy and includes a diverse collection that is continually being curated and updated by the Teacher-Librarian.

Three school performances, supported by a generous donation from PAC, showcased different stories from different perspectives: (1) *Herstory of Music*, (2) *Popping Toads and Lion Skins*, a collection of African and Afro-diasporic folklore oral stories, told by Shayna Jones, and (3) *The Flight of the Hummingbird: A Parable for the Environment*, an opera based on an Indigenous parable from the Quechuan people of South America which became well known within Haida culture.

Improve equity

This is connected to our work with respect to story. We want to ensure that each child sees themselves in the literature and resources used at school.

As already mentioned, the library collection is regularly being curated and updated. New novels for study in class were purchased in consultation with the VSB Equity and Anti-Oppression Department.

Wolfe is building a home reading library for the primary students and, through a generous PAC donation, have purchased books with stories about diverse people and cultures.

The stories told in the grade 6 and 7 Heritage Fair projects this year were focused on oppression and resistance in Canada. These projects were shared with the school community at the Heritage Fair. Some students also presented their projects at the Regional Heritage Fair.

Students' work in learning about diversity resulted in students beginning to understand and recognize micro-aggressions. Students have been heard identifying behaviours they see in the media and in the school as examples of different types of micro-aggressions. Discussions in classes followed about why these behaviours classified as micro-aggressions and the harms the behaviour caused.

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

We continue our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit in numerous ways.

The school community has been learning the new VSB Land Acknowledgement. Students in many classes have written about their own connections to land and shared them at assemblies and on the announcements when doing the Land Acknowledgment.

Staff continue to learn and broaden the lessons and resources used in their teaching about Indigenous peoples. Staff look for stories by Indigenous authors to ensure authenticity.

Teachers are also working with students to learn about the significant Indigenous histories including Indian Residential Schools, MMIW&G, and the effects of colonialization.

Staff and students are also learning the locations of different Indigenous territories, the proper pronunciation of Indigenous groups, and about Indigenous plants.

A number of staff participated in a book club that studied *Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies: An Act for Reconciliation and Anti-Racist Education* by Jo Chrona.

The home reading library purchase included books about Indigenous peoples and culture.

Students created a number of art projects to learn about the important histories, including a display of knitted orange shirts with writing about Indian Residential Schools and a display of red dresses alongside information about MMIW&G. In another class, students learned about Indigenous mathematics through weaving.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

We know we are on track by the work students create, the questions they ask, and the deepening sophistication and understanding observed in class conversations.

Student assessments, as shared with families in the Communicating Student Learning reports, also show us that there was student growth in literacy over the course of the year.

Next year, we will continue to learn through story with some increased focus on the Personal and Social core competency which is the set of abilities that relate to students' identity in the world both as individuals and as members of their community and society.

We will know we are on track when we hear students describe their identities in specific ways such as "I am a reader" or "I am an artist." We also will know we are on track when we hear students asking their peers to treat them with respect, and seeking adult help when needed.