

## 2024-2025 School Learning Plan

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### SCHOOL STORY

xpey' is an Indigenous Focus Elementary School that has welcomed both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from across the district since it was established in 2012. This choice school was named xpey' in 2017 to honor and deeply connect with the three Indigenous Nations who host the school on their traditional territory. xpey' means "cedar" in the hə́nqəmínəm language of the the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam) People.

*With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & sə́lilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.*

xpey' is found in the Grandview Woodlands neighborhood of East Vancouver. xpey' currently serves 71 Kindergarten to Grade 7 students and has a Strong Start Program for children ranging from 0-5 years of age. Families are an integral part of xpey's community and are welcome in the All Nations Room and school throughout the day. xpey' staff are committed to working with families to facilitate the intergenerational learning of Indigenous knowledge, ways of being and doing.

xpey' works closely with several external agencies and individuals who support students' sense of identity and belonging, as well as their social-emotional, physical and academic wellbeing. xpey' shares its grounds with Eagles in The Sky and Eaglets who provide both pre and before/after school daycare. xpey also hosts community volunteer tutors. In addition, several rotating lunch and after school programs run at xpey' such as Writer's Exchange, basketball, robotics, expressive art and Indigebuddies (Big Brothers). Lunch Labs teaches students about healthy eating and encourages them to try a variety of foods, twice weekly. Throughout the year, Indigenous role models and elders are invited to share knowledge and teachings. For example, a pipe ceremony is held each school term to respect the change of seasons.

Honouring the resiliency of Indigenous Peoples and their stories, xpey' celebrates its unique status as an Indigenous Focus Choice School within the VSB. Our school goals are social emotional learning, Indigenous learning, Literacy and Math. We move toward achieving these goals within Indigenous curricula, structures, and strategies. Our vision is to foster strength of self and identity, pride in and knowledge of Indigenous cultures, languages and ancestry, as well as academic excellence.

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

Over 90 % of xpeý students identify as Indigenous, less than 10 percent are English Language Learners and approximately 29% have ministry designations that describe and support diverse learning profiles. Many xpeý students have moved to Vancouver from rural areas of BC or other Canadian provinces and some are cared for by extended family members. Being separated from their larger families and land, xpeý students learn best when adults connect with them as individuals and facilitate a school environment that accounts for how culture and intergenerational experiences can influence learning differences and preferences.

xpeý students thrive when learning through Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. They benefit from time to connect with each other, their families, and school staff at the beginning and end of each day. Their natural time for focused learning is the middle portion of each school day. xpeý students gravitate towards play-based and hands-on experiential, cultural, and land-based learning. They are also relationship-based social learners who enjoy presenting their learning orally, including by storytelling.

Data collated from Learning Update Reports (Term 1) and Summary of Learning Reports (Term 3) provide further insight into xpeý learners. For Language Arts and Math, the graphs below compare the percentage of students achieving at each performance scale indicator across Term 1 and Term 3.

Term Comparison by Percentage: Primary Language Arts (Grade K-3)

|        | Emerging | Developing | Proficient | Extending |
|--------|----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Term 1 | 65       | 17.5       | 17.5       |           |
| Term 3 | 32       | 39         | 23         | <10       |

Term Comparison by Percentage: Intermediate Language Arts (Grades 5-7)

|        | Emerging | Developing | Proficient | Extending |
|--------|----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Term 1 | 52       | 39         | <10        |           |
| Term 3 | 61       | 26         | 13         |           |

For Language Arts, the data between Term 1 and Term 3 shows an increase in the number of students assessed at the Developing and Proficient levels for Primary students. A few Primary Students were assessed as extending by third term. For intermediate students, more students were assessed at the Proficient level.

#### Term Comparison by Percentage: Primary Math (Grades K-3)

|        | Emerging | Developing | Proficient | Extending |
|--------|----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Term 1 | 47.5     | 27.5       | 25         |           |
| Term 3 | 27.5     | 41         | 27.5       | <10       |

#### Term Comparison by Percentage: Intermediate Math (Grades 5-7)

|        | Emerging | Developing | Proficient | Extending |
|--------|----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Term 1 | 63       | 27         | 10         |           |
| Term 3 | 57       | 30         | 10         | <10       |

For Math, the data between Term 1 and Term 3 shows an increase in the number of students assessed at the Developing and Proficient levels for both Primary and Intermediate students. A few Primary and Intermediate Students were assessed as extending by third term.

While the achievement data for Language Arts and Math demonstrates improvement in student outcomes, the vision to have most students (85 % or more) achieving greater than the emergent level continues to be a school goal.

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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**

A sense of belonging and well-being is a cornerstone to improving student achievement in social emotional learning, literacy and numeracy. We strive to make school fun and welcoming for students and families by offering engaging learning activities such as Sports Day, a School Based Indigenous Day, offsite Field Studies (Environmental Youth Alliance Garden, UBC Botanical Garden, Indigenous Day at the board office, Swimming Lessons, and Splash and Dash) as well as onsite Field Studies (Ingrid – hands on Science and Kryste Dos Santos - Motown history performer). To further support a sense of belonging and well-being for students, we have school spaces such as our All Nations Room, Sensory Rooms and a Ready Body Learning Minds Motor Lab where students can connect with staff and ready themselves for learning.

We are also focusing on hands-on learning through inquiry and exploration. Our learning support team of Classroom Teachers (CTs), Resource Teachers (RTs), a Curriculum Enhancement Teacher (CET), an Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker (IEEW), an Area Counsellor (AC) and School and Student Support Workers (SSAs/SSB), work together to support the academic and social/emotional learning needs of students. Staff are working to ensure students have access to targeted instruction in literacy and numeracy to be successful. We will continue to work on our strategies and adapt as needed to support student improvement.

## Improve equity

We approach each child's learning profile by first recognizing their strengths and then identifying and addressing barriers to their learning. Our approach combines and applies the First Peoples' Principles of Learning, the Vancouver School Board's (VSB's) Responsive Literacy Framework and the VSB's Responsive Tiered Intervention (RTI) Framework. Our learning support team regularly reviews student progress and collaborates to provide Differentiated Instruction (DI) within a Universal Design Framework (UDL). We also strive to facilitate socio-economic equity for students and their families by providing breakfast, lunch and snacks as well as gift cards to purchase food, clothing, and household items. In addition, our Community Links team facilitates student participation in summer camps and after school activities like soccer and music classes.

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

xpeý embodies a journey of reconciliation. We are in constant review of how we can increase the Indigenous content and accuracy of our yearly practices as well as our daily routines and teaching. In keeping with Indigenous ways, we are learning the protocols of the *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam) in honour of the land xpeý is on. This is evident in our unlearning and relearning of the Coast Salish blanket ceremony for our yearly Grade 7 graduation. We are grateful to Elder Rose Nahanee, Sesemiya (Tracy Cameron), and Latashkinem (Robert Williams) for guiding our learning. Each school year we invite Indigenous elders and knowledge keepers to guide our ways of knowing, being and doing. This coming school year we are planning to make moccasins, ribbon skirts, fans, and smudge kits. Each month, we also plan to introduce medicine, a book, and a selection of music. In addition, we will include the Coast Salish Anthem and mention of a notable Indigenous fact in our daily announcements. We will continue to invite families to participate in pipe ceremonies and to share in our recognition of significant days such as Orange Shirt Day/Truth and Reconciliation Day (Sept. 30), Red Shirt Day (May 5) and National Indigenous Day (June 21). Perhaps most importantly, we will begin the school year with a community gathering.

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

We will know we are on track if:

- The number of students participating in school-based activities increases.
- Student attendance continues to improve.
- The comparative data between Term 1 (Learning Update Report) and Term 3 (Summary of Learning Report) continues to show improvement.
- The Indigenous content of our yearly practices, daily routines and teaching improves or increases.
- Visiting Elders share positive feedback about their experiences in the community.
- The number of family members attending school events or volunteering in the school increases. Student voice from Student Learning Survey (SLS) and Middle Years Development Index (MDI) data shows an increase in positive responses.