

2024-2025

School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). Established in 1908, Britannia Secondary School in Vancouver, British Columbia, boasts a storied history that intertwines with the dynamic tapestry of the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood. Originally known as Britannia High School, it emerged as one of the city's pioneer secondary institutions, responding to the evolving needs of a burgeoning population.

Throughout the years, Britannia has not only adapted to changes in educational paradigms but has also embraced the rich diversity of its surroundings. The school's commitment to inclusivity is evident in its robust Indigenous supports, acknowledging the ancestral lands upon which it stands. Britannia Secondary actively engages with Indigenous cultures and traditions, fostering an environment that celebrates diversity and reconciliation. This commitment aligns with the broader ethos of the Grandview-Woodland neighborhood, which is renowned for its multicultural makeup, with residents hailing from a myriad of backgrounds.

In addition to its cultural inclusivity, Britannia Secondary School is recognized for its academic excellence. Staff are engaged and dynamic, and despite its small size, the school offers a wide variety of programming for all learners. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Britannia provides students with a globally-focused education, emphasizing critical thinking and intercultural understanding. This initiative aligns with the school's dedication to preparing students for a rapidly changing world. Furthermore, Britannia has become a hub for sports enthusiasts, housing a hockey academy that blends academic pursuits with athletic development. The academy not only underscores the school's commitment to holistic education but also taps into the Canadian passion for ice hockey, creating a unique and well-rounded educational experience for students.

With its commitment to diverse community involvement, support for Indigenous communities, student learning and behavioral support programs (Learning Assistance Life Skills, Learning Support Program, Junior and Senior Social Development), Vancouver Alternate Secondary School partnership in alternative programming (Outreach and Streetfront), and the hockey academy, Britannia Secondary School remains a beacon of cultural diversity, educational vibrancy and community unity in Vancouver.

We offer the following student learning and behavioural support programs:

- LALS – Learning Assistance/Life Skills program is designed for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities.
- LSP – The Learning Support Program provides academic support for students with diagnosed learning disabilities.
- SSD – The Senior and Junior Social Development Programs offer small, sheltered learning communities for students with significant social-emotional and executive functioning challenges.

Post Secondary Transition – The Secondary Life Skills Program is a small, supportive class for adult students with autism, physical disabilities, deaf/blind or chronic health conditions or have a moderate to severe/profound intellectual disability.

Outreach – Located in the Britannia Community Complex above the Britannia Public Library, Outreach was created to provide a safe, welcoming, and successful learning environment to Indigenous students who face barriers and/or systemic obstacles in regular classes. Students who attend Outreach are working towards graduating with a British Columbia Dogwood Certificate.

Streetfront – The Streetfront program provides experiential activities for students who have had previous difficulty engaging in a mainstream educational setting. These experiences include marathon running through the Street2Peak program, which has taken students to the peaks of Patagonia, New Zealand, Kilimanjaro and Newfoundland. The grade 8 – 10 program students are also on the British Columbia Dogwood graduation certificate track. Staff were recently the recipients of the Premier's Award for Excellence in Education for Outstanding Collaboration.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

We are a diverse community. Over 50% of our students identify as Indigenous or Black. Our students are resilient, kind, and industrious. They respond well to our staff who emphasize connection combined with high levels of support and accountability. Basic needs are required by many of our students; as a result, we have an extensive community support framework both in school and after school which endeavours to address student needs and engage students academically and socially.

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

Numeracy and Equity

Goal #1: Our first goal is to improve the numeracy skills of our Grade 8 and 9 students.

Numeracy has an increasingly significant role in enabling and sustaining cultural, social, economic, and technological advances. Being numerate involves more than mastering basic mathematics.

Numeracy involves connecting mathematics that students learn at school with what occurs outside of school, and requires skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and logic related to applications in the real world.

Mathematics gives students access to important mathematical ideas, knowledge, and skills. Numeracy connects these skills with their personal and professional lives. When a learning institution focuses on these two key areas concurrently, equitable opportunities for students to enroll in senior math courses in high school and post-secondary increase, as well as a positive disposition towards math, occurs.

To ensure equitable skill acquisition in numeracy in students, we will begin the process of early identification of students who have struggled in Mathematics and will support student progress in math by adding an additional class of numeracy support.

Action #1:

- All incoming grade 7 students will be assessed using an online math assessment chosen by the math department.

Action #2

- Through feeder school input, and the numeracy assessment student data, we will determine which students would benefit from extra math support in grade eight. The students will be enrolled in both a Numeracy class and a Math 8 class.

Action #3:

- Data (Numeracy assessment and CSL reports) as well as a post numeracy assessment with all grade eights, will be reviewed in late spring to see if the extra math support helped students improve their numeracy.

As mathematical skills, knowledge and confidence grow, we are predicting an increase in our Numeracy 10 assessment scores which every student must take as part of graduation requirements.

Belonging and Equity

Goal #2: Our second goal is to increase engagement and sense of belonging in our students.

Attendance is an ongoing concern, but one which is complex and has many layers which cannot be resolved easily. Creating opportunities for students to express themselves in a supportive and accountable environment is pivotal, particularly with an emphasis on equity.

The school will focus on three key approaches/structures: restorative practices, motivational interviewing, and student forums.

These approaches/structures aim to provide equitable opportunities for all students to express their needs, concerns, and ideas regarding their school experience. By actively listening and incorporating their feedback into our strategies, we seek to address barriers to attendance, especially those faced by marginalized and underserved students. This approach fosters a more inclusive environment and ensures that every student feels heard, valued, and supported.

By focusing on equity and fostering a sense of belonging, we aim to identify and address the root causes of absenteeism and empower all students to take an active role in shaping their educational journey.

Action #1: Student forums:

- Organize student forums moderated by counsellors to ensure confidentiality while collecting authentic comments from students
- Create a safe space for students to share their experiences, concerns and suggestions

Action #2: Motivational Interviewing

- Provide training for staff on motivational interviewing techniques to help them engage students in meaningful conversations.
- Focus on empowering students to make positive changes and take ownership of their attendance and academic performance.

Action #3: Restorative Practices:

- Implement a high support/high accountability approach using restorative circles.
- Emphasize working collaboratively with students, rather than doing things for them, to them, or not addressing the issue.
- Create a school community where students feel heard, valued, and responsible for their actions.

By integrating these approaches, the school aims to create a more inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students to attend regularly and participate actively in their education.

We will use attendance and student survey data (hard data) and street data (anecdotal and narrative information shared in forums and circles) to track the efficacy of the three approaches as described above.

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

Goal #3: Our third goal is to establish an Indigenous student leadership group in conjunction with the district Indigenous education department.

Of the close to 600 students currently enrolled in Britannia Secondary, over 40% of our students identify as Indigenous. Hence the need to establish a robust and active Indigenous Student Leadership group at Britannia. Whereas Eurocentric leadership emphasizes independent achievement, self-growth, and competitiveness, Indigenous leadership is much more rooted in mutual growth and development with a focus less on self and more on all relations and the wellness of others. Indigenous principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility are integral to a governance model that is reflective of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing.

One area we are particularly proud of is the Wellness Blocks for our grades eight and nine students. With the support of staff (classroom teachers, counsellors, Indigenous support staff and community support workers), students participated in a variety of land-based, Indigenous focused, and

mindfulness activities at least two times a week. We began with the grade eights two years ago, but the project has been so successful that the grade nine students have also requested the continuation of the wellness blocks. The wellness project was part of a 3-year inquiry cycle through NOIIE (Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education) to improve the transition of students from elementary to high school and will continue with further community funding.

Our staff also supported the creation of a new and much larger All Nations room which is inclusive to *all* students. It is a fun, safe, and caring place to be. Students regularly access the room for academic, emotional, and physical needs supports such as food and clothing.

As we focus on creating the Indigenous student leadership group, it is important for non-Indigenous students and educators to recognize that the Indigenous student leadership cohort is Indigenous led. A more impactful and equitable centering and lifting up of our Indigenous students will, as a result, take place.

Action #1

- District and School staff from our Indigenous Department and School Administration will meet to plan and implement an Indigenous Student Leadership group in Britannia Secondary in the fall.

Action #2

- Local elders will be invited to speak to the students about community leadership and will share their wisdom, experience, and stories about what is Indigenous leadership.

Action #3

- Regular community gatherings and sessions with students led by Indigenous students modelling student leadership will be established beginning in the late fall. Leadership students will share information with other students about how to be a positive Indigenous leader within the school.

The Indigenous Student Leadership group will become an integral part of the school much like the current Student council. Events will be cited in the school calendar well ahead of time so that the school staff, students and surrounding community will be aware of upcoming events.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

Numeracy and Equity

Goal #1: Our first goal is to improve the numeracy skills of our Grade 8 and 9 students.

This year, our focus was on improving numeracy skills among Grade 8 and 9 students, particularly those experiencing math anxiety or at risk of disengagement. We aimed to build foundational skills and confidence before students' progress through the full curriculum.

Action #1: All incoming grade 7 students will be assessed using an online math assessment chosen by the math department.

Evidence

All grade 8 students were tested using the CAT 5 math assessment test in October 2024. This allowed staff to review each student's numeracy level. At the end of the school year all grade 8's completed the Cat 5 test again. This data was used to determine what type of supports to put in place for students, such as enrolling them in a math learning hub block for 2025/26 school year. All results were shared with caregivers.

Action #2: Through feeder school input, and the numeracy assessment student data, we will determine which students would benefit from extra math support in grade eight. The students will be enrolled in both a Numeracy class and a Math 8 class.

Evidence

To support a greater number of students, we will implement two targeted Learning Hub Math support blocks for Grade 8 and 9 students, replacing the current year-long class model. When consulted, students expressed a preference for this new approach, noting that they would rather not remain with the same teacher and peer group for the entire year. The resource team, counsellors and math department head created a list of students who would be best suited to enroll in the Learning Hub Math support class. We also extended this to grade 9 and have decided to run two Learning Hub Math support classes to support our numeracy goal targeting our grade 8 and 9 students.

Action #3: Data (Numeracy assessment and CSL reports) as well as a post numeracy assessment with all grade eights, will be reviewed in late spring to see if the extra math support helped students improve their numeracy.

Evidence

Data has been reviewed and there has been some positive success with the students who were enrolled in the year-long math class. Students are sharing that they have less math anxiety and are feeling more confident. These students will be enrolled in the Learning Hub Math support block next year.

The Britannia staff explored how numeracy appears across subjects, not just in math. The staff reviewed our numeracy assessment data with the district helping teacher Andrew Pirie. The staff are keen on collaborating within departments as well as with our elementary school partners to align numeracy support across transitions.

Summary of Goal, May 2025

Britannia has implemented a structured approach to support numeracy development among students. Incoming grade 7 students will undergo an online math assessment to identify their skill levels early. Based on assessment data, written learning updates and input from feeder schools, selected grade 8 and 9 students will receive additional support through both a Learning Hub Math support class and support within their Math 8 and 9 classes. With the addition of our new Learning Hub starting in September of 2025, the staff will monitor and work closely with students who require extra support with numeracy. Data reviews indicate reduced math anxiety and increased confidence among students. Looking ahead, the school hopes these efforts will

encourage more students to pursue Pre-Calculus 10 rather than defaulting to Workplace Math 10. This will support more students in accessing academic pathways.

Belonging and Equity

Goal #2: Our second goal is to increase engagement and sense of belonging in our students.

Action #1: Student forums:

- **Organize student forums moderated by counsellors to ensure confidentiality while collecting authentic comments from students**
- **Create a safe space for students to share their experiences, concerns and suggestions**

Evidence

Although no formal student forums were held during this school year, student voice was still prioritized through other means. Feedback collected from students at the end of the previous school year was shared with staff and used to guide planning and decision making. This input continues to inform efforts to create a more inclusive and responsive school environment, with plans to implement structured student forums in the future to amplify student perspectives.

Action #2: Motivational Interviewing:

- **Provide training for staff on motivational interviewing techniques to help them engage students in meaningful conversations.**
- **Focus on empowering students to make positive changes and take ownership of their attendance and academic performance.**

Evidence

Counsellors and staff received training in motivational interviewing techniques during the fall to enhance their ability to engage students in meaningful, supportive conversations. While the impact of this approach has not yet been formally measured, it was integrated into broader efforts to support students' attendance and engagement.

Attendance focus:

- Identified 70 students with chronic absenteeism.
- Held targeted attendance meetings involving program teachers, counsellors, and Indigenous Education staff.
- Used Power BI to track and share attendance data, and assigned staff to connect directly with families
- Some success was noted in re-engaging students, though additional outreach is needed.

Family Engagement:

- Ideas such as family dinner nights were proposed to strengthen school-home connections and build trust with families, particularly those of students with persistent attendance challenges.

Action #3: Restorative Practices:

- **Implement a high support/high accountability approach using restorative circles.**
- **Emphasize working collaboratively with students, rather than doing things for them, to them, or not addressing the issue.**
- **Create a school community where students feel heard, valued, and responsible for their actions.**

Evidence

While formal restorative circles were limited, the school focused on community building initiatives to foster a sense of belonging and shared responsibility. Events such as the back-to-school assembly with a focus on the new cell phone policy, the symbolic “BRUINS” field formation, holiday celebrations, a pep rally and a student recognition assembly helped strengthen school spirit and connection. Staff observed that some students were not yet ready to engage in restorative work due to challenges with self-regulation. Ongoing staff discussions have centered on balancing accountability with compassion and recognizing the importance of strong adult student relationships. Additionally, while many students seek out safe spaces in the building, not all feel ready to fully participate in class, highlighting the need for continued support in building readiness and resilience.

Summary of Goal, May 2025

To support students' belonging and engagement, the school focused on student voice, motivational strategies, and community-building. While formal student forums were not held, past feedback informed planning, and staff were trained in motivational interviewing to better support students, especially around attendance. Seventy students with chronic absenteeism were identified, and targeted outreach efforts showed some success, with more engagement planned.

Restorative practices were introduced through school-wide events that fostered connection and school spirit. Some students struggled with self-regulation; highlighting the need for continued support and strong adult-student relationships. These efforts reflect a commitment to creating a more inclusive and responsive school environment.

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

Goal #3: Our third goal is to establish an Indigenous student leadership group in conjunction with the district Indigenous education department.

Action #1: District and School staff from our Indigenous Department and School Administration will meet to plan and implement an Indigenous Student Leadership group at Britannia Secondary in the fall.

Evidence

This year, the school partnered with the District Indigenous Education Department to begin establishing an Indigenous Student Leadership group. Grade 10-12 Indigenous students participated in cultural learning and leadership development activities, including drumming, carving, and a day of learning at Musqueam. These experiences helped strengthen cultural identity and leadership skills, laying a strong foundation for the formal launch of the leadership group.

Action #2: Local elders will be invited to speak to the students about community leadership and will share their wisdom, experience, and stories about what is Indigenous leadership.

Evidence

Students had the opportunity to meet with local Elders to explore the meaning of leadership and strengthen their cultural identity. Britannia remains committed to deepening these connections and will continue to work with the Indigenous Education Department to invite more Elders and community members to engage with the students in the future.

Action #3: Regular community gatherings and sessions with students led by Indigenous students modelling student leadership will be established beginning in the late fall. Leadership students will share information with other students about how to be a positive Indigenous leader within the school.

Evidence

Indigenous students at Britannia participated in a range of enrichment experiences that supported their growth as leaders. These included the **Sauder School of Business Program**, which explored entrepreneurship through an Indigenous lens; the **VCC Culinary Arts Program**, which built practical skills and cultural pride; and the **Outward-Bound Program**, which fostered resilience and leadership through outdoor education. Senior students also led the redesign of the All Nations Room, creating a welcoming and inclusive space. Indigenous student voice was also represented on student council, with two Indigenous student reps serving on the team.

All students continue to explore and strengthen their cultural identity; they are preparing to take on mentorship roles to support younger Indigenous students. These efforts reflect the school's ongoing commitment to reconciliation, cultural revitalization, and empowering Indigenous youth as leaders within the school and beyond.

Summary of Goal, May 2025

As part of Britannia's ongoing commitment to reconciliation, the school partnered with the District Indigenous Education Department to begin establishing an Indigenous Student Leadership group. Grade 10-12 students engaged in cultural and leadership development activities such as drumming, carving, and a day of learning at Musqueam, while also meeting with Elders to explore Indigenous leadership. Students participated in enrichment programs including the Sauder School of Business,

VCC Culinary Arts, and Outward Bound, and led the redesign of the All Nations Room. Two Indigenous students also served on the student council. As students continue to strengthen their cultural identity, they are preparing to mentor younger peers, reflecting on the school's dedication to cultural revitalization and empowering Indigenous youth as leaders.