

## 2024-2025 School Learning Plan

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### SCHOOL STORY

Eric Hamber Secondary School is a dynamic and inclusive learning community that will welcome approximately 1,700 students in Grades 8–12 for the 2025–2026 school year. Our school offers a wide range of academic and enrichment programs designed to prepare students for success in post-secondary education and beyond. We are proud to host a District Mandarin Bilingual Program, a District Specified Alternate Program (Challenge Studio), and a vibrant International Student Program.

In September 2024, we moved into a state-of-the-art, seismically safe school building—the largest seismic replacement project in the history of the Vancouver School District. The building was designed in consultation with the Musqueam people, whose traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory the school resides on. A striking five-metre (16-foot) female welcome figure, created by Musqueam artist Brent Sparrow, stands at the school's entrance as a powerful symbol of respect, recognition, and connection to the land.

Inside the school, the atrium features the intricate weavings of Debra Sparrow, a renowned Musqueam artist. Her work reflects Indigenous culture, history, and identity, offering daily opportunities for students and staff to engage with and reflect on Indigenous perspectives. The weavings are intentionally placed to surround students as if they are being hugged—an expression of care and belonging that is part of Sparrow's broader project of blanketing the city with warmth, culture, and connection.

The new facility is built to LEED Gold standards, supporting modern learning environments and sustainability goals. It includes flexible learning spaces, advanced science and technology labs, and a City of Vancouver-funded 69-space childcare centre—all supporting a modern, future-focused education.

Eric Hamber is a comprehensive secondary school that emphasizes academic excellence, leadership, creativity, and community service. Our graduates consistently pursue post-secondary studies at top institutions across Canada and internationally. In fact, our most recent graduates received numerous school-based and externally funded scholarships, and were accepted to prestigious Ivy League

universities such as Harvard and MIT, reflecting the strength of our academic programs and the dedication of our students and staff.

We offer a wide range of Advanced Placement (AP) and enrichment courses, as well as career education, STEM, fine arts, and language programs that help students explore their passions and build strong portfolios for university applications.

We are supported by an engaged Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and a generous alumni association, both of which contribute to student success through mentorship, scholarships, and community partnerships.

Our School Learning Plan is now in its third year, with goals that align with the Vancouver School Board's Education Plan:

- Enhancing student engagement to improve academic success and prepare students for active citizenship and post-secondary pathways.
- Deepening students' sense of belonging while fostering environmental, community, and personal responsibility.
- Incorporating Indigenous culture and content in authentic, place-based ways to enhance understanding of the First Peoples Principles of Learning.

We are proud of our students' achievements, including:

- Leadership and innovation grants supporting sustainability, STEM, and social justice initiatives.
- School-wide events that build community and school spirit.
- Workshops and mentorships with university students and professionals in fields such as engineering, environmental science, and the arts.
- Student-led clubs and competitions that develop real-world skills and leadership experience.

At Eric Hamber, we are committed to preparing students not only for graduation, but for lifelong learning, global citizenship, and meaningful post-secondary opportunities. Our new building, diverse programs, and supportive community make Hamber a place where students thrive—academically, socially, and personally.

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

At Eric Hamber Secondary School, our community of learners is diverse, motivated, and increasingly engaged in both academic and extracurricular pursuits. Across departments, we observe a student body that is:

### *1. Academically Motivated and Passionate*

- Many students demonstrate a strong interest in science, math, and technology, often influenced by family backgrounds in related fields.
- There is a growing trend of students enrolling in multiple science and math courses, participating in clubs, and competing in external contests (e.g., Physics Olympics, CanSat, Math Competitions).
- New course offerings such as AP Biology and Forensics 12 have seen full enrollment, indicating a demand for advanced and specialized learning opportunities.

### *2. Diverse in Background and Learning Needs*

- Our learners come from a wide range of socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, including a significant number of multilingual and heritage language students.
- We support students with a variety of learning profiles: those with IEPs (Gifted, LDs), English Language Learners, neurodivergent students, and those experiencing trauma or mental health challenges.
- The student population is dynamic, with shifts influenced by post-secondary requirements and systemic changes (e.g., semester system affecting course selection).

### *3. Reflective and Goal-Oriented*

- Teachers use a variety of assessment tools early in the term (e.g., written/oral responses, observations) to establish baselines and tailor instruction.
- Students engage in self-evaluations and goal setting, particularly in English and ADST, fostering ownership of their learning journey.
- One-on-one conferencing and pre-reporting interviews are common practices to provide personalized feedback and support.

### *4. Socially Connected and Seeking Belonging*

- Students value peer connection and often choose to be in class for social engagement.
- Clubs and extracurriculars (e.g., Science Experiment Club, Math Club—the largest in the school) are thriving, indicating a desire for community and enrichment beyond the classroom.

### *5. Navigating Challenges with Resilience*

- Post-COVID, students have shown increased resilience, though some still struggle with risk-taking, boundary-setting, and self-regulation.
- Teachers note a reluctance among students to take responsible academic and social risks, despite high expectations for achievement.

### *6. Supported Through Collaborative Practices*

- Departments engage in regular collaboration to share student data, discuss learning needs, and coordinate support strategies.

- September “Student Sharing” meetings and ongoing communication with families ensure continuity of care and early intervention.
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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

### 1. Literacy

Eric Hamber fosters literacy across all disciplines by embedding reading, writing, and communication skills into subject-specific contexts:

- **Scientific and Digital Literacy:** Students evaluate the credibility of sources, including social media, and use mind-mapping and vocabulary development to enhance comprehension and communication.
- **Reading and Writing Strategies:** Across English and Social Studies, students engage with diverse texts, practice inferencing, predicting, and critical thinking, and participate in initiatives like *Poetry in Voice*.
- **Arts and Media Literacy:** The arts deepen literacy through cultural studies, identity exploration, and media creation, helping students become both critical consumers and expressive creators.
- **Language Learning:** Modern Languages emphasize literacy through vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension, reinforcing that language learning is literacy.
- **Applied Literacy:** ADST and PHE integrate reading and writing into real-world contexts such as recipes, schematics, SMART goals, and reflective journals.
- **Mathematical Literacy:** Math and Science departments support students in decoding math language and applying it in interdisciplinary contexts.

## 2. Numeracy

Numeracy is developed through both traditional instruction and cross-curricular, real-world applications:

- **Integrated Learning:** Science and Math collaborate on topics like trigonometry and ratios, while Social Studies uses statistics and data analysis to support critical thinking.
- **Arts and Numeracy:** Music, dance, and visual arts reinforce mathematical concepts like rhythm, proportion, and spatial reasoning.
- **Language and Numeracy:** Students learn numbers and frequency in target languages, often through games and cultural activities.
- **Applied Numeracy:** ADST courses use real-life math in construction, tailoring, and budgeting. PHE incorporates data collection through fitness assessments and heart rate tracking.
- **Assessment and Support:** Formative and summative assessments, support worker feedback, and 1:1 support in math classes help track and improve student progress.
- **Achievement Data:** Eric Hamber students perform above district and provincial averages on the Numeracy Assessment, supported by strategies like vertical whiteboarding and collaborative problem-solving.

## 3. Physical and Mental Well-Being

The school promotes holistic well-being through curriculum, environment, and supportive practices:

- **Physical Well-Being:**
  - Outdoor learning and mindfulness walks are integrated into Science, Arts, and Language classes.
  - PHE uses fitness assessments and goal setting to track growth and promote lifelong health.
  - ADST and Home Economics emphasize movement, ergonomics, and healthy habits.
  - Movement-based learning (e.g., TPR in languages, dance in arts) supports physical development.
- **Mental Well-Being:**
  - Teachers model healthy habits, offer flexible deadlines, and provide brain breaks to reduce stress.
  - English and Arts use journaling, literature, and creative expression to foster emotional resilience.
  - ADST uses tools like “fingers to five” to check in on student well-being and promote self-awareness.
  - Safe spaces, inclusive practices, and regular communication with support staff help students feel seen and supported.

## 4. Belonging

A strong sense of belonging is cultivated through inclusive practices, extracurricular opportunities, and community-building:

- **Clubs and Field Trips:** Science, Social Studies, and Languages offer clubs and excursions that build peer connections and cultural appreciation.
- **Inclusive Curriculum:** Literature, arts, and language classes reflect diverse identities and encourage students to see themselves in their learning.
- **Celebrations and Events:** Language Day, Maple Syrup Day, and cultural showcases invite the whole school to participate and celebrate diversity.
- **Safe and Supportive Spaces:** Teachers foster classroom communities through group work, storytelling, and empathy, while extracurriculars and gym access during lunch and FIT time extend belonging beyond the classroom.
- **Staff Commitment:** Belonging is supported by the dedication of staff who volunteer time and build rapport with students, creating a culture of care and connection

### Improve equity

Eric Hamber Secondary is committed to fostering an equitable learning environment where all students—regardless of background, ability, or identity—have access to meaningful learning opportunities and feel valued in their educational journey. Departments across the school are actively working to reduce barriers and promote inclusion through the following strategies:

#### 1. Inclusive Teaching Practices

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** is implemented in Science and other departments, offering students multiple ways to demonstrate understanding and access content.
- **Differentiated instruction** and **collaboration with Learning Assistance** ensure that students with exceptional needs receive targeted support.
- **No prerequisites** in ADST classes and **multi-grade groupings** in Fine Arts and Languages promote peer mentorship and inclusive participation.

#### 2. Curriculum That Reflects Diverse Perspectives

- **Social Studies and English** integrate themes of social justice, gender, sexuality, and historical inequities, helping students critically engage with issues of equity.
- **Fine Arts and Languages** celebrate cultural diversity through student-centered projects, cultural events, and inclusive content that reflects students' identities and lived experiences.
- **Language placement testing** ensures students are placed appropriately, supporting both heritage and non-heritage learners.

#### 3. Equitable Access to Opportunities

- **Clubs and extracurriculars** (e.g., STEMsorority, CanSat, Debate Club, Language Day, intramurals) are designed to be inclusive and accessible to all students, regardless of schedule or background.
- **PHE** has removed barriers to participation by relaxing PE strip requirements and prioritizing engagement over skill level.

- **Fitness centre and gym access** before school, at lunch, and during FIT time ensures all students have opportunities for physical activity.

#### 4. Supportive Learning Environments

- Teachers across departments build **safe, welcoming classrooms** by recognizing diverse learning needs, offering flexible assessment formats, and fostering a sense of belonging.
- **Math and PHE departments** acknowledge the challenges of large class sizes and limited scheduling flexibility, advocating for systemic changes to better support equity.
- **Ongoing communication** with families, counsellors, and support staff ensures a holistic approach to student success.

#### 5. Student Voice and Agency

- **Student-led learning** in Fine Arts and ADST empowers learners to shape their educational experiences.
- **Collaborative projects** and **peer learning** foster equity by valuing diverse strengths and perspectives.
- **Flexible assessment** practices (e.g., presentations, creative work, group projects) allow students to demonstrate learning in ways that align with their strengths.

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

Eric Hamber Secondary is committed to deepening knowledge, awareness, appreciation, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions. Across departments, educators are embedding Indigenous perspectives into curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture in meaningful and authentic ways.

### 1. Curriculum Integration and Land-Based Learning

- **Science** integrates Indigenous knowledge through lessons on traditional medicines, the chemical properties of natural materials (e.g., cedar, dyes), and fire practices. Students explore interconnectedness and environmental stewardship through Indigenous worldviews.
- **Social Studies** offers courses like *BC First Peoples 12* and embeds Indigenous content across grades 8–10, including the TRC Calls to Action, UNDRIP, and landmark court cases. Teachers approach this work with humility and a commitment to continuous learning.
- **English** incorporates Indigenous stories and literature in all courses, with a focus on the First Peoples Principles of Learning and Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Being.
- **Fine Arts** launched Truth and Reconciliation units, land-based photography and ceramics projects, and drama performances based on Indigenous myths. These projects emphasize experiential, holistic, and relational learning.
- **Languages** explore Indigenous legends, picture books, and greetings (e.g., Musqueam greetings in Mandarin classes), and compare Indigenous cultures across regions and languages.
- **ADST** includes Coast Salish design in graphic design units and wood carving techniques, with guest speakers enriching student understanding of Indigenous craftsmanship and storytelling.
- **PHE** incorporates Indigenous games and teachings through guest speakers like Métis Elder Ray McKeown, emphasizing collective learning, survival skills, and cultural connections to movement and play.
- **Math** uses the *Math First Peoples Teacher Resource Guide* and promotes collaborative, decolonized learning environments.

### 2. Cultural Acknowledgment and Respect

- Teachers and departments consistently acknowledge the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations in classes, emails, and ceremonies.
- Educators attend professional development sessions focused on Indigenous education and bring this learning back to their classrooms.

### 3. Student Engagement and Expression

- Students engage in projects that explore their own ancestry and connections to land, fostering empathy and understanding.
- Public displays of student artwork and performances related to reconciliation create shared learning experiences for the school community.



#### 4. Resources and Community Connections

- Departments are expanding their use of Indigenous-authored resources, including materials from the First Nations Health Authority and the First Nations Education Steering Committee.
- Guest speakers and community partnerships bring authentic voices and lived experiences into the classroom, enriching student learning.

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

At Eric Hamber Secondary, departments are committed to using both qualitative and quantitative data to monitor progress toward school learning goals. The following indicators and strategies will guide our reflection and improvement efforts:

#### 1. Student Enrollment and Course Selection Trends

- **Science** will track enrollment and attrition in senior science courses, including the number of students opting for online alternatives. Requests for new courses (e.g., Astronomy, AP Sciences) will be logged to assess interest and inform future offerings.
- **Math** will monitor student requests and withdrawals, aiming for a consistent student experience across all classes and student engagement. They will also track students identified as needing extra support.
- **Languages** will observe continued enrollment in advanced levels and note when students take language courses out of interest rather than requirement.
- **ADST and Fine Arts** will track enrollment growth and retention, especially in multi-year participation and elective choices.

#### 2. Student Engagement and Participation

- **Arts** will assess engagement through participation in rehearsals, projects, and extracurricular events. They will also track leadership roles and independent artistic pursuits.
- **PHE** will monitor participation in elective courses, intramurals, and FIT activities, as well as student use of gym spaces during non-instructional time.
- **ADST** will use attendance and participation in events like the Fashion Show and Yearbook to gauge engagement.

#### 3. Student Achievement and Growth

- **All departments** will use formative and summative assessments to track student progress. This includes:
  - Self-assessments and reflections (Languages, English, Arts)

- Scope and sequence tracking in English for Grades 8–10
- Monitoring normalized achievement curves in Math
- Celebrating student achievements in Science and ADST

#### 4. Qualitative Feedback and Anecdotal Evidence

- **Science and Arts** will collect anecdotal feedback from students, parents, and alumni (e.g., requests for new courses, reports of real-world language use, alumni success stories).
- **Languages** will gather stories of students using their language skills in travel or post-secondary settings.
- **All departments** will continue to display student work and use exhibitions and performances as opportunities for feedback and reflection.

#### 5. Collaboration and Professional Learning

- Departments will use **Pro-D days and HIP sessions** to:
  - Develop shared assessment strategies
  - Address challenges such as AI usage in writing
  - Finalize scope and sequence documents
  - Share data collection methods and findings

#### 6. Community and Stakeholder Involvement

- **Science and Math** will maintain communication with parents, counsellors, and administrators to support student success.
- **All departments** will continue to involve the broader school community through newsletters, events, and student showcases.