

2024-2025 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

Gordon Elementary is a vibrant and active community of staff, students and families situated in the heart of Vancouver's Kitsilano neighbourhood. We are grateful to be surrounded by the North Shore mountains and within walking distance to some of Vancouver's beautiful parks and beaches that connect us to this land. *We are honoured to be working and learning together on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).* Currently, the school enrolls 403 students within 18 Divisions from kindergarten to grade 7. The learners at Gordon are diverse in their cultural, educational, and life experiences.

Our school is part of the VSB Early Literacy Initiative, and we have Reading Recovery and Leveled Literacy Interventions programs to support early learners in the primary grades. Our teachers are committed to deepening our understanding of the curriculum to foster and facilitate an inquiry-based approach to learning. This includes student-centered teaching strategies, collaboration with colleagues in grade groups and across grades, resource sharing and expertise, and providing lessons that extend learning beyond the classroom. Our professional development is aligned with students' learning needs as well as social/emotional growth. Recently we have begun to look at innovative practices in assessment and reporting.

We see educating students as a partnership between school and parents and caregivers, and work to provide meaningful, enriching opportunities to support a child's learning at school and in the community. With the support of our Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), we recently created an outdoor learning space that complements our commitment to outdoor learning. Several classes do regular outdoor learning workshops, and we have a flourishing garden program where students learn about agriculture, plant species and how important the land is to Indigenous people.

We have also recently updated our school Code of Conduct, which we have renamed Gordon's Circle of Care. Our Circle of Care is designed to foster a safe, inclusive, equitable welcoming, nurturing, and healthy school environment which aligns with the new 2026 VSB Education Plan. This applies to all members of the Gordon community—students, educators, parents, and caregivers. Our Circle of Care seeks to support our understanding of our students' needs and how we can best teach them the skills they need to thrive both socially and academically. We encourage all students to R.I.S.E. to success through their Relationship and Belonging, Intellect, Spirit, and Emotional Wellbeing. The staff explicitly teach and model what it means to R.I.S.E. in all locations of the school and the community. We have incorporated the Medicine Wheel into our Circle of Care which represents a symbol of healing, growth, life, learning and balance in many Indigenous communities. Through this

lens, Gordon’s Circle of Care emphasizes a child’s social and emotional growth. Research shows that children who are both socially and emotionally healthy are the best learners and the most successful in school.

Students at Gordon are engaged in leadership activities such as service in our office, and as library monitors, morning announcers, and Student Council. We offer a variety of sports and extra-curricular activities such as volleyball, basketball, badminton, cross-country and track and field. We also have a very dynamic and vibrant SOGI Club that is supported by staff. Parents and caregivers work as active partners within our school by fundraising and volunteering to support and enhance student learning (e.g. Hot Lunch, technology in the classroom, performance and educational programs that support the curriculum), promoting involvement of parents and other community members in providing for the education of children (e.g., Digital Literacy, Body Science, Inclusion education), and the building of our school community.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

From the Student Learning Surveys for grade 4 and 7:

When students were asked if they had a choice in what they were learning:

Never or almost never	30%
Sometimes	33%
Most to all of the time	32%

When students were asked if they were taught to improve how they learn:

Never or almost never	Masked
Sometimes	27%
Most to all of the time	54%

The survey data highlights varying levels of student engagement and support in their learning processes. Approximately 32% of students reported having frequent choice in their learning activities, while 30% experienced little to no choice, indicating room for improvement in fostering student agency. 54% of students felt they were often taught strategies to enhance their learning. These figures suggest that while many students benefit from instructional practices aimed at personalized learning and skill development, there remains a significant portion who could benefit from more consistent and inclusive approaches to self-directed and reflective learning.

Term 1 & 3 Written Learning Update (Report Card) Data K-7

The bar graph illustrates the distribution of student proficiency levels. In the fall, the majority of students fall within the developing and proficient categories, indicating that most are meeting or approaching grade level expectations. A smaller proportion of students are at the emerging level, suggesting additional support would be beneficial. Only a very small percentage have reached the extending level, highlighting an opportunity to further challenge and support students that have achieved proficiency (which is the goal). Overall, the data suggested generally positive trend with room for growth at both ends of the spectrum.

When comparing this data with that of the first term we see a trend. The percentage of students in the developing category has lowered and the percentage of students in the extending category has increased. There is a clear positive trend.

The decrease in the developing column and the increase in the extending column of the report card data suggests, at least in part, that an increased focus on our goal of self-assessment may have had a positive effect on achievement in Literacy. But what is of more interest is the direct survey of the students. There was a dramatic increase in students indicating that they understood what self-assessment was. The use of self-assessment, it was reported, increased in the sometimes column. The often to always decreased. Perhaps this was due to students gaining a greater understanding of what self-assessment is as they were more accurately able to answer this question the second time around. Students reported that self-assessment helps you learn better – a little bit but not a lot. More work will need to be done in that area in the future to help students understand how powerful self-assessment can be in their own learning journey. A dramatic shift in terms of confidence of use by the students as they reported a large shift towards being very confident in using self-assessment. The increase in non-confidence could possibly be attributed to a greater understanding that they did not know what it was but only thought they knew what it was during our initial pre-survey.

The anecdotal responses reflect a greater and more mature understanding of self-assessment. Words and phrases such as independence, guidance, reflection and improvement, verification, growth and development, performance review, persistence and correction show up. This shows that self-assessment may have contributed to increased achievement by students in Literacy.

Student Survey Data on Self-Assessment:

As part of the work at Gordon on ensuring all students have access to what they need for success, we spent time seeking student voice on self-assessment and learning. This was a school created survey that helped us measure student perception on self-assessment. The data below will help shape our work to improve equity for all students to be successful. We did pre- and post-surveys after classroom teachers did literacy activities using self-assessment as a strategy.

Do you know what self-assessment is?

	Pre	Post	+/-
Yes	46%	73%	+27%
No	54%	27%	-27%

How often do you use self-assessment in class?

	Pre	Post	+/-
Never	6%	3%	-3%
Sometimes	67%	80%	+13%
Often to always	28%	17%	-11%

Do you think self-assessment helps you learn better?

	Pre	Post	+/-
Not at all	6%	5%	-1%
A little bit	53%	70%	+17%
A lot	41%	24%	-17%

How confident are you in using self-assessment?

	Pre	Post	+/-
Not confident	3%	17%	+17%
Somewhat confident	53%	0%	-53%
Very confident	44%	83%	+39%

In the surveys of students, student understanding of what self-assessment is increased dramatically. There were mixed results for the other 3 questions. Overall, the data reflects increased awareness and moderate adoption but also highlights the need for more consistent and supportive implementation to build sustained confidence and deeper belief in its effectiveness.

The student's anecdotal responses offer rich insight into their understanding of learning and self-assessment. These reflections underline a growing awareness of self-assessment's role in learning. Some students highlighted how the process fosters autonomy, allowing them to take ownership of their progress and identify areas for improvement. Others expressed mixed emotions, acknowledging both the challenges and rewards of evaluating their own work. This variety of perspectives suggests that self-assessment is not a one-size-fits-all tool but rather a multifaceted practice that resonates differently depending on individual needs and experiences.

When asked how people learn, students emphasized active engagement, collaboration, and the importance of feedback and environment. This highlights a holistic view of learning that includes both cognitive and social emotional elements. Their definitions of self-assessment centred on self-awareness, motivation, and personal growth, suggesting that students see it as more than just a grading tool. It's a means of building confidence and fostering reflection. Descriptions of classroom self-assessment practices, such as using checklists, scoring, and written reflections, indicate that students are engaged in structured, meaningful activities that support their learning journey. Overall, the comments reflect a thoughtful and nuanced understanding of both learning processes and the role of self-assessment. This supports the need for staff to continue to ensure we support all students' needs at school.

On Our Journey to Reconciliation

In efforts to integrate Indigenous knowledge into the curricula, increase cultural appreciation and foster cultural safety for Indigenous students, an Indigenous artist was made available to work with our students. Indigenous students and their friends were invited to work in a small group setting for multiple weeks so they could have an opportunity to build a strong positive relationship with the artist and one another. The artist not only taught the students how to draw

but also told stories and shared his perspectives and experiences around growing up in Residential Schools in British Columbia.

At the conclusion of the students' time with the artist, the students were asked to provide qualitative data. A summary of some of their replies was:

"I liked working with [artist name]."

"I looked forward to his visits."

"I enjoyed learning more."

"It was good that I was allowed to bring friends from my class down too."

"Can we bring [artist name] back next year?"

"I will miss this because I am moving to Toronto."

The students' anecdotal feedback following their time with the artist reflects a highly positive and engaging experience. The mention of being able to bring friends highlights a sense of inclusion and shared excitement and also doubled the number of students learning about Indigenous brilliance and joy. While the request to bring the artist back next year indicates lasting impact and enthusiasm. One student's note about missing the experience due to moving away underscores the personal value they placed on the opportunity. Overall, the feedback suggests that the artist's involvement was meaningful, memorable, and well-received by the students.

In addition, as an act of reconciliation, our school has been engaged in the process of personalizing the Indigenous land acknowledgement. Not only has this allowed for students to practice the names and correct pronunciation of the Indigenous nations, but it has also helped foster a personal connection to the land, and genuine respect and recognition of Indigenous peoples.

We started this process with three of our eighteen divisions this year, specifically with our Kindergarten students. We plan to build on this next year and expand this learning to other classes, with our littlest learners leading the way in Indigenous allyship.

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

This year, Gordon Elementary School focused on improving literacy through self-assessment. There was a recognition that teachers have their own beliefs about good literacy practice and their own strategies on how to best teach literacy.

While some teachers stated they use self-assessment in class as a strategy, many did not use it well enough and often enough. This was an area where the staff decided to focus their efforts to help improve student achievement.

To achieve this the staff:

- Participated in professional development sessions with Katie White who is an expert in the area
- Participated in an in-school book club to deepen their own understanding of self-assessment
- Collaborated with the resource team
- Used differentiated groupings among students
- Conferenced with students to help guide them in the process of self-assessment
- Helped survey their students to track progress

Improve equity

To focus on equity, the staff explored what the term means. The agreed definitions are:

- Equity is individual.
- Each person gets what they need to help them improve and.
- There is a recognition that this will look different for each person.

Self-assessment by nature is equitable as each student identifies their own strengths and areas that need improvement, and each student sets their own learning objectives and goals and works on their own timeline to meet those objectives and goals.

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

In our ongoing journey of reconciliation, we will continue our efforts to foster understanding and promote healing and unity among communities. We plan to invite Indigenous artists, storytellers and knowledge keepers to work with all students to provide diverse perspectives and deepen cultural appreciation. As a staff we will embrace opportunities for continued professional development in Indigenous histories, cultures and reconciliation practices. We will also continue to encourage student leadership following the example of this year's Kindergarten students, and their work in personalizing the land acknowledgement. This will be in the spirit of Call-to-Action 63.iii building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE ON TRACK?

We will meet throughout the year to discuss progress towards school goals. This process involves looking at student progress data and determining if we need to change our approach to meet student needs. The resource team was also asked to be part of actions being conducted by classroom teachers at classroom teacher request.

We will continue to compare Written Learning Update (report card data) from terms 1 and 3, and a student survey on assessment, both pre and post.

We will also review Student Learning Survey Data and any other relevant information that helps us to see progress and growth not only in a qualitative way but through quantitative student voice avenues.