

## 2024-2025 School Learning Plan

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### SCHOOL STORY

*With deep gratitude and respect, we acknowledge the school is located on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səlilwatał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nation.*

John Henderson Elementary School is named after John Henderson (1880–1968) who was a Vancouver engineer and School Trustee. The school grounds are shared on the west side with Sunset Park, which allows students to have access to additional green space rock theatre, a larger playground, and a large grass playing field. In addition, the school has its own smaller playground on the east side, with a playground structure, tarmac for games, a painted sensory pathway, and a space-net climbing area.

The school building is mostly one level but has a second floor on the south side and is wheelchair accessible. Henderson serves more than 500 students. The population comes from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and has a multi-ethnic composition with over 31 languages other than English being spoken at home. Henderson has a part-time Curriculum Enhancement teacher focusing on literacy development and early intervention. There is a highly active and well attended StrongStart Centre that works with caregivers and children under five. A full-time Youth and Family Worker supports the community with food security, community programming, and social-emotional learning. Henderson is fortunate to have onsite before and after-school care provided by the South Slope YMCA. Many families also use the school-age care program provided by Sunset Community Centre.

Henderson celebrated progress toward the Education Plan goals of student achievement, self-regulation, equity, student engagement, and reconciliation in 2024/2025 by continuing to build community by class collaborations across grade groups and intentionally supporting *Social Emotional Learning* (SEL) programming and social justice. Research shows that social emotional learning positively impacts the overall well-being of children and youth. There are many events at Henderson that are organized to connect us as a community such as the Scholastic Book Fair, the annual winter concert, the garden club, the drama club, the Ukelele club, Dungeons & Dragons, plus numerous extra-curricular sports teams; in addition, this year (2024/2025) featured theatrical performances, including the Gr. 1-4 musical theatre production titled “*Rock! The Musical*,” the *Henderson Junior Theatre Company*, and *The Fine Arts Showcase*. Students continue to strengthen citizenship by participating in many of the leadership activities offered, which include Student Council, Hawk Helpers on the playground and in the lunchroom, library monitors, and assembly leaders.

Henderson has a devoted staff who provide inclusive, inquiry-based, hands-on learning opportunities for all students to develop their talents and strengths. Staff also work closely with the community to further connections. The Firefighters Snack Fund and Food4Schools Lunch Program, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, Sunset Community Centre, the One-to-One Literacy Volunteer program, Arts Umbrella, and the *Artist in Residence Program* (AIRS) are well established in the school. Henderson is also supported by the John Oliver Community Schools Team, which provides programs after school and during school breaks such as the Schools Out program. To further build community and connection, the Henderson Parent Advisory Council (PAC) offers many exciting events including two hot lunch days a month, family nights, and seasonal community building school wide activities. We have an active, supportive parent community that volunteers to support school projects and field trips.

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

The Henderson community of more than 500 learners are active, playful, engaged, and keen to learn. Students come from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, reflecting the rich diversity of the broader community. A large portion of the student body are English Language Learners, with more than 30 languages spoken at home, contributing to a dynamic and inclusive cultural and learning environment. Approximately 4.5% of the school population identifies as Indigenous and approximately 8% of our students are learners with diverse abilities and have received Ministry designations. A benefit of learning within a diverse community is the positive impact on students' perception of others. For example, results from the 2024/2025 Student Learning Survey indicate that 91% of Henderson students surveyed responded positively to the question, "At school, do you respect people who are different than you (e.g., think, act, or look different)"

Henderson students are well cared for at home; school and learning are valued. As many of our students and families are navigating a second language and culture, they work through additional layers of complexity related to communication, culture, the Vancouver community, as well as B.C. curriculum and approaches to education. There are a variety of out-of-school programs within the community designed to support student and family health and wellbeing, athletics and the arts, and cultural learning. For many of our students, the school day is a valuable time for social connection and time with friends and classmates. We work diligently with all students and families to support community and connection.

Henderson staff are engaged in frequent conversations, planning sessions, and reflection to identify Henderson students' strengths and areas for growth strengths. During Class Review conversations in Fall Term 2024, teachers and staff repeatedly described Henderson students as being *creative, kind and caring, helpful, friendly and cooperative*, and that they *love learning*. Through daily anecdotal conversations with students, staff, and families, it is evident that our students seek connection and positive relationships with peers and staff—Henderson students love to come to school to be with friends! To support engagement amongst all learners, we have been incorporating inquiry, experiential learning, arts-based learning, and outdoor education into class and school planning. In addition, Student Leadership is important at Henderson, with many

students in all grades involved in the Henderson Students' Council, providing service as Hawk's Helpers, and cross-grade buddy support.

As in any school setting, the needs of students and the community vary and shift each year and over time. A current theme related to children's development emerging in schools, everywhere, is students' need for support with social/emotional growth and the development of self-regulation, particularly in classroom, group, and unstructured settings. This is true at Henderson. We are supporting students develop skills with peaceful resolutions of conflict during play (e.g., using words, seeing the perspectives of others), with self-regulation during lessons and classroom times to promote effective learning, and with other social/emotional learning opportunities. We support many new immigrant and refugee families from various parts of the world integrate into the community. For newcomer families, some students have not had the opportunity to develop school readiness skills. We continue to develop the ability to reflect on personal values and beliefs while still respecting those of others

We know that students need to feel welcome and connected, and that a nurturing, caring relationship with others in the school is vital to enhance their social/emotional wellbeing and increase motivation and engagement in learning to promote success. For example, findings from the 2024/2025 Student Learning Survey indicate that 83% of students feel that there are 2 or more adults who care about them at school.

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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**

#### **Language and Literacy**

At Henderson, English language skill development begins with vocabulary acquisition, which builds students' confidence in speaking. As their vocabulary grows, students become more fluent and engaged in oral communication. Intermediate students frequently participate in both collaborative and individual presentations, make announcements, and speak at assemblies and community events.

In reading, students first develop strong decoding skills, followed by improved comprehension and fluency as their vocabulary and exposure to text increase. Writing development begins with basic sentence structures and progresses as students gain experience across genres. Students engage in authentic writing tasks such as creating scripts for theatrical performances, promoting ADST (Applied Design, Science and Technology) projects, and preparing school-wide announcements.

This year, primary teachers collaborated to enhance literacy instruction. Strategies included phonemic awareness programs like University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI), Heggerty, and Rime Magic, along with the use of leveled books and age-appropriate decodable novels. These approaches aim to build foundational literacy skills in early learners.

According to the June 2025 Summary of Learning data, just under 50% of Henderson students are currently assessed as 'proficient' or 'extending' in literacy. In response, teachers have worked together to establish a consistent assessment framework. This includes selecting common

screeners and developing an annual assessment scope and sequence to guide instruction and ensure consistency across grades.

This shared approach supports a deeper understanding of proficiency scales and helps align teaching practices to better support student learning and assessment. By focusing on vocabulary development, authentic literacy experiences, and consistent assessment practices, Henderson continues to strengthen literacy outcomes for all learners.

### **Numeracy**

This year, Henderson continued its focus on enhancing numeracy development across all grade levels. Both Primary and Intermediate teachers collaborated with the district's Curriculum Enhancement Teacher and Math Consultant to explore effective assessment tools. After testing various screeners, including those adapted from Marion Small and the Saskatchewan Screener, the team developed a customized Henderson math screener.

This new screener will be implemented in the 2025/2026 school year using a two-stage assessment schedule (Fall and Spring). Its purpose is to inform instruction and support student learning by identifying strengths and areas for growth. All teaching teams will use one of two adapted versions of the screener, tailored to meet the specific needs of Henderson students.

In addition to formal assessments, numeracy instruction continues to be embedded in classroom activities. Teachers use math games to foster enjoyment and build foundational skills, helping students develop a positive relationship with mathematics. Upper-intermediate students also had the opportunity to participate in national math contests, further enriching their learning experience and encouraging mathematical thinking beyond the classroom.

According to the June 2025 Summary of Learning data, 60% of Henderson students are currently assessed as 'proficient' or 'extending' in Mathematics. This data highlights both the progress made and the ongoing need to support all learners in achieving numeracy success.

### **Physical and Mental Well-Being, and Belonging**

Henderson is committed to supporting students' physical and mental well-being through a wide range of programs and activities. Intermediate students participate in all district sports teams, while primary students engage in physical education through initiatives like Marafun, Gardening Club, and Arts Umbrella Dance Workshops. According to the 2024/2025 Student Learning Survey, 93% of students rated their mental health as fair to excellent, and 98% reported the same for physical health.

This year, all students took part in the Kind Mind Project, a month-long initiative from the KELTY Centre at BC Children's Hospital focused on mental wellness. Additional programs supporting student well-being included Second Step, Zones of Regulation, Mind Up, Social Thinking, PATHS® Social/Emotional Learning (i.e., Prevention, Awareness, Teaching, Self Awareness), PLEA: Children of the Street, and Saleema Noon Body Science Workshops.

Grade 7 students participated in an outdoor camp experience that fostered leadership and community building. All students also joined in a school-wide Play Day, celebrating the International Day of Play, which emphasizes the importance of play in developing essential life skills.

Classroom learning has included exploration of the Seven Grandfather Teachings and Character Traits, often supported by the Teacher Librarian. Henderson continues to build a sense of belonging by recognizing and celebrating the diverse cultures within its community. This includes highlighting the histories, holidays, and contributions of equity-deserving groups.

The school uses literature as a tool for inclusion, guided by Rudine Sims Bishop's concept of books as "windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors" so that children might see themselves in learning and in the world. Over the past several years, Henderson has expanded its collection of diverse books and regularly invites guest speakers and performers to deepen students' understanding of the cultures represented in their school community.

### **Improve equity**

Over the past two years, Henderson staff have participated in Sensory Motor Labs workshops led by the District Inclusion Support Team. These sessions, along with additional school-based and offsite training for support staff, have equipped educators with strategies to enhance student self-regulation. These practices promote equity by helping all students access and demonstrate authentic learning more effectively. Since implementation, many students across all grades have used the Sensory room to promote regulation and learning-readiness. To further support student regulation and engagement, Henderson has created alternate learning spaces, such as The Pause Room, which provides a calm environment for students to reset and refocus. In the 2025/2026 school year, the school will introduce a Nurturing Room—a quiet, flexible space designed to support learning, emotional regulation, and physical movement.

Building on this foundation, Henderson continues to implement inclusive practices through the Response to Intervention (RTI) model; more teachers are expressing interest in and active planning with Universal Design for Learning (UDL). These frameworks guide instructional planning and support the diverse needs of learners across the school.

These initiatives reflect Henderson's commitment to inclusive education and responsive school organization. The RTI model will continue to inform decisions around resource allocation and support distribution, ensuring that interventions are timely, targeted, and effective.

By combining professional development, inclusive design, and supportive environments, Henderson is creating a school culture where all students feel safe, supported, and empowered to succeed.

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

At Henderson, we continue to deepen our understanding and integration of the First People's Principles of Learning, which emphasize holistic, experiential, and relational approaches to education. These principles support the well-being of the self, family, community, and the land, and guide our efforts to foster connectedness, respect, and a strong sense of place.

At Henderson, all school-wide events begin with the official VSB land acknowledgement and the Coast Salish Anthem. These practices ground our community in respect for our place, the land, and its original caretakers. Last year, Intermediate students created a collection of personalized Land Acknowledgments, expressing their individual connections to the land and their commitment to reconciliation. This informs our work this year in which all classes have taken a deeper look into the meaning of the Land Acknowledgment along with correct pronunciation of the Host Nations.

Through guided discussions and reflective activities, students are developing a more personal and informed understanding of Indigenous histories and current realities.

Henderson remains committed to creating a learning environment where all students feel a sense of belonging and responsibility. By embedding Indigenous perspectives into our daily practices and curriculum, we aim to foster empathy, awareness, and a deeper respect for the diverse histories and cultures that shape our community.

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

**Student Learning Indicated Through Quantitative Measures.** We will know we are on track by monitoring, assessing, and collecting quantitative evidence. In 2025–2026, examples of quantitative data measures designed to support instructional decision-making and student learning include the following school-wide assessment measures, implemented two times per year (fall and spring): (a) school wide write, (b) belonging survey (Intermediate), (c) numeracy screener.

In addition, we will review the following data to help determine where we are at and where we are going: (a) proficiency scales as indicated in the Learning Updates and Summary of Learning, (b) through shifts in the annual BC Student Learning Survey, which illuminates student perceptions about belonging, wellbeing, and academic growth, and (c) through qualitative feedback from staff, students, and parents.

**Student Learning Indicated Through Qualitative Measures.** We will continue to look at student self-reflections, stories and anecdotal evidence. The school climate, relationships between students, staff and parents will help provide authentic indicators of how well we are doing to create a positive environment, where all are willing and excited to be involved and engaged with learning at school. We will celebrate our successes as a community through newsletters, displays, PA announcements, assemblies, PAC meetings, and community gatherings.