

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).

Dr. A.R. Lord Elementary School is in the northeast part of Vancouver close to Hastings Park Conservancy in a diverse, hilly, green neighbourhood. Our area has not experienced high transiency. We even have a second generation of students attending AR Lord. There are fourteen different languages spoken in our community with English, Cantonese, and Vietnamese being the most prevalent.

Most grade seven students enter Templeton Secondary where they have success in academics, specialized programs, sports, and social responsibility.

The student population engages in extra-curricular learning and school service opportunities such as choir, cross-country, volleyball, basketball, badminton, track & field, Templeton STEM challenge, student-led morning announcements, student lunch monitors, and student leadership with social justice projects.

Our school's enrollment has plateaued in the past several years. We currently enroll Kindergarten to grade seven students in nine divisions with close to 200 students. Across the street at Hastings Community Centre, the out of school care program, 'OSC' is a welcomed asset to our school community. The community centre also runs daycare and preschool programs where future classmates meet before entering Kindergarten.

Our staff have engaged in recurring conversations about how best to meet increasing and complex needs related to learning, mental wellness, family stressors impacting students, generalized anxiety, and the shifting concept of world safety. We are active partners with our School Counsellor, School Psychologist, School Speech-Language Pathologist, and the Templeton Family of Schools Community School Coordinator.

Dr AR Lord Elementary has many unique and positive characteristics. We are proud of how we organize a small and complex student population into an inclusive and close school community. Our school community benefits from close relationships between all ages of students, as well as between home & school. Our school staff team meets monthly to plan and adjust learning support strategies for students.

At AR Lord Elementary, we celebrate student achievement inside and outside the classroom. Student work is displayed all over our physical space. Students and staff regularly acknowledge each other's achievements publicly and individually through morning announcements, in-person visits, P.R.I.D.E tickets, and during formal collaboration and learning sessions. The community regularly invites others to observe learning and results of project-based learning. This also creates a sense of belonging in school and community. Applying chosen skills to demonstrate learnings allows students to celebrate their strengths.

We celebrate physical and mental well-being inside and outside the classroom. Often, staff teach and support groups learning outside as well as lead direct teaching of outdoor education. We regularly make the connection between physical & mental well-being through the Self-Regulation Framework™ and other mental health and social-emotional learning curriculum such as Second Step, Open Parachute, MindUp, SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity), Zones of Regulation, Social Thinking™. Staff support students with open dialogue, gender-inclusive language (and reminder notes for guest educators), and regular teaching opportunities. We celebrate SOGI Pride and School P.R.I.D.E through our Code of Conduct. The school-wide positive behaviour support system is grounded in the P.R.I.D.E matrix: Purpose, Respect & Responsibility, Integrity, Diversity and Engagement.

Equity and Reconciliation are ongoing practices as staff and students are unlearning prejudices and re-learning history together. We engage in acts of reconciliation together by sharing inquiry projects about Canadian history, daily land acknowledgements, and singing the Coast Salish anthem. Our school library is a common learning area where staff and students access new and culturally responsible print materials that teach and celebrate Indigenous culture.

We have an extraordinarily spacious and engaging school yard with a playground structure, garden area, two basketball areas, gravel field and grass field as well as several playground games painted beneath a covered, hard surface play area.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

Through observation and student voice we understand our community of learners in the following ways.

Diverse Needs:

- There are many different learning styles, with rich neurodiversity
- Differences in values can both enrich and be challenging for the learning environment, as some prioritize freedom and independence while others find strength in group plans.
- Emotional Intelligence:
- Variety of levels of resilience and experiences with others.
- Group work expectations differ from smaller family units or cohorts.
- Strong emphasis on fairness, justice, and equity.
- Learning and Perspective:
- Some children understand the need for different approaches for different students.
- Students are learning empathy and that equity does not mean the same approach for everyone

Anxiety and Relationships:

- Some students have increased anxiety due to separation from parents at drop-off time
- There is a strong importance of relationships with adults and peer approval.
- We see a shift in behavior around grades 4/5 as children begin to see themselves differently

Based on Term 1 proficiency indicators for student learning in numeracy and literacy, we see that:

There was a positive trend in student proficiency over the academic year. In Numeracy, the percentage of students assessed as 'emerging' decreased from 7% in Term 1 to 6% in the final term, with English language learners making up 13% of emerging students in Term 1 and 11% in Term 2. In Literacy, the proportion of students in the 'emerging' category declined from 13% in Term 1 to 10% by Term 3. Among these, English language learners comprised 39% in Term 1 and 31% in Term 2. This is excellent progress in both numeracy and literacy over the course of the two terms. By the beginning of second term, we focused further on two specific areas:

- numeracy teaching and learning.
- regulation and neurodiversity

Data from 2024/25 tells us that students have a low perception that Indigenous studies are being taught as well as a low perception of our school participation in programs, activities and celebration. We are continuing to work on explicit teaching about the teaching and participation in Indigenous studies, programs, activities and celebration. The data tells us that students are not recognizing the journey of reconciliation explicitly. When we provide opportunities to connect learning, we will show and tell students how this learning is part of our reconciliation journey. For example, we use the Musqueam teaching kit available to Vancouver educators, we have incorporated more Indigenous activities and celebration into our learning such as a singing and drummer performer, soapstone carving, and class-wide land acknowledgement practices.

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

We are working toward decreasing achievement gaps in literacy and numeracy by ensuring all students have equitable access to learning supports needed for success. We can provide meaningful actions by adjusting instruction based on student need. Teachers will increase knowledge of each other's work which will influence their perceptions of their colleagues' abilities and motivate them through co-constructing new knowledge.

We are assigning financial resources to purchase laptops to secure access for learning tools for learners with IEPs. We regularly measure learner response to interventions and adjust teaching strategies and small groups based on this data.

Improve equity

Our classes are designed in multiple grade groupings to increase collaboration amongst learners and classroom and resource teachers. We will continue to provide additional teacher collaboration time to support educational planning that provides access to curriculum for all learners.

Our school staff have engaged in learning with a District Consultant to learn tools and to practice anti-oppression intervention, self-awareness and examine our own biases.

When we see the discrepancy in learning between students achieving “emerging” and those achieving “developing”, we want to further understand and design interventions for what is behind the gap. Additionally, we have completed a brief assessment: The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) of learner skills related to social and emotional functioning in both January and June 2025. DESSA results are lower overall for students on an IEP, ELL, boys and Indigenous students. Academic performance is linked to social-emotional learning; therefore, we want to focus on both areas.

We initiated partnerships of at-risk students with a staff member to increase connection and belonging. We also offered extra activities during lunchtime such as chess and Dungeons and Dragons(D&D) club to foster connection and belonging for all learners.

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

We will continue to integrate First Peoples Principles of Learning throughout our classroom activities and routines. Our collection of Indigenous books and learning resources will continue to be a spending priority. We participate in place-based learning by utilizing our outdoor education resources such as gardening materials and tools for visual investigations; we also provide weather-appropriate outdoor wear for all learners. We collaborate with staff at the Hastings Conservancy in our neighbourhood for enriched outdoor learning. We have prioritized budget allocation for a school gardening program *Earthbites* for all students. We will continue student-led morning announcements with the correct pronunciations of the names of the local nations: xwməθkwəyəm(Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

One of our goals is to improve student outcomes on Numeracy outcomes. We will know that we are track as success will be evident through regular assessments with our classroom and resource teachers. Students will show increased engagement and joy during numeracy activities.

Additionally, there will be an increase in students' proficiency in Numeracy, with more students meeting or exceeding benchmarks on various numeracy assessments. If we do not see any improvements for our students, we must be willing to critically examine our role in this. We must ask what leads to the present situation and how we, the professionals, contribute. In addition, we will continue to review Communicating Student Learning Data for language arts and mathematics to review student progress.

We will know that we are on track to improve equity and continue our journey to reconciliation through a variety of measures that will indicate student improvement in areas of academics,

belonging and awareness of Indigenous culture. Feedback from students and families will show meaningful conversations and experiences are taking place, though some changes may be gradual and not immediately visible. Overall, a positive environment will be reflected in students' happiness, engagement, and support systems involving connections with adults and peers. We can check with our community about our school-wide adjusted celebration of Field Day at Khanamoot. We will gather information from students and discuss as a group the impact of new activities such as incorporating Indigenous games, learning on the land and by the ocean. Student Learning Survey data will continue to provide information on areas of strength and areas for growth.