

2024-2025

School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

Queen Alexandra School sits on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) and is located at the busy intersection of Broadway and Clark in East Vancouver. After grade 7, the majority of students feed into Vancouver Technical Secondary School, but past students attend a range of high schools. Our school receives supports through the Enhanced Services and Community Schools Teams. Our vision is to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration and communication skills in students. QA is known for its welcoming learning environment, flexible learning spaces, and the desire to authentically integrate Indigenous ways of knowing into the school. We foster students' creativity, self-expression and respect for diversity, and we make every effort to nurture students' development into successful global citizens. The students, families and staff of Queen Alexandra Elementary School work together in an emotionally nurturing environment so all students can succeed academically and socially.

Queen Alexandra currently has over 150 students from Kindergarten to grade 7, and a vibrant Strong Start program. There are 37 members on school staff, including classroom teachers, resource and prep teachers, a curriculum enhancement teacher, a teacher-librarian, an area counsellor, school and student support workers, an Indigenous education worker, a neighbourhood assistant, office administrator, custodial and cafeteria workers and a principal. There is a strong sense of family among staff; many staff members have deep connections with multiple generations of families.

Family involvement is highly valued at Queen Alexandra Elementary, and we are fortunate to have a very engaged and active Parent Advisory Council (PAC). The PAC is an integral link between the school and the community, providing families with a platform to actively contribute to the school's activities. This collaboration fosters a sense of partnership and ensures that parents' voices are heard and valued. We run coffee mornings for families every Friday in the lunchroom, which helps further strengthen school and community bonds. We also host an Indigenous Day in June where families are invited to partake in teaching and learning sessions.

Queen Alexandra makes significant efforts to provide diverse curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students. Sports and sportsmanship play a significant role at the school - we encourage students to participate in team and individual sports, such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, track and field and Ultimate Frisbee. For many years we have been part of the AIRS (Artist-in-Residence) program. This year our inquiry is focused on Indigenous Principles of

Learning, self-identity, and the cyclical nature of water. Students will co-create a mural to represent their understanding of these themes.

Queen Alexandra has developed diverse community partnerships, which offer opportunities for our students during and after school in arts, literacy, STEAM and sports. We work with community partners to offer winter, spring and summer programs, alongside before and after school care programming. Our school is grateful to community partners and proud of each student's learning journey.

We foster community and learning through a variety of events and activities, including school-wide themes such as Multicultural Day, Literacy Day, and Orange Shirt Day, drumming and singing the Coast Salish Anthem at events and assemblies, monthly "shout outs", weekly newsletters, school website communications, PAC meetings, Friday Morning Family Coffee, and Winter and a Spring Fair and Gallery. Each month we focus on one of the Seven Sacred Teachings, with students being honoured when they demonstrate that month's Teaching. We also highlight these during monthly assemblies. Students' work is displayed in the hallways and samples of their work are shared with families during student conferences. Queen Alexandra aligns our practice with the overarching goals set out by the Vancouver School Board Education Plan.

QA students see themselves and their communities in the curriculum. Numerous resources, from the library to the playground, display this inclusivity. For example, books celebrating Indigenous cultures and traditions are abundant in our library. The outside garden is being redeveloped this year to help students learn about a sense of place. With the help of a VSB sustainability grant, we plan to plant Indigenous medicines, grasses and plants to rejuvenate this space.

Queen Alexandra ensures a school environment which is safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive for students and families. Each year we evaluate and renew plans for the improvement for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners and increase our knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

The diverse student body at Queen Alexandra includes over 17% of students with recognized diverse learning needs, 15% identified as English Language Learners (ELL), and more than 38% of students identifying as Indigenous.

Through staff meetings and discussions, along with family and student surveys, overall school strengths and needs of our learners were identified. This year, our grade 4 and 7 students participated in the Student Learning Survey. We intend to use this information as baseline data moving forward.

Overall Strengths

Queen Alexandra is a resilient and inclusive community where students, families, and staff work together to support one another. Learners demonstrate strong oral communication skills and benefit from a welcoming environment that values diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. Social-emotional learning is central to the school's approach, with a focus on building

relationships, self-regulation, and student advocacy. Staff and families collaborate to nurture confidence, connection, and well-being among students.

Overall Stretches

Students at Queen Alexandra have a wide range of individual needs, including academic support, self-confidence, and social integration. Some learners face challenges with transitions, focus, and peer relationships. Staff are committed to understanding diverse communication styles and backgrounds, especially for students who may have experienced trauma. Continued emphasis on structure, stability, and external supports—such as those provided by the Enhanced Services Team—will help ensure all students thrive.

Our learning community demonstrates a strong commitment to supporting students' holistic development while addressing their diverse needs and fostering a culture of inclusivity and resilience. We continue to prioritize social-emotional learning, academic support, and community collaboration to enhance the overall well-being and success of students.

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

Our literacy focus this year is to strengthen reading comprehension while continuing to build foundational literacy skills. Building on last year's implementation of explicit and systematic reading programs, we are now emphasizing fluency in Kindergarten and Grade 1, and decoding and comprehension in Grades 2 through 7. Teachers are using a range of resources—including UFLI, Rime Magic, and SQP2RS—within daily literacy blocks, supported by tools like posters, mini-whiteboards, and word study kits. Collaboration among classroom, resource, and curriculum enhancement teachers ensures targeted support in phonological awareness, fluency, and comprehension.

To monitor student progress and guide instruction, we use a variety of assessments such as the Heggerty assessments, Kindergarten Protocol, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, and grade-wide writes. We also value student strengths beyond standardized testing, including oral storytelling and fine arts. This year, we have begun to administer DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) benchmark assessments to all students three times a year to track phonics, fluency, and comprehension. At the beginning of the year, 34% of students were identified as "At Risk," 15% as "Some Risk," 35% as "Minimal Risk," and 16% as "Negligible Risk." Our goal is to shift more students into the lower-risk categories as the year progresses.

To support this, we've expanded the use of literacy assessment folders—initially introduced for K-3 students—to include all grades, providing a consistent record of progress. Weekly guided reading sessions allow students to apply their skills in meaningful contexts, while comprehension is regularly monitored through targeted strategies. Staff remain committed to professional growth

through ongoing collaboration, resource exploration, and professional development, ensuring our literacy program continues to evolve in support of every learner's success.

Improve equity

At our school, equity begins with belonging. Though we are a small school, the sense of family is strong - students know most of the adults in the building, and every hallway echoes with respect, kindness, and inclusivity. Relationships are at the heart of our work, and we intentionally nurture them through daily interactions, shared experiences, and community-building events. Our breakfast and lunch programs are more than just meals—they are moments where stories are exchanged, and friendships are deepened. The Adam's Apples initiative, where students are encouraged to take an apple for themselves and one for a friend, is an example of a simple but powerful symbol of care and community that is part of our practice.

Throughout the year, we bring in a wide range of performances and workshops—from lacrosse and wrestling to Afrobeats, hip hop, and theatre—to celebrate the many ways people express themselves. Monthly student-led assemblies highlight the Seven Sacred Teachings, recognizing students who embody each value. This year, we also launched a Social Justice Club, giving students a platform to share their voices and shape our school culture. Social justice principles are woven into daily instruction, with a focus on Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Black and Women's History, and cultural celebrations. Our teaching practices are guided by the Universal Design for Learning framework, ensuring that all students can demonstrate their learning in ways that reflect their strengths—whether through storytelling, technology, visual art, or writing.

To understand how students experience school, we closely monitor responses to four key questions from the Student Learning Survey. We recorded the percentage of students reporting positive responses to key questions. Last year, 50% of Grade 4 students and 84% of Grade 7 students felt that adults cared about them. When asked if they felt welcome at school, 63% of Grade 4s and 79% of Grade 7s said yes. Feelings of safety were more varied—only 38% of Grade 4 students felt safe, compared to 84% of Grade 7s. Similarly, 50% of Grade 4s and 79% of Grade 7s reported a sense of belonging. These results guide our ongoing efforts. We will continue to engage the Social Justice Club for ideas on how to improve equity, and as a staff, we are committed to deepening our understanding through professional development in areas such as SOGI, racial equity, and anti-oppression. By sharing resources and learning together, we reaffirm our commitment to making Queen Alexandra a place where every student feels seen, valued, and empowered.

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

At Queen Alexandra Elementary, Indigenous education is woven into the fabric of our school community, supporting the success of Indigenous students and enriching the learning of all. Each month, we focus on one of the Seven Sacred Teachings, offering students opportunities to explore and embody these values in their daily lives. Students are recognized through "honourings" collected in the office and celebrated at monthly assemblies, where they often share their stories with the school. Our participation in the Artist in Residence program this year centers on the First Peoples' Principle that learning involves exploring one's identity. This theme is echoed in our

assemblies, led by our QA drummers, and in student-led Land Acknowledgements that reflect personal understanding and connection to place.

Cultural events such as Orange Shirt Day, Red Dress Day, and QA Indigenous Day are deeply meaningful at Queen Alexandra. These occasions bring together students, families, and community members, culminating in shared drumming at the “Four Corners” of Broadway and Clark. Throughout the year, families are invited to share their knowledge and traditions, enriching our collective understanding. To track our progress, we monitor student responses to key questions from the Student Learning Survey. Again, we recorded the percentage of students reporting positive responses to key questions. Last year, 0% of Grade 4 students and 32% of Grade 7 students reported participating in Indigenous celebrations and activities. Meanwhile, 56% of Grade 4s and 63% of Grade 7s said they were being taught about Indigenous Peoples of Canada, and 33% of Grade 4s and 53% of Grade 7s reported learning about local First Nations. These results guide our efforts to deepen engagement and understanding across all grades.

This year, our intermediate students are engaging with the 94 Calls to Action, beginning in September and continuing through to June, when they will reflect on and share their learning. Staff are equally committed to this journey, actively working to decolonize their teaching practices and school environment. Professional development is ongoing, including participation in Indigenous Focus Day and experiential workshops at Cheakamus Centre. Many staff are also learning through “Sk’emel Iya’7yulh: The Paddle Journey,” an interactive workshop led by Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Elder Yeltsilewet (Faye Halls), daughter of the Late Chief Simon Baker (Khot-la-cha), which leads staff on a hands-on journey through history from an Indigenous perspective. Together, these efforts reflect our school’s deep and growing commitment to reconciliation, cultural responsiveness, and inclusive education.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE’RE ON TRACK?

To track our progress, we utilize a range of assessments and surveys at different grade levels. The school is making steady progress toward its goals in literacy, well-being, and belonging. In literacy, we’ve strengthened our instructional practices and expanded the use of consistent assessment tools like DIBELS, which is now administered more broadly across the school. While the overall percentages of students in each risk category remained stable from the beginning of this year to the end, the increase in participation—particularly among students who were previously in higher-risk categories—indicates that more learners are making progress in the literacy learning. This shift reflects the impact of our structured literacy blocks, guided reading sessions, and the use of targeted resources such as UFLI, Rime Magic, and literacy assessment folders. Staff collaboration and ongoing professional development continue to ensure that our literacy instruction is both responsive and effective.

In the areas of equity, well-being, and reconciliation, our school culture continues to grow stronger. Student Learning Survey participation has increased steadily over the past three years, giving us a clearer picture of how students experience school. This year’s results show that there was an increase in the number of students reporting positive responses about feeling welcome and safe, while responses around feeling cared for and a sense of belonging fluctuated in grade levels surveyed (grades 4 and 7). Engagement with Indigenous education is also deepening, with

more students reporting positively that they are learning about Indigenous Peoples and local First Nations, and participation in cultural celebrations. Initiatives like monthly assemblies centered on the Seven Sacred Teachings, and staff continuing their learning through professional development, such as “Sk’emel Iya’7yulh: The Paddle Journey”, are helping to build a more inclusive and culturally responsive environment. These efforts demonstrate that we are not only on track but continuing to grow in ways that support every learner’s success and sense of belonging.