

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2025-2026 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 xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

Here at Sir Alexander Mackenzie Elementary, we strive to foster a pro-social school community “*where students can learn, see themselves, feel supported and connected so that they develop a love of learning and become lifelong learners.*” – VSB Education Plan 2026

Sir Alexander Mackenzie Elementary is proud of its diverse, inclusive community. Built in 1930, Mackenzie is a beautiful, Art Deco building full of stories and history; the lower ‘West Wing’ opened in 2002. The student enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year is 395 students, plus a rotation of 20 new students from across VSB every 5 weeks in the District Gifted Enrichment Centre. Mackenzie has a culturally diverse student population with as many as 33 languages being spoken. Mackenzie is also home to a District Life Skills class, District Gifted Enrichment Centre, Strong Start Program, as well as the YMCA before and after-school care. We are also members of the John Oliver family of schools.

Mackenzie’s remarkable staff consists of over 60 dedicated members who always center students. As a staff, we work passionately and collaboratively to co-create learning and exploration opportunities for students to reach their individual potential, feel safe and brave enough to take up and hold space, as well as become positive contributing citizens.

Our two schoolwide goals include:

- Continuing to nurture students’ social-emotional capacity and increase their sense of belonging to others, Mackenzie, and the communities they are members of.
- Developing students’ writing, reading, and comprehension skills through engaging learning and exploration opportunities co-created by the school and VSB’s Professional Learning Community team.

Learning and growth are intricate processes that require care, patience, inspiration, motivation, and time. Together, school and home support our young learners to find joy in learning, be curious about

the world around them, and see themselves reflected and represented in the communities they are members of. With our care and guidance, their *soon to shine moments* await them!

Students' overall learning and exploration of the curriculum—along with their physical, social-emotional, and mental wellness, and their sense of belonging and connection to others and the school—are supported by our dedicated team. This team includes classroom teachers, resource teachers, school-student support assistants (SSAs), non-enrolling teachers for Music, Physical Education, and Library, an Area Counsellor, a Youth & Family Worker, a Speech-Language Pathologist, an Educational Psychologist, supervision aides, office staff, and administrators.

At Mackenzie, staff offer many opportunities for students to foster their leadership and citizenship skills. Students volunteer and dedicate their care, time and effort to being morning announcers, Playground Pals, assembly leaders, keeping our school grounds clean, members of sports teams and clubs such as the Spirit Club and Volunteer Group, and so much more. We appreciate and acknowledge that staff volunteer their time to provide enriching learning and growth opportunities for students.

The Mackenzie staff are engaged members of the many school committees that support students, staff, and the school. Committees meet regularly to discuss schoolwide goals and direction, student needs and support, health and safety, professional development, collaborative learning and teaching opportunities, and the many grade groups and schoolwide initiatives.

We encourage all students to be “*active, productive and socially responsible citizens*” ([Education Plan 2026, Values Statement](#)) and to participate in the many activities available at Mackenzie, from sports teams to clubs to many volunteering and leadership opportunities such as being library monitors. Furthermore, we encourage families to support and get involved in school events and initiatives; we value and appreciate their positive contributions to the Mackenzie community. Mackenzie's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) supports our school's initiatives and actively works with the school to bring offerings to students that enrich their schooling and learning experiences. PAC also brings the parent community together to collectively foster a greater sense of belonging for everyone. Mackenzie's parents are engaged participants in our school community. Many parents are involved in volunteering in school activities and with PAC endeavors, such as Munch-A-Lunch, Move-a-thon, Welcome Kindergarten Families, Culture Club, Movie Nights, Year-End Family Party, and Sports Day. Starting from the 2024-2025 school year, PAC Culture Club has been creating opportunities for students to celebrate inclusion and diversity through the visual and performing arts; this year, they collaborated with John Oliver to curate an art exhibition by both schools.

Together, we co-nurture a safer, more joyful, welcoming, and inclusive school where everyone is brave enough to take up and hold space to better understanding the identity of self and others, as well as feel a deeper belonging and connection to each other and our school community. We live and practice our school motto, “Together is better!”

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

Mackenzie's community of learners is engaging, full of wonder, and eager to learn and experience the world around them. Besides their well-planned and executed lessons and units, teachers provide many

learning and growth opportunities for students through guest presenters and field trips. As a school, we also gather for learning and fun such as Remembrance Day assembly, Black History Month learning with our teacher-librarian, Lunar New Year art and performance by The Vancouver Chinese Music Ensemble, Vancouver Youth Choir concert, Himig Kabataan Cultural Society Choir, Mackenzie's spring concert, and our first Pride Celebration.

Our learners also love music, being active, and reading. We have a Music and Physical Education teacher, as well as a teacher-librarian who provides additional robust curriculum and learning beyond the classroom. Our Music room is a dynamic hub where students learn a variety of instruments and genres of songs; our Grade 7s get to learn their instrument of choice in a band program. As a school, we are also participating in a 2-year VSO Connects program where students will learn from professional musicians. Our library is a vibrant, central hub where everyone in the school gathers to read, learn, and socialize. Students independently check out their preferred books and library monitors volunteer their time to check in and shelf books during recesses. Physical Education is taught by either the classroom or P.E. teacher. Mackenzie Dragons are not only athletically inclined; they also demonstrate good sportspersonship. This year, Elevate Ultimate did Ultimate skills development with all grades, and The Whitecaps Community Coaches conducted soccer skills development, and Bike HUB conducted their Ride the Road program with Grades 6 & 7. For the first time in Mackenzie's history, we won the Vancouver Elementary Physical Activity Association Senior Boys Volleyball Championship.

Our community of learners love to give back to the school and community. Students have a deep sense of empathy and leadership. Besides representing the school on sports teams and making daily morning announcements, Dragons volunteer in many clubs that benefit other students and those in our community.

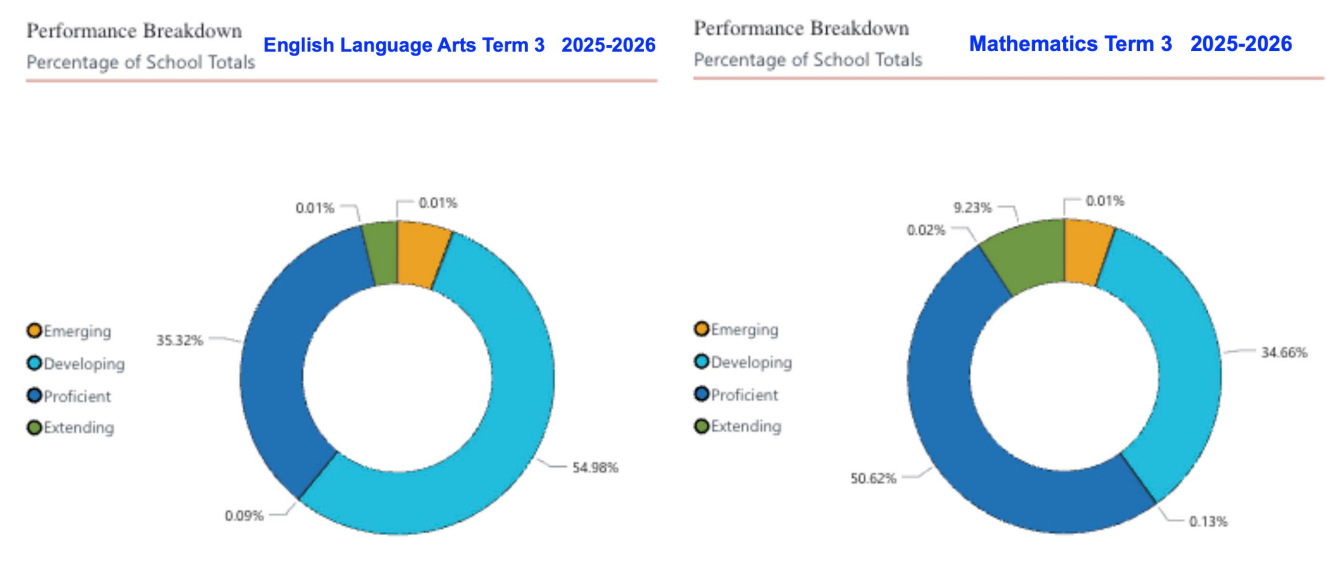
- Playground Pals is a leadership opportunity for intermediate students to create play opportunities for students during lunchtime. Playground Pals are also trained to help students resolve conflicts.
- Volunteer Group is another intermediate leadership opportunity for students to help communities beyond Mackenzie. Students create fundraising initiatives to raise awareness and, or funds for a charity of their choice such as The Greater Vancouver Food Bank.
- Spirit Club is not just a club of student volunteers who bring our school community together through spirited fun such as Pajama & Hot Cocoa Day and Team Canada spirit day to cheer on Canadian Olympians in Milano Cortina, they also look beyond our school walls to raise awareness and funds for charitable organizations. This year, Spirit Club led us to donate socks, gloves, and toques for a charitable organization that supports individuals in need on the Downtown Eastside and raised funds for another worthy cause that supports children. .

There is a strong sense of the school community among our community of learners and staff. Teachers form "Buddy" classes to co-create opportunities for students to get to know each other and learn to work cooperatively and collaboratively together. To support the school's writing literacy goal, we invited VSB's Professional Learning Community team to collaborate with teachers to provide writing literacy learning for students. After school, our VSB Community Schools team also foster a greater sense of belonging to our community by bringing in community partners to provide extracurricular

experiences for students such as ASSAI's (After School Sport and Arts Initiative) art program and Active Play.

Data collected from the FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment), MDI (Middle Years Development Instrument), EDI (Early Development Instrument), and SLS (Student Learning Survey) provide insight into our community of learners. However, these are only snapshots of a cross-section of our students. Further data of students' learning and growth are reflected in the two Written Learning Updates and one Summary of Learning provided by teachers. With the information from these reports, we can gather more concise data about our community of learners. . With writing literacy as a school-wide goal, our cold-writes and the day-to-day work educators do to build on students' writing understanding and knowledge to inform us about their progress in this domain. It is important that school leaders' model being learners so that we are part of the work in the classrooms and around the school.

The English Language Arts and Mathematics data below is based on the 2025-2026 Learning **Update for Term 2** and reflect student population from Kindergarten to Grade 7. The data includes students who have Ministry designations and who are coded as ELL. Both data include students who identify as Indigenous.



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

To support our school's writing development, since the 2024-2205 school year, Mackenzie educators have been collaborating with each other and VSB's Professional Learning Community team to co-teach, as well as co-create curriculum and learning experiences to build on students' writing development and to create more access points to engage in writing. This year, through the patterns derived from data of writing assessments and samples, we have collectively noticed positive progression in students' writing development - increased confidence in writing and joy of writing, storying, and storytelling.

Classroom and resource teachers along with the PLC team and administrators gather in grade groups to dialogue about students' writing development and plan for next steps; for Term 3 of 2025-2026 into the 2026-2027 school year, we are working on reading and comprehension in connection to writing as a holistic approach to literacy development.

We have One-to-One volunteers who regularly work with selected students on their reading abilities. Literacy folders, which will follow students from year to year, house their literacy data. As a school district, we are also using the ministry's K-12 School District Professional Learning Grant to support delivery of evidence-based literacy instruction, as well as screening for K-3 students and interventions for K-7 students at Mackenzie.

At Mackenzie, it is important that we nurture students to resolve conflicts peacefully and be pro-social citizens. Administrators use restorative practices to guide students in their conflict resolution learning. In 2024-2025, Kaylie Maughan of Community Justice Initiatives Association, conducted a restorative practice workshop with the whole staff. Classroom teachers took their learning into the classrooms by creating shared community values and administrators met with grade groups to talk about the school's Code of Conduct, as well as collective shared values, responsibilities, and sense of belonging.

Mackenzie staff provide many leadership and growth opportunities for students. We start our days with welcoming and positive morning announcements, Playground Pals that provide safer and guided play for students, clubs such as Spirit Club, Volunteer Group, Culture Club, Library Monitors, sports teams throughout the school year, assemblies such as for Remembrance Day, Lunar New Year, Black History Month, and Mackenzie ambassadors give guided tours to our new Kindergarteners and their families during On Our Way to Kindergarten. As mentioned above, our student leaders also create schoolwide initiatives that give back to our community at large. Our sense of belonging extends beyond the walls of Mackenzie into our communities.

"The Vancouver School Board believes an effective public education system will prepare students to be active, productive and socially responsible citizens." - [Education Plan 2026](#)

Improve equity

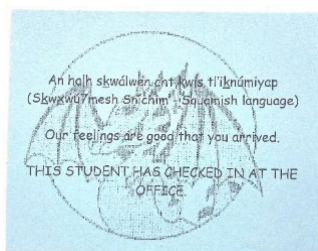
To support students with diverse needs, we continue to implement [Ready Bodies Learning Minds](#) and access our sensory room to teach students how to regulate their emotions and bodies, so they develop the strategies to be engaged learners. With the [Universal Design for Learning](#) in mind, teachers provide differentiated learning opportunities that meet students where they are in their learning journeys. With writing development as a school-wide goal, the school team works together to develop curriculum and provide additional support for students; as mentioned, VSB's PLC team collaborates with teachers to provide targeted learning opportunities such as Story Workshops, Oral Storytelling inspired by First Peoples Principles of Learning, and Know Your Code (development of spelling patterns for reading and writing), and Peer Editing. All these opportunities create more access points for students to engage in writing.

Our School-Based Team (SBT) meets a minimum of twice monthly to discuss the needs of students and how best to support them. Our school team also works closely with district teams and, or community

partners and outside agencies such as VCH to support students and their families. Together, school, family and students outside support(s), work collectively to provide the best care and education for the children in our care.

At Mackenzie, we uphold [Vancouver School Board's equity](#) stance on:

- Eliminating gaps in achievement and outcomes among students.
- Eliminating racism and discrimination in all forms.



As a school, we are committed to fostering a safe and caring school that promotes “safety, mutual respect and acceptance.” Our values are aligned with VSB’s [Safe and Caring Schools](#). To support student’s journey to becoming positive, contributing citizens and peaceful conflict solvers, we incorporate restorative practice as a way of being.

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

“The Vancouver School Board – a large, urban school district located on the unceded, traditional lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) – respects and supports Indigenous ways of knowing and learning.” - [Education Plan 2026](#)

We introduced a new Safe Arrival procedure at Mackenzie this year; when students arrive at school after the 9 a.m. bell, they check-in at the office to get a Welcome Slip, written in Skwxwú7mesh sníchim language, to welcome them to the school. We also take part in schoolwide learning over morning announcements such as the Land Acknowledgement and how to pronounce xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). These are part of Mackenzie’s reconciliation efforts to uplift and make Indigenous language and culture visible. (Truth & Reconciliation: Calls to Action #14 and #62)

For the 2024-2025 school year, students learned Indigenous songs and drumming from Deanna Gestrin of St’at’imc ancestry. This year, Indigenous Artist Russell Wallace from the St’at’imc and Lil’wat Nations shared and taught songs and drumming in an immersive 4-day workshop series. These Vancouver Youth Choir Indigenous Music Education Programs were offered by the VYC as a concrete way to truth and reconciliation in our community.

As a school community, we believe that adult learning and student learning are symmetrical. Hence, we learn together as a school community through our school newsletter, Mackenzie Matters, and continued teachings by educators and administrators. Each year, VSB holds an Indigenous Focus Day

for staff to explore Indigenous pedagogies, cultures, and practices; we gathered in Family of Schools for this learning opportunity as educators.

How Mackenzie embodies and aims to incorporate the [First Peoples Principles of Learning](#) which was developed in partnership by the BC Ministry of Education and the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC).

1. Aligning Social-Emotional and Belonging Goals

- **FNESC Principle:** *Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.*
- **Connection:** Mackenzie's focus on social-emotional learning and belonging aligns with this principle. We practice sharing and conferencing in circles. Restorative Practice is how we approach conflict resolution and community building.

2. Strengthening Holistic and Experiential Learning

- **FNESC Principle:** *Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).*
- **Connection:** The learning plan emphasizes student engagement through activities like guest speakers, field trips, and buddy classes, which align with experiential and relational learning.

3. Embedding Indigenous Knowledge and History

- **FNESC Principle:** *Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.*
- **Connection:** Mackenzie acknowledges the unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, and səlilwətał Nations. The school also shares Indigenous knowledge through morning announcements and newsletters.

4. Recognizing Generational Roles and Responsibilities

- **FNESC Principle:** *Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.*
- **Connection:** Mackenzie's mentorship opportunities (i.e., Playground Pals, buddy classes) foster leadership and responsibilities.

5. Honoring the Sacredness of Knowledge

- **FNESC Principle:** *Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.*
- **Connection:** Teachers and presenters educate students about the sacredness and acknowledgement of teachings.

6. Acknowledging Learning Takes Time

- **FNESC Principle:** *Learning involves patience and time.*
- **Connection:** At Mackenzie, we emphasize the idea of *soon to shine moments* which aligns well with the principle that learning is a gradual process.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

On-going conversations with students, staff, families, and community partners best inform us if we are on track. Continued surveys and data collected from various sources can provide insight to how we are doing in the various areas of focus and interests. Mackenzie's own data collected from the Written

Learning Updates and Summary of Learning will provide a more accurate snapshot of where students are in their learning. Data collected from the FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment), MDI (Middle Years Development Instrument), EDI (Early Development Instrument), SLS (Student Learning Survey), and Literacy Screening through DIBELS for K-3 provide insight into our community of learners. Self-reflection and meetings as a staff to dialogue about students and our school offerings and direction keep us engaged in our school goals and opportunities, and looking ahead together to the possibilities yet to come.

“When we evaluate change, one of the more helpful approaches is identifying something to aspire to.”
- Dr. Shree Walker, *Educate Me! Changing Ourselves, Inspiring Others*