



2025-2026

School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

Sir William Van Horne Elementary School is located in a diverse neighborhood in the Oakridge - South Slope area of Vancouver. *It is also on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwataʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). The Van Horne Community is honoured and grateful to learn and unlearn on these lands.*

Van Horne hosts about 430 students from Kindergarten to Grade 7 from various backgrounds and socio-economic levels with about one-third identified as English Language Learners. We have 18 divisions, evenly split between intermediate and primary. Our school is situated in a 3 story seismically restored building with one out building. We do have accessibility for students as we have an elevator and ramps to access all areas of our school.

Van Horne continues to work towards the Education Plan Goals of student achievement, physical, and mental well-being, belonging, equity, and reconciliation in 2025/2026 by continuing to highlight community and intentionally supporting equity of access. The school collaborates closely with the Van Horne Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to build a thriving community, focusing on diversity, environmental challenges, and transparent parent-school relationships. Students continued to strengthen citizenship by participating in many leadership activities, including student government, playground leaders, office monitors, library monitors, and morning announcements. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and lead initiatives, enhancing student experiences.

The school has around 50 staff members, including teachers, support workers, and administrative staff, who provide a holistic education. We offer varied learning experiences, including project-based learning and extracurricular activities like sports, arts, and student leadership opportunities. Partnerships with organizations like the YMCA and Little Mountain Neighborhood House further enrich student life.

This year, staff engaged in collaborative reflection on the Van Horne mission statement, clarifying shared goals, values, and intentions for our school community.

Our mission is to nurture curious, confident, and caring learners who develop a lifelong love of learning. We strive to help every child reach their full potential in a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment. Through meaningful academic and social learning experiences, responsive teaching

practices, and a focus on responsibility and respect, we empower students to thrive as members of our school community.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

A diverse student population of 430 students is divided into 18 divisions, with equal numbers of intermediate (4 - 7) and primary (k - 3) grades. At Van Horne, approximately 33% of the students are English Language learners. A number of our students have BC Ministry of Education special education designations.

Students at Van Horne have aspired to be productive members of society. They have historically been offered multiple avenues to contribute to the school community via leadership opportunities. The students are supported by active and caring families who place a high value on community building. The students have the support of caring staff, and this relationship is evident to them. Staff run after-school athletics, lunchtime clubs, and other whole school activities that bring students together. In addition, the students enjoy immense support from an organized and active Parent Advisory Council, who maintains a daily presence in the school. Students are aware of many of the members of the school PAC and approach them for support with ease.

Our school code of conduct, in which students had the opportunity to provide input, highlights these values seen across the school:

- Kindness
- Responsible behavior
- Hard work and effort
- Caring and empathy
- Fairness

Through anecdotal conversation with students and staff, it is evident that students at Van Horne: are thoughtful and kind, eager to learn, willing to participate in co-creating learning environments as well as co-creating community events, and advocate for their learning when given the chance (through self-assessment). They enjoy working collaboratively, flourish when in strong relationships, thrive in outdoor learning environments, and respect and celebrate each other's differences.

At our school, the voices of our students are guiding the path forward. Recent surveys reveal that nearly 70% of students feel good about themselves, and a similar number feel a strong sense of belonging at school. Over 80% say they feel welcome and safe and believe that adults treat them fairly and are there when needed. While more than half of our students are learning how to care for their mental health and have strategies to manage stress, about 40% still report feeling stressed or anxious at school. Peer relationships are generally respectful, but with 1 in 3 students experiencing bullying at least sometimes, we know there's more work to do. Physically, most students are eating well and staying active, though many wake up tired several times a week. These insights show that while many of our students are thriving, we remain committed to strengthening stress management, peer support, and connection for every learner. Together with families, we're using this data to shape a school environment where every child can succeed and feel supported.

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

Literacy and Numeracy

As a school community, we are committed to improving student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and fostering a sense of belonging.

Our students demonstrate a strong passion for literacy and learning. They eagerly participate in a wide range of literacy activities, reflecting their genuine love for reading. Beyond reading, students thrive in experiences that foster creativity and communication, such as story writing, drama, and collaborative projects. They enjoy engaging in philosophical debates, exploring dramatic works, and sharing ideas through presentations and oral storytelling. With rich life experiences and a strong connection to the community, our learners bring diverse perspectives to discussions and demonstrate leadership in group settings. Their enthusiasm about literacy underscores a dynamic learning environment where curiosity and collaboration flourish.

The Van Horne staff is dedicated to improving student achievement in literacy. We have screened all students in literacy and collected and analyzed the data, and provided targeted support based on individual needs. This includes offering resource support or guided programming to challenge students to help them meet their academic goals. We are using the valuable insights gained from our focus on reading to guide and expand our efforts into writing, fostering a balanced literacy program that empowers every student to succeed. We will continue to support students to develop stronger reading skills.

Our new focus will be to strengthen students' writing skills and build their confidence in their ability to express ideas effectively. We will work on improving basic mechanics of writing, organization, and elaboration, while helping students expand vocabulary and use richer, more descriptive language. Through these efforts, we strive to create confident writers who can communicate with clarity, creativity, and purpose.

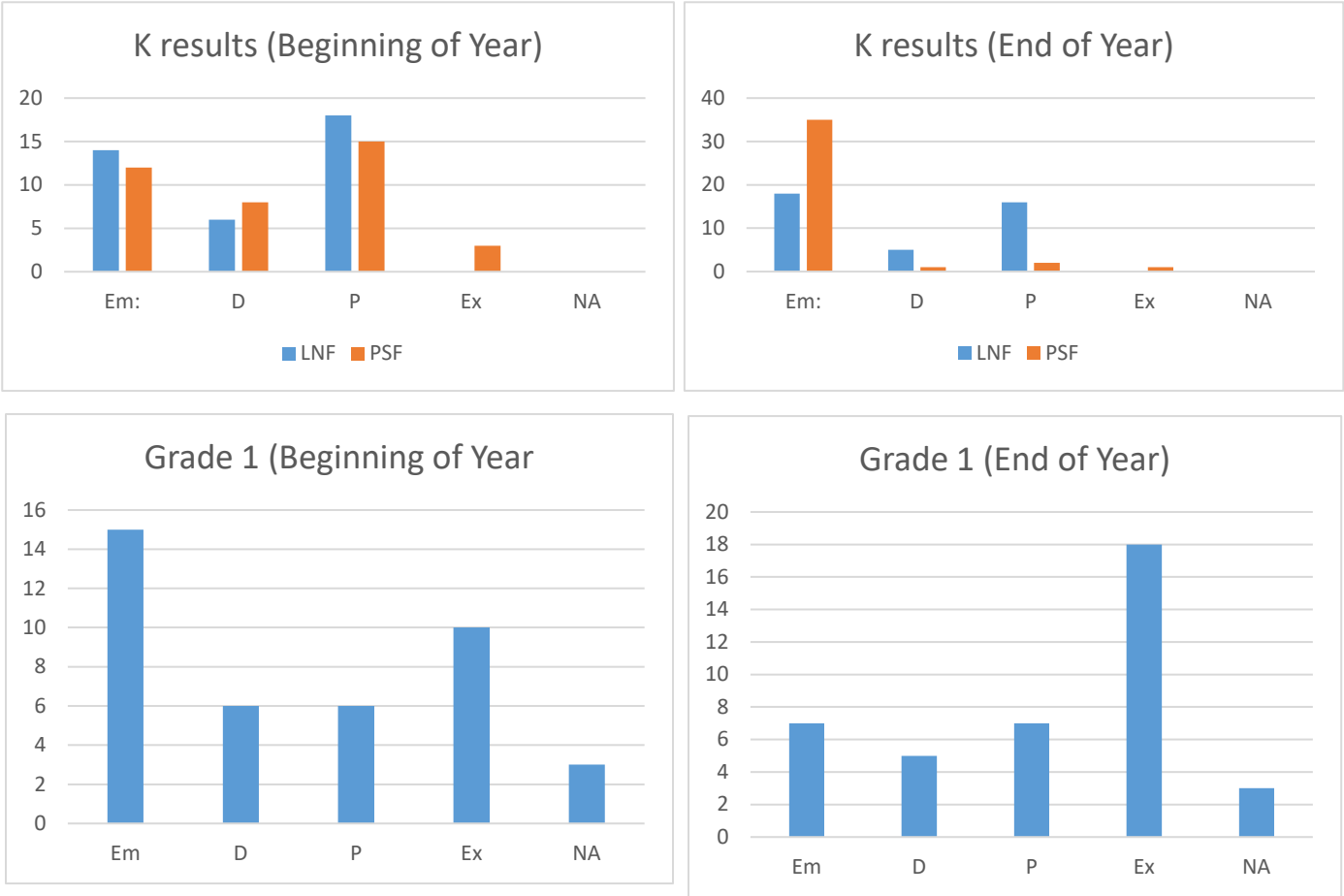
Our finding from our school wide reading assessment is shared below:

For Kindergarten, the assessments include Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) and Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF). In Grade 1, students complete an Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) screener. For students in Grades 2 through 7, we collect data using both the ORF and a silent reading comprehension measure (MAZE). By analyzing the data, we have identified an increase in students at the "Emerging" (EM) level in the early primary grades, indicating that more learners are in the initial stages of reading development. This trend is partly attributed to an influx of students joining our primary classes throughout the year, many of whom are English Language Learners and require additional time to develop foundational reading skills. As a result, there is a clear need to strengthen instruction in

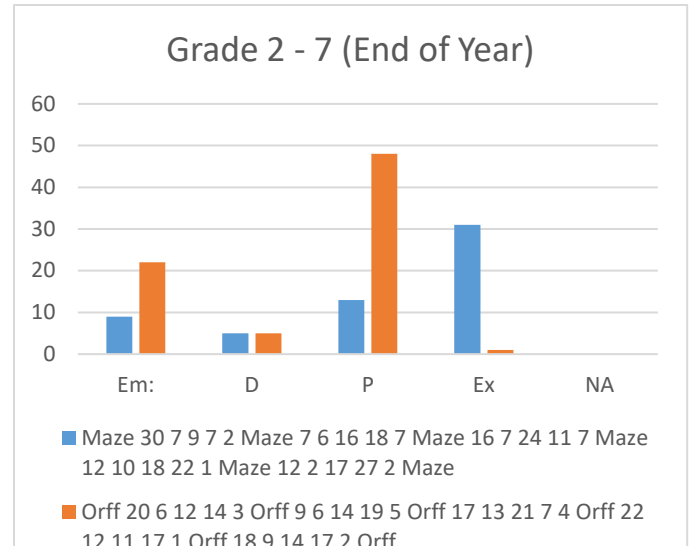
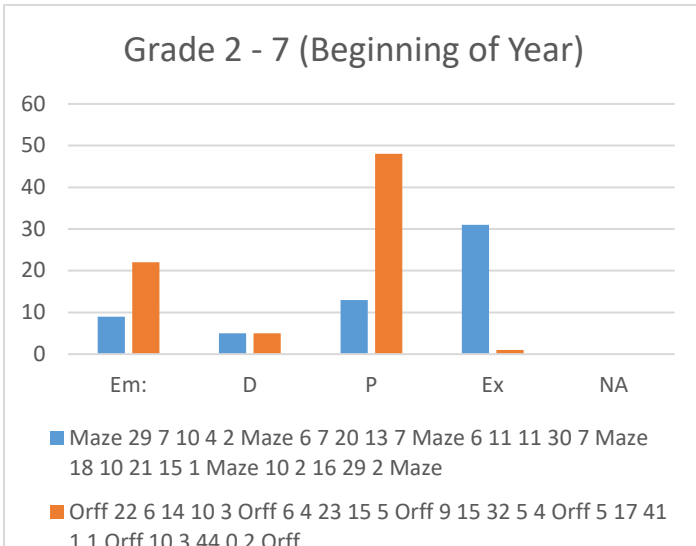
phonological awareness, particularly in segmentation, as well as to provide more scaffolded support for reading comprehension.

In the intermediate grades, there is a noticeable increase in the number of students achieving at the “Exceeding” (Ex) level. At the same time, many grades show a reduction in students at the “Developing” (D) level, indicating a positive shift either toward proficiency or toward clearer identification of students requiring targeted intervention. There is also evidence of polarization within these grades, with fewer students in the middle “Proficient” category and more clustered at either the Emerging or Exceeding levels. This pattern allows us to identify students who would benefit from Tier 2 supports, such as targeted small-group instruction and explicit teaching of comprehension strategies. Additionally, these results highlight the importance of ensuring that high-performing students are appropriately challenged through enrichment opportunities.

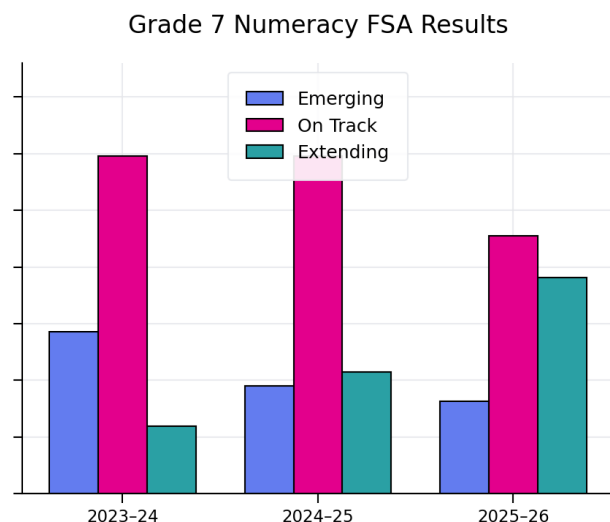
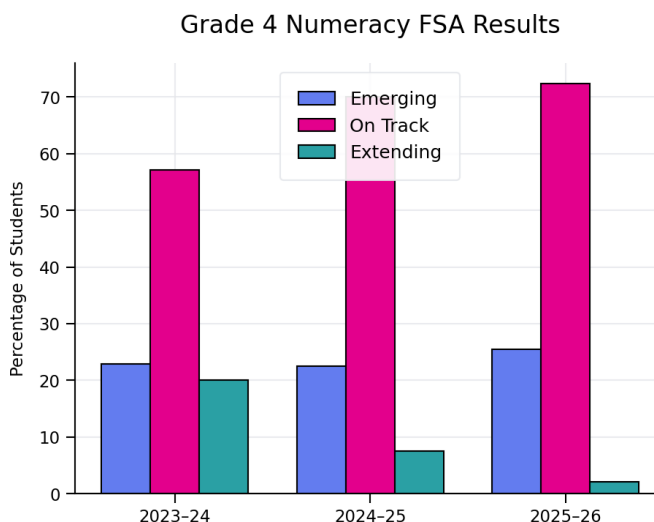
Also in our intermediate grades, we observed a decrease in students achieving the *Exceeding* level on MAZE assessments, alongside ORF (Oral Reading Fluency) data showing a widening range of performance. To address this trend, students would benefit from increased instruction in reading comprehension strategies, with a deliberate focus on strengthening the connection between fluency



and comprehension.



In numeracy, over the past three years, our school’s Numeracy FSA results show both strong progress and important areas for continued focus. In Grade 4, the majority of students are consistently On Track, increasing from just over half of students in 2023–2024 to nearly three-quarters by 2025–2026. This reflects effective core numeracy instruction. At the same time, the number of students demonstrating Extending skills has declined, highlighting a need to further strengthen enrichment and challenge opportunities for students who are ready to deepen their mathematical thinking. In Grade 7, results show a different but encouraging pattern. The percentage of students in the Emerging category has steadily decreased, while the percentage in Extending has grown significantly, indicating strong gains for students demonstrating advanced numeracy understanding. However, fewer students are now in the On Track range, suggesting a widening range of learner needs. Moving forward, our school will continue to focus on strengthening foundational skills through screening to identify possible gaps,



provide targeted support, while also increasing opportunities for mathematical reasoning, problem-solving, and extension, ensuring success and growth for all learners.

Physical and Mental Well-Being and Belonging

The school emphasizes student belonging and well-being through a wide range of engaging and inclusive learning experiences. These include project- and inquiry-based learning, as well as extracurricular opportunities in the arts, sports, and leadership. A large school choir supports both primary and intermediate students, fostering a strong sense of belonging and community through music. Students are encouraged to take on leadership roles through student government, PA announcing, library and office monitoring, and leading clubs such as Dungeons and Dragons, Band Club, Newsletter Club, Soccer Club, Gym Club, and Science Club, which are run by students and sponsored by staff. Programs such as big buddy/little buddy classes further strengthen peer connections and a sense of community.

Teachers identified several intentional actions to support student wellbeing, recognizing both the size of the problem and the importance of proactive, consistent practices. Staff explicitly teach social scripts, conflict resolution strategies, and mindfulness practices through “open parachute” calming strategies to help students manage emotions and problem-solve effectively. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) instruction is embedded across classrooms, with a focus on active listening, mirroring back feelings, regular body breaks, and maintaining consistent routines and expectations to create safe, predictable learning environments. Teachers support students in applying learned strategies through programs such as WITS and by engaging students in open classroom discussions that build shared memories, including non-academic moments that strengthen relationships. Educators model empathy, presence, and responsible decision-making, reinforcing that mistakes are opportunities for learning. Students are encouraged to listen, take responsibility for their actions, make good, safe, and healthy choices, and develop empathy through consistent modeling and guided practice. In the spring, the school also participated in the Kind Mind program with the Keltly Foundation, which involved short, developmentally appropriate lessons implemented at school and extended into the home. Families were invited to engage in challenges together, supporting a shared culture of kindness, mental well-being, and empathy within classrooms and the broader school community.

As a staff, we worked together to develop a definition of belonging. Here is what was developed with all staff voices included:

Fostering belonging, through inclusion, is the shared creation of spaces where everyone feels respected, accepted, valued, and included. Where everyone is treated equitably. There is an environment of consistent support for all. It means individuals feel safe to be themselves, respected for who they are, and have the opportunity to experience meaningful, authentic relationships that support growth and well-being. Belonging grows when individuals can contribute and influence the community, not just observe. If someone feels excluded, there should be clear steps for support.

This year, to foster student voice, students were surveyed with questions to allow them to share their experiences at Van Horne. Here are the results of the survey:

K–3 Students	Grades 4–7 Students
• Very strong sense of safety and belonging ◦ ~75–80% answered “Yes” for feeling safe and belonging. • Strong adult connection ◦ Most students report having a trusted adult at school. • Learning comfort is high ◦ Large majority report feeling comfortable asking questions or making mistakes. • Bullying ◦ Most students reported “No” to feeling bullied, though “Sometimes” responses suggest emerging peer-conflict in some grades.	• Safety remains high, but with more “Sometimes” responses than in K–3. • Sense of belonging and fairness decreases ◦ A noticeable shift from “Yes” to “Sometimes” in feelings of belonging and fair treatment. • Adult connection still strong, but some students report inconsistency. • Bullying and peer conflict increase ◦ Higher combined “Yes” and “Sometimes” responses for feeling bullied. • Comfort with mistakes declines slightly ◦ More students report only “Sometimes” feeling safe to ask questions or make mistakes.
Cross-Grade Takeaways: Relationships matter most at all ages—students consistently link wellbeing to friends and caring adults. Calm, supportive environments are strongly connected to learning success. Bullying and conflict prevention need greater emphasis in Grades 4–7.	
Ideas the staff have shared to improve feelings of belonging and safety: • More student voice in school activities • Recognition of pro-social behaviour from students around the school • Teach strategies around peer conflict and provide avenues to support students reporting incidences as they occur so that intervention and supports can be provided	

Improve Equity

Advancing equity and inclusion is a core focus at our school and aligns closely with the Vancouver School Board’s priorities of equity, anti-racism, and student well-being. We intentionally amplify student voice through student government and leadership opportunities, fostering agency, belonging, and shared responsibility within the school community. In classrooms, SSAs work collaboratively with teachers to provide responsive and targeted support, while inclusive practices such as rotating special helper roles ensure that all students are seen, valued, and able to contribute meaningfully. Educators

design learning experiences with multiple entry points, make appropriate accommodations, and set individual goals that honour each learner's strengths, identities, and needs. Accessibility is further supported through the use of subtitles on instructional videos, including in multiple languages when appropriate, to reduce barriers to learning. In addition, the school provides equitable access to no-cost lunchtime opportunities, such as choir, sports, and challenge-based programs including science and board games, ensuring that all students can participate fully in school life. Together, these practices support inclusive, anti-oppressive learning environments where every student has the opportunity to thrive.

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

Over the past year, our school community has continued to deepen its commitment to reconciliation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples through intentional, meaningful, and curriculum-embedded learning experiences across grade levels and subject areas. Guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning, staff have worked to integrate Indigenous perspectives throughout teaching and learning, with a focus on relationship, land, story, identity, and experiential learning rather than isolated events.

Across divisions, students engaged in learning that honoured Indigenous voices, knowledge systems, and ways of knowing. Students explored Indigenous literature and oral storytelling traditions, learning about the importance of story, communication, and intergenerational knowledge. Learning experiences included discussions of First Nations governance, treaties, land use and stewardship, as well as the historical and ongoing impacts of residential schools. Place-based and land-based learning such as outdoor journaling, sit spots, nature walks, field trips, and experiential learning at camps, museums, and community spaces, supported students in building connections to place and understanding learning as holistic, relational, and rooted in lived experience.

Indigenous perspectives were intentionally embedded across curricular areas, including mathematics, science, and the arts. Students learned about the shapes and forms used in Coast Salish art, connecting geometry to cultural design and meaning. In mathematics, Indigenous objects such as wooden paddles and canoes were used in problem-solving contexts, alongside learning about the carvings and cultural significance embedded in these items. Students will further apply this learning by creating their own lahal sticks later in the year as part of a probability unit, connecting mathematical concepts to traditional Indigenous games and practices.

In science, students explored Traditional Ecological Knowledge, seasonal cycles, sustainability, and relationships to the natural world. Planned learning includes incorporating traditional Indigenous technologies and hunting practices into studies of simple machines and forces, supporting students in understanding science through Indigenous innovation, ingenuity, and land-based knowledge. Across literacy learning, students engaged with short stories and texts by Indigenous authors throughout the year, ensuring that Indigenous voices were present across reading and writing experiences rather than limited to specific months or events.

School-wide practices further supported reconciliation and visibility of Indigenous perspectives. These included Orange Shirt Day and Truth and Reconciliation learning, intentional use and pronunciation of local Nation names in land acknowledgements, Indigenous music and language exposure, Indigenous author visits, and a library collection that centers Indigenous-authored texts year-round. Students

were invited to respond to Indigenous stories through art, writing, discussion, and reflection, reinforcing respect, empathy, and understanding.

Student voice, as reflected in the Grade 4 and Grade 7 Student Learning Surveys, provides important insight into how this work is experienced. Many students reported that they are learning about Indigenous Peoples and local First Nations sometimes or most of the time, indicating that Indigenous perspectives are woven throughout regular classroom instruction. Fewer students identified participation in “ongoing Indigenous activities or programs.” This feedback is understood in the context of our approach: much of the Indigenous learning at our school is integrated directly into curriculum and daily programming, rather than offered as stand-alone activities or separate programs. As a result, students may not always recognize this learning as discrete “ongoing Indigenous activities,” even though Indigenous perspectives are consistently present across subjects and throughout the year.

Encouragingly, students in both Grade 4 and Grade 7 reported strong feelings of belonging, safety, and feeling welcomed at school, key conditions for reconciliation work grounded in relationship and trust. Survey results also show that students are learning to think about how their actions affect others, work collaboratively, listen respectfully, and solve problems peacefully. These social and relational competencies closely align with the First Peoples Principles of Learning and reflect the broader impact of reconciliation-informed practices on student well-being, empathy, and respect for diversity.

As we continue this journey, staff remain committed to deepening their own learning with curiosity, humility, and reflection. Reconciliation is ongoing work that requires listening, unlearning, and sustained commitment. Through continued professional learning, collaborative dialogue, and reflective practice, staff continue to work toward reconciliation in meaningful ways that honour Indigenous Peoples and ensure this learning is authentically embedded in classroom practice, school culture, and relationships.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE’RE ON TRACK?

We are committed to fostering a positive and inclusive school climate where authentic relationships among students, staff, and families signal growth and progress. A vibrant, engaged community reflects that we are on the right path.

To ensure we stay on track, we will gather both qualitative and quantitative data. This includes stories, interviews, and feedback from students, staff, and parents/caregivers, as well as measurable indicators such as:

- Student assessments, as shared with families in the communicating student learning reports, parent teacher interviews, student-led conferences.
- School-wide reading and math assessment data.
- Sharing the updated land acknowledgement through weekly parent updates, PAC meetings, community gatherings, assemblies, and morning announcements.

By continuously reflecting on these insights, we aim to strengthen our sense of community and enhance student engagement in learning.