



2025-26 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), and səliłwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

Thunderbird is a vibrant and diverse community in Vancouver, home to 170 students from a wide range of cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds. Approximately 50% of the student population are English Language Learners, reflecting the rich multicultural fabric of the neighbourhood.

To support students and their families, Thunderbird offers a variety of educational and community services. Key staff members include a Youth and Family Worker, a Neighbourhood Assistant, Cafeteria Worker, and a Curriculum Enhancement Teacher. Together, they coordinate essential programs such as breakfast and lunch services, provide access to healthy snacks, and help ensure that students' basic needs are met. As well as supporting student learning by enriching classroom instruction, coordinating supplemental programs, and fostering community partnerships.

The breakfast program serves over 30% of the student body, offering nutritious meals to start the day right. For preschool-aged children, the StrongStart program provides early learning opportunities in a welcoming environment.

Thunderbird also partners with community organizations like the Community Schools Team and the Thunderbird Community Centre to offer after-school activities and services during school breaks. These collaborations help create a safe, supportive, and enriching environment for all children in the neighbourhood.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

Our learners reflect a rich tapestry of cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and socio-economic diversity. Nearly half of our students speak a language other than English at home, qualifying them for additional English Language Learner (ELL) support.

Šxʷəxʷaʔəs Thunderbird is proud to serve a significant Indigenous student population, deeply connected to place and culture. We work closely with our Indigenous Enhancement Worker and

external Indigenous partners to strengthen our understanding and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions. Through diverse cultural and historical teachings, we strive to foster respect and build meaningful connections.

Guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning, ᓃᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄ Thunderbird is committed to reconciliation, embedding these principles into our daily practices and long-term goals.

Academically, we recognize the need to improve Language Arts outcomes, particularly in reading and writing, where current achievement ranges from low to moderate. This challenge presents an opportunity to focus our collective efforts on strategies that support literacy development for all learners.

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 goal is to increase reading fluency and comprehension. As a staff, we are examining literacy strategies that introduce explicit instruction in phonics, reading, and writing. We are exploring best-practice approaches to learn and implement as a team to improve student learning and achievement in reading.

Teachers are focusing on foundational skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, language, and vocabulary, with an emphasis on these skills in primary grades (K–3) to ensure a strong foundation for reading. These goals align with the VSB Responsive Literacy Framework K–7.

In response to English Language Arts (CSL) and reading data, we are prioritizing student learning and achievement in Language Arts. Specifically, we are analyzing reading scores and implementing instruction and interventions that are both universal and targeted.

To strengthen early literacy, we will introduce literacy screeners for kindergarten students this year, with the goal of expanding screening to all primary-level students in the coming year. These tools will help us identify early learning needs and provide timely, targeted interventions to support foundational literacy development.

This goal connects to the Vancouver School Board's Education Plan to improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by:

- Encouraging students to reach beyond previous boundaries in knowledge and experience.
- Increasing literacy, numeracy, and deep, critical, and creative thinking.
- Ensuring alignment among school, district, and provincial education plans.
- Reporting student results about performance, well-being, and outcomes to the community and using the results to improve the quality and effectiveness of education and support provided to students.

It also aligns with the First Peoples Principles of Learning, emphasizing that:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Additionally, it connects to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, which commits the Vancouver Board of Education to equity of opportunity for Indigenous students and the ongoing development of best-practice strategies for instruction, improvement, and inclusion.

Improve equity

Our equity goal is to close achievement gaps in reading by focusing on early intervention in kindergarten and grade one. This commitment aligns with the Vancouver School Board's Education Plan 2026, which emphasizes increasing equity by eliminating disparities in student achievement and outcomes.

Through strategic and targeted interventions for vulnerable learners, we will:

- Provide individualized support through our Curriculum Enhancement Teacher and resource team, offering one-on-one instruction, small-group learning, and literacy-rich activities.
- Provide targeted small-group and one-on-one literacy interventions for Grade 1 students identified as at risk through the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) and classroom assessment data. These interventions will focus on foundational skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, and reading fluency, using evidence-based strategies aligned with the VSB Responsive Literacy Framework.

We will measure success using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) and Report card data. This data will give us a longitudinal look at our interventions provided to our priority learners and track their success and learning overtime.

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

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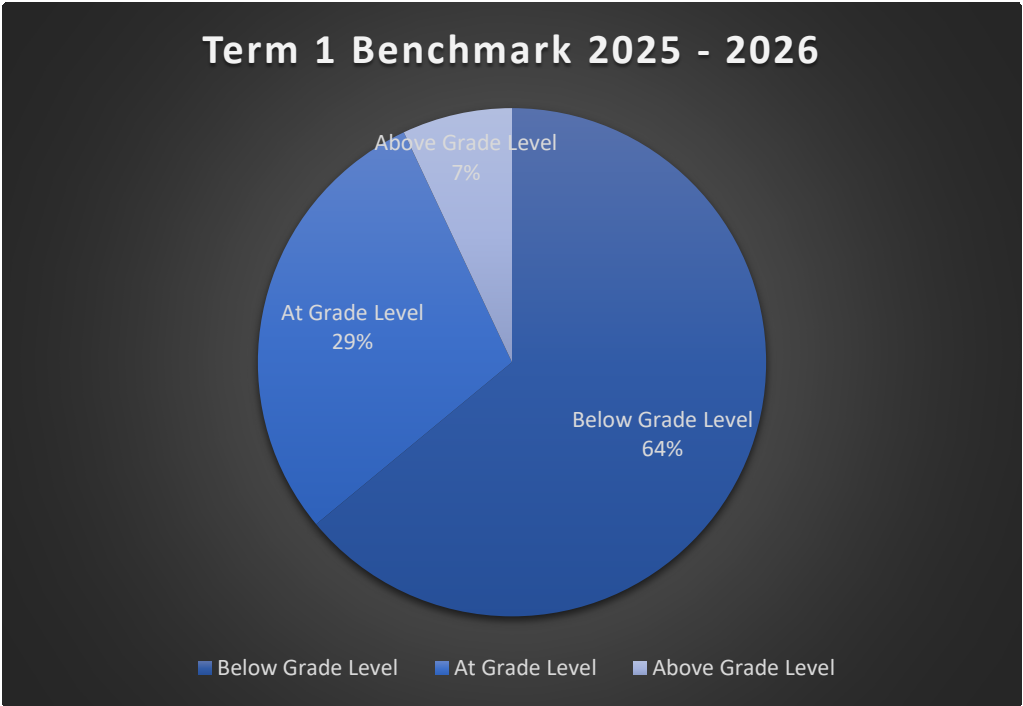
Our goal is to enhance awareness, respect, and understanding of Indigenous perspectives through diverse cultural and historical teachings. We actively involve students in these efforts, encouraging participation and engagement in learning and sharing these important aspects within our school community.

This commitment aligns with district objectives and holds particular significance in our community, where many families are of Indigenous ancestry. Guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning, we embed these values into daily practice through activities such as Orange Shirt Day, Truth and Reconciliation assemblies, daily Indigenous acknowledgements, and learning the Calls to Action in child-friendly language. We maintain an Indigenous Garden, drum the Coast Salish Anthem, and regularly review Indigenous Success Plans for students in Grades 1, 2, 4, and 6.

A significant initiative this year is the redesign of our school logo. To further enrich our connection to the land and honor Indigenous identity, we are partnering with a local artist from a host Nation to create a logo that reflects Indigenous perspectives and values. This new design will serve as a visible symbol of our commitment to reconciliation, cultural respect, and the deep relationships we continue to build with the land and community. The updated logo will not only represent our school but also stand as a meaningful expression of belonging and shared responsibility.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE’RE ON TRACK?

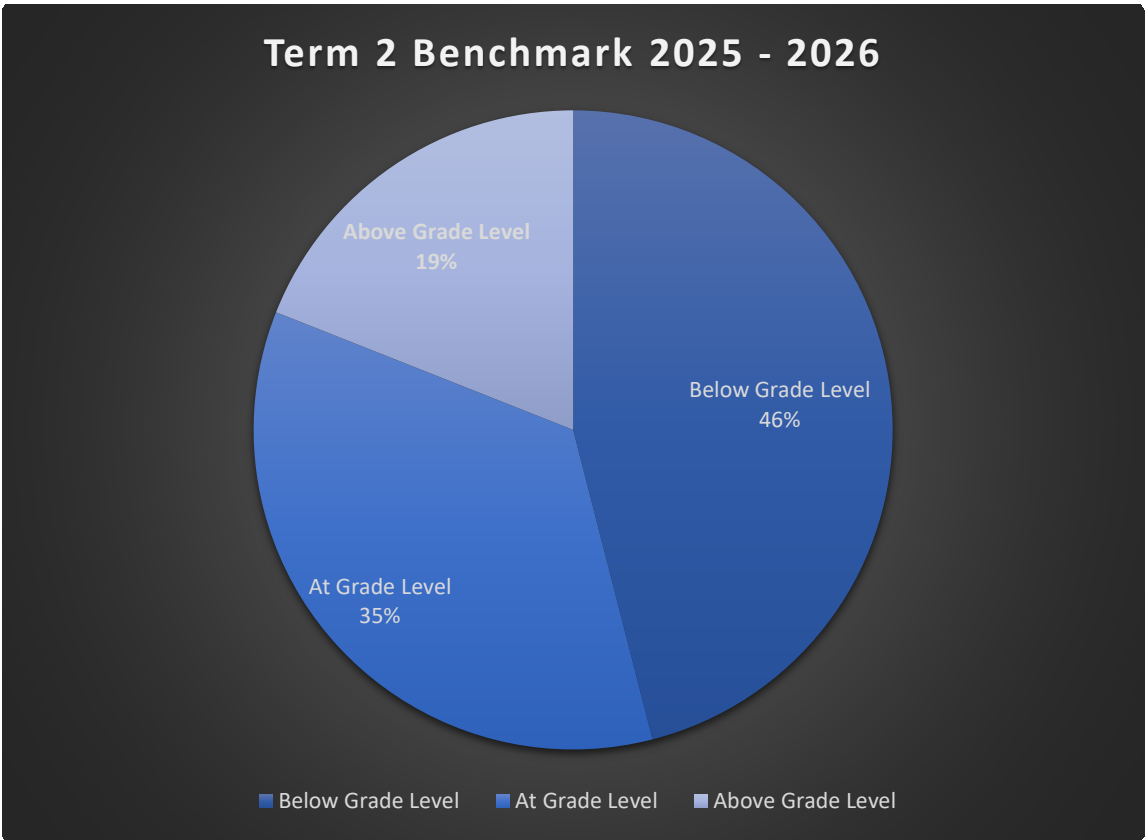
By collecting year-over-year Learning Update data alongside the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we will establish a clear baseline for reading achievement and English Language Arts performance. This data will allow us to track growth over time, analyze trends, and measure student progress both throughout the school year and across multiple years at šxʷəxʷaʔəs Thunderbird—ensuring our strategies are responsive and impactful.



As we transition to the new reporting format, using SpacesEdu, all teachers at Šxʷəxʷaʔəs Thunderbird will adopt this approach to ensure consistency and clarity in communicating student learning. Last year, approximately half of our teachers piloted the new format, providing valuable insights and feedback that have shaped this year’s full implementation.

Through the use of the standardized Benchmark assessment, we have established an understanding of our students’ reading levels and baseline achievement. This data serves as a critical foundation for informed decision-making, enabling us to implement targeted instructional strategies that foster the development of essential Language Arts skills. Using these insights, we aim to strengthen reading fluency, writing proficiency, and overall literacy growth across all grade levels. This process is part of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, ensuring that instructional practices evolve in response to student needs and evidence-based data.

When examining Fall 2025 reading achievement using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we found that 64.0% of students were below grade level expectations, 29.0% of students were at grade level, and 7.0% of students were above grade level, during the same period. The data indicates a need for targeted and consistent efforts in literacy instruction and best-practice strategies. Knowing this data, we are working using multiple strategies to help kids move forward in their learning.



Reviewing Spring 2026 reading achievement, using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we found that 46% of students were below grade level expectations, 35% of students were at grade level, and 39% of students were above grade level.

Examining baseline data from fall 2025 to spring 2026 for the 2025-2026 academic school year, we can see there is a significant decrease in the percentage of students below grade level expectations, from 64.0% in Fall 2025 to 46.0% in Spring 2026. This indicates a positive trend in reading achievement over the year. Further, the percentage of students at grade level increased from 29.0% in Fall 2026 to 35.0% in Spring 2026. This suggests that many students improved their reading skills to meet grade level expectations. We also observe that the percentage of students above grade level expectations increased from 7.0% in Fall 2026 to 19.0% in Spring 2026. This is a significant increase, indicating progress in higher reading achievement.

Overall, the data shows a positive trend in reading achievement over the year. The significant decrease in students below grade level and the increase in students at grade level suggest effective interventions and improvements in reading instruction. The slight increase in students above grade level also indicates that some students are excelling beyond expectations.

Improve equity

šxʷəxʷaʔəs Thunderbird's School Learning Plan and the VSB Education Plan both focus on creating equity within the school and the school district at large. At šxʷəxʷaʔəs Thunderbird, in line with the Vancouver School Board, we aspire to increase equity by eliminating gaps in achievement and outcomes among students, eliminating racism and discrimination in all forms, evaluating and renewing plans for the improvement of Indigenous learners' education, and improving stewardship of the district's resources by centering on effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

While keeping all of these goals in focus, we are examining strategies to eliminate gaps in achievement and outcomes among students at risk, specifically looking at reading in the early years. To help achieve greater success in outcomes, the school is provided with a curriculum enhancement teacher to help with skills and strategies for all students in English Language Arts and Resource Teachers who specifically work with at risk students. With this help, our teachers offer initiatives and opportunities targeting literacy throughout the year. Examples of these are Family Literacy Night and Books for Breakfast, which engage both students and caregivers and are intended to increase the joy of reading and help parents engage in strategies at home. Additionally, we provide equal and equitable access to books in the library and an online reading program, IXL, to supplement and track student progress.

This year as a provincial initiative, Thunderbird has implemented kindergarten screening in literacy. Using the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of literacy skills, to provide educators with quick, reliable tools to screen, monitor, and guide, reading instruction for students, which will help identify students at risk in reading early on, and to track progress to help all students become successful readers.

Through the work of early screening in kindergarten, as well as teacher evaluation, we have identified those kindergarten students at risk and are implementing targeted interventions based on individual student need.

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

We are committed to deepening our understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge by actively seeking opportunities to collaborate with local Indigenous people and experts. Their guidance will help us expand our knowledge, awareness, appreciation, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions. We will continue to align our efforts with the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, First Peoples Principles of Learning, Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and the VSB's Education Plan 2026 to advance reconciliation at ᓄᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ Thunderbird.

As a school, we have committed to increasing education around Indigenous cultures and incorporating the First Peoples Principles of Learning as a cornerstone for lessons across the curriculum. By analyzing Student Learning Survey data, we can stay on course and understand where our students are in their learning journeys.

This school year we worked to update our school logo, the Thunderbird, to create authenticity by having a local indigenous artist with ancestry from the Ts'msyen, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) nation to design a logo that reflects the land in which we are situated. Through this process, students and stakeholders were consulted and participated in the unveiling of our logo. Also, lessons were taught regarding the significance of our logo which helped students, better understand, indigenous, world, views, and ways of teaching and learning.

Currently, our understanding of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge is reflected in student self-reports from the 2025 Student Learning Survey. According to the survey, 81% of grade 7 students recognize that they are learning about Indigenous people at least some of the time. These figures indicate that while we have made significant strides—such as engaging with storytellers, creating Indigenous art, and exploring Indigenous culture and ways of knowing—there is still much work to be done. We are committed to continuing this engagement and weaving Indigenous perspectives into all aspects of our education, particularly among our intermediate students.

Over the past years, from the 2021-2022 school year to the 2024-2025 school year, we see a general trend indicating that students are seeing themselves as learners of Indigenous culture, local First Nations, and are more aware that celebrations, activities, and reconciliation are embedded in the daily learning we do. When asked at school regarding their learning about Indigenous and First Nations, students reported over the four-year period that they are learning about Indigenous people's education Some of the time or more, approximately 56% responded positively in 2021-2022, 43% of in 2022-2023, 65% in 2023-2024, and 81% in 2024-2025. This shows a continued increase in student awareness regarding the teaching of Indigenous and First Nations education.

As a school, we will continue to support and work on increasing and deepening our understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge with efforts to enhance Indigenous education. Indigenous education is woven into the fabric of all we do.