

NOTICE OF MEETING

EDUCATION PLAN COMMITTEE

Secretary Treasurer's Office
Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at 7:00 pm
Public viewing via live broadcast

Alfred Chien (Chair)
Christopher Richardson (Vice-Chair)
Lois Chan-Pedley
Suzie Mah

Helen McGregor, Superintendent of Schools
Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer

Notice of Meeting

A Meeting of the **Education Plan Committee** will be held in room 180 of the VSB Education Centre (1580 West Broadway, Vancouver BC) **for participating trustees, staff, inherent rights holder representatives and stakeholder representatives on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at 7:00 pm.** The meeting will be live broadcast for the public.

Trustees:	Janet Fraser	Jennifer Reddy (Alternate)
	Preeti Faridkot	Joshua Zhang
	Victoria Jung (Alternate)	

Student Trustee:	Freddie Zhang
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Other Senior Team Staff:	Daniel Blue	Maureen McRae-Stanger
	Pedro da Silva	Janis Myers
	Michael Gray	Alison Ogden
	Jessie Gresley-Jones	

Inherent Rights Holder	Faye Mitchell, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)
Representatives:	Kirsten Baker-Williams, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)
	Kirsten Touring, səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)

Representatives:	Justin Chapman, BCVSBCMTU	Alternates:	Mike Logan, BCVSBCMTU
	Priscilla Santos, CUPE 15		Suzette Magri, CUPE 15 (Alt 1)
			Lorena Spencer, CUPE 15 (Alt 2)
	Henry Munns, CUPE 407		Adam Crawford, CUPE 407
	Angela Waterlow, DPAC		Sherry Breshears, DPAC
	Tim Chester, IUOE		Tim De Vivo, IUOE
			Scott Deyell, PASA
	Bruce Garnett, VASSA		David Nicks, VASSA
	Salena Sharma, VDSC		
	Karine Ng, VEAES		Deborah Tin Tun, VEAES
	Riley McMitchell, VEPVPA		Margie Trovao, VEPVPA
	Carl Janze, VSTA		Carmen Schaedeli, VSTA

EDUCATION PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, October 15, 2025, 7:00 to 8:30 pm
Room 180, VSB Education Centre

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) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

The meeting is currently being broadcasted live, and both the audio and video recordings will be accessible to the public for viewing even after the meeting ends. Footage from this meeting may be viewed from Canada or anywhere else in the world.

Meeting Decorum:

The Board has a strong commitment to ethical conduct. This includes the responsibility of committee members to conduct themselves with appropriate decorum and professionalism. As Chair of the Committee, it is my responsibility to see that decorum is maintained. To do that I ask that:

- i. All committee participants request to speak through the chair.
- ii. Civility towards others is maintained as committee participants share perspectives and participate in discussion.
- iii. Staff are able to submit objective reports without influence or pressure as their work is acknowledged and appreciated.
- iv. Committee participants refrain from personal inflammatory or accusatory language or action.
- v. Committee participants present themselves in a professional and courteous manner.

Please see reverse for the Purpose/Function and Power and Duties of this Committee.

1. Items for Approval

- 1.1 Board/Authority Authorized Course:
First Peoples Visual Arts 12

Presenters

Ranjit Bains, Director of Instruction
Alison Ogden, Associate Superintendent

2. Discussion Items

None

3. Information Items

- 3.1 Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) K-12 Literacy Supports

Maureen McRae-Stanger, Associate Superintendent
Alison Ogden, Associate Superintendent

Education Plan Committee

C. Responsibilities:

- C.1 Review and make recommendations to the Board regarding matters related to the development and implementation of the Education Plan.
- C.2 Review and make recommendations to the Board regarding the annual Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Report.
- C.3 Review and make recommendations to the Board regarding proposed Board Authority Authorized Courses.
- C.4 Review and make recommendations regarding the implementation and cessation of District programs.
- C.5 Review and make recommendations to the Board regarding annual school learning plans.
- C.6 Review and make recommendations to the Board regarding school calendars.
- C.7 Review matters referred to the Committee by the Board and make recommendations as requested.

October 15, 2025

TO: Education Plan Committee

FROM: Ranjit Bains, Director of Instruction
Alison Ogden, Associate Superintendent

RE: Board/Authority Authorized Course: First Peoples Visual Arts 12

*Reference to
[Education Plan](#)*

**GOALS AND
OBJECTIVES:**

- Goal 1: The Vancouver School Board will improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by ...
- Encouraging students to reach beyond previous boundaries in knowledge and experience.
 - Improving school environments to ensure they are safe, caring, welcoming and inclusive places for students and families.
 - Increasing literacy, numeracy and deep, critical, and creative thinking.
 - Ensuring the alignment among school, district, and provincial education plans.
- Goal 3: The Vancouver School Board will continue its Reconciliation journey with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit by ...
- Increasing knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions.

INTRODUCTION

Board/Authority Authorized Courses (BAA courses) are offered by Board of Education or Independent School Authorities to respond to local needs of the schools and their communities while providing choice flexibility for students. BAA courses are authorized by Boards/Authorities according to requirements set by the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care.

BACKGROUND

Teachers submitting new course proposals must adhere to the [Guidelines for Board Authority Course Requirements and Procedures](#) outlined by the Ministry.

Grade 10-12 BAA courses that Boards/Authorities wish to offer need to align with the Ministry curriculum to reflect the Ministry's Know-Do-Understand curriculum design.

When reviewing new Grade 10 to 12 BAA course proposals, the following Ministry criteria are considered:

- BAA courses may overlap with Big Ideas and Curricular Competencies of Ministry courses.

- BAA courses are not:
 - Courses with significant overlap with provincial curriculum content: This includes adapted courses, partial versions of Ministry courses, and hybrids of two or more Ministry courses.
 - Remedial courses or those preparatory in nature: for example, a math course designed to help students who have completed Pre-calculus 11 that provides review and remediation for them before they enroll in Pre-calculus 12; or a writing course designed to help students develop the skills needed to meet the learning standards of Creative Writing 11.
 - A modified course: for example, a social studies course designed for Grade 11 students with intellectual disabilities with significantly different learning standards from Ministry Exploration in Social Studies 11.
 - An adapted course: adaptations are teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student's needs so they can demonstrate that they are meeting the learning standards of the curriculum. A student working to meet learning standards of any Grade or course level may be supported through the use of adaptations.

ANALYSIS

As part of the Vancouver School Board's annual BAA course approval process, the BAA Course Review Committee reviewed submissions for the 2026-2027 school year. This committee is comprised of district staff, secondary school-based administrators, and Vancouver Secondary Teachers Association (VSTA) members.

The BAA Course Review Committee, guided by the criteria outlined above, reviewed the proposals, provided feedback and opportunities for resubmission. The following course met the stated criteria:

- First Peoples Visual Arts 12

Please refer to curriculum framework for this course in the attachment.

RECOMMENDATION

The Education Plan Committee recommends:

That the Board approve the *Board/Authority Authorized course: First Peoples Visual Arts 12*.

Attachment: Board/Authority Authorized course: First Peoples Visual Arts 12

Board/Authority Authorized Course: **First Peoples Visual Arts 12**

School District/Independent School Authority Name: Vancouver School Board	School District/Independent School Authority Number: SD39 Vancouver
Developed by: Jay Rudolph and Robin Roberts	Date Developed: 2023/2024/2025
School Name: Vancouver Technical Secondary	Principal's Name: Roberto Moro
Superintendent Approval Date (for School Districts only):	Superintendent Signature (for School Districts only):
Board/Authority Approval Date:	Board/Authority Chair Signature:
Course Name: First Peoples Visual Arts 10/11/12	Grade Level of Course: 10/11/12
Number of Course Credits: 4	Number of Hours of Instruction: 120
Course Category: Visual and Performing Arts	Course Code: YVPA-0A

Board/Authority Prerequisite(s): none

Special Training, Facilities or Equipment Required:

Training:

- Art specialist strongly recommended.
- Art history background is an asset, must have familiarity with Coast Salish and other Indigenous art.
- Experience in two- and three-dimensional art forms, from a range of areas (visual arts, textile arts, and arts & crafts appropriate to a variety of Indigenous cultures, etc.).

Equipment:

- A variety of two-dimensional supplies: paper, pencils, felts, print making, acrylic and water colour paint, brushes, etc.
- A variety of three-dimensional supplies; this could be an extremely wide variety of needs, depending on the culture students choose. Example: Coast Salish arts: variety of wood mediums, carving knives, chisels, gouges, saws, tracing paper, light table, projector, planes, sanders, drills, clamps, files, vices, adzes, workbench, rasps, emery cloths, sandpaper, glue, paint, oils, stains, dyes, to name a few.
- Textile Arts: Beading, looms, weaving supplies, and fabric art supplies (needle, thread, fabric, knitting needles, beading supplies, leather, wool, possibly a sewing machine, etc.).
- Other Indigenous cultures (Inuit, Eastern Canadian, Aztec, etc.) use similar tools but may require the resourcefulness of the teacher to find tools to enable students to proceed with inquiry of a culture that is not of the local Indigenous people. For example, soap stone carving would need soapstone, files, saws, masks, sandpaper, etc.
- Resource materials: access to internet, books, and Knowledge Keepers.

Course Synopsis:

Visual Arts offers a unique way of exploring one's identity and sense of belonging. Historical traditions, perspectives, and worldviews can be shared through the visual arts. In this First Peoples Visual Arts course, students will explore Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing, and local cultural learning through looking at and creating works of art. Coast Salish art practices will be the initial focus of the class. However, as a way to understand their personal histories, students will be encouraged to explore and create art pieces reflecting the art styles of other Indigenous cultures. Students will put in the time and patience needed to reflect, recognize, and create pieces of artwork that reflect both traditional and contemporary art forms.

Rationale:

The course will allow students to reflect on the integrated ontology held by traditional Indigenous cultures around the world, with the initial focus being the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). The links between people, land, story and art will be explored.

The balance of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual values exists in the world of Indigenous oral traditions and the art forms that represent these traditions, which remind us of these values and the importance of sharing them with others.

Within the Coast Salish Indigenous communities, for example, art works take the form of crests, house posts, photographs, weaving, knitting, beading, blankets, ceremonial objects, painting, etc. This list is not exhaustive because the variety of physical forms of representation is limitless due to the diversity of Indigenous cultures that have and still do exist around the world.

Students will be guided and encouraged to develop their skills, using a variety of tools and technologies, to work towards proficiency of various mediums.

Goals:

- Students will gain a connection between art making and their own cultural heritage, finding inspiration to delve further into traditional means of art making, or expanding to include contemporary mediums, or blending traditional and contemporary images, ideas, and philosophy.
- Students will develop skills in using classroom, library, and internet resources to develop ideas for images, project concepts, and project development, with the understanding on how to gain inspiration without plagiarism or appropriation.
- Students will be given opportunities to complete inquiry-based projects through discussion with their teacher.
- Students will learn to use various mediums, tools, and processes associated with art productions in a safe manner.
- Students will work on self-calming strategies, to work through the frustration of learning new skills with success.
- Experiential learning requires practicing on scrap materials prior to working on actual projects, to build confidence and clarity on how to use the mediums, tools and processes associated with art production, such as problem solving, further developing ideas, and revisiting techniques to work towards mastery.
- How student projects are refined and finished will be determined through discussion with the teacher. Students will consider the merits of various ways to develop their art projects and finishing techniques. Reflective writing, one-on-one and small group discussions, and whole-class gallery walks and critiques.

Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives, including but not restricted to, the First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Bringing in community members with specific skills in areas being studied to support on-going projects, i.e. carver, weaver, knitter, etc. Students will learn the protocol for inviting and respecting Elders and Knowledge Keepers that come to share their knowledge.
- Students will choose images that are culturally meaningful to them for their project development. They will consider how the chosen images and motifs represent self, family, community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Adults and students will create a classroom culture that encourages creative risk taking in a safe environment and supports the development of art skills.
- The engagement of body and mind is essential for developing skills and for completing art projects. Students will need to recognize when and why projects are not happening as desired and work to overcome difficulties. To move towards mastery, students will have to take the time needed and be patient with themselves as they are developing new skills.

Recommended Instructional Components:

- Direct Instruction: by teachers and by community members, in a group setting and one-one-one, as needed and as available.
- Modelling habits and skills needed for successful skill development: teachers working on pieces alongside students, if possible.

- Skill development: working from more forgiving to more challenging materials, scaling up their work, and moving from two-dimensional towards three-dimensional pieces where appropriate.
- Peer teaching: encourage students to support each other, learn from their peers which builds confidence for the supporter.
- Experiential learning: give opportunities and materials for practice and to gain muscle memory with materials, processes, and technologies.
- Inquiry learning: students will research a variety of cultures, try different mediums and develop different skills with the tools that are available.
- Videos: access to seasoned artists working on their medium is inspirational, even if they cannot be brought into the classroom.

Recommended Assessment Components: Ensure alignment with the Principles of Quality Assessment

This course is assessed by using the Triangulation of Assessment, which allows the teacher to collect evidence of student learning; this evidence is collected from the following three sources: conversations, observations, and products.

The following **Principles of Quality Assessment** will be noted:

- Assessment is ongoing, timely, specific, and embedded in day-to-day instruction.
- Student is involved in assessment and feedback.
- Assessment focuses on all three components of the curriculum model - knowing, doing, understanding.
- Assessment provides ongoing descriptive feedback to students

The students will play an active role throughout all stages of assessment to ensure that they feel ownership of their work and to hear and provide feedback about how they are doing, and where they will focus next.

Assessment specific to this course:

- Exemplars: made by students, teachers, and community members will be used.
- Self-assessment and discussion with teachers to determine the level of skill students are developing.
- Ongoing feedback: regular feedback to students to discuss areas of strength and ways they can increase their skill development.
- Peer-assessment: students will be taught how to give positive feedback to their peers in a safe, kind and nurturing way.
- Oral and written self-assessment: Rubrics help students assess whether they meet the expected criteria. Indigenous cultures are rooted in oral tradition, therefore, allowing oral self-assessment and reflection acknowledges and honors those traditions. The teachers can take notes during or later, if necessary, for summative assessment and reporting. This allows space for student written self-reflection, but written and oral reflection will carry the same weight in assessment.

Learning Resources:

- Learning resources from inherent rights holders will be explored
- Musqueam Kit
- Perpetual Salish – UVic
- Salish Weave Collection
- www.fnesc.ca
- Heart/Mind Coast Salish Principles of Learning
- Gilbert, Jim and Karin Clark, Learning by Designing, volumes 1 and 2
- Gilbert, Jim and Karin Clark, Learning by Doing Northwest Coast Native Indian Art Stanley, Robert Sr., Northwest Native Arts, Basic Forms
- Stanley, Robert Sr., Northwest Native Arts, Creative Colors, book 1 and 2
- Resilience Art Cards sets
- Indigenous Plant Card sets
- Classroom library essential: Bill Reid, Robert Davidson, Susan Point, Debrah Sparrow, Roy Henry Vickers, etc.
- Assorted videos
- VSB Indigenous Education lending library
- Access to internet for student inquiry

***this list is a starting point and is not exhaustive**

Additional Information:

Access to artwork outside the classroom would enhance student engagement and interest in creating artwork:

- Artist Circle with community artists
- Host Nations' Heritage Centres
- Provincial, Regional and local Museums
- Museum of Anthropology
- Vancouver Art Gallery (youth under 18), also have learning resources from prior shows
- Bill Reid Gallery
- Camosun Bog walk
- Stanely Park
- Community and land-based artwork
- Computer(s) and access to internet for student inquiry

BIG IDEAS

The artist's intention is to transform **materials** into art to reflect traditional **cultural expression**.

Indigenous traditions, perspectives, worldviews, and stories can be shared through **aesthetic experiences**.

Growth as an artist and as a **storyteller** requires time, patience and reflection.

The creation of **personal and culturally significant** visual arts relies on the interplay of the body and mind.

Visual arts offer a unique way of exploring one's **identity and sense of belonging**.

Learning Standards

Curricular Competencies	Content
<p><i>Students are expected to do the following:</i></p> <p>Explore and create</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create artistic works that reflect traditional histories, imagination and inquiry • Explore artistic possibilities and take creative risks • Create artistic works with an audience in mind • Express meaning, intent, morals, values, beliefs and traditions through visual arts • Develop and refine artistic skills, reflecting historical cultural traditions • Demonstrate safe and responsible use of materials, tools, and workspace <p>Reason and reflect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and analyze how artists use materials, technologies, processes, and environments in art making, both in historical and in contemporary times • Recognize and evaluate design choices in artistic creations, as a reflection of historical perspective and a contemporary perspective • Develop personal answers to aesthetic questions, historically and contemporary 	<p><i>Students are expected to know the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the shapes and motifs specific to the cultural context of indigenous culture being explored • Identify the materials, techniques, and technologies traditionally used to make indigenous art forms • How the materials, techniques, and technologies traditionally were used to make indigenous art forms • Understand the creative process as a reflection of the morals, values, beliefs, and traditions within culture • Symbols and metaphors are used to represent the moral, values, beliefs, and traditions within Indigenous cultures • Role of the artist as storyteller of traditional histories • Role of the audience as receiver of traditional histories • Understand that creating art forms that reflect personal indigenous identity helps to shape a better understanding of self and one's identity within the modern world

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on the influences of a variety of contexts on artistic works <p>Communicate and document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document, share, and appreciate works of art in a variety of contexts • Demonstrate respect for self, others, and place • Communicate ideas and historical culture through art making • Communicate and respond to social and environmental issues <p>Connect and expand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore First Peoples perspectives and knowledge, other ways of knowing, and local cultural knowledge through artistic works • Create artistic works that demonstrate personal, cultural, and historical contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand visual arts supports relearning lost traditions • Identify traditional, innovative, and inter-cultural artists • Understand how Indigenous art making develops modern cultural meaning • Ethics of cultural appropriation and plagiarism • Traditional and contemporary First Peoples worldviews, stories, and history as expressed through visual arts
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Big Ideas – Elaborations

- **materials:** the broad spectrum of materials, technologies and processes is open-ended and constantly evolving, and materials chosen will reflect the indigenous culture chosen by the student to explore
- **cultural expression:** is vast, in that it may be different for each student, depending on cultural heritage and on culture for which a student may identify with
- **aesthetic experiences:** emotional and cognitive responses to creating and viewing traditional and culturally significant works of art
- **storyteller:** within cultures with old and/or oral traditions, visual arts can take the place of the written word to tell stories
- **traditional histories:** reflection of morals, values, beliefs and traditions within an indigenous culture
- **personally and culturally significant:** a culture for which a student has a personal or historical connections with

Curricular Competencies – Elaborations

- **traditional histories:** emotional connection through identifying with traditional shapes and motifs, to inform others of the morals, values, beliefs, and traditions of an indigenous culture
- **creative risks:** make an informed choice to do something where unexpected outcomes are acceptable and serve as learning opportunities
- **historical cultural traditions:** works of art that share common visual characteristics can be described as belonging to the same indigenous culture
- **responsible use of materials:** using materials in an environmentally responsible way, considering their level of biodegradability and potential for reuse and recycling
- **environments:** place-based influences on the creation of artistic work; art related to or created for a specific place
- **aesthetic questions:** questions relating to the nature, expression, and perception of artistic works
- **variety of contexts:** for example, personal, social, cultural, environmental, and historical contexts
- **document:** through activities that help students reflect on and demonstrate their learning (e.g., writing an essay or article, journaling, taking pictures, storyboarding, making video clips or audio-recordings, constructing new works, compiling a portfolio)

- **place:** any environment, locality, or context with which people interact to learn, create memory, reflect on history, connect with culture, and establish identity. The connection between people and place is foundational to First Peoples perspectives on the world.
- **respond:** through activities ranging from reflection to action
- **social and environmental issues:** locally, regionally, nationally, and/or globally
- **ways of knowing:** First Nations, Métis and Inuit, gender-related, subject/discipline-specific, cultural, embodied, intuitive

Content – Elaborations

- **shapes and motifs:** not in a western art context, but reflective of the indigenous culture in a historical context. In traditional Northwest Coast Indigenous, for example, art forms use the basic motifs of formline, ovoid, trigon, crescent, and circle
- **materials, techniques, and technologies traditionally used:** used by the creators of artwork in a historical context, not what we would use today. The tools discussed will vary depending on the culture(s) students wish to complete an inquiry on; this could be wood, fabric, cedar for weaving, soapstone, shell, etc. and the tools originally used to change the raw materials to artwork with cultural meaning
- **creative process as a reflection of the moral, values, beliefs, and traditions:** artwork created to reflect the stories, histories, and religion of the indigenous culture being explored. In this course the focus is on the visual arts, but students may, through their want to include dance, drama, and/or music as part of their projects, including multiple processes in their exploration, selection, combination, refinement, reflection, and connection with the culture chosen.
- **symbols and metaphors:** symbols are any motif, shape or image that has meaning, while metaphors are the meaning that develops when more than one symbol is juxtaposed
- **storyteller:** within cultures with old and/or oral traditions, visual arts can take the place of the written word to tell stories
- **traditional histories:** identifying traditional shapes and motifs, to inform others of the morals, values, beliefs, and traditions of an indigenous culture
- **audience:** within cultures with old and/or oral traditions, audience learn or are reminded of the stories that give meaning

Content – Elaborations

- **lost traditions:** old and/or traditions lost through colonization and the development of a narrow understanding of art as a Western Eurocentric perspective
- **cultural appropriation:** use of a cultural motif, theme, “voice”, image, knowledge, story, song, or drama shared without permission or without appropriate context or in a way that may misrepresent the real experience of the people from whose culture it is drawn

October 15, 2025

TO: Education Plan Committee

FROM: Maureen McRae-Stanger, Associate Superintendent
Alison Ogden, Associate Superintendent

RE: Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)
K-12 Literacy Supports

*Reference to
[Education Plan](#)*

**GOALS AND
OBJECTIVES:**

Goal 1: The Vancouver School Board will improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by...

- Increasing literacy, numeracy and deep, critical, and creative thinking.
- Reporting student results about performance, well-being, and outcomes to the community and using the results to improve the quality and effectiveness of the education and supports provided to students.

Goal 2: The Vancouver School Board will increase equity by...

- Eliminating gaps in achievement and outcomes among students.
- Evaluating and renewing plans for improvement of Indigenous learners' education.

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education and Child Care's [Framework for Enhancing Student Learning \(FESL\)](#) policy and guidelines support a shared commitment to improve student success and equity of learning outcomes for every student in British Columbia.

At the Education Plan Committee meeting on September 10, 2025, the [VSB Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Annual Report 2024-2025](#) (interim progress update), was shared with the committee, and at the October 1, 2025, Board meeting, the Board approved submission of the report to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Aligned with FESL and the Education Plan, VSB continues to focus on four priority areas to support student success: literacy and numeracy proficiency, quality instruction and assessment, support for priority learners, and well-being and connections.

The Education Plan Committee meeting of October 15, 2025 will focus on literacy proficiency, specifically the Ministry of Education and Child Care's [K-12 Literacy Supports](#) initiative.

This report is provided for information.

BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Education and Child Care recently announced a focus on improved literacy success for students in all school districts in BC through the [K-12 Literacy Supports](#) initiative. As per the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning policy, the goal is to ensure that students meet or exceed literacy expectations at all grade levels. However, based on provincial data collected through FESL, literacy results have been trending downward for the last several years and gaps in achievement are evident for priority learners including Indigenous students, students with disabilities or diverse abilities, and children and youth in care.

The Ministry has provided grants to all districts to support literacy K-12 in the following areas:

- professional learning for teachers in evidence-based approaches to literacy development, instruction, assessment and interventions
- literacy screening for all K-3 students:
 - kindergarten screening in 2025-2026
 - grade 1-3 screening in 2026-2027
- literacy education/information and resources for parents and caregivers

The Ministry has also provided additional funding to Provincial Outreach Programs (POP) to create and provide resources to support these identified literacy initiatives in all school districts.

In VSB, the work to support literacy for all learners is well underway and is grounded in the [VSB Responsive Literacy Framework](#). A literacy working group made up of elementary and secondary classroom teachers, Speech and Language Pathologists, district literacy teachers, administrators and district staff was created in the spring of 2025 to continue to guide this important work and support the ongoing implementation of the literacy priorities identified by the Ministry.

K-12 LITERACY SUPPORTS: SUCCESS MEASURES

Literacy data from classroom assessments and report cards as well as data from K-3 literacy screeners, the grade 4 and 7 Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), and the grade 10 and grade 12 Graduation Literacy Assessments (GNA) will continue to inform how literacy is supported in schools. These assessments are important check points of individual student progress, and also provide a snapshot of system wide strengths, challenges and trends. Understanding these assessments and using them effectively is an important part of planning a comprehensive approach to literacy proficiency for all students.

[Literacy Screening K-3](#)

Early literacy screening is a formative assessment process designed to identify students' foundational reading skills and areas for improvement. By identifying needs early, educators can provide timely instructional supports and interventions. Additionally, screening results can inform resource allocation and guide system improvements in literacy proficiency.

Mandatory literacy screening will begin for kindergarten students in the 2025–2026 school year, with grade 1-3 screening beginning in 2026–2027. Literacy screeners are brief, specific, reliable and predictive assessments of key literacy skills. Classroom teachers will administer the screener 2-3 times per year. Following screening, teachers will use the results to inform instructional planning and monitor individual student progress. All students are expected to participate in the screening process. Accommodations will be provided for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and for English Language Learners (ELL). Screening results will not appear on student report cards but may be shared informally with parents or caregivers.

Ministry approved screening tools include [Acadience Reading](#), [aimswebPlus](#), [DIBELS](#), and [easyCBM](#). Although VSB schools may select any of the Ministry-approved kindergarten screeners for this school year, the district will offer training in DIBELS for English schools and Acadience for French Immersion screening.

In 2026-2027, all districts will use one standardized screener created by the Ministry of Education. This screener will align to BC curriculum and context, will be culturally responsive, and embed the [First Peoples Principles of Learning](#). The Ministry will provide more information to support the implementation of this new screener throughout the 2025-2026 school year. District-wide outcomes from literacy screening will be included in upcoming FESL reports.

Foundation Skills Assessment Grade 4 and 7

The Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) is a learning assessment for grade 4 and 7 students focusing on literacy and numeracy. The literacy component evaluates how students think, understand, communicate, and reflect, rather than just testing factual knowledge. Reading and writing skills are assessed through literacy tasks aligned to the curriculum. The FSA provides a snapshot of student learning, helping teachers, families, districts and the Ministry to understand where students are in their literacy development and identify areas needing support. Students with disabilities or diverse abilities, English Language Learners, and Indigenous learners who may require academic or social-emotional support will be provided with the appropriate accommodations necessary to ensure successful completion of the FSA.

The literacy component of the FSA consists of both online and paper based literacy activities aligned with a theme. These activities mirror regular reading and writing activities that students engage in daily. These tasks are completed during regular classroom time. Results are marked by educators using a provincial proficiency scale, categorizing students as "Emerging," "On Track," or "Extending." Families receive their child's marked test booklet, which provides insights into their learning progress.

Similar to literacy screeners, FSA results are used to inform classroom teaching and monitor student progress. The FSA provides one data point among several, including report cards and classroom assessments, which together offer a comprehensive view of a student's literacy development.

With the introduction of K-3 literacy screeners, the grade 4 FSA assessment will provide important data on the effectiveness of early literacy instruction and interventions, especially for priority learners who have previously experienced gaps in literacy achievement. Strong participation rates for the FSA are key, and although they have been steadily increasing in VSB over the last five years, they continue to trend lower than the province. Gathering more comprehensive literacy data from all students will help to

identify learners who require additional literacy supports in grade 4 and beyond. In particular, participation rates for Indigenous learners have been consistently low. For the past two years, a letter from the Superintendent and the Indigenous Education Council (IEC) has been sent to all Indigenous families, encouraging their participation.

Graduation Literacy Assessments Grade 10 and 12

The grade 10 and grade 12 Graduation Literacy Assessments are similar to the Foundation Skills Assessment, measuring the understanding and application of literacy skills. Students must complete both assessments to graduate with a Dogwood Diploma, which ensures high participation rates. The assessments are offered multiple times during the school year.

Students are assessed in their ability to use critical thinking and analysis to make meaning from a diverse array of texts and to communicate their ideas. The grade 10 and 12 Literacy Assessments are not based on a particular course, but on learning across multiple subjects taught throughout K-12. Students are assessed on the four point Ministry of Education proficiency scale. Additional supports and accommodations are provided for students with diverse learning needs, English Language Learners, and Indigenous learners as needed.

Although students typically take each assessment once in their Grade 10 or Grade 12 school year, they may complete both assessments up to three times to improve their proficiency. The highest proficiency will be used on their official graduation transcript.

The Graduation Literacy Assessments inform individual student proficiency and also provide system level information on the effectiveness of literacy instruction K-12.

A Data Driven Approach to Success

Data from literacy screeners, the Foundation Skills Assessment, and the Graduation Literacy Assessments offer snapshots of K-12 learning and present an overview of district literacy proficiency. These sources assist in identifying areas of strength, achievement gaps, and patterns over time. The [*VSB Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Annual Report 2024-2025*](#), particularly *Part 2: Respond to Results*, outlines literacy initiatives currently being prioritized by VSB to support literacy outcomes and facilitate the implementation of the Ministry's K-12 Literacy Supports initiative.

COMMITTEE MEETING STRUCTURE

Following a brief presentation, committee members will engage in small group discussion to learn more about the Ministry's literacy assessments as well as the initiatives that the VSB is implementing to support improved literacy success for all students.