



SOOKE 62
SCHOOLS
Shaping Tomorrow Today

EQUITY IN ACTION



2023-24 Report

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the traditional territories of the Coast Salish: T'Sou-ke Nation and Sc'ianew Nation and Nuuchahnulth: Pacheedaht Nation. We also recognize some of our schools reside on the traditional territory of the Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation.



WE BELIEVE

In fostering a district-wide focus on learning and ensuring an equitable approach to enable everyone to have the opportunity to achieve their potential.

Sooke School District #62 Equity in Action 2023-24 Report

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Introduction

The '[Equity in Action Project](#)' represents the current directions the Ministry of Education and school districts are taking to address systemic barriers impacting Indigenous student achievement. A focus on 'equity of opportunity' and a co-constructive approach is driving a review of practices and policies that may be creating obstacles for Indigenous learners in the B.C. public school system. The Project was created in response to the [An Audit of the Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System](#) that recognized a 'racism of low expectations' for Indigenous learners in the B.C. education system.

The focus of equity are systemically focused on four [Indigenous Student Success Pillars](#) including:

1. [Learning Profile](#) - personalized and evidence-informed; timely support and responses; culture of reflective practice (Pathway to Graduation – Grandparents' Perspective Circle)
2. [Learning Environment](#) - high and motivating expectations for all; develops confident learners with a sense of belonging and identity; requires an awareness of implicit bias and privilege.
3. [Pedagogical Core](#) - methods and practice of teaching are culturally relevant, includes Indigenous worldviews & perspectives, connects to family & communities.
4. [Policy & Governance](#) – accountable to community, coherent & aligned, committed to action

Currently, Sooke School District is in its sixth year of Equity in Action. Over the years, school and department staff have reflected on the experience of education for Indigenous learners and responded with strategic actionable goals to create conditions for success. This year, school teams revisited goals and actions related to the Learning Environment &/or Pedagogical Core. They also considered how using a [Distinctions-based Approach](#) & participating in the Pathway to Graduation Circles can inform support and celebrate individual learners in their building. District Office continued to move forward with initiatives related to the Policy & Governance pillar.

The Equity in Action 2023-24 Report is a compilation of District, Department, and School Equity Reports. It showcases the Equity in Action goal/focus, actions, and considerations for continuing the good work in the 2024-25 school year.



EQUITY IN ACTION AT THE DISTRICT

Ensuring our learning environments are safe, accessible and welcoming.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AND TOOL LAUNCH

In the fall of 2023, the Sooke School District released its 2023-2026 Accessibility Plan. This plan underscores our commitment to creating supportive learning and working environments for all students and staff, ensuring equitable access and opportunities. The three-year plan will guide us in identifying system needs, priorities, and action plans.

To support the implementation of the plan, we have formed an Accessibility Advisory Group. This multi-disciplinary group, which includes staff and a parent representative, meets regularly throughout the school year. Their role is to refine district priorities and develop recommendations in line with the Accessible BC Act principles, which include inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design. The Accessibility Plan is a dynamic document. It will evolve based on feedback from our community to identify, remove, and prevent barriers, thereby improving accessibility for everyone.

As part of this initiative, we have also launched the Accessibility Feedback Tool. This tool will help the district understand the barriers people face when accessing school programs, buildings, or services.



A young student reads using braille.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

In the spring of 2023, the District engaged Bakau Consulting to conduct a diversity, equity, and inclusion audit. This audit involved surveys and focus groups with district staff, students, families, and the community. One key recommendation from the audit was to form a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Working Group to thoroughly review the audit report and prioritize its recommendations.

The DEI Working Group was established in the spring of 2024, consisting of both school-based and district-based staff. Their first meeting took place in April, where they began analyzing the report and its recommendations. The primary goal of the working group is to ensure that our schools and workplaces are safe, accessible, and welcoming for everyone. This group will continue to meet regularly, and additional groups may be formed to ensure we are continuously adapting and meeting the needs of our community.



A diverse group of students join hands.



EQUITY IN ACTION AT THE DISTRICT

Ensuring our learning environments are safe, accessible and welcoming.

QELEŅSEN Á, LEŅ GIFTED AS NAME FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

A new secondary school option was approved by the Board of Education at the beginning of the 2022/23 school year. The school was temporarily known as Eagle Ridge Secondary. A consultation process for a permanent name began in September 2023. The process involved students, families, staff, community and local Indigenous First Nations. The Nations determined the gifting of a name would come through Sc'ianew First Nation, which is the closest to the school.

SENĆOFEN language teachers and local Elders Lavina Charles and Shirley Alphonse, the SENĆOFEN name recommendation to bring forward for the school was QELEŅSEN Á, LEŅ Secondary School (pronounced K-wuh-Lun-Sun, Eh Lun). QELEŅSEN Á, LEŅ is SENĆOFEN, and translates to “Eagle House”. The powerful spirit, resilience and grace that the Eagle symbolizes are the attributes that come with the word, QELEŅSEN and the word, Á, LEŅ means house or in this context, school. The Board of Education unanimously passed a motion to name the new secondary school QELEŅSEN Á, LEŅ Secondary School on November 21, 2023.



Bald eagle in flight.

LEA SIGNING WITH T'SOU-KE FIRST NATION

On October 5, 2023, the Board of Education signed a Local Education Agreement (LEA) with T'Sou-ke First Nation. LEAs play a crucial role in delivering educational programs and services to First Nation students in British Columbia's public schools. They serve as a key mechanism for fostering relationships between First Nation communities and education boards, aimed at enhancing First Nation student outcomes.

This LEA provides a strategic and respectful framework for the Board of Education and T'Sou-ke First Nation to collaborate in the Sooke School District. It establishes clear expectations and responsibilities for both parties, focusing on improving student achievement. Goals include better grades, higher Dogwood Diploma completion rates, and smoother transitions to post-secondary education, training, or employment for T'Sou-ke First Nation children and youth.



T'Sou-Ke First Nation Chief Gordon Planes at LEA signing celebration in October 2023.

CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION DEPARTMENT

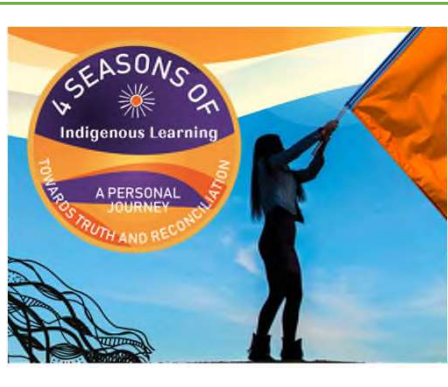


Team Members: Denise Wehner, Erin Russell, Shelby Pollitt, Joy Nugent, Lisa Marshall, Francesca Lee, Shannon Gomboc, Stephanie Cave

This 2023/24 school year, our team focused on the goals of increasing our own knowledge and understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing and being and intentionally weaving Indigenous epistemologies and pedagogies through our work. This is in response to the TRC Call to Action #62 *Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history* as well as the 9th BC Teachers Professional Standard, *Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Metis. Educators critically examine their own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to facilitate change.*



Denise and Shelby



4 Seasons of Indigenous Learning

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: As a full team, we committed to completing the 4 Seasons of Indigenous Learning Season 1. Reflecting on this learning and process after our final module, we had all learned new things and done some unlearning in the process. Two team members were able to attend the FNEESC Conference in Vancouver as well, which was powerful learning.

LEADING WORKSHOPS: In response to the new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement for secondary students, our team supported secondary teachers of Indigenous-focused courses through facilitating regular opportunities to build and engage with a community of practice and professional learning opportunities and resource sharing. One of our team members led a math pen pals project through their work in the Indigenous Cultural Mathematics Mentorship for Educators program with UBC. This

project connected students in our district with students in Rocky Mountain School District to make connections between similarities and differences in *place* between our two locations, as well as discuss math through using Richard Van Camp's Book *What is the Most Beautiful Thing you Know About Horses?* We also wove Indigenous teachings through our work by incorporating opportunities for outdoor learning into workshops, as well as developing a locally-focused resource for supporting teaching and learning around the Core Competencies in K-12 classrooms.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR we will continue to engage in professional learning as a team through the 4 Seasons of Indigenous Learning Season 2. Our work supporting teachers of the Indigenous-focused graduation courses will continue as well, with another workshop specific to BC First Peoples planned since we did an English First Peoples workshop this spring. We will also continue to weave Indigenous content and ways of being through our work, modelling and demonstrating that this is our work and responsibility as educators.



Tea blending at Aylard Farm with K-8 teachers.

Early Learning & Childcare Department



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: To strengthen effective pathways for the transition to Kindergarten

TEAM MEMBERS: Frances Krusekopf & Erin Van Stone

INTRODUCTION

SD62's Early Learning & Childcare Department was established in fall 2023, and since then has partnered and collaborated with other departments to meet District-wide goals. It has been a pleasure to work with Na'Tsa'Maht Indigenous Education (NIE) to enhance and expand the experiences of Indigenous families in our community.

DATA USED TO INFORM GOALS / FOCUS

Ready, Set, Learn (RSL) and Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten Transitions (SEY2KT) are two Ministry of Education & Childcare initiatives focused on supporting the successful transition of children and their parents/caregivers into the public school system. Over the last two years, our department has focused on a welcoming approach, with many 'touch point events', to support new Kindergarten families as they begin school. We use participation numbers in our RSL and SEY2KT events to inform our focus.



Ren Louie's display at Books for Breakfast, April 2024



Musician & Storyteller Al Hirsch, March 2024

This year, our department planned and hosted the following RSL & SEY2KT events, in collaboration with NIE:

- Musician & Storyteller Al Hirsch performed for sum-SHA-thut-Lellum daycare & SD62 Kindergarten class at T'Souke nation
- Ren Louie drummed and read at Books for Breakfast in Colwood
- Our department sponsored part of T'Souke & Pacheedaht community dinner costs
- Traditional dancer Madelaine McCallum performed for young children and Kindergarten students in Sooke
- Our department hosted a Kid's Korner at all three community dinners with the nations in our District

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR:

In 2024/25, our Early Learning & Childcare department hopes to continue, as well as build upon, the RSL and SEY2KT activities and events that took place this year. We recognize that creating meaningful relationships takes time, and we commit to a long-term investment in getting to know our community partners who work in and with the nations as well as with urban Indigenous and Metis peoples. In this way, we hope to support initiatives that interest the community and make them feel welcomed.

Additionally, we hope to increase participation in our StrongStart Outreach program in Port Renfrew. Beginning in April 2024, this program offers a weekly drop-in program for children ages 0 – 5 and their parents/caregivers. In June 2024, we will offer a pilot session with dinner and playtime at the Pacheedaht Health Centre in hopes of attracting more families to the program. If successful, then we will build on this model in September.

In February 2024, SD62 submitted a ChildCareBC New Spaces application for a 56-space childcare facility on the Hans Helgesen School grounds. We are still awaiting approval of this grant application. If successful, it will provide much needed infant toddler and 3–5-year-old spaces to the community, including S'cianew Nation.



Madelaine McCallum



NA'TSA'MAHT INDIGENOUS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

GOAL 1 – increase awareness of Distinctions Based Approach with culture & language programming and consultation & celebration with Indigenous communities

ROLE MODEL PROGRAM - The Role Model Program supports the integration of First Peoples' perspectives, worldviews, and content throughout SD62. It is a means to bring Indigenous knowledge holders and allies into learning environments while offering a gift of appreciation through honoraria. The NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education Department provides each school with honoraria funds to support accessing role models within the Role Model Program. This year, there were 27 active Role Models in the program that provided over 650 role model presentations in schools.



ELDER IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM - The Elder In-Residence Program helps meet the goals of the NA'TSA'MAHT Enhancement Agreement and has proven to be a powerful means of deepening understanding and building relationships between staff, students, and the greater Indigenous community. Elders offer a window into protocol while increasing language awareness and Indigenous ways of knowing. Their participation in schools demonstrates the importance of intergenerational relationships. Residing on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish and Nuuchahnulth, we are honoured to have both Coast Salish and Nuuchahnulth elders be part of the program.



This year, the Elder In-Residence Program included both weekly and rotational cycles – totalling 26 schools. Elders in schools (Henry Chipps, Raymond Peter, Jackie Planes, Janet Sutherland, Earl Claxton Jr., and Jo-Ina Young) worked at their respective schools on an established weekday from October through to the end of May. Rotational Elders worked on a 6–7-week cycle at various schools. In addition, Elder Shirley delivered the T'Sou-ke Nation Kindergarten SENĆOŦEN Program to four Sooke Elementary Schools. Marlene Clifton facilitated a drumming series at 12 additional schools in the inner zone. We are honoured to have the Elders be part of the school community and raise our hands in gratitude to them.

SOUTH ISLAND LAND-BASED GRADE 12 CELEBRATION - The NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education Department hosted the 3rd Grade 12 Land-based Celebration, in partnership with T'Sou-ke Nation, Sc'ianew Nation and the YMCA Camp Thunderbird. Over 100 students and staff from SD 61, 62, 63, W̱SÁNEĆ, and the Francophone school district came together as a South Island family with Role Models, Knowledge Keepers and Elders. The activities of the day, from drumming to canoeing, cedar harvesting to art & beading, provided rich opportunities for participants to engage with and learn about local Coast Salish & Nuuchahnulth cultures. The inclusion of traditional teas, locally sourced salmon, and songs from local Elders further added to the cultural experience of the event.



NA'TSA'MAHT INDIGENOUS GRADUATION CELEBRATION - The NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Graduation Celebration honours Indigenous student success. This year, we hosted over forty Indigenous graduates and their families, community members and school district staff to a beautiful evening event. The event began with welcoming words from community and district staff. Valedictorians from each school shared inspirational words about their educational journey which was followed by the NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education Teacher recognizing each graduate's memorable moments of school life and personal goals for the future. Elders in Residence presented graduates with a hand drum and drum bag. Métis



students were sashed by Kookum Jo-Ina Young. Many students joined in cultural drumming at the end of the night with local elders. For the second consecutive year, Royal Bay’s Culinary Department catered a delicious meal to 300 guests.

COMMUNITY DINNER EVENTS - The NIE department works with each of the First Nations to co-plan community dinners with host schools, as well as an Urban & Métis dinner to honour the Indigenous people who have moved away from their home communities. This honours a distinctions-based approach to planning and co-creation.

Urban and Métis Dinner: We partnered with David Cameron Elementary to host the first family dinner to honour the Urban Indigenous & Métis families of our school district. Over 200 guests were welcomed by Sc’ianew Elder Henry Chipps, Shirley Alphonse and Chief Chipps. Following a traditional Métis dinner (Bison stew, strawberry salad, and Red River Bannock), there were 2 student performance groups. Grandma Marlene Clifton led David Cameron students to sign and drum to 4 songs, and Kookum Jo-Ina Young, Métis Elder, led students and guests in a tradition jigging with a live fiddler (Calvin Cairns).

T’Sou-ke Nation: We partnered with T’Sou-ke Nation for a community gathering with traditional seafood chowder and sockeye salmon, hosted by the amazing Sooke Elementary school & staff. Over 165 guests enjoyed learning about T’Sou-ke Nation traditional foods by experiencing a meal cooked by Rob & Nathan Davies. *“When the tide was out, the table was set”* said Jackie DeYaeger. Two children from T’Sou-ke Nation, Riley & River, along with Councillor Rose Dumont opened the evening by welcoming guests to the T’Sou-ke Nation territory. T’Sou-ke Elder Jackie DeYaeger and filmmaker Arnold Lim were both honoured through a traditional blanketing led by Elder Shirley Alphonse with help from Elder Auntie Jannie, Councillor Rose Dumont and Trustee Trudy Spiller. The evening ended with the Sooke Elementary students performing a traditional Métis dance called the Red River Jig, led by Kookum Jo-Ina Young.

Pacheedaht Nation: We partnered with Pacheedaht Nation for a community gathering about traditional foods, which included Elk and Salmon. The dinner was hosted by the Pacheedaht Health Centre and included about 75 guests. Elected Councillor Tracy Charlie opened the evening welcoming everyone to Pacheedaht and teacher/community member Trystal Dunn-Jones commented on the Canoe project at Port Renfrew Elementary. School teams and district departments such as Early Learning, Curriculum Transformation, and Human Resources were there to speak with families, and Superintendent Paul Block shared the building plans of the new Port Renfrew Elementary School. The evening ended with a cake, Bannock and door prizes for Pacheedaht Community members and children.

Sc’ianew Nation: We partnered with Sc’ianew Nation for a community gathering which included a sockeye salmon and a seafood chowder dinner. The event was hosted by Dunsmuir Middle School and included an opening dance from the Esquimalt Singers and Dancers Group which includes some young talented students. Sc’ianew Nation Chief & Council welcomed over 200 guests where local Elders gave a blessing to an Art Mural that was co-created by students and a local Sc’ianew artist. Local elders also honoured community members part of the Ocean Resources team who provide land-based experiential learning to 3 schools, as well as the outgoing Principal. The evening included a student performance from the Dunsmuir drum group, learning about the traditional bone game Lahal, and ended with a traditional Métis jig led by Kookum Jo-Ina Young.

GOAL 2 – foster an understanding that each Indigenous student has gifts & needs

How am I doing on my pathway to graduation?



PATHWAY TO GRADUATION CIRCLES - *The Pathways to Graduation Circle – Grandparents’ Perspective* framework is designed to answer the question, *“How is each First Nations, Inuit and Métis student doing on their path to graduation?”* or through the voice of a grandparent *“Tell me about my grandchild, are they on their path to graduation?”*. The framework’s intent is that through safe and focused conversations we will understand who is on

their path to graduate and who may need additional care. Envisioning a grandparent in the space ensures we enter each circle conversation with a good heart and mind remembering that families entrust their children with us each day with hopes that they will be both successful and happy at school. Pathway Circles include School and

NA'TSA'MAHT administration, and NA'TSA'MAHT Department staff (NA'TSA'MAHT Education Teachers, Program Assistants & ESD Teachers)

Currently, we are in our second year of the Pathway to Graduation Framework. With a distinctions-based approach, we began with a Lellum / 'A,LEN (House) Circle at the beginning of the year to provide an overall picture of who the Indigenous students are in each school and highlighted programming/services provided to each school by the NIE Department. Two additional Pathways followed in January/February and May/June. These Pathways focused on student attendance and engagement, academics, adult/peer connections and overall wellness using a **Green (celebrate) – Yellow (monitor) – Red (action)** framework. Comments confirmed each student is doing well or brought forward actions to support the child. For Grade 10 to 12 students, meeting course requirements for graduation is also reviewed. To date, the Pathways have showcased the power in working together to both celebrate and make actions for student success. We know the Pathways To Graduation Circles have positively impact learners this year and will in the years to come.

STUDENT AND FAMILY ADVOCATE - Informed by 2022-23 Pathway to Graduation Circles, this year, the NIE Department was proud to add the kindergarten to Grade 12 Student and Family Advocate Teacher position to the NIE Team to support student success. To date, the advocacy has centred around three areas: collaboration, system navigation, and accessibility. The advocacy is done in collaboration with School Teams, District Resources, Nations & Designates, and Community Organizations. Families are supported within the school and district and with navigating appointments and connections to doctors, counsellors, and various support agencies. A key component of the role is being able to meet students and families where they are at whether it be in school or community. Currently, the Advocacy Lellum (House) includes 39 students: 18 students living in community and 21 students living away from community. The students come from a total of 15 schools including 23 at the elementary level, 6 at the middle school level, and 10 at the high school level. Although a new position, the Student and Family Advocate has proven to be an essential component of Indigenous student success. Examples include students moving forward with district-provided psycho-educational assessment after support to see an optometrist and support with transportation to ensure attendance for the assessment; completing a learning assessment they were hesitant about previously so their education program can be more tailored to their needs; accessing Inclusion Support case management with referrals to and support for their family to follow up with necessary service providers; registering for summer camp with a one-to-one worker after support for their parent to complete the application process; receiving glasses after support to see an optometrist and support with to access funding for glasses. In addition, the advocate has built capacity in staff by the creation of an External and Outside Supports for Indigenous Students and Families directory on Engage.

GOAL 3 – increasing authentic cultural learning experiences within NIE staff

NIE EQUITY IN ACTION - The NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education (NIE) team began the year together on the land at Sc'ianew Nation – Spirit Bay Centre – for their September start-up circle where we ate lunch with community members, Elders and school district staff. The NA'TSA'MAHT team engaged in cultural learning throughout the year, including drum making and painting with local Elders Rick Peter and Henry Chipps, who taught the team with the Coast Salish cultural protocols. Later in the year, the team was offered to learn about Ribbon Skirt or Shirt making, taught by Kookum Jo-Ina Young. A variety of cultural learning was offered at the professional development days. At our annual Winter Solstice gathering, we convened at the Hulitan Bighouse, where the NIE staff brought their drums to learn drumming from Grandma Clifton.



SOUTH ISLAND FAMILY OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATION TEAMS - One of the Equity in Action goals of the NIE Department was increasing a sense of belonging and cultural understanding for our staff so that they had more strategies to support culture and language programming to Indigenous learners. This school year, School Districts 61, 62, and 63 came together to build capacity within their teams to deliver more effective and culturally responsive culture, language and support programs. This collaboration resulted in the sharing of cultural resources, particularly those of the Coast Salish, which are relevant across all three districts. Efforts have also been made to find strategies that honour families who have children who attend more than one school district, as many of our Indigenous families have lineage from First Nations across Vancouver Island. In September, the Indigenous Education teams participated in a land-based cultural learning day at Camp Thunderbird in Sooke for team building. Together, as a South Island family of Indigenous Education staff, we participated in drumming and singing, beading, canoeing, and learning Lahal. Our teams reconvened next at the FNEC Conference in Vancouver, and again in February at Centre Mountain Lellum Middle School for a professional development event focused on resource sharing for Teacher-Librarians and Indigenous Education staff. This time we extended the invite to more districts, including the Francophone School District, Cowichan, and the WSANEC School Board. This session included learning about First Peoples resources, Indigenizing Learning Commons, the Indigenous Graduation Requirement, French First Peoples resources, and culture/language programming. Participants also observed students using the giant First Peoples Map of North America.



WESTSHORE SECONDARY SCHOOL

EQUITY IN ACTION REPORT 2023-24

WESTSHORE SECONDARY IS GRATEFUL TO TEACH, LEARN AND LIVE ON COAST SALISH TERRITORIES. WE ARE HONOURED TO WORK CLOSELY WITH BEECHER BAY SC'IANEW NATION, T'SOU-KE NATION, NUU-CHAH-NULTH PACHEEDAHT NATION AND METIS NATION OF GREATER VICTORIA.

Introduction:

At Westshore Secondary School, staff and students have been working towards our **Equity in Action Goal: Increasing Westshore's understanding of and engagement with Indigenous language and connection to land, sea, and sky.**

This goal is a continuation of last year's goal, with a greater emphasis on action stemming from our previous Wayi Wah book discussions. Through a variety of experiential, land-based field trips, through learning with and from Indigenous Role Models and by engaging in deep conversations using Wahi Wah as a guide, Westshore has moved from discussion to ACTION within our collective reconciliation journey.



Connecting to the Land

“Elder Earl explained to us the lifecycle of salmon...they send the bones downstream and pay respect to it in order to let them act as nutrients for the rest of nature. It is a common First Peoples' view that all things on earth are interconnected and this act runs very deep spiritually, as Salmon have been an integral aspect of many First Peoples in the Pacific region”. - Westshore Sooke Student

Each year, Westshore students are invited to participate in land-based learning at Goldstream Park. This year, Brother Rick led a drumming circle and Elder Earl shared teachings about the salmon run.



Connecting to the Sea

“Listen to the wisdom of the land; it speaks to you all the time”- WS Teacher

This photo was taken at SNIDƆEŁ, the traditional territory of the WSÁNEĆ (Saanich) First Nation. Students and staff gathered with Elder Earl to learn about how the sea and land provided for the WSÁNEĆ people. Elder Earl's stories and teachings held greater power and significance as we were surrounded by the land and sea that the stories were about.



Connecting to the Sky

ƆENTOL (“to be together, along with” in SENĆOŦEN)

This photo was taken at the top of PKOLS (Mt. Doug) and reflects our connection to the sky. Organized by the Westshore Equity Team, Westshore staff were given the opportunity to spend the April Pro-D at PKOLS learning off the land with Elder Earl. This was a chance for staff to reflect on where we live and the stories that were here before us. Spending the day hiking and learning together also strengthened our sense of community.



Looking ahead to next year, staff have provided input into the direction our equity work will take next year. These include: continuing to use a cultural plan to guide our teaching and learning throughout the year, revisiting how the First Peoples Principles of Learning can be used to create new classroom activities that are more authentic to the goals and culture of our school, facilitating professional development opportunities for staff to learn on the land together, and using new sources to continue our deep conversations about reconciliation and action.

Moving Forward...

HY'CHKA TO THE FOLLOWING EQUITY TEAM MEMBERS FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP, COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION:
DARRELL WRIGHT, JAMIE CLEGG, JUDY MCELDERRY, LIANE DIMOCK, STEPHAN PERREN ; CONNOR MCGUIGAN GREGORY HENKELMAN, GILLIAN LEROSE

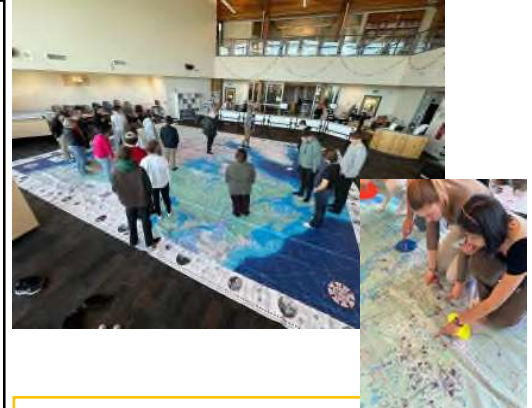
Belmont Secondary School



Goals:

- Create additional Indigenous focused class options
 - Add cross-curricular experiential elements to these classes
- Conduct resources review, looking to diversify representation
- Support teacher efficacy in using First Peoples Principles in the classroom

At Belmont Secondary School we have been working towards reconciliation and the continued practice of incorporating the Indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and learning into the classes and lives of students and staff. There is a great deal of thought and value placed upon developing these principles as bedrocks of learning and making them the foundations of strong teaching practices. Some of the key ways that we have done this at Belmont include a resource review to ensure that the resources used by our departments are representative of our students and values, as well as the introduction of new Indigenous focused classes across grade levels to offer opportunities for students to take multiple classes in their time at Belmont that highlight the stories, wisdom, and knowledge of the Indigenous people of Canada. We have worked to build cross-curricular opportunities within these classes to enrich the experiential learning that is so valuable to making lessons meaningful and memorable for a lifetime.



Students engaging with a lesson on Indigenous excellence on the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada



The best way to show our work is in highlighting the amazing learning experiences our students have had at Belmont this year. Students have taken part in Métis jigging with Madelaine McCallum, drumming with Grandma Clifton, a salmon bake with Doreen Scow and Elder Henry, Lahal with Brother Rick and Elder Henry, medicine bag making, jigging, and sharing of Métis culture with Kookum Jo-Ina, lessons on art, resilience and Métis culture with Debra Kessler and Rose Prevost, drumming and storytelling with Ren Louie, drum painting with Dahlila Charlie and much more.

This button blanket was created by a Grade 12 student who made it as their capstone project. They worked with their mother as an exploration of their Indigenous heritage and sharing of family history and stories.

Looking forward to next year we are excited to be introducing even more Indigenous focused courses to Belmont. We are also working on building more robust relationships with key role models to schedule them regularly in the building to allow their teachings to extend over time, provide time for follow up, and give students opportunities to get to know them over several visits instead of on-off lessons in their classes. With this, we hope to have role models able to scaffold their teachings to our teachers so that the classroom teachers build their skills and abilities in using the Indigenous ways of knowing and doing in their classes when a role model isn't there to support. Another goal of the school is to work towards increasing student voice and activity around some of the key events in the calendar, be they celebratory or mournful, such as Orange Shirt Day, National Indigenous Peoples' Day, Moosehide Campaign etc. We are also excited to be working on a project to replace our school crest with one developed in partnership with a local Indigenous artist and based on the land. This will hopefully be completed for the upcoming school year and will visually represent the land that we are so grateful to have the opportunity to live, work and play on.



Bannock on the fire at the May salmon bake event led by Role Model Doreen Scow

CENTRE MOUNTAIN LELLUM MIDDLE SCHOOL

EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: This year we explored ideas around bringing authentic meaningful teaching and learning experiences to all classrooms through an Indigenous people's week.



Professional Development session morning with Equity Team and staff

TEAM MEMBERS: Toby Owen, Cole Spittle, Pedra Stephen, Kathleen Meiklejohn, Leanne Bilous, Cheymus McNulty, Michaela Mistal

Here at Centre Mountain Lellum, we have a large team of educators with a lot of enthusiasm and ideas for the Equity in Action team. We first got together in October and discussed our school values and bringing forward a school wide celebration and learning opportunity for the week of June 21 and Indigenous People's Day so that the teaching and learning opportunities are meaningful and authentic.

We examined curriculum, and the First Peoples Principles of Learning. We also spent an afternoon at the NIE office to look at the different resources that are available to bring into schools and support the work. We also had several lunch meetings to discuss how to bring the ideas and learning forward, the logistics, as well as bringing our big ideas into manageable teaching and learning opportunities. Through these conversations, we created an opportunity for Staff to come in during a Professional Development Day and brainstorm different activities that they can run with their classes and grade group during the week. Having supportive conversations, and sharing information led to three afternoons in June that will be grade-based rotations.

One of the main highlights for our work this year was hearing the conversations and ideas of staff who came together for the Professional Development Day in April.

Our Equity in Action team is passionate and enthusiastic with big ideas. It is a challenge to embark on large scale activities and school wide events and bring the logistics together.

Looking forward to next year, continuing to develop the celebration of First Peoples Principles of Learning through smaller modules in the school year, our Indigenous People's week, as well as our forthcoming art installation and working to educate our school on our values will be the focus of our next school year.

SPENCER MIDDLE SCHOOL



EQUITY IN ACTION
@SPENCER MIDDLE SCHOOL 2023-24

WHY EQUITY?
Learning, Engaging, and Empowering All Students

OUR GOALS TOWARDS EQUITY!

1. To promote connection and belonging for the Spencer Community.
2. To support learning to and from the land.
3. To reflect, educate and inform on equity, justice, anti-racism, discrimination and inclusion.

HOW TO REACH OUR GOALS!

- Engage & Enrich/50 Program for grade groups and school
- Collaborate with Dr. Gundersen on anti-racism education
- Focus on to showcase diverse cultures within the school
- Facilitate professional book club and staff learning
- Provide access and opportunities to learn from the land
- Create and expand community school garden
- Develop the Health and Well-being program
- Continue to build on the Living Library at Spencer
- Offer trainings, cultural awareness, and other cultural events
- Foster Group Outdoor Learning experiences
- Regular Learning Skills Model lessons

EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS

- To promote connection and belonging for the Spencer Community
- To support learning to and from the land
- To reflect, educate and inform on equity, justice, anti-racism, discrimination and inclusion

TEAM MEMBERS consist of CUPE, STA & PVP members

Nathan Ambrose, Sharon Bond, Hayden Bartels, Jen Nixon, Kristine Taylor & Chloe Wade

INTRODUCTION

Our Equity Team is a dynamic group and we have done many things to support our goals, such as participating in the Reconciliation Education year-long series, meeting with Joe Heslip, creating monthly cultural displays, organizing events, incorporating Indigenous pedagogies at staff gatherings, and securing funding for an accessible and inclusive outdoor play space. We built the timetable to enable “Explore and Enrich” to support students to feel connected and further inclusion for students who may not thrive in a classroom environment.

DATA USED TO INFORM GOALS / FOCUS

We accessed the data from the Equity Survey, Student Learning Surveys, and anecdotal ‘street data’.



T & R Day - Brother Rick, Chief Chipps and Ren helped us celebrate Orange Shirt Day.



MMIWG2S+
We co-organized an event for Red Dress Day.



Pride Progress
We collaborated with the City to have the Pride Progress Crosswalk.



Living Library
We collaborated with community members to have Living Library events. Here is Board Chair Dowhey.



Coast Salish Design Shirt
We added Coast Salish inspired shirts with middle school symbolism to team uniforms.



Access Awareness
We supported inclusion with a Wheelchair Basketball Game.



Role Models
We learned from role models; here we are making cedar roses.



Presentations
We brought in speakers from diverse backgrounds for assemblies. This is D.O. Gibson.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR: We will complete the inclusive and accessible playground, hope to expand the garden and learning from the land processes, develop “E50” a smaller enrichment program to tap into student and staff gifts, and continue reach our goals.

“ I’m really happy to see Spencer promoting diversity and including everyone. Spencer truly feels like a place where everyone belongs. ”
(Rajib D, Parent, April 2024)

DAVID CAMERON ELEMENTARY

EQUITY GOALS: Celebrate culture and student success, Role Models, Gatherings, Truth and Reconciliation, First Peoples Principles of Learning

TEAM MEMBERS: Raelene Koot, Deb Meir, Nerine Sequeira, Sue Tonnesen and Rosie Cook



We started the year strong with a powerful assembly on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. Students spoke about why we wear orange shirts, drummed the *Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Honour Song*, read Rita Joe's poem, "I Lost My Talk," and sang the Late Chief Dan George's *Coast Salish Anthem*.

"We look to the future with hope. We will continue to learn. We commit to working towards a better Canada. We will fight prejudice and discrimination. We will strive for a land that recognizes and respects all peoples."



As a team and staff we collaborated throughout the year with our NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Educator, Raelene Koot, to inform goals/focus. We also looked to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Education-related Calls to Action to continue "building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect."

On March 13 DC hosted the Na'tsa'maht dinner to honour the Urban Indigenous & Metis families of our school district. Gramma Marlene Clifton led DC students in singing and drumming, while Kookum Jo-Ina Young led students and guests in traditional jigging accompanied by live fiddler Calvin Cairns.



This spring DC had the honour of welcoming 13 beautiful Coast Salish Prints created by local Indigenous artists into our learning spaces. Students and staff appreciated the opportunity to engage up-close and meaningfully with these art works.

On Pink Shirt Day we were privileged again to have Gramma Clifton join us - this time to open our assembly drumming with grade 4 students. We were proud to weave Indigenous knowledge into our efforts to build a positive community where everyone feels safe, recognized, and accepted.



Most recently, DC took part in a MMIWG2S march with staff and students from Ruth King, Spencer, and Savory. It was an important and emotional event that we hope to build upon next year.



Looking ahead to next year we hope to build on the work and relationships that we have explored this year, while looking forward to new ways of seeing, learning, and celebrating Indigenous voices and perspectives in our growing school community.

Happy Valley Elementary



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: Supporting Indigenous Students and Building a culture of respecting diversity in our school and community.

TEAM MEMBERS: Kendra Laidlaw, Kristin Holland, Rupert Gadd, Camille McRae, Kristine Kosolofski, Liz Kannagara, Laura Shaefer

INTRODUCTION

Happy Valley Elementary continues to build upon the Equity in Action Goals we set in the 2022-2023 school year. This year we focussed on completing the JEDI Book Bag Project, shifting the student club towards more actionable activities and a new student-friendly name (Kindness Club), developing our understanding of how to decolonize education and better support our Indigenous students with our book club novel "Wayi Wah!", inviting Role Models into all classrooms to better support the TRC calls to action 62 and 63 and provide positive representation for our Indigenous Students, working with our NA'TSA'MAHT Classroom Program Assistant, Suyoun Kim, to increase opportunities for SENĆOŦEN language learning (activities in classrooms + whole school participation in the Coast Salish 13 Moon Bulletin Board project), collaborating with school garden coordinator, Ashley Conrad, to bring Indigenous learning into our school garden.

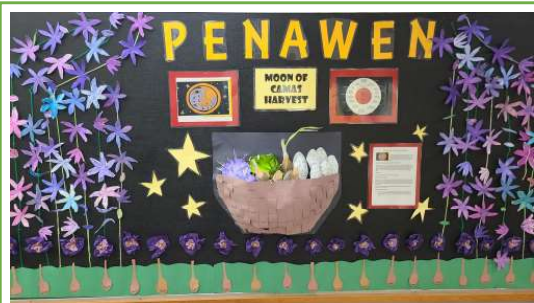
Incorporating Indigenous learning with The Four Sisters in the Happy Valley Garden



DATA USED TO INFORM GOALS / FOCUS

The Happy Valley Equity in Action Team began their work upon reviewing data from the anonymous survey shared with families in the 2021-2022 school year. We identified a few areas of focus:

- **Promote awareness, acceptance, and celebration of Indigenous culture.**
- **Improve positive representation for IBPOC students.**
- **Make our school a safer space for IBPOC students and students with diverse needs.**
- **Incorporate the First Peoples Principles of Learning Indigenous Learning by utilizing our school garden.**



SENĆOŦEN language learning with our Coast Salish 13 Moon Bulletin Board project

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR...

The Happy Valley Equity in Action Team is hopeful that we will be able to expand our SENĆOŦEN language learning goals, our Monthly JEDI Themes, increase participation in the Student Kindness Club, and explore "HVTV" as a new modality for sharing JEDI messages.



Students learn about traditional medicinal herbs with Role Model Robynne Edgar

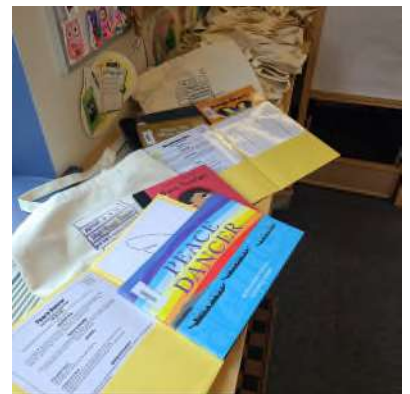
Focus Area: TRC Calls to Action

62. ...Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve.

63. ...Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.

Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.

Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above students. mutual respect.



JEDI Book Bags ready to be shared with classroom teachers



LAKWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS:

- 1) Continue to encourage outdoor learning as a focus.
- 2) Continue to encourage build on small steps forward to having more time with Knowledge keepers and Elders.
- 3) Use Equity time to engage in looking at the implementation of the FPPOL and outdoor learning.
- 4) Continue efforts to have personal growth and authentic work towards truth and reconciliation, and BCTF standard 9, in our community.
- 5) Continue to promote and encourage our school community to engage/completion of the equity scan.



Coast Salish Weave on display



Nature spiral for mindfulness

TEAM MEMBERS:

Cherise Bouvier, Tammy Edson, Kloe Holmes, Corrinne Kosik, Kerry Arnot

Data used to inform goals/focus...

- Multiple conversations with Staff
- Professional learning at a staff meeting – google drive, QR codes for direct connection to District resources, re introduction to resources in our building.
- Resources check out through our library.
- Inquiry group “What can we do to better support our diverse learners?”

Highlights... Grandma Clifton and Brother Rick drumming with students – the energy was incredible! Our music teacher wants them to come back during his drumming unit to incorporate Indigenous drumming into his teaching. He was very appreciative of their calm, but firm approach and the students responded very well. Seeing the buffalo hide laid out in our library was incredible and the students appreciated being able to talk to Kokum Jo-Ina about her experiences and learn more about the history of the Metis Nation. Doreen came and created button blankets with the younger students, next year we hope to use our new Logo during the creation of these. We worked with Jamin Zuroski, and each child got a chance to either design or colour our new logo. The students even picked the final logo from multiple choices. We now have a new logo to share with our community and will be introducing it at beach day (June 21) on t shirts for staff. Our kindergarten staff accessed Michelle Stoney colouring pages to give to their students and created a snowy bulletin board with Gitxan snowmen. We are celebrating culture and student success through role model visits using visuals such as the Coast Salish Weave collection. We of welcomed the Coast Salish Weave Prints created by local Indigenous artists into our library. Students and staff appreciated the opportunity to engage up-close with these art works



Reflections...

- This year we shared our Google drive at a staff meeting, talked about the Coast Salish weave collection and booked the collection and shared it with staff.
- We created a living spiral in an outside area after sharing the lesson with the staff and invited them to use it.
- Elder Earl did a residency,
- Brother Rick came and drummed with students,
- Grandma Clifton came and drummed with students.
- We had Kokum Jo-Ina work with students.
- Bertha Landrie worked with students
- Doreen created button blankets with students.
- We continue to work on outdoor learning as a focus.
- We had our grade four students create a display on the Coast Salish moons.
- Coast Salish Weave collection on display in our library.
- Finalized our new logo with the help of Jamin Zuroski



New logo created with Jamin Zuroski and all our students

We are continuing to encourage forward movement; we very much appreciate the support of the Na'tsa'maht team sending resources our way and hope this continues. Standard 9 was played at the staff meeting to remind folks of their obligations. Our NCPA's calm demeanor really helps to support our students and to help coordinate Elders and Knowledge keepers going into classrooms.

Looking ahead to next year...

- continue to build on baby steps forward we have explored this year, while looking forward to having more time with knowledge keepers and hopefully more involvement from our Equity team.
- We would like to use some of the Equity ttoc time to release teachers to engage in looking at FPPOL and outdoor learning resources and to maybe co plan with our NCPA to bring in more Knowledge Keepers.
- We are hoping to continue receiving resources and time from the Na'tsa'maht team. We want to continue efforts to have personal growth and authentic work towards truth and reconciliation in our community which will result in furthering our students' connection to Lakewood, increase their sense of belonging and increase e capacity to see themselves represented in our community of learners.
- We continue to promote and encourage school community to complete the equity scan to guide goals and next steps.
- continue to build on the work and relationships that we have explored this year, while looking forward to new ways of seeing, learning, and celebrating Indigenous voices and perspectives in our growing school community.

Millstream Elementary School



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: Last year, our Equity in Action team created a set of Indigenous resources and lesson plans that aligned with the core competencies. The goal was to create a “hub” at the school level that had books and associated lesson plans readily available for classroom use



Orange Shirt Day

to support teachers with bringing Indigenous voices into the classroom. The hope is that our Indigenous students will see themselves and their culture reflected in the classroom. These book packs offer a way to share Indigenous perspectives and traditional stories and foster an awareness of own and other cultures. This year, the focus was to align the core competencies with monthly assemblies to encourage a year-long focus on this work while also responding to the concerns raised by students in the Equity in Action survey who did not see themselves and their culture reflected in the classroom. Another goal was to

look for opportunities to provide whole school learning experiences.

TEAM MEMBERS: Laura Colton, Amanda Culver, Michelle King, Nitzana Kohn, and Tammy DeLeenheer



Gratitude Song



culture reflected in their classroom.

Data used to inform goals/focus: From our 2023 Equity in Action survey, we learned that 23% of our students said that they never see family or people from their cultural background in their classroom. We also learned that 23% of our students said that they never see their

Highlights / Stories / Quotes: This year, two to three classes partnered up to lead assemblies related to a core competency. Our latest assembly, focused on the core competency of creative thinking. Grade 3 students illustrated and read the story, “Raven, A Trickster Tale From the Pacific Northwest” by Gerald McDermott. Our Kindergarten class acted out a condensed version of the story.



Highlights / Stories / Quotes: This year, we also added another element to our assemblies: drumming. At the start of our assemblies, our Music teacher, Dr. Kentel led a group of students in a gratitude drumming song.

Our students joined Lakewood School on Orange Shirt Day. Students wore their orange shirts, drummed, and carried posters that shared messages about kindness and every child matters.

Our Na'tsa'maht Classroom Program Assistant, Nitzana Kohn, provided some wonderful whole school offerings. Students had the opportunity to weave hearts, butterflies, birds, and owls which were

used to create a beautiful bulletin board.

A few of our teachers have also been working in our school garden to create a pollinator garden as well as plant and identify indigenous species and learn about seasonal rounds.

Our students and staff also had the opportunity to view the Coast Salish Weave Display.

This month, Ren Louie will be visiting our school to share the book he has written called, "Teachings of the Drum" and teach us songs and dancing.

Reflections... While there were many highlights this year, we as a staff believe that there is more work to be done. The assemblies provided an important opportunity to highlight the core competencies and weave an Indigenous perspective so that our students can see themselves within our school community. Through our whole school and community activities, the hope was to create a community of belonging and pride, to broaden our perspectives, and to foster intercultural understanding. In a year with a big change over in staff, we felt that we have created a sense of belonging in our school community and will continue to strive to maintain a space where all our students feel welcomed and valued.

Looking ahead to next year....

- Plan activities with neighbouring schools (i.e., Orange Shirt Day, National Indigenous Peoples Day)
- Continue monthly assemblies of core competencies and weave in an Indigenous perspective.
- Monthly staff meeting share outs of Indigenous resources
- Whole school celebrations throughout the year
- Continue to use the Equity in Action survey as a guide to supporting students

PEXSISEN Elementary School: Equity Report 2023-2024



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS:

- Ensuring families have the information they need to self-identify Indigenous Ancestry.
- Placing priority on funded services and programming to those classes that have students with Indigenous Ancestry.
- Continue educating our community about our school name, its meaning and significance.



TEAM MEMBERS: Derrick Titian, Chelsea Sihota, Nevada Kaludjer, Max Weinstein, Ceilidh Deichmann

Introduction: This year's team looked closely at how we are doing as a school to continue building awareness of our school's connection to its name and the local Nations through programming, planned activities and cultural events. We aim to continue to enhance students' exposure to cultural content in authentic ways.



Elder Butch Dick with PEXSISEN Staff



Data used to inform goals/focus:

- Feedback from staff;
- Our School Lellum;
- 2022-2023 Equity Survey Results;
- Ministry of Education's Equity Scan Learning Profile Questions and rubric.

Bannock by Div. 15

Highlights / Stories / Quotes:

- Drumming with Grandma Clifton;
- Buying a fryer to make our own bannock;
- Whole school Sacred Teachings and monthly moon activities;
- Elder Earl Claxton visits to share the story of the PEXSISEN moon;
- Elder Butch Dick joining staff to share his gift of resources for our school;
- Our second annual Honouring PEXSISEN Assembly [and video](#);
- Jessica Joseph being celebrated at our Honouring PEXSISEN Assembly and her mother's pride of her accomplishment;



Jessica Joseph in front of her mural

Highlights / Stories / Quotes continued:

- Planning a whole school Fun Day on June 21, 2024 to celebrate and acknowledge National Indigenous Day with Indigenous centered activities including lacrosse, lahal, drumming, crafts, tea and much more.

Special guests at our
Honouring PEXSISEN Assembly



Reflections:

Our Equity team continues to learn and grow along with our school. This year, we saw an increase in Indigenous identification among our families, along with new students to our community. This helped us reshape our thinking from last year where we looked at our Equity goals through a whole school lens to focus on the needs of our identified students. We ensured that all classes with students of Indigenous ancestry had first and repeated access to Elders, Role Models and other programming. When possible, we extended invitations to other classes to participate and engage in whole school activities to ensure all PEXSISEN students have access and exposure to Indigenous knowledge beyond that which happens in the classroom.

As a team we also learned the importance of reaching out to the staff to support our efforts. We had many plans in place that we couldn't fulfil with a team of 5 people. This has encouraged us to investigate other methods of bringing Indigenous activities to the whole school for the upcoming year. We also engaged our Equity budget to provide release time for teachers to consult with PVP and the Na'tsa'maht department staff for our Pathways Circle meetings to ensure we had the most accurate and up-to-date information for each student.



Looking ahead to next year:

With a rise in Indigenous ancestry at our school we are looking forward to an increase in our Na'tsa'maht Classroom Program Assistant Derrick's time in our school and what this means for the possibilities! We are also looking to our teachers to partner up and take on sharing knowledge of the Saanich moons at our monthly assemblies next year. Data from our 2024 Equity Survey will also drive our work.

This year has seen our students do a beautiful job of

the Traditional Territorial Acknowledgment twice weekly on our announcements and at assemblies and gatherings. We are keen to teach students how to create their own personal acknowledgements and continue our reconciliation journey.

We will also plan our 3rd Honouring Assembly for May 2025 with Elder Earl Claxton as our special guest. The focus of the assembly will be on the PEXSISEN moon.

RUTH KING ELEMENTARY



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: Building inclusivity for the school community. Weave First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous ways of Knowing into our practice and culture.

TEAM MEMBERS: Vicki Ives, Sarah Finnie, Angela Secord, and Trish McNabb

At Ruth King, we're committed to honoring Truth and Reconciliation by enacting systemic change in our practices. Our daily announcements respectfully acknowledge the land we learn on, recognizing its Indigenous heritage. During our monthly assemblies, we issue a Call to Action, and we unite in drumming the Hych'ka song, embracing Indigenous traditions and culture. Our dedication extends to our events and programs, as we feature Indigenous performers through ArtStarts and invite Indigenous presenters during Literacy Week. We actively participate in initiatives like Red Shirt Day with a symbolic walk and support the Moose Hide campaign. Through these actions, we strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment that celebrates Indigenous heritage and fosters understanding and respect for all.



This year, we've had some incredible highlights that further our commitment to honoring Indigenous culture and Truth and Reconciliation. Kookum Jo-Ina graced our school, bringing her trappers tent and enlightening lessons on Métis voyageurs, enriching our understanding of Indigenous history. Ren Louie, author of "Drum from the Heart," shared his powerful story with us, inspiring empathy and cultural appreciation among our students.



First row: Staff drumming at first assembly, students with Kookum Jo-Ina, medicine wheel carpet and trappers tent, students with Orange Shirt Day art installation for fence, drumming with Grandma Clifton,
Second row: Students reading Be a Good Ancestor during whole school ceremony, Red Dress Day walk down Goldstream Ave. Ms. Trish leading students in drumming.

In a hands-on workshop, all staff members participated in crafting drums. We also commissioned 40 classroom drums for ongoing use. At our spring music concert, we drummed guests into the event, and sang the Children's Blessing song, fostering a sense of community and connection. These experiences have been transformative, deepening our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and enriching our school community with the richness of Indigenous culture.

Next year, we will continue to weave Indigenous practices into all aspects of the school process. Ruth King is commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. By integrating Indigenous perspectives, traditions, and knowledge systems across curriculum, events, and daily routines, we can create a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment for all students. This ongoing dedication ensures that Indigenous voices and experiences are respected, celebrated, and upheld as integral parts of our school community.

Savory Elementary School



Focus – Belonging 1) Weave First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous ways of Knowing, Being and Doing into our practice and culture 2) Connecting to land and place through outdoor learning 3) Foster community connections and increase opportunities collaborative learning.
Team Members: J. Bureau, K. Chan, E. Denhoff, D. Duddridge, G. Orchard, E. Still, D. Titian, J. Cotton, L. Vogelaar, R. Hislop

We continue to focus on creating a strong sense of connection and belonging for our students with the three focus areas shared. Our goal is that all students have an understanding of and an appreciation for themselves, their learning, their community and their environment. We want each student to feel capable, connected and have a sense of contribution. When students have a strong sense of connection and belonging, they engage, take risks and thrive on their learning journeys.
 Data used to inform us included – a) Street Data such as narratives and stories, anecdotal/staff reflection etc. b) Artifacts such as student work/reflections/performances etc. c) Surveys – SD Equity, Ministry of Education Learning Survey, FSA, School Surveys d) Achievement Data – Literacy, Numeracy assessments/learning support plans/CBIEPs, Learning Updates (informal and formal) e) Pathway Data.



Connecting to Land & Place – Outdoor & Community Learning – Mill Creek & Savory “mountain”

Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing - Drumming/Community Connections – Red Dress Day Community Walk

Drumming with Role Models in music class and in school wide events has been central to our efforts Weaving First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing into our school culture, practice, and norms. Students have also learned the Coast Salish Anthem which we now begin whole school gatherings with. Learning about and practicing the Circle Process has also been a key this year. We are gathering the whole school in Circle; some classroom use circle as a class meeting and check ins (self, classroom community, peer relationships); and we have begun to use Circle as part of our restorative practice. Outdoor and community learning – learning about the land, local habitat, wildlife, and environmental stewardship is part of every child’s learning experience at Savory. Some of this learning takes place on our grounds and some on local natural areas such and Mill Hill and Mill Creek. This learning is led through collaboration with staff, Role Models and community partners. Another area of celebration and focus is the creation of our multi-age House Groups – each one named after a Coast Salish Animal. Students will belong to their House throughout their time at Savory. We gather in our Houses for a variety of learning experiences, as well as school community building and fun.



Collaborative Learning – House Groups (multi-age) – Raven House

Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing – whole school Circle

Next year, we will continue to focus on our primary goal and the three areas of focus articulated. Moving forward, we will be more intentional with the First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing – sharing our thinking/practice with our students, colleagues and parents. We also want to expand our understanding and practice of the Circle Process across our school, such that staff and students use this as part of their daily norms. We will continue to bring drumming into our places and spaces with more learning (staff and students) and resources (more drums) becoming less reliant on Role Models. Continued outdoor learning with a focus on native plants and environmental stewardship is part of our plan for 2024-2025. Leveraging our Houses as a way of learning together and further creating community, connection, and belonging will be central to our school year and practice.

WILLWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS:

- 1) Support the integration of FPPOL into instructional practices in classrooms and around the school.
- 2) Provide opportunities for students to experience culture and language.

TEAM MEMBERS:

Roberta Standley, Pooja Narang, Sharon Schwartz, Patti Christianson, Suyoun Kim, Adina McIndoe



Introduction...

Our Equity Team is committed to providing authentic learning opportunities for our students to see, hear and experience Indigenous culture and language.

Data used to inform goals/focus...

Equity in Action Survey
Conversations with Staff

Highlights...

We continued to dedicate the bulletin board in the front entrance to the Coast Salish Moons. Classes signed up to create a display sharing information about the moon each month.



April's Bulletin Board



May's Bulletin Board

We started sharing monthly moon pictures, information and links to further resources in our weekly staff memo for easy access for staff to share with their students.

This year we added daily sharing of the Territorial Acknowledgement to the announcements done by our Grade 4 and 5 students. This also expanded into having students share the Territorial Acknowledgement at our school assemblies.

The primary binder of SENĆOŦEN language and resources that was started last year was completed this year.

After experiencing our first opportunity with the Coast Salish Weave Art Collection this year, our team developed a series of lessons to go with the collection for next year so that all students, Kindergarten to Grade 5, can participate in several lessons to deepen their experience and understanding of Indigenous art and the shapes used to create it.

We have been very fortunate to have a variety of Role Models in our classes this year providing cultural learning opportunities for students. Some of the things they have been able to experience are storytelling, nature walks, Métis culture, dream catchers, Lahal, cedar weaving, drumming, and dancing.

A highlight this year was having Grandma Clifton visit our school on many occasions to provide a series of drumming, singing and dancing lessons to several of our classes. Students learned four songs with Grandma Clifton that they were able to sing by the end of their time together.



Reflections...

Our inspiration for developing the Coast Salish Weave Art Collection lesson series came directly from the positive experience, engagement and learning that happened through the drumming series of lessons that Grandma Clifton was able to provide our students. Watching the students' growth and accomplishments of what they were able to achieve over the course of a series of experiences on the same topic showed us the power and need to provide multiple opportunities like that as we continue to strengthen students' learning and understanding of Indigenous culture and language.

Our team is very excited about the ideas we discussed about how to continue this work next year.

Looking ahead to next year...

Goals:

1. To provide school-wide opportunities for students and staff to experience culture and language together.
 - a. Bring in a cultural performance
 - b. Put our Indigenous school logo on the side of the building
 - c. Expand the SENĆOŦEN language bulletin board with seasonal themes
 - d. Teach a series of lessons to go with the Coast Salish Weave Art Collection
 - e. Plan/organize cultural blessing ceremony of the new shed for students and staff to observe/participate in
 - f. Ask Elders if they would gift the outdoor learning space with an Indigenous name

2. To increase opportunities for outdoor place-based learning for all.
 - a. Install a shed by the garden to house outdoor garden and learning equipment
 - b. Revitalize the school garden
 - c. Develop outdoor learning space (long-term plan)
 - i. Covered spaces for all weather uses
 - ii. Whiteboard area for teaching
 - iii. Fire pit
 - iv. Consider installing a second shed to house outdoor learning equipment (ie: class sets of clip boards, magnifying glasses, identification cards, etc...)

École Royal Bay Secondary School



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: Three of the Four Indigenous Student Success Pillars: Learning Profile, Learning Environment & Pedagogical Core

TEAM MEMBERS: Ms. Bunjun, Ms. Doyle, Mr. Dubé, Ms. Lockhart, Ms. MacPherson, Mr. Stee, Ms. Lemmen & Ms. Wong

Focus 1:

Learning Profile - personalized and evidence-informed; timely support and responses; culture of reflective practice (Pathway to Graduation – Grandparents' Perspective Circle)

Example:

Equity team met in December to continue the work of the previous school year.

NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education (NIE) teachers led the team through all Grade 12 Indigenous students and their progress on the pathway to graduation.



Pathway *through* Graduation



CultureFest @ RBSS

Focus 2:

Learning Environment - high and motivating expectations for all; develops confident learners with a sense of belonging and identity; requires an awareness of implicit bias and privilege.

Example:

Equity team members were welcomed to participate in a personal Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) which introduces teachers and leaders to their implicit bias and privileges.

This inventory was supported by the Sooke International Student Program Department and facilitated by Ms. Wong, an IDI facilitator.

Focus 3:

Pedagogical Core - methods and practice of teaching are culturally relevant, includes Indigenous worldviews & perspectives, connects to family & communities.

Example:

Support of culturally relevant activities and events over the course of the school year:

- Gatherings and teachings in the Indigenous Garden
- Field trips and role model/elder-in-residence activities sponsored/supported by grants secured by the NIE team
- Connection to land and community through activities such as features in [Indigenous Youth Roots](#) and in-school raptor presentation in Ms. Lockhart's class



Featured: [Indigenous Youth Roots](#)

Dunsmuir Middle School



Goals: Equity in Action will review SBT student profiles for Indigenous students to inform specific strategies to serve Indigenous learners.



Student artists working on the Na'tsa'maht Mural for the front of Dunsmuir Middle School.

Members: Chelsea Richardson, Anastasia Wilson-Burke, Fabian Duque-Park, Chris Smythe, Conor Hart

The Equity in Action team at Dunsmuir has been busy this year diving into SBT data to look at specific strategies in supporting Indigenous students. The team also worked to support learning around important events such as MMIW Day and Orange Shirt Day. We reinforced a culture of belonging by promoting our Dunsmuir Drum Group, showcasing the Coast Salish Weave, creating a school mural celebrating our indigenous community and Sea Wolf logo, and hosting a multi grade Lahal tournament for Dunsmuir classes.

Data used to inform goals/focus.

Review of SBT notes for Indigenous students referred in 2023/2024 and following up on SBT recommendations.



*From April 3 to 12, all grades took part in activities associated with the Coast Salish Weave. Grade 7 students created their own Coast Salish-inspired artwork based on one of Dunsmuir's new school values: **Create Belonging***



Our Dunsmuir Drum Group poses in front of the Red Shirts created by our grade 6 classes, and the faceless dolls created by the grade 7s and 8s.

Highlights / Stories / Quotes

-Teachers and students were able to form powerful connections through SBT. One student was connected with Ms. Wilson-Burke, who has supported the student in becoming a leader in our SOGI community.

-The entire staff and student body participated in a silent walk of solidarity on Orange Shirt Day.

-All grades took part in the Coast Salish Weave artwork that was presented in the Learning Commons by Mr. Duque-Park.

- All grade 6 classes created red paper dresses with meaningful words reflecting their learning for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Day.

-All grade 7 and 8 classes created faceless dolls adorned with thoughtfully decorated red dresses. All students participated in a silent reflective walk through the exhibit while the Dunsmuir drum group played songs led by Brother Rick.

-On May 23rd, 6 Classes created 12 teams that competed in the first ever Dunsmuir Lahal Tournament.

Reflections

Through the deep dive of SBT notes, members of the Equity team identified possible connections between Indigenous students brought to SBT and caring adults in the building. This resulted in students being connected to more adults, programs, clubs, and teams. A recommendation that the team noted is that having a regular review of Action Items from SBT would help support **ALL** students, including our Indigenous students. Building scheduled action item review dates into SBT could help keep past student referrals from being lost in the shuffle and continue to maintain the support networks established through SBT after the meeting ends. These meetings could review what action items have been followed up with, what strategies have been successful and where more support could be implemented.



On May 1st Dunsmuir students pinned their commemorative craft in the gallery, Gr. 6 made red dresses, while grade 7 and 8 students made faceless dolls. This activity was in honor of MMIW Day on May 5th.

Looking ahead to next year....



Students participating in the school Lahal tournament on May 23.

The 2023 Equity in Action team members from Dunsmuir gained insight regarding the systems in place for keeping track of Indigenous learners, specifically by considering the function of School Based Team meetings. Looking ahead to next year the team will continue to build on the knowledge gained about SBT and how these systems of support create conditions of success for all Indigenous students.

ÉCOLE JOHN STUBBS MEMORIAL SCHOOL



EQUITY 2023-2024 GOALS/FOCUS: The group focus was on strengthening a sense of belonging and community with students, families and community, and the exploration of identity.

Members of committee: Nicole Underwood, Jessica Narsing, Cam Gray, Renée Matta, Kookum Jo-Ina, Candace Donnelly, Chelsea Richardson, Katrina Abell



Role model Glenn M. Grande's drumming workshop with grade 7 class

We are a K – 8 school with many entry points of engagement with our students and staff. Last year the committee was committed to creating excitement and connection throughout the school, and wanted to start this year with momentum to continue to foster an appreciation for what is around us and provide opportunities for connection and inclusion



Flower display accompanying a lesson on the camas plant

for our students and their families and provide representation of culture in our school and all classrooms.

Brother Rick teaching grade 6 class how to play Lahal and drumming

Goals and focus were set through conversations and observations from staff and students and data collected from the equity in action learning environment student survey from 2023.



Kookum Jo-Ina showing grade 8 students some beading techniques



Grade 8 student leaders help prepare for the Orange Shirt mosaic project

There were many activities and elder/role model visits to classes this year which focused on the land, art, sharing of stories and learning new skills like drumming, Lahal, beading and weaving.

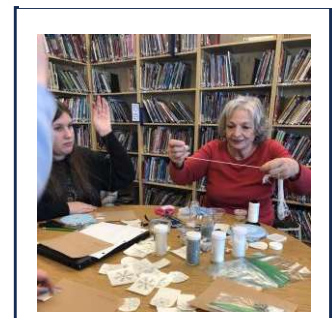
The committee had goals which included:

- Personalizing territorial acknowledgement
- Review of Na'tsa'maht Agreement
- Explore the Salish Weaves
- Orange Shirt whole school project
- Rework the Learning Profile Rubric for staff to become checklist which would be revisited throughout the school year

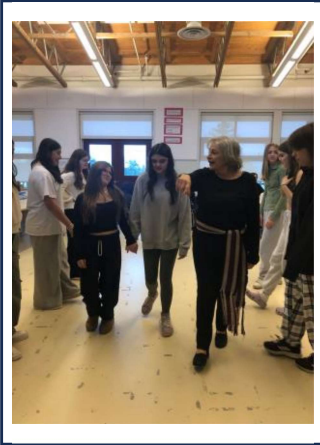
Kookum Jo-Ina was a treasure to have in the school each Tuesday. She visited classes to teach about the Metis culture (one of the favourites was jigging) and ran activities for students to try hands-on activities, such as beading.



Grade 6 classes learning how to weave



In reflection of the year, efforts were focused on trying to give opportunities for staff and students to focus on foundational components moving towards a whole school movement of truth and reconciliation and to make work personal and authentic.



Kookum Jo-Ina teaching grade 7s to jig

And looking ahead to next year, we will...

Continue efforts to have personal growth and authentic work towards truth and reconciliation in our community which will result in furthering our students' connection to John Stubbs, increase their sense of belonging and increase the capacity to see themselves represented in our community of learners.

Involve truth and reconciliation activities in our planning day and creation of a unifying year-long plan with singular vision/focus for next year.

Use of learning profile to maintain consistent growth in our students.

Promote and encourage school community to complete the equity scan to guide goals and next steps.



"Chaque enfant compte"



Completed Orange Shirt project "Chaque enfant compte" where every student contributed a hand to the mosaic



Making pouches with elementary class



Drumming with Role Model Ren Louie

- Goals:**
1. Promote, celebrate, learn Indigenous culture as well as other cultures in our school.
 2. For our students to come to school and see themselves and their families represented in our school community
 3. Support and equip outdoor education

Team: Shawn Taal, Becky Clark, Shannon Mills, Eva Martin, Simone Harding, Ashlee Reitmeier

Data to Inform Goals/Focus

- Looked at the equity survey result from last year
- Collected anecdotal data based on stories from students and families
- Looked at school population and cultures represented in our classrooms
- Reviewed initiatives from the previous year and their lasting impact



Legacy project of school drums made during the 2022/2023 school year.



Ren Louie, RCMP and Mrs. Clark connecting with grade 5s in the 1st annual Colwood Lahal tournament.

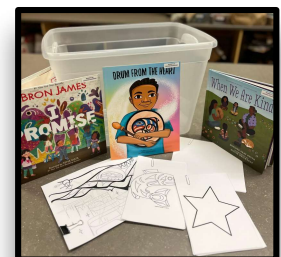


Highlights

- First (annual) Lahal tournament was a success and positive afternoon for staff, students and some guests
- Elder Earl Claxton Jr. in to support some primary classes in garden learning, focused on the growth of the Indigenous plant garden
- Ren Louie, local Belmont graduate and author, sharing learning and his new books, twice this year with classes
- Increased collaboration with multiple staff to expand garden learning into more classrooms
- New logo/mascot collaboration and vision has begun. Artist has done first drafts. Continuing into next year.

Look ahead to next year

- Fostering the community of Family Grouping (a past initiative that hasn't been utilized in a unique way)
- Creating bins to teach the Saanich Moons and connect the learning to monthly school activities (holidays, traditions, seasonal fun)
- Continuing to grow the Lahal tournament (to include other schools)



10 new learning buckets for our family groups.



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS

TEAM MEMBERS: Donna Sagodi, Bronwyn Bright, Tanya Constable, Caitlyn Elvedahl, Laura Sherwood, Ukiah Cancela, Laura Rojas Barbero



Role Model Doreen Scow drumming with a grade five class in the nature playground

Originally, we chose an esoteric goal regarding Truth and Reconciliation; however, with consideration of a more holistic approach to the First Peoples Principles of Learning, conversations with new staff and students, our goal was adapted. This led us to an opportunity to bring us together as a whole school community through music by bringing in Indigenous role models to our school with a focus on drumming. Our District Na'tsa'maht classroom program assistant visited weekly, for cultural sharing. Teachings included the moons, medicine wheel, beading, and Indigenous art. Our teacher librarian also taught the Coast Salish Moons with all our classes.

Four Indigenous role models shared drumming and singing with most students in the school. In the fall we had Doreen Scow, in the Winter Ren Louie, in early spring Glen Grande, and in May Marlene Clifford. We were able to do this with the support of the Na'tsa'maht Department, with role model money, and using money provided by the PAC for cultural activities. This provided equitable opportunity to every student. The connection and engagement with our complex students were beautiful as many were regulated through the experience.

Our secondary goal this year was to indigenize our school garden. This took us on an interesting path. Using funds from a Social Justice Grant we had purchased plants for the garden. However, due to the presence of Poison Hemlock the garden and soil were removed. However, we were able to have the district horticulturist work with us to harvest and plant some local plants, which ended up being an amazing learning opportunity. We were also gifted some plants from the school at Port Renfrew. The garden continues to be a work in progress and a learning opportunity.



School Garden with Indigenous plants reclaimed from the school lands and gifted from Port Renfrew Elementary

Data: Equity scan survey with a sample of students at our school. Qualitative data collected through discussion. Information from the Pathway Circles.



Indigenous Role Model Glen Grande sharing the Thunderbird drum with a kindergarten class

REFLECTIONS.....We need to make concrete goals so they are achievable, consider staff change, and think in a more child centred manner.

Looking Ahead to Next Year....

Introduce Lahal game, DEI lesson kits (diversity, education, inclusion), incorporate multi language/greetings into our school, consider having classes/students write their own territorial acknowledgement and announce at the end of day (make a specific connection to daily/weekly learning/experience).



EQUITY GOAL:

To engage all members of our school community in developing a sense of belonging through shared learning about identity, culture, environment and place.

TEAM MEMBERS: Kim Boesche, Jayne Struch, Tricia Cooper, Rae Koot, Joanne Dubé, Karen Sjerven

DATA USED TO INFORM GOALS / FOCUS

Equity in action survey results, Equity Team discussions, student voice and response to activities, staff feedback in staff meetings, parent and community engagement and support.

INTRODUCTION:

Our learning journey this year has focused on connecting with community and the land. We are fortunate to learn on the traditional lands of the SC'IANEW Nation, specifically Beecher Bay. We value our partnership with the nation and rely on their knowledge and guidance. We welcome multiple perspectives and have aligned with Wild Schools HCTF to focus on the environment. Students and staff will foster stewardship while building environmental empathy and climate resilience. The learning weaves Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Being in our daily practice at school, " Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility".



Throughout the year we have focused on opportunities on land learning within and around the community.

We are thankful to learn traditional knowledge from Role Models:

- Ren Louie - sharing his story and leading us in drumming.
- Teddy Anderson - whole school Hoop Dance performance and teaching us to learn we all belong and are connected.
- Kookum Jo-ina - celebrating Métis culture and traditional living with the land.
- Coast Salish Weave Blue Collection – observing and appreciating Coast Salish Artists and their work. Students were inspired to learn traditional stories and create their own artworks.



On Site Learning included:

- Weekly lessons in our school learning forest for all students
- Shared class participation in territorial acknowledgement and daily announcements
- Literature focused on representing different views and cultures
- Monthly Assemblies led by students to celebrate and learn about the Coast Salish Moons
- Forest Committee with students k-5
- Wild Schools Partnership including weaving traditional knowledge with environmental learning
- Daily opportunities to experience gardening in the courtyard and urban indoor garden



Off-site learning included:

- Classes visiting Beecher Bay Oceans Research and experiencing environmental impacts to ocean life. The learning was led by staff and community members at Beecher Bay.
- Spending the day at Metchosin Farm with Fiona and Dan learning to celebrate seeds and indigenous plants
- Local visits to Devonian Park, Witty's Lagoon, Goldstream Park and RBC Museum, and Metchosin Museum to appreciate and learn from our community



Next Steps

Next year we are continuing to welcome our community to our school events and strengthen our partnerships. We will be in year two as a Wild School and will build on our environmental learning across the grades. We are in consultation with Beecher Bay to develop and publish signage and language that is inclusive of SC'IANEW Nation.



Sangster Elementary

EQUITY GOAL – To create a learning environment in which all children feel welcomed and valued in our school and their classrooms, and to continue to create a strong sense of belonging with a focus on connecting to our place and our local Indigenous Communities.

TEAM MEMBERS – Camille McFarlane, Georgette Walker, Rosalind Wilkinson, Lisa Lockerbie, Angela Scandale, Michelle Moore, Catrina Snook, Deanna Stidston

DATA USED TO INFORM GOALS / FOCUS

Equity Survey; Student, Family, and Staff Feedback, Indigenous Pathways



Our school mural represents our strong connections to our sense of place.

This year we continued our goal of creating belonging and connecting to place. As a team and school staff, we have identified ways in which we can decolonize our school spaces and educational practices. One was the development of a new logo, and another was to create a mural at our front entrance. In December, we unveiled the mural in which all students participated. This mural was inspired by the work the students did in developing a new logo and sharing their sense of place. We worked on the development of our school logo, and we hope to finalize it by the end of this school year. We celebrated the mural unveiling by inviting Brother Rick and Elder Henry in for our assembly and to lead us in a drumming circle.

This year we spent time examining our Lellum and through this process we recognized that we had a high percentage of Métis students. We also reflected that in the past we usually had only one visit by a Métis role model or Elder. This year, we invited multiple Métis Role Models and Elders in, to purposefully connect our Métis students to their culture and to their place of learning at Sangster. We also held a staff gathering to recognize National Day of Reconciliation and our NCPA, Rosalind, led us in an Orange Shirt Beading activity. We continued to use our Place-Based Core Competency posters to share Indigenous teachings, SENĆOTEN and learn about the competencies.



Drumming Circle with Brother Rick and Elder Henry for the mural unveiling

Camas

SENĆOTEN Name:
KŁO,EL

Scientific Name:
Camassia

Indigenous uses: The starchy bulbs were cooked in earth ovens for many hours, eaten like potatoes or pounded into flour

Interesting Facts: Individual plants may live to be 15 - 20 years old.



Grade 4/5 Releasing Salmon

This year we continued to support our classes in connecting with the land through place-based learning. Role models led nature walks, and then teachers continued the teaching and learning in the forest. One class participated in the Salmon project and released 99 fry of a possible 100 at Goldstream! Another class developed the Indigenous Plant Garden, revitalizing this garden, researching and choosing plants, taking care of them and then creating individual plant sign that we placed in the garden and also linked on our webpage. Next year we would like to continued and expand our place-based learning as a whole school.

WISHART SCHOOL



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: Language learning
TEAM MEMBERS : Kristi Bryant (STA)
Erin Butte (STA)
Ruchi McArthur (Admin)

We built upon our success from last year incorporating the Territory Acknowledgement into our classroom startup where students created personal, meaningful class acknowledgements. These are shared throughout the year in class, at events and on the announcements. Students engaged in meaningful work with NA'TSA'MAHT staff and created Indigenous-inspired art to support their learning.



Territory Acknowledgement created by students

Coast Salish Inspired Art

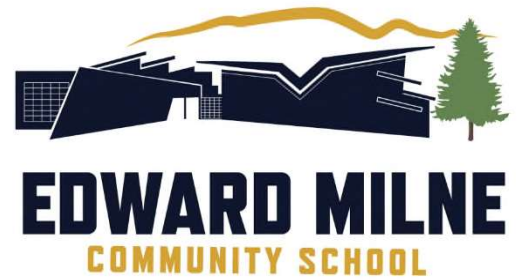
Our focus this year was on oral storytelling and learning SENĆOŦEN words. Students enjoyed visits from role models and engaged in learning language from Elder Shirley's videos. SENĆOŦEN words are used during whole school announcements. Posters were created to help students learn animal names and numbers.



LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

We feel very proud of our new garden and the meaningful learning will take place going forward. The garden includes an extensive collection of Indigenous plants, connecting student learning with the land. We have reached out to the Indigenous Education Department to support us in next steps for Indigenizing our STKAYE (wolf) logo.

Edward Milne Community School 2023-2024



At Edward Milne Community School, our staff strive for equity in action, towards Truth and Reconciliation. In our eyes, equity in action can take on various forms and themes, all with our students at the forefront. With the close connection (emotionally and proximity) to the Nations around our community, equity in action isn't just about unique events, but is a part of who we are as a school culture. That being said, this year saw new aspects and initiatives within our school, as well as the continuation of important relationships and events.

At the beginning of the school year, some teachers brainstormed the idea of creating walking maps of our community, each a different distance, and each with different landmarks/ conversation points for the teacher to stop and discuss with their class. The idea behind this project was to have prescribed walking "tours" that teachers didn't have to plan, organize, and/or map out, and each one was inscribed with educational significance. As the maps were being developed, there was a recognition that, due to Sooke's close relationship and history with our local nations, adding indigenous history and culture of the area would add a beautiful component to each walk. This project is not "complete," nor will it ever be, as new maps are continuously being planned and built in an ongoing acknowledgement towards Truth and Reconciliation, and honouring the culture and history of our area.



The Salish Weave Collection workshops have always been an integral aspect of Edward Milne's equity focus, and it was again this year. In February, we hosted the Salish Weave Collection for 7 school days, which was visited by most of the students, in many different classes. Our school's staff recognizes the importance of such events, and ensures that our students have the opportunity to visit this amazing collection of artwork.



At EMCS, we have organized a "Winter Wellness Week," which is a week (plus a few more days), wherein numerous activities, events, and speakers grace our halls and classrooms, all with the aim to bring an awareness to various cultural aspects. The week has always been a huge success. This year's team decided

to change directions slightly, as we always battle uncertain weather conditions in the winter, impacting any outdoor cook-outs and other such activities, and shifting where we host such activities. With this in mind, the Equity In Action Team decided to organize a Spring Wellness Month, ensuring that we can utilize more outdoor spaces, including our outdoor classroom and firepit.



Over the month of May, our students witnessed and engaged in powwow dancing with role model Maddie McClellan, the always-popular La’hal games with Brother Rick, numerous walking field trips (as described earlier), cedar rose making with Elder Jackie DeYaeger and Janine Bradley, and a language presentation by Janine Bradley. The month was capped off by a full-day Bannock roast at our outdoor fire pit, along with smoked salmon and other foods. Elder Jackie DeYaeger brought the inaugural event to a close with a Thank You prayer. Overall,

the month was a huge success on every level, and the staff and students were buzzing about the numerous events for days afterwards.

Moving forward, our Equity In Action team has big plans, all with a mind towards Truth and Reconciliation. We will continue to develop our walking tours, as well as hosting the Salish Weave Collection. With the success of the Spring Wellness Month, we will plan for this again next spring, while adding new and exiting offerings for the school community. We are also planning on bringing back our language “lessons,” where a new indigenous word or phrase is introduced to our students every couple of weeks. The word or phrase is posted up in classrooms for the staff and students to keep coming back to. This initiative was started two years ago, and we are hoping to gather the momentum back.

The staff and students at Edward Milne Community School continue to foster an inclusive, equitable, and engaging community, while learning about indigenous culture and ways of knowing in a meaningful, and often hands-on way.

Prepared by Todd Powell, Vice Principal

Journey Middle School

Journey Middle School has 568 students. This school is built on the traditional territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation. We have students that also travel from our partner Nations, the Nuuchahnulth Pacheedaht Nation to the West. Our school is nestled alongside the forest, by DeMamiel creek, and Stickleback pond. Students, and teachers alike, treasure opportunities in these outdoor spaces to connect with our surrounding lands. These opportunities create a safe space for diverse learners to meet, share, and learn together.



Our year was filled with enriching cultural and educational experiences, fostering deep connections with Indigenous knowledge and traditions. Elder Janet Hansen from the T'Sou-ke Nation visited weekly, sharing the historical and personal significance of tribal journeys through her Tribal Journeys Pilot program. Students expressed their learning by creating cedar paddles adorned with Coast Salish artwork. The Grade 7 Diversity Celebration, coordinated with the Na-tsa-maht Department, featured various cultural activities including Lahal, Salmon Staking, Beading, Hide Stretching, and Pemmican making with Kookum Jo-Ina. Goldstream Provincial Park provided a setting for land-based learning, focusing on the salmon life cycle, Indigenous plant knowledge, and traditional practices such as drumming and bannock making. Kookum Jo-Ina also imparted Métis history, emphasizing the Red River's importance and guiding students in creating a Métis dot painting mural for the school foyer. Additional activities throughout the year included beading, foraging for traditional teas, various art forms, plant identification, and ceremonies like the Red Dress and Orange Shirt Day, all contributing to a profound appreciation and understanding of Indigenous cultures.



Our goals for next year focus on deepening our connection to the land through gardening, the arts, and language. We plan to revitalize our school gardens with Native plants and increase Elder Janet's presence in our community. Efforts will include reviving the welcome mural at the school entrance, boosting staff participation on the equity committee, and enhancing teacher involvement in learning opportunities. We aim to integrate Indigenous languages into our school community, expand our collection of Indigenous novels and books, and create a safe space for teachers to share Indigenous content and pedagogies. Additionally, we will hold space for days of Indigenous significance.



Equity in Action at École Poirier Elementary School

Located on the traditional territories of the T'Sou-ke Nation, our school is situated beside Little River, a creek that flows into the Spring Salmon Place, the Sooke River.



Della Rice sharing her knowledge of ethnobotany.

The school's Equity Team leaders included: Caitlin Adsett, Grania Bridal, Erika Pyper, Nicole Underwood, and Tess Vally.

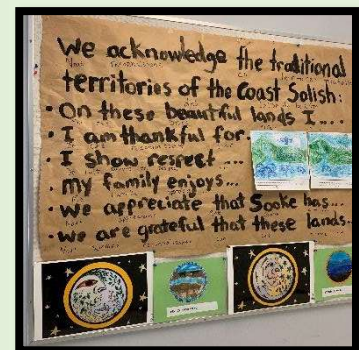
École Poirier's goals for this year were:

- to learn from Indigenous role models.
- to connect with the nature around us.
- to develop a stronger sense of place.
- to indigenize our systems and ways.
- to gather as a whole school to learn about the Coast Salish moons, the seasons, to celebrate Indigenous people and to acknowledge important truths.



How we grew this year:

- we learned about the moons, ethnobotany, drumming, Salish art, Métis culture, and indigenized math.
- we learned about native plants by planting them in the school garden and identifying them in the forests around us.
- students widened their palette and sampled teas that were locally harvested.
- our intermediate students wrote a song about our mascot, SPÁ,EF, the Black Bear.



- students developed their own territorial acknowledgements in French and English which were presented through our recorded daily announcements.
- the Coast Salish Anthem was played for the whole school on alternating Mondays and for key assemblies like Music Monday.
- we had gatherings for Truth and Reconciliation Day, Winter Solstice, Elderbeary Day, Bear Witness Day, and we are looking forward to a Summer Solstice gathering.
- our music teacher and her students drum in circle for our gatherings.
- our neighbourhoods reflect our surroundings.



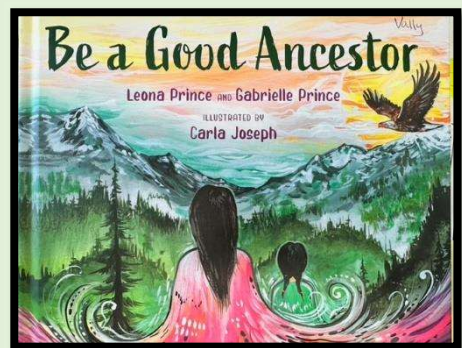
Drumming in circle with Mme Arts



Learning about Métis culture with Jo Ina.



Recognizing where we are and connecting to place by changing our neighbourhood names.



Connecting with deeper concepts through Indigenous literature.



Our future goal:

As a staff, we would like to revisit and reflect on the First Peoples Principles of Learning. This will ground our practice, guide our shared learning, and direct the next steps in our path toward truth and reconciliation.

ROAR----* **R** Real friends... ***O**pen hearts and minds... ***A**spire to be our best... ***R**ealize passions

At John Muir Elementary, our team has been working towards reconciliation through the incorporation and celebration of Indigenous cultures, specifically Métis and Coast Salish. We have focused on art and connection through the teachings of Indigenous cultures, role models, and elders in our community.



This past year began with a whole school assembly for National Truth and Reconciliation Day on

September 29. Throughout the year classrooms were engaged in activities that promoted the celebration of the culture and resiliency of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people.



Some of the activities that students have participated in this year were beadwork, dream catcher making, drumming and weaving.

Some of the Elders and Role Models that visited our school were:

- Doreen - drumming
- Bertha and Joe - Métis Elders on the history of the Métis and cultural teachings
- R e n L o u i e - D r u m m i n g
- Kokum Jo-Ina - Metis teaching and animal hides

ROAR----* **R** Real friends... ***O**pen hearts and minds... ***A**spire to be our best... ***R**ealize passions



Our students were lucky enough to experience being in a teepee and feeling animal hides thanks to visits from elders. This hands-on learning and celebration of culture and history has proven to provide a much deeper level of learning, respect, and engagement.

In addition to ongoing classroom activities and lessons, the whole school has benefited from morning SENĆOŦEN language announcements led by students.



These lessons focused on counting numbers and local animals. These animals were then used as a colouring sheet focus for the Indigenous Peoples Day assembly. On this day students participated in a celebration of culture and learning. Using what they had learned in the past school year they participated in a whole school assembly with singing, drumming, practicing the language they had learned and learning about the importance of Indigenous cultures and what the day is about.

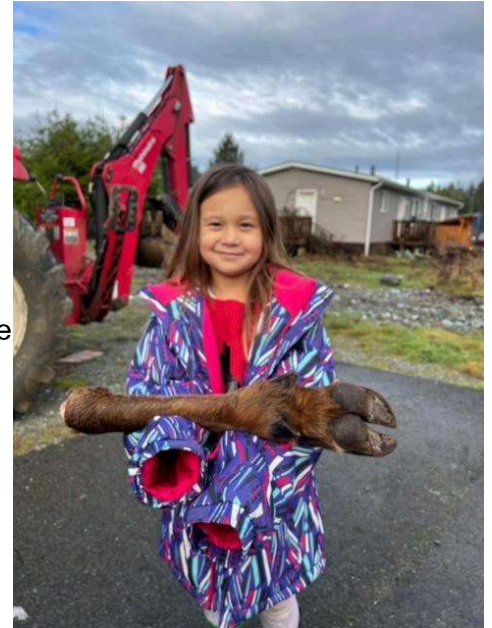
Over 70% of the students surveyed from the NA'TSA'MAHT program at the school have noticed the daily SENĆOŦEN announcements and words that students have been teaching in the mornings. Of these students, 60% can remember visits from elders and role models in their classes throughout the year at times.

At Port Renfrew Elementary, our team has been working towards reconciliation through the incorporation and celebration of Indigenous cultures, specifically Pacheedaht and Coast Salish. We have focused on art and connection through the teachings of Indigenous cultures, role models, and elders in our community. Much of the learning involves hands-on activities and learning by doing.

Salmon are the staple of Nuu-chah-nulth life and it was fitting that the school went on a tour of the Salmon Hatchery. They observed the entire process of taking salmon eggs and raising them to young fish before releasing them in the nearby river.

In the classroom, students are learning how to say words and phrases in Ditidaht. They are taught by Mr. Dunn-Jones.

Elder Della Rice spent the day with the students teaching them about Indigenous plants and edible forest snacks. She also showed the students about how to use wild plants as medicine and salve from traditional local native plants.



The school moved Pacheedaht Nation's cupuc (red cedar canoe) to the school and put it in the carving shelter. The students were taught how to do sanding, painting and repairing cracks so that the cupuc was ready for the water. Traditionally, the cupuc was used for transport on waterways, to engage in trade and barter.

The school went with elders to a sacred cedar to learn about bark stripping. They harvested enough cedar bark to make cedar roses, and to dry for future use. Perhaps next year they will make clothes out of cedar bark?

Ren Louie taught the students about drumming, singing and storytelling.

When one of the teachers, Mr. Dunn-Jones shot an elk, the entire school participated in skinning and sectioning, butchering and degutting. The meat was quartered and shared with the community.

Each student made feathers and paddles – carved from yellow cedar and then painted, to be used for cultural dances in the future.

Teoni Spathelfer, author of *Abalone Woman*, visited and worked with the children for the day.

Interestingly, 100% of the students surveyed at the school can remember that they have been taught Ditidaht language in the mornings and 100% can remember visits from elders and role models in their classes throughout the year at times.



SASEENOS ELEMENTARY



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS

TEAM – Carolyn Lalonde, Elaine Haddad, Hailey Ridley, Cam Meiklejohn

Saseenos Elementary is a school of approximately 200 students and 35 staff members. We are situated on the traditional, unceded territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation. We work closely with the nation to promote inclusion, equity, and growth in everything we do! We try to weave traditional Indigenous knowledge and learning regularly and cross-curricularly.



ABOVE: Finger Weaving / Land-Based Biology
LOW: Kindergarten Land Based Learning/ Métis learning with Kookum Jo-Ina

ABOVE: Traditional Métis Medicine Bag / Animal Pelts
BELOW: Inuit Soap Carving / Staff gather for Pro-D

This year our focus primarily centered around maintaining current equitable programs and initiatives and adding in additional supports where needed. With several new staff we tried to encourage the inclusion of the Indigenous Principles of Knowing into staff and student enrichment and learning opportunities. Our whole school focuses on land based learning opportunities and connecting to the First Peoples Principles of Learning (POL).

Our major event that our team focused on this year was an Indigenous Education Staff gathering for Professional Development. We used our equity TOC release time to offer staff an afternoon to get inspired to include Indigenous Education in their everyday teaching. We did this by offering a viewing of the NIE Resource Bins, offered different of resources to go through and share, and an opportunity to collaborate with other staff members to incorporate POL's in their classes.

To enrich curriculum classes had visits from Elder Jackie, Bertha and Joe Landry, Kookum Jo-Ina, Teoni Spathelfer and Doreen Scow.



Next year we are going to continue with teacher led initiatives, including offering staff collaboration time to focus on the Coast Salish 13 Moons (W̱SÁNEĆ) throughout the school. We will continue our focus on land based learning as a school. Lastly, we will continue to book Role Models that enrich classroom curriculum.

Sooke Elementary



EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS: To continue to build understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and ways of knowing & being for the purpose of creating safe, welcoming, inclusive learning environments. Promote a culture of belonging

TEAM MEMBERS: Lisa Stuart, Marion Stupich, Alee Labbey-Kracji, Lisa Maria Schlosser, Liz Stannard, Michelle Nahanee, Krista Leakey

The staff at Sooke Elementary have seamlessly integrated and emphasized Coast Salish content into all aspects of our school. This is evident in the SENĆOŦEN signage around our school as well as simple greetings in SENĆOŦEN, role model and elder visits, and our school's commitment to nature-based learning opportunities.



Under the Cedar Garden Before Re-Wilding



Under the Cedar Garden After Re-wilding

This year we unveiled our Camas Meadow, which was a continuation of the Under the Cedar re-wilding project. The purpose of the Under the Cedar Garden was to have natural wilderness near the school so that their youngest students could easily engage in nature-based learning. The Camas Meadow is an extension of an accessible nature learning space.



The Story of our Camas Meadow



Camas Meadow April 2024

Sooke Elementary's Seasonal Round is an ongoing project which allows students to connect their own understanding of the land and environment with the teachings of TŦE SĆELÁNEŦ ET ŦSÁNEĆ lunar calendar.



Sooke Elementary's Seasonal Round

Sooke Elementary

Brother Rick came to Sooke Elementary to help us practice the Coast Salish Anthem. We now include the anthem in all our school-wide assemblies.



Brother Rick leading students in the Coast Salish Anthem



Tea Counter

We have a class that delivers traditional teas to classes on a weekly basis.



Division 2's weekly traditional tea deliver.

Coast Salish words and artwork adorn our school.



Artwork commissioned by our role model, Jamin Zurowski.



We will continue to promote the integration of Indigenous content into the culture of our school. Our current staff is committed to the Indigenous ways of knowing & will collaborate with new staff member to ensure everyone feels supported. New initiatives discussed by our Equity Team for the 2024-25 school year include collecting/harvesting natural products (i.e., deep fry maple buds, dandelion biscuits, nettle tea), & reading moon cycles on our announcements.