



Student Voice Engagement Plan 2026-27

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With gratitude and respect, we acknowledge that we live, learn, and work on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish: T'Sou-ke Nation, SĆÍŖNEW (Beecher Bay) Nation, and the Nuu-chah-nulth: Paaʔčiidʔath (Pacheedaht) Nation. We also recognize that some of our schools are located on the traditional territories of the MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nation, and the Łə́kʷəŋən peoples of Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sooke School District is pleased to present its Student Voice Engagement Plan, which identifies goals and strategies to support student participation in the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan. This plan provides an annual perspective on our student voice engagement, including planned actions and systems for monitoring progress over the next three years (2026-2029).

This plan is founded in a comprehensive district scan during 2025 and informed in an ongoing manner through a series of annual student engagements. These engagements provide opportunity to directly elevate student voice, identify areas for consideration in future strategy, and provide important feedback on student experience of belonging and connection.

This plan has identified three key goals to address feedback from the engagement process:

1. Improve student perception of being known, connected, and valued
2. Engage student participation in school decision-making
3. Use student feedback to inform school growth planning

This plan reflects our commitment to engage students in meaningful and authentic dialogue about their experiences in the Sooke School District and to honour their voices in our annual planning cycles. It is grounded in the priorities set out in our Strategic Plan and guided by a long-term vision for student success.

To learn more about the Sooke School District—including information on the Board of Education, our Strategic Plan, and the traditional territories on which we live, learn, and work—please visit www.sd62.bc.ca.



VISION STATEMENT

This plan emphasizes that student voice is central to shaping inclusive, innovative, and empowering learning environments in School District 62 (Sooke). It aims to foster meaningful dialogue and ensure students feel heard, respected, and involved in decision-making.

PURPOSE

To create a school and district culture where every student feels heard, valued, and empowered to contribute to decisions that affect their learning and well-being.

KEY THEMES

(THESE REFLECT DIRECT STUDENT FEEDBACK FROM ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS IN 2025-26)

- **Belonging & Relationships** - Many students identify relationships with adults as critical in developing a sense of being known, connected, and valued.
- **Agency and Choice** - students emphasize wanting learning that is engaging, relevant, and responsive to their needs.
- **Authentic Inclusion** - students expressed strong support for learning about diverse cultures and were clear that current approaches can feel superficial.

GOAL 1: IMPROVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF BEING KNOWN, CONNECTED, AND VALUED.

Staff will:

- **Build authentic relationships** by using inclusive language, active listening, and intentionally creating opportunities for every student to be known, valued, and connected.
- **Act on student voice** by seeking feedback regularly, communicating what was heard, and sharing the actions taken in response to student input.
- **Embed culturally responsive learning throughout the year** by celebrating diverse identities, perspectives, and experiences through meaningful, ongoing, and authentic learning opportunities.
- **Foster safe spaces for dialogue and expression** by modelling respectful conversation, encouraging diverse viewpoints, and ensuring students feel comfortable sharing their ideas, experiences, and aspirations.

Students will:

- **Share their voice** and perspectives to help improve their school experience.
- **Foster belonging** by building positive relationships and supporting others.
- **Engage respectfully** with diverse perspectives and experiences.
- **Participate in learning** and activities that celebrate culture, identity, and inclusion.
- **Contribute to school communities** where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and connected.
- **Use their voice** and leadership to create positive change.



GOAL 2: ENGAGE STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL DECISION MAKING

Staff will:

- **Invite student representatives** to participate in school leadership and planning meetings.
- Create regular opportunities for **students to co-lead** initiatives (e.g., assemblies, clubs, events).
- Provide **guidance and mentorship** to support students in leadership roles.
- **Explain decision-making** timelines and processes with students in accessible formats.

Students will:

- **Participate in school structures** and provide input on key decisions.
- **Lead or co-lead projects** that impact school culture or operations.
- **Communicate peer perspectives** to staff through structured forums or councils.
- **Collaborate with staff** to co-create solutions to school-wide challenges.





GOAL 3: USE STUDENT FEEDBACK TO INFORM SCHOOL GROWTH PLANNING

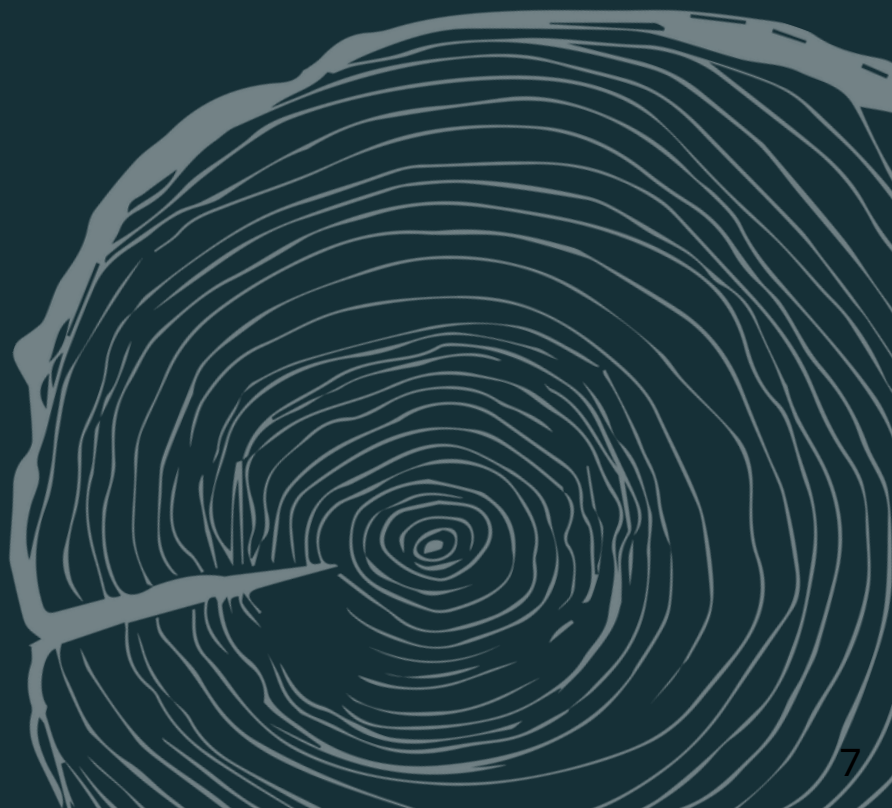
Staff will:

- **Collect student feedback** regularly through surveys, interviews, and classroom discussions.
- **Analyze student input** alongside academic and behavioral data to inform planning.
- **Include student voice** data in school growth plans and professional learning agendas.
- **Report back to students** on how their feedback shaped decisions and next steps.

Students will:

- **Provide honest and constructive feedback** about their learning and school experience.
- **Participate in feedback sessions** to review and interpret school data.
- **Co-develop action plans** with staff based on shared priorities.
- **Review progress on initiatives** they helped shape and suggest adjustments as needed.

APPENDIX



2025-26 STUDENT VOICE ENGAGEMENT SYSTEM LEARNING

Events/Structures

- Introduction of 2025-26 Student Voice Engagement Plan
- Student-Trustee Forum
- Middle School Youth Engagement Project
- Middle School Wellness Market
- Secondary School Student Equity Retreat
- School Growth Plan Templates
- Education Policy Committee - Student Voice presentations



“You know you belong when adults talk to you as if you matter” (Belmont Student)

Enhancing Student Learning report Data Insights

Provincial Data

- All students reporting they feel welcome increased from 70% to 75% over five years
- All students reporting a sense of belonging increased from 49% to 62% over five years
- Indigenous students reporting a sense of belonging increased from 45% to 57%
- Students with special needs reporting a sense of belonging increased from 39% to 52%

Local Data

- 84% of students report feeling welcome at school
- 92% of students report feeling safe at school
- 78% of students report a sense of belonging at school
- 88% of students report adults care about them at school



“Having someone who wants you to be there and believes in you....” (Student equity retreat)

Summary

The Enhancing Student Learning Report evidence suggests that students are increasingly experiencing schools as places where they feel welcome, safe, connected, and cared for. Improvements in belonging, relationships with adults, and Indigenous student outcomes provide a strong foundation for deepening student voice. While current data demonstrate growing student engagement and connectedness, additional measures are needed to understand the extent to which students participate in decision-making and see their feedback reflected in school improvement efforts.

Direct Student Voice

Direct student feedback was collected through the series of engagements described above and summarized below.

- Goal 1 - Feedback indicates students want a greater role in shaping: learning experiences, school culture, leadership opportunities, course offerings, school events, equity initiatives.
- Goal 2 - The strongest message from students was about the importance of relationships. Students consistently identified trusted adults, welcoming environments, authentic cultural representation, and meaningful connections as critical factors influencing belonging at school.
- Goal 3 - Students generated specific, actionable improvement ideas across multiple domains including learning, inclusion, mental health, facilities, culture, and engagement.

“Student agency/voice in how to approach learning” (RBSS Student)

Summary

Student feedback gathered through the 2026 Equity Retreat and other engagement opportunities, demonstrates that students want meaningful opportunities to influence decisions that affect their learning and school experience. As a result, school growth plans have been adjusted to include specific language outlining the inclusion of student voice. Students consistently emphasized the importance of trusted relationships, authentic cultural representation, inclusive learning environments, and greater voice and choice in both classrooms and schools. Their recommendations provide clear evidence that student perspectives can contribute valuable insights to school growth planning and help create learning environments where all students feel known, connected, valued, and empowered to lead.



CURRENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Ongoing Activities:

- Leadership clubs and classes across grade levels
- Student councils and executive roles
- Student-led assemblies, announcements, and presentations
- Informal feedback through reflections and CBIEPs
- Inclusive clubs (e.g., SOGI, GSA, Rainbow Club)
- Participation in school committees and initiatives
- Peer helper roles and grad council meetings
- Strong student-staff relationships and open dialogue

Annual and Structured Events:

- Student Learning Survey and focus groups
- Equity retreats and surveys
- Round circles, town halls, and neighbourhood gatherings
- Cultural and environmental events
- Career events, capstones, and year-end activities
- Student-Trustee forums and logo redesign projects



USING STUDENT VOICE TO DRIVE CHANGE

- Feedback loops guide daily operations and planning
- Student input shapes school goals, equity plans, and event planning
- Data from surveys and focus groups inform programming and resource allocation
- Staff collaboration and distributed leadership ensure student voice is embedded in school culture
- Emphasis on moving from anecdotal to quantifiable feedback

AREAS OF LEARNING/AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

- Create more opportunities for students to share feedback
- Involve students more directly in decisions that impact their learning and school experience.
- Expand opportunities for student leadership, advocacy, and participation in school growth
- Increase transparency by clearly communicating how student feedback informs decisions and actions.
- Strengthen opportunities for students to build relationships with trusted adults.
- Ensure all students feel welcomed, valued, and able to contribute to their school community.
- Design school spaces and experiences that support student well-being and engagement.
- Increase opportunities to celebrate and learn about diverse cultures, identities, and perspectives throughout the school year.

ACTIONABLE STEPS

To strengthen student voice and engagement, consider the following actions:

1. Establish Regular Feedback Loops

- Use surveys, forums, and class discussions to gather input
- Ensure students know how their feedback is used

2. Create Visible Channels for Expression

- Suggestion boxes (physical and digital)
- Student voice boards or newsletters

3. Empower Student Leadership

- Expand leadership roles and clubs
- Support student-led initiatives and events

4. Ensure Representation and Inclusion

- Celebrate diverse cultures and identities through events and curriculum.
- Provide safe spaces for underrepresented voices

5. Act on Feedback

- Share outcomes of student input
- Implement feasible suggestions and explain decisions transparently

6. Train Staff on Student Voice

- Encourage teachers to actively listen and respond to student ideas.
- Include student voice in school planning and policy discussions