

EQUITY IN ACTION



25-26



INDIGENOUS LEARNING DAY

September 22, 2025

Morning: 8:30am - 12pm

9am Film:

Voices from the Local Elders

Keynote Address:

**Jody Wilson-Raybould
& Carolyn Roberts**

Afternoon: 1pm - 3pm

Site-Based Learning



1st Inaugural Indigenous Learning Day, Sept. 22nd 2025



EQUITY IN ACTION 25-26





Elders & Artist Advisory Group

From Top Left: Dahlila Charlie, Shirley Alphonse; **Middle:** Phyllis Charles, Janet Sutherland; **Top Right:** Henry Chipps, Rick Peter; **Bottom Left:** Jo-Ina Young, Jackie DaYaeger-Plane; Earl Claxton Jr.

With gratitude and respect, we acknowledge that we live, learn, and work on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish: T'Sou-ke Nation, SĆIΛNEW (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 Ləkʷəŋən peoples of Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.





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INTRODUCTION

The ***Equity in Action Project*** represents the Ministry of Education and school districts' enduring commitment to dismantling systemic barriers that impact Indigenous student success. Grounded in principles of equity of opportunity and a co-constructive approach, this initiative encourages a comprehensive review of educational practices and policies that may hinder the progress of Indigenous learners within British Columbia's public education system.

The project was launched in response to the ***Audit of the Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System***, which revealed a pervasive "racism of low expectations" toward Indigenous students. In response, the Equity in Action framework is built around ***four foundational pillars*** that support Indigenous student success:

1. **Learning Profile** – Personalized and evidence-informed, emphasizing timely supports, responsive interventions, and a culture of reflective practice (e.g., *Pathway to Graduation – Grandparents' Perspective Circle*).
2. **Learning Environment** – Promotes high, motivating expectations for all learners; nurtures identity, belonging, and confidence; rooted in an understanding of implicit bias and privilege.
3. **Pedagogical Core** – Embeds culturally relevant teaching practices, grounded in Indigenous worldviews and perspectives, and intentionally connects learning to family and community.
4. **Policy & Governance** – Ensures systems are community-accountable, coherently aligned, and driven by sustained, meaningful action.

Now in its eighth year, the Equity in Action journey in the Sooke School District continues to grow and evolve. Staff across schools and departments have reflected on the educational experiences of Indigenous learners and developed strategic, actionable goals to support student success.

We extend our sincere gratitude to members of the Elder Consultation Circle, whose guidance continues to shape school and district initiatives. Their voices help ensure this work remains authentic and aligned with the perspectives of local First Nation rights holders.

During the 2025–26 school year, school teams revisited and refined goals connected to the Learning Environment, Pedagogical Core, and Learning Profile. Through this process, teams explored how a distinctions-based approach and participation in Pathway to Graduation Circles can better support, recognize, and celebrate individual learners.

At the District level, efforts focused on supporting the implementation of the Indigenous Education Council Policy, strengthening relationships with local Indigenous Rights holders, and advancing work connected to the Policy and Governance pillar.

The Equity in Action 2025–26 Report brings together celebrations, reflections, and goals from schools and departments across the district. It highlights key initiatives, shares promising practices, and identifies areas for continued growth as the district moves this important work forward.



DEPARTMENT REPORTS



25-26



Elder Marlene Clifton leading the Leadership Team in a Drumming Circle at a Leadership Meeting

COMMITMENT

Our Commitment - Equity in Careers Education means that we work to ensure that regardless of background, identity, ability or circumstances all students have equal access to post-secondary, trades training, apprenticeships and employment opportunities.



Camosun College Indigenous Learner's Day

EQUITY TEAM:

DANIELLE HUCULAK
BRIAN HOTOVY
KRISTY CALDWELL
GRAHAM TRELOAR
EMILY MORELAND
MIKE HUCK

GOALS

- Ensure equitable access through counselling, programming, work experience, and post-secondary pathways
- Reduce participation gaps
- Remove systemic barriers
- Deliver inclusive, culturally responsive programs and pathways
- Increase representation and belonging by connecting students with diverse mentors, employers, and role models
- Improve outcomes for underrepresented youth
- Ensure accessibility and accommodations across all career events and placements
- Strengthen family and community engagement in career education



Bridges to Service Event:
Western Canada Spill Response team

ACTIONS AND EVENTS

- | | |
|--|--|
| Camosun Health X & ELC Day | Canadian Coast Guard Day |
| Camosun Hands on Health Day | Camosun Women in Trades and Technology |
| Camosun Indigenous Learners' Day | CICan World of Choices Event |
| EPBC Parent's as Career Coaches | School based Volunteer Fairs |
| Skills Canada Regionals and Provincials | School based Career Fairs |
| Soroptimist Society Dream It Be It | Elementary & Middle School Entrepreneurship Fairs |
| Island Health Career Exploratory Day | Skills Canada InSpire! Program |
| Bridges to Service: Career Pathways for Indigenous Youth (RCMP, Coast Guard, CAF, WCMRC) | Plumbers Union Local 324 Hands-On Learning Days |
| Marine Tech Event | Camosun Trades E-Van |
| Take Our Kids to Work Day | Westshore Secondary mini trades sampler |
| Campus Tours | Capstone Presentation Events |
| Dual Credit Teachers' Community of Practice | Junior Achievement TechWorks |
| Career Curriculum Teachers' Community of Practice | Financial Literacy Workshop for Middle School Teachers |
| Seaspan Tour | myBlueprint Virtual Learning Sessions (Middle and Secondary) |
| Middle School Entrepreneur Fairs | |



Westshore Secondary Trades Sampler

RED DRESS DISTRICT RESOURCE BIN



EQUITY TEAM:

DENISE WEHNER
SHELBY POLLITT
REISHA RYAN
STEPHANIE CAVE
JOY NUGENT
FRANCESCA LEE
DEANNA BRAJCICH
ANA GALAC
SHELLEY YATES
SHANNON GOMBOC

K-12 Immersion Métis Cultural Kits and Professional Development

Curated Kits

- Story books
- Lesson plans
- Music spoons
- Métis sashes
- Michif books with audio
- Métis art puzzles
- Hudson Bay Company blanket



Indigenous Resource Amplification Spine Labels

*Purchased 500
spine labels
for each school.*





Dawn and Lourie at the Indigenous Career Fair

OUR GOALS:

- 1.1 Consult with IEC representatives on procedures to recruit and hire staff that develop and deliver programs and services for Indigenous students, or whose roles involve significant interaction with Indigenous students. This may include reviewing proposed job descriptions, advising on posting or sharing current job opportunities to reach potential candidates, and IEC participation in hiring processes.
- 1.2 With First Nations partners providing leadership and direction, work together to address the history of the Indian residential school system through the development of professional development opportunities for staff, in a sensitive and appropriate manner.
- 1.3 In cooperation with First Nations partners, promote awareness and respect among new and existing employees of the district for First Nations' unique language, culture and history.

OUR ACTIONS:

- Participated in the Accessible Employment Expo 2025 hosted by WorkBC Victoria in September
- Participated in the Langford Job Fair hosted by WorkBC at the John Horgan Campus in September
- Attended the Esquimalt Nation Open House in October
- Attended other career fairs including the Victoria Career & Education Expo in October
- Participated as a Guest Speaker at the WorkBC Job Club to support job seekers in October
- Hosted a recruitment table at the NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education Community Dinner at Ruth King Elementary in November
- Represented part of the School Board office team in the NA'TSA'MAHT Lahal Tournament in February
- Offered the following Indigenous learnings for the CUPE Professional Development Day in May:
 - Cedar Weaving by Maria Sampson who is a Coast Salish Weaver
 - Bond and Bead with Joslyn Charlie from the Nuu-Chah-Hulth and Kwakwaka'waka nations

OUR COMMITMENT:

School District No. 62 (Sooke) is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in a workplace that is free of discrimination and harassment. Our educational environments are welcoming and safe. Our staff and students value and appreciate our differences.

WATER BLESSING AT LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION CENTRE



Elder Shirley Blessing a Communication Board

The Language & Communication Centre celebrated the opening of its new space with a meaningful Water Blessing ceremony, guided by Elder Shirley Alphonse & Brother Rick Peter. The gathering brought staff together in a spirit of reflection, connection, & gratitude while honouring the cultural traditions of local First Nations communities. Through song, welcome, & the blessing of both people and space with a cedar bough and sacred water, the ceremony fostered a strong sense of well-being, belonging, and cultural respect. The event highlighted the importance of creating a space that reflects and honours *Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being*.

An informal open house followed, welcoming district staff to visit the new location, celebrate the team's work, and connect with colleagues. The occasion also provided an opportunity to reflect on the district's ongoing commitment to creating inclusive, respectful, and culturally responsive environments where everyone feels valued and supported.

EXPANDED SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SERVICES

This year, SLP services at Port Renfrew School expanded to include multi-day visits by the school SLP & the SLP from the BC Provincial School Outreach Program. Two students were provided with AAC devices. In addition, Pacheedaht Nation secured Jordan's Principle funding to support eight students with services from a traveling private SLP. This included coordinated school visits working with the classroom teacher to incorporate SLP strategies into classroom activities. Next year, we will continue to strive to strengthen relationships in community so that we can work more collaboratively with families to better support students.

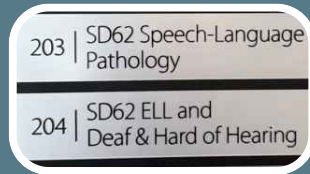


LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION CENTRE MEMO

The Memo intentionally highlights the WSÁNEĆ Coast Salish Moons, a practice which helps ground our work in local seasonal cycles while deepening our connection to the land & community. Next year, the information will be expanded to the IES Weekly memo & include Seasonal Celebrations & Annual Events.

ELL TEACHER SURVEY: FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING IN PRACTICE

ELL teachers participated in an anonymous survey to reflect on how the FPPOL are enacted in their work with multilingual learners. Grounded in relationships, identity & lived experience, the survey supported thoughtful reflection on practice and a shared commitment to reconciliation. Insights will guide ongoing dialogue and strengthen efforts to embed Indigenous worldviews consistently into our pedagogy. Next year, the survey will be expanded to more IES Department staff. ELL Meetings will also focus on one First Peoples Principle of Learning per meeting.



814 Goldstream Avenue
NEW Office Location for:
SD62 SLP/AAC
SD62 ELL & MCSW
SD62 Deaf & Hard of Hearing



NIE Student Family Advocate, Danielle Huber & School SLP Sydney Torok with Private SLP in Pacheedaht Nation

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026-27

Deepen Our Collective Understanding of the Learning Profile Pillar

- Review Inclusive Education Services' District Lellum with IES staff to develop a shared understanding
- Utilize elements of Pathway to Graduation Model to support student transitions from Elem to Mid & Mid to Sec
- Strengthen supports for local First Nation students by intentionally consulting with First Nation communities and continuing the implementation of IES programs & supports that enhance student achievement & well-being

Strengthen Our Practice in the Learning Environment & Pedagogical Core Pillars

- Consider culturally responsive accessibility and inclusion practices
- Initiate & implement projects through the Elder's Advisory Consultation Framework

GOALS

- Relationships
- Local Context
- Student Centered
- Student Success



INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education (NIE) is dedicated to enriching the educational, social, cultural, and academic experiences of students who self-identify as having Indigenous ancestry. Guided by the wisdom and direction of the Indigenous Education Council, Elders, Role Models, local Nations, families, and community partners, our programs and services support student success while helping to weave Indigenous perspectives, histories, languages, and ways of knowing throughout K-12 learning.

This year, NA'TSA'MAHT continued to strengthen identity, belonging, academic success, cultural connection, and student transitions across the district. Our team worked alongside schools to challenge bias and systemic racism, support meaningful learning opportunities, and create welcoming environments where Indigenous students are seen, supported, and held to high expectations.



CULTURE & LANGUAGE

NA'TSA'MAHT continued to support cultural learning, language revitalization, identity, belonging, and connection to land through a wide range of school and district initiatives. Highlights included:

- The 3rd annual multi-district SD62 Lahal Tournament and continued participation in South Island Lahal tournaments
- New Thunderbird cultural land-based programming for at-risk students supported by Student Advocacy Teachers
- Hulitan Partnership: Grandma Clifton drum rotations at Urban zone Schools
- Role Model and Elder in Residence programming across schools K-12
- Coast Salish Weave Art Collection rotations
- Carolyn Roberts' book launch and staff learning connected to *Tess's Red Dress*
- Winter Solstice Gathering at the new Royal Roads John Horgan Campus Indigenous Space
- September start-up learning and year-end gathering in community at the new T'Sou-ke Nation Health Building
- A second year attending the Qualicum First Nations Early Learning Conference
- Monthly resource bulletins and ENGAGE resource support for schools
- Co-creation of District Authentic Resources in partnership with the Elders & Curriculum Dept.
- Third year facilitating the Elder's Advisory Circle supporting school and district cultural initiatives





INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS



• Highlights included:

- Urban Indigenous Dinner and Film evening featuring Lahal
- Métis Community Dinner at Ruth King Elementary
- T'Sou-ke Nation Community Dinner at John Muir Elementary
- SĆIΛNEW Nation Christmas Dinner hosted at SĆIΛNEW STĒLIT̓KĒL Elementary School
- Pacheedaht Family Pizza Night and launch of the new Port Renfrew School middle school program
- Three Elder Consultation Circles, continuing this important practice for a third year
- Continued relationship-building with local Nations, Métis families, urban Indigenous families, Elders, Role Models, students, and staff

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026-27

We are excited about the year to come.

Our Focus will be:

- The 2nd District-wide Indigenous Learning Day
- 4th Year Elders Advisory Circle
- Continuing the Thunderbird Culture Group Series with Student Advocates
- South Island District initiatives i.e.) Lahal Tournament; Land-based Day



SCHOOL REPORTS



25-26



Cedar Harvesting with T'Sou-ke Elder Janet (Journey Middle School)



HIGHLIGHTS

- Targeted academic support for Indigenous learners
- Cultural sharing through events such as the Salmon Bake
- Embedding cultural foods and learning within Feeding Futures
- School-wide learning on MMIW2S+ through a story walk
- Collaborative cross-curricular exploration of Truth and Reconciliation through a student-created video
- Promoting student equity through anti-racism and allyship development

EQUITY TEAM:

SARAH BAAS
TARA COLBORNE
MADISON DAHL
CHRISTINE HOSKINS
KIM MARIER
SHANNON POON
KIM SCOTT

WORKING TOWARDS OUR GOALS

This year, we continued to deepen understanding of territorial acknowledgements by supporting the creation of meaningful, locally grounded, and personalized territory acknowledgements. We worked to strengthen graduation pathways through targeted academic and homework support, while also sharing culture through food. Through a school-wide approach, we continued to seek opportunities for collaborative learning and shared experiences, including drumming.

EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS:

- Deepen equity through student voice to inform school practices.
- Strengthen graduation pathways for Indigenous students through targeted academic support.
- Create opportunities to share culture and deepen learning aligned with the First Peoples Principles of Learning.



Drumming and shared songs led by Grandma Clifton



LOOKING AHEAD

- Increase Indigenous student voice in school culture and decision-making.
- Expand visual representation of Indigenous cultures throughout the school.
- Strengthen staff practice in territorial acknowledgements and First Peoples Principles of Learning.
- Develop and embed a school-wide cultural plan across all departments.
- Support new staff in Indigenous learning, including engagement with Elder in Residence and Role Model programs.

May 5th Red Dress Day Art and Story Walk

ADULT GRADUATION PROGRAM

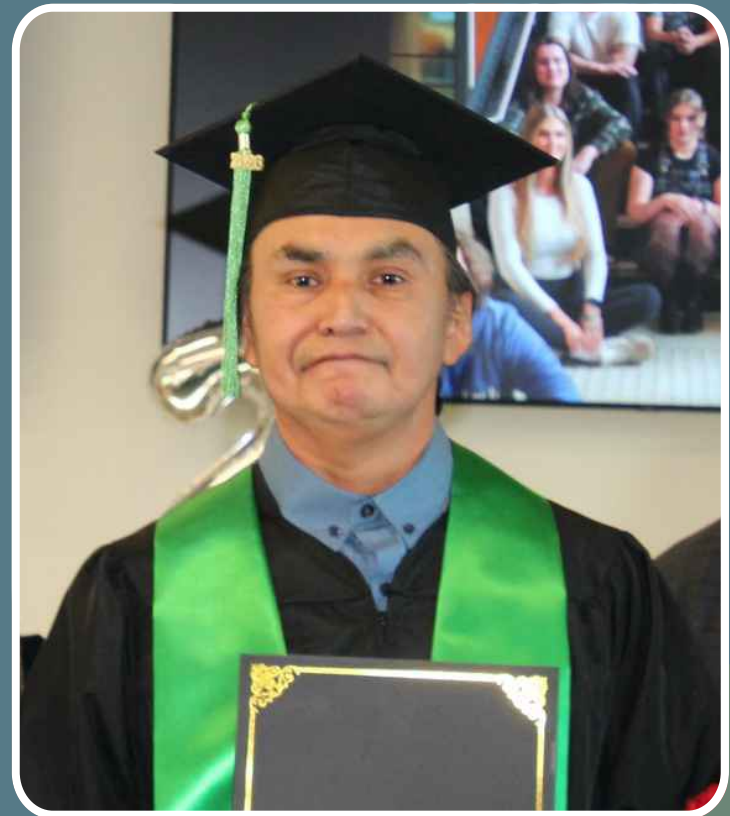
The Fast Forward to Graduation Program provides adult (18+) students the opportunity to earn their BC Adult Graduation Dogwood Diploma in 5 months or 1 semester. SD62 Continuing Education is proud of our Indigenous graduates of 2026.

EQUITY TEAM:

MORGAN SARGENT
SUSAN COATES
HEATHER LAIT

EQUITY IN ACTION GOALS

- Bringing cultural teachings into the classroom
- Create a sense of belonging for all students
- Invite Indigenous Role Models into the classroom and to school events
- Participate in District NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education (NIE) NIE events



Cultural teaching were brought in by the NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education staff & Role Models. Students participated in a lahal tournament and attended the Indigenous Grad Recognition Ceremony.



EDWARD MILNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Equity Team 2025-2026 Events

Orange Shirt Day Sept. 29th 	Indigenous Word Wall Year long  Rotating words with prize entries for students practicing Indigenous phrases	Na'tsa'maht Wellness Week Feb 17-20 Guest Speaker Kaleb Dahlgren Flourish Workshops WSANEC Ultimate Spirit Sessions Lahal Tournament Food at the outdoor firepit	Grade 9 Inclusion and Anti-Racism Workshops Throughout Feb  Tanya will contact Gr 9. teachers with scheduled timeslots.	MMIWG Ceremony May 5  Reach out to Rhiannon if you'd like your class to be involved
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New members always welcome! Our next team meeting will be in the afternoon of the "I" Day

EQUITY TEAM:
 ALISON BARTON
 PATRICK GALE
 ALEXANDER GARSON
 RHIANNON JONES
 O'SHEA
 TANYA PHILLIPS
 KRISTI SCHAEFER
 TIFFANY STEADMAN

EQUITY GOALS & FOCUS AREAS

- Strengthen the school's connection to local Indigenous communities to build trust and collaboration.
- Connect all students to Indigenous ways of knowing and the natural world through Role Models, teaching garden, and place.
- Increase Indigenous student graduation rates by addressing academic, cultural, social emotional, and systemic barriers through targeted support
- Support Language: SENĆOFEN and Ditidaht Word Wall for opportunities to hear and practice language.

WHAT'S NEW AT EMCS

ON SEPTEMBER 23RD DURING SD62'S FIRST INDIGENOUS DAY OF LEARNING, T'SOU-KE ARTIST AND COMMUNITY MEMBER SHELLEY DAVIES' NEW MURAL WAS UNVEILED AT EDWARD MILNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, AS AN EMCS ALUMNI HERSELF, SHELLEY PUT MANY HOURS INTO THIS BEAUTIFUL PROJECT THAT NOW LIVES PERMANENTLY IN OUR MAIN STAIRWELL. THE HERON "SNEKE" WAS GIFTED TO EDWARD MILNE BY OUR ELDER JACKIE ON BEHALF OF THE T'SOU-KE NATION. THE HERON IS THE GUARDIAN AND WATCHMAN OF THE SALISH SEA. THE HERON IS KNOWN TO GUIDE FISHERMAN BACK TO SHORE DURING BAD WEATHER. THE HERON IS A SYMBOL OF PATIENCE AND GRACE.

EMCS RAISES THEIR HANDS IN GRATITUDE TO ELDER JACKIE, SHELLEY DAVIES AND THE T'SOU-KE NATION FOR SHARING THIS GIFT WITH US.






Indigenous Valedictorians



SENĆOTEN word stop at the Orange Shirt Day walk

LOOKING AHEAD

- Build on existing initiatives to deepen impact and **whole school** engagement.
- Continue to use data and observations from the learning community to guide next steps:
 - Addressing Racism.
 - Rebranding EMCS to include the gift of SNEKE from T'Sou-ke Nation.





ÉCOLE ROYAL BAY SECONDARY

A YEAR OF GROUNDING AND DIRECTION-SETTING

This year has been a formative “direction-setting” year for our school’s equity work. With new administrators and staff, we focused on building shared understanding, strengthening relationships, and establishing a clear path forward.

Looking ahead, we are building on this foundation by engaging the wider school community in meaningful events and inviting staff and students to participate in committees that will help plan, organize, and support this work collaboratively.

EQUITY TEAM:

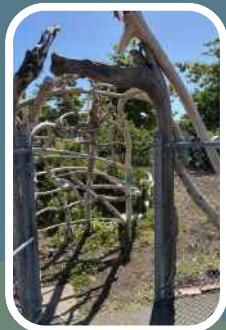
BENULA BUNJUN
JOHN FROESS
NEVADA KALUDJER
CHRISTOPHER MOORE
LINDSAY LOCKHART
ROB MCALLISTER
CHELSEA RICHARDSON
REISHA RYAN
WILLIAM STEE
JADIA WONG

GOALS AND FOCUS AREAS

- Strengthening relationships and shared understanding
- Deepening cultural awareness and understanding the current landscape of our school community
- Building structures for sustained equity work

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hosting the district’s Indigenous Learning Day at our school (September 22)
- Orange Shirt Day activities
- Connections: Brother Rick Peter (respected pillar of our community), Bruce Comaniuk (Native Plant Garden and mural work), ongoing involvement of Elders and Role Models
- Lahal!
- Red Dress Day/National Day of Awareness for MMIWG2S+ People
- Staff reflection survey
- Setting direction for next year + forming committees



LOOKING AHEAD

- Addressing racism (especially in jokes/humour)
- Examining school spaces to promoting inclusion
- Making Indigenous language visible throughout the school
- Increasing whole-school engagement
- Deepening student connection





QELENSÉN Á, LEN SECONDARY SCHOOL



Veterans Memorial Park October 2025

STRENGTH, PROTECTION & RESPECT

We prioritized connecting to the principle that learning is recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

- **Strength:** knowing and facing our history as a Nation and the role of Indigenous Nations that helps define us
- **Protection:** reflecting on the implications of our perception as Peace Keepers juxtaposed against our history of colonization
- **Respect:** committing to reflecting on our history as we make decisions about who we are, and our future actions

FOCUS GOALS:

CENTRE OUR SCHOOL IDENTITY AROUND THE CULTURALLY GROUNDED LOGO WHICH ENCAPSULATES THE POWERFUL SPIRIT, RESILIENCE AND GRACE THE SCHOOL NAME HIGHLIGHTS.

ROOTEDNESS & GROWTH

Continuing our focus to the principle that learning is embedded in memory, history and story, we participated in Métis 101 to learn more about experiences on the Prairies:

- **Rootedness:** connection to the environment offers both challenges and opportunities. These factors are regional and impact both culture and society. We learned about the importance and roles of specific animals in Métis culture.
- **Growth:** a growth mindset can be challenging but is essential if we wish to advance our community. While exploring the challenges that occurred in daily Métis life, we reflected on how ideas and solutions can help us individually but more importantly the greater good of a thriving and supportive community. We then tied that learning to our experiences as students and teammates.



Métis 101 April 2026



Plant Walks May 2026

UNITY & BALANCE

Finally, we touched on the principle that learning is holistic, reflective, experiential and relational:

- **Unity:** As student athletes we understand the concept of being unified as a team. The Plant Walk helped us learn about Indigenous plants around Langford Lake and unify/connect our experiences from our school garden, to our surroundings.
- **Balance:** By expanding our learning and experiences in these various ways, we sought to bring balance to our goal of becoming well-rounded, educated citizens.





WESTSHORE SECONDARY SCHOOL



Westshore Lahal Team

EQUITY GOALS & FOCUS AREAS

Equity in Action Goal: *To promote equitable practices by increasing Westshore's understanding of and engagement with Indigenous language and connection to land, sea, and sky.*

This goal is in continuation of our previous year with the following focus areas:

- Increasing opportunities for staff and students to engage in Indigenous ways of knowing, learning and language through drumming and song with Indigenous Elders
- Continue to increase opportunities for students to learn from land, sea and sky through role model visits and a variety of land-based learning
- Immersed staff and students into the Indigenous cultural experience of Lahal

EQUITY TEAM:

LIANE DIMOCK

JUSTINE KELLY

RACHEL TAILLEFER

DARRELL WRIGHT

GILLIAN LEROSE

STRATEGIES & STORIES

Westshore's yearly cultural plan guides our equity actions and practices through the four seasons. This collaborative document ensures each grade level/program in the school engages with meaningful land-based learning opportunities.

Equity in action survey results show students are keen for more Indigenous perspectives and culture to be embedded in classrooms

This Year's Highlights:

- Take a Hike program formed a Westshore Lahal team and participated in 3 local tournaments this year. Students acted as leaders within the school community to share their learnings with younger grades.
- Every program/class at Westshore participated in drumming sessions with Gramma Clifton- Indigenous language, ways of knowing, learning and histories.
- Stronger focus on Indigenous student grad transitions and exposure to available post-secondary and career opportunities
- Increased land-learning opportunities including a new field trip with Fort Rodd Hill's camas meadow with role model Janine Bradley
- Equity in Action team began leading staff through discussions on how to incorporate Indigenous music into classroom teaching through lens of Carolyn Roberts: Re-Storying Education

"Our deep conversations never would have happened without drumming first"
-Gr. 12 student

"You can forget about a documentary or a book, it's not a real life experience, but I remember Goldstream and Grandma Clifton's stories so well"
- Student CG

"I loved learning more about my culture from my Mom's side"
- Student BA



NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Graduation Ceremony



Land-based learning at Goldstream Park

LOOKING AHEAD

2026-27 Goal: We will advance equity by strengthening Indigenous cultural learning, amplifying student voice, and building staff capacity to engage in land-based and classroom practices that foster belonging, identity, and meaningful participation for all learners.

Looking head to next year, staff and students have provided input into the direction our equity work will take next year. These include:

- Increase opportunities for staff to learn about and from the land, sea and sky in order to build confidence to engage these activities with students
- Continuing to use a cultural plan to guide our teaching and learning throughout the year with an emphasis on supporting our ILP programs and students with increased cultural learning opportunities
- Form a Westshore Student Equity in Action group with a goal of organizing a student retreat in the fall. The goals of this group is to capture more student voice and engage students in equity planning for the school year ahead
- Continue to increase student confidence and participation in Lahal by facilitating a school based lahala tournament during the SIS'IT moon.
- Continue to support grade 12 Indigenous students with supported transitions to post-secondary and career opportunities





WESTSHORE SECONDARY SCHOOL

EQUITY GOAL AND FOCUS AREAS

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 our previous years' goals, with three focus areas:

- A greater emphasis on Indigenous language learning
- Opportunities for staff to engage with Indigenous ways of knowing and learning through the creation and use of drums
- Continue to increase opportunities for students to learn on and from land, sea and sky through role model visits and a variety of land-based learning field trips

TEAM MEMBERS

LIANE DIMOCK
 JUSTINE KELLY
 JAMIE CLEGG
 DARRELL WRIGHT
 KIM STROM
 RACHEL TAILLEFER
 GILLIAN LEROSE



Staff Drum Making Workshops

STRATEGIES AND STORIES

- Westshore's yearly cultural plan guides our equity actions and practices through the four seasons. This collaborative document ensures each grade level/program in the school engages with meaningful land-based learning opportunities.
- Equity in action survey data shows students are keen for more land-based learning opportunities

This Year's Highlights:

- Staff drum creation with Brother Rick, drum design with Dahlila, drumming sessions with Grandma Clifton and Glenn Grande
- SENĆOŦEN counting (1-10) at monthly staff meetings
- Land-based learning field trips: Goldstream, SNIDÇEĒ, Metchosin Farm, Moose Hide March
- Student-created Westshore Territory Acknowledgement

"The Moosehide walk was enlightening, I have never done anything like it and it made my mind more open" – Student- JR

"When I went to the Seed Farm I liked being outside and learned lots as well. It was a memorable experience so I remembered what I learned more than I would at school" – Student WV

"I love hearing speakers we wouldn't have at school" Student-GSC



Grade 12 Social Justice Students at the Moose Hide March

LOOKING AHEAD

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
- Increasing opportunities for staff and students to engage in drumming together
- Continuing to increase our SENĆOŦEN learning through the teachings of the 13 moons at monthly staff meetings
- Facilitating more land-based learning opportunities for Westshore students
- Engage staff in deeper conversations about reconciliation and action by using the book *Re-Storying Education* by Carolyn Roberts



Goldstream Salmon Run with Elder Earl



WESTSHORE SECONDARY SCHOOL

EQUITY GOAL AND FOCUS AREAS

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- A greater emphasis on Indigenous language learning
- Opportunities for staff to engage with Indigenous ways of knowing and learning through the creation and use of drums
- Continue to increase opportunities for students to learn on and from land, sea and sky through role model visits and a variety of land-based learning field trips

TEAM MEMBERS

LIANE DIMOCK
 JUSTINE KELLY
 JAMIE CLEGG
 DARRELL WRIGHT
 KIM STROM
 RACHEL TAILLEFER
 GILLIAN LEROSE



Staff Drum Making Workshops

STRATEGIES AND STORIES

- Westshore's yearly cultural plan guides our equity actions and practices through the four seasons. This collaborative document ensures each grade level/program in the school engages with meaningful land-based learning opportunities.
- Equity in action survey data shows students are keen for more land-based learning opportunities

This Year's Highlights:

- Staff drum creation with Brother Rick, drum design with Dahlila, drumming sessions with Grandma Clifton and Glenn Grande
- SENĆOŦEN counting (1-10) at monthly staff meetings
- Land-based learning field trips: Goldstream, SNIDÇEĒ, Metchosin Farm, Moose Hide March
- Student-created Westshore Territory Acknowledgement

"The Moosehide walk was enlightening, I have never done anything like it and it made my mind more open" - Student- JR

"When I went to the Seed Farm I liked being outside and learned lots as well. It was a memorable experience so I remembered what I learned more than I would at school" - Student WV

"I love hearing speakers we wouldn't have at school" Student-GSC



Grade 12 Social Justice Students at the Moose Hide March

LOOKING AHEAD

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
- Increasing opportunities for staff and students to engage in drumming together
- Continuing to increase our SENĆOŦEN learning through the teachings of the 13 moons at monthly staff meetings
- Facilitating more land-based learning opportunities for Westshore students
- Engage staff in deeper conversations about reconciliation and action by using the book Re-Storying Education by Carolyn Roberts



Goldstream Salmon Run with Elder Earl





CENTRE MOUNTAIN LELLUM



Staff land based learning

OUR FOCUS

We focused on embedding our values—SIÁM, TENEW, Na'tsa'maht, and IY, ŠKÁLEÇEN—into our school culture by aligning them with our equity work, four pillars, and school goals. We also focused on developing student engagement around these core values, and landbased learning

EQUITY TEAM:

- KATHLEEN MEIKLEJOHN
- MICHAELA MISTAL
- CHEYMUS MCNULTY
- LEANNE BILOUS

OUR YEAR OF LEARNING

Our team worked to intentionally align our school priorities with our shared Indigenous values of SIÁM (respect), TENEW (the land), Na'tsa'maht (unity), and IY, ŠKÁLEÇEN (working together in a good way). This year, we strengthened school culture by establishing school families to deepen belonging, relationships, and shared expectations for engagement and learning across the school community. These families provided a structure for embedding our values into daily interactions, school expectations, and student responsibility. We also expanded land-based learning through the undertaking and creation of an Indigenous garden with the support of the STA and facilities. We also engaged in landbased learning through forest walks, and regular connections to seasonal changes. These experiences grounded learning in TENEW and supported students in building awareness of land, place, and reciprocity. Together, this work strengthened a values-based, relational, and land-connected school culture.



Staff PD - Land based learning

GOALS FOR 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR

Continue to deepen our commitment to Indigenous education by embedding Indigenous ways of knowing more intentionally into classroom planning and instruction across all subject areas. We will strengthen land-based learning through consistent integration of the Indigenous garden, forest walks, and seasonal cycles into teaching and learning, deepening students' connection to TENEW and place. We will also further develop school families as a key structure for living our values, SIÁM (respect), TENEW (the land), Na'tsa'maht (unity), and IY, ŠKÁLEÇEN (working together in a good way), while strengthening student belonging, leadership, and restorative practices. Through this work, we will continue to actively embed our values across the school community and strengthen a respectful, relational school culture.





DUNSMUIR MIDDLE SCHOOL



Dunsmuir students working on art with Dahlila Charlie.

EQUITY GOALS & FOCUS AREAS

This year, Dunsmuir's equity goal focused on providing meaningful Indigenous teaching and learning experiences for the entire school and building capacity by supplying school wide resources and increasing staff confidence in using them. We continue to be guided by the data found in Dunsmuir's Lellum and offer enhanced supports for our students.

Despite multiple staff transitions, consistent members of our team provided opportunities to share and celebrate culture within the school and broader community, and hosting school wide events that highlighted a variety of Indigenous perspectives, voices, and traditions.

EQUITY TEAM:

CRAIG DIDMON

ANASTASIA WILSON BURKE

KIRSTEN WALKER

JULIA CLIFTON

ALEXIS MCKEAN

KIM STROM

HIGHLIGHTS

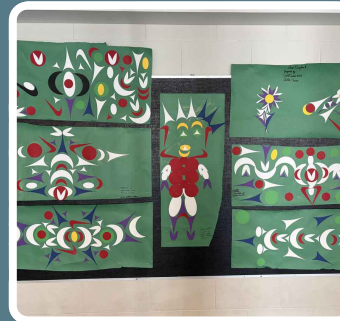
- **Truth and reconciliation work** – our Equity Team has supported all students in recognizing Orange Shirt Day, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Louis Riel Day, Red Dress Day and National Indigenous Peoples Day.
- **Arctic Winter Games** school-wide tournament highlighting Inuit events/competition. Students competed within their classrooms in 3 events, followed by a finals tournament.
- **Lahal** – The school continues to deepen our engagement with Lahal. This year's activities will include team and class competitions, staff-versus-student lunchtime games, and a school-wide tournament.
- **Culture work** – students have had the opportunity to work on incredible art projects with Dahlila Charlie, experience the Thunderbird drum with Glenn Grande, group drumming, and plant walks with Kevin Henry. Our year end event will include time with Kookum Jo-ina and lots of fry bread!



Drumming with Glenn Grande and his Thunderbird drum.



Learning about Metis culture with Emily Hanna



Cooperative group art with Dahlila Charlie



Year end Indigenous student gathering at Camp Thunderbird



Doing more together!

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead to the 2026/27 school year, the Dunsmuir Equity in Action team is committed to building upon the progress made this year by expanding participation in the events and opportunities of this year. We will be welcoming new staff and directly linking our literacy, numeracy and attendance goals to cultural stories and events to more solidly weave Indigenous ways of learning into the fabric of our school and Lellum.

We will continue to maximize our use of the land around us and as many cultural experiences as possible.



JOURNEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOALS & FOCUS - LEARNING AND WORKING TOGETHER

Our goals this year were:

- To invite Elders and knowledge holders to our school to reflect the diversity of our learners
- Hold space and honour days of special significance like Orange Shirt Day, Moosehide Day and Red Dress Day
- Increase connection to the land and community by use of outdoor and land-based learning
- Work to embed Indigenous ways of learning into curriculum and throughout the school, including classrooms, student supports and extra-curricular activities through teacher led curriculum and lesson sharing

EQUITY TEAM:

LEANNE ZANON
LARA BELL
OLIVER WINSER
TERRI HAYWARD
KELLY DVORAK



OUR SCHOOL

This school is built on the traditional territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation. Journey is nestled alongside the forest, by DeMamiel creek, and Stickleback pond.



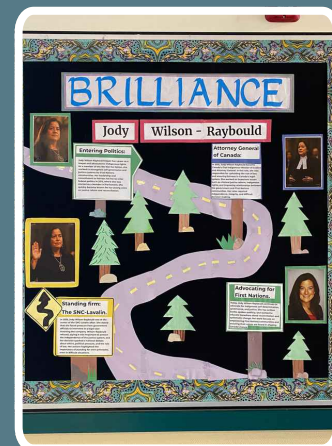
Students, and teachers have meaningful learning opportunities in these outdoor spaces to connect with our surrounding lands. These opportunities create a safe space for diverse learners to meet, share, and learn together.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Elder Janet Hansen from T'Sou-ke made regular weekly visits and worked with students, classes and with the Inclusive Education Department in creating enriching connections to students
- Created a visual language board that included SENĆOŦEN and diitid'aa?tx languages that will continue into next year.
- Expanded our Honouring MMIWG&2S people through purposeful activities.
- Created a moon board as a visual reminder of the Saanich moons and its connection to our land
- Dahlila Charlie shared knowledge and vision with our students through creating an art display
- Several classes researched and designed additions to the Brilliance Board that celebrates Indigenous Excellence
- Students are repairing the Mural in the front facing the entrance that showcases Na'tsa'maht
- Debra Kessler and Rose Dupont shared Metis Woodland art

GOALS

- Continue to support educators to embed Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding into meaningful learning opportunities
- Continue to increase the visual representation of Indigenous art and culture through out the school.





Speakers at the Red Dress Day Walk

EQUITY GOALS & FOCUS AREA

- To foster a sense of belonging and connection for the Spencer Community (students, staff, caregivers)
- To support place-based and land-based learning
- To reflect, educate and advocate on equity, justice, anti-racism

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EQUITY SURVEY

- Students who have experienced and witnessed racism shows a 10% decrease from last year
- More students have what they need to learn
- Improvements in student voice, inclusion and relevance to learning
- Land Acknowledgement is visible and heard

EQUITY TEAM:

- NATHAN AMBROSE
- HAYDEN BARTELS
- SHARON BOND
- GINA CAPRETTA
- ASHLEY CONRAD
- JEN NIXON
- ANNA SERDYUKOVA
- KRISTINE TAYLOR
- LISA THERRIEN
- KIRSTEN WALKER

HIGHLIGHTS & STORIES: OUR EQUITY JOURNEY

- We continued to focus on cultural exhibitions, performances, and guest speakers promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. Highlights: Grupo América, Bryan St. Louis, Christian Armstrong, Indigenous role models, and drumming with Grandma Clifton;
- Significant expansion of the Explore and Enrich (E2) Program, increasing opportunities for student voice and engagement, ownership of learning;
- Expanded learning and participation in days of significance, including, MMIWG2S+, Reconciliation Day, Red Dress Day Walk;
- Launch of the Lahal Club, with participation in four Lower Island tournaments;
- Introduction of the Equity Film Series, hosted three films and were supported through strong community partnerships and local business donations;
- Ongoing development of the front entrance visual display, reflecting and celebrating the school's diversity;
- Expanded land-based learning opportunities, including the Salish Sea Program, visits to Lohbrunner Farm, invasive species removal initiatives; and participation in the Outdoor Adventure Group (E2).



Students working the land at Lohbrunner Farm



Playing Lahal at the NIE Day of Learning

LOOKING AHEAD

We will continue our collective learning on our equity journey by:

- **Addressing Racism and Supporting DEI work and learning:** ensuring more visibility to celebrate diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism initiatives, including training and discussions with staff and students; create a learning resource for staff and school for collective action, learning and understanding.
- **Strengthen Connections and Belonging:** expand on the Explore and Enrich (E2) Program; continue to grow Lahal, and expand on all clubs, including a multi-cultural club; support performances, cultural displays and learning that reflects the diversity of the community; increase consistent access to Indigenous and diverse voices and content across curricular areas.
- **Expand Authentic Student Voice:** Create opportunities for increased student voice and involvement in decision-making; create more opportunities for student-to-student mentoring; ensure students have what they need to learn and have ownership of their learning, through initiative such as E2.



COLWOOD ELEMENTARY



THIS YEAR'S GOALS AND FOCUS

This year, we adapted our school's family groups to better meet current needs and interests, focusing on building community and belonging across ages and abilities. We held monthly assemblies striving to emotionally include all students with Indigenous ways of knowing weaved throughout. We responded to staff feedback and student engagement, and incorporated STEM activities. We also shared our experience running an elementary Lahal tournament to support other schools. Our Lahal tournament was a full day filled with 8 stations in the morning that classes rotated through including playing lacrosse, creating button blankets, gardening, an Indigenous story walk through the forest, sampling tea, and playing Lahal. We were fortunate to have Grandma Clifton support the Lahal teachings. In the afternoon, students watched the grade 5's participate in the 3rd annual official Colwood Elementary Lahal tournament.

EQUITY

TEAM:

TAMARA MAXIM
JULIA CLIFTON
EVA MARTIN
SARAH RAMSBOTTOM
BECKY CLARK
SUE TONNESEN
CATRINA SNOOK



HIGHLIGHTS

- Role Model visits
- Gramma Clifton supporting the Lahal tournament
- Monthly Equity Family Group assemblies and activities.
- Community building through participation on Music Monday.
- Staff book club - "Ensouling Our Schools"
- Painting Indigenous hand drums

STUDENT QUOTES

- "I like that you get to learn while having so much FUN!!!"
- Family Group
- "I like how we are outside the whole day" - Lahal Day
- "You can do fun distractions and sing along with your friends" - Lahal Day

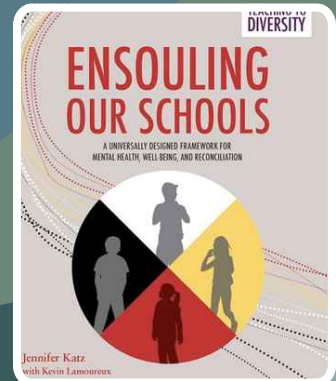
STRATEGIES

We have asked for feedback from the staff and the exiting grade 5 students as an example of intergenerational learning and feedback. Classrooms continue to take time to learn from the land in our outdoor classroom, Royal Roads forest, and school garden with growing support from Flourish! School Food.



LOOKING AHEAD

Our goal is to simplify family group activities and focus on community building, sense of belonging, and mentorships across age groups. We aim to expand the tournament by partnering with Hulitan Daycare and Westshore High School to foster intergenerational learning. We hope that the RCMP can also join next year and help make bannock.





CRYSTAL VIEW ELEMENTARY

THIS YEAR'S FOCUS AND HIGHLIGHTS

This year, we expanded our collection of Indigenous-authored books to support both classroom learning and our staff book club. Students learned from Indigenous Role Models and Elders through drumming, storytelling, dance, beading, and traditional games like Lahal. Ms. Nicole also worked weekly with classes on hands-on Indigenous activities such as making Talking Sticks, Button Blankets, beaded ornaments, and bear paws. Staff participated in workshops hosted by Qualicum First Nations, bringing back meaningful resources to enrich learning through play.

Our Grade 3/4 students reflected on Territorial Acknowledgements and created their own, incorporating their cultural identities while expressing gratitude and respect for the unceded traditional territories. Their acknowledgement opened our yearbook, morning announcements, and Spring Concert. The concert was especially meaningful as Grandma Clifton and older students performed for the community, ending with everyone joining in "The Women's Warrior Song" arms raised as warriors. Crystal View will also celebrate Indigenous culture at the year-end Fun Day through a variety of traditional games and activities.

EQUITY TEAM:

- CHRISTY CHIA
- TANYA CONSTABLE
- ALEXIS MILNE
- NICOLE HAGUE
- BRONWYN BRIGHT
- DONNA SAGODI



Grade 4 and 5 students at the Lahal tournament



Drumming with Gramma Clifton at the Spring Concert

Territorial Acknowledgement created by grade 3/4 class-published in the yearbook

WHERE WE LEARN & PLAY

We are from Crystal View Elementary. We are from all over the world.

Our school is near Mill Hill. We would like to acknowledge with gratitude and respect that we are on the traditional, and unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, specifically the Lekwungen (Songhees and Esquimalt) Nations.

We like spending time in nature by camping, swimming, running, fishing, and going on forest walks in Mill Hill. We promise to take care of the land by respecting nature, picking up garbage, composting, and recycling.

We will learn from Elders, continue learning about Indigenous peoples, and take part in important Indigenous days and events throughout the year. We will also show kindness, respect, and care for one another and the land we have the privilege to live, learn, and play on.

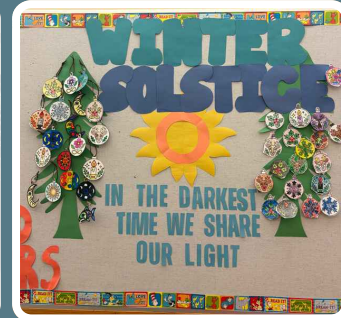
Hych'ka, K'leco K'leco, Maw'cii, Hat'mevz, Thank you

LOOKING FORWARD

Next year, our main goal is to implement the Circle of Courage Core Competency Reflection template created by the Equity Team this year, which some classes are already using. We are also excited to have Ms. Constable incorporate Indigenous content into library and ADST lessons. In addition, we will finalize a new school logo designed by a local Indigenous artist to reflect community and nature within the existing cougar paw. We are also committed to ensuring every class receives Indigenous learning experiences and visits, using school funds where needed.



Lanterns created for Winter Solstice



Winter Solstice - decorations



Button blankets created by students



Created by grade 4/5s after watching "Where Have All the Buffalo Gone?"





DAVID CAMERON ELEMENTARY



EQUITY TEAM:

- SHANNON CAUDWELL
- GEMMA CLARKE
- KIANNA TREWIN
- LYNN BROWN
- ROSIE COOK

THIS YEAR WE FOCUSED ON COLLABORATION, COMMUNITY, AND HONORING FNESC'S FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPALS OF LEARNING

In early September we gathered as a staff to drum and sing together. Teachers then met in grade groups and had collaboration time with Shannon, our NA'TSA'MAHT Classroom Program Assistant.

- "Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions"
- "Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational"
- "Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge"
- "Learning involves patience and time"



We held our third National Day of Truth and Reconciliation Assembly, where students read, "Stolen Words" by Melanie Florence.

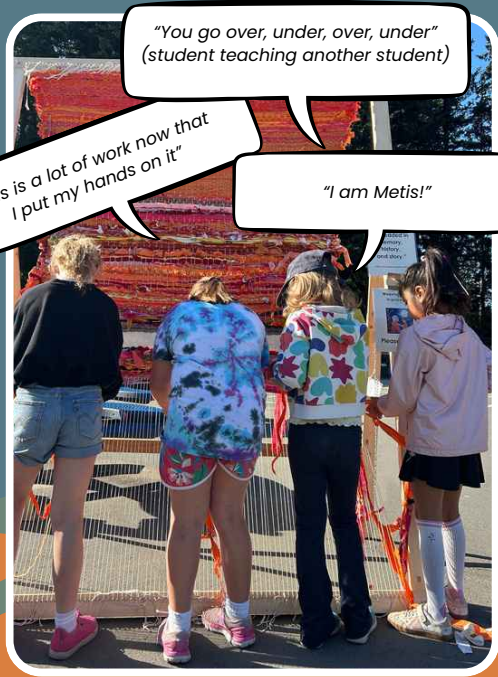


We were honoured to welcome guest artist, Dahlia Charlie, to help us create our Tree of Life.

Students, staff, and families have worked together to complete our Truth and Reconciliation loom that we started last year with Esquimalt and Tsartlip guest artist, Sherry Thomas. We look forward to hanging this important art work in our front foyer.

LOOKING FORWARD

In the year ahead we hope to weave SENĆOŦEN language into our daily learning. We will continue to amplify teacher collaboration. We look forward to decolonizing our foyer, and pursuing Equity Pro D as well.



"You go over, under, over, under" (student teaching another student)

"This is a lot of work now that I put my hands on it"

"I am Metis!"





HANS HELGESEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

GOALS AND FOCUS

This year we continued our learning and partnership with SĆIÁNEW Nation to expand our understanding of language and culture. A main focus for this year was weaving First Peoples Principles of Learning in a natural and meaningful way into everyday practices.

We followed the WŚÁNEĆ Moon calendar and highlighted each moon at our monthly assemblies. Students are continuing to show growth and ownership in taking steps toward truth and reconciliation by volunteering to share the territorial acknowledgement at assemblies and daily announcements. To end every assembly, each class led the whole school by drumming the Hy'chka song.



EQUITY TEAM:

- NICOLE HAGUE
- CAMILLE MCRAE
- TRICIA COOPER
- CHELSEA IRURETAGOYENA
- JOANNE DUBE
- KAREN SJERVEN



Drumming at our monthly assemblies



Orange shirt day



Drums made by Grade 5s and RBSS students

HIGHLIGHTS

Special guests we learned from include:

- Brother Rick – Storytelling and Hul'qu'mi'nun language
- Kookum Jo-Ina – Métis teachings and storytelling
- Glenn Grande – The "Thunderbird" drumming
- Ashlee Reitmeier – Dream catchers
- Delilah Charlie – Coast Salish art
- Fiona Chambers – Metchosin Farm

Special Activities to support learning

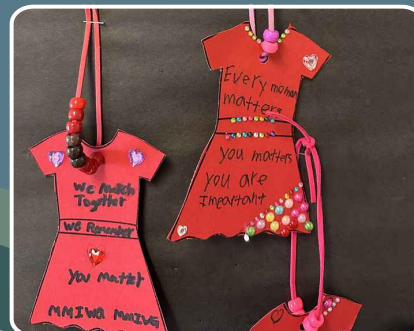
- Grade 4/5 working at Metchosin Farm
- Grade 3/4 releasing salmon at Goldstream Park
- Flourish workshops – seed saving, planting, harvesting
- in-class activities:
 - button blankets
 - bear paw mittens
 - talking sticks
 - beading and cedar weaving
 - Red Dress day dresses
 - lacrosse



WŚÁNEĆ Moons bulletin board



Watering our indigenous plant garden beds



Red dress day dresses



Bear paw mittens



HAPPY VALLEY ELEMENTARY

EQUITY TEAM:

- RUPERT GADD
- KRISTINE KOSOLOFSKI
- SELBY PELLOW
- ALICIA PETERSON
- LAURA SCHAEFFER
- SARAH STIRLING
- KATE YAKAMOVICH
- KENDRA LAIDLAW

GROWING TOGETHER (FOCUS)

At the start of the school year, our staff spent time learning the drumming songs that our students know and perform at assemblies. This helped staff feel more comfortable participating alongside students and also created a meaningful way to open staff meetings together as a group.

Students regularly read the territorial acknowledgement at assemblies and during morning announcements, showing growing confidence and ownership in their own journeys of truth and reconciliation.

We completed our first rotation of Coast Salish Animals of the Month and have begun revisiting the animals with the addition of Michif names. This helps honour and reflect the lived experiences of our Indigenous students, who are of Métis heritage.



CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEY (HIGHLIGHTS)

The staff and students at Happy Valley Elementary are grateful for the many opportunities to learn from and work with knowledge keepers and Role Models this year. With the support of the NIE department and our school PAC we continue to enrich student and staff experience with authentic voices and activities in the following ways:

- Kookum Jo-Ina Metis presentation and medicine pouch making
- Saanich Moon bulletin boards co-created with NCPA and class teachers
- Whole school presentation with Indigenous storyteller Kung Jaadee
- Cedar bead necklace making
- Salish Weave
- Raising Salmon and participating in a salmon release
- Drumming with Grandma Clifton
- Creating Lahal sets for all of our intermediate classrooms
- Garden workshops incorporating traditional knowledge



Monthly bulletin board - The Bullhead Moon

FUTURE PATHWAYS (GOALS)

- Further expand our work in language learning, both in SENĆOŦEN and Michif for students, staff, and families.
- Continue to develop our school culture and collective identity by selecting a new school mascot that reflects both the character traits of our school community and fosters a meaningful connection to a local animal
- Honour diverse ways of knowing, doing, and sharing understanding by exploring Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles as a staff



Surveys for "values of Happy Valley School"



JOHN MUIR ELEMENTARY



K/Grade 1 Clay QELENSEN

OUR VISION

John Muir is committed to fostering a school culture where Indigenous knowledge, histories, and perspectives are respectfully and authentically embedded in all aspects of learning. We strive to build meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities. We continue to honour diversity which enriches our community and to ensure that every individual deserves success and to feel valued and to be heard. We feel honoured to work, live, and play on the traditional unceded territory of the T'Sou-ke Nation.

EQUITY TEAM:

- CORRINE MERX
- JESSICA HEPTING
- ELLA LEBLANC
- HAILEY RIDLEY
- MANDI BECKING
- TAMMY DELEENHEER

YEAR OF LEARNING

This year, our school has continued its commitment to Indigenous education by meaningfully integrating Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum. Students continued to engaged with authentic Indigenous stories, teachings and resources across many subject areas. We were honoured to welcome Indigenous Knowledge keepers and community members into our classrooms . Continued connections to the land and sea through hands-on exploration of the local beach and forest to learn about the importance of the plants and animals that inhabit these ecosystem and their significance in Indigenous knowledge systems. We were honoured to host a NA'TSA'MAHT Dinner in partnership with the NIE Department and our local Nation. The evening provided a meaningful opportunity to come together in community, celebrate learning, and share the important work happening within our school alongside our Elders and Ms. Hailey. Families had the opportunity to view student art and writing inspired by the NIENE moon, reflecting students' learning and connections to the teachings of the Saanich seasonal calendar. As a school community, we reflected on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action through events such as Orange Shirt Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. These learning opportunities fostered empathy, respect, and understanding in our students. While we acknowledge there is more work to be done; we are proud of the steps we've taken this year and remain committed to deepening our relationships with the local Indigenous communities and continuing this important journey of learning and reconciliation.

LOOKING AHEAD

- continue to strengthen relationships with the local Nation and deepen students' understanding of local Coast Salish ways of knowing, being, and belonging
- continue to foster stronger connections to the land and sea through purposeful, place-based learning experiences
- increase the visibility and everyday use of SENĆOŦEN language and culture



Whole school mural representing NIENE moon





ÉCOLE JOHN STUBBS MEMORIAL

EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS

Team Members: Our team has two administrators, a teacher librarian, two NCPA members and teacher representatives from the elementary and middle schools. We are a K-8 French Immersion School.

Equity Goals:

Working on Indigenizing the school logo with a local artist.

- Creating an outdoor learning space accessible for all of our students.
- Developing confidence in engaging in the work of decolonizing teaching practices.
- Learning to talk about the culture with authentic resources to avoid cultural appropriation
- Students and staff learning drumming and songs taught by knowledge keepers

EQUITY TEAM:

- TRACEY ANNE GEORGE
- KEELY ROBERTS
- ANGELINA HENDRY
- CANDACE DONNELLY
- MEGAN POMPER
- THERA DE GREEF
- KATRINA ABELL
- MELLISSA RYAN



Have a Heart Mural

Artist in Residence, Dahlila Charlie worked with elementary students to create this *Have a Heart Mural*. It is proudly displayed in our main hallway.

Grandma Clifton worked with middle and elementary students teaching them traditional drumming.

Highlights



Drumming

LOOKING AHEAD

- Contine to work with an artist to create a new logo representative of our school on traditional territory
- Hold assemblies based on local Coast Salish traditions
- Review the resources we currently have and continue to build them and find ways to share and engage them with the teachers
- Continue to invite knowledge keepers to our school to teach our students and staff
- Further study the Indigenous Atlas of Canada



WITH PAC SUPPORT, AN INDIGENOUS OUTDOOR LEARNING SPACE WAS BUILT. ELDER SHIRLEY ALPHONSE HELPED US OPEN OUR LEARNING CIRCLE WITH A WATER BLESSING



Kindergarten Class creating their personalized territorial acknowledgement





LAKWOOD ELEMENTARY



Witness Blanket Project for Orange Shirt Day

INTRODUCTION & HIGHLIGHTS

At Lakewood, our champions of equity continue to work hard on integrating First Peoples' Principles of Learning into day-to-day curriculum. Our population is approximately 5% identified students from various nations and backgrounds. Our primary goal at Lakewood is to ensure these students feel welcome and supported in all aspects of their school experience, with a secondary goal of bringing understanding, empathy, and learning to non-Indigenous students in the spirits of Truth and Reconciliation.

Some highlights include:
Métis beading, playing Lahal, Bannock-making, and other cultural learning opportunities.

EQUITY TEAM:

KERRY ARNOT
 CHERISE BOUVIER
 OLIVIER EMERY
 MEG GRIEVE
 KAYDENCE KAUFFMAN
 CAM MEIKLEJOHN

EQUITY GOALS & FOCUS

Our equity team has identified several areas of growth for this year. We have been working on:

1. Continuing to **welcome Elders and Knowledge Keepers** into the school
2. Focusing on **Métis knowledge** and resources in particular to support our representative population
3. **Building an in-house collection** of authentic resources in library for Equity
4. Continuing **expanding land-based learning** opportunities
5. **Integrating Indigenous learnings into routines** (i.e. regular territorial acknowledgements on announcements, drumming/singing at assemblies, using "Hych'ka" instead of thank you with staff and students)

Indigenous role models who visited this year:

- Kookum Jo-Ina - Métis culture and history, Fur Trade.
- Ashlee Reitmeier - History of beadwork and beading activities.
- Brother Rick - Drumming
- Janine Bradley - Nature walks, identifying Native plants, storytelling, Hul'qumi'num language learning.
- Dahlila Charlie - Coast Salish design elements and art.
- Marlee Paterson - Michif (Métis-language) learning.
- Grandma Clifton - Drumming and learning the Women's Warrior Song.
- Julie Cohen - Métis fiddling and jigging.
- Glenn Grande - Thunderbird the medicine drum and the Seven Grandfather Teachings.



Thunder Drumming with Glenn Grande



Inuit Soapstone carving



Hands on with Métis artifacts.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

For next year we are hoping to build on previous successes/projects to continue the good work already being done in the building:

- Continue territorial acknowledgements, singing/drumming, language integration throughout the days and weeks
- Build empathy and understanding within our non-Indigenous community of families through meaningful dialogue as to the legacy, ongoing impacts, and goals of Truth and Reconciliation
- Further integrating land-based learning opportunities
- Begin the process of equity meetings earlier in 2026/27





ÉCOLE MILLSTREAM



Julie Cohen (Métis fiddler) visit

FOCUS & GOALS:

CONNECTING TO THE SEA, LAND, & SKY

- 1) Understanding how the land, sea and sky are interconnected and woven throughout the First Peoples' Principles of Learning.
- 2) Knowledge building and sharing learning to empower our students and the school community.

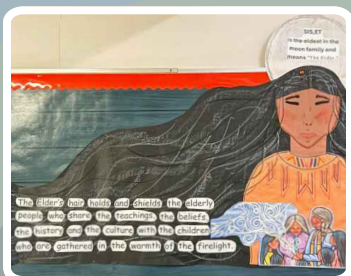
EQUITY

TEAM:

MARY ADAIR
 LAURA COLTON
 NATHAN GATES
 DYLAN JOY
 MICHELLE KING
 SHARON SCHWARTZ

SUPPORTING LEARNERS:

- 1) **Truth & Reconciliation Walk** – Continued with our annual walk to the corner of Millstream & Treanor to show our support for “All Kids Matter”.
- 2) **WSÁNEĆ Moons** – Monthly bulletin boards and lessons in the classroom. Expanding a bit more on the events related to the moons (ie. SXÁNEL – BULLHEAD MOON...a time for harvesting seaweed), along with other things visible in the sky (ie. Orion’s Belt).
- 3) **Winter Solstice** – A shared lesson and slides was given to all teacher to allow for in-class learning and discussions.
- 4) Invited **Role Models** to support Indigenous learning (ie. Bruce Comaniuk – chalk drawing for Indigenous Games Day, Drumming – Grandma Clifton, & Julie Cohen – Métis Jigger and Fiddler).
- 5) **Indigenous Language Day** – We invited Kung Jaadee to our school to kick off Literacy Week. She shared her traditional Haida stories, personal experiences, and contemporary Haida life.
- 6) **Land Acknowledgements & Hych’ka Siem** – used daily and monthly to recognize, honour, and respect where we live, learn and play. Students took on leadership roles on the announcements and assemblies in sharing the territorial acknowledgement. As well, some intermediate students wrote their own thoughtful land acknowledgements to share with the school.



SIS,ET – Elder Moon



Kung Jaadee – Haida Storyteller



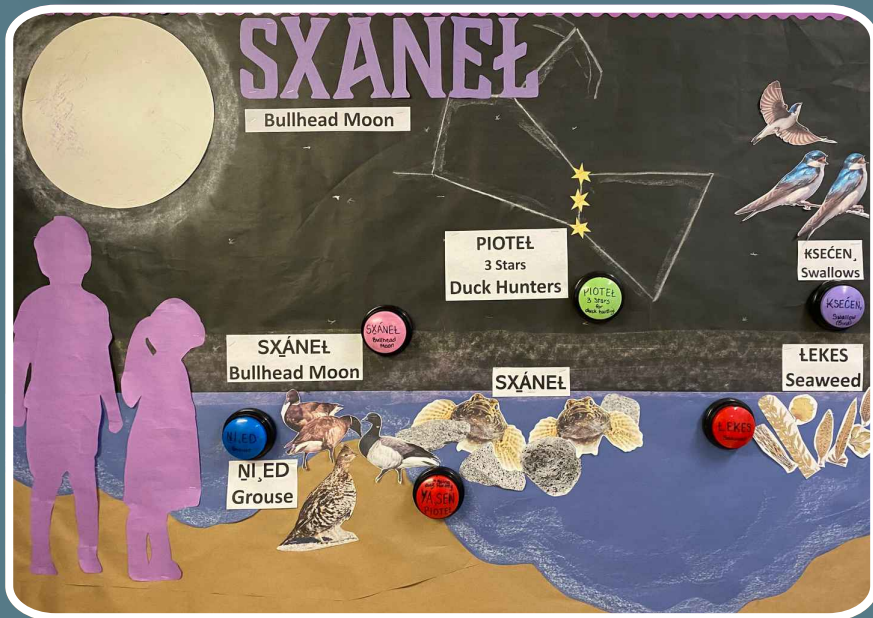
Drumming with Grandma Clifton



Truth and Reconciliation Walk



ÉCOLE MILLSTREAM



SXÁNEL – Bullhead Moon bulletin board with SENĆOŦEN word buttons

SUPPORTING LEARNERS CONTINUED:

- 7) **Indigenous Games Day** – We continued with some of last years games/activities (eg. Bruce Comaniuk for chalk drawing), along with introducing some new activities. Shared knowledge of the importance games played in their every day lives for hunting, fitness, and building community.
- 8) **Indigenous Book List** for story reading in the classroom and ways to connect the curriculum to the “Land, Sea, & Sky”.



Jaadee Kung – Haida Storyteller

MOVING FORWARD:

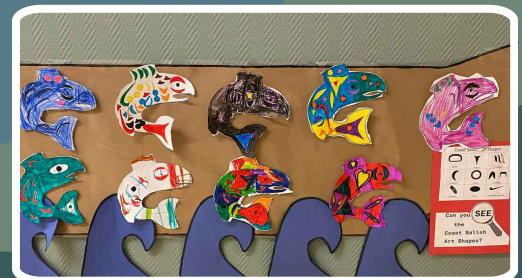
- 1) **Professional Development** – We are in the planning stages of a November workshop with the Qualicum First Nations Culture Program to organize a pro-d day for our staff and to possibly open it up to other staff in the district.
- 2) **Indigenous Language** – Highlight language in the classroom more throughout all the grades. Incorporate Indigenous Language into our Literacy Week and showcase some Indigenous Authors (local and across Canada).
- 3) **Indigenous Learning Fair** – Have more classes join to showcase our learning.



Truth and Reconciliation Walk

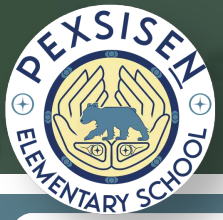


Drumming with Grandma Clifton



Coast Salish Art Shapes





PEXSISEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

EQUITY GOALS AND FOCUS

The PEXSISEN Equity Team and school community continued to engage meaningfully with local Indigenous knowledge, guided by the teachings of our school name, PEXSISEN (“open hands”). This work remained grounded in hands-on, relationship-based learning, including visits from role models, an artist residency, expanded drum-making opportunities, school-wide assemblies, and other student-centred activities.

Building on last year’s goals, we strengthened inclusive practices by increasing Indigenous language learning opportunities, creating adapted materials, expanding the annual Honouring Assembly, and recognizing Red Dress Day for the first time. Throughout the year, we focused on deepening students’ connection to the PEXSISEN community and the meaning of our school name. This included expanding the Grade 5 drum-making tradition to include painting drums, continuing participation in Lahal tournaments (with a need to further develop intramural opportunities), and supporting student leadership through territorial acknowledgements. We also increased access to Indigenous language learning, including all students learning and singing the Hych’ka Siem song.



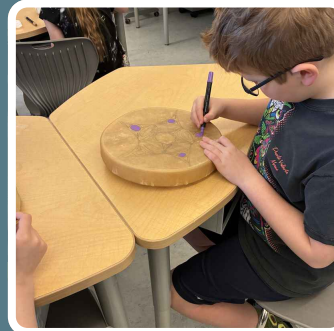
2025-2026 Honouring Assembly

EQUITY TEAM:

- MATTHEW BARKER
- JENNIFER BUREAU
- CAITLIN ELVEDAHL
- HEATHER FINLAY
- JOSH JOHNSON
- RACHEL LERHE
- KATIE LONGPHEE
- RHIA WARDELL
- KEELY ROBERTS

SUPPORTING LEARNERS AND HIGHLIGHTS

- Strengthened relationships and cultural learning through visiting role models and artist-in-residence Dahlila Charlie who helped expand our drum-making tradition of last year by helping students paint each drum.
- Facilitated school-wide events, by expanding the PEXSISEN Honouring Assembly, with guests, presentations and community involvement, National Indigenous Peoples Day and introduced Red Dress Day.
- Increased student voice and engagement through student-led territorial acknowledgements and contributions to assemblies, art displays, and the school legacy video.
- Deepened SENĆOŦEN language learning and seasonal teachings through stories like the PEXSISEN ŁKÁLJ story, signage with QR codes linking to First Voices, and additional resources.
- Expanded participation in cultural practices such as Lahal to support student understanding and connection.
- Improved accessibility and inclusivity by expanding the Equity Team and adapting Indigenous learning opportunities for students of diverse abilities.
- Equity survey data shows a foundation of respect for Indigenous learning and a commitment to inclusive practices across the school community.



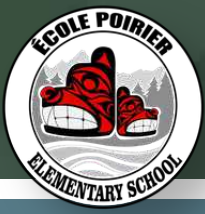
LOOKING AHEAD

Overall, this year reflected steady progress toward our goals, with meaningful opportunities for student learning and connection. Looking ahead to the 2026-2027 school year, we will build on this work by:

- Increasing participation in Lahal through intramural games and by hosting the 2026-2027 tournament.
- Continuing to integrate Indigenous representation across all areas of learning and school culture.
- Expanding access to Indigenous learning opportunities for students of all abilities.
- Fostering First Peoples Principles of Learning through the next annual PEXSISEN Honouring Assembly

Celebrating Spring and New Beginnings





ÉCOLE POIRIER ELEMENTARY

GOALS

To build school-based resource collections for use with students throughout the year.

Continue to build on place-based learning opportunities, connected to Indigenous ways of knowing and the curriculum.



EQUITY TEAM:

NICOLE UNDERWOOD
VICKI IVES
CAITLIN ADSETT
KEVIN PARSONS
SANDI ARTS
BEA ANDREWS
SEAN BROWN
CHARLOTTE KARLEEN
SANDI BOWERS

Our school community is on T'Sou-ke Nation territory surrounded by nature. We are committed to Truth and Reconciliation; in conversations, activities, relationships, and learning.

IN OUR SCHOOL WE:

- Give individualized territory acknowledgements to connect with place
- Invite role models to teach all of us
- Incorporate SENĆOŦEN and Southern Michif languages through our Na'tsa'maht Classroom Program Assistant
- Play and share Lahal in classes and with community
- Use our surrounding forests to connect to place
- Acknowledge and honour cultural dates and annual events
- Have a school mascot, the Black Bears, and logo designed by former student Isabelle St. Pierre from T'Sou-ke Nation
- Host a full-day Indigenous Day in June



OUR PATH FORWARD

- Include Calls to Action in assemblies and school culture
- Continue to focus on First Peoples Principles of Learning
- Include our families and whole school community in Truth and Reconciliation
- Incorporate SENĆOŦEN into daily activities, announcements, greetings, displays, and counting
- Explore ways to honour more cultural dates and annual events, such as Red Dress Day



PORT RENFREW SCHOOL



GOALS FOR 2026-2027

- Increase our time learning from and on the land.
- Continue improving student attendance through family and community connections.
- Work with Paaʔčiidʔath fisheries and mill to increase land based learning opportunities.
- Incorporate a daily drumming circle with every student participating.
- Make drums with all students and staff.
- Increase participation in community events and activities to increase local cultural knowledge and understanding.
- Cedar Bark Harvesting, Prepping, and Creating with students.
- Continue introducing Ditidaht words to students and add signage to our school.
- Teach our students Lahal and play a tournament in community.

EQUITY TEAM:

KAILEE PURNELL
 KYSA WADSWORTH
 ALEX WALMSLEY
 LAURIE KUZMAN
 TRYSTAN DUNN-JONES
 TESS VALLY



Taking advantage of our location to learn at our local Beaches.



Practicing Ditidaht at the beach.



Trail building at our school.

TOGETHER WE :

- Learned and celebrated cultural Nuu-chah-nulth teachings.
- Joined Paaʔčiidʔath Fisheries to prepare fry for release into the river.
- Harvested and planted Camas with Paaʔčiidʔath Fisheries.
- Worked with a local elder to create art.
- Learned drumming with a local elder.
- Began learning Ditidaht names for local landmarks.
- Walked to our forest and beach for learning on and from the land.
- Made and planted a school garden.
- Invited family into our school to strengthen trust and ties with community.
- Joined community to share food, celebrations, and learn together.
- Included Middle School Grades in our school to keep children in community.
- Learned to surf at our local beaches from community members.
- Planted Eel Grass and Crab Apple Trees in the fall.



Planting locally harvested Camas in community.



Clipping fish with Paaʔčiidʔath Fisheries.



Visiting other schools to learn together.



Working on the land.



RUTH KING ELEMENTARY

EQUITY TEAM:

ADDIE DE CANDOLE

TRISH MCNABB

SARAH FINNIE

GORD JOHNSON

EQUITY GOALS AND FOCUS AREAS

Our school has intentionally embedded the First Peoples Principles of Learning into our daily practice and culture by embracing *Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being, and Doing* across a range of authentic experiences. Events such as drumming, beading, and storytelling bring to life the interconnectedness of culture. Through class-personalized territorial acknowledgments, the study of the Coast Salish Moons, and school and community-wide recognition of Orange Shirt Day, Red Dress Day (MMIWG2S+), Indigenous Veterans' Day, we foster learning that is rooted in history, memory, and respect. Students and staff engage in deeper learning about the culture and continued presence of community. Indigenous perspectives are woven into learning through the use of Coast Salish shapes, Waxes beading, and updated library resources that celebrate Indigenous voices and ways of knowing.



Orange Shirt Day March



Drumming with Grandma Clifton



Red Dress Day March with Dorreen Scow

LOOKING FORWARD

Our school will continue to strive to align our practices and teaching methods with Indigenous teachings by incorporating cultural practices into school events. We create space where all students and staff can engage meaningfully with Indigenous perspectives, honour diverse ways of knowing, and build a school culture grounded in respect, reciprocity, relationship and high academic standards.

- High expectations for everyone who walks through the door
- Equity Team to focus on the Coast Salish Moons throughout the year with monthly bulletin boards and scheduled meeting times
- Monthly staff meeting with a learning spotlight focused on sharing NIE resources
- Collaborative art project around the Coast Salish Moons
- Continue to use sharing circles and restorative justice practices
- Outdoor land-based learning



Na'tsa'maht Dinner



Indigenous Veteran's Day Ceremony



Coast Salish Shapes Artwork



Library resources





SANGSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Derrick, our NCPA, & peer helpers making bannock.

EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS

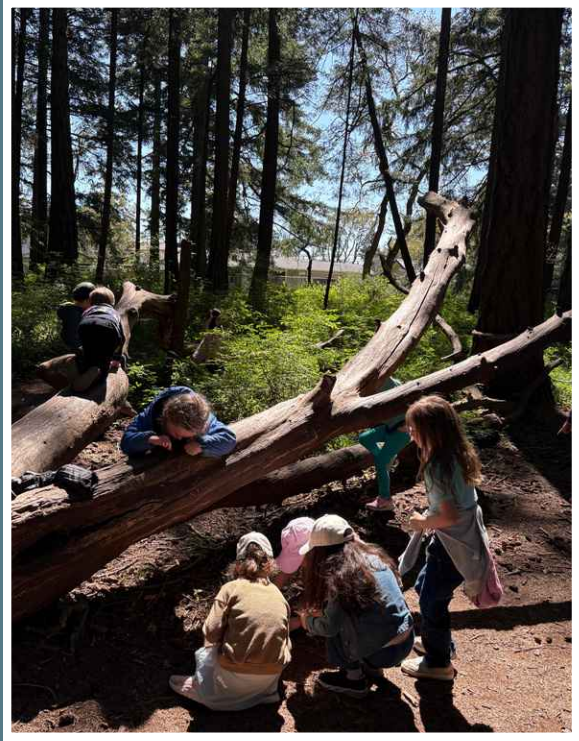
- Ensure Indigenous cultures, languages, and ways of knowing are meaningful & presented across the school (artwork, signage, land acknowledgements connected to learning, school events).
- Establish consistent cultural safety practices so Indigenous students experience school as a place free from racism, stereotyping, or deficit thinking.
- To increase the connection between the core competency animals and posters that were created a few years ago.
- To increase student awareness of our local Coast Salish culture by honoring Indigenous Seasonal Celebrations and Annual Events and by participating in land-based learning & Indigenous cultural practices

EQUITY TEAM:

CYNTHIA BERENYI
 SINCLAIRE LOVETT
 HEATHER MILES
 LORRAIN BUCKERT
 KATELYN PERRY
 DERRICK TITIAN
 KRISTA LEAKEY

SANGSTER'S HIGHLIGHTS, STRATEGIES AND COMMITMENTS

- All classes enjoyed bannock made by our NCPA & peer helpers
- Students requesting to say territorial acknowledgement to start the week & during assemblies; making bannock during primary imaginative playtime
- Collaborated with Artist in Residence, Dahlila Charlie, using Coast Salish shapes to create artwork
- All classes viewed the Coast Salish Weave; collaborative lessons with our NCPA & classroom teachers
- Classes enjoyed visits from the following role models: Ren Louie who did drumming & Lahal; Brother Rick who sang & taught Lahal; Grandma Clifton who did drumming; Julie Cohan who shared her Metis culture; & Glenn Grande who did Powwow drumming
- All classes participated in place-based learning in the forest (asking permission and leave no trace, nature stays in nature, quiet reflections, thanking the forest when we leave)



Forest exploration



Nature-based story workshop

LOOKING AHEAD AND NEXT STEPS

- incorporate Saanich moons into morning announcements, memos, & newsletters
- organize students into family groups using SENĆOŦEN plant & animal names; groups meet one afternoon a month to focus on whole-school Indigenous content





SASEENOS ELEMENTARY

EQUITY GOALS/FOCUS OF 2026/27

- Further incorporate Indigenous cultural learning in authentic ways throughout the year. Ensuring Indigenous Ways of Knowing are represented in our teaching and showcased in our school.
- Learn and teach about the Coast Salish Moons and incorporate SENĆOŦEN language at school assemblies and daily announcements.
- Signage in SENĆOŦEN will be added to our school.
- We will incorporate drumming into class and whole school events by learning the Coast Salish Anthem.
- Understanding the meaning of and personalizing T'Souke Territory Acknowledgement through our daily announcements.
- Add staff resources to support understanding and increase confidence in our ability to support our Equity Goals.

EQUITY TEAM:

ELAINE HADDAD
KATIE LIEBAULT
HAILEY RIDLEY
ALYSSA RICHARD
TESS VALLY



Elder Jackie pressing apples with Nature K



Exploring and learning in our natural surroundings



Grade 1 presenting on Orange Shirt Day

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Students once again had the opportunity to experience Kookum Jo-Ina's Métis 101. Some activities included a chance to explore and try on Métis regalia, put themselves in the shoes of Métis people through games and beading activities, and learning about the Bison. They also had the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of Métis culture later in the year with role model Julie Cohen who taught about Métis jigging and fiddling. Our River Runners were excited to participate in activities that connected learning to stories, traditions, music, movement, and art.

Saseenos is fortunate to benefit from extra time with Elder Jackie, who spends time with our Nature K students in the beautiful T'Souke Forest surrounding our school. Through these experiences, students are developing deeper connections to the land, local teachings, and Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Students participated in an array of educational activities to honor National Indigenous People's Day. Students walked in mixed grade groupings around community with stops to learn about local languages, flora and fauna as well as traditional and current customs. We learned SENĆOŦEN words from EMCS students who came to our classes to share their knowledge. We are individualizing and expressing understanding of acknowledging the T'Souke Territory when we gather.



Art with local elder for Red Dress Day



Coast Salish moons, and learning about Red Dress Day



Julie Cohen showing students her Métis scarf



Drumming with Brother Rick scarf





SAVORY ELEMENTARY



Brother Rick with the Golden Lahal Stick

EQUITY GOAL & FOCUS

Our goal at Savory is to create an inclusive culture of connection and belonging for our learners – connecting students with themselves, their learning, their community and their environment.

This year we have continued and refined our equity work with a focus on:

- Weaving first peoples principles of knowing, being and doing into our practice and culture
- Connecting to land and place through outdoor learning
- Fostering community connections and increasing opportunities for collaborative learning

EQUITY TEAM:

DERRICK TITIAN
 COURTNEY SIMCOFF
 DAVID VARGAS
 XIMENA MATHEWS
 CEILIDH DEICHMANN

SUPPORTING LEARNERS & HIGHLIGHTS

Strengthening identity and belonging:

- Student-led territorial acknowledgements and increased presence of SENĆOŦEN language during announcements has helped students connect to local culture, land, and identity in meaningful, everyday ways.

Enhancing cultural awareness and learning:

- Engagement with Elders, role models, storytelling experiences, and school-wide Indigenous learning events has served to deepen students' understanding of Indigenous perspectives, histories, and traditions.

Fostering engagement and community through culture and play:

- Events like the Lahal tournament, Literacy Week and our first ever Indigenous Day of Learning has integrated cultural practices with active, collaborative learning and community building.

Supporting reconciliation and social awareness:

- Participation in events such as Red Dress Day helped students develop awareness, empathy, and understanding of important social and historical issues.



Red Dress Paper Dolls



Red Dress Day Gathering



Truth and Reconciliation Day



Artist - Dahlila Charlie



Author - Robert "Lucky" Budd

LOOKING AHEAD

For the **2026-2027 school year**, Savory will work towards:

- Strengthening community through shared drumming and singing experiences and more mindfully embedding the practice of gathering in circle.
- Continuing to increase opportunities to learn and use SENĆOŦEN language, alongside a sustained emphasis on outdoor, land-based learning and collaborative experiences in nature.
- Students taking on leadership roles through cultural learning activities such as Lahal, with older students supporting younger peers.



SC'IANEW STELITKEL ELEMENTARY



Chief Chipps and Elder Shirley During our School Blessing

BEGINNING OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER

Our new school was gifted our name from SC'IANEW Nation, and means Salmon Children. In August we invited Chief and Council to our opening and our school was blessed by Elder Shirley Alphonse. We are grateful to have had Elders, Role Models, and Chief Chipps present on our first day of school and to drum our students into our new school. As we began our journey, we worked closely with SC'IANEW Nation in the development of our logo, which represents the beginning of the salmon life cycle.

EQUITY TEAM:

ERIN BUTTE

LISA LOCKERBIE

LISA PARK

KRISTIN HOLLAND

CAMILLE MCFARLANE

SCHOOL LEARNING

Throughout the year, our school Equity Goals were based around learning and understanding. We invited members of the SC'IANEW Nation and our Logo Artist to our start of year assemblies. Our staff and students learned the pronunciation of our name and gained a better understanding of the significance of our name. All students learned about the Salmon Life Cycle through participation in the Salmonids in the Classroom Program. Our Grade 1 students visited Goldstream to release them.

Our whole school also focused on the WSÁNEĆ Moons, with all students learning about the moons and participated in activities throughout the year to support this learning. All students also learned how to play Lahal in class, and we had a Lahal Club. Our school also recognized Red Dress Day.

In order to increase connection to the land and place based learning, one of our teachers led a PD session on outdoor learning and Indigenous plants, which encouraged staff to take students into the forest and participate in place-based learning.

We were fortunate to have various Elders and Role Models in Residence to share about drumming, art, and Métis Culture. Our Grade 5s made drums that will stay in our school for all future students.



Salmon Release



Learning about SAANICH Moons



Drum Making with Brother Rick





SOOKE ELEMENTARY

PLANTS



Building nests under the Cedars

Kindergarten students observe seasonal changes and explore local plants, deepening their understanding of growth and the traditional uses of medicinal plants. Primary students often visit the Camas Meadow or sit under the cedars to reflect and gather ingredients for teas and salves, fostering curiosity and a meaningful relationship with the land. Intermediate students take weekly nature walks and engage in sit-spot activities, followed by learning experiences that strengthen their connection to place. These practices emphasize that learning is experiential, holistic, and rooted in an understanding of the environment. Through these experiences, students develop a deeper appreciation for the land and its teachings.

GOALS:

CO-CREATE PLACE-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES WITH STAFF AND STUDENTS WHILE FOSTERING STEWARDSHIP AND MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS TO THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE.

EQUITY TEAM:

- MARION MAHONEY
- LISA MARIA SCHLOSSER
- MICHELLE NAHANEE
- JACQUI OULDALI
- EMILY HARRIS
- LISA STUART
- LIZ STANNARD
- GLENN GIBSON
- JENNIFER HUNT

PEOPLE

Na'tsa'maht, Indigenous Education Department, along with staff including Classroom Program Assistants, ESD educators, and teachers, provides daily support for our students.

Role Models offer meaningful opportunities for students to build multi-generational connections through learning, storytelling, and music.

These programs honor the voices and knowledge of First Peoples, fostering a deeper sense of belonging, identity, and respect for the land and one another.

As a staff, we remain committed to recognizing and decolonizing our teaching practices, ensuring that learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational.



Playing the spoons

PLACE

At SES, morning announcements include SENĆOŦEN language, bulletin boards proudly display Coast Salish art, and territorial acknowledgments are thoughtfully curated by students. The Coast Salish anthem is sung at assemblies and taught in Music class, accompanied by drumming. The school library features a collection of Indigenous literature, including Coast Salish stories, plant guides with SENĆOŦEN names and traditional uses. Additionally, the Coast Salish Weave Art Collection was displayed, and SENĆOŦEN signage is posted throughout the school.

"I learn more outdoors than I do in the classroom."- Grade 3 student



A visit from Kookum Jo-Ina and Rosie



WILLWAY ELEMENTARY

OUR YEAR TOGETHER



This year, Willway has continued to foster meaningful learning opportunities that celebrate Indigenous perspectives, community connections, and environmental stewardship. Beginning with our feather installation recognizing residential school survivors in the fall, we welcomed Indigenous Role Models into classrooms, highlighted animals of the month in SENĆOŦEN, hosted a school-wide art show featuring Indigenous artists, expanded our outdoor learning space/garden in partnership with the Flourish Society, and supported hands-on learning through Peninsula Streams watershed and salmon workshops. Students contributed to a collaborative school-wide art tapestry exploring sense of place, while our Métis picture book collection continues to grow in support of our lèllem.

EQUITY TEAM:

- PATTI CHRISTIANSON
- KEELY ROBERTS
- SHANNON MILLER
- ROBERTA STANDLEY
- POOJA NARANG
- CHELSEA MARLE
- GEORGIE WALKER
- BETHANY WIENS

LOOKING AHEAD

Moving forward, our Equity Team will focus on strengthening students' sense of belonging, connection, and safety by creating more intentional opportunities for relationship-building and regular check-ins with trusted adults throughout the school. To further support identity, representation, and belonging, we will make Indigenous learning more visible through interactive bulletin boards featuring Indigenous role models, SENĆOŦEN language, animals of the month, Saanich Moons, and the diverse cultures and languages represented within our school community. Students will continue to engage in hands-on, place-based learning through outdoor education, Peninsula Streams workshops, gardening, Indigenous plant identification projects, and collaborative art experiences such as the school-wide tapestry and Indigenous artist showcase. We also plan to expand opportunities for storytelling, cultural learning, and student participation through initiatives such as the Stories of the Land and Sea Club, increased access to Indigenous and Métis resources, and personalized land acknowledgement work. These practices are intended to build stronger relationships, deepen students' connection to land and culture, and create a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment for all students.





WISHART ELEMENTARY

INTRODUCTION & REFLECTION ON OUR YEAR

The staff at Wishart Elementary put thought and effort into creating a learning community that is welcoming and inclusive. Indigenous content is woven throughout daily learning. The Equity team has expanded the SENĆOŦEN language learning kits for each classroom to include plant resources connecting to our Indigenous garden. We completed our collaboration and adopted our new Coast Salish STKAAŦE wolf logo. We enjoyed many rich learning opportunities with Role Models and an Artist in Residence including drumming, bead work, bentwood boxes, exploring Metis culture, spooning and jigging. Indigenous studies is interwoven throughout all subjects during the year and an interactive bulletin was prepared to explore each WSÁNEĆ Moon. We are very fortunate to have access to a forested area and a learning garden that hosts Indigenous plants and this year we have labeled the plants in SENĆOŦEN as well as learned what plants we have naturally occurring in our plant walk trail. Our team has created an environmental board to enable students with communication disabilities greater access to the learning.

EQUITY GOALS

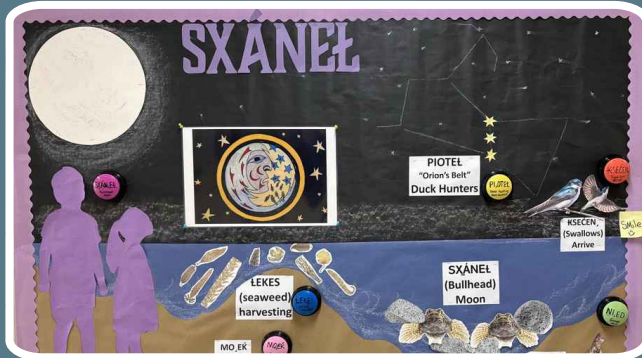
TO CONTINUE TO BUILD AND DISTRIBUTE SENĆOŦEN LANGUAGE RESOURCES FOR STAFF & STUDENTS. TO PROMOTE A CULTURE OF BELONGING, AND TO DEVELOP CONNECTION TO PLACE.

EQUITY TEAM:

AMANDA GRAHAM
KRISTI BRYANT,
JANE SINCLAIR
MARY ADAIR



Tasting Miner's Lettuce



WSÁNEĆ Moon Bulletin Board



Drumming with Role Model

LOOKING AHEAD

The Equity Team at Wishart Elementary has developed substantial strategies to support an inclusive environment. We will continue to:

- Ensure our diverse community is represented in classrooms and around the school, using a distinctions based lens.
- Monitor progress and support academics and social/emotional.
- Recognize and acknowledge each individual's strengths, traits, skills and needs.
- Continue to support connection to place and sense of belonging
- Continue daily territory acknowledgements.

As we move forward, the staff at Wishart plan to:

- Continue to expand our Indigenous plant labelling to include more native plants naturally occurring along our plant walk trail
- Incorporate more SENĆOŦEN language in the learning environment.
- Continuing to add to our resources about Indigenous plants and support staff in accessing current resources and supports.
- Weave in WSÁNEĆ moons meaningfully into learning.



Land Acknowledgments



Scanning Garden Labels



SENĆOŦEN Communication Board



SENĆOŦEN Language Resources

