

2023-2024 - Year 1 School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY

Admiral Seymour Elementary is a multicultural school located in a thriving neighborhood in the Grandview Woodlands area. The school serves 144 students from Kindergarten through 7th grade, representing a diverse range of ethnicities such as Indigenous, Syrian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Mexican, Colombian, French, Lebanese, and Jordanian. The students come from homes where languages like English, Arabic, Spanish, Cantonese, Punjabi, and Vietnamese are spoken. Approximately 37% of our students are English Language Learners.

Our school has a rich history, with its first building constructed in 1900 and a second brick building added in 1907. In 2000, Seymour Elementary celebrated its centennial with a celebration spanning through the decades. Over the years, as the neighborhood has evolved, so has the school, becoming a dynamic and vibrant hub of the community.

Classes at Seymour Elementary are organized as combined classes, grouping students from different grade levels together. The combined classes include Kindergarten, 1st/2nd grade, 2nd/3rd grade, 3rd/4th grade, 4th/5th grade, 5th/6th grade, and 6th/7th grade. The students adapt well to various instructional settings, including individual work, classroom activities, and small group configurations.

The safety and well-being of the students are paramount at Seymour Elementary. The school has two before and after-school care providers: Raycam, located at Hastings and Campbell, and the YMCA, which operates on the school premises. Additionally, the school offers school-based after-school programs focused on sports, Science, and leadership. The school has established significant partnerships with community groups, including the Saint James Music Academy for music programs and the Writer's Exchange for after-school writer's workshops. According to the MDI survey, 82% of Seymour students who took the survey reported having a positive after-school activity that contributes to their well-being.

To ensure students have access to nutritious meals, Admiral Seymour Elementary provides a breakfast program and a lunch program. The school also participates in the BC Agriculture in the Classroom initiative, receiving monthly shipments of fruits and vegetables. In conjunction with Fresh Roots Urban Farming Society and Growing Chefs, our school hosted a Lunch Lab "pop up" for the first time in the Spring of 2023, wherein students took part in the preparation, cooking and serving of nutritious food for the whole school. Healthy snacks are available at all times, and the school participates in the Backpack Buddies program, which allows students to take food home each week.

Additionally, Seymour Elementary serves as a Strong Start site, welcoming children between the ages of 1 month and 5 years on weekday mornings from 9:30 am to 11:30 am. The Strong Start Centre provides a welcoming space for families and caregivers to connect while offering preschoolers access to a rich and high-quality learning environment.

Our valuable community sponsors include the Terminal City Club, Lawson Lundell LLP, BC and Yukon Book Prizes, Sentinel Secondary and Brooksbank Elementary. We are especially proud of our 20-year partnership with Borden Ladner Gervais law firm (BLG) and love the weekly reading sessions with the lawyers in our classrooms. We also

love the books they bring and our school library is one of the best in the district thanks to the financial support of BLG.

Fine Arts opportunities are enriched through hip hop with Bugaloo Dance Academy, Queen drama workshops, music for all classes with the Saint James Music Academy and photography and visual arts through Artists in Residence in Schools.

We are proud of the diverse athletic opportunities available to students at Seymour Elementary. This year the Vancouver Whitecaps sent some of their best players and community coaches to run a soccer academy and lively soccer games take place every recess and lunch. Over 110 students had six weeks of triathlon training with Exceleration Triathlon. In the winter all classes had skating lessons and time on the ice. Throughout the year we offer basketball, volleyball, lunchtime yoga sessions, cross country running, track and field and gymnastics with Gym Sense.

2. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS? (SCANNING)

At Seymour Elementary, we believe in the power of experiential learning to engage and inspire our students. Throughout the year, we organized various field studies to provide our students with diverse opportunities for growth and learning. Our field studies encompassed athletic, artistic, and academic experiences, ensuring a well-rounded educational journey for our students.

We took our classes ice skating, swimming, hiking, camping, and running, encouraging physical activity and exploration. Our students had the chance to explore various educational sites in Vancouver, including Grouse Mountain, the Port of Vancouver, Vancouver Aquarium, Vancouver Public Library, Smokehouse at Britannia Elementary, Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver Art Gallery, Macmillan Space Science Center, Science World, the Museum of Vancouver, Maplewood Farm, and the Pacific Coliseum for the Hobiye celebration (Nisga'a New Year). Additionally, we organized a celebratory trip to Playland, providing a fun and rewarding experience for our students.

As part of our commitment to community-building, we arranged two outdoor school-wide field studies. One took place atop Grouse Mountain, allowing our students to connect with nature, while the other occurred at Cates Park on the traditional lands of the Tseil-Waututh people, fostering an appreciation for Indigenous cultures and traditions.

Within our school, we incorporated experiential learning through a range of in-school activities. Students engaged in Indigenous drum making, Bannock cooking, skateboarding, Earth Day neighborhood clean-up, photography with an Artist in Residence, silk banner painting with an Artist in Residence, a small business Maker's Faire, cardboard chair design, and tending to our school garden. Local walks and other community-based experiences were also integrated into our curriculum, providing hands-on learning opportunities for our students.

We recognize the importance of inviting experts to enrich our students' educational experiences. In the 2022-2023 school year, we welcomed the following experts to Seymour Elementary: West Coast Exotics, Orphaned Wildlife (OWL), Saleema Noon Sexual Health Educators, a librarian from the Vancouver Public Library, Davita Marsden from the Vancouver School Board Indigenous Education Department, and Brandon Peters, also from the Vancouver

School Board Indigenous Education Department. These experts shared their knowledge and expertise, further enhancing our students' learning journey.

Building connections and developing friendships is a priority at Seymour Elementary and our students love these opportunities to connect with peers outside of their local community. We have buddy classes at St. George's School, York House, and West Point Grey Academy, where students have the opportunity to connect and establish new relationships. Within our school, older students read with younger students, collaborate on projects, create gifts, cook, and celebrate holidays together. These special relationships and connections contribute to a sense of community and belonging among our students. Additionally, many of our senior students volunteer as helpers in classes throughout the school, fostering leadership skills and a spirit of service.

We understand the significance of reading both at school and at home. To ensure all students have access to books, we are grateful for the support of the Kiwanis Club of Vancouver, the Tzu Chi Foundation, and Books for Me, who have provided books for our students to have at home. Our partnership with the Vancouver Public Library continues to thrive, with library representatives visiting our school to promote summer reading programs, assist students in obtaining library cards, demonstrate reading techniques to parents and caregivers during Welcome to Kindergarten events, and welcoming our students to both the main branch and the local branch in the Strathcona neighborhood.

Our school garden is an integral part of our educational environment and another activity our students enjoy. The garden club meets during lunchtime, and students are responsible for the care, maintenance, planting, harvesting, and tending of the garden. Last year the soup made from our vegetables was served as a warm winter treat after school and a spring salad was welcomed in May. A highlight of the year for our community and our garden club is the day we have a garden open house and share the bounty of our harvest with students, families, staff and community members.

In our Applied Design, Skills, and Technology (ADST) program, our students have thrived and made steady progress in utilizing the design process. One of the highlights of the year was the December marketplace, where each senior student embarked on an entrepreneurial journey. They conducted market research, designed prototypes, produced their own products, and sold them at a market open to all students, staff, and parents.

Looking ahead, as part of our three-year plan, we are actively researching ways to incorporate technology with Universal Design for Learning. Throughout the grades, ADST projects encompass a wide range of activities tailored to students' personal interests and developmental levels. Some examples include:

- Personal interest projects
- Stop motion animation
- Building a bear den
- Knitting, sewing, felting, and weaving
- Designing and constructing gingerbread houses
- Creating plaster masks and parachutes
- Practicing coding
- Designing dream playgrounds and schools
- Building and testing bridges
- Constructing 3D marble mazes
- Jewelry making
- Building planter boxes
- Making soap
- Baking and cooking throughout the year
- Designing and building simple machines
- Designing and creating Halloween costumes.

By engaging in these ADST projects, our students develop valuable skills, unleash their creativity, and gain hands-on experience in various areas of design and technology – all of which they welcome. At Seymour Elementary, we are committed to fostering a dynamic and forward-thinking learning environment that prepares our students for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

3. WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE LEARNERS?

(SCANNING)

As a tier one designated Inner City School, we prioritize the well-being and support of our students. To meet their diverse needs, we have dedicated staff members such as an Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker, Youth and Family Worker and a Student Behavioural Support Worker. Additionally, 22% of our students have a Ministry of Education Designation, and we have thirteen School Student Support workers (SSWs) who provide academic and social emotional learning assistance.

Data from the Middle Years Developmental Instrument (MDI) 2022/2023 reporting year indicates that our students have a higher-than-average connection to the adults at school. Among the general population of Vancouver, 70% of students surveyed identified a supportive adult as an asset. At Seymour Elementary, this percentage rises to 73%.

We greatly appreciate and value the role of parents and caregivers as partners in education. Our Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meets monthly and actively supports our school community. They have provided classroom resources, facilitated the purchase of technology, acquired Indigenous resources for our library, and have been involved in various initiatives. Some of the initiatives undertaken by our PAC this year include organizing a community dinner during Communicating Student Learning (CSL) conferences in February, Friday morning community coffee, funding Saleema Noon and her sexual health educators, and coordinating the Welcome Back Barbecue for September 2023.

At Admiral Seymour Elementary, our mission is to educate the whole child. We prioritize addressing the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students. Central to our approach is promoting kindness—kindness towards one another, kindness towards our school, and kindness towards ourselves. By emphasizing kindness and providing comprehensive support, we strive to create a nurturing and inclusive learning environment for all our students.

4. WHAT IS THE FOCUS FOR OUR COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS BASED ON THE EVIDENCE? (FOCUSING)

We place a strong emphasis on kindness within our school community. We strive to cultivate an environment where kindness is practiced and valued. This includes promoting kindness towards one another, fostering a sense of empathy and respect among students, staff, and the community beyond. We also encourage kindness towards our school itself, instilling a sense of pride, responsibility, and care for our physical learning environment. Moreover, we emphasize the importance of self-kindness, teaching students to develop a positive self-image and prioritize their own well-being.

By focusing on academic, social, and emotional growth while emphasizing kindness, we aim to create a supportive and inclusive learning community at Admiral Seymour Elementary. Our goal is to empower our students to become

well-rounded individuals who are not only academically prepared but also equipped with the skills, values, and attitudes necessary to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

An important step towards being successful is utilizing Jennifer Katz's Three Block Model of UDL that recognizes the role of mental health programming and emphasizes four pillars: Self-Worth, Belonging, Cognitive Challenge and Social Learning. The crucial roles these pillars play in promoting mental health, student engagement, achievement and attendance is integral to the growth of our school.

On a final note, it is worth mentioning that this approach to UDL aligns with the whole child worldview of Indigenous Education and reconciliation – two aspects that are woven into the fabric of Seymour. This perspective recognizes the importance of considering the social, emotional, and cultural aspects of students' lives in addition to their academic development. In doing so, Seymour staff aim to foster compassionate classrooms that are inclusive and support the well-being of all learners.

5. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING)

After dedicating time asking questions about school culture, student and community perceptions and how we define and create a culture of kindness, we are committed to growing and challenging our practice in regards to how we respond and work with the curriculum to better meet the needs of our learners. Six guiding questions were asked to help drive discussion in relation to our school growth plan:

What does a positive school culture look, sound and feel like?
How would we describe the current school culture at Seymour?
What are Seymour's current values?
How do we think our student/families would describe the staff at Seymour?
What is the relationship between kindness, ethics and values?
What is the goal of kindness and where does it come from?

Data was collected in terms of key responses and ideas and further work was done in regards to what we wonder and what actions stem from this data. We will continue to engage in activities such as this while returning to and reviewing data from previous discussions.

Moving forward, our inquiry question will be: How will we create a culture of care and kindness that supports academic and personal growth?

How will we effectively create a culture of care and kindness while supporting academic, personal and social emotional growth through the lens of inclusion, equity and reconciliation?

6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

By utilizing the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) model based on competencies developed by CASEL, we are committed to the development of our students. By assessing where our students are and identifying where we want them to be, we aim to design strategies and interventions to support each child's social emotional growth.



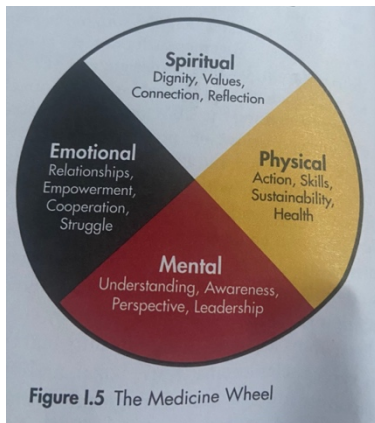
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Creating a strong sense of belonging, care, and kindness within our powerful goal. It helps foster a positive and inclusive school culture students feel supported and valued. By integrating social emotional learning into our curriculum, we are committed to providing students with essential skills, attitudes, and behaviors to navigate their daily tasks and challenges effectively and ethically.

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By expanding our focus on social emotional learning beyond the classroom to school-wide practices and policies is a significant step. It will ensure that the principles and values of SEL are embedded in all aspects of our school community and will be evident across environments. By promoting a community of kindness and emphasizing caring and supportive interactions, we want to create an environment where students thrive and flourish both inside and outside of the walls of Seymour.

In year one, staff are examining the Three Block Model of Universal Design for Learning while developing



schoolwide practices that promote kindness. With positive behaviour intervention strategies in place, we are focused on creating clear, safe and warm boundaries for our students that prioritize building healthy relationships with peers and adults that foster stability and predictability. Over the course of the next year, Seymour staff aim to collaboratively come together to implement schoolwide community building in addition to SEL programming that addresses the needs of our learners. With a sense of belonging, in addition to a strong, kind and caring culture in place, we hope to see an increase in attendance while also further challenging students academically.

One of our biggest shifts for the upcoming school year is to adjust the way we are teaching reaching across the grades. This means moving away from the Reading Recovery model and leveled guided reading and moving toward inclusive classroom instruction using the guiding principles in the Science of Reading as well as UDL (Universal Design for Learning). We know that our students need a strong sense of community and belonging at Seymour and by increasing the time spent as a class and having targeted in-class resource support rather than a pull-out model, we hope to increase their sense of belonging. We will collect baseline belonging data next year through the MDI.

As we focus on building a community of kindness, we expect to see students' friendships and pro-social behaviours increase.

7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

Moving forward, we are looking to implement a variety of programs for social emotional learning at Admiral Seymour. These programs play a crucial role in supporting the holistic development of our students. Programming that will be continued, utilized or require new learning are:

1. Restorative Justice: This approach focuses on resolving conflicts and addressing harm by emphasizing accountability, empathy, and repairing relationships.
2. PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports): PBIS promotes positive behaviors by establishing clear expectations, teaching appropriate social skills, and providing recognition and rewards for desired behaviors.
3. TAPS (Talking About Personal Boundaries): TAPS helps students understand personal boundaries and teaches them how to communicate and respect personal boundaries in various situations.
4. Whole body listening: This program encourages active listening and teaches students to use their whole bodies, including their eyes, ears, and brain, to focus and understand.
5. Zones of Regulation: The Zones of Regulation framework helps students identify and regulate their emotions by categorizing them into different zones and providing strategies for self-regulation.
6. Mind Up: Mind Up incorporates mindfulness practices and social-emotional learning to develop students' self-awareness, emotional regulation, and overall well-being.
7. Mindful Breathing: This practice involves teaching students techniques for focused breathing to promote relaxation, stress reduction, and self-calming.
8. Second Step: Second Step is a comprehensive social-emotional learning curriculum that covers various topics, including empathy, emotion management, problem-solving, and communication skills.
9. Ready Bodies, Learning Minds: This program focuses on the connection between physical and cognitive development, promoting self-regulation and readiness for learning.
10. Sensory Room: A sensory room provides a calm and safe space where students can engage in sensory activities to regulate their emotions and improve their focus.
11. Medicine Wheel: The Medicine Wheel is a cultural tool used in Indigenous education to promote holistic well-being and balance in physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects.
12. The Virtues Project: The Virtue's Project is a global Initiative that is about cultivating character. ["The mission of the virtue's project is to inspire people of all cultures to remember who we really are and to live by our highest values."](#)

These programs, along with the data gathered from the Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA), anecdotal evidence, and current research, provide a strong foundation for our social emotional learning initiatives. By nurturing caring environments, building nurturing relationships, and intentionally teaching students the skills they need for social and emotional fitness, we are fostering the healthy and happy development of our students. It's evident that professional development and training for staff members is a priority for addressing the various areas of need in social-emotional learning and creating a supportive environment at Admiral Seymour Elementary. Here are some key points to consider:

- Training Needs: Staff members would benefit from training and ongoing professional development in areas such as Universal Design for Learning, the Science of Reading, PBIS, trauma-informed practice, and targeted social-emotional learning. This training should cover topics like peaceful problem solving, growth mindset, executive functioning, and self-regulation. Bringing in experts to facilitate these trainings and ensuring ongoing support is crucial.
- Collaboration and Planning: Providing dedicated time for staff to collaborate on a weekly basis is important, especially considering the significant changes and potential staff turnover. This time can be

used to plan and align strategies, share best practices, and ensure consistent implementation of social-emotional learning initiatives.

- **Visual Supports:** Creating pictorial visuals for problem-solving, kindness, expected behaviors, and self-regulation will benefit students across all classrooms and learning spaces. These visuals will provide visual cues and reminders, supporting students in understanding expectations and reinforcing positive behaviors.
- **Alignment and Communication:** It's essential for all staff members, including administrators, teachers, support staff, engineers, lunch program staff, supervision aides, and guest programmers, to be familiar with the expectations and vocabulary related to social-emotional learning. This ensures consistency and alignment in supporting students' social-emotional development. Sharing these expectations and plans with community partners, such as RayCam and the YMCA before and after-school care, will help maintain consistent expectations for students in both school and after-school programs.
- **Common Vocabulary and Code of Conduct:** Developing and implementing a common vocabulary for expectations and problem-solving will promote a shared understanding among students, families, caregivers, and staff. It's important to recall and reintroduce the work done on PBIS from 2018-2021 and review expectations with all stakeholders. This revised work should be reflected in an updated Code of Conduct to provide clarity and guidance for behavior expectations.

By addressing these needs and ensuring ongoing training, collaboration, and alignment, you will create a cohesive and supportive environment that promotes social-emotional learning and positive behavior for all students at Admiral Seymour Elementary.

8. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK? (CHECKING)

We will know when we are successful when our students report a strong sense of belonging at Seymour Elementary and when we see students increasing their ability to take risks and expand their capacity for all types of learning.

We expect to see an increase in the number of students who have a strong sense of belonging with their peers. On the MDI, only 50% of our students surveyed indicated a high level of peer belonging. Conversely, 42% have a low feeling of belonging with their peers. We also expect to see an increase in the number of students who rate their school experience highly on statements such as:

- "I am certain I can learn the skills taught this school year."
- "People care about each other at this school."

This year, 75% of our students responded medium to high for each of these statements while 58% responded medium to high on the statement, "I feel like I am important to this school."

As reported in the MDI, children's sense of safety and belonging at school has been shown to foster their school success in many ways. When children have positive experiences at school, they are more likely to feel they belong within their school, feel more motivated and engaged, and have higher academic achievement. (Wang and Degol, 2016)

In November 2021 teachers, support staff and administration collaborated to complete the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) surveys for grades K-7. In November 2022, we completed the same surveys for students in K-7 thereby tracking all students in all classes. The DESSA provides 8 behaviour-based questions to help us learn more about how our students are accepting responsibility, being kind, using positive language, focusing, working in a group, performing tasks in order, showing care when doing work and following the advice of a trusted adult.

With increased instruction in social emotional learning and a focus on building a community of kindness, we expect to see these results continue to improve.

We also know we are being successful when we ask our students what they appreciate about Seymour Elementary and they tell us they like the gym, the math, the science, the big field, the staff, their friends, the kind teachers, doing Splash 'n Dash, going on field studies, creating art, all our library books, playing at recess, participating in sports, playing rigorous games of soccer and doing school work.

Overwhelmingly, what our students say they like the most at Seymour is the staff and their friends.

9. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION? (CHECKING)

Many teachers feature pride walls in class where students select which work to display in addition to some key highlights and practices that celebrate student learning, foster parental involvement, and promote cultural awareness:

1. **Pride Walls and Bulletin Boards:** Teachers at Seymour Elementary feature pride walls in their classrooms, where students can select and display their work. Bulletin boards throughout the school showcase visual demonstrations of learning, including family surveys integrating math and writing, visual models, poetry, self-reflections, goal setting examples, compliments for peers, connections to

literature, and cultural celebrations. A collaborative school-wide bulletin board outside the library reflects creative reader responses from the Book of the Month program.

2. **Communicating Student Learning (CSL) Conferences:** The school holds CSL conferences in the autumn and spring, providing an opportunity for parents and caregivers to celebrate student learning. These conferences allow for meaningful conversations between teachers, students, and families about progress, strengths, and goals.
3. **Winter Celebration and Meet the Staff Evening:** Seymour Elementary holds an annual winter celebration that showcases student artwork and creativity. In September, the school plans to resume the Meet the Staff evening, where families can reconnect with the staff and learn about their children's integrated projects.
4. **Artist in Residence Exhibition:** In June, Seymour Elementary hosts an annual exhibition featuring the work of the Artist in Residence. This event allows students and staff to celebrate and appreciate various forms of artistic expression.
5. **Grade 7 Guided Tours:** Grade 7 students take pride in guiding parents of incoming Kindergarten students on an extensive tour of Seymour Elementary, showcasing the dynamic learning environment and providing a warm welcome to new families.
6. **Year-End Slideshow:** The year-end slideshow is a highlight for both students and staff, sharing hundreds of joyful photos taken throughout the school year. The main display case features a computer with a large monitor that cycles through these photos, creating a popular and engaging space for students to see themselves and their classmates.
7. **Cultural Celebrations:** The main floor bulletin boards at Seymour Elementary celebrate and honor cultural traditions and holidays, including Diwali, Ramadan, Eid, winter celebrations, kindness challenges, Lunar New Year, Black History Month, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Indigenous Peoples Day, Pink Shirt Day, and Orange Shirt Day. This reflects the school's commitment to fostering diversity, inclusivity, and cultural awareness.
8. **Community Partnerships:** The school expresses gratitude to community partners through meaningful letters, collaborative writing experiences, and photos, acknowledging the importance of these partnerships in supporting student success and enriching the learning environment.

These practices and initiatives demonstrate Seymour Elementary's dedication to creating a supportive and inclusive community where students' achievements, cultural diversity, and social-emotional well-being are celebrated and nurtured.



District-wide Indigenous Focus (worldviews): To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all learners.

10. WHAT LEARNING HAVE WE DONE AT OUR SCHOOL TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS AND KNOWLEDGE?

Our Indigenous students are from distinct Nations including Haida, Nisga'a, Tsimshian, Squamish, Musqueam, Nuxalk and Kwakwaka'wakw. We also have Métis students. Many are deeply connected to their culture and are from families who have a strong presence in Vancouver's Indigenous community. Other students are living off-reserve in an urban setting and are not from families who are deeply immersed in Indigenous heritage. Our Indigenous students have diverse interests and talents including soccer, art, public speaking, reading, cooking, beading, canoeing, basketball and video games. We have students who actively seek experiences to learn more about their heritage through talking to family or elders or reading books by Indigenous authors. In our community, Hobiye (Nisga'a New Year) and National Indigenous People's Day are large celebrations while the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Day of Mourning and Orange Shirt Day are times for reflection, learning and memorial marches.

Currently, 36% of our students at Seymour are Indigenous.

We know that the majority of our students learn best through experiential, hands-on opportunities. Some prefer to work collaboratively and others prefer to work independently. We know that sustained tasks with paper and pencil are not preferred methods for learning or demonstrating knowledge and skills.

Crafting an Indigenous land acknowledgement and creating inclusive spaces for Indigenous culture were important steps towards promoting reconciliation and creating an inclusive learning environment. Here is an example of our Indigenous land acknowledgement which was written by students and staff:

"We respectfully acknowledge that we live, learn and play on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm/ Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh/Squamish and səliłwətał/Tsleil-Waututh People who were forcefully evicted from their homes but still live on and have the rights to these lands. We share this to show our commitment to continue unlearning and relearning to not repeat the horrible actions of the past."

By incorporating this land acknowledgement into gatherings and events, Seymour Elementary demonstrates respect for the Indigenous Peoples whose traditional territory the school occupies.

The creation of an All-Nations room with medicine wheel seating provides a safe and welcoming space for students to create, talk, share, and learn throughout the day, including recess and lunch. This space encourages a sense of community and offers opportunities for students to engage with Indigenous culture.

Transforming the library to include medicine wheel seating and dedicating 30% of library funds to books written by Indigenous authors is a significant step towards promoting Indigenous representation and perspectives in the

school's resources. By providing access to Indigenous literature, students can learn about Indigenous culture, history, and contemporary issues, fostering understanding and empathy.

The presence of an Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker (IEEW) at Seymour Elementary is invaluable in guiding students in Indigenous culture, knowledge, and history. The cultural teachings and experiences provided by the IEEW benefit all classes, promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.

Staff engagement in district-wide Indigenous Focus Non-Instructional Days and additional Indigenous learning workshops, such as the one facilitated by local artist Christine Mackenzie, further deepen staff members' understanding and ability to integrate Indigenous teachings and art into the curriculum.

The inclusion of books from the BCTF Authentic Aboriginal Picture Book list in the school library reflects Seymour Elementary's commitment to providing authentic and diverse Indigenous literature to students.

These initiatives demonstrate Seymour Elementary's dedication to incorporating Indigenous perspectives, teachings, and experiences into the school community, fostering cultural awareness, respect, and reconciliation.

11. WHAT EVIDENCE OF UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS AND KNOWLEDGE HAVE BEEN FOSTERED WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY? PLEASE SHARE HOW IT IS EMBEDDED THROUGHOUT.

As we learned from the Indigenous Focus Non-Instructional Day in May 2020, a hierarchical approach to education is not effective; rather, many of our classes and learning spaces include circular seating, talking circles, gratitude practices as well as time for honouring and appreciating others and themselves in a collaborative atmosphere. We commissioned Haida artist Eric Prytula to create a bee school logo to showcase us as the Seymour Sting and to represent our school's location on Indigenous lands.

Our commitment to Indigenous learning flows through the year. September 30th is an important day for our community as we honour National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. September is also when we introduce loom weaving which many students appreciate as a tool to increase focus and to create a beautiful woolen quarter bag. In October our classes experienced a traditional smokehouse in the city at Britannia Elementary and learned about the significance of salmon and how the fish is prepared and smoked for preserving.

On November 8th, we honour Indigenous Veteran's Day and this year focused on Indigenous Soldiers. Our students researched and gave daily presentations over the PA, practicing their public speaking skills and sharing their knowledge.

In February, we welcomed a cultural presentation by Three Crows entitled, How Raven Stole the Sun. As part of Pink Shirt Day, our grade 5/6 students embarked on a powerful project based on Indigenous poet and spoken word artist Shane Koyczan's book, To This Day.

March was Hobiye (Nisga'a New Year) and several classes attended the event at the Pacific Coliseum.

In April 2022, our students joined residential school survivor Elder Kat Norris from the Coast Salish Lyackson First Nation in the Kairos Blanket Exercise and several staff members attended a weekend workshop to enhance their learning of this powerful experience.

A highlight for our students each year is our bannock project, facilitated by our IEEW. She teaches each class about the traditional ways of preparing Bannock and each class does a bannock cooking session. The smell of fresh

bannock wafting through our school makes our mouths water as we yearn for the hot bread and jam. Last year we fried the bannock and this year it will be baked.

It is important for our Indigenous students to have role models, artists, mentors and cultural teachers. Working with Davita Marsden, 45 students in grades 5, 6 and 7 made traditional drums from sinew and hide. Further, we hosted Brandon Peters from the VSB Indigenous Education department to present his workshop about tanning buffalo hide.

For National Indigenous People's Day, we gather as a community of students, parents and staff to celebrate and honour Indigenous culture, history and traditions while sharing food and fun together.

Our school garden is an important space for our staff and students. Through a grant from the Environmental Youth Alliance we planted Indigenous herbs, shrubs and vegetables for observing and harvesting. To supplement the physical garden we purchased several Indigenous local plant and tree resource books.

All students at Seymour benefit from our book of the month project where we share a book, create a powerful response or collaborative project and each classroom gets a copy of the book. This year, 30% of our books are written by Indigenous authors:

- I Hope by Monique Gray Smith
- Still This Love Goes On by Buffy Saint Marie
- Be A Good Ancestor by Gabrielle Prince and Leona Prince

12. HOW WILL WE SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE AND KNOWLEDGE?

Seymour has benefitted greatly this year with the addition of an Indigenous Counsellor. We strongly believe that the latter has contributed significantly to building relationships and trust within our community.

Moving forward, we are committed to:

- sharing our Indigenous land acknowledgement when we gather
- continuing to share circles/talking circles/gratitude circles
- weekly Indigenous experiences and projects with our IEEW
- monitoring and following through with Individual Student Success Plans and AIMS
- increasing Indigenous content
- learning the Coast Salish anthem and singing it at each assembly and gathering
- incorporating First Peoples' Principles of Learning and the 7 Grandfather's Teachings
- inviting elders and Indigenous leaders to our school
- ensuring all our students are represented in the books and materials we select
- place-based learning outdoors on our school grounds, in our garden and on the community
- providing active, experiential learning modalities
- creating safe spaces within our school
- increasing opportunities for oral storytelling and story making
- including local Indigenous language on our bulletin boards, printed material, newsletters and displays
- ensuring we are listening to and learning from our students and families

When we asked our students to tell us what they are interested in learning and experiencing they told us:

"I want to learn how Inuit people make igloos."

"I want to hear more Indigenous stories."

"How do Indigenous people make canoes?"

"How are different types of traditional houses made?"

"Where do Indigenous People live now?"

"I want to learn how houses were made of snow and how Indigenous people caught fish."

"I would like to learn about language"

"I want to learn how Indigenous People made instruments like drums"

We know that we are being successful in our approach and commitment to increasing the knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students because we listen to our students. When we invited our students to share their Indigenous knowledge and understandings, they told us:

"I know that salmon is important to Indigenous people."

"Indigenous People built their own homes."

"Indigenous People were unfairly removed off their land."

"Indigenous People are the First People of Canada."

"Some children had to go to residential school."

"Cedar is important for Indigenous People and they make things out of cedar."

"Many Indigenous People died in residential school."

"What I know about Indigenous People is that they built their own weapons and hunting tools."

Further indications of success include attendance, engagement at school, connections with adults, student self-assessments, and the Indigenous individual success plans.