



1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Thunderbird ʂxʷəxʷaʔəs Elementary is a designated Enhanced Services Tier One Inner City school on the north-east side of the city. This year we have 210 students whose families come from diverse cultural, linguistic and economic backgrounds. Over 50% of our students are English Language Learners and 8% of our students meet Ministry standards for requiring specialized supports for their learning needs. We have a variety of programming to support all of our students in the regular classroom setting, such as a well-equipped sensory room, a fine motor area, and our new collaborative space - the Learning Lab. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, some of our students participated in the *Learning from Home* option that provided students and families with virtual connections with their teachers, while a parent at home supervised their learning.

We have a full-time Youth and Family Worker, Neighbourhood Assistant, and Literacy Teacher. Our food services shifted slightly to support the Provincial health restrictions this year. Our hot breakfast program regularly serves over 40% of our school population and hot lunch program caters to over 50% of our students. Additionally, KidSafe is able to provide after-school programming for a limited number of referred students, following strict health & safety protocols.

We share the site with the Thunderbird Community Centre and work closely with community center staff to plan after school programs and day camps during school holidays. The community center also has before and after school care as well as a pre-school program. To ensure the safety of all of our students and staff during the pandemic, guests and volunteers were only able to support our students virtually. We have and will continue to work collaboratively with the Community Schools Team and have many close partnerships with community groups and agencies such as Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) and the Learning Disabilities Society (LDS) of Greater Vancouver.

This year our students were able to enjoy virtual opportunities with the UBC Engineering Department to learn about coding and technology and to participate in the Artist in Residence program with Artist, Guna from the Tlinglit First Nation, as they learned cultural drawing, painting, and dancing. During this pandemic, we were still able to safely provide leadership opportunities through participation in Student Council, PA announcers, and equipment monitors.

At Thunderbird Elementary, we find many ways of celebrating our achievements. We seek opportunities to build community and to develop a culture of shared joy. We have monthly virtual Superstar assemblies where we showcase student success in any area and finish by singing our school song, "We'd Rather be Here." We are looking forward to resuming our popular Parent Coffee Group on Thursday mornings, when the pandemic is over.

It is vital that our students have the literacy skills to support a functional and successful life beyond school. This is the fourth year of our inquiry: **Which interventions and supports are the most effective for improving attainment in reading for all our learners?** In this final year, we continued to focus on providing students with a language rich environment and with opportunities to develop oral language skills. Additionally, we have provided early intervention through Reading Recovery and a robust early years reading program throughout their primary years and into the Intermediate grades.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

Our learners come from culturally rich and diverse backgrounds. Many of which are English Language Learners and are Indigenous. Our students are appreciative, polite, and display good school spirit; many students are involved in leadership activities offered at the school pre-pandemic, such as Playground Leaders, Student Council, Assembly MCs, and Lunch Monitors. Guests to our school describe our students as welcoming, helpful, and kind. They continually demonstrate a positive attitude, determination, and lively curiosity toward their learning. Impressively, our students display resiliency and perseverance in their lives. A core group of our students are challenged by absenteeism and chronic tardiness. Some of our students have difficulties with self-regulation and social-emotional learning, which impact their learning.

Our staff have observed that many of our students find the critical analysis of reading materials challenging. A large number of our intermediate students can decode but the assessments in comprehension show low results. Additionally, we notice students display a disconnect between what they are reading and life experiences; low background knowledge (or exposure) makes it difficult for our learners to find meaning in stories, concepts, and ideas taught.

Over the last 4 years, our staff have explored how our learners' needs drive the learning environment and teaching practices. We see our students as citizens of the 21st century fully immersed in the digital age of online engagement and ready for and motivated to take on learning challenges that have direct relevance and application. To greater enhance our own practices, our staff have engaged in professional development opportunities and collaborative inquiries, such as:

Fountas & Pinnell Classroom (FPC) Guided Reading Inquiry Pilot, examining:

- how to build stronger reading and writing connections through guided reading and FPC materials to address diverse literacy needs in students
- how to bring the First Peoples principles of learning into the use of FPC guided reading materials
- what is the impact on student and teacher literacy learning when using FPC guided reading materials

Adrienne Gear Inquiry

- How might we deepen students thinking to develop their reading, writing and understanding of themselves, others and the world?

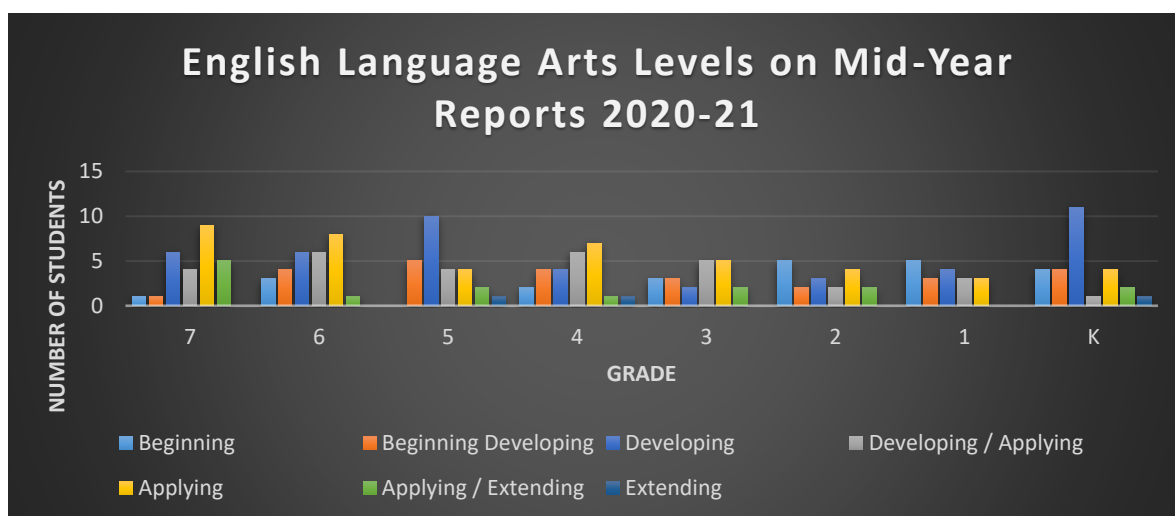
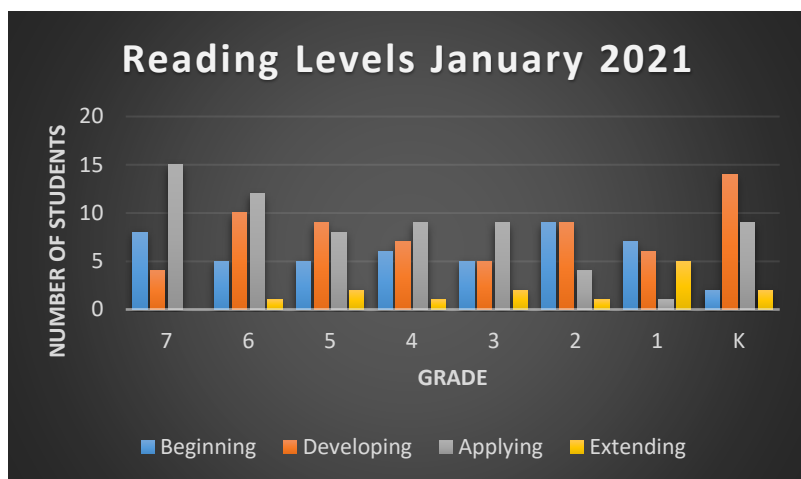
Writing Inquiry

- What are approaches and strategies that nurture and develop confident writers in the early years?"

Thunderbird Book Club

- Teaching to Diversity: The Three Block Model of Universal Design for Learning by Jennifer Katz
- examining how we can adjust our practices to meet all the varying needs in each classroom

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?



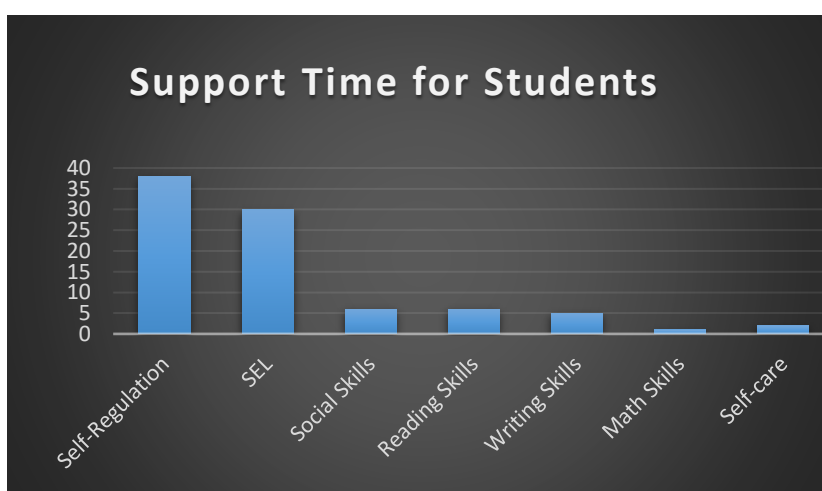
4. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

Communication with parents is ongoing and includes both formal and informal discussions. We encourage parents to view student work and progress through the online platforms, *MS Teams Classrooms* and *myBlueprint*. Additionally, we invite all parents to participate in our Communicating Student Learning (CSL) conferences to review their child’s learning strengths, areas for growth, and ways to support their learning. Regular updates from the Principal are provided via electronic newsletters and a more in-depth analysis of student learning is discussed at monthly PAC meetings. Prior to the pandemic, parents were invited to our in-person assemblies in which classes would showcase their learning through presentations. Parents are invited to view our monthly virtual superstar assemblies in which we celebrate student success. Meaningful consultation with parents of students whose learning needs are requiring special attention occur regularly with the school staff involved.

5. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

Throughout the last 2 years, our staff have engaged in important dialogue regarding the wellbeing of our students and how their learning is affected. These are the highlights of our discussions and what will move us forward in a focus for our school inquiry over the next few years:

- students are noticeably dysregulated at school and it impacts their learning; Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) are foundational skills and consistency through the grades is essential for success
- low problem-solving skills and SEL language observed
- SEL and emotional regulation are the building blocks for academic work; if students are not regulated they cannot learn
- the need for continuity of SEL language, strategies, and expectations through K-7; SEL curriculum
- COVID19 has had a huge impact on the social and emotional learning for our students
- question what is needed to create and sustain a culture of calmness, respect, care, and joy
- would like to shift inquiry to focus on Social-Emotional Learning for students to create a strong school community and help students develop life skills
- focused professional development as a staff in this area
- using the DESSA to collect data and measure progress



District-wide Indigenous Goal: To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.

6. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS LEARNERS IN OUR SCHOOL?

Thunderbird ᓃᓃᓃᓃᓃᓃ Elementary has a diverse population of 35 Indigenous learners across many different Nations, including Squamish, Musqueam, Tsleil Waututh, Haida, Nisga'a, Cree, Objibway, Kwaqitl and Metis. Our Indigenous learners are represented across all of our grades.

7. WHAT HAVE WE DONE AT OUR SCHOOL TO SUPPORT ALL LEARNERS IN REGARDS TO THIS GOAL?

Below is a list of supports and activities prior to and during the pandemic that we engaged in with our learners:

- Our Teacher-Librarian and Literacy Teacher created a collection of indigenous themed books in our library; this collection continues to expand based on district and teacher recommendations.
- Teachers are committed to infusing indigenous content into regular classroom work to make the curriculum more relevant for our learners.
- Sharlene Singh, from the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) provides gardening lessons using our eight garden boxes; four of which are designated to support the growth and teachings of Indigenous Foodscapes. To celebrate National Indigenous day, all students and staff tried various foods grown in our gardens and learned about the medicinal uses of plants in indigenous cultures.
- Our Artist in Residence, Megan Jensen (Guna) from the Tlinglit First Nations incorporates cultural learning through drawing, painting, natural art, and dancing.
- All assemblies begin with the acknowledgement of the land and the Indigenous Peoples whose land the school is on
- A full school acknowledgement of truth and reconciliation during our Orange Shirt Day assembly
- Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker, Candace Curr, has provided academic and social support for classes, small groups, and individuals.
- The Coast Salish word, ṣxʷəxʷaʔəs is a part of our school name and is seen in every school communication and on our school Spirit Wear.
- The Coast Salish cedar Totem pole, carved by Indigenous artist Art Bolton, prompts dialogue, interest, and curiosity as it stands beautifully in the Thunderbird primary playground.
- Elders & parents have been invited into classrooms to teach students about their traditions and culture.

8. WHAT WILL WE CONTINUE TO DO IN THIS AREA?

The following strategies and supports have all been effective ways of supporting the district-wide Indigenous Goal. Additionally, Thunderbird ᓃᓄᓐᓃᓄᓐᓃᓄᓐᓃᓄᓐᓃᓄᓐ Elementary will be looking at continued growth in the following areas:

- Dedicate professional development time to look at further ways of imbedding Indigenous content into classroom learning
- Cross School Collaborative Inquiry (AIRS): How does sustained collaboration with a resident artists in an established studio or virtual environment impact student learning in relation to the curriculum, the core competencies and the First Peoples' Principles of Learning? In what ways might the art marking process contribute to the development of social emotional intelligence and mental health?
- Continue to purchase Indigenous Education book sets and resources to be used in the library and classrooms.
- Staff will share their own learning journey and the work they are doing with students in the area of anti-racism and cultural awareness at the beginning of staff meetings.
- Invite speakers, parents, and any guests to provide teaching for students and staff
- Continue to develop community connections through Thunderbird Community Centre, RayCam, UNYA, RICHER as agencies to support our Indigenous students and families.
- Ongoing academic, cultural, and social-emotional support of our Indigenous Enhancement Worker
- Opportunities for students to make personal connections to reconciliation
- Weekly Parent Coffee Group with staff for strong connection and communication
- Utilize data found on AIMS and attendance tracking as measures of student engagement in school.
- Indigenous Day Celebration
- Participation in the District-wide Indigenous Grade 7 Leaving ceremony every June
- As a staff, opportunities for further exploration, discussion and implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

9. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE BEING SUCCESSFUL IN THIS AREA?

- Grade 4-6 Heritage Projects in which all students and parents are invited to attend
- Indigenous Foodscapes learning and harvest party for all students
- Student learning displayed throughout the school; showcasing their work in assemblies and school newsletters
- Community Engagement Events and Parent/Teacher CSL conferences
- Data collected from MDI and daily attendance
- Regular meetings with Indigenous Enhancement Worker and relevant school staff to input data into AIMS Success Plans; create a plan for support where needed
- Personal portfolios shared using online platforms and during CSL conferences with parents
- Peer and staff recognition in class, at school and during community events