

2022-2023 - Year 1 School Learning Plan

GENERAL SCHOOL STORY

Waverley Elementary School is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm | Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh | Squamish and səliwətaʔ | Tsleil-Waututh Nations in the area now known as south east Vancouver, British Columbia. Waverley School enrolls 395 learners in Kindergarten to Grade 7. This number includes two cohorts of learners who participate in the Vancouver School Board's (VSB) Social Emotional Learning Centre – Plus program which is located at the school.

Learners attending Waverley Elementary School have diverse backgrounds and speak many different languages. Waverley School has approximately 62 dedicated staff, many of whom have worked at the school for a number of years. Waverley staff support the inclusion of students with diverse and complex learning needs supported by classroom teachers, a Resource Team and a large team of Student Support Workers (SSW). Waverley's Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker (IEEW) and Youth and Family Worker (YFW) work closely and collaboratively to support students, families and staff. Waverley students are expected to follow the School's Code of Conduct – Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Your Best.

Waverley School values strong partnerships with local organizations. These include the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, Arts Umbrella, National Council of Jewish Women, Earthbites and Indigo. South Vancouver Neighbourhood House has an Out of School Care Program at Waverley School and generously provides staffing for extracurricular activities such as the Grade 6/7 Global Citizen's Lunch Program. Unique to Waverley is the Taiko Drumming Program which runs weekly after school led by one of our teachers on staff. Students involved in this program perform at school in assemblies, at the school's annual Terry Fox Run, at the VSB Celebration for Performing Arts and in parades and locally around metro Vancouver. Waverley received a three year Indigo Literacy Grant this school year.

Waverley School community has many assets. Waverley School has a Strong Start Centre Program, welcoming infants and preschoolers and their caregivers and introducing them to the school community. Waverley School has a garden which actively engages learners, teachers and parents/guardians. Waverley has a small, active and supportive Parent Advisory Council (PAC). Parents and guardians meet monthly to organize community building activities (eg. Bingo Night) and fundraising activities (eg. weekly hot lunch program and bottle drive) to support the school and the school community. The school garden and special events such as Sports Day, the Grade 7 Leaving Ceremony are also strongly supported by Waverley PAC.

Waverley School staff endeavors to align its school plan goals with the VSB's 2026 Education Plan. Waverley School staff is committed to Equity, Student Achievement and Reconciliation and is has been part of the VSB's Collaborative Early Literacy Initiative (CELI) Program for over a decade.

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

Waverley learners, K-7, and their families were significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. Many Waverley learners stayed at home for prolonged periods of time and did not attend school during some or all of the pandemic. The number of “Option 4” learners at Waverley, learners who learned from home for longer periods of time, were some of the highest in Vancouver School District. During the pandemic years, Waverley extracurricular activities and community activities after school and on weekends (eg. community teams and Killarney Community Centre) were limited or stopped. Services for students with complex learning needs during outside of school hours were limited or not available at all to students and their families (eg. social groups for students with autism).

Due to Waverley Health and Safety expectations, classes at Waverley spent most of the pandemic years (2020-2022) in their classrooms and in their designated ‘playzones’. Classes did not travel into the community (or beyond) on field trips or mix with other classes in or outside of the school. School-wide assemblies, and Sports Day as well as programs such as Peer Helpers and Big Buddies which connected classes across the school were paused. Library use for collaboration time and combining classes for learning was limited. After school sports did not take place at schools or between schools within the VSB.

Student absences at Waverley remained exceptionally high in January 2021 and significant numbers of learners were frequently absent when school resumed in September 2022. Waverley staff also observed that learners, in general, have needed much more learning and social skill development support since the pre-pandemic times.

Waverley parents/guardians have appeared to be more stressed since September 2022 with the impact of rising costs of living such as food and housing. This became exceptionally evident when Waverley parents/guardians were surveyed regarding access to Student Affordability Funds in November 2022.

Many Waverley students have also been sharing with Waverley teachers and staff that they feel lonely (have few friends) either at school or outside of school or both. Waverley staff also observe that students seem to get excited and attendance notably increases, when school wide activities take place and when they are actively involved (eg. PA Announcements, assemblies, Indigenous drumming ceremony etc.).

Waverley Staff have also reported feeling the isolating impacts of the pandemic. Health and Safety Covid 19 Protocols, while necessary, reduced the ability for staff to connect and collaborate. During pandemic years they have not been able to share food, converse as much during break times and before and after school, and share in the joy of school wide and grade level events and activities.

Staff strongly believe that learners need to feel a greater sense of belonging at Waverley School in order for them be engaged in learning and to have success both academically and socially. As such, Waverley educators believe Waverley students need to feel a greater sense of belonging. It is believed by the staff that if students feel a stronger sense of belonging, students will attend school regularly, become more engaged and that student achievement levels will improve.

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

(SCANNING)

There are a number of ways to collect evidence to support what we know about Waverley learners. There are Student Attendance Records (MyEd), Literacy Achievement Data K-7 from VSB Written Reports, and Reading Recovery Data (collected by the Reading Recovery Teacher and collated by the VSB). Evidence would also include annual MDI data, and Student Learning Survey Data (Grades 4 and 7). We will also be able to get a sense of connection and belonging from attendance in after school / lunch programs, community events and the Walking School Bus Programs. Anecdotal data can be collected by staff as well as artifacts from class wide and school wide activities. It will also be important to collect anecdotal data from parents/guardians. In terms of collecting evidence from students input or voice in this process, a survey that assesses student level of belonging and how to measure this will need to be created for the purpose of collecting data regarding this goal. Some students will need to have survey's read to them or answers scribed for them in order for data to be collected from every student.

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

It will be the focus to enhance a sense of belonging with all learners at Waverley School. As well as enhancing or increasing a sense of belonging and connectedness to the school, the focus will also be on enhancing student literacy achievement K -7 at Waverley. Specific focus will be given to more vulnerable learners and learners who seem or indicate loneliness or isolation or who do not attend school regularly or consistently. Vulnerable learners would also include those students who struggle academically (eg. lower literacy achievement levels), indicate that they feel lonely or less connected. The focus will also be on Indigenous learners. This focus connects to the VSB's Education Plan because Goal 1 of the VSB 2026 Education Plan is to "improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being and belonging." This focus connects to the VSB's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement where one of the key goals is "to increase Aboriginal students' sense of pride, self-esteem, belonging, place, acceptance and caring in their schools." The focus also connects to the personal and social core competencies as students will be focused on understanding their identities, building relationships, developing social skills and awareness, teamwork, connectedness to self and community and understanding others.

4. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING)

The pandemic years (2020-2021 and 2021-2022) had a profoundly isolating impact on the Waverley School community. Many students live in intergenerational households or with vulnerable family members which contributed to students staying home for longer periods of time. In order to improve the success for students, Waverley School needs to enhance each students' sense of belonging. Enhancing belonging needs to be individually, within classroom learning environments/communities and with the wider community. The key areas focused on will be increasing a sense of belonging and literacy achievement in all of our learners. Inquiry Question: **How can we enhance a sense of belonging for ALL students at Waverley to increase student literacy achievement levels?**

5. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

YEAR 1

During YEAR 1, our plan is to re-establish school programs and events to support increasing a sense of belonging and engagement for learners with school and between classes:

- Collaboratively implement Waverley's 'Walking School Bus' for learners who need support with getting safely to and from school and restart 'Big Buddy Programs' between classes.
- Hold monthly student-led assemblies (eg. Pink Day, Earth Day, Asian Heritage Month, etc.) run by classes and coordinated by Vice- Principal in collaboration with classroom teachers and learners.
- Hold school wide events to engage students and enable parents/guardians to attend such as the Terry Fox Run, Winter Concert, Dance 2 Play Hip Hop Program, Sports Day, Bike to School Week etc.
- Continue to establish a Community Room within the school for students, and parents/guardians to gather and connect with each other and with each other.
- Support PAC community connecting and building events - eg. Bingo Nights and Garden Enhancement.
- Involve Grade 7s in the creation of an 'Interactive' Welcome Bulletin Board at entrance of school.
- PA Announcements by students and supported by Vice-Principal recognizing school and community events and accomplishments. Ensure that PA Announcements are culturally responsive.
- Create a School Wide Kindness Tree which connects students and classes and highlights student voices about what kindness means to them.
- Establish Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Team of staff at Waverley School.
- Establish Literacy Team at Waverley School. Find ways to generate funding to improve collection of books and resources for school.

YEAR 2 and YEAR 3

During YEAR 2 and YEAR 3, the focus will be to continue to expand school wide initiatives, initiate classroom level changes, and collect data on belonging and literacy achievement levels. We will:

- Continue expand school wide activities above adding more events which "open up the school" to families and students.
- Teach students social skills and more specifically, ways to build positive relationships at school.
- Ensure that all students K-7 are able to identify two "SAFE ADULTS" they are connected with at Waverley.
- Continue to support PAC with holding interactive community building events (eg. Bingo Nights) and ensure that these events are accessible for all families to attend.
- Increase opportunities for student and parents/caregivers to connect in Waverley's Community Room (eg. parent/guardian lunches/gatherings, student clubs).
- Chart attendance improvements and track success of initiatives such as the 'Walking School Bus'.
- Focus on differentiated instruction in classrooms to ensure that classrooms are inclusive and equitable for all learners. Develop class strategies that are school wide to ensure that students experience a strong sense of belonging and community. Help students be able to articulate what/who they need for school success.
- Collect data by way of student surveys (this will need to be created) regarding student belonging – and distributed in Sept/Oct 2023 and again in April 2024.
- Hold focus groups of students to gather 'student voices' regarding School Plan to gauge impact and obtain feedback. Listen to different 'meanings of belonging' by students. Create more opportunities across classes and the school for student voices to be heard (eg. different ways to represent learning in classes).
- Provide collaborative opportunities for teachers to discuss ways to improve literacy achievement and engagement. Data will need to be collected to track increases in literacy achievement.
- Library book collection and resources will need to be reviewed carefully to ensure books and resources are current and that they are engaging for learners. Initiate author visits.
- Record/track numbers of participants in extra-curricular school activities (lunch and after school).
- Professional Development opportunities for Waverley staff on the topics of Belonging, Inclusion, Differentiated Learning and Literacy.

6. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

Teachers will need to collaborate time throughout this process to discuss enhancing/increasing student belonging and to coordinate classroom and school wide strategies that will have the greatest impact on student belonging and achievement. Waverley staff will need to have professional development in the areas of identity, belonging, equity, inclusion and literacy. We will also need to buy books and resources to support teacher education in these areas. Resources will also need to be purchased for Waverley's library so that the book collection is up to date and so that learners can "see themselves" in the books. We will need to bring in authors to inspire and engage our learners and continue to seek out community members to come into our school and engage with learners and school staff.

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

We will begin collecting data via student surveys and focus groups in late September and October 2023. We will use this survey as some of the baseline data. We will use attendance records from the 2021-2022 school year as baseline and compare to improvements with attendance records in 2022-2023. We will record numbers of students involved in teams, events, extracurricular programs etc. We will use Literacy Data from Final Year End Reports from June 2022 as baseline data to see improvements in literacy achievements by students in 2023-2024. We will use annual Middle Years Development Index (MDI) data and Student Learning Surveys from YEAR 1 as baseline to track improvements in YEAR 2 and YEAR 3. If there are no changes or unanticipated changes, by the middle of YEAR 2, we will need to adjust and revisit/change our approaches/strategies.

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

We will share this information in a variety of ways with parents/guardians, students, staff and other members of the community. These will include:

- 'Waverley Weekly' – memo to to parents/guardians.
- Waverley website.
- Classroom level communications between teachers and parents/guardians.
- In conversations between administrators, YFW and IEEW and parents/guardians.
- PAC Meetings and PAC Meeting Minutes.
- PAC Bulletin Board (in the school).
- At School Community Events.
- During Learning Conferences.
- In meetings with community partners.

We will collaborate with other schools to find creative new ways to share information about our school plan with parents/guardians and members of the broader community.



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

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

The learning that is taking place at Waverley to support and enhance our understanding of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge is an important and continuous journey. Waverley learners are in different places with respect to their learning about Indigenous worldviews and knowledge. Some learners have well developed understandings. Other students are new to Canada and may have understandings of Indigenous peoples and cultures from their countries but are new to learning about Indigenous peoples in British Columbia. Waverley staff are also in different places personally and professionally with respect to their learning about Indigenous worldviews and knowledge. Some staff have been born and raised and have taught for many years in BC while other staff are new to the country. One way or another, Waverley staff are committed to Reconciliation - taking action to make meaningful changes in classrooms and in the school which disrupt long standing, historical and colonial structures and ways of being.

Waverley staff participate in annual professional development provided on VSB Indigenous Focus Days. Waverley educators also seek out other means of personal and professional development through reading, taking courses and workshops, collaborating with colleagues from other schools in the district.

Ways that Waverley educators are committed to integrating Indigenous knowledge and worldviews are:

- reading stories/poems and literature written by Indigenous authors in classes and in the library.
- integrating Indigenous knowledge and worldviews across subject areas (beyond Social Studies).
- following the First People's Principals of Learning in classrooms (eg. recognizing and understanding that learning takes time and patience).
- teaching about residential schools in developmentally appropriate ways in classrooms.
- organizing ways for students to participating in district opportunities and field trips on related topics.

As a school, Waverley:

- Recognizes Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Day at the end of September each year by learning about the day in classes and by wearing Orange Shirts as a school community.
- Starts assemblies, PAC meetings, school staff meetings (staff committee meetings and school based team meetings) with land acknowledgements.
- Has a student created land acknowledgement at the main entrance of the school.
- Is trying to use a circle form for gathering more intentionally for class, staff and school meetings.
- Waverley Grade 7 teachers and school administrators worked with the Indigenous Education Department to build 30 Indigenous drums and held a Drum Awakening Ceremony in March 2023.
- Special efforts have been made this year to store the drums and integrating drums into class activities, assemblies and events.
- Is in the process of carefully removing, selecting and purchasing books and resources for the school library.
- Is in the process of purchasing resource books for educators on topics related to Indigenous education.
- Educators are working on collaborating with school IEEW to develop lessons for students in classes across the school (eg. Medicine Wheel teachings).
- Has intermediate students put up (and refresh when needed) orange ribbons on Waverley's school fence to honor the children who have died in residential schools.
- Is in the process of considering which Indigenous plants should be growing in Waverley's garden boxes.

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

During YEAR 2 and YEAR 3 of Waverley's school plan process, evidence of how Indigenous worldviews and knowledge have been fostered within Waverley School Community will need to be actively and intentionally collected. Data will need to be collected from multiple sources. Both qualitative and quantitative data will need to be collected. Student and parent/guardian perspectives will need to be gathered in a variety of ways. Waverley staff will need to collaborate with other schools in the district and the provide to find effective methods of data collection (eg. student surveys).

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

Waverley staff understand that Reconciliation is a journey that requires on-going and intentional action, meaningful connections and ongoing conversations, and learning. Waverley teachers are committed to continued learning about Indigenous perspectives and knowledge so that they are able to effectively embed Indigenous perspectives and knowledge in all curricular areas. This year, staff have:

- Worked with the IEEW in classes to learn about the 7 Grandfather Teachings
- Learned Coast Salish Weaving techniques for an ADST unit
- Went on field trips to the Vancouver Art Gallery to see the exhibition of Robert Davidson, visited Canoe Cultures to observe carving practices of canoes, visited the Museum of Anthropology for the exhibit: *č̓asnaʔəm, the city before the city*.
- Participated in the Reel to Reel International Film Festival For Youth with a focus on viewing indigenous films
- Students learned about oral storytelling
- Students have played the drums from the Drum Making Workshop in school assemblies to create new traditions
- Labeled indigenous plants in our school's courtyard
- Indigenous families have been invited to a luncheon organized by the IEEW & YFW in our Community Room
- 4 students from Waverley attended the Indigenous Education Grade 7 Moving Forward Ceremony

In order for staff and learners to continue to sustain and enhance our understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge we will need to:

- Seek out more opportunities for staff-wide Indigenous Focussed professional development.
- Seek out more opportunities for students to engage in related district and community events.
- Offer a book club to interested staff lead using Jo Chrona's book, *Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies: An Act of Reconciliation and Anti-Racist Education (2022)*.
- Continue to find ways to embed learning about Indigenous perspectives and knowledge at the school and classroom levels.
- Create more opportunities for parents to gather in our Community Room to connect with each other, with their children and with staff (eg. IEEW and YFW).
- Find more ways to engage Indigenous parents in school events and our PAC.
- Create opportunities for staff to listen to Indigenous parents/guardians/caregivers feedback about their experiences and their children's experiences at Waverley School.
- Continue to work on understanding Canada's Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) findings and recommendations and work on the specific Calls to Action that focus on education.