

SCHOOL NAME: Herbert Spencer

RATIONALE

Our school is a K–5 dual track community school offering both English and French Immersion programs. We serve a diverse population of approximately 452 students across 15 English divisions and 6 French Immersion divisions. This diversity enriches our learning environment and underscores the importance of fostering connection, belonging, and shared understanding among students.

In response, the school’s growth plan emphasizes play-based and inquiry-driven learning to strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy skills while nurturing risk-taking, resiliency, and curiosity. Guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning, the plan aims to ensure that Indigenous students’ cultures and perspectives are celebrated and shared, while Family Groupings continue to serve as a vital structure for building empathy, cross-age relationships, connection and belonging.

GOAL

The school will cultivate a play-based learning environment designed to enhance the development of literacy and numeracy skills through exploration, inquiry, and experiential learning. Instructional practices will promote risk-taking and resiliency, supporting students in viewing challenge and failure as integral components of the learning process.

Guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning, the school will foster learning experiences that are holistic, reflective, relational, and connected to both community and place. Indigenous students will be encouraged and supported to celebrate and share their cultural knowledge and perspectives, enriching the learning of all members of the school community.

Through the intentional use of multi-age Family Groupings, the school will strengthen connections, belonging, and collaboration among students, staff, and families, aligning with the district’s core values of empathy, belonging, curiosity, and resiliency.

OBJECTIVES

- Implement and expand play-based instructional approaches to promote curiosity, creativity, and engagement
- Strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy skills through inquiry and exploration
- Foster student risk-taking, resiliency, and reflection as part of the learning process
- Honour and integrate Indigenous perspectives and the First Peoples Principles of Learning across all curricular areas

STRATEGIES

- Support professional learning communities for staff on play-based, inquiry, and experiential learning approaches including the expansion of the “loose parts” story workshop
- Implement the BC Ministry of Education’s Early Literacy initiatives, including the use of literacy screeners each term to measure progress and inform targeted interventions to narrow the gap early for struggling learners
- Embed numeracy skill development within authentic, play-based learning contexts

- Build connection and belonging through Family Group structures and community partnerships
- Expand club offerings and provide increased leadership opportunities for our students

- Partner with Indigenous Support Worker and our Indigenous families to co-plan authentic learning experiences and celebrations of culture
- Facilitate Family Group Days and cross-grade collaborative projects and activities to foster mentorship and belonging
- Utilize data from the Foundation Skills Assessments (FSA), Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI), Early Years Development Instrument (EDI) and Parent and Student Satisfaction Surveys to inform evidence based instructional practices and guide further strategic initiatives

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Classroom observations and teacher documentation demonstrate increased use of play-based and inquiry approaches
- Playground observations indicate increased student engagement, cooperation, and harmony among peers, with a corresponding decrease in incidences of conflict
- Classroom and Family Group observations reflect strengthened collaboration, empathy, and peer support with students demonstrating increased ability to resolve challenges independently
- Literacy and numeracy assessments show measurable growth across grade levels
- Student self-assessments reflect increased confidence, persistence, and willingness to take learning risks
- Lesson plans and school events reflect meaningful integration of Indigenous perspectives and the First Peoples Principles of Learning
- Family Group participation data and feedback demonstrate greater engagement, connection, joy and enthusiasm for learning

Evidence of success will show increased student engagement, confidence and collaboration, alongside measurable gains in literacy and numeracy. Students will further demonstrate resiliency, belonging and curiosity, reflecting growth aligned with district values and the school’s learning goals.

COMMUNICATION/REFLECTION

Ongoing reflection will occur through collaborative staff discussions and planning meetings, working group meetings, and engagement with families. Evidence of student growth and school-wide progress will be shared through newsletters, assemblies, and Principal Messages. These reflections will guide next steps, ensuring the school continues to nurture curiosity, empathy, and belonging in alignment with district priorities.