



**WEST VANCOUVER
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
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Indigenous Education School Plan 2025/2026

1. School: **Ridgeview Elementary School**



2. School Indigenous Education Committee Members:

- Warren Zerbe
- Megan Roughley
- Shelley Gardner
- Catherine Kennedy

3. School Main Contact Person(s):

- Warren Zerbe
- Megan Roughley
- Shelley Gardner

4. Activities, events, speakers, presentations, projects etc. that have occurred at your location over the past two years:

Ridgeview has engaged in activities congruent to the goals from the Indigenous Enhancement Agreement, which are

- To use Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Perspectives to inform and empower our teaching, learning and decision- making.



- To enhance student success by facilitating transitions and pathways throughout the K-12 Journey.
- To create a sense of space and belonging for Indigenous students that is inclusive to all.

Professional Development

Professional Development has been led by our Indigenous Education and Professional Development Committees for the purpose of strengthening teacher understanding of the Enhancement Guiding Principles. In the past, Ms. Kennedy and Ms. Gardner have represented Ridgeview at the WVS Indigenous Circle, to share out what is going on around the district.

We also have had ongoing liaison with the Indigenous Support Teachers to improve sense of belonging and presence of students of Indigenous ancestry at Ridgeview and liaised with Bob Baker to support Indigenous education curricular connections:

- Show awareness of how story in First Peoples' cultures connects people to family and community
- Traditional and contemporary First Peoples' stories take many forms (e.g., prose, song, dance, poetry, theatre, carvings, pictures) and are told for several purposes
- Ridgeview Indigenous Education Committee continues to review curriculum to discover curriculum connections and activities to Indigenous Education

On September 24, 2021, staff participated in a professional development day at the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre to deepen their understanding of local Indigenous cultures and traditions. The day included a guided tour and a meaningful discussion with the curator about the impacts of residential schools. Following this, staff took part in a reflective walk to consider how they could approach these topics thoughtfully and respectfully in their classrooms.

In June 2022, the school began working with Alroy (Bucky) Baker, who led a drumming circle during Sports Day. As part of this collaboration, the Grade 6 students created cheers for four



Indigenous animal groups: Wolf, Orca, Eagle, and Raven, each represented on the paddles of the canoe displayed in the school foyer. These animal groups and cheers continue to play an important role in school gatherings.

In December 2023, staff participated in another professional development session led by Shannon and Phyllis, who facilitated the Blanket Exercise. This experience provided staff with a deeper understanding of the history and ongoing impacts of residential schools and colonialism, supporting the school's continued commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Most recently, in November 2024, staff engaged in the District Indigenous Professional Development Day, where speakers shared perspectives on Two-Eyed Seeing, a framework that weaves together Western and Indigenous worldviews to build mutual understanding and respect.

Library Resources

An extensive collection of Indigenous literature aligned with the K–7 curriculum has been carefully curated at Ridgeview. Our Teacher-Librarian developed and shared a scope and sequence outlining Indigenous content across the curriculum to support staff in deepening their understanding of this material as outlined by the Ministry of Education. To complement this work, our Teacher-Librarian created a presentation titled [Reflections of Indigenous Studies](#) to further explore these connections. The scope and sequence provides a framework for introducing Indigenous content and inquiry in a developmentally appropriate way at each grade level. Ridgeview's library includes a wide range of Indigenous resources to support curriculum connections across grades. These include Follett Library collections on residential schools and Indigenous stories, a Grade 2 resource focused on the salmon life cycle, and a Grade 3 unit exploring global Indigenous cultures such as the Coast Salish, Iroquois, Maasai, and Australian Aboriginal peoples. Additional resources are available based on teacher requests and thematic classroom needs.



Curriculum Connections

Ridgeview Elementary has actively participated in Orange Shirt Day each year as part of its ongoing commitment to reconciliation. All classes engaged in age-appropriate discussions and activities to raise awareness about the history and legacy of residential schools, and this work continues to evolve. Each class shared Phyllis' Story, supported by Teacher-Librarian, and contributed to a bulletin display that reinforced the message Every Child Matters. The display encouraged students and adults to reflect and ask important questions such as: What is Orange Shirt Day? Why do we recognize it? What does Every Child Matters mean?

Students created a class set of drums, which have been used in school gatherings and assemblies, including during Indigenous Peoples Month. Ridgeview's student teams: Wolves, Orcas, Eagles, and Ravens, represented the four paddles displayed in the foyer canoe and symbolized each learner's personal journey. These teams have continued to come together for assemblies and school events to build community and shared understanding.

In Grades 6 and 7, students have explored topics related to Truth and Reconciliation and the history of residential schools, while students in Grades 4–7 have examined symbolism in traditional and contemporary Indigenous art forms, including dance, song, story, and visual art, as well as objects used in daily life and ceremonial practices.

To support this ongoing work, Ridgeview has maintained a collection of Indigenous Education Resources on TEAMS, accessible to all staff for classroom planning and professional learning.

During the 2024–2025 school year, students engaged in a meaningful Salmon Inquiry Project that invited them into a shared community learning experience. It played a significant role in shaping our collective journey. This inquiry served as an entry point into bridging the cultural interface described by Dr. Amy Parent (2017) and supported our commitment to teaching Indigenous values through the 4Rs: Respect, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Reverence.

The salmon project launched the spiral of inquiry we aim to continue in the coming years, ensuring our Indigenous learning remains holistic and rooted in knowing, learning, and doing. It provided students with authentic opportunities to connect with place, understand local



ecosystems, and reflect on cultural teachings that guide stewardship and community responsibility.

5. Action Plan for 2025/2026

Items to Consider in Connection with the Goals:

Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh sníchim

- Our goal this year is to make the *Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh sníchim* (Squamish Language) more visible around the school through resources like:
 - [Held by the Land Card Deck](#)
 - [The Land Knows Me: A Nature Walk Exploring Indigenous Wisdom](#)
 - [Squamish-English Dictionary](#)
 - And more
- On the November 24th Pro-D Day afternoon, staff explored Indigenous plant resources in the Library and enjoyed a Coast Salish plant knowledge workshop with Squamish Nation ethnobotanists Senaqwila Wyss.

The Four R's

- Continue inspiration by recent work from staff and the District Indigenous Professional Development, in addition the *The First Peoples Principles of Learning*, we want to embed the *The Four R's: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity and Responsibility*; into our work with Truth and Reconciliation and valuing the Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being.
- The 4 Rs can be used in teacher planning to evaluate the resources they use, ensuring Indigeneity is incorporated into year plans, and/or lessons, and in establishing classroom values and common language at our school.

Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility

The "Four Rs" proposed by Verna J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt in their seminal 2001 work, provide a comprehensive guide for educators to engage with diverse learners in a meaningful



and impactful manner. As cited below from the *UBC Faculty of Education Professional Development & Community Engagement* <https://pdce.educ.ubc.ca/values/> 2024:

Respect

“The foundation of the Four R’s. It means recognizing the inherent value and dignity of all people, including Indigenous peoples and their knowledge. Respect also involves acknowledging and honouring the history and traditions of Indigenous peoples, including their unique ways of knowing, being, and doing. By demonstrating respect, non-Indigenous people can create a safe and welcoming space for Indigenous knowledge to be shared and valued.”

Relevance

“Relevance means recognizing the importance of Indigenous knowledge and culture in today’s world. Indigenous knowledge is grounded in centuries of lived experience and is deeply connected to the land and environment. By recognizing the relevance of Indigenous knowledge, non-Indigenous people can gain a deeper understanding of their own place in the world and their responsibility to care for the environment.”

Reciprocity

“Reciprocity means recognizing that relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples must be based on mutual respect, understanding, and benefit. Reciprocity involves giving and receiving in equal measure and recognizing the importance of Indigenous knowledge and culture in shaping our collective future. By practicing reciprocity, non-Indigenous people can build stronger relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities.”

Responsibility

“Responsibility means recognizing the role that non-Indigenous people have in creating a more just and equitable society for all. Responsibility involves acknowledging the harms of colonization and working towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It also means taking action to address the ongoing social, economic, and environmental issues facing Indigenous



communities. By embracing their responsibility, non-Indigenous people can work towards building a more just and equitable future for all.”

By embracing the principles of Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility, non-Indigenous people can build respectful and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities. This view starts student centered, and extends to the wider community. Therefore, our actions will be inclusive to our diverse community and staff. Through these relationships, we can work towards a more just and equitable future for all.

- With this in mind - our **2025/2026 Action Plan** includes:
 - Morning announcements using the Squamish language to start, traditional welcome, and on Fridays we play the Coast Salish Anthem.
 - Students enter whole-school assemblies to the Coast Salish Anthem.
 - Designing staff meetings and workshops to begin with cohort circles to open a shared discussion around the learning for our students.
 - Canoe Teachings with Bob Baker for our Grade 6/ 7s
 - New signs around the school in the *Sḵwxwú7mesh sníchim*
 - Working with Sylvia King, in collaboration, to support our students with Indigenous ancestry and their families
 - Tsitsayxemaat Rebecca Duncan (Language and Cultural Advisor) visiting our classes with students with Indigenous ancestry
 - Emphasis on place-based learning and our connection to the land. Whether it's exploration at the beach, outings to Chatwin, outdoor photography, the cool it challenge, and connections to Ambleside, etc.
 - Bring in [MOA/UBC Teaching kits](#) for hands-on learning experiences
 - On October 17, Grade 6 students experienced a one extended day field trip to the Cheakamus Cultural Centre in Squamish to make connections to the land, Squamish Nation history, and culture.



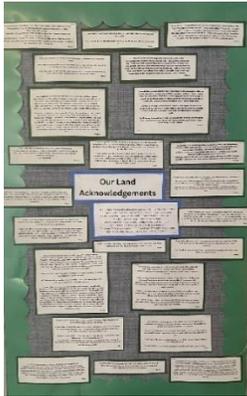
6. How does your plan support the goals of the 2020-2025 Indigenous Enhancement Agreement?

At Ridgeview, we are supporting the three guiding goals to support the District's Indigenous Enhancement Agreement:

To use Indigenous ways of Knowing and Perspectives to inform and empower our teaching, learning and decision-making.

- Explicit teaching around the First Peoples Principles of Learning
- Explicit use of the 4 R's in meetings and classrooms
- Community and Curriculum tie-ins in classroom learning, such as:
 - Orange shirt day stories, reflection and discussion
 - Spirit Bears Guide to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action
 - Coloring poppies with Coast Salish designs for Indigenous Veterans Day
 - Personal land acknowledgments
 - Weaving
 - Oral-Storytelling
 - Outdoor learning at Chatwin Park
 - Three ears and two-eyed seeing
 - TRC 57 Speaker Series
 - West Vancouver School's Indigenous Education - Educational Videos
- Monthly Indigenous Education meetings to guide the work around the school and reflect on the District Circle Meetings





To create a sense of space and belonging for Indigenous students that is inclusive to all.

- Explicit use of the 4 R's in meetings and classrooms
- Continue using drumming to embrace local Indigenous culture that directly connects with our Indigenous students and allows for everyone to gain a better understanding of the Squamish traditions.
- Use the morning announcements and the Coast Salish Anthem to celebrate the *Skwxwú7mesh sníchim*
- Invite Indigenous students to participate and celebrate their ancestry when possible
- Start to plan for Orange Shirt Day in May 2026



To enhance student success by facilitating transitions and pathways throughout the K-12 Journey.

- Continue ongoing professional development to decolonize practices
- Explicit use of the 4 R's in meetings and classrooms
- Continue to connect the seven Indigenous students with our District Success Teacher, Sylvia King, in addition to other staff, that can support their educational journey at Ridgeview.
- Connect regularly with families and to ensure that they are partners in their child's educational journey at Ridgeview.
- Continue to create opportunities for beautification projects for our learning community at the front entrance and other areas of our school outside as gathering spaces and outdoor learning commons to highlight our natural setting with Indigenous landmarks. We wanted to create a space to include an Indigenous Garden with native BC plant species. We aspire to use our outdoor space as another means to learn and gain another perspective, especially when Bob Baker can have conversation from our vantage point of the landmarks visible from Ridgeview for our students.

7. How does your plan support Indigenous Equity? Have you considered the following questions:

- The Four R's were designed to support Indigenous Equity
- *How can we create opportunities for increased parent/family and student voice?*
 - Include Indigenous students when holding school events to do the land acknowledgement
 - Create classroom opportunities to bring in parents to be part of activities like reading, sharing their story, welcoming grandparents in, etc.
 - Have parents part of the Indigenous Education Planning process, and with Action Items



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- *How can we create opportunities for families to be welcomed in our schools?*
 - Invite Indigenous parents to volunteer at camp, be involved with the RPAC, communicate with them to share their story or someone who they can help bring in that they are connected with (i.e. Phyllis Webstad)
- *How can we create opportunities to improve K-12 transitions?*
 - Be sure to support transitions between grades
 - Proactive conversations with Grade 6 student family to support future transition to secondary school