



Indigenous Education School Plan 2025 – 2026

School: Bowen Island Community School

School Indigenous Education Committee Members:

Erin Gleason, Sylvia King, Laura Magrath, Bailey Waurechen

School Main Contact Person(s):

Laura Magrath

What is the focus of your Indigenous School Plan for 2025/2026?

Goal #1: Cultural Lessons and Experiences for All BICS Learners

Canoe Culture

- Continued lessons with Sahplek for Grade 6/7 students.
- Students will learn:
 - The cultural and historical importance of canoes to Skwxwú7mesh people.
 - Traditional teachings connected to travel, protocol, relationships, and leadership.
- Students will connect these teachings to core competencies such as *community, responsibility, and well-being*.
- As part of this work, we hope to incorporate drumming, language, and songs that relate to canoe journeys and the responsibilities of paddlers.

Whale Day

Whale Day celebrates the return of whales to Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound—an annual event that ties deeply to our school identity as the Seawolves.

- Students learn why whales are considered the “wolves of the sea” and explore teachings about:
 - Multi-generational family structures
 - Care for one another
 - The health of ecosystems
- Activities occur throughout Whale Day and Earth Week and include:
 - Outdoor learning experiences
 - Drumming and singing Spakwus Slolem and Yéw'yews songs
 - Art and storytelling connected to land and water



- These celebrations strengthen connection to place and reinforce ongoing environmental stewardship.

Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Cultural Lessons and Teachings

We are continuing to grow strong relationships with community knowledge keepers.

- Our hope is Rebecca Duncan will share cultural teachings with K–7 learners.
- These sessions (February + April) may include:
 - Traditional stories, motions, drumming, and dance
 - Teachings connected to seasons, place, belonging, and respect
- Students will learn as whole-grade groups to build confidence in sharing at school events such as assemblies, family gatherings, and community celebrations.
- **Indigenous Student Cohort Opportunities:**
 - Indigenous students will have small-group opportunities to learn weaving, cultural games, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh language, and art.
 - These students will be supported to bring activities, stories, or demonstrations back to their classrooms—strengthening leadership and pride.

Goal #2: Create a Sense of Belonging and Inclusive Spaces

We are transforming one classroom into a **Bowen Island place-based learning room**, a welcoming and culturally connected space.

The room will include:

- Shelves and displays featuring Indigenous stories, legends, picture books, and maps
- Artifacts and student-created art connected to land, water, and cultural learning
- Identification guides for local plants and wildlife
- Touch-and-explore learning provocations inspired by Nexwlélexwm
- Indigenous plants and natural materials for hands-on learning

Intended impact:

- All students will deepen their sense of connection to place, identity, and community.
- Indigenous families will have a welcoming space for:
 - Community gatherings
 - Sharing cultural practices
 - Celebrations and storytelling
- This space will also serve as a place for small groups of students to learn language, engage in quiet reflection, and build relationships with the Indigenous Success Teacher.



Goal #3: Enhance Family Connections

- Indigenous families will be invited to seasonal gatherings once per term.
- Events may include:
 - Shared meals
 - Opportunities to provide feedback on programming
 - A chance for families to connect with staff and one another in a supportive environment
- A consistent meeting rhythm supports ongoing collaboration, belonging, and visibility of Indigenous voices in school decision-making.

Goal #4: Academic Support for Indigenous Learners

Our FESL goals emphasize literacy and social-emotional learning for all learners.

- **Literacy:**
 - Many Indigenous students are working on decoding, fluency, and comprehension.
 - Sylvia King provides individualized support through hands-on, land-based, and outdoor literacy experiences that are culturally rooted and experiential.
 - Activities include nature journaling, oral storytelling, vocabulary building connected to land, and multimodal literacy tasks.
- **Social-Emotional and Belonging:**
 - Programming supports confidence, identity, and self-regulation through relationship-centred practices.

Goal #5: Create Transition Pathways for Indigenous Learners

Grade 7

- Connections with Indigenous Success Teachers at WVSS and Rockridge
- Opportunities to meet other Indigenous students at the secondary level
- Participation in the district Indigenous Grade 7 celebration

Kindergarten

- Indigenous Success Teacher attends Welcome to Kindergarten and Gradual Entry events
- Early connection with families to strengthen relationships and support transition success
- Opportunities to share stories, songs, and family history of learning on Nəxwlélexwm

If you have students with Indigenous Ancestry attending your school, what Indigenous Student Outcome(s) are you working to improve? (Attendance, Developing Sense of Belonging, Literacy, Numeracy...) Please reference your school data.



Literacy

- Strengthening decoding and fluency
- Expanding comprehension through oral language, storytelling, and land-based literacy
- Integrating multimodal and experiential literacy that resonates with diverse learners

Sense of Belonging & Attendance

- Increasing presence, comfort, and connection to school
- Creating safer and more culturally affirming spaces
- Strengthening relationships with staff, peers, and the community

How does your plan connect to the Enhancement Agreement and/or the Equity in Action Goals found in the (see WVS Indigenous Success Plan)

1. Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Perspectives

Our cultural learning (canoe teachings, storytelling, drumming, lessons with community members) embeds Indigenous worldviews into everyday learning. The place-based room further supports experiential, relational learning that mirrors Skwxwú7mesh knowledge systems.

2. Enhancing Transitions and Pathways

We intentionally scaffold transitions from Kindergarten through Grade 7. Students meet key district Indigenous staff, attend celebrations, and build relationships that ensure continuity of support into secondary school.

3. Creating a Sense of Space and Belonging

The place-based learning room, Indigenous family gatherings, and small-group cultural learning all foster belonging. Celebrations such as Whale Day reinforce identity, connection, and community.

4. Equity in Action Alignment

Our plan aligns with Equity in Action through:

- Promoting culturally responsive literacy
- Addressing gaps in belonging and achievement
- Guiding school decisions through relationships, cultural teachings, and place-based learning



Highlight your school plans and learning intentions for the November 24th Indigenous Focused PD Day afternoon Session.

Morning: District keynote with **Dustin Louie**

Afternoon:

Staff will continue exploring Indigenous perspectives through story and reflection, guided by questions inspired by Dustin Louie's teaching:

- How do our personal stories shape the learning experiences we create for students?
- What is the shared story of BICS, and how are we co-authoring it as a community?
- How can Indigenous perspectives remind us that learning is interconnected, experiential, and rooted in belonging?

Staff will leave the session having developed intentions for how these teachings will influence classroom practice and school culture.

What are you most proud of with respect to your Indigenous School Plan?

At Bowen Island Community School, we are proud of:

1. Strengthening Relationships with Knowledge Keepers

We have cultivated and look forward to cultivating relationships with Skwxwú7mesh knowledge keepers. These relationships bring authentic teachings to students and deepen our connection to this land.

2. Building Cultural Celebration into Our Identity

Whale Day, canoe culture lessons, drumming, and storytelling have become part of who we are as a school. These are not one-off events—they shape our school culture and help learners understand their responsibility to place and community.

3. Developing a Place-Based Learning Space and Strengthening Family Connections

The new Bowen Island learning room is becoming a hub of curiosity, belonging, and connection. We are proud to create a space where Indigenous students feel seen and celebrated, and where all students learn about the land we share. Our seasonal gatherings offer families a place to share stories, connect with one another, and influence the programs we create. We are proud to be building a school community where Indigenous families feel welcomed, understood, and valued.



**WEST VANCOUVER
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
The premier place for learning.



Instructions: Please put a PDF copy of your Indigenous School Plan in the AO Folder/Indigenous Education/Indigenous School Plans 2025-26 by December 01, 2025

Please save PDF as *(Your School Name)* Indigenous School Plan 2025-26)

These plans will be posted on the WVS Indigenous Education website and will be shared with the WVS IEC.