



Indigenous Education School Plan 2022 - 2023

1. **School: Eagle Harbour Montessori**
2. **School Indigenous Education Committee Members: Debbie Tobin, Erica Hardern, Nathan Blackburn, Randeep St. Jaques - Parent Representative**
3. **School Main Contact Person(s): Erica Hardern**
4. **Activities, events, speakers, presentations, projects etc. that have occurred at your location last school year:**

The 2021/22 school year at Eagle Harbour started the way it ended in June of 2021 with a drum circle as the children entered the school grounds. With the discovery of 215 children by Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc people in Kamloops our school like many others wanted to find a way to authentically honour and remember all the children who became the change makers that day and in the subsequent days to come.

As a school we felt honouring and remembering would need to be embedded in our culture and not be relegated to one day. The staff asked if each Tuesday for the rest of June we could start the day with a drum circle. As the children arrived they dropped their bags, found a drum, quietly joined the circle on field and used their voice to remember and honour. "All Our Voices Matter" is a foundational pillar at Eagle Harbour.

What happened next was extraordinary. The community began to join in from afar with their voices and like the children if they didn't have a drum they used their hands to create the percussion sounds of the drum.

Organically drumming at Eagle Harbour has become a part of the foundation that guides and holds the learning up in our community. Our drum has traveled with our Vice Principal to summer school and became the bell for the children who attended

summer school. The drum told the story of our school and carried with it the First People’s Principle of Learning: “Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or certain situations.”

As Orange Shirt Day approached and the first National Truth and Reconciliation Day was recognized our school worked together to further understand the significance of these days. The Upper Elementary students took an indepth look at residential schools with the novel “Fatty Legs” while the K’s and Lower Elementary students used a variety of picture books to further thier understanding. To honour both days we held a school wide drum circle, read “Awâsis and the World-Famous Bannock ” and then made Bannock.



With the help of our parents, district gardener, Nat’s Nursery and a grant from the World Wildlife Federation we worked a piece of land at Eagle Harbour to bring it back to its original beauty. This piece of land is known as “The Spirit Garden” in honour of all the children whose seeds never got the chance to grow. The garden is filled with Indigenous plants that bring healing and life. With the help of the larger Eagle Harbour community, we continued to work this land and the surrounding land to eradicate the

non Indigenous invasive species and replace them with Indigenous species. Listen to [The Story of our Spirit Garden](#) by clicking the link.

Our extended Eagle Harbour community became involved in our Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Ms. Harden was asked to share our learning, songs, drumming and stories that we have been gifted to local Beaver groups and their families during their evening sessions.

All of this learning continued to shape our sense of community which in turn is contributing to our sense of belonging at Eagle Harbour.

We shared our FESL (which focused on Belonging and Building Community) at the end of May which began with an opening drum circle and included explicit knowledge and evidence of the many ways Indigenous knowledge and learning is embedded in our everyday lives at EHMS.

5. Action Plan for 2022/2023

Possible items to consider:

Our 2022/23 school year began with a week long community drum making workshop where our students and community members came together to build 30 Indigenous drums. This was a project that was three years in the making. We had children and families who had moved on to other schools come back and be part of this week as it has meant so much to them.

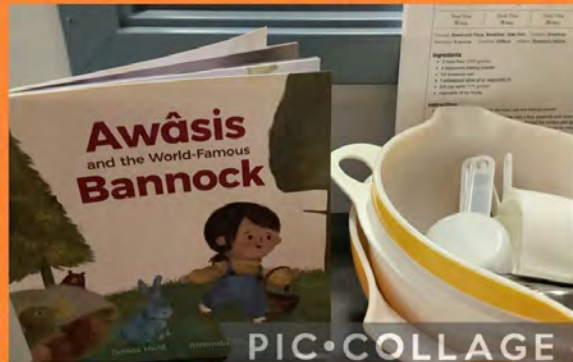
The children and community members were both honoured and humbled to build these drums. We were even more honoured when we were able to wake them up on National Indigenous Peoples day with a community drum circle in our field led by Xwalacktun. Click [HERE](#) for a video peek at our learning journey.



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We ended the week by making Bannock and completing artistically done Orange shirts that have become part of the Little Orange Shirt Project at UBC.



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Our drums were played for the first time publicly at our Remembrance Day Ceremony. Before we began our ceremony we asked the children to lead us in the Equality Song - All our voices Matter. The most significant learning and change this year is the children now lead the drum circles, as the knowledge and gifts have been passed on to them. All our gatherings begin with an Indigenous land acknowledgement that is as unique as the child or adult giving it.



Drumming is one of the most authentic ways of learning at our little school in the woods. Recently we took our whole school to Eagle Harbour beach and the children said "aren't you going to bring a drum? We need it to call us to gather."





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

We continue to plan our school learning journey using the Indigenous Ways of Knowing as our guide. We use these ways of knowing to “inform and empower our teaching, learning and decision making” in what we feel is authentic and true to who we are as individuals and learners. Our school community has committed to continually educate those around us that these truths still exist today and it is our duty to make a better future for everyone.

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

One of the ways we are creating more opportunities for students’ voices to be heard in our school is by having students help plan and lead all of our community events and activities. With guidance and support, they are learning to impart and reflect important values with integrity and purpose - both with words and actions. For example, because they regularly experience teaching, learning and playing through and about the land and natural environment, our students are becoming comfortable giving land acknowledgements from their hearts, as opposed to reading or reciting a pre-planned statement to open our events and assemblies.

At present, we have knowledge of only one indigenous-identified student enrolled at Eagle Harbour. Therefore, it is important that the teachers and staff make every effort to invite and welcome indigenous friends, guest teachers, visitors and community members to participate in our school as often as possible so that the students indigenous voices and perspectives are reflected more equitably.