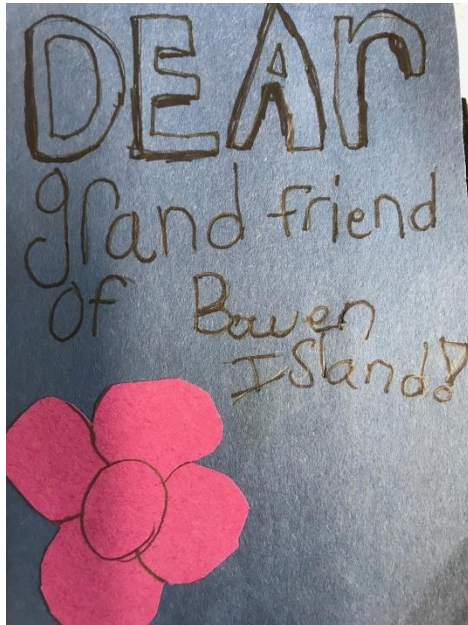




# Bowen Island Community School

West Vancouver Schools

## Community School Coordinator's 2023 Annual Report



**Community and place-based learning with a focus on fostering a sense of belonging**

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In 2021 this report transitioned to a new format to reflect the calendar year.

photo: the Grandfriends program fosters a sense of belonging



## Role of the Community School Coordinator

1. Advance the goals of the BICS Framework for Enhanced Student Learning (FESL) and the Vision and Values of the Board.
2. Schedule the use of Bowen Island Community School (BICS) in an optimum fashion to benefit, respond to, and to harmonize the use needs of students, staff, Community Recreation and the community by processing rental requests, creating schedules and promoting awareness of the community school model and how it works .
3. Community Connections and Community Building: works with project-based groups, committees, task groups and non-profits within the school and the community. Actively liaise, partner with and share information and resources with various organizations including non-profit community groups and key groups such as the BICS Parent Advisory Council (PAC), the Bowen Island Community School Association (CSA) and the Association of Community Education British Columbia (ACEbc).
4. Communications and Community Development. Facilitate community development through events, Community Learning programs and projects that build community and promote community health, safety and life-long learning.
5. Write grants to support projects and programs that enrich learning opportunities for BICS students as well as to purchase assets that benefit the community school and all who use it.
- 6.

## Place Based and Sense of Belonging Learning and Community Connection Highlights: Grandfriends Program

Grandfriends is the longest running program at BICS, as fostering intergenerational and community connections builds a sense of belonging for all. Big and little buddies from grade 4/5 and grade 1/2 made math-literacy cookies, wrote cards and letters and practiced songs for special visits to the local senior's centre throughout the year. Parents and grandfriends helped to make this program happen, and a full year of thoughtfulness on both sides made hearts warm and gave students a sense of confidence, accomplishment and belonging.





## FESL feature story: Bowen H2O Art Exhibit

The goal of the BICS Bowen H2O exhibit was sharing student learning about Bowen Island with community through the arts to foster a sense of belonging. The Bowen H2O Art Exhibit at the local Hearth Gallery in Snug Cove was an opportunity to share eco-art and education with the community. The exhibit featured one or more art works from every student in the school. Part of the lead-up to the artshow included a screening of the Uncharted Waters documentary and a Q&A with local artist Di and environmental educator and diver Adam Taylor who talked to students about the making of the film. Uncharted Waters was made by youth film makers Molly Dennis and Hannah Siden, who filmed a custom welcome and introduction of the film for the audience in the BICS gym. Thank you to all the community volunteers and participants who made this educational event happen. The viewing was also made possible thanks to Carla Skuce, Bowen Island Parks and Environment Coordinator, the Bowen Island Municipality, and community volunteers and participants in the film. Community guests also helped to introduce and explore various topics. Local resources such as [Howe Sound/Atl'ka7tsem Marine Reference Guide](#), developing a Bowen geology classroom resource, and the new Reptiles of Bowen book helped to round out the learning that inspired the artworks. First Nations and youth voices helped us to learn about our environment, and the importance of the work of citizen scientists, ecologists and eco-visual artists.

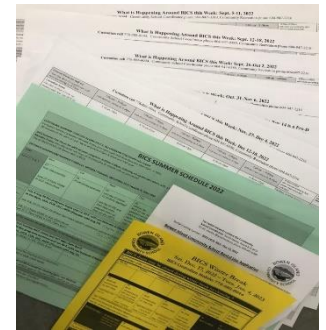
Students were proud to have their artwork displayed in a real gallery setting and classes visited the exhibit to see what the school had created together. The entire project was powerful, inspiring and a wonderful opportunity to deepen our local knowledge and sense of belonging. Thank you to the local Arts Council for supporting this education in the arts project, as well as the Community School Association.



## Coordination of the Community School

The Community School Coordinator maintains a master calendar and weekly communicates the schedule. The use of the site is coordinated in an optimum fashion to benefit, respond to, and to harmonize the joint use needs of the school, students, staff, Community Recreation Services, and the community. The CSA is the community contact for site information, processes rental requests, creates schedules and promotes awareness of the community school model and how it works. The Community School Coordinator also works collaboratively to create break schedules, special events, as well as tracking and processing site use, rental requests, invoices and payment. The CSC reports on custodian extra time, and the BICS Stage Agreement and scheduling. To do this work the School Coordinator works with the principal, staff from School District facilities, custodians and Bowen Island Municipal staff, as well as with Elections and Vancouver Coastal Health Services when there are elections or uses such as vaccination clinics. The School Coordinator works to ensure the needs of the user groups are accommodated and that they feel welcome and well-hosted and that use conforms with site expectations. The School Coordinator works on monitoring site uses and needs and identifying and assisting with improvement projects.

- BICS is open year-round
- BICS hosts important community events such as elections, Craft Fairs, Bookfest, and more.
- Custodians are on site approximately 325 days of the year
- Rooms and spaces inside and outside of the school are used by the public elementary school, Community Recreation Services and the community.
- The community school site, which includes exterior washrooms, a tennis court, playground, outdoor learning centre, grass field, turf field and basketball hoops are accessible 365 days of the year.



A feature site-improvement project this year was finding funds and organizing the upgrade of the school's sign to have a welcoming entrance featuring the new logo, hand carved in cedar by a BICS student and their parent who is teaching them to carve.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





## Community Connections and Community Development

The Community School Coordinator works with project-based groups, committees, task groups and non-profits within the school and the community. The **Community Seed Library** at the Public Library and the **Grandfriends** Program which runs intergenerational activities and programs at BICS and in the community are two examples of connecting to the community and community learning. These programs run in partnership with the Bowen Island Public Library and S.K.Y. (Seniors Keeping Young). The **BICS Garden Club** Saves Seeds to Support Community Food Resiliency: BICS students of all ages have helped to harvest, save and package over one hundred seed packages that were donated to the Bowen Island Seed Library at the Bowen Island Public Library.

**The Homework Club** revived as a Community Learning program, an OST, free, homework skills literacy program that ran thanks to support from the Bowen Literacy Task Group. The **Youth Crafters Program** was also revived as a financial young entrepreneur and craft program that allowed youth to create their own small business and then launch it at the CSA's Craft Fair. Both of these programs were open to all youth in the community. The **BICS Grade Five Leadership Program** launched this year and the School Coordinator was one of the mentors of a group of youth that sought to improve the school as well as to make a real difference in the world by running a community-wide stamp drive to benefit a charitable organization, through a partnership with Canada Post.

### Feature Community Connections Story:

#### BICS Youth Curator Program explores BC Heritage Week

The 2023 Youth Curator program completed with a visit to the museum and archives to celebrate everything that they have learned about local history. The President of the Bowen Island Museum and Archives participated in the certificate ceremony in recognition of this program that has the Youth curators create an exhibit that is displayed at BICS that is by youth for youth. The exhibit is also shared at the museum, and the program is designed to build connections to our local heritage and to increase a sense of belonging to the community by learning about local history. The topics selected by the youth included the health of the sea and return of whales to the waters around Bowen Island, different types of whales, whale hunting, the history of uses of Bowen Island by the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) as well as the history of bicycles and mountain biking on Bowen, invasive species and the impact on indigenous amphibians and reptiles, the history of Bowen Island ferries, the Wild Horses of Bowen, and the history of wheel chair use on Bowen Island. Participants report feeling a sense of belonging when learning about the past and how it is connected to our present.



## Other Community Connections, Communications and Learning enrichment

Communications and Community Development. The Community School Coordinator facilitates community development through events, Community Learning programs and projects that build community and promote community health, safety, and life-long learning. (examples: Community service projects, the BICS CSC monthly e-newsletter, articles for the local newspaper.)

The Community School Coordinator also assisted in communications and **coordinating community and parent volunteers**, attended **PAC, CSA, BILTG, and ACEbc meetings**, created a **monthly school e-newsletter**, ran an **Art Club**, assisted with a committee to make **inclusivity** visible around the school site, helped with **the Student Council's** global and local initiatives, the **BICS Emergency Preparedness committee**, hosting the **11<sup>th</sup> annual Whale Day**, coordinating Cultural Enrichment committee initiatives such as the visit by the ArtStarts whole-school performance and cultural sharing by **Tribal Vision Dance**, assisting with the school's **Welcome to Kindergarten**, coordinating the **BC School's Fruit and Vegetable Program**, applying for grants and programs such as the **Planting a Promise, Bulbs4Kids** and coordinating the **Bowen Tea Cup and Blossom Appreciation project** for div 7 & 8, coordinating in collaboration with WV staff the new-format **Ready, Set, Learn** event and coordinating the **Sense of Belonging Whale Mural** whole-school Project as well as assisting with **place-based learning field trips**, and connecting classes to local resources and volunteers when requested.



**BICS CSC e-Newsletter** *Community Connections* is a monthly e-newsletter created by the Community School Coordinator to build community connections by featuring BICS programs and events as well as featuring community Recreation programs and community events that might be of interest, or of service, to families. It is also a great way to invite new volunteers to participate at the school as well as highlighting and celebrating parent and community volunteers activities at the school





## FESL feature story: The Sense of Belonging Mural Project

A cultural enrichment FESL program that had students learning about abstract painting and then painting their joyful emotions with local Emily Carr University of Art and Design, professor emeritus artist Susan Hillman and then creating a collaborative artwork that was featured as the backdrop of the BICS Winter Concert, to share it with students and parents and then on display and shared with the public at the Bowen H2O exhibit.

This project was made possible thanks to various sponsors, including the CSA, PAC and the donation of canvases by Opus Art Supplies.

Every student painted a panel (and some staff and parent volunteers too) no knowing what the big picture would be. The final 8' x 16' mural was assembled and unveiled for the first time at the Winter Concert. At the end of the school year students and all participants received their original canvas artwork as well as a commemorative print of the complete mural.

The project and funding was coordinated by the Community School Coordinator a community-connective whole-school project to foster a sense of belonging and to illustrate how, as individuals, we can celebrate all our individualities and still all be connected. The individual images, together formed a big picture, and how we could once again all come together and celebrate and be comforted, like a big cozy sense of belonging quilt. Many thanks to Xwalactun for the new school logo and permission to creatively interact with it.

