

Burnaby School District – School Plan

Our Story

Who we are? *(With considerations for ELL, Inclusive Ed, CYOC, Indigenous students)*

- School Population: 286 students with 13 enrolling divisions
- Staff Members: 15 enrolling teachers, 7 non-enrolling teachers & 11.5 Educational Assistants
- Students with Aboriginal Ancestry: 1
- Students with Diverse Needs: 29
- English Language Learners: 144

What are we doing well?

While achievement remains high, staff have observed a growing number of students who show limited interest in reading for either academic or personal enjoyment. In addition, teachers have noted a decline in certain literacy skills such as elaborating with sufficient detail, thinking critically, and supporting ideas with evidence from the text. These trends appear connected to students' reduced motivation to read for pleasure. Over the past three years, Parkcrest staff have made a collective effort to re-ignite students' love of reading. This has been an intentional focus embedded in our school culture, and we are seeing positive results. Successful initiatives include:

- **Classroom Library Carts** – increasing access to high-interest books and encouraging spontaneous reading opportunities.
- **Home Reading Logs** – fostering reading habits and family engagement in literacy.
- **Partnership with Burnaby Public Library** – supporting library card sign-ups and access to a wide range of reading materials.
- **Author Visits (in-person and virtual)** – inspiring students by connecting them directly with writers and their creative process.
- **Indigenous Oral Storytelling with an Elder** – deepening cultural understanding and appreciation for diverse ways of sharing stories.
- **Community Book Swaps** – building excitement around sharing and discovering books.
- **Monthly Literacy Assemblies** – highlighting different genres, celebrating reading, and creating a sense of shared purpose across the school.

Collectively, these strategies have strengthened students' engagement, motivation, and enjoyment of reading. Staff are observing increased student enthusiasm for books and greater participation in literacy-related activities.

How do we know?

Parkcrest Elementary continues to demonstrate strong academic achievement in Literacy. According to our 2024–2025 FSA Literacy results, 81% of Grade 4 students and 77% of Grade 7 students are proficient or extending.

In addition to FSA data, Parkcrest staff have fully embraced the Burnaby School District's Primary Literacy Framework, including its assessment tools and timeline. This alignment ensures that we have consistent and reliable data to inform instruction across classrooms and grade levels. Teachers use this information to identify student strengths and areas for growth, guide instructional decisions, and monitor progress over time.

Collaboration is a key part of our success. Staff engage in set monthly collaboration blocks organized by grade groupings, providing dedicated time for teachers to analyze assessment data, share instructional strategies, and plan next steps together. These structured opportunities for collaboration help ensure a cohesive and responsive approach to literacy instruction across the school.

The combination of strong achievement data, consistent assessment practices, and intentional collaboration provides clear evidence that our literacy initiatives are having a positive and sustained impact on student learning.

Our focus:

Next Steps: Shifting Focus to Non-Fiction Literacy: Building on the success of re-engaging students in reading, our next area of focus will be on non-fiction literacy. Assessment data and teacher observations indicate that while students demonstrate strong engagement and skills in narrative texts, many encounter challenges when reading informational texts. Students typically receive more exposure to fiction, which can limit their familiarity with the structures, language, and strategies required to comprehend non-fiction literature. Non-fiction literacy is essential for understanding content across all subject areas, including science, social studies, and mathematics. Informational texts provide multiple entry points for learners, allowing students of varying abilities and backgrounds to access information, engage with ideas, and make connections to real-world contexts. Developing skills in non-fiction reading also fosters critical thinking, as students learn to analyze evidence, draw inferences, and evaluate the reliability of information.

Key areas for development include:

- **Building background knowledge** – Explicit instruction helps students connect new information to prior knowledge, strengthening comprehension.
- **Expanding academic and content-specific vocabulary** – Mastery of specialized terminology supports independent engagement with texts.
- **Identifying main ideas and supporting details** – Teaching strategies to recognize and organize key information enhances understanding and critical thinking.
- **Interpreting and analyzing information presented in graphs and charts** – Instruction in reading visual data equips students to draw conclusions, recognize patterns, and apply information meaningfully.

Alongside the focus on non-fiction literacy, intermediate teachers will collaborate with a district literacy lead to explore the implementation of a unified reading assessment for the intermediate grades, aligned with the timeline and structure of the primary literacy framework. Teachers will examine a range of assessment options and work collaboratively to determine the approach that best meets the needs of our student community. This ensures that assessment practices are consistent, purposeful, and directly support instructional planning and student learning.

STRATEGIES: (to support Focus)

Key areas for development include:

- **Building background knowledge** – Students often struggle to make connections to new information when prior knowledge is limited. Explicit instruction and scaffolding in this area help students integrate new ideas and strengthen comprehension.
- **Expanding academic and content-specific vocabulary** – Mastery of specialized terminology is essential for understanding concepts across subjects. Developing vocabulary supports students' ability to engage with texts independently and with confidence.
- **Identifying main ideas and supporting details** – Many students focus on isolated facts rather than understanding overarching concepts. Teaching strategies to identify and organize key information enhances comprehension and critical thinking.
- **Interpreting and analyzing information presented in graphs and charts** – Non-fiction texts frequently include visual data. Instruction in reading and interpreting these visuals equips students to draw conclusions, recognize patterns, and apply information meaningfully.

By focusing on non-fiction literacy, we aim to provide students with the tools and strategies necessary to navigate informational texts with confidence. This focus ensures students are not only able to comprehend a wider range of texts but also develop critical thinking skills, engage deeply with content, and access multiple entry points for learning across all curricular areas.