



GULF ISLANDS
SCHOOL
DISTRICT 64

EPIC SCHOOL PLAN
2023 – 2024

Fernwood Elementary School

SIGNATURES

PRINCIPAL

PAC CHAIR

TEACHER

STUDENT

OUR SCHOOL

SCHOOL IDENTITY/CONTEXT

Fernwood Elementary School has chosen to continue to focus on improvements in student success rates in numeracy, to more fully integrate the "on-track" tool in IPass and to increase the sense of belonging amongst students for the 2023/2024 school year.

OUR STORY

Fernwood Elementary School currently serves about 200 students and their families in the north end of Salt Spring Island. The vast school property has an outdoor classroom, garden, greenhouse, and new playgrounds for students to enjoy. We have programs (grades K - 7) where students engage in deep explorations of natural spaces on local farms, the beach and parks in multi-age groupings. Students at Fernwood are guided by the 3 R's showing care to each other by being respectful, responsible and reaching out to others. Our halls are filled with laughter, singing, beautiful artwork, and the occasional dance party!

GOAL STATEMENT

Numeracy

Implementation of daily number sense routines will help our students to be more flexible, strategic and engaged in their numeracy work. These routines will help our students to better explain and justify their thinking when solving numeracy problems.

On Track, Ipass

Continued implementation of the "On-Track" tool in Ipass will help teachers with tracking assessments and progress of students. It will be a coordinating tool for tracking interventions from the classroom level to the district level.

Sense of Belonging

A student buddy program will help all students to feel a sense of belonging and connectedness to the school, staff and students. The first goal of the SD64 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement is focused on Belonging and Identity. This buddy program can be socially based, but also academically focused on numeracy and literacy.

AREAS OF STRENGTH/GROWTH

Fernwood has a strong school-based team that meets weekly to discuss at risk students. The team considers achievement and social/emotional factors. Investigation and interventions are put into place to support students.

An area for further growth would be to continue to use data collection to assess student progress and to promote effective numeracy instruction school wide.

FOCUSING DIRECTION

PROCESS FOR REVIEWING/REVISING/DETERMINING

Our current school growth was constructed by the current administration team and with teacher input from the teacher staff representative. A member of our PAC read and approved our current school plan. We again hope to have a more active PAC this coming year so that they can be more closely involved in this process. We meet through the year to plan and keep the growth plan on the staff meeting agenda so all staff keep our goals front and center. Data is collected from report cards, classroom assessments, and sources such as the FSA and student learning survey, and analyzed to gain understanding about our students' strengths and weaknesses. We need to better utilize using the "on track" tool in IPass to help us to see which students in each class are on track or not in the foundational skills

PURPOSE / DATA RATIONALE

Numeracy

The data from FSA, in-school assessments and report cards indicates that numeracy is the core subject area needing more support. The grade 4 data from the 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 school years is listed below. Starting in 2022/23 we have data from the first grade 7 group.

2019/20 FSA Grade 4 Numeracy
30% - emerging
68% - on track
2% - extending

2020/21 FSA Grade 4 Numeracy
17% - emerging
72% - on track
11% - extending

2021/22 FSA Grade 4 Numeracy
18% - emerging
79% - on track
3% - extending

2022/23 FSA Grade 4 Numeracy
37% - emerging
63% - on track
0% - extending

2021/22 Grade 4 Achievement - Summative report card
11% - emerging
84% - on track
5% - extending

2021/22 Grade 4 Assessment Data (snapshot)
8% - emerging
78% - on track
14% - extending

2022/23 Grade 4 Achievement - Summative report card
4% - emerging
89% - on track
8% - extending

2022/23 Grade 4 Assessment Data (snapshot)
12% - emerging
81% - on track
6% - extending

Grade 7 data - the first year at the elementary school

2022/23 FSA Grade 7 Numeracy
64% - emerging
36% - on track
0% - extending

2022/23 Grade 7 Assessment Data
0% - emerging
81% - on track
19% - extending

2022/23 Grade Achievement - Summative report card
0% - emerging
85% - on track
15% - extending

Sense of Belonging results

The 2021 Student Satisfaction Survey results related to Sense of Belonging are as follows:

Is school a place where you feel like you belong?

Never = 23%
Few times = 0%
Sometimes = 4%
Most of the time = 28%
All of the time = 38%
Don't know = 4%

ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

Numeracy

Fernwood will continue with the good work from the past years. New instructional methods and resources will be shared at staff meetings. As a staff we will ensure everyone is familiar with and able to implement the Island Numeracy Assessments. At staff meetings we will have a regular agenda item to share and discuss effective math strategies. This will help to build capacity and leadership amongst the staff. We will use learning sprints as well as regular collaboration time to allow teachers to work together in groups to further develop expertise in numeracy instruction. Some of the school-based Pro D days may have a numeracy focus. Fernwood will continue to connect through the school district with the Island Numeracy Network (INA) and the resources produced by the INA. We will continue to collaborate within the school and with the district on early intervention/support in primary classes to build up number sense and mathematical basic skills to give students a solid mathematical foundation to support their mathematical thinking in the older grades.

Sense of Belonging

Fernwood will institute a buddy program with the restart of the Firebirds student leadership program. This will enable leadership students to connect with students to help ensure no student feels "left out". We will continue with buddy programs this helps to create connections between older and younger students.

With the cessation of COVID protocols we had a lot of success with inter/intramural sports and other school events such as concerts.

School staff will be asked to notify administration and the school-based team of any students who are not making good healthy connections with students and staff. By tracking and then intervening appropriately we hope to ensure that all Fernwood students will have a strong sense of belonging. We will continue with social/emotional support groups led by a youth worker and counselors to support struggling students. Embedded in our goal of sense of belonging is our work integrating indigenous ways of knowing. Additionally, we will continue to work with SD 64 Indigenous Education team on a monthly basis. We will continue to connect relationships with the Penelakut Nation.

COLLABORATIVE CULTURES

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS / STUDENT VOICE

Numeracy

Since the 2020/2021 school year Fernwood has continued with an EPIC grant focused on Numeracy. We will continue with this goal for the 2023/2024 school year. This grant has enabled the staff and administration to collaborate in improving numeracy instruction. Staff have participated in small group sessions through learning sprints, Pro D, Pro Growth and other school sponsored collaboration opportunities.

Sense of Belonging

We were able to organize team sports again. There was a renewed culture of athletics at the school. We were able to organize some larger events such as a band concert, school wide Makerspace gallery walks, field trips, many guest speakers to share their knowledge, a wonderful building connections trip to Penelakut Island, and year-end celebrations such as a grade 7 graduation BBQ. All of these events have allowed us to strengthen the sense of belonging for the students and the entire Fernwood community

Fernwood School will continue to connect with families through our weekly school newsletters and PAC on both goals. At PAC meetings we will highlight and report the initiatives centered on numeracy and the sense of belonging. We will be able to share the progress on these goals with PAC and parents using the information and data from the formal and informal surveys and assessments. We will also seek PAC input on these goals. The goal for strengthening a sense of belonging allows for lots of parent involvement such as helping with after school sports and clubs.

Student Voice

Numeracy

Using both provincial and school-based assessments, Fernwood is able to track student progress.

As part of the EPIC numeracy initiative students were interviewed.

Embedded in the math instruction will be student reflection or "math talks". Students will be able to describe their progress in numeracy. This information will be collected anecdotally as well as formally in surveys by teachers. This information will be used in conjunction with classroom assessments and FSA results to gauge student progress, engagement and suggestions.

Sense of Belonging

Fernwood uses the annual satisfaction survey to formally track student sense of belonging. Additionally, staff will observe students and note any that need support.

Both school goals will be presented and explained to students at whole school meetings. Classes can also have more intimate discussions and ideas generated from this can be brought to the whole staff at monthly staff meetings.

STAFF/SHARED WORK

Staff will share their ideas and learning during staff meetings, school-based Pro D, and through collaboration time to focus on numeracy initiatives. The staff identifies using small groups to help students struggling with foundational numeracy concepts as important. These student groups can be supported by educational assistants working along side teachers.

The school will build on traditions and initiatives which build a greater sense of belonging for all students. We will work towards more whole school events such as whole school picnic lunches, rainy day activities for students, more student club activities, and incorporating more indigenous themes in our school activities. Our PAC will continue to be a major supporter of these events.

We will continue to maintain our links to agencies such as Saltspring Island Community Services, tennis club, and funders such as the Saltspring Foundation and the Raffi Foundation.

DEEPER LEARNING

WHAT WILL STAFF NEED TO KNOW TO LEAD/PERFORM THIS WORK?

Numeracy

Over the past three school years the staff have been looking at numeracy instruction and deep learning deeply. These initiatives will continue next year. We are hopeful that we will be able to continue the district funded EPIC program with a focus on numeracy.

A regular feature of the staff meetings will be for teachers to share numeracy instructional techniques. We will also pursue this work through regular learning sprints.

Sense of Belonging

Staff will participate voluntarily in school events to promote student well being. Staff will be able to give lots of insight into how to improve students' sense of belonging based on their observations and knowledge of the students.

WHAT SKILLS WILL WE FOSTER WITH STUDENTS FOR THEM TO EXPERIENCE SUCCESS?

Numeracy

The numeracy initiatives will promote a sense of mathematical thinking and skills amongst students. They will become more comfortable in taking risks, exploring math concepts, explaining their thinking for problem solving and develop stronger skills.

Some of the ways that staff can help to foster this is by having students work collaboratively and explain their problem solving thinking/process.

APPROACH TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING?

Numeracy

Many of the schools in SD64 have a numeracy goal. We hope that the district Pro D will see this as a worthwhile area to focus on.

Teachers from different schools can share their work in the area of numeracy with one another.

Many schools in the district have used the Island Numeracy Association (INA) materials in their classrooms. Fernwood staff have used these materials this past year and we intend to increase it's usage even more.

Indigenous ways of knowing

The Fernwood staff has committed to integrating and embracing indigenous ways of knowing into the instruction and daily life at Fernwood.

TAKING ACTION

How will the school structure an approach that can be measured in short formative cycles?

How will the school foster a sense of partnership to achieve a common goal of increased student achievement?

LEARNING SPRINT APPROACH

The learning sprints in numeracy will reinforce instruction of foundational concepts and solving word problems, teachers will assess and track the student progress in Ipass, depending on the results of assessments they can reteach concepts as needed. The model will be to initially assess, teach foundational concepts, apply the learning to problem solving/word problems and reassess.

Teachers will meet for the learning sprints and will discuss classroom instruction and interventions. Teachers will share out their findings and further opportunities for growth and will be accountable to each other by sharing at meetings.

Teachers will also complete a reflective document for each collaborative meeting. This documentation will be shared with the Principal and used to track the efficacy of the interventions and initiatives.

In the fall the first Learning Sprint will focus on foundational concepts inherent in the problem solving/word problems.

Further learning sprints every 8 to 10 weeks. Action includes:

- discussion and planning at staff meetings
- teacher collaboration time
- support for teachers in best practices for numeracy instruction. Includes potentially In-service, Pro D and Pro Growth
- resources to aid in instruction and learning
- EA's to participate in Learning Sprints as needed and when appropriate

ACCOUNTABILITY

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL?

Numeracy

We will gauge staff participation in numeracy initiatives. Staff will have opportunities to participate and suggest ways of increasing their participation in numeracy initiatives.

The school will look at data collected from provincial and in-school assessments.

Our goal will be to move all students that are "emerging" (37%, 2023 FSA grade 4 data) in Numeracy to at least the "on track" level.

Sense of Belonging

Staff and parents will note more students with stronger connections to the school community. The results from the student survey reflect the improvements in sense of belonging over the past year.

There will be re-invigorated events and programs such as Firebirds, intramural sports, and clubs.

We will compare the data from the Student Learning Survey and increase the sense of belonging results. We hope to see the number of students indicating that school is a place where they do not feel they belong drop even further.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

To be collected over the year.

Numeracy

We will collect data from FSA, in-school assessments, INA assessments when available and report cards.

The data will be compared to past years where possible.

The "on-track" tool in IPass will also be used to determine which students are needing further support.

Sense of Belonging

Provincial Satisfaction Survey, anecdotal observations, school-based team referrals

STUDENT EXPERIENCE EVIDENCE

Numeracy

Student self-assessments and reflections built into the lessons

Sense of Belonging

Check-ins with students during whole school meetings and in class

Student participation in initiatives

Student self-assessments from Core Competencies

Parent assessments / survey / feedback

EPIC STORY

STORY

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

NOTES
