



## **Fernwood School Growth Plan 2025-26**

Located in the north end of Salt Spring Island, Fernwood School serves about 215 students in Kindergarten to Grade 7 and their families. The vast school property has an outdoor classroom, garden, greenhouse and new playgrounds for students to enjoy. Staff is committed to providing outdoor learning experiences for our students, including frequent walking field trips to Fernwood Beach. We have partnerships with community organizations, including Salt Spring Island Community Services (counselling), Salt Spring Literacy (1-1 Readers), The Raffi Foundation, The Salt Spring Conservancy and The Circle.

### **Our Story**

**Fernwood Elementary School: Building a Stronger, Inclusive Community**

Fernwood Elementary is a vibrant Kindergarten to Grade 7 learning community committed to fostering a cohesive and inclusive school culture. In recent years, we have focused on strengthening students' sense of belonging and enhancing social-emotional literacy through a variety of initiatives.

A key part of this work has been the implementation of a school-wide Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system. Central to this approach are our "Three Cs": Care for Self, Care for Others, and Care for the Environment. These values are explicitly taught and reinforced across all areas of the school, helping to create a consistent and supportive environment for all learners.

To further build community, we hold weekly Whole School Meetings and have reinstated school concerts, bringing students, staff, and families together. Staff have sponsored a wide range of clubs, sports teams, and special events, enriching the school experience and encouraging student engagement.

Our school counsellor and classroom teachers have collaborated to co-teach social-emotional learning lessons, ensuring that students receive consistent support across settings. Thanks to a Raffi Foundation grant, we were also able to welcome an additional counsellor to lead social groups, providing further support for students who benefit from small-group interaction.

Fernwood's end-of-year survey data reflects the impact of these efforts, showing a significant improvement in students' sense of belonging and staff morale. We are proud of the progress made and remain committed to nurturing a safe, inclusive, and connected learning environment for every child.

With progress made in enhancing our school's culture and climate, we are now turning our focus toward improving academic achievement. Our school data indicates that a significant number of students are not yet meeting proficiency in foundational skills, particularly in reading.

Recognizing that reading is a cornerstone of both academic success and lifelong learning, we have chosen to prioritize it in our instructional efforts. By strengthening students' reading abilities, we aim to build a solid foundation that supports deep learning across all subject areas and empowers students to have greater agency in their learning, both in and beyond the classroom.

## Goals

### Long-Term Goal

All students will reach proficiency in Reading.

### Short-Term Goal

Improve reading achievement for every student, with a focus on moving those not yet at grade level closer to proficiency through regular explicit instruction and progress monitoring.

## Culture and Structures to Support Literacy

To reach our school goals, we will implement the following structures:

### Staff Meetings:

Reading will be a standing agenda item to facilitate ongoing professional dialogue around evidence-based instruction and student progress. Staff meeting topics will be about data-driven discussions, literacy strategies, differentiation and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. We will also celebrate successes noted in the progress monitoring data.

### Team Collaboration:

Teachers will meet in primary and intermediate teams to review data, plan instruction, and design targeted interventions. These meetings will occur after each assessment period (3-5 times per year). Release time will be provided for teachers to visit and observe other teachers as a means of growing their practice.

### Tier 1 Instruction Focus:

Emphasis will be placed on strengthening core literacy instruction across grades K–7. This will involve whole-class instruction to introduce concepts, followed by targeted small group sessions to reinforce learning and provide additional support for students who need it. This learning will occur in our staff meeting discussions, collaborative meetings and district provided in-services for teachers.

### In-Class Support:

The LIST team will provide in-class support to teachers to help them differentiate instruction, rather than providing Tier 2 supports during Term 1. Once Tier 1 instructional practices are firmly in place, Tier 2 supports will begin with students identified needing the most support in their reading, using targeted instruction.

### Instructional Resources:

Teachers will be equipped with current, evidence-based materials such as UFLI, Reading Rev, and

Decodable Readers. We will initiate an after-school book club for staff and provide the book and snacks. This will provide a forum for discussing best practices and learning new strategies.

#### Reading Culture:

We would like to create a culture of reading by immersing students in books and emphasizing the joy of literature. Fun Initiatives like a Reading Blitz, Battle of the Books, guest authors and readers, book riddles, interactive bulletin boards and reading games aimed at promoting a love of reading.

#### School-Wide Learning Buddies:

Older students will be trained on how to support younger students in their reading development. Buddy reading sessions will be intentional and structured. Students will share their individual reading goals.

### Capacity Building

#### Principals:

We will need to keep current on evidence-based literacy practices and learn to better facilitate focused data-driven dialogue with our staff. We will be using the Literacy Leadership Matters book to help guide our conversations with staff.

#### Teachers:

We will build instructional capacity through the structures noted previously, including data-driven discussions at staff and collaborative team meetings; collaborative planning and sharing of effective practices; peer observations to support professional growth; and district-led professional learning for primary teachers.

#### Students:

Using the data from our assessments, instruction will target foundational reading skills such as rapid letter naming, phonemic segmentation, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and decoding. These efforts will ensure that all students are supported in developing the essential skills needed for reading success.

#### Assessment

#### K–3 Teachers:

Teachers will implement the DIBELS Literacy Screener three times per year (fall, winter, spring). Following each assessment window, the primary team will meet to analyse results and plan targeted instructional actions. Between assessment periods, teachers will use DIBELS progress monitoring tools to track student growth, reflect on instructional effectiveness, and make timely adjustments.

#### Grades 4–7 Teachers:

Teachers will conduct reading assessments three times per year. After each assessment cycle, the intermediate team will meet to review data, evaluate instructional strategies, and plan next steps.

Ongoing reflection and adjustment will be embedded in team discussions to ensure impactful instruction.

## Community Building and Communication

The School Growth Plan will be shared with staff early in the school year and revisited regularly during staff and collaborative meetings. The plan will be communicated to families through PAC meetings, school newsletters, Parent Education events and the school website.

## Fernwood Data

Over the past two years, staff morale and the overall school climate have shown significant improvement. Collaborative work among staff has become the norm, fostering a more cohesive and supportive environment.

In a staff survey conducted in November 2023:

- 0% reported morale as “high”
- 36% rated it as “average”
- 64% rated it as “low”

By June 2025, the results had shifted dramatically:

- 59% reported morale as “high to very high”
- 41% rated it as “moderate”
- 0% reported it as “low”

Perceptions of school climate have improved. In 2023:

- 0% rated it as “good”
- 79% rated the climate as “moderate”
- 21% rated it as “poor”

In June 2025:

- 12% rated the climate as “excellent”
- 71% as “good”
- 18% as “fair”
- 0% as “poor”

## Student Sense of Belonging

According to our year-end student survey:

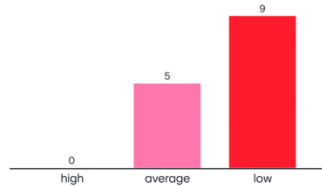
- 76% of students reported feeling a strong sense of belonging in their school and classroom communities
- 23% felt they “somewhat” belonged
- 70% reported feeling safe at school
- 25% felt “somewhat” safe
- 5% reported not feeling safe

While there is still room for growth, these results reflect the success of our efforts to enhance the school environment for both staff and students. Please see attached data pages.

## Fernwood Social-Emotional Data

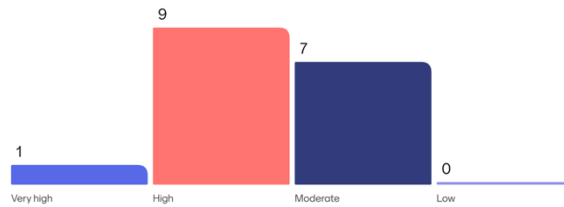
### Staff survey November 2023

Morale is



### Staff survey 2025

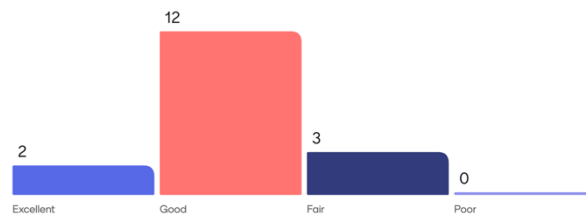
Staff morale is



School climate is



School climate is



## Student Learning Survey Data

### Is school a place where you feel like you belong?

	Grade 4	Grade 7
Never	10%	3%
Almost Never	10%	7%
Sometimes	26%	30%
Most of the time	36%	38%
All of the time	10%	15%
Don't know	5%	3%

### Do you feel safe at school?

	Grade 4	Grade 7
Never	4%	0%
Almost Never	12%	14%
Sometimes	8%	17%
Most of the time	24%	50%
All of the time	44%	14%
Don't know	8%	1%

# Social Emotional Survey

## June 2025

2. I like school.

[More details](#)

2.52

Average Rating



3. I feel safe at school.

[More details](#)

2.81

Average Rating

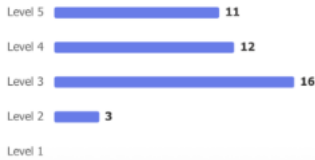


5. People care about each other in my class.

[More details](#)

3.74

Average Rating



7. Adults treat students kindly and fairly at this school.

[More details](#)

2.81

Average Rating



9. I feel like I belong in my classroom and my school community.

[More details](#)

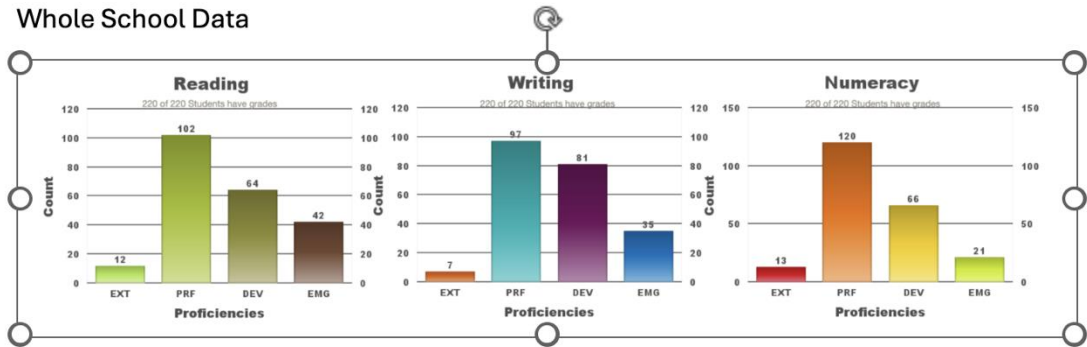
2.83

Average Rating



# Fernwood Academic Data 2025

## Whole School Data



## FERNWOOD ELEMENTARY: HOW ARE WE DOING?



### COMPOSITE SCORE BREAKDOWN BY GRADE (%)

Grade Level	Intensive Support	Strategic Support	Core Support	High Core	Below Target	Not Assessed
K	32	28	32	12	60	0
1	37	11	11	30	48	0
2	36	9	36	18	45	0
3	22	22	41	10	44	0
4	32	27	23	18	59	0
5	32	14	9	27	46	23 (5)
6	32	14	18	21	46	14 (4)
GOAL:	5	15	80		20	(9)

*Informed teachers are our best insurance against reading failure.  
While programs are very helpful tools, programs don't teach. Teachers do.*

– Louisa Moats

