

# **School Growth Plan**

2025-2026

Mayne Island School

Gulf Islands – School District #64

## **Current Reality**

Mayne Island School is a small, multi-age K–7 learning community defined by a strong culture of care, creativity, and community connection. Students benefit from a dynamic learning environment that integrates the surrounding natural environment, the arts, and partnerships with local organizations. Efforts to embed Indigenous ways of knowing, honour local land-based knowledge, and build relationships with local knowledge keepers continue to grow. Beginning in the 2025–26 school year, SENĆOŦEN instruction will be offered across twenty-two weeks, providing authentic language learning opportunities that are not widely accessible. All of this is supported by an engaged staff and family community.

Feedback from students, staff, and families collected through surveys and dialogue highlights consistent strengths and opportunities for growth. Strengths include engaging, hands-on learning experiences, progress in literacy and numeracy, and strong parent and community involvement. Students consistently report feeling safe and connected with adults in their learning environment.

Targeted instruction in literacy through the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) structured literacy program, small-group math support, and inquiry-based projects have contributed to both engagement and foundational skill development. A standout example was the theatre program, which modelled cross-disciplinary, student-driven learning. Students assumed roles aligned with their interests and strengths, including lighting, props, sound, ticketing, and acting. Learners were empowered to take ownership and collaborate meaningfully. Inquiry flourishes when students engage in questioning, exploring, and reflecting within a structured framework that nurtures agency (Murdoch, 2022).

Challenges identified include the need for greater consistency in staffing and routines, as shifts in teaching assignments affect stability for students. The broad developmental range within multi-age classes adds complexity in meeting diverse academic and behavioural

needs. While many students benefit from strong, trusting relationships with adults, there is an opportunity to further enhance emotional safety and ensure behavioural expectations are clearly and consistently communicated across all learning spaces. Strengthening shared understanding in these areas supports students in navigating peer relationships, developing emotional regulation skills, and engaging more confidently in learning.

Staff reflections highlighted the importance of deepening inquiry practices. Key goals include ensuring students have the foundational literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills needed to fully access inquiry, developing a shared understanding of the inquiry approach, and expanding student agency in questioning and self-assessment. Staff meetings have evolved into intentional collaboration time focused on professional learning and shared decision-making. Protecting collaboration time while maintaining consistency and continuity for students will be critical moving forward.

## **Aspiration: Direction We Are Heading**

**School Goal: *Deepen student inquiry through foundational skill development.***

Students will strengthen foundational literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills alongside Core Competencies to confidently engage in meaningful inquiry. Our aspiration is to cultivate confident, agentic learners equipped to explore complex ideas and make meaningful connections. As students develop these foundational skills and deepen their understanding of their own learning, they gain confidence to articulate educational goals and take ownership of their learning journey.

As we entered the second year of our inquiry goal, it became clear that while students were eager and capable of engaging in deeper learning, consistent access to literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional foundations was essential. We recognized that to enable all learners to thrive in inquiry, we must strengthen and, in some cases, first secure these core skills to ensure equitable entry points for every student.

Foundational skills include literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional learning. Social-emotional learning (SEL) supports students in managing emotions, developing empathy, and building relationships. Research shows that strong SEL skills enhance engagement and learning outcomes (Durlak et al., 2011).

Inquiry is a structured and purposeful approach where students engage with curiosity, ask meaningful questions, explore ideas, and reflect on understanding. Inquiry encourages students to construct knowledge through experiences that spark critical thinking and creativity, supported by teacher guidance (Murdoch, 2022). Inquiry is responsive,

intentional, and promotes ownership, real-world connections, and cross-disciplinary learning.

SENĆOTEN language instruction, aligned with Core Competencies, supports students in understanding truths, reconciliation, and restoration while strengthening identity and belonging in their learning journey. This direction builds on successes from 2024–25. The implementation of UFLI provided staff and students with a shared structure and language around literacy instruction, increasing consistency and confidence in reading and writing. The theatre program demonstrated how student-driven, cross-curricular learning supports both foundational skill growth and learner agency.

Looking ahead, our work aligns with the district’s strategic commitments; particularly equity, deep learning, and strong relationships. Ensuring all students access foundational skills increases agency and supports learners to thrive in a connected, caring school environment.

## **Culture and Structures**

To foster deeper learning, we commit to building conditions that help all learners grow with confidence, curiosity, and connection. This requires aligning practices, structures, and resources to support foundational skills, student agency, and collaborative inquiry.

For students, consistent and explicit instruction in literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional learning will continue using UFLI, small-group math instruction, and other evidence-based practices. By securing core skills first, we create conditions for meaningful, high-impact inquiry. SENĆOTEN language learning will also be embedded, with instruction and assessment connected to Core Competencies to build communication, cultural understanding, and personal and social responsibility. Tools like Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) ensure timely, targeted support.

Students will explore interests, take meaningful roles, and reflect on learning through projects, performances, place-based learning, and peer collaboration. Behavioural clarity and social-emotional learning will remain priorities to ensure students feel respected, connected, and empowered.

For staff, collaboration time is essential for reflection and professional growth. Staff meetings will remain spaces for co-learning and shared decision-making. Developing shared language and understanding around inquiry, assessment, and Core Competencies strengthens alignment across classrooms. Teachers will provide clear learning intentions, co-create success criteria with students, and offer timely feedback to feed forward to next

steps. Making learning visible through self-reflection and feedback builds student ownership and creates a transparent learning environment.

Structurally, sustainable collaboration requires rethinking time and supports. As a small, multi-age school with limited overlapping schedules, we will pursue predictable collaboration time, minimize transitions for students, and prioritize continuity in adult relationships. Data and dialogue will inform decisions to ensure structures meet learner needs. Our goal is a culture where students, staff, and families feel connected, empowered, and engaged in purposeful learning.

## **Capacity Building**

Deepening inquiry through foundational skill development requires ongoing capacity building among leaders, staff, students, and families.

For students, this means becoming independent, reflective learners who engage with curiosity and confidence. Core Competencies include thinking critically and creatively, communicating and collaborating effectively, and demonstrating personal and social responsibility.

For staff, capacity building centres on:

- Refining instructional practices that scaffold foundational skills alongside inquiry
- Building shared understanding of inquiry, assessment, and Core Competencies
- Developing collaboration structures for co-planning and sharing best practices

For leaders, capacity building focuses on:

- Facilitating collaborative inquiry and shared leadership.
- Using diverse data which includes academic, social-emotional, behavioural, and community voices, to inform decisions.
- Modelling curiosity, agency, belonging, and trust while deepening understanding of equity and Indigenous perspectives.

For families and community, capacity building occurs through transparency, communication, and involvement. Families will have entry points into learning through school events, celebrations, conversations, and feedback opportunities.

## **Community Building**

Deepening inquiry requires collective effort and strong relationships.

Engaging Students: Students participate in goal-setting, self-reflection, peer feedback, and classroom dialogue, understanding not only what but why they learn.

Engaging Staff: Staff are co-learners and co-leaders. Meetings support ongoing inquiry, co-planning, and reflection.

Engaging Families: Transparent communication and meaningful involvement help families understand the school goal and inquiry's role. Events such as performances, fairs, and conferences allow families to celebrate learning and contribute to community understanding.

Working Together: Connection and trust are prioritized. Relational work among students, staff, and families fosters safety, engagement, and a shared sense of purpose.

## **Assessment and Monitoring**

Assessment extends beyond achievement data to include dialogue, observation, and reflection grounded in relationships. Staff will share classroom experiences and student work to foster visibility and responsive practice.

We will use:

- UFLI and DIBELS data to help monitor literacy growth
- Small-group math assessments and formative tasks
- Student reflections, goal-setting artefacts, and curated evidence of inquiry
- Inquiry journals, graphic organizers such as KWL charts and mind maps
- Culminating projects such as a Science Fair, Entrepreneur Fair, and theatre performances
- Reflections and self-assessments connected to SENĆOTEN language instruction and Core Competencies

Adjustments will be collaborative and curiosity-driven, focused on responding to learner needs while modelling an inquiry approach.

## Communication

Mayne Island School's story is one of thoughtful evolution: from critical thinking to interdisciplinary inquiry to deepening inquiry through foundational skills. Students must feel seen, heard, and empowered to explore meaningful questions.

We will communicate through multiple platforms, including newsletters, student performances, classroom displays, and community events, highlighting how foundational skills enable inquiry. Communication will also highlight SENĆOŦEN learning as part of our commitment to truths, reconciliation, and restoration. Student voice will be central, showcasing reflections, questions, and growth through various means of expression.

## Conclusion

Our story is ultimately about relationships which is the foundation for authentic inquiry and agency.

Mayne Island School's goal is to deepen inquiry by fostering foundational skills alongside the Core Competencies of communication, thinking, and personal and social awareness. These competencies empower students to ask meaningful questions, think critically and creatively, and share their voice with confidence. Grounded in a strong sense of belonging, reconciliation, and supportive relationships, this goal nurtures curious learners who feel seen, heard, and motivated to engage deeply with their learning and the world around them.

## References

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