



# GULF ISLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Strategic Direction 2024 – 2028

Approved on: September 11, 2024

School District No. 64 (Gulf Islands)

## Acknowledgment of Territory

The Board of Education for School District 64 acknowledges its responsibility as settlers on the unceded, shared, and ancestral territories of the **Coast Salish First Peoples**. The Board endeavors to walk in respectful partnership with those who have been stewards of these lands and waters for millennia, strengthening relations for the benefit of every child, family, and community we serve.

### *Eagle by Quentin Harris (Salish)*

In Northwest culture, the Eagle is revered for her wisdom, a harmonious blend of knowledge, introspection, and the discernment of when to apply specific skills.

With her keen vision, she sees the world with clarity, drawing on her rich past to navigate an exciting and uncertain future. Although she soars high and views the landscape from afar, she returns to share her insights on the best path forward.

This vision reflects our aspirations for students to cultivate wisdom, acquire real-world skills, and then share their experiences with our community. True power emerges from empowerment.

The technical design of our logo features an Eagle in a circular form, symbolizing continuity and unity. Circles, with no beginning or end, are found throughout nature — from the earth, moon, and sun to tree rings, ripples on water, drums, and the talking circles we hold on the land. Additionally, the Eagle's wing is incorporated into the shape of an ocean wave, representing the Gulf Islands' connection through water. Water separates our islands but also unites us, sustaining life.

**Quentin Harris** crafted our Indigenous Education and Indigenous District logos. He frequently shares his knowledge and skills in our classrooms or engages in activities like floor hockey with students.



## School District No. 64 (Gulf Islands)

# Board Commitments and Beliefs

The Board is entrusted to positively affect student achievement and well-being. Although each of us may define success differently, we can all identify success and well-being in children who are confident, curious, and prepared to engage in the world beyond the classroom. We understand that success is far more than graduation or a metric we use to measure proficiencies. It is our aspiration that our students feel love and acceptance, know peace and a sense of self, experience quality instruction and programs, and master the skills and competencies necessary for fulfillment and well-being throughout their educational journey.

The mandate of public education is to “improve outcomes for students”. As governors, Boards of Education are responsible for establishing a plan for their district, which acts as a road map or north star. At its most effective, the plan is lived out through operational planning (i.e. school, financial, human resources, information technology, facilities, transportation, and engagement/communication plans) and in our daily work.

Our plan reflects who we are as a district, how we work together, and what we value. It serves as the lens through which we view strengths and demands; it focuses attention and guides decision-making. It orients our governance priorities to confirm that our actions and choices align with our aspirations for those we serve.

We, the Board of Education of Gulf Islands School District, commit to this strategic direction with humility and courage, using the resources available to us to secure and sustain a creative, healthy, and responsive system where every child thrives and flourishes.

The Gulf Islands Board of Education is comprised of seven trustees who are elected to a four-year term during civic elections. They are accountable to the public for governing the district in a sound and responsible manner.

**Tisha Boulter**  
*Board Chair*

**Chaya Katrensky**  
*Vice-Chair*

**Jeannine Georgeson**  
**Deborah Luporini**  
**Greg Lucas**  
**Nancy Macdonald**  
**Rob Pingle**



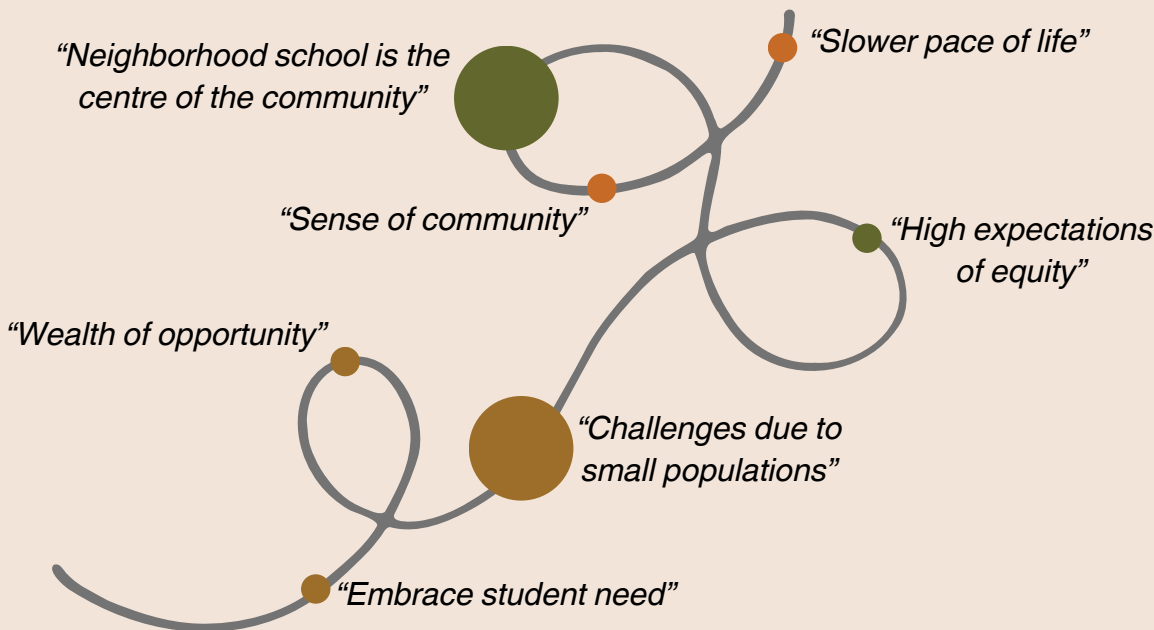
*We will care deeply, act wisely, and find joy in each day.*

# School District No. 64 (Gulf Islands)

## District Context

Gulf Islands is a geographically and culturally diverse public school district comprising five island communities that identify as unique, inclusive, and champions of the arts and the environment. Located in the British Columbia Southern Gulf Islands archipelago on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish First Peoples, the District operates a family of nine schools serving approximately 1500 students and their families. The District prides itself on offering quality and innovative programs, promoting active and healthy lifestyles, and providing caring and inclusive learning environments where students, staff, and visitors feel safe and welcomed.

## Thoughts From Our Trustees



## Who We Are



**5 Southern Gulf Islands:**  
Galiano | Mayne | Pender  
Saturna | Salt Spring



9 Schools (including 64GO)



1500 Students



40 International Students



11% Indigenous Ancestry



13% Disabilities/Diverse Abilities



In Funding Protection



350 Employees



98 Students travel by water taxi every day



**Range of specialized programs:**

- 64GO | Online/blended learning
- Gulf Island School of Performing Arts
- Late French Immersion
- Phoenix Place | Alternative program
- Saturna Ecological Education Center (SEEC)
- Seamless Day Kindergarten & StrongStart

## Our Plan

Our plan aligns with provincial education mandates, legislation, policies and the British Columbia Curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12. It is a compliance document. Although by nature colonial, this document is the mechanism through which the Board of Education is held accountable to its learning community, rightsholders, and the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

The “*Know-Do-Understand*” design of the BC Curriculum represents content (Know), competencies (Do), and key concepts (Understand). The Board feels that a balanced perspective of this model includes a fourth component: “Be,” which signifies identity, connections, and personal well-being. The four represent heart, body, mind, and spirit, and together, they constitute system balance and well-being. Within our plan, specific connection to this model of system well-being is made to four themes of focus:

Theme	Curricular Connection
Truths, Reparation, Restoration, and Healing	● KNOW
Relationships and Belonging	● BE
An Ethic of Learning	● UNDERSTAND
Integrity and Responsibility	● DO

As presented in our plan, these themes are not hierarchical. Each is integral to creating and sustaining system balance and well-being.

The Board, in alignment with the Ministry of Education and Child Care, recognizes that students must develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to prepare them for the world beyond the public school system. To ensure that students are prepared to attain career or higher education goals, outcomes are identified in each theme that relate to one or more areas of development:

- intellectual development
- human & social development
- career development

*(The Educated Citizen, Ministry of Education and Child Care)*

Without compromise, the Board will uphold the guidance and direction provided by the Truth and Reconciliation Committee’s Calls to Action, the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, the First Peoples Principles of Learning, and the wisdom of local nations.

# KNOW

## Truths, Reparation, and Restoration

We commit to learning the truths of our history in this place (colonially known as the Southern Gulf Islands, British Columbia, and Canada) and to taking action to support healing and the restoration of Indigenous knowledge systems, land, language, and culture. We walk together, alongside each other in humility and respect, with the rightsholders of this place. We recognize that racism and colonization continue to exist, and collectively, we will address the impacts of colonialism that perpetuate inequity of outcomes for Indigenous learners in our district. We commit to educating non-Indigenous learners so that, as they move through the world, they uphold truth, listen, challenge inequities, and are prepared to stand as allies. We acknowledge that our understanding and perspectives have been shaped by the systems we hope to change. To truly transform education, we need to challenge what we think we know and be prepared and willing to honour Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing and being. This is a step towards meaningful action, restoration, reparation, and healing.



## PRIORITY FOR STRATEGIC FOCUS

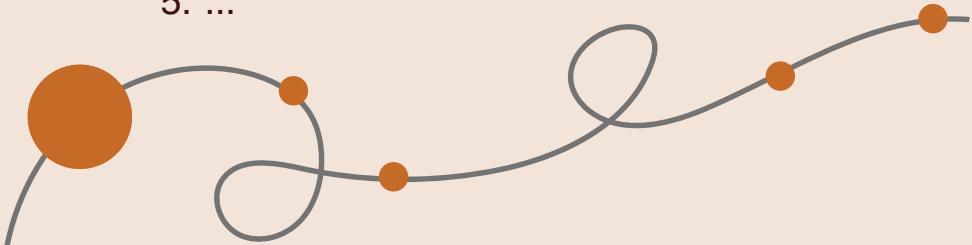
# Truths, Reparation, and Restoration

## KNOW

What we think we know is based on our mental models, which are often biased and incomplete. Therefore, in this theme, KNOW is an aspiration. We recognize that our knowledge is insufficient and often a barrier to learning and to listening with open hearts, spirits, and minds. We must commit to growing, expanding, and deepening our understanding as we challenge what it means to KNOW. We need to unlearn (let go of entrenched thinking) to truly be open to learning.

### Aspirations:

1. Identify settler/colonial bias in policy and practice as we create awareness and work to decolonize systems that perpetuate inequity and racism (healing).
2. Achieve equitable educational outcomes for all Indigenous students in our district.
3. Acknowledge, honour, and respect rights holders by strengthening and sustaining productive and respectful relationships (reparation).
4. Embed Indigenous worldviews, ways of knowing and being, language, and culture throughout the District (restoration).
5. ...



# BE

## Relationships and Belonging

We strive for balance in our relationships with ourselves, others, and the lands and waters that sustain us. With open minds and hearts, we create safe, welcoming, and caring learning environments that are inclusive and accessible. We ensure everyone is connected, supported, and seen. We relate to each other with kindness, care, love and compassion, nurturing environments where everyone belongs and contributes. As a community of learners, we acknowledge intersectionality, honour diversity and celebrate the exceptional in everyone.





## STRATEGIC FOCUS THEME

# Relationships and Belonging

## BE

BE is about identity, knowing who we are, and our place in the community.

### **Aspirations:**

1. Be a leader in cultivating well-being and championing social justice.
2. Strengthen and maintain relationships with community partners.



# UNDERSTAND

## An Ethic of Learning

We model the deep learning that we aspire to see in the education system through thoughtful and continuous reflection. We cultivate the freedom to explore new ideas, take risks, and challenge the status quo. We provide quality instruction and programs that meet the needs of every learner from early years to adult. We understand that curiosity is essential for deep learning and transformative growth, creating space for every learner to flourish.



STRATEGIC FOCUS THEME

## An Ethic of Learning

### UNDERSTAND

UNDERSTAND is more than content; it's the foundation of learning, being open to new perspectives, and making sense of the world around us.

#### **Aspirations:**

1. Empower student agency, engagement, and voice.
2. Nurture curious, critical, and creative learners so that every student is prepared and ready for the world beyond Pre Kindergarten to 12.
3. Foster deeper learning experiences.



# DO

## Integrity and Responsibility

We act with integrity, consideration, and honesty in all we do. We are intentional with our words and actively listen to promote collaboration that benefits the learning community. We create sustainable practices and are responsible in our use of resources. We consider the impact of our actions on past, present and future generations as we commit to being good ancestors. To foster integrity and demonstrate responsibility, we “walk the talk.”



## STRATEGIC FOCUS THEME

# Integrity & Responsibility

## DO

DO is a sense of purpose and action. We have clear goals and strategies that support us in achieving those goals. DO-ing holds us accountable to our aspirations.

### Aspirations:

1. Implement sustainable practices for alignment and coherence.
2. Be a leader in environmental stewardship and sustainability.

School District No. 64 (Gulf Islands)

## Strategic Direction 2024–2028

### Acknowledgment

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who played a vital role in the development of this strategic plan. The collaboration and commitment demonstrated by our staff, community members, and partners have been instrumental in shaping a vision that reflects our collective aspirations.

We particularly thank our leadership team for their guidance and unwavering dedication to this process. Their strategic insights and leadership have ensured that our goals are not only ambitious but also achievable.

To our students, families, and community partners, thank you for your ongoing support and input. Your perspectives have been invaluable in crafting a plan that prioritizes the needs and success of our students.

As we move forward, we remain committed to working together to bring this plan to life, confident that it will guide us toward a future where our district continues to thrive and excel.

Thank you for your dedication, hard work, and belief in our shared vision.

## GULF ISLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT 64

Learn more about the Gulf Islands School District:

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### Jill Jensen

Superintendent of Schools

If you have questions or comments about the district's Strategic Direction, please contact us at [reception@sd64.org](mailto:reception@sd64.org).