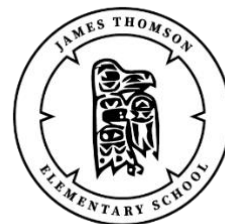




School Growth Plan

School: James Thomson Elementary

Principal: Matthew Hull



Purpose and Vision:

At James Thomson Elementary, we are dedicated to nurturing confident, compassionate, and capable learners. Through a commitment to inclusive literacy instruction and social-emotional development, we empower every student to thrive academically and personally in a safe, respectful, and engaging environment.

We envision a school community where every child is seen, heard, and valued—where literacy unlocks opportunity and social-emotional learning fosters empathy, resilience, and ethical leadership. By cultivating curiosity, connection, and courage, we prepare our students to navigate the world with confidence and compassion.

Our Story

James Thomson School is honoured to be located on the unceded traditional and treaty lands of the ʔaʔamɨn (Tla'amin) people. The area known today as Wildwood is traditionally called ʔiçəm (Thichum), meaning “on the edge of the forest.” This land has been home to the ʔaʔamɨn people since time immemorial, and their deep connection to the land, waters, and culture continues to shape our community.

Our school recognizes that education is a powerful tool for reconciliation. We are committed to learning from and with the ʔaʔamɨn Nation, and to honouring the stories, language, and knowledge systems that have existed here long before colonial settlement.

While the first formal school in Wildwood opened in 1923, we acknowledge that learning and teaching have always been integral to ʔaʔamɨn life—through oral traditions, land-based knowledge, and intergenerational teachings.

In 1986, with the guidance and support of the ʔaʔamɨn Nation, an afternoon language enrichment program was introduced for kindergarten students. This marked the beginning of a renewed commitment to Indigenous language revitalization. Today, ayajuthem language instruction is integrated into all classrooms, helping students connect with the land and culture of the territory they learn on.

In 2010, James Thomson expanded to include French Immersion, offering students the opportunity to graduate with a dual-language diploma. We celebrate linguistic diversity.

Our school community is enriched by strong parent and community involvement, including in our school garden, Farm to School feasts, and breakfast program. These initiatives reflect traditional values of sharing, sustainability, and community care.

Our school mascot is the raven, a figure of transformation and knowledge. Our motto reflects our shared journey:

You Have to Believe to Achieve!
klahsum kwath kwy yehgon ooksum kwol ee!
Vous devez croire pour atteindre!

Our Learners

James Thomson Elementary School is a tri-lingual (English, French, ayajuthem) Eco-Immersion school fostering rich learning experiences, environmental respect, and healthy living through exploring our outdoors and connecting children

to nature. We are situated on the traditional and unceded territory of the Tla'amin People. Being the only French Immersion elementary school in Powell River, we draw students from all areas between Saltery Bay and Lund. We have 266 students spread throughout 12 divisions supported by 30 staff. We are a diverse student population, including 28% Indigenous learners as well as learners whose first language is French. We take pride in meeting our students where they are and helping them find their full potential.

District Priority 1: Cultivating an Ethic of Learning

Ensure early learners and students have the best possible learning experience (student success).

Goal 1

James Thomson Elementary will improve literacy achievement for all students by the end of the 2025-2026 school year through the implementation of structured, evidence-based instruction aligned with the SD 47 *Literacy Foundations: A Teacher Toolkit for the K-3 Reading Instruction*.

Inquiry Question:

What interventions are most effective in reducing literacy gaps for students with learning differences?

Action 1: Structured Literacy Implementation

Staff will implement a structured literacy approach that is explicit, systematic, and cumulative. Instruction will target foundational skills including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Literacy blocks will be scheduled to include whole-class and small-group instruction guided by diagnostic assessment data.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning involves patience and time.* Structured literacy respects that foundational reading skills develop step by step.
- *Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational.* By including diagnostic assessment and adapting to individual needs, instruction is relational and reflective.

Evidence

Administration and the Learning Team will meet with teachers frequently to review classroom literacy programs. Instructional adjustments will be made based on student assessment data and observed progress.

- DIBELS and IDAPEL screening and UFLI progress monitoring
- CORE phonics and UFLI assessments.
- Classroom-based formative assessments.

Action 2: Tiered Literacy Support

Targeted Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions will be provided for students identified as at risk through the universal screening tools. Instruction will be delivered through push-in small group formats and literacy centers focused on specific, identified skill development.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.* Providing interventions honors that equitable support ensures every student has the tools to succeed.
- *Learning requires exploration of one's identity.* Supporting struggling learners allows them to see themselves as capable and valued members of the community.

Evidence

- Intervention attendance and participation tracking.
- Progress monitoring using DIBELS, UFLI fluency checks, and teacher observations.
- Movement across skills bands and reading levels.

Action 3: Collaboration

Each teacher staff meeting will include dedicated time for literacy-focused professional learning. Topics will include decoding strategies, comprehension scaffolds, and structured literacy routines. Peer observation and collaborative planning will be encouraged to share best practices.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.* Sharing strategies across teachers echoes Indigenous traditions of oral knowledge-sharing.
- *Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.* Collaboration models mentorship and collective responsibility for student success.

Evidence

- Staff feedback and reflection surveys.
- Implementation of strategies observed in classroom walkthroughs.
- Growth in student outcomes linked to instructional excellence.

Action 4: Culturally Responsive Literacy

Literacy instruction will integrate Tla'amin stories, oral traditions, and texts that reflect diverse cultures and student identities. This will foster engagement, belonging, and deeper comprehension.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning requires exploration of one's identity.* Integrating Tla'amin stories and oral traditions affirms student identities.
- *Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.* Indigenous texts highlight the centrality of story to learning.

Evidence

- Student engagement in culturally relevant texts.
- Inclusion of Indigenous content in classroom libraries and lessons.
- Student reflections and writing samples.

Action 5: Student Voice and Ownership

Students will be supported to set personal reading goals and monitor their progress. Classroom libraries will be co-curated with student input to promote ownership and motivation.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning is relational, focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place.* Co-curating libraries reflects reciprocal relationships between students and teachers.
- *Learning involves patience and time.* Personal goal setting acknowledges growth is a journey.

Evidence

- Student goal setting records and progress charts.
- Reading logs and book reviews.
- Student surveys on reading confidence and enjoyment.

Comprehensive Evidence of Growth

- Writing Samples: Use [BC Performance Standards](#) to assess growth in writing conventions, ideas, and structure.
- Teacher Observations: Use rubrics or anecdotal records to document skill development.
- Participation Data: Monitor attendance in intervention groups and literacy events.
- Classroom Literacy Data: Collect frequency of reading aloud, independent reading time, and use of literacy centers.

District Priority 3: Cultivating Connection

Prioritize mental health, community connections, and social-emotional learning.

Goal 2

James Thomson Elementary will foster a respectful, inclusive, and emotionally supportive environment where all students feel safe and valued. Through a focus on social-emotional learning, we aim to nurture empathy, resilience, and ethical decision-making across all school experiences.

Inquiry Question:

How do explicit strategies for self-regulation (breathing, brain breaks, mindfulness) affect students' readiness to learn?

Action1: Embed SEL into daily instruction

Integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies—such as self-awareness, empathy, and responsible decision-making—into classroom routines and curriculum.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.* SEL helps students reflect on choices and relationships.
- *Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational.* SEL competencies align directly with holistic well-being.

Evidence

- Student, family, and staff surveys measuring perceptions of safety, belonging, emotional wellbeing, and inclusion.
- Teacher observations and anecdotal records documenting student interactions, emotional regulation, and peer relationships
- Classroom walkthroughs noting SEL integration
- Frequency of positive behaviour referrals or recognitions
- Reduction in office referrals, conflict incidents, or peer mediation needs.
- Journals, goal-setting sheets, or exit-slips focused on SEL competencies (e.g., empathy, resilience, self-awareness)

Action 2: Monthly school-wide themes and assemblies

Use monthly themes (e.g., Respect, Integrity, Accountability) aligned with Tla'amin values to guide assemblies, classroom discussions, and school-wide activities.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.* Using Tla'amin values and themes builds cultural memory.
- *Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.* Assemblies reinforce collective values and shared responsibility.

Evidence

- Student reflections or journal entries
- Participation rates in assemblies and community-building events
- Number and nature of students involved in SEL activities, leadership programs, buddy initiatives, and school-wide events.
- Feedback from staff and families on theme relevance

- Artifacts like posters, student-created content, and assembly scripts

Action 3: Create safe spaces for student voice

Establish regular opportunities for students to share ideas, concerns, and feedback through class meetings, suggestion boxes, or student-led initiatives.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning requires exploration of one's identity.* Safe spaces allow students to articulate and shape their identity.
- *Learning is relational and connected to community.* Encouraging student voice reflects reciprocity and trust in relationships.

Evidence

- Number and nature of students involved in SEL activities, leadership programs, buddy initiatives, and school-wide events.
- Reflections from student leaders on their contributions and growth
- Survey responses indicating students feel heard
- Follow-up actions taken based on student input

Action 4: Staff collaboration on inclusive practices

Dedicate time in staff meetings to share strategies for building inclusive, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive classrooms.

First Peoples Principle:

- *Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.* Staff collaboration models mentorship, collective responsibility, and intergenerational learning.
- *Learning is holistic and relational.* Inclusive practices recognize the interconnectedness of social, emotional, and academic learning.

Evidence

- Staff meeting notes and shared resources
- Peer observations and feedback
- Staff survey responses on confidence in inclusive practices
- Frequency of positive behaviour referrals or recognitions
- Reduction in office referrals, conflict incidents, or peer mediation needs.

Action 5: Community engagement and feedback

Engage families and caregivers in conversations about school culture through events, newsletters, and surveys.

First Peoples Principles:

- *Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.* Engaging families ensures learning is connected to community well-being.
- *Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.* Families bring lived experiences and stories that enrich collective understanding.

Evidence

- Family engagement survey results
- Attendance at school culture-related events
- Testimonials or stories shared during conferences or newsletters
- Qualitative feedback from families

Our Story is Beyond

In addition to our academic and social-emotional goals for the year, James Thomson Elementary is excited to deepen our connection with Brooks Secondary School. We will actively seek opportunities to welcome Brooks students into our learning spaces—whether through buddy reading, passion project showcases, collaborative arts experiences, or shared celebrations like sports days. We are also launching a new K–7 Student Leadership initiative that empowers students to take an active role in shaping our school community. Through meaningful participation and mentorship, students will be supported in developing a strong sense of identity, belonging, and ethical responsibility.