



SCHOOL: Hammond Bay Elementary

YEAR: 2024-25

PRINCIPAL: Shannon Apland



OUR SCHOOL

We are a single track French Immersion school with 388 students currently enrolled in grades K-7. We are grateful to be located on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw peoples, next to the ocean, surrounded by beautiful old growth trees and cradled by a creek. The land on which our school is situated is traditionally referred to as Xwtal'uw'nuc, which means the creek that comes from behind.

At École Hammond Bay we strive to create a culture of trust and safety where students thrive physically, emotionally and academically. Staff model growth mindset, patience, compassion and inclusive practices. We believe that learning French as a second language should be fun and that it should be accessible to all learners. In supporting our students to achieve at the highest levels they possibly can, we see parents and the community as essential partners in learning.

As part of our goal towards Truth and Reconciliation, staff and students at École Hammond Bay draw upon the wisdom of the Syeyutsus principles. We start each school day with expressions of gratitude and an acknowledgment to the land. As much as possible, we bring students outdoors to learn from and on the land. Students learn through listening, playing and exploring. We value the stories of the elders and knowledge keepers, and we teach students to become stewards of the land.

OUR SCHOOL GOALS

Student Success

Increase literacy success rates for all students

Staff work with students to develop rich French vocabulary through play, stories and oral teachings.

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We conduct screeners and collect data on students' competencies several times throughout the academic school year.

Truth and Reconciliation

Create and share district-wide, Syeyutsus Principles of Teaching and Learning

Working with our staff and students, indigenous knowledge keepers and community partner groups in a spirit of respect, courage and vulnerability to bridge together different views and beliefs in a restorative caring way.



OUR CELEBRATION STORY

The 2023-2024 school year we celebrated a number of wonderful initiatives:

Morning Announcements and Land Based Learning:

Every morning, during the announcements, leadership students acknowledged the land and led the staff and student body through breathing exercises designed to calm our busy minds and to prepare for a good day of learning together.

Over the school year, all classes spent part of their day outside learning on and from the land. Many of the lessons were cross-curricular in nature and every lesson was conducted with an appreciation of the land as our teacher. We also learned from our local knowledge keepers who shared history of the land, the language and the importance of balance, respect and reciprocity.

Several classes, including our grade 7 leadership group, worked with Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) to remove invasive plant species from the neighbouring Whalley creek. Students worked with NALT and other community members to learn about protecting local species of plants and animals. This includes local salamanders and the popcorn flower that is endemic to this area.

Acts of Reciprocity:

In the month of December École Hammond Bay acted as the 'Everyone Deserves a Smile' packing hub for our local community and schools. Together we packed 785 bags and delivered them to people experiencing financial hardship or living without a home. Every student at École Hammond Bay lent a hand during this important initiative through designing and painting a gift bag, creating a card with a message of kindness and then personally packing their bag that was later delivered by the Leadership team.

Celebration of French

In the month of March we participated in an event called Manie Musicale. This event is designed to foster a love of the French language through music. Manie Musicale was a success in bringing the school together with a love of singing newly released French songs from around the world. The lyrics of the songs enriched our collective vocabulary and the music videos and links to the artists, taught students, parents and staff about other countries and cultures around the world that speak French.

Community Building and Fundraising:

In the month of June, our PAC hosted their annual community Fun Fair. This event is always a wonderful way to close the school year and is open to students, families and their friends. Proceeds from this fundraiser went back to the students in the 2024-2025 school year in the form of new library books, upgraded library furniture, supplemental field trips and local artists and author presentations.