2025-26 School Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

School: Departure Bay Elementary

Principal: Larry Dean

Our Story/Our Learners

Strengths-Based Description of Our School Community and Learners

Departure Bay School is a vibrant, inclusive learning community in the Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools district. We proudly acknowledge that we learn and work on the traditional territory of the **Snuneymuxw First Nation**.

We are home to **352 students**, organized into **17 divisions**, ranging from kindergarten to Grade 7. In addition to our focus on the core subject areas, we emphasize environmental stewardship, outdoor learning, and sustainability'values that are reflected in both our teaching practices and school culture.

- Our students are **curious, creative, and compassionate**, showing a strong sense of responsibility for each other and the world around them.
- We serve a **diverse population**, including a significant number of **Indigenous learners**, and we honour Indigenous ways of knowing through integrated culturallearning and land-based experiences.
- We have a wide variety of family backgrounds and languages within our community, bringing rich cultural perspectives to our school community.
- We are proud of our commitment to **inclusive education**, supporting students with diverse abilities through collaboration with families and support staff.
- Our teaching and support staff are **dedicated, collaborative, and student-focused**, continually working to improve learning outcomes and foster a strong sense of belonging.
- We benefit from **engaged families and community partnerships**, which help build a connected, supportive school environment.
- Social-emotional learning is a core focus, with programs and practices in place to support student **well-being, self-regulation, and empathy**.
- With a growing focus on **literacy, numeracy, environmental inquiry, and outdoor learning**, our learners are empowered to think critically, actresponsibly, and care deeply.

Departure Bay School is a community where learners thrive through connection, curiosity, and care.

What is the data telling us about our learners:
Satellite data shows that many of our students are meeting expectations in writing; however, we also have a number of students who are still at the emerging and developing stages. Using data from FSA scores, student Green, Red, Yellow data, district and school-based formative assessments, and June report card marks, we are identifying areas for growth and continuing to focus on strengthening writing skills across all grades.

Goals for 2025 – 26

Goal 1

Student Success

Increase literacy success rates for all

School specific goal: Writing

By June 2028, our school will increase student achievement in writing by ensuring that at least 75% of students in Grades 1-7 demonstrate proficiency or higher on grade-level writing assessments, with targeted improvement for our priority populations.

Strategies to meet the goal:

Key Strategies:

1. **Adopt school-wide writing program(s)** (e.g., traits of writing, writing continuum) by the end of the 2026 school year to ensure consistency in instruction and assessment across all grades.
2. **Participate in professional development** in culturally responsive writing instruction and formative assessment tools.
3. **Implement regular school-wide writing activities** (three times annually) to calibrate teacher assessments and track student progress.
4. **Target early intervention** (Grades 1–3) through small-group instruction, ELL supports, and targeted IST teacher involvement.
5. **Engage families** through home-writing activities, student writing showcases, and literacy nights to strengthen school-home connections in writing development.

How will you know:

Indicators of Success:

- Increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in writing by June 2027.
- Reduce the proficiency gap in writing for our Priority Population.
- 100% of teachers will participate in writing professional development by June 2026.
- Increase in student engagement and confidence in writing, as measured by a student writing **survey** administered yearly.

Timeline:
Start: September 2025
Milestones:

- November 2025: Writing programs adopted and put into practice.
- November 2025: PD completed with a focus on writing.
- January 2026: Interventions launched.
- Ongoing: School-wide writing assessments (Fall, Winter, Spring).

Resources / Supports Needed:

- Professional learning time and budget (e.g., in-service sessions, writing mentors).
- Writing assessment rubrics and exemplars.
- Data sets: e.g.-,repot card data, FSA, NLPS assessments, classroom assessments.
- Support from Indigenous Learning Team and Inclusive Education staff.
- Family engagement materials (translation, take-home writing kits, events).
- District writing kits and resources.

Responsibility & Monitoring:

- Principal, teaching staff, non-enrolling staff, and Literacy Lead will coordinate implementation and track progress
- Teacher teams will review student writing samples and data each term
- Goal reviewed and adjusted yearly in the School Learning Plan process

Goal 2

Student and Employee Wellness

Increase the number of employees who feel valued and/or engaged

School specific goal:

Increase the number of staff who report feeling valued and engaged in their work by fostering a positive, inclusive, and collaborative school culture

Strategies to meet the goal:

1. **Staff Recognition and Appreciation**
    - Establish regular opportunities to celebrate staff achievements (e.g., monthly shout-outs, newsletters, staff appreciation events).
    - Encourage peer recognition through initiatives such as “staff gratitude boards” or “kindness shout-outs.”
2. **Voice and Collaboration**
    - Create formal opportunities for staff input on school decisions (e.g., surveys, staff advisory groups, team meetings).
    - Involve staff in shaping school goals, events, and improvement plans.
3. **Professional Growth and Support**
    - Offer professional learning aligned with staff interests, identified needs, and school priorities.
    - Encourage collaboration through team planning time and sharing of best practices.
    - Support mentoring or buddy systems for new and returning staff.
4. **Well-being and Connection**
    - Promote work-life balance through wellness initiatives and manageable meeting schedules.
    - Host regular social opportunities that build connection and community among staff.
5. **Communication and Transparency**
    - Maintain clear, consistent, and positive communication from school leadership.
    - Provide timely updates and celebrate both individual and collective successes.

How will you know:

- Increased positive responses on the School, District or Ministry Staff Engagement Survey (questions related to feeling valued, connected, and supported).
- Higher participation in staff events, professional learning, and school initiatives.
- Increased instances of peer-to-peer recognition and collaborative projects.
- Positive trends in staff retention and attendance.
- Anecdotal evidence through staff feedback, informal check-ins, and team reflections indicating a stronger sense of belonging and morale.