



# Greenwood Elementary (GES) Growth Plan

Focus Goal: Outdoor Education / Year 2 Wild School

## Be Curious

### What is going on for our learners?

- Families identified outdoor education, smaller class sizes, and strong staff support as things working well at GES.
- Students are actively participating in outdoor learning through the Wild School program, land-based activities, biodiversity stewardship projects (FINS salmon release, plant identification/signage), and classroom work with themes that are later taken outdoors.
- Outdoor spaces are also being used for social-emotional growth, reflection, and belonging.
- Families also value reading, writing, and math confidence, alongside problem-solving, creativity, communication, and collaboration—all skills that outdoor education can naturally foster with intentional instructional planning.
- Appears to be an appetite for also including learning about local food producers and food literacy
- Forays into gardening and learning about how to grow food have inspired interesting opportunities for teaching in health-related areas.

### Who are we most worried about?

- Vulnerable students who require greater support for full inclusion, social-emotional supports, and equipment/resources to fully participate in outdoor learning.
- Students whose families expressed a need for more balance between traditional academics and outdoor learning.
- Students navigating multi-grade splits, where teachers are still building capacity with new grade-level curriculum.

### What information do we have right now about our kids? What is missing?

- Current data:
  - 81% of families feel well or somewhat well informed about school events and instruction (World Café, 2025).
  - 42% of families expressed interest in parent education around academics and child wellness (World Café, 2025).
  - Attendance data shows illness is the primary barrier, not outdoor learning.
  - Students have shown curiosity and voice through observations of seasonal plant changes, which has inspired the potential biodiversity signage project.
  - students are arriving with heightened states of dysregulation and requiring soft starts.
  - Many students are struggling with food literacy.
- Missing data:
  - More consistent and regular student voice (reflections/surveys/interviews on how outdoor education impacts their learning, identity, health, and belonging).
  - Quantitative achievement data connecting outdoor learning to growth in literacy and numeracy.

- what is the story behind the dysregulation and are there any commonalities?
- how can outdoor learning help with dysregulation if it is intentionally designed to support mindfulness?

### **How are we incorporating student voice?**

- Circle of Courage reflections.
- Student-led outdoor projects (gardening, salmon release, story walks, land-based art, biodiversity signage).
- Future plan: collect direct student reflections on how outdoor learning supports identity, belonging, resilience, and academics.

### **Strengths**

- GES's outdoor education program is strongly supported by families.
- Staff commitment to professional development, community partnerships, and integration of innovative land/place-based learning.
- School's "backyard" provides rich access to a school garden, forested mountains, biodiversity, and Indigenous cultural connections.

### **Areas for Growth**

- More explicit connection between outdoor learning and academic outcomes.
- Continued focus on equity and inclusion for vulnerable learners.
- Increased staff familiarity with multi-grade outdoor strategies.
- Continuing to build the garden space as a learning space and utilizing the expertise of local community members.

### **Trends and Equity Gaps**

- Strong evidence of outdoor education benefiting all learners.
- Gap in inclusion: vulnerable students need targeted support/strategies/equipment to benefit equally from outdoor experiences.
- Mixed readiness among families to engage in parent education opportunities or view outdoor learning as purposeful.

## **Get Intentional in Our Inquiry**

### **Priorities and Why**

- Outdoor education remains a top priority because it is valued by families, supports academic and SEL growth, and strengthens student engagement and identity.
- Prioritize inclusive practices in outdoor learning so vulnerable students experience the same sense of belonging and mastery.
- Link outdoor education to literacy/numeracy instruction (e.g., place-based math, storytelling as literacy practice).
- Advance biodiversity stewardship projects (e.g., medicinal plant signage informed by Syilx knowledge) that integrate student curiosity and Indigenous teachings.
- Create opportunities for students to learn about food literacy (nutrition, gardening...etc.) and local food producers to both promote healthier personal choices and build understanding in how

food is locally produced.

### **What will have the biggest impact?**

- Embedding literacy and numeracy goals into outdoor education.
- Strengthening SEL and inclusion through outdoor collaboration and reflection.
- Building staff capacity for multi-grade biodiversity, gardening/ food production, literacy, and numeracy instruction outdoors.

### **Evidence for direction:**

- Direct family feedback from the World Café.
- Student-initiated ideas for biodiversity learning, gardening, food production.
- BC Curriculum emphasis on Core Competencies and First Peoples Principles of Learning.
- Wild Schools program goals (biodiversity, stewardship, PD, place-based learning).
- Research showing outdoor education improves engagement, achievement, and well-being.

### **Measurable 3-Year Goals**

- Increase student self-reported confidence in literacy and numeracy through outdoor contexts.
- Improve inclusion outcomes for vulnerable students (through SEL, Circle of Courage, teamwork outdoors).
- Document growth in creative, collaborative, and critical thinking skills through portfolios and student voice surveys.
- Develop relationships with local food producers and student opportunities to grow and use locally sourced foods in healthy ways.
- Complete a biodiversity project that results in student-designed signage for local medicinal plants, deepening connection to Syilx cultural knowledge.

## **Make Time for Learning**

### **Learning needed (staff):**

- Designing multi-grade outdoor lessons in literacy, numeracy, gardening, food production, and biodiversity.
- Inclusive strategies for supporting vulnerable learners outdoors.
- Building capacity for teaching biodiversity, food production, and Indigenous knowledge.

### **Learning structures:**

- Professional development through the Wild Schools program.
- Continued mentorship with district leaders (e.g., Monica Nissen).
- Collaboration with community experts and Syilx knowledge keepers.
- Use of TC<sup>2</sup> (Critical Thinking Consortium) frameworks for outdoor inquiry.
- Staff inquiry cycles to trial outdoor-based literacy/numeracy lessons and share results.
- Using the learning resources of BCAITC (British Columbia Agriculture in the Classroom)

## Action with Intent

### What we will do differently

- Connect outdoor education explicitly to literacy, numeracy, and health.
- Embed biodiversity projects and Indigenous teachings (e.g., medicinal plant signage).
- Strengthen strategies for inclusion of vulnerable learners outdoors.
- Build connections with local community experts and food producers
- Offer students regular opportunities to build their knowledge how to grow foods and use in healthy ways

### Practices we will refine

- Ongoing Circle of Courage integration.
- Student-led inquiry (gardening, food production, biodiversity, salmon release, stewardship).
- Using outdoor education as a driver of SEL and resilience.
- Balancing outdoor and traditional classroom learning.
- Build our teacher tool boxes with a variety of resources and strategies to support all learners and facilitate knowledge growth

### What is having a positive impact? How do we know?

- Outdoor education named by families as a key strength.
- Students engaged in salmon release, plant studies, fire safety, and land-based art.
- Families and students report noticing positive impacts on belonging and learning.

### Grounded in research

- Outdoor learning supports Core Competencies and First Peoples Principles of Learning.
- Research shows land-based learning improves engagement and supports vulnerable learners with alternative ways to succeed.
- We know that many of our students struggle with food literacy, understanding food literacy, and making healthy choices

## Thoughtful Sharing

### Have we made enough of a difference? How do we know?

- Family/student surveys, student reflections, biodiversity project outcomes, and classroom data (literacy/numeracy, SEL).

### What have we learnt?

- Outdoor education drives student engagement, SEL, and community identity.
- Literacy and numeracy need stronger, more explicit integration.
- Student curiosity leads to authentic stewardship opportunities.

### **Emerging next steps**

- Increase parent education and inclusion strategies.
- Build connections with Indigenous knowledge keepers and community partners.
- Expand student voice collection to assess impact.

### **Supports needed**

- Ongoing Wild School mentorship and PD.
- Professional development in outdoor education, biodiversity, food literacy, local food producers, gardens, literacy/numeracy outdoors.
- Resources/equipment to ensure vulnerable students can fully participate.

## **Alignment with Wild Schools Program Goals**

### **Wild Schools Goal 1: Provide schools with professional development and resources to support environmental teaching and learning**

- GES staff identified a need for professional learning in biodiversity, literacy/numeracy outdoors, and multi-grade instruction.
- Ongoing Wild School mentorship and district partnerships will build teacher capacity.
- Staff inquiry cycles and PD sessions will focus on embedding academic outcomes into outdoor contexts.

### **Wild Schools Goal 2: Engage schools in outdoor place-based learning to help connect students with nature**

- Students regularly participate in forest explorations, gardening, FINS salmon program, and land-based art/storytelling.
- Outdoor spaces are deliberately used to foster curiosity, inquiry, health, and SEL.
- Future projects could include story walks, outdoor music, gardening, learning about local food producers, and Circle of Courage integration outdoors.

### **Wild Schools Goal 3: Foster school participation in stewardship of B.C.'s biodiversity**

- Students will lead a biodiversity project identifying and creating signage for local medicinal plants significant to Syilx peoples.
- This project is rooted in student curiosity about seasonal changes in plants and expands their understanding of ecosystems.
- Partnerships with local knowledge keepers and experts will support stewardship learning and embed Indigenous knowledge into student projects.