

Greenwood Elementary School Growth Plan 2026–2027

Purpose and vision

At Greenwood Elementary School, we believe students learn deeply when learning is connected to their community, the land, and authentic questions. As a Wild School, we will use our local watershed and surrounding ecosystems as contexts for interdisciplinary, place-based learning.

This plan was developed collaboratively through staff discussion and planning, student observations and interests, family feedback, school-based assessment information, and consultation with community and outdoor-learning partners.

Be Curious: What is happening for our learners?

Our evidence shows several important strengths:

- Students are highly engaged when learning outdoors and participating in hands-on experiences.
- Our small-school environment supports strong relationships and a sense of community.
- Students demonstrate curiosity about local plants, animals, waterways, and seasonal changes.
- Families value outdoor learning and want students to develop strong foundational academic skills.
- We have strong community partnerships with several groups that specialize in environmental services or public education programs

We have also identified areas for continued growth:

- Students need further opportunities to explain their thinking, interpret information, collect and represent data, and solve meaningful problems.
- Multi-grade classrooms require learning experiences that allow students at different levels to investigate common concepts.
- We want students to understand more deeply how land, water, people, and living things are interconnected.
- Students need meaningful opportunities to contribute ideas and exercise agency in their learning.

Focusing: Our inquiry question

How can place-based learning in the Kettle River watershed strengthen students' numeracy, inquiry, communication, and understanding of the connections among land, water, and living things?

All classes will participate in at least one sustained investigation connected to the Kettle River watershed and contribute to a shared Greenwood Elementary field guide, biodiversity inventory, map, or related public product.

Why this focus?

Outdoor and place-based learning are established strengths at Greenwood Elementary. Our next step is to become more intentional about connecting these experiences to measurable student learning.

The Kettle River watershed provides an authentic context in which students can:

- estimate, measure, count, classify, and compare
- collect, graph, interpret, and communicate data
- observe patterns and changes over time
- investigate biodiversity and habitat
- read informational and cultural texts
- write field-guide entries and explanations;
- create maps and consider scale, distance, area, and location
- learn Syilx language and perspectives connected to land and water
- communicate learning to families and the wider community.

Alignment with the District Strategic Plan

This goal supports the district's published strategic directions:

District direction	Connection to the GES plan
Equity, Inclusion and Belonging	Outdoor, experiential, and multi-modal learning provides varied entry points for learners and builds connection to place and community.
Student Voice and Agency	Students will help select inquiry questions, investigation sites, species, data-collection methods, and ways of sharing their learning.
Wellness and Resilience	Regular learning outdoors supports well-being, confidence, collaboration, responsible risk-taking and perseverance.
Community Connections	Learning will involve families, Syilx knowledge and language, local experts, Wild School partners, and community organizations.

Developing a hunch

We believe students are most engaged when learning is hands-on, purposeful, and connected to their lives. However, we have not always used common learning intentions, assessment tools, or follow-up tasks to make students' academic growth through outdoor learning visible.

If we plan shared place-based inquiries, explicitly teach the numeracy and literacy skills embedded within them, and use common criteria to assess learning, students will become more confident in applying and communicating their learning across contexts.

Make time for learning

Staff will:

- develop a common rubric that can be adapted across grades;
- learn more about outdoor numeracy and interdisciplinary assessment;
- work with Wild School mentor Monica Nissen and other community partners;
- seek guidance and appropriate resources for incorporating Syilx knowledge and language respectfully;
- share observations, student work, and instructional adjustments during staff collaboration time; and
- consider how outdoor learning can support students requiring additional or alternative ways to demonstrate understanding.

Action with intent

During 2026–2027, students and staff will undertake interconnected inquiries based on the question:

How are land, water, and life connected within the Kettle River watershed?

Possible learning experiences include:

- studying forests, riparian areas, wetlands, ponds, lakes, creeks, and rivers;
- utilizing trips to Wilgress Lake Outdoor Education Centre
- conducting biodiversity inventories;
- completing pond and water investigations;
- observing and recording seasonal change;
- measuring temperature, precipitation, distance, area, growth, and water conditions;
- counting, classifying, graphing, and comparing plants and animals;
- mapping local habitats and waterways;
- exploring the Syilx Water Declaration;
- learning appropriate Syilx names and language;
- studying local species such as bear, cougar, elk, coyote, fish, plants, and aquatic organisms;
- participating in experiential games such as camouflage and predator and prey

- creating a shared field guide, with each class or house team contributing a section.

The field guide is therefore the culminating product, while the growth plan remains focused on what students learn through creating it.

Evidence we will collect

Evidence	When	Purpose
Student work samples	Each term	Show growth over time
Student reflections and self-assessments	Fall, winter, and spring	Gather student voice and perceptions of learning
Teacher observations	Ongoing	Document engagement, collaboration, vocabulary, and application of skills.
Participation records	Ongoing	Ensure every class and student has meaningful opportunities to participate
Family/community feedback	Spring	Assess the clarity, relevance and impact of shared projects
Final field guide or public presentation	Spring	Provide authentic evidence of collective learning

Continuous improvement cycle

Fall: Establish and plan

- Invite students to share what they know and wonder.
- Confirm the common inquiry question and assessment criteria.
- Seek family and community input.
- Determine class and house-team contributions.

Winter: Implement and examine

- Conduct field studies and classroom investigations.
- Collect student work and teacher observations.
- Review progress during staff collaboration.
- Identify students needing additional instruction or alternative entry points.
- Adjust activities and teaching strategies.

Spring: Demonstrate and evaluate

- Complete the field guide, biodiversity inventory, map, or public presentation.
- Gather student, family, staff, and partner feedback.
- Compare spring evidence with the fall baseline.
- Identify successful practices and next steps for 2027–2028.

Indicators of success

We will know the plan is having an impact when:

- students can explain how they collected, represented, and interpreted information;
- student work shows increasing accuracy, complexity, and independence;
- students can describe connections among land, water, living things, and people;
- students see their ideas and contributions reflected in the project;
- all classes contribute to the shared learning product; and
- staff use outdoor learning more intentionally to address curricular competencies and assess student growth.