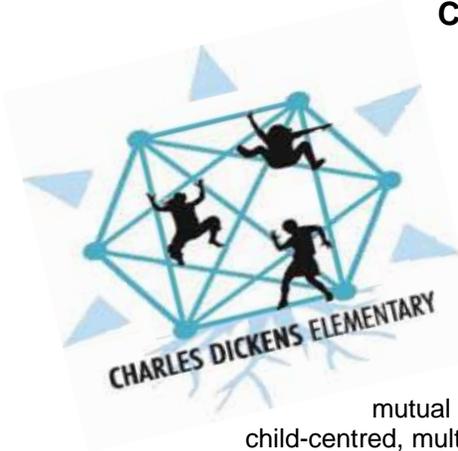


## CHARLES DICKENS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



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Principal: Julie Weatherall  
Vice Principal: Shelley Sunner  
Secretary: Carmelina Spirli  
PAC Co-Chairs: Jessie Mok &  
Kate Shapiro  
Director of Instruction: Aaron Davis  
Trustee: Carmen Cho

### MISSION STATEMENT

Together we bring alive our commitment to develop each child's potential in all domains through a long-established philosophy built on mutual respect, continuous learning and opportunities for leadership within a child-centred, multi-aged framework.

# October 2021

We acknowledge that we *learn*, work together, and play on the unceded and traditional territory of the x̱m̱əθḵʷəy̱əm (Musqueam), seḻḻw̱iṯuḻh (Tsleil Waututh) and s̱ḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish Coast Salish) peoples.

### IMPORTANT DATES:

**Monday, October 11<sup>th</sup>: Thanksgiving Day – School is not in session.**

**Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup>: Earthquake Drill at 2:00 – 3:00 pm.**

**Friday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>: Provincial Pro-D Day – School is not in session for students.**

**Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>: Conferences (for some classes); 2:00 pm dismissal for all students**

Dear Dickens Community:



These feathers and T-shirts are by Division 6 Grade 1 and 2 students.

Division 5 Grade 1 and 2 students said – At school we should feel: included, proud, peace, busy, happiness, calm, community, kindness, productive, belonging, success, joy, healthy, love, friendship, free.

## **Cross Country**

Thanks to our fabulous and dedicated team of Cross Country Coaches who have organized practices and accompanied 87 keen students to three Mini Meets at Trout Lake. Audrey, Sheila M., Kim F., Kim H., Sandhya, Kyle, Jo and others have made it possible for Dickens students to participate in a district-wide sport after a year without this opportunity.

## **Off They Go!**



## **Music – A Message from Eric**

In Intermediate music class, students have mostly been working with the school's set of ukuleles. I have introduced some different ways to read music for ukes (i.e. chord charts, tablature and a simplified numeric system) and we've been learning some songs and tunes. As students develop their skills, they'll be increasingly able to work out music by themselves. I'll introduce two-part harmonies soon, as well as some songs on the themes of Halloween and Remembrance Day. For those students who have a ukulele at home, I encourage them to practice their skills as much as possible.

The marimbas are undergoing some much-needed maintenance, and students will be playing them again as soon as they're ready. I am also getting the guitars in playing condition and will be transitioning the older students to guitars later this fall.

Stay tuned for information about student performances!

The music program would benefit from an electric piano/keyboard. If any family has one that isn't being used, I would be happy to include it with our school instruments for students to play.

Feel free to contact me with any questions about the music program. You can reach me at [ehartman@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:ehartman@vsb.bc.ca)

## Singing Club



Singing Club is back! Eve-Lyn de la Haye, or Evie, is a professional singer in opera and classical music and has been teaching children and teens in musical theatre classes, music camps, choirs, and private voice lessons for 15 years. She is also a Senior Teaching Artist for Vancouver Opera, bringing a program called Project Opera to Elementary schools across the city (including Charles Dickens!).

The Charles Dickens Singing Club is open to students from grades 3 to 7 and will meet every Tuesday from 12:15 till 12:45. Weather permitting they will sing outside in the Red Courtyard. In the colder months they will be in the gym where they can maintain physical distancing. Masks will be worn at all times. For our first session we had a wonderful turnout!

In pre-COVID years the Singing Club had several opportunities to perform, including the Remembrance Day Assembly, Winter Concert, the Elementary Choral Festival in early March, Spring Fling, and the year-end assembly. We don't know what performances will look like this year, but they will start by preparing an uplifting peace song that they hope to perform virtually for Remembrance Day.

## Earthquake Drill

On October 20<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 – 3:00 pm we will be having one of our two required earthquake drills. Usually, the BC Shakeout only involves Drop-Cover-Hold and counting to 60 in classrooms. This year it will require us to:

- Drop-Cover-Hold On
- Evacuate the school
- Set up the Command Centres outside
- Have a Student-Family Reunification drill

**We need your help!** We will need about 20 – 30 families who would like to participate in the Student-Family reunification Drill. This will involve coming to the Student Reunification area at the entrance to the school by the Rainbow Road (to the East). You will need identification to pick up your children. This is in case the person at the table is a staff member who does not know you or the person who is picking up your children. They will check your ID against the information you have provided on the yellow Emergency Student Reunification Form. If you don't have your ID we would need to find someone who can verify you are the parent/guardian. Runners then go to pick up your children from the field where they are waiting with their class.

If you would like to participate in this drill, please email me at [jaweathera@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:jaweathera@vsb.bc.ca)

I will confirm with the first 30 people who respond. You would need to be at the Rainbow Road by 2:15/2:30. Thanks!

## Communicating Student Learning

**October 27<sup>th</sup>** is our first of our two Fall Conference dates, the second being **December 1<sup>st</sup>**. On both of those days students will be dismissed at 2:00 pm. Teachers generally pick one of the two dates to have Parent-Teacher Conferences, Student-Led Conferences or Goal-Setting Conferences. Your child's teacher will let you know which of the two dates they will be having conferences. Pre-Covid, parents booked a time to come into the classroom to meet with the teacher and/or view their child's work, usually with the student present. Since Covid the Conferences have been virtual or on the phone. Your child's teacher will send you information about what format their conference will take and offer times when you can book either a TEAMS call or a phone call.

Below is a review of the BC MOE guidelines around CSL (Communicating Student Learning).

In BC there are a minimum of 5 communications to parents about student learning required each year:

- 2 written – Report cards – end of January and June 29<sup>th</sup>
- 3 informal, ongoing, throughout year – Fall and Spring Conferences
- Plus an additional communication or event such as calls, meetings, demonstrations of learning, interim reports, portfolios, digital communication (i.e., myBlueprint), etc.
- Each communication should include:
  - What is going well (Where am I now?) – i.e. STUDENT STRENGTHS
  - What is an area for growth/improvement (Where am I going?) i.e. – AREAS FOR GROWTH
  - What is the plan for supporting that goal (What do I need to get there?) – i.e. – WAYS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Reporting practices have changed to reflect the Redesigned Curriculum. It is focussed on *doing* rather than *knowing* and on *learning* rather than being *achievement based*. The learning process involves teachers creating rich learning tasks based on BC Curricular Competencies and student interests. Students work with teachers to set criteria. Powerful questioning and learning conversations allow for ongoing, timely descriptive feedback to the student. Metacognitive skills are developed through student reflection and self-assessment. Learning can be process, inquiry and project based.

There are no letter grades; instead the statements below are used. In fact, the Redesigned Curriculum is similar to the way Dickens' teachers have always taught and the new report card is similar to the traditional Dickens report cards. This is the second year that all VSB schools are using a new online reporting tool to write their reports. They include opening comments, student strengths, and areas for growth as well as ways to support learning. Students will be evaluated as:

- Beginning
  - Developing
  - Applying
  - Extending
- their knowledge in each subject area.

The first report cards will be sent home at the end of January. They will report on: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts Education, Core French (grades 5 – 7), and Physical and Health Education. Applied Design, Skills and Technology and Career Education will be reported on for Grade 6 and 7 students this term.

## School Goal

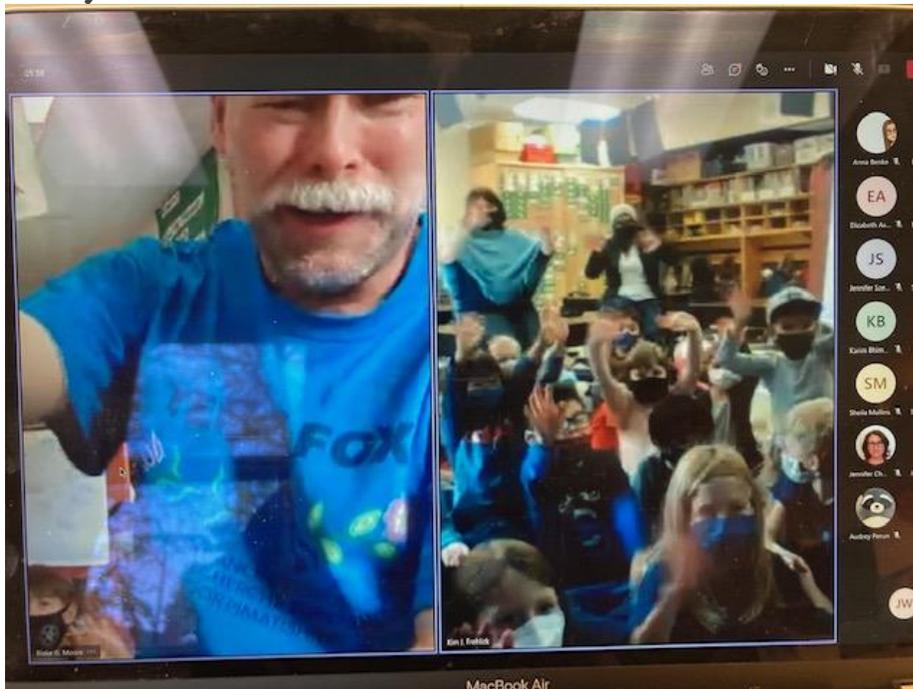
Last year the School Growth Plan with the Inquiry Question: 'exploring the connection between collaboration and continuous learning' was rolled over because of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the Spring of 2021 Dickens staff met several times to discuss the school philosophy and to reaffirm their commitment to collaboration and teaming. Recognizing that written output was an issue for many of our students, we adjusted the goal to 'collaboration through an inquiry question which focuses on improving student writing'. A writing committee met on September 27<sup>th</sup>, our first Pro-D Day this year, and had a discussion about improving student written output, which included what our students' needs were and how we could best meet those needs. Following a teacher-led collaborative process we decided on the specific wording of our school goal: **To develop student voice and confidence through written communication while establishing a common language around the writing process and assessment.** We feel that this goal will help us meet the criteria of building student confidence and honouring student voice while teaching the writing process in a systematic way across grades.

## VSB Education Plan 2026

The Vancouver School Board is soliciting feedback to help guide the Board of Education's work over the next five years. This is one of your opportunities to help influence the District's strategy. You might already have seen this survey, but if not, there is still time this weekend. It only takes a few minutes and also presents a good opportunity for discussion with your children. There is a student survey as well.

The survey is at [edplan2026.vsb.bc.ca](https://edplan2026.vsb.bc.ca). It closes on **October 11, 2021**.

## Terry Fox



Our Terry Fox Run today was a huge success. Blake started us off with a virtual assembly in which all the classes got to wave hello before we watched a video of Terry's journey and his commitment to raising money for cancer research. The assembly ended with a rousing Terry cheer by Division 8. Afterwards primary classes ran

around Sunny Side Park with an amazing amount of energy, some of them completing more than ten laps! Then intermediate classes had their turn. It really was a joy to be outside on this beautiful fall day watching such happy and determined runners.

Once again, Dickens has surpassed itself with donations to the Terry Fox Foundation. **We have already raised \$2520!!!** If you would like to support our efforts to raise money for cancer research, there is still time. Kindly click on the link below to donate.

### Charles Dickens Elementary Fundraising

Link: <http://www.terryfox.ca/CharlesDickensElementary>

A huge thank you to Kim Frehlick and Blake Moore who organized this event. (And a shout-out to Division 8 for their Terry Fox cheer – they certainly know how to shout it out!)

## Happy Thanksgiving

Division 4 Talks Turkey (with broccoli!)



**How to paint a turkey (as reported by Esmee)**

**We used a pencil and some used a tracer to make the face and we traced over the pencil with sharpie and we coloured with pastels and we painted with broccoli!**

**We wish all of our Dickens families a wonderful Thanksgiving with lots of turkey, broccoli and whatever else you and your family have on the menu.**

Julie Weatherall,  
Principal, Dickens Elementary