



September 2026

Courtenay Elementary 2026-2027 School Growth



Comox Valley Schools Annual School Growth Plan

Decolonizing, Indigenizing Commitment

Courtenay Elementary is committed to the Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement, Local Education Agreement, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. At Courtenay Elementary, we continuously embed Indigenous ways of knowing and being in our school community interactions through a focus on relationships, respect, and a connection to the land. Additionally, Indigenous perspectives and voice are reflected in both our approach to learning and the content that we deliver.

Students participate in cultural learning, leadership opportunities, and buddy programs, which seek to develop intrapersonal and interpersonal skills among students. Personalized learning supports are at the heart of our approach, with a goal of building up student confidence, and in turn fostering positive personal identity. Students contribute to a welcoming school community by engaging in gatherings (Fun Fair), celebrations (recognition assemblies), academic goal setting (student-led conferences), acts of kindness (ORCAs), and leadership (kitchen helpers). We are also working to expand student leadership opportunities through the establishment of monthly sharing



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circles where Indigenous students can speak about their school experiences, needs, ideas, and successes in a safe and respectful space.

The adults at Courtenay Elementary help create a safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive school by embedding Indigenous perspectives into daily learning, building strong relationships with students and families, and providing personalized academic and emotional support. We invite Elders into our school, create opportunities for students to practice leadership—even in small ways like holding a door open for others—celebrate student success (ORCAs, awards), and ensure Indigenous students feel seen, valued, and supported by making their stories visible at our school. We are working to expand ways for school staff to work with families, our Indigenous support worker, and the district Indigenous education team to enhance our understanding and learning around Indigenous ways of knowing and being through special events (Orange Shirt Day), field trips (Big House, fish traps), and special programming (Warriors). The staff at Courtenay Elementary demonstrate an ongoing commitment to supporting local community leaders who can support student learning and belonging.

Context and Portrait of the School

Courtenay Elementary School is located on the traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation in the city of Courtenay. We acknowledge and give thanks for the opportunity to learn and grow on these lands. Courtenay Elementary School is a community school, and as such, benefits from grants and monies that support the enhancement of the school grounds, the feeding of the students, and extra-curricular programs for students and families. This is especially important given the location of the school and tremendous needs of the student population that we serve.

In addition to this unique status, Courtenay Elementary also currently houses one of the district's two Montessori programs and is the home base for the district Challenge program. In addition to these specialized programs, Courtenay Elementary also runs a Strong Start program, houses a before and after school program (Bounce), and a morning pre-school (Jump Start) program for youngsters preparing for school.

The school community reflects a mix of urban and semi-rural characteristics, with families connected to a range of cultural, economic, and social backgrounds. Courtenay Elementary is home to a very diverse population of students, including a significant number of immigrant families who do not speak English as their first language (31). Additionally, there are 34 low incidence designations currently, with some further designations in process. Our counsellor supports about 80 students and families. The Indigenous support worker sees about 58 Indigenous students in the



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school community on a regular basis for check-ins, meals, chats, and the like. We have a busy SLP with a 0.4 position with a full case load of students 40 students and an additional 17 kindergarten student check ins. Our part time ELL teacher supports many families as does our youth and family support worker. We provide breakfast to about 35 students daily and serve on average 120 hot lunches daily to students who pay on a sliding scale from a nominal fee to no fee at all. Lunches are made from scratch by Masako. The program is funded by the school district.

Courtenay Elementary is known for its strong sense of community, inclusive practices, and commitment to student well-being. The school emphasizes social-emotional learning and collaborative approaches to teaching and learning.

Recent initiatives include:

- Strengthening school-wide literacy practices
- Increasing outdoor and place-based learning opportunities

Last year's focus on literacy and belonging highlighted the importance of student voice and engagement. Evidence showed that when students had structured opportunities to express themselves, engagement increased. This insight directly informs this year's focus on strengthening communication core competency.

Our Learners: What the Evidence Tells Us

Evidence collected over the past 2–3 years indicates the following trends:

Literacy:

Information shared by teachers to our CST indicated that our students demonstrate steady growth in reading; however, variability remains in written expression and oral communication. Some learners require additional support in organizing and expressing ideas clearly. We see that 52% of our learners are emerging or developing in Writing compared to 37% in Reading and 31% in Numeracy.

Attachment 1.

Numeracy:

Using the same information source numeracy skills are developing consistently—though students benefit from opportunities to explain their thinking and reasoning using mathematical language—64% are Proficient or Extending.

Core Competencies (Communication):

Student self-assessments and teacher observations indicate that while many students can share ideas, fewer demonstrate confidence in:



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- Listening deeply to others
- Building on peer ideas
- Communicating clearly for different audiences

Attendance & Engagement:

Attendance is an area of concern. 33% of our students missed 20 days of school while 10% missed over 40 days. This will be an area of further observation this year. A few priority students have more absences than their peers. Engagement increases when learning is interactive, collaborative, and connected to student interests and identity. There are several students on integration support plans supported by families, Inclusive Education, and the school-based team.

Student Voice:

Students report that they feel more engaged when they:

- Have choice in how they share their learning
- Work collaboratively
- Feel heard and respected

Equity Considerations:

As outlined in our Context and Portrait of the school, Courtenay Elementary has a very diverse student population. In the creation of our school focus we have attempted to provide multiple entry points for our Priority Learners. Communication takes many forms, and we have attempted to honour those pathways through our planning.

Strengths to Build On

Courtenay Elementary has built a strong foundation of relationships (between staff members and staff to student), inclusivity (variety of learning spaces), and student-centered learning. These strengths provide an ideal base to deepen students' communication competency, particularly in authentic, collaborative, and culturally responsive contexts.

Courtenay Elementary is a welcoming, supportive, and tightly connected community where everyone — students, staff, and families — is valued and accepted. There's a shared commitment to kindness, collaboration, and making a meaningful difference in students' lives, especially those with diverse and high needs. Despite



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challenges, the school community is resilient, passionate, and proud of the work they do. It's a place where relationships matter, growth is encouraged, and the sense of purpose is strong — a school where people want to be.

District Context:

Every school will uphold and support literacy and numeracy development.

Our School's Core Competency Focus Area for 2026/2027 is Communication Specifically, Writing as Communication (K–5)

Priority Focus Area:

Strengthening student writing as a meaningful form of communication across K–5 by connecting oral language, reading, writing, identity, and community. Students will use writing to share ideas, feelings, perspectives, and stories while deepening awareness of self, family, culture, and community.

Student Outcome Shift

“We will know that we are making progress when we see students...”

- using writing to communicate ideas, feelings, opinions, reflections, and learning across all subject areas
- participating in conversations for a variety of purposes: to connect, learn, help, share, and build understanding
- listening actively and responding thoughtfully
- creating stories, reflections, responses, and informational writing connected to self, family, culture, and community
- using oral storytelling, discussion, and collaborative talk to support written communication
- reflecting on how to strengthen writing and presenting for clarity, engagement, and audience impact

Adult Practice Shift

“We will know that we are making progress when teachers / support staff / school leaders...”



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- intentionally create safe, inclusive environments where students feel confident sharing their voice through speaking and writing
- embed daily writing opportunities across all curricular areas rather than limiting writing to literacy blocks
- explicitly teach writing using best practice literacy instruction: modeled writing, shared writing, guided practice, writing samples, and independent application
- provide descriptive feedback focused on growth, clarity, voice, and communication effectiveness rather than only conventions
- provide time for staff to collaborate regularly to review student writing and communication evidence and adjust instruction based on need

Design Principles (From Comox Valley Schools Strategic Plan)

- Personalized Learning
 - This principle fosters student agency, encouraging creativity and inquiry through individual choice, voice, relevance, and engagement. Continuous feedback and reflection support progress along each student's unique learning journey.
- Student-Centered Assessment
 - This approach provides students with voice and choice in demonstrating their learning. It prioritizes formative, peer, and self-assessment, goal setting, co-creating criteria, and descriptive feedback.

Monitoring & Evidence Cycle

- Evidence reviewed monthly by staff teams and school leadership during the staff professional development meetings
- Data sources include:
 - Student self-reflections (Core Competency profiles) Student learning Survey information 2022-2025
 - 2025/26 53% responded positively
 - 2024/25 45% responded positively
 - 2023/24 Survey Data Incomplete
 - 2022/23 61% responded positively
 - FSA Writing Results: 2023-2025
 - 2025/26 **56% are Emerging**, 38% On Track, 6% Extending



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- 2024/25 **75% are Emerging**, 21% are on Track, 4% Extending
- 2023/24 41% Emerging, **55% On Track**, 5% Extending
 - Classroom Assessments: **See attachment 1**
 - Samples of student work
- Adjustments made during collaborative planning meetings if progress stalls

Impact Indicators

Quantitative Indicators

- increased completion of writing tasks across subject areas
- improved writing assessment performance using school created writing criteria
- increased student participation in classroom discussion
- reduction in writing avoidance behaviours
- improvement in the evidence gathered through teacher assessment, provincial assessments and student feedback

Qualitative Indicators

- students engagement in writing tasks
- students demonstrate stronger voice, organization, and detail in written and oral communication
- students ask clarifying and extending questions during discussions

Implementation, Capacity Building & Resource Alignment

Professional Learning

Staff will participate in ongoing professional learning focused on strengthening writing as communication. Learning will emphasize best practices in literacy instruction and the Communication Core Competency through:

- explore a variety of explicit instruction practices as they related to writing using modeled, shared, guided, and independent writing practices
- develop strategies to strengthen oral language, active listening, discussion, and collaborative talk as foundations for writing
- supporting students in identifying purpose, audience, and voice in written and oral communication
- using Core Competency Communication Profiles to support student reflection, self-assessment, and goal setting
- reviewing writing assessment practices and common school-wide expectations for writing development



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Collaboration Structures

School staff will work collaboratively to support consistent writing instruction and communication development across all grade levels.

Collaboration structures will include:

- monthly staff professional development meetings focused on reviewing writing evidence and Communication Core Competency growth
- grade group and team planning meetings to co-plan writing instruction, common expectations, and targeted interventions
- collaborative review of student writing samples and classroom assessments to identify trends and next instructional steps
- shared reflection on student self-assessment data, FSA writing results, and Student Learning Survey information

This collaborative approach ensures consistency, shared responsibility, and responsive teaching practices across the school.

Resource Alignment

Resources include:

- writing exemplars, school-wide criteria, and communication success criteria for student self-assessment and teacher feedback
- visual supports, graphic organizers, sentence frames, and scaffolds to support diverse learners
- intervention supports for students requiring additional literacy support through learning support teachers and targeted small group instruction
- protected collaboration time for staff to review evidence and adjust instruction

Resource decisions will prioritize equity, belonging, accessibility, and meaningful student engagement.

If Progress is Not Evident

If progress is not evident, staff and school leadership will:

- revisit student evidence to identify specific barriers to writing growth and communication development
- provide additional targeted small group intervention and individualized literacy support
- adjust instructional practices to strengthen explicit teaching, scaffolding, and student engagement



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- revisit school-wide expectations and ensure consistency in writing instruction across grades
- strengthen collaboration with families and community partners to support student confidence and literacy development

The goal is continuous improvement through reflection, responsiveness, and shared responsibility so that all students experience success as writers and communicators.

What We Are Focusing On

For the 2026/2027 school year, Courtenay Elementary School's Core Competency focus is Communication, specifically writing as communication withing the Personalized learning Design Principle of SD71. Our priority is strengthening student communication through writing by connecting oral language, reading, writing, identity, and community. We want students to see writing as more than an academic task—it is a meaningful way to share ideas, feelings, opinions, stories, and learning.

Why It Matters

Our evidence shows that while many students are growing in reading, there is greater variability in writing and oral communication. Currently, 52% of our learners are emerging or developing in writing compared to 37% in reading. Student self-assessments and teacher observations also show that many students need more support in listening deeply, building on peer ideas, and communicating clearly for different audiences. By improving writing as communication, we are strengthening student voice, confidence, belonging, and academic success across all areas of learning.

How Success Will Be Measured

Evidence will include student writing samples, classroom assessments, and school wide literacy assessments. We will also review FSA Writing Results, Student Learning Survey data, and



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student self-reflections using the Communication Core Competency Profiles. We will know we are making progress when we see students are using writing for different purposes, participating actively in discussions, and making stronger connections between story, identity, and learning. We also expect to see improved writing assessment results, increased engagement during literacy learning, and fewer writing avoidance behaviours.

How Families Can Support Learning

Families play an important role in helping children grow as writers and communicators. You can support learning by encouraging conversations at home, asking your child about their ideas and opinions, and providing opportunities for storytelling and reflection.

Reading together, talking about books, journaling, letter writing, and sharing family stories all strengthen communication skills. Celebrating your child's writing and encouraging them to share their learning helps build confidence and pride.

Communication Methods

We will share progress and learning through:

- school newsletters
- Learning updates and parent-teacher conferences
- school website and ongoing communication from staff and administration

Strong communication between school and home helps ensure all students feel supported, connected, and successful.



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Attachment 1:

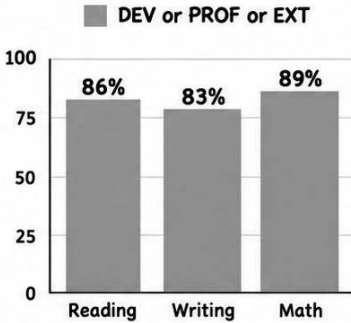
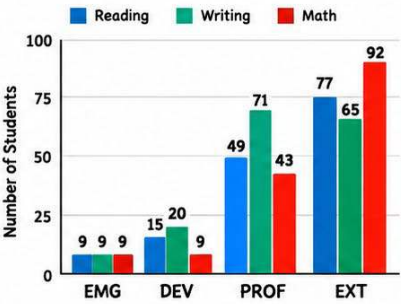
At the end of the 2024/25 school year we collected data on
Reading, Writing, and Math for students in K-4
using the Provincial Proficiency scale.

Courtenay Elementary Data for Start up of 2024/2025 School Year

Expectations	EMG		DEV	PROF	EXT
Reading	9	15	49	77	24
Writing	9	20	71	65	9
Math	9	9	43	92	20

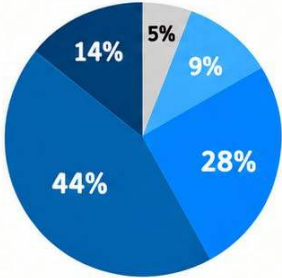
We collected data on 174 students in K-4. (This year students will be in grade 1-5)

* 9 students were not identified using the 1,2,3,4 scale. - These are students with IEPs or students who are brand new to speaking English. Other students with IEPs or who are ELL were scored using the provincial proficiency scale.



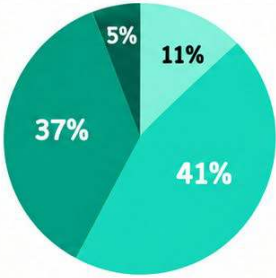
Reading

#	EMG	DEV	PROF	EXT
9	15	49	77	24
5%	9%	28%	44%	14%



Writing

#	EMG	DEV	PROF	EXT
9	20	71	65	9
5%	11%	41%	37%	5%



Math

#	EMG	DEV	PROF	EXT
9	10	43	92	20
5%	6%	25%	53%	11%

