



Early Years Plan

2025-2030

EARLY YEARS PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood launches the journey of lifelong learning. Current research refers to the first 8 years of life as formative years, when children are particularly receptive to environmental and biological factors. These factors create the neural connections and pathways that affect their physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and creative capacities over their lifetimes. Rich early learning experiences in homes, schools, and communities set the very foundation of children's health and well-being, their sense of community and social life, secure sense of self, healthy spirit of adventure, respectful relationships, and character.

The Early Years Plan aligns with the Burnaby Schools Strategic Plan 2025-2030 – a vision for the future shaped by the voices of Burnaby students, families, staff, and community.

VISION

Learning in the spirit of wonder and joy.

MISSION

To provide rich early learning experiences and environments, which stimulate children's thinking, creativity, and engagement to contribute to society and create a better world.

- Families are the first and most powerful influence on their child's learning, development, health, and well-being.
- Learning happens within the context of relationships where children, their families, and educators are co-learners, constructing knowledge together.
- Children are curious, competent, capable of complex thinking, and recognized as citizens who contribute to society.
- Play is integral to well-being and learning.
- Inclusive and engaging environments and experiences foster playful inquiry, children's well-being, holistic learning, and development.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Over the course of this plan, the District will focus on the following priorities, goals and objectives.

Creating Rich Early Learning Experiences

Goal 1 Continue to support meaningful and innovative educational practices from 0 - 8 years of age.

Objective 1

Expand and support professional learning opportunities and nurture pedagogical leadership around playful inquiry in the early years.

Action:

- Continue to align our practice with the following *Ministry of Education and Child Care* documents; *BC Early Learning Framework*, *Learning in the Primary Years*, and *Learning Pathways*.
- Host an Early Years Community of Practice including mentorship opportunities.
- Develop Professional Learning opportunities focused on Literacy and Numeracy for StrongStartBC Educators and teachers from kindergarten to Grade 3.

Objective 2

Create learning environments for experimentation and transformation.

Action:

- Create opportunities for cross-district Kindergarten classroom visits.
- Continue to develop the use of the *Echo Maker* recycling space to include Early Childhood Educators, teachers, and District staff as well as the Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network group.
- Maintain sustainable, high-quality play-based materials and equipment in Early Years classrooms.

Nurturing Our Relationship with Families as Partners

Goal 2 Engage with families in their child's learning and well-being.

Objective 1

Continue to support the transition from early care to school.

Action:

- Continue supporting 'Welcome to Our School' Kindergarten events.
- Support meaningful and innovative gradual entry practices.
- Continue to provide 'Learning Together' programs inviting children, educators, and families to visit their new school prior to Kindergarten to learn, build relationships and play together.
- Continue to work collaboratively with Early Learning community partners on events such as Play to Learn and Child Care Appreciation.

Objective 2

Communicate student learning through authentic practices that reflect a holistic cross-curricular perspective.

Action:

- Continue to make learning visible through practices, such as pedagogical narration and documentation.
- Continue to support meaningful and authentic assessment strategies.
- Implement District and Ministry of Education and Child Care's Early Literacy Assessments.

RESULTS

The progress towards implementation of our Early Years priorities will be shared within the Burnaby Schools District's wider strategic plan.