

We have a diverse and amazing community at Watson Road Elementary!

Our school's work towards inclusion has been at the forefront of what we do and one of the ways we are striving to meet the needs of our community is through our own learning.

Did you know?

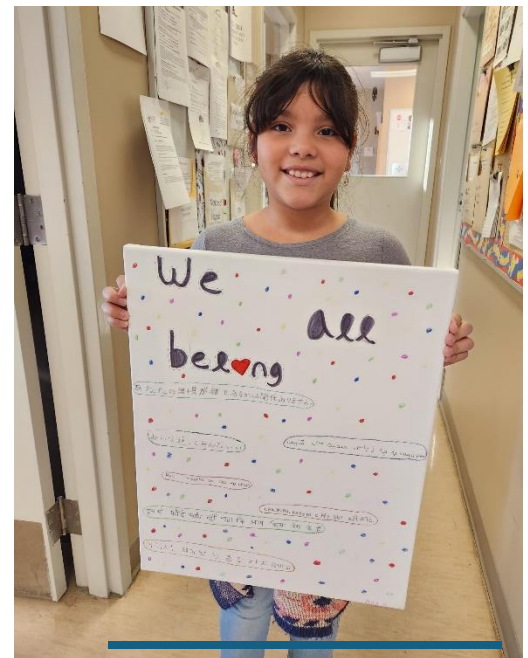


- We have a dedicated staff of learners and part of the learning our staff participates in is through our school's Equity Team who have come together regularly since October 2021 to develop their own understanding of Anti-Racism, Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity.
- Students sense of safety has improved in the past few years, as has their sense of feeling of connections to adults as evident from our gr. 5 M.D.I. Survey, and our gr. 4. Student Learning Survey. These results on the most part are higher than the district average.

- 11% of our student population identify as Indigenous learners.
- Our student population is diverse. We have 7% of our students born outside of Canada (eg. Ukraine, Bangladesh, France, Korea, Iran, Spain, China, Fiji, Brazil, Nigeria, Philippines, Colombia, Jamaica, Macedonia, Bolivian, Hong Kong, Afghanistan, and the USA.)



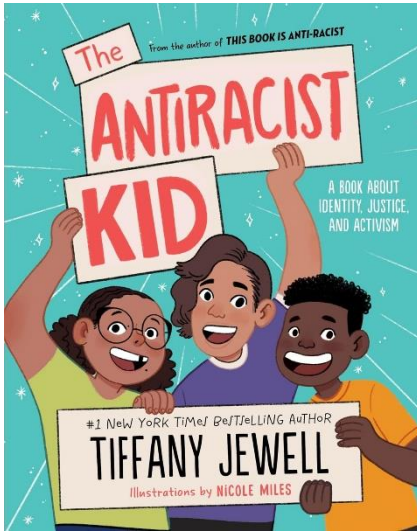
Melani, gr. 6 & Raven, gr. 6 as emcees at our musical performance



Ana, gr. 4

Our ELL teacher, Mrs. Temme, has been an equity leader helping to celebrate our diversity of students' cultures, languages, and ethnicity at WAT.

Over the past few years, our Equity Team have participated in both the BCPVPA's Leading for Equity and Unconscious Bias Professional Learning Series (Leading Equity - Professor Nouman Ashraf/

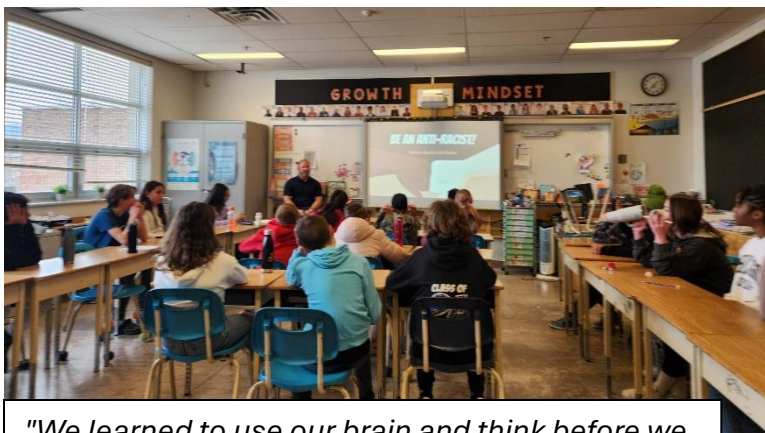


Decolonizing and Indigenous Education - Carolyn Roberts/ The Performance of Pink - Bryan Gidinski/Equity In Action: Using a Cultural Humility Lens - Beth Applewhite) , facilitated this learning with our staff at staff meetings, and completed a district DEI training with our district lead. More, our team in January 2024, completed a book study on “The Anti - Racist Kid” which 22 staff members participated in discussion and goal setting. Further, we have hosted a parent panel in 2022 where we invited parents who, or their children have, experienced racism, discrimination, micro-aggression, or teasing because of their skin colour, cultural background, or how they identify, to share their stories with us at parent roundtable. This event led to an even more inspired focus for our team to continue this important work. In June 2024 we hope to host another parent panel in a similar fashion and have sent along an initial interest invitation to our community.

RECONCILIATION

EQUITY DIVERSITY

INCLUSION



"We learned to use our brain and think before we speak because it might be hurtful," Arisha, gr. 6

Mr. Johnson has intentionally provided classroom discussions this year about being an 'anti-racist', and engaged our students in dialogue around the topics of micro-aggressions. This learning is designed to build student capacity to call in and call out when they hear something that is considered a micro-aggression or a slur.

We are also providing more opportunities for students to better understand Indigenous ways of knowing and what personalized land acknowledgments mean. In the past two years, many of our classes have participated in a multi-day focus on understanding and appreciating the importance of land acknowledgments and have gone onto the land to craft their own, which many share out during morning announcements. This work is supported by our Elder in Residence, Bonnie Coble, Melissa Madden, our Indigenous Student Advocate and Mrs. Williams.



Additionally, at the end of last year, and the beginning of this year, we partnered with a school in the N.W.T. And, we created a bridge of learning about their northern community in Canada as we learned about Moose Kerr School in Akalavik, NWT and fundraised to support their community.



As the Province and School District develop Anti-Racism Action Plans, we are excited to continue working with our community to provide the safest, warmest, most inclusive learning environment possible for ALL of our families, staff, and students.

Our staff are committed to this work. At October's 2023 Implementation Day, our team unpacked Jo Chrona's visual of "Becoming Anti-Racist in Canada", and our staff began taking steps toward a paradigm shift that extend multicultural knowledge and appreciation of others to include personal self-reflection and the transforming awareness of our own cultural blind spots. It was hoped that participants will grow to be more culturally responsive and competent. Understanding that racism exists, we had discussions about racism to acknowledge this truth.

Becoming Anti-Racist in Canada: a Journey
 From Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies: An Act for Reconciliation and Anti-Racist Education (2023) by Jo Chrona
 Also see <https://laudisk.com/2021/03/11/an-anti-racist-journey/>



Idea/graphic adapted by Jo Chrona based on work of Andrew M. Ibrahim MD, MSc

Chrona, Jo.(2023) Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies: AN ACT FOR RECONCILIATION AND ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION.

Unpacking the Anti-Racism Guide for Teachers

"Anti-racism is the practice of identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices and behaviours that perpetuate racism."



- 1) Inquiry approach - Connecting Anti-Racism work with the BC Curriculum
 - a) What does this look like and sound like?
 - b) Create a plan/vision to integrate this into your lesson/s
 - i) How do you "fit" Anti-Racism dialogue into your learning environment?

Our grade group teams unpacked the [BC K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan and Anti Racism: A Guide for Teachers resources](#). We connected Anti-Racism work with the BC Curriculum. What does this look like and sound like? Our teams created a lesson

plan/vision and action plan, as well, we examined the [Anti-Racism Posters](#): How do we use these as talking points in our classrooms? We had fifty Watson Staff members participating in this learning day.

Here are a few samples of our staff's commitments to this priority:

- I will listen for and respond to racist statements by leaning in to listen and asking to understand the content

- I can/will teach students how to stand up to injustices by demonstrating my own courage to speak up
- I will walk away with deep reflection about how I can incorporate a new understanding in a primary classroom to give voice to fears, insecurities, and innocence that surround the idea of inequity and racism
- I will enjoy learning about different cultures and show my students different cultures.
- I will continue to grow in my understanding of our diverse cultures in order to support those around me.



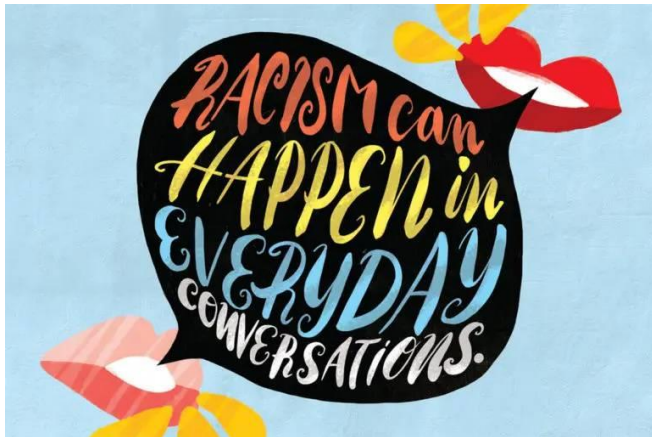
L-R: Mr. Baker (gr. 5/6) Ms. Janacek (CEA), Mrs. Bubela (CEA), Ms. Broughton (CEA), Ms. Waugh (Gr. 5/6) , Mrs. Bonneteau (gr. 5/6)



CULTURE TREE: One of our staff teams created this visual on Implementation Day to show 'observable culture', 'unseen' culture, and 'deep rooted' culture.

- I will be more present with the people around me and in my life. To build more connections.
- I will intentionally incorporate anti-racist ideas in my lessons and also be more aware of microaggressions.
- I will continue to find ways to create and hold space for people whose voices have been marginalized.

- I can learn more about different cultures, and traditions, while also trying to figure out my own.
- I will tackle these hard conversations with my students, rather than avoid them.
- I will take more risks in teaching anti-racism in my classroom.

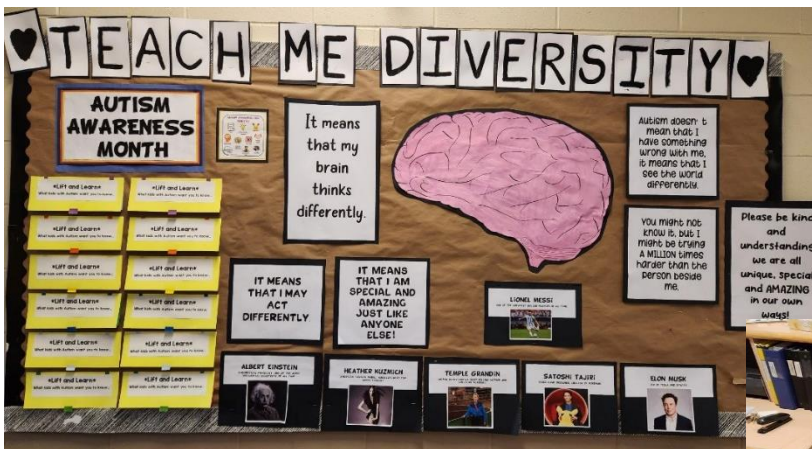


L-R: Mrs. Schmalz (gr. 2), Mrs. Shimizu (CEA), Ms. Madden (Ind. Student Adv.)

This year we continue to host monthly assemblies to be explicit in our instruction regarding anti-racism with all grades. We have read aloud several books, and during April's assembly, our intermediate students did a poster walk of the nine anti-racism posters created by the Province of BC.

As well, our staff recognize and celebrate the different cultures and diversity among our community. We have dedicated staff, of Mrs. Temme, and Mrs. Schmalz, who create beautiful visual references for students to learn more about 'Diversity'. We have shared out about Lunar New Year, Autism, and Mental Health to name a few.





Throughout the year, during morning announcements, we have student voices helping to grow our community's awareness and appreciation for our diversity. For example, sharing their personal land acknowledgements, interesting facts about their culture, facts about autism, about mental health to name a few.





L-R: Ms. Madden (Indigenous Student Advocate, Mrs. Ramdyal (gr. 2/3), and Rishan Z.

We continue to revisit and reflect and ask, leading questions to help guide the work we do at Watson Road:

- What barriers do we face when teaching for Equity?
- What does Equity look like in our community?

School? Classrooms?

- What ideas do you have to promote Equity in our classrooms?
- What actions can we take to ensure Equity in our community? School? Classrooms?

The administration team of Mrs. Williams and Mr. Johnson recently had the opportunity to talk to our STARs (Student Advisory Reps), who are selected by their classroom teachers, about their perceptions of the work our school is doing to support Anti-Racism learning, and if they are

noticing a difference in our school. We were so proud to hear our students speak of the importance of being kind and inclusive towards all students and that they all notice a significant reduction in situations where racial slurs and/or micro-aggressions are occurring. Our work truly takes a community to make a difference for all of our learners, and we are grateful to our students, families, and staff who have helped make this difference.