

<b>Section:</b>	<b>Students and Instruction</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Stó:lo History and the Halq'eméylem Language, Story, and Culture</b>	<b>4.4</b>

**Purpose**

Mission Public Schools lies within the traditional, ancestral, unceded and shared lands of the Sq'ewlets, Leq'á:mel, Sema:th, Matheqwí and Qwó:ltl'el Nations, and operates on Stó:lō territory, of which the language is Halq'eméylem.

Halq'eméylem is the acknowledged language of this land and of Stó:lo ancestors. The place from where the Halq'eméylem (Upriver variety) language originates is Leq'á:mel. The language comes from the land, and it has been this way since time immemorial. As such, relational language ties exist between the peoples of this region.

*Halkomelem* includes three sister languages: Halq'eméylem (Upriver variety, as per above), Heñq'emih'em (Downriver variety) and Hul'q'umi'num' (Island variety).

The Board of Education acknowledges its responsibility to partner and support the vitality of the Stó:lo History and the Halq'eméylem language, story, and culture, and to honour traditional territories by advancing the teaching and learning of the language, story and culture.

The Board recognizes the importance of Elders as Halq'eméylem-speaking knowledge holders. The Board recognizes the interconnection between the land, the language, and Stó:lō history. Language acquisition is holistic and occurs through culture, story, frequently in land-based learning experiences and a part of everyday life experiences. As such, it is important that it be embedded in teaching and learning, made visible in the learning environment and across the curriculum.

**Policy**

The instruction of Stó:lō History, and the Halq'eméylem language, Story, and Culture is a foundational education component in Mission Public Schools, with instruction embedded into the curriculum from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

**General Guidelines**

1. The school district will:
  - 1.1. Engage with the Seabird Island First Nation Halq'eméylem-speaking language community members whenever necessary regarding further developments of the Halq'eméylem language, story, and culture curriculum in recognition that the Halq'eméylem language curriculum used by Mission Public Schools was developed and shared by Seabird Island First Nation; and
  - 1.2. Engage with local Indigenous Elders, Indigenous community members and Indigenous staff on an ongoing basis to maintain dynamic and rigorous Halq'eméylem language, story, and culture programming;

- 1.3. Encourage all Trustees, staff and students to be open to learning the Halq'eméylem language, through stories, culture, and land-based learning experiences and/or opportunities (i.e., Stó:lō Story Revitalization, Classroom Visits from Halq'eméylem Speaking Persons etc.);
- 1.4. Ensure that a variety of authentic resources, are available to teach the Halq'eméylem language, story, and culture in Mission schools;
- 1.5. Actively seek out and hire Halq'eméylem speaking persons to ensure that Halq'eméylem teaching and learning thrives in Mission schools.

**Date of Original Board Approval: September 20, 2022**

**Date Amended:**

*Legal Reference: UNDRIP, Articles 8, 11, and 13  
TRC, Calls to Action 13, 14, and 62*

*Cross Reference: (other policies, and procedures)*