



Vancouver School District

School Plan for Britannia Secondary

Year 2 (2021) of 3 Year Plan, 2018 - 2022

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, current school plans have been carried forward to the 2021/22 school year.

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Britannia Secondary opened in 1908 and is the oldest secondary school in Vancouver. It is situated on a 16 hectare site which includes Britannia Elementary School, Britannia Community Services Centre, Britannia Community Library (Vancouver Public Library Branch), and a host of recreational, educational, and community services. Site administration is done cooperatively with the Britannia Community Services Centre, through a partnership established in 1975 between the Grandview-Woodlands and Strathcona communities, Vancouver City Council, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Parks Board, and the Vancouver Public Library Board. This partnership has seen significant redesign in 2018, most apparent at the school level in the opening of a learning commons and our separation from the public library.

Britannia is a comprehensive community school. The staff consists of 1.75 administrators, 42 full and part-time teachers and 26 support staff (which includes community education coordinator; drug and alcohol counselor, school support B program workers). 550 Students are enrolled in the main school and 74 in alternative programs attached to the secondary school; 206 students (32%) are indigenous or Metis; 16 students are designated ESL students; and there are 18 International students. Since 2007, approximately one quarter of Britannia students have been ministry coded.

On the one hand, Britannia is an Inner City School. Everyday there are situations and circumstances, associated with low income urban communities, which are dealt with by staff. Recognition of the impact of income on educational attainment has been a consistent theme in the literature on school and community linkages since the Plowden and Rutter studies of the early 1970's. We feel this impact at Britannia where approximately 31% of our students live in households that receive income assistance or have MCF involvement; 33% of our families earn less than \$30 000 pa (19% District; 16% Province).; 27% of our families are single parent (16% District; 15% Province) (City of Vancouver, 2018, Social Indicators and Trends: Grandview-Woodlands and Strathcona; HELP Early Development Indicators: Community Summary, 2017; EDI Wave 4 Summary; EDI 16/17)

On the other hand, Britannia serves a vibrant community of diverse cultures, interests and needs. Home languages of our students reveal that this diversity is reflected within our student population with at least 38 different languages spoken. The Britannia catchment area also has the highest concentration of indigenous peoples in Vancouver (9.5% in 2010; 20% in 2018 of the total Urban indigenous population) (HELP Early Development Indicators: Community Summary, 2010; City of Vancouver, 2018, Social Indicators and Trends: Grandview-Woodlands and Strathcona, p. 31).

As a comprehensive school, opportunities are provided to all students in Mathematics, English, Sciences, Social Studies, Modern Languages, Physical Education, Fine Arts, Technical Studies and Applied Skills curricula areas. Modified and challenged/enriched courses are offered in some of the core academic areas to meet our diverse student needs.

Our staff initiate programs that give support, assistance and curricular instruction for Grade 8 students who need help in managing the transition from Grade 7 to 8. The school offers several district programs of which we are extremely proud, including three in the main school. Our International Baccalaureate Program is a two-year program in Grades 11 and 12 that follow a rigorous curriculum leading to external examinations and an internationally recognized Diploma. Our Venture Program is an enriched, academic mini-school that offers a global education experience for motivated students in Grades 8, 9, and 10 and provides excellent preparation for entrance into the IB Program. In September 2007, Britannia implemented a Hockey Academy, the first in Vancouver, drawing students from Vancouver and Burnaby and in September 2018, Britannia began to pilot a Film Program for students interested in careers in the film industry.

Outreach and Streetfront are district alternative resource programs providing curricular and developmental support in alternative settings for 65 students. The programs are located on site. Students in the Alternative programs can be re-integrated into the regular school at the senior level.

Britannia also houses four on-site programs for students with special needs. The Learning Support Program is a district program designed to serve students with learning difficulties. The program is capped at 15 students. Students take their core academics in a small, supported setting and are integrated into classes in the main school for their elective courses. The second program is Pacific Storm, a program for students needing social and emotional support. The program is capped at 14 and is staffed with a teacher, YFW and an SSW. The third and fourth programs are Learning Assistance and Life Skills (LALS) programs, one for grades 8 to 12 and one called Grade 13 for students in their 6th year of LALS. Both programs opened at Britannia in September 2018.

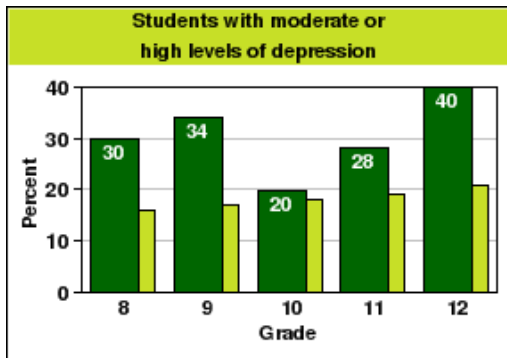
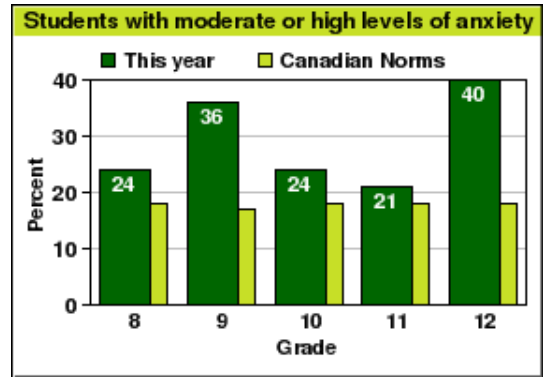
2A. WHAT DID WE SEE?

The strengths of our Britannia students are varied. Britannia students, in general are community minded, caring, helpful, supportive, honest, truthful, generous, forgiving, loyal, creative, pragmatic, resourceful and independent. They also have grit and are incredibly resilient.

Absenteeism and truancy remain a problem at Britannia. At Britannia, in the 2016 survey, the student truancy rate was 32%; the Canadian norm for these grades was 31%. By gender, the truancy rate for girls was 33% and for boys, 32%. The Canadian norm for girls is 28% and for boys is 34%. While the data for grades 8-11 are roughly aligned to national averages, there is a significant deviance at the grade 12 level where 80% of our students admitted to skipping and truancy – double the national average. This suggests that the focus on attendance support in the early years has had success, though we are still above national self-reporting data. In 2017 and 2018 absenteeism has remained a critical issue in the school, mitigated slightly by district Community Links provision of a 1.0 Counsellor.

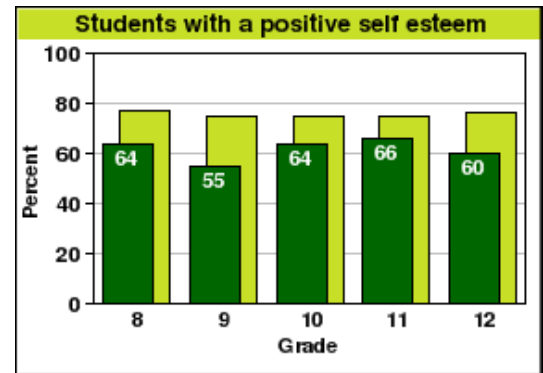
In 2017 we modified our focus on attendance to resiliency and success for all students. OurSchool data from 2016 and 2017, for example presents data on student vulnerability and effort.

The table to the right shows data on students who have intense feelings of fear, intense anxiety, or worry about particular events or social situations. Aggregated, 26% of students at Britannia had moderate to high levels of anxiety; the Canadian norm for these grades is 18%. And by gender, 46% of the girls and 11% of the boys at Britannia had moderate to high levels of anxiety. The Canadian norm for girls is 21% and for boys is 14%.

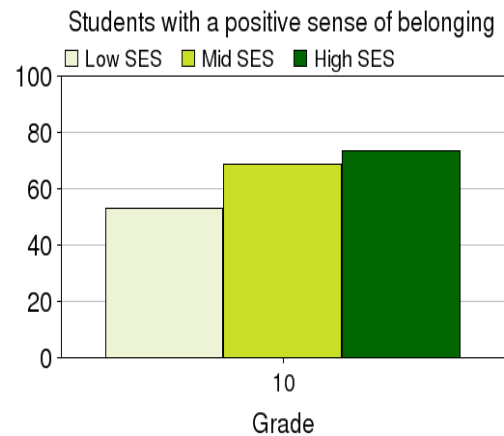


The table to the left shows OurSchool data on students who have prolonged periods when they feel sad, discouraged, and inadequate. While the table shows grade level data, averaged, 28% of students Britannia had moderate to high levels of depression; the Canadian norm for these grades is 18%. By gender, a clear discrepancy is revealed: 48% of the girls and 12% of the boys at Britannia had moderate to high levels of depression. The Canadian norm for girls is 21% and for boys is 15%.

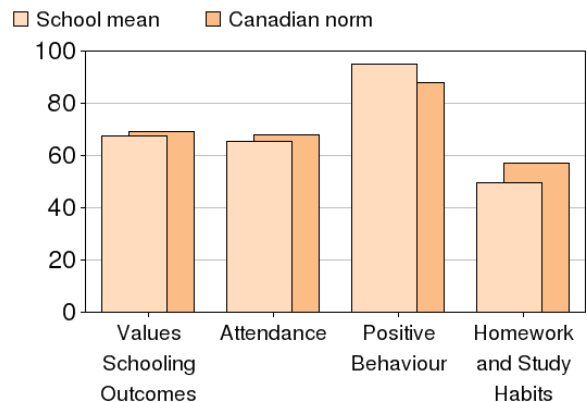
The table on the right corroborates data in tables two and three by considering the other end of the spectrum: positive self-esteem. Thus students who like and accept themselves, and are proud of their accomplishments amounted to 62% of Britannia sample students had high self-esteem; the Canadian norm for these grades is 76%. And 48% of the girls and 73% of the boys at Britannia had high self-esteem. The Canadian norm for girls is 72% and for boys is 79%.



The table on the right digs deeper into the information in table four by exploring the concept of belonging in the school disaggregated by socio-economic status (SES) at Britannia. Corroborating findings of Eric Jensen (2009, p. 22) and compounding the impact of multiple stressors found in low income families, students at Britannia in, for example, grade 10 living in families with a low socio economic status have a lower sense of belonging and attachment to the school, a finding that helps to explain the historical absenteeism and truancy rates being above district, provincial and national norms.

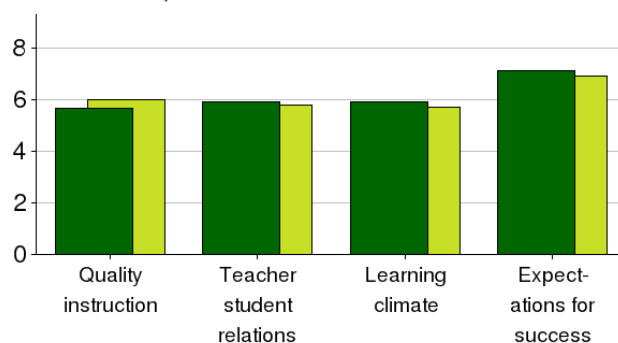


Students who value schooling outcomes and meet the formal rules of schooling are considered *institutionally engaged* (TTFM, 2017). These students feel that what they are learning at school relates to their long-term success; this view is reflected in school and class attendance and commitment to homework. Levels of institutional engagement in Britannia are shown at the right, where it is apparent that Britannia compares favorably with national norms- a significant result considering the challenges faced by students and teachers in this vulnerable neighborhood.



The table on the right helps explain this engagement from a student's viewpoint: school level factors that account for engagement include quality of instruction, positive student-teacher relations, a positive learning climate, and reasonable and consistent student expectations. An example of this can be found in the high levels of student engagement in our sports programs in general and basket ball in particular. Another example of the interrelated nature of school level factors affecting student engagement is observed in figures one and two- our Inclusion assembly held on Tuesday May 14 2019, an assembly that had staff performing in drag and addressing the key theme of inclusion and acceptance. The assembly had an incredibly positive affect on teacher-student relations, student self-esteem, and the school's learning climate.

School-levels factors associated with student engagement at Britannia Secondary



2B. WHAT DO WE NEED TO RE-ADJUST?

The previous plan is as follows:

Goal: To address students' gender and racially based inequality of experience and engagement at Britannia.

Actions:

- Maintain adjusted bell schedule to allow teachers to provide 30 minute tutorial and seminar sessions to facilitate student success and student-teacher connections.
- Continue pro-active and positive early intervention system to address attendance issues (1. Teacher→Student→Parent; 2. Counsellor/Attendance Support Worker→student→Parent; 3.Admin→Student→Parent).
- Continued School Based Team and SBRT support; Skills support blocks provided on-going academic support of students with attendance issues.
- School Messenger attendance program attached to email and phone.

- In-school workshops by DRTs on differentiating instruction in relation to students with diverse learning needs.
- Professional Development focused on student engagement and positive classroom environments.
- Parent focus groups on engaging parents in regards to improving communication of teachers and parents, support for parents, as well as opportunities for parents to connect with each other.
- Continued offering of a variety of levels for core academic subject areas, from modified to enriched, to better meet the academic needs of all students.
- Student Learning Survey at grades 10 and 12.
- Student Focus Groups.
- Improved attendance.
- Regular attendance.
- Provincial and school exam results, honor roll
- Grade to Grade transition rates,
- Student focus groups and forums,
- Formal and Informal Parent Feedback through PAC and other avenues
- Institutionalize use of new learning commons

In terms of a three year plan, the following summarizes the key activities and programs in the school, and indicates growth areas.

Program/initiative	Year 1: 2018-2019	Year 2: 2019-2020	Year 3: 2020-2021
Regular programming - Indigenous STEM (IndSTEM) partnership - SFU (YELL) partnership - Film program - English dept.	Pilot across all grade 10 science classes Pilot in Entrepreneurship 11/12 class Pilot 4 block senior film program. Implement new Media Arts and Communications courses	Institutionalize across all grade 10 science classes in one unit Institutionalize in Entrepreneurship 11/12 class Apply for formal District Program status (Careers/Acelt stream) Institutionalize Media Arts and Communications courses	Braiding of key concepts across Science 10 approaches Institutionalize in Entrepreneurship 11/12 class Implement district Film program if approved Institutionalize Media Arts and Communications courses
Venture	Extend internal and external Venture programs in grade 9 cohort. Maintain internal/external Venture at grade 8.	Extend internal and external Venture programs to grade 10 cohort. Maintain internal/external Venture at grade 8 & 9.	Institutionalize internal and external Venture programs in grade 8-10 cohorts
IB	Include Indigenous ways of knowing as mandatory unit in TOK 11	Institutionalize Indigenous ways of knowing as mandatory unit in TOK 11; extend to grade 12	Increase IB 11 enrolment from expanded Venture pool

Hockey Academy	Increase grade 8 enrolment by 3; grade 9 by 2	Maintain year one targets. Integrate increases into program.	Maintain year one targets. Integrate increases into program. Add second HA cohort.
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3. INQUIRY QUESTION (previously known as “Goal”)

The inquiry question will not be adjusted. The inquiry question is as follows:

Women, and more specifically indigenous women, bear the brunt of inequality in our society. This inequality is reflected at Britannia and needs to be addressed as part of our initiatives regarding reconciliation and innovation. In fact debates in our community regarding reconciliation have sharpened and ask: “How can there be reconciliation without justice; without land?” At the school level these experiences are reflected in different attendance patterns. Attendance data has prompted a shift in the school level dialogue to a greater awareness of the gendered dimension of inclusion, access, and equity.

With this in mind the most important work that we can do is to build an explicit focus on narratives of inclusion and exclusion into our planning; a focus on understanding how gendered narratives of inclusion continue to exclude. This work has begun at the leadership team level and teachers across the spectrum are increasingly building gendered, feminist, and LGBTQ narratives into their curricula.

This work will continue within the realm of teacher autonomy and leadership. Nevertheless, more broadly at the school level specific initiatives can also be identified.

Specifically put, our guiding inquiry question will be: *How can we address student’s gender and racially based inequality of experience and engagement at Britannia?*

4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW PLAN?

The plan for 2019-2020 is to continue with the activities indicated above in section 2B. We will continue to monitor attendance and intervene when students attendance impedes their academic progress. Staff have been and will continue to take part in professional development on trauma-informed classrooms and schools and student and personal mental wellness. Addressing student’s gender and racially based equity and inequality of experience and engagement will continue to be a focus of the efforts of all teaching and support staff.

The three year plan which started in 2018 is also outlined in section 2B above. This plan outlines the growth in programs which will be continued in year two.

5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

Program/initiative	Year 2: 2019-2020	Support	New Curriculum linkage
Regular programming - Indigenous STEM (InSTEM) partnership - SFU (YELL) partnership - Film program - English dept.	Continue across all grade 10 science classes Continue in Entrepreneurship 11/12 class Continue 4 block senior film program. Implement new Media Arts and Communications courses	District Indigenous Education dept. Partnership with UBC, ACTIVA, and non-profits Partnership with SFU Partnership with SFU and William F. Whytes. Budgetary investments made in 2018 Budgetary investments allocated in 2018. Allocate additional \$1500.00 for Y1.	Aligns with AEEA; new curriculum focus on Indigenous knowledge and project & place based learning, & traditional and ecological knowledges. Aligns with AEEA; new curriculum focus on Indigenous knowledge and project & place based learning, & traditional and ecological knowledges. Aligns with AEEA; new curriculum focus on Indigenous knowledge and project & place based learning, & traditional and ecological knowledges, and employment linkages. Aligns with AEEA; new curriculum focus on Indigenous knowledge and project & place based learning, & traditional and ecological knowledges, and employment linkages.
Venture	Extend internal and external Venture programs in grade 9 cohort. Maintain internal/external Venture at grade 8.	Apply for administrative support. Budget for internal admin support	Aligns with new curriculum focus on project based learning and enriched and self-directed learning.
IB	Shift to greater focus on History of Americas. Include Indigenous ways of knowing as mandatory unit in TOK 11	Budget for staff training and new curriculum resources	Aligns with AEEA; new curriculum focus on Indigenous knowledge and project based learning.
Hockey Academy	Increase grade 8 enrolment by 3; grade 9 by 2	No new resources- will result in better resource utilization	Aligns with new curriculum focus on enriched and self-directed learning.

6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

Initiatives outlined above will impact on girls and vulnerable students experience of access and equity. Evidence will be obtained by interviews with counsellors and staff referrals and feedback through focused staff discussion.

Students will be surveyed each year by the Student Learning Survey which will also provide our baseline data. Student self-assessment of the core competencies will provide anecdotal data on personal values and choices, self-regulation, relationship building and well-being.

We expect to see lower anxiety, loneliness and reports of bullying. We expect higher grades and lower absenteeism. And we expect higher enrolment.

If no change is seen, we will refer to the Framework for Enhanced Learning to complete further scanning and focusing in order to plan for further strategies and practices that support student well-being.

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

Success is communicated through and celebrated by report cards, the honor roll and principal's list, the student and staff bulletin, the PAC, the daily PA announcements, school newsletters, the school website and Twitter feeds, awards nights, and at our Graduation ceremony.



District-wide Indigenous Goal: To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.

8. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS LEARNERS IN OUR SCHOOL?

Britannia's indigenous learners include status, non-status, Metis, and identified on-reserve students. Although the significant majority of indigenous students are non-reserve, we have two important clusters of students from Bella Coola and the Nisga'a valley who have chosen to attend Britannia. Indigenous and non-indigenous data is shown in the table, below. The table includes regular and alternate program students; of our total enrolment, 32% of students have indigenous ancestry, up from 27% in 2010/2011 and 2011/12. In-short, over the past 10 years an increasing number of students at Britannia have indigenous heritage.

	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
Indigenous	46	43	39	36	42	206
Non-Indigenous	73	88	77	77	122	437
Total	119	131	116	113	164	643

9. WHAT HAVE WE DONE AT OUR SCHOOL TO SUPPORT ALL LEARNERS IN REGARDS TO THIS GOAL?

In addition to celebrations and communication identified in our Goals, our Indigenous Assemblies also honor First Nation's experience and place in our school. Further celebrations include participation in community events where our students are represented, and formal and informal student meetings and celebrations that recognize achievements.

Further to actions identified in Goal 1, above, practices that focus on indigenous students include:

- Significant attention to improved attendance through positive engagement with indigenous students and a concerted effort to connect with parents.
- BRITE 8 is a holistic program that focuses on community and relationship building amongst all of our grade 8 students. The Welcoming Ceremony and the activity day at Cheakamus provided opportunities for all of our students to experience indigenous teaching in a context of learning, growing, sharing and acceptance.



Figure 1. Orange shirt day at Britannia honoring Residential School survivors.

- School Based Team and SBRT support; Skills support blocks.
- Indigenous Student and parent focus groups
- Britannia's All Nations Success club

Ongoing partnerships with community groups, for example, with Vancouver Native Housing Society and UNYA.

10. WHAT WILL WE CONTINUE TO DO IN THIS AREA?

Building on collaborative inquiry into supporting indigenous learners and integrating themes of Reconciliation into the classroom, several important school-community collaborations have occurred, and will continue. These include participating in community Reconciliation in Action events (2015, 2016 and 2017) hosting the Maori All Blacks rugby team on 2 November 2017, the BC Indigenous Basketball Championships in Spring Break of 2019, and the famous Trout Lake powwow in May 2019. These events and celebrations have positioned indigenous students and families at the center of excellence and achievement in our community, and are paralleled by innovative and collaborative lesson planning and unit delivery that focuses on indigenous and settler relations. For example, commencing in September 2018 an exciting Media Arts course, and a redesigned Communications 11/12 course integrates First Nations principles of learning and new curriculum project work into course delivery; an indigenous STEM partnership project for all grade 10's similarly extends our commitment to indigenous pedagogy and inclusion (and thereby to Reconciliation and Innovation).

Our Indigenous education teacher and support worker have continued to play a vital role connecting indigenous students and families to school through daily phone calls and follow-up meetings, liaison with community based agencies, a weekly (Wednesdays from 3:15-6:30pm) extra homework club, and alongside district staff, district leadership (for example, coordinating and hosting professional development workshops at Britannia and at the Museum of Anthropology).

Guided by district policy and national and provincial initiatives regarding Reconciliation we intend to continue this work.

11. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE BEING SUCCESSFUL IN THIS AREA?

We know that we are being successful because:

Increasingly we are recognized as being a school that 'defies the expectations' (Veasy Scholarships coordinator, personal communication, May 22nd 2018);

We have been chosen by the Superintendent as a case study school for inclusion in her upcoming "Ignite" presentation to a gathering of BC District Superintendents in July 2018;

One of our indigenous students has been selected to be part of a 7 person student panel to meet with Provincial Ministers of Education from across Canada (5th July, 2018).

Our indigenous student graduation rates are among the highest in the district and Province; First Nation's athletes are leaders in our school and we encourage these students to assume leadership roles on our student council. Lastly, we are consistently identified as an indigenous "magnet school" from across coastal British Columbia.