

2022-2023 - Year 1

School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY (TO BE UPDATED EACH YEAR)

John Oliver Secondary School catchment area falls within the South Vancouver-Fraser area of Vancouver. The school runs along 41st Avenue East and Fraser Street with the catchment extending south to the Fraser River, west to Main Street and east to Knight Street. The catchment is primarily single family residential, multi-dwelling apartments along with retail stores of all types along each of the main arteries.

John Oliver Secondary's diverse population is approximately 950 students, representing over 35 home languages being spoken. Over 65% of the population reports speaking a language other than English at home with Tagalog and Punjabi being the greatest percentages. Indigenous students comprise four percent of the school population. John Oliver students span the spectrum of academic abilities, from gifted learners to those with learning challenges. Approximately eighteen percent of the students are supported by Individual Education Plans.

John Oliver offers a strong, comprehensive curricular program designed to satisfy university, trades and college entrance requirements and prepare students for success in their chosen career trajectory. The school's strong academic focus is complemented with excellent visual and performing arts, technical, and technological programs. Our Technical Education program is one of the largest programs in the province for mechanics, metalwork, woodworking, and robotics where many students carry-on into post-secondary opportunities. Our growing Music program features our famous Jazz Band/Choir ensemble, the 24 Carats, and our Culinary Arts program provides students with the opportunity to learn industry standard skills.

John Oliver Secondary also hosts numerous District Programs including six unique special education programs from Life Skills to a Learning Support Program. These district special education programs provide small supportive classes and/or support for students without any designations to those with complex learning profiles. Depending on the program, the support provided focuses on building organizational and academic skills, to improving social, behavioral and communication skills.

The last two district programs on site are the JO Digital Immersion Mini-School and the Take-A-Hike Alternative Program. The JO Digital Immersion Mini-School hosts an innovative digital component which includes mentorship from technology professionals and courses with digital focus along with the traditional courses and enhancement activities found at other Mini-Schools. The highly acclaimed Take-a-Hike Alternative Program is for students who thrive in a non-traditional classroom. The program focuses on all the academic courses while building self-confidence, motivation, and skills with weekly field trips and longer wilderness experiences.

John Oliver school has an impressive offering of extra-curricular activities, including a strong athletics program, and numerous clubs that celebrate cultural diversity, challenge the students' physical,

intellectual, and creative abilities, and raise awareness of economic, social, and environmental issues, while offering opportunities for service and philanthropic work.

2. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

This question was posed to both the Staff as a whole and Department Heads on a subject/department basis and through student discussions and surveys. Overall, we found that our students are keen learners who have a genuine commitment to the school and the people within. They have good relationships with each other and have a good tolerance for differences. Our students value family and the JO community, show empathy and are attempting to be advocates for themselves by talking about their difficulties and challenges with each other and with counsellors. They are multi-skilled and diverse with a range of abilities levels but all striving to reach their maximum potential.

John Oliver students continue to develop their core competencies, building on their classroom experiences with critical and creative thinking. They are developing and fine tuning their ability to reframe their strengths and weaknesses by building on what they do well and using it to learn what they do not do well. This is developing their confidence as they learn to communicate their success.

3. WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE LEARNERS?

Much of the evidence that we have worked with in developing this school plan has been anecdotal evidence from teachers, parents, and students. We have hosted discussions and surveys with each of the stakeholder groups about school culture as a whole and have extrapolated this data into common themes. These themes have then been further broken down through staff meetings and department head meetings into what our students face in education and the school community. Each department reported slightly different strengths and needs, but the overall concepts were similar. Critical and creative thinking skills, personal accountability, and the connection of that to the community were the common themes. Teachers repeatedly expressed that these are the concepts they see daily in partner/group work, presentations, class dynamics, and hallway behavior.

Additionally, we reviewed the Data from our Numeracy and Literacy Assessments. The Numeracy and Literacy Data showed that John Oliver was slightly lower in achievement in these assessments than the district average and is something we will look at next year.

We will also use the Ministry of Education and Child Care's Student Learning Survey results from the 2022-23 school year to inform our plans for the 2023-24 school year.

4. WHAT IS THE FOCUS FOR OUR COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS BASED ON THE EVIDENCE?

We will be focusing on all our learners as a schoolwide initiative. Our last school learning plan was developed before Covid and since then the Vancouver School District has created the Education Plan 2026 to which we will be aligning our goals. The Ministry of Education curriculum still consists of Curricular Competencies, Big Ideas, and Core Competencies which are all interconnected into the delivery of the VSB Education Plan 2026. We will be focusing on expectations of high achievement and developing structures and support to assist our students to meet those expectations. We understand that all our students have come to us from different backgrounds, educational settings, and lived experiences, but will be expecting each student to strive to meet the high achievement levels we know that they can reach. We will be focusing on building teaching and learning capacities in both our staff and students. The support we put into place for each student will differ as each student is at a different point in their educational experience and we will be working with each student through their classroom teachers to maximize their learning opportunities.

Areas of the VSB Education Plan 2026 that our Inquiry is connected to:

Goal#1: We will be improving student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by “Increasing literacy, numeracy, and deep, critical and creative thinking.”

Goal #2: We will be increasing equity by “Eliminating gaps in achievement and outcomes among students”

Goal#3: We will be continuing our Reconciliation journey by “Increasing knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions.”

To achieve these goals, we will also be “Encouraging students to reach beyond previous boundaries in knowledge and experience,” which is another part of the VSB Education Plan 2026.

5. INQUIRY QUESTION

Through anecdotal observations from staff, students, and parents as well as through assessment data, it has been noticed that students' achievement could be improved through development of certain skills and cross-curricular opportunities. Literacy, Numeracy, Critical and Creative thinking are broader concepts than simply a narrow curricular area and as such the school as a whole will be working to have students build their abilities in those areas. We have developed an Inquiry Question:

"Which explicit literacy, numeracy, critical and creative thinking teaching and learning strategies most positively impact student achievement and equitable opportunities for success?"

Through building these strategies in departmental and school wide areas we will be helping students meet their achievement expectations while investigating the efficacy of teaching practices we use.

6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN?

Departments and the whole staff were asked what actions they would take related to the inquiry question. We have not broken this down into year-by-year tasks as much of this will build on one another. We will be constantly looking at how our strategies are working and adapting them to affect the most positive change for our students

- The school will work to incorporate the concepts of core competencies (specifically critical and creative thinking) into regular classroom instructions and promote more self-assessment of students' confidence in those competencies.
- The school will explore new strategies to build capacity in literacy and numeracy in all subject areas as literacy and numeracy is not exclusively English and Math.
- Building on another core competency of communications, departments will continue to foster communication skills as communication is vital to building creative and critical thinking.
- The school will explore ways to make more connections to students' self and to culturally relevant materials to expand students' knowledge and awareness.
- The school will explore concrete lessons that can be used to teach Indigenous Education and improve critical and creative thinking skills
- The school will explore building more family and community supports to assist our students with their skills development at home
- The school will build into their classes more opportunities for critical thinking and transferring curricular concepts (literacy and numeracy) to work and life situations.

7. WHAT SUPPORT WILL WE NEED?

The area of learning the school will be focusing on is how to effectively make changes to current instruction in all departments to focus on improving literacy, numeracy, critical and creative thinking. While this is already implicitly done in many subject areas, we will need to learn to build more opportunities for skill development and bring the concepts of literacy, numeracy, critical and creative thinking out in more explicit ways. Staff will use more professional development through collaborative days and professional development days to learn new and possibly more effective techniques which will be subsequently taught to the students. These skills can be passed down to our student leaders for peer-to-peer mentorship such as with our Peer Tutors.

We will also rely on assistance from the Vancouver School Board through providing resources for the school and our Curriculum and Instruction Resource Teacher along with our Department Heads. We will champion staff that currently use effective techniques and ask them to mentor and help develop teaching strategies at the school.

8. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

We will know if we what we are doing is working through discussions with our students (student forums), parents (surveys), and through our staff (discussions and anecdotal evidence). Additionally, we will look at school-wide performance on the graduation assessments. We have asked our stakeholders this year about where they see John Oliver students excelling at and where they need development and will be able to ask the same question in a year to see where they have grown. We will continue to monitor achievement results in the Ministry Assessments and will fully use the Ministry of Education Student Learning Survey to locate areas that need addressing. If we see little or no change then we will need to reassess our techniques or tighten our inquiry into one area to focus all our efforts

9. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION?

Information at John Oliver Secondary is already shared on the school website, school twitter account, and school Facebook site. Information will also be shared at staff meetings, department head meetings, during collaborative times and at student assemblies, and through PAC (Parent Advisory Council) meetings and community gatherings. Our goal is to provide more opportunities for displaying student achievement and development within the school building itself and into the wider social media realm where possible.



District-wide Indigenous Focus (worldviews): To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions among all learners.

10. WHAT LEARNING HAVE WE DONE AT OUR SCHOOL TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS AND KNOWLEDGE?

John Oliver currently has a number of practices to build knowledge, awareness and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions:

- John Oliver has an “All Nations” room which is coordinated and operated by our Indigenous Education Staff. This space is a welcoming, comfortable environment for all students and provides food security and other resources for all students and that celebrates Indigenous traditions and cultures.
- John Oliver Secondary has an Indigenous Education Team of two teachers and a support worker who continue to support Indigenous students academically outside of classroom instruction. The team also assists classroom teachers to develop ways to incorporate Indigenous traditions and cultures into their lessons.
- John Oliver has many Indigenous art pieces created by Indigenous Artists showcased outside the office and in the Learning Commons. We also asked for and was gifted an Indigenous Art Raven to use as one of the school’s logos along with our historical crest logo and a Joker logo.
- John Oliver has built into their professional development days opportunities for staff to learn about Indigenous concepts and knowledge to be used in their classroom teachings
- John Oliver has embraced the grade 11 English First Peoples curriculum as the English course taught to all our Grade 11 students
- John Oliver hosted the 11th annual First Peoples’ Festival featuring Christie Lee and Empowerment through Hip Hop presentation
- John Oliver teachers are consistently bringing Indigenous stories and ways of learning into their classroom instruction
- John Oliver is hosting a REEL Canada showing of two (one for the junior students and one for the senior students) films that are made by Indigenous Film makers and bring to discussion some sensitive Indigenous concerns.

11. WHAT EVIDENCE OF UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS AND KNOWLEDGE HAVE BEEN FOSTERED WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY? PLEASE SHARE HOW IT IS EMBEDDED THROUGHOUT.

Our evidence of understanding of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge that has been fostered in our school community is mainly anecdotal, but we also have information from students from the Student Learning Survey.

- Staff and students are using land acknowledgements before meetings
- Indigenous books and books written by Indigenous authors are displayed prominently in our Learning Commons.
- Students in our Little Tree Club are learning to garden with Indigenous plants in our garden plots
- Our Take A Hike program is actively working with families, community partners and Indigenous resource workers to decolonize their classroom practices to support their Indigenous students

12. HOW WILL WE SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE AND KNOWLEDGE?

John Oliver Staff are excited to continue to learn, re-learn, and teach Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within the school and to our students. Our staff have recently completed a Professional Development opportunity which has provided them with a framework to build Indigenous perspectives and knowledge into their classroom lessons. Here is what John Oliver currently has planned:

- Several of our staff have begun working with students on 1000 Ravens for Reconciliation, after being gifted this project by its creator Bev Best. The students will be folding 1000 (or more) Ravens to be displayed and presented at the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation assembly we will have at the end of September 2023
- We have offered and will be running a First Peoples' English 12 class in the next school year for those that wish to continue in the First Peoples' English focus from their Grade 11 courses
- We will be planning more Professional Development on Indigenous Perspectives in our November Professional Development Day.