

2022-2023 - Year 3 School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Killarney Secondary School offers a comprehensive program of studies for students with diverse learning needs. We offer a wide variety of course offerings including extensive Fine Arts, Applied Skills, and Technical Studies programs, and a large, comprehensive athletics program. Killarney students, graduates, staff, and parents have developed many traditions and take pride in the history and accomplishments of our school community. It is the mission of Killarney Secondary School to provide an environment within which all learners can be successful. Aspects of life at Killarney have been built around the various cornerstones, which are:

School Motto: *'Semper Fidelis'* (Always Faithful)

School Colors: Green and Grey

School Emblem: Shamrock

Team Name: Cougars

Resiliency and connectedness are a part of our school culture. We put students first and provide a friendly welcoming environment. There are many opportunities for students to connect with people, clubs, teams, performances, and the greater Killarney community. Dozens of school clubs, school presentations, student involvement in assemblies, and other points of connection help to create a sense of belonging for all students. Acceptance of diversity is evident in the halls, on posters, and in the daily interactions between all members of the school community. The Pride Club continues to be prominent in helping celebrate diversity.

Our Inquiry Question last year was: **What is the relationship between relevant, authentic assessment and the fostering of student growth and investment?**

The key areas of learning that we focused on were:

- Focus student attention on the 3 A's (Attitude, Achievement and Assessment) of Investment at Grade Assemblies and homeroom in September.
- Pro-D will focus on learning about and implementing relevant and authentic assessment practices.
- District Resource Teacher training in standards-based assessment to complement Pro-D training for all staff.
- Work in departments on student collaboration in choosing tasks and designing rubrics to make assessment more meaningful and help students understand expectations.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

Strengths: Most Killarney students continue to be engaged, motivated students who enjoy school. Many are driven by post-secondary aspirations and have a growth mindset. They are respectful, social, honest, and form strong relationships with peers and the school community. Killarney students are empathetic and create an environment of care and support in a socio-economically diverse population. Work on resilience as a whole school has resulted in students being more resilient, and more aware of how to foster resilience in themselves and with their peers.

Needs: Some Killarney students are still learning the skills of resilient students and demonstrate low stick-with-it-ness and poor focus. The number of students exhibiting symptoms of generalized anxiety is increasing and is an ongoing concern. Students continue to need support with organization and time management skills, and with maintaining balance. FIT (Flexible Instruction Time) is an opportunity for students to improve in these areas, but it is not always used to maximum effect. Poor attendance, poor sleep habits, self-regulation and the distraction of technology continue to be barriers to success for these students.

What is going on for our learners?

- Students appreciate the flexibility and the reduction in anxiety that changes in assessment have provided.
- Using relevant assessment practices has led to an overall increase in self-confidence amongst our learners and overall better success rates, especially at the lower grades.
- Many students are finding that courses delivered in the semester format are fast-paced and those students with more academic courses in each semester are experiencing a heavy workload. Having Teams can be an additional tool for teachers and learners to communicate. Many students are not always using Flexible instruction Time (FIT) effectively.

Grade 8 and 9 teachers have shifted to the Proficiency Scale and strength-based report card feedback. Students are familiar with the scale and extensively use the scale to do accurate self-assessment. Many teachers are offering more choices and students have more input into how they represent their learning. Many teachers are offering rewrites/ opportunities for relearning concepts.

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

- We have seen some notable examples of assessment flexibility.
- Yes, because assessment is occurring for core competencies and not just content memorization or work habits.
- We have adjusted and made it through some very new learning environments.
- We have observed that students are clear and generally accurate in their self-assessment.
- We also have more conversations about learning/quality of assignments vs. requests for higher percentages.
- With the shift to standards-based assessment, students have a clearer idea of what is expected of them. This has been driven by greater clarity of expectations through rubrics but also through the development of exemplars for what various levels of work look like. With the assessments targeting multiple skills, students have a better understanding of where their strengths and deficiencies lie and are therefore more focused on their skill development in the future.

4. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

- Direct messaging to student grade groups and the whole school group on TEAMS.
- Monthly Newsletter and direct emails to parents as needed.
- In Department, staff, school-based team, staff committee, and pro-d meetings.
- GREEN Card examples of positive student behavior.
- Monitoring progress through Ministry Student Learning surveys and CyberTeens survey.
- Baseline student achievement data – report cards, provincial assessment data (Numeracy and Literacy Assessments).
- Student self-assessment across the curriculum, including Core Competencies, particularly Communication and the Personal and Social competencies (Positive and Personal Cultural Identity, Personal Awareness and Responsibility and Social Responsibility).
- School Twitter account used to highlight events and notable achievements.

As a staff, we will review our progress as part of the School Growth cycle and adjust, as necessary.

5. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

The school began discussions in 2021 about shifting focus away from assessment to a goal in the social-emotional area. Staff want to rebuild the sense of the school community that was diminished by the restrictions required to mitigate the Covid-19 global pandemic. In December 2021, the school surveyed the student body as part of the CyberTeens research study in partnership with the University of British Columbia. The aim of the study is to better understand youth's motivations for using technology, and how this relates to their mental health and relationships with parents and peers. The key findings from the survey were as follows:

- 1424 students participated (total population of school 1520)
- More than half of the students said that they felt at least "somewhat more" anxious since the start of this school year
- 70% of the students said that they were connected with others since the start of the school year while 21% said they were disconnected
- With reference to learning during Covid-19 students felt they had gaps in foundational knowledge resulting from struggling with online learning, a rushed Quarter system, too long a time between taking a subject in the following year, and restrictions hindering participation

The survey results confirm that many students are feeling social-emotional distress. Staff feel that it is a suitable time to move to the following goal:

To develop students' sense of belonging through social connection and positive relationships.

Student Learning Survey data from April 2022 can be used to establish a baseline for the question: *Is school a place where you feel like you belong?*

- 170 Grade 10 students from a total population of 273 responded (62%)
- 110 Grade 12 students from a total population of 303 responded (36%)

Grade 10 Responses

- Never 2%
- Almost Never 5%
- Sometimes 32%
- Most of the Time 41%
- All of the Time 11%
- Don't Know 4%

- No Answer 1%

Grade 12 Responses

- Never 10%
- Almost Never 8%
- Sometimes 41%
- Most of the Time 28%
- All of the Time 5%
- Don't Know 5%
- No Answer 0%

Staff have identified some specific strategies which can be organized into 3 broad categories of Learning, Structural Supports, Professional Development.

Learning

- Provide meaningful opportunities for interaction amongst students in groups and partners using oral conversations, group discussions and group projects.
- Organize field trips to reconnect with students.
- Prioritize growth mindset.
- Build community through identity projects shared in class.
- Look at early assessment of learning in September to identify those students who are behind in their knowledge and skills to better provide support in the English classes.
- For PE, resumption of cross-grade activities including Square Dancing, skating, Seymour snowshoeing, swimming, community runs
- Provide opportunities for multi-age engagement (elementary students to seniors).
- Promote immigrant engagement that promotes development of language and social interactions with other students.
- Encourage group projects and explore outdoor project options.
- Create opportunities in class for students to connect (chats, check-ins, question of the day).
- Team building activities with students in the first few weeks of school to build rapport between students and their teacher.
- Collaborate with other departments on projects (such as baking for Street Squad and making food for downtown eastside with Leadership class) that support our community.
- Positive interpersonal communications in shop classes to increase productivity and enthusiasm
- Give students more flexibility and choices during FIT
- Support for parents—workshops to help them with their struggling teens and adolescent issues

Structural Supports

- Hold grade meetings and assemblies.
- Reconnect Link crew with students in grade 8
- Students from Mentorship class to mentor students in assigned classes
- May mental health/connection month, Mental Wellness quiz on Wednesdays, Here for Peers, Adam's Apples.
- Continue to use TEAMS for community discussion boards.
- Formation of Connection Crew—a group of staff developing school-wide connection activities such as school-wide Jeopardy game and class reflection activity on ways to connect at Killarney and what staff can do to promote connectedness, mental health education activities
- More student government and school-wide events like spirit days
- Encourage students to join extracurricular activities, clubs and teams, sports.
- Work with community partners like South Van Neighborhood House to provide learning opportunities for students.

- More spaces for school connection and support—Homework Club on Mondays, Tutorial class every block for drop-ins
- Inclusionary extracurriculars--Sports, clubs, the indoor track meet, music and drama performances, night of talent.
- Newcomer Welcome Circle sponsored by South Van Neighborhood House
- Welcome orientation for international students
- ELL (English Language Learner) students give school tours throughout the year to newcomers
- Work on increasing collaboration between ELL classes and non-ELL classrooms to help with diversity and connection
- Exploring different uses of FIT to build connection.
- Collaborate with VSB (Vancouver School Board) staff to provide workshops for students on digital citizenship and avoiding online exploitation.
- Continue with CyberTeens project looking at adolescent technology use and its impact on their health and relationships with parents and peers
- Staff connection events sponsored by Admin, Social Committee, and Departments
- Highlighting what is going on through Twitter, newsletter, PA announcements, in-school scrolling monitor
- Work on building and reinforcing a culture in our school that is built on positivity, understanding, and listening to empower student voice

Professional Development

- Pro-D around UDL and inclusion/adaptations so that teachers feel equipped to help our most vulnerable students.
- Work through the book *We Belong-50 Strategies to Create Community and Revolutionize Classroom Management* by Laurie Barron and Patti Kinney with Department Heads and have extra copies available for a staff book club.
- Pro-D Committee to consider offering workshops in social-emotional learning.
- Unpacking of student feedback around connecting and identification of students who are disconnected to an adult with the idea of targeting them for building connection by staff



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

6. WHAT HAVE WE DONE AT OUR SCHOOL TO SUPPORT ALL LEARNERS IN REGARD TO THIS FOCUS?

- Indigenous students at Killarney continue to receive support services provided by an Indigenous Education Worker.
- Indigenous Success Plans are completed each term for individual students by a team consisting of the Indigenous Education Worker (IEW), Grade Counsellor, and Grade Administrator.
- Included Indigenous literature and music and ways of learning in the language classroom. -Explore other cultures with students describing their own cultural backgrounds to foster an acceptance and appreciation of other cultures.
- Included Indigenous languages and cultures in Spanish and Metis French Canadian literature.
- Introduction of Indigenous-focused graduate requirement course options: English First Peoples 10, English First Peoples 11, English First peoples 12, and BC First Peoples 12.
- Open and collaborative relationships with our Indigenous Education Worker and outside Indigenous community partners.
- We have introduced novels by Indigenous authors at every grade level and sought to include more literature and Indigenous ways of knowing within and guiding our ELA units. -Individual teachers have created inquiry units that go beyond the literature to explore Indigenous cultures and histories.
- Some teachers have sought the support of IEW to create and support lessons and units.
- Continue with the guided Indigenous tour on Seymour Mountain.
- Incorporating Indigenous teachings during our mindfulness sessions.
- Connecting more to the indigenous history of lacrosse.
- Have increased student awareness and appreciation of storytelling.
- Have invited Indigenous guest speakers into classes.
- Talk about cultural appreciation and language in Choir, draw on local examples and language.
- Brought in 3 Crows productions with help of IEW for online presentation.
- Story telling unit and masks of the world unit in Visual Art.
- Indigenous worldviews are embedded in all Social Studies curriculum. At each grade, topics around Indigenous histories and current events and links to the environment are included.
- Some staff are weaving Indigenous learning styles in the classroom including focusing on holistic learning, more collaborative activities, and work, embed storytelling and the importance of honesty. An example includes facilitating the Blanket Exercise to have students focus on experiential learning and kinesthetic learning to help better understand perspective.
- Hosting the Youth Equity and Diversity Forum that looks at intersectionality of a person's identity.
- In Entrepreneurship and Marketing 8, students research an Indigenous social entrepreneurship business in Canada and present it through a PowerPoint in class to learn more about Indigenous contributions and the importance of community, family, and environment.
- In Economics 12, students read a story from the book Braiding Sweetgrass to learn about the importance of gift giving in Indigenous cultures and compare it to the mixed market economy present in Canada.
- In Foods, students make traditional Indigenous foods (such as Three Sisters soup) to learn about Indigenous cultures and agricultural sustainability.
- Science: Grade 10 field trip to First Nations workshop of chemicals of dying natural materials. Grade 8 exploration of Indigenous plant uses for medicine and food, opportunities to explore First Nations issues in pathogen and society project. Gr 9 for the ecology unit, connecting to the concept of sustainability, discuss sustainable practices done by First Nations like building clam gardens and plant management.

- English, Drama, and LAC classes heard traditional stories and songs from invited elders. Drama classes always begin in a circle and tell /answer a question of the day (form of storytelling).
- Art classes learned how to make drums which will be painted and donated to the Music Department for use in their classes.
- Textile classes practiced Indigenous weaving.
- A cross-section of classes learned of the impacts from the Residential School era by viewing a live performance of the play “Complicit.”
- Photography: Students worked with an Elder and did a photo unit on elders and storytelling through photos.
- Our School-Wide Remembrance Day Assembly includes content about Indigenous contributions to the wartime efforts of Canada.
- The gardening club is learning about and growing traditional Indigenous plants in the school garden.

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

The schoolwork on reconciliation has focused primarily on increasing knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions among all learners. An area for growth is to engage and gather more with local First Nations—Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil Waututh.

- We will also try to benefit from the knowledge and experiences of any Indigenous students who are in the classroom and who feel comfortable sharing.
- Indigenous guest speakers including elders
- Continue to search related resources and to offer enrichment activities, liaise with our Indigenous Support staff.
- Seek authentic resources from Indigenous sources.
- Field trips to enhance student appreciation of Indigenous culture.
- Experiential Pro-D
- Develop individual self-efficacy with respect to Indigenous education.
- Increasing awareness about local nations and languages.
- Better understanding of what the land acknowledgement means and stands for rather than just saying it at the start of the assemblies and meetings.
- Highlight strength and resilience instead of over-focusing on suffering and trauma.
- More connections can be made between current events such as pipeline protests and the history of systemic racism and the bigger impact that it has on Indigenous issues.
- Participate in workshops and reconciliatory activities.
- Department and discipline-specific training and education that provides examples of work that has been done.
- Departments highlighting their contributions to incorporating Indigenous themes
- Work on providing options for students to satisfy the Indigenous Focus graduation requirement for 2023-2024.
- Strengthening connection to land—spending more time outside on land to connect with it, school-wide cleanup to take care of land, the land’s role in sustainability
- Celebrations of different Indigenous events/festivals

Encourage teachers and departments to continue doing the above and more. The graphic below represents ideas coming from Department discussions on the November 26, 2021, Indigenous Focused Non-Instructional Day.

