



Vancouver School District

School Plan for Killarney Secondary School

Year 2 (2019) of 3 Year Plan, 2018 - 2021

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

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

Killarney Secondary School offers a comprehensive program of studies for students with diverse learning needs. We offer remedial programs and enrichment programs; an extensive Fine Arts program 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 have a prominent role in helping to celebrate diversity.

At Killarney we celebrate growth and every learner's journey. In grades 8 and 9, we have restructured our "Honour Roll" to become "On a Roll" which acknowledges individual student growth during the year, rather than just "high achievement". We are extending "On A Roll" to all grades in September 2019.

Our Inquiry Question last year was: **How can focusing on student engagement, achievement and multi-literacies foster inclusion and support all learners?**

The key areas of learning that we focused on were:

- 1. Attitude and Engagement:** to foster and enhance positive attitudes and meaningful engagement by promoting a culture of care, respect and participation, continuing to nurture mindfulness and resiliency in our school community.
- 2. Achievement:** To enhance student achievement by fostering an inclusive school environment that recognizes, supports and meets the needs of our diverse learners in the context of the new BC curriculum.
- 3. Multi-Literacies:** To continue to grow the range of literacies through increased focus on Foundational skills, such as reading comprehension, math skills, and critical thinking.

2A. 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. Anxiety is increasing and is an ongoing concern for many students. Students continue to need support with organization and time management skills, and with maintaining balance. I-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 have we done/are doing to address student needs?

During Mental Health Wellness Week in December 2018, the Leadership 11 and 12 classes conducted an **online stress survey** over two days at lunchtime. 534 students participated in the survey, with grades 11 and 12 participating at the highest rate (grade 11: 32.2% of respondents) and grades 8 and 9 the lowest participation rate (12% each). Females participated at twice the rate of males. The top stressors for students were school grades, tests, post-secondary admission, homework and family issues. The effects on daily life that were most reported were anxiety, trouble sleeping and lack of motivation. Students also reported that their top five methods of de-stressing were listening to music, eating, watching TV or movies, hanging out with friends or family and playing sports. Students reported that friends are their first go-to when stressed, followed by “no one” and lastly parents. Close to 50% of students reported that they frequently or always deal with their stress. 9.2% reported that they never deal with it. The most stressful school subjects that students reported were Math, Science (Physics, Chemistry, and Biology) and English.

The **student forum** this year, led by the Leadership 11 and 12 students, focused on Life Skills and how well high school was preparing them for life post-secondary. It included questions on whether school provides enough opportunities to help develop everyday life skills, including group work, sharing and developing ideas, the importance of creating positive relationships with teachers and mental and physical health. Over 50% of students at the forum reported using I-time at least sometimes. A majority of students surveyed know what the Core Competencies are but that more could be done to incorporate them into the curriculum.

Other highlights of activities this year that supported our goals were:

Attitude and Engagement

- Project-based learning across the curriculum to tap into student interests
- Guest speakers presented on relevant topics that were meaningful and relatable
- Community involvement such as Cougar Mart’s involvement with the Salvation Army, Street Squad Downtown Eastside care packages, catering for Mainstage Opening Night, Leadership class burritos, iMentorship for elementary schools, business competitions and field trips
- Math “open door” policy, math help club and afterschool homework club; grade 8’s rewrite opportunities in Math 8 and switch to code from numerical assessment; Prime Time Math Games day for Killarney family of schools.
- ELL games such as Taboo, mindfulness activities to improve language skills as well as resiliency; sports activities such as table tennis.
- TEAMwork: working on skills that promote sense of family, self-respect and accountability in Fine Arts program (performance uniforms, caring for materials and room), leadership within the community, real world projects with deadlines, field trips that promote skills for social functioning in the community.
- Student choice for projects and assessment

- Mindfulness and meditation sessions are part of regular PE program
- Drama: over 215 students were involved in the Mainstage production this year as actors and crew and over 115 students participated in the Spring Fever festival, with 8 student-written plays, 19 directors and 88 actors.
- The Remembrance Day Assembly was a collaborative effort of many departments, including Social Studies, Music, Drama, Multi-media and Visual Art.
- English: students teaching students, discussion groups, peer evaluation and feedback, sharing circles, gallery walks, group projects, silent discussions, Mindfulness Mondays and regular check-ins.

Achievement:

- Tech Studies: Opportunities for students to learn at their own pace
- Tutorial Centre: peer communication and peer tutors
- New Math 8 assessment system, Math Help Club, math contests, Open door policy
- Home Ec: Student self-assessment and reflection, student-led tasks and responsibilities, goal setting and achievable standards, multi-model assignments.
- Music: Using inclusive language, recognizing diverse needs by promoting those students' gifts and challenges, focusing on both formative and summative assessment for skill acquisition and development, modifying rubrics as needed.
- Science: Developing different assessment tools
- Social Studies: Indigenous content across the curriculum
- PE: Students teaching students eg. PE grade 10's lead grade 8's and 9's offer opportunities for collaboration and developing leadership skills
- English: Reading groups that support different reading levels; literature circles; grouping strategies for supporting struggling students; growth mindset instruction and choice in assignments and projects.

Multi-literacies:

- Tech Studies: the importance of these skills is stressed in the context of tech studies: reading shop drawings, math skills (eg. measuring accurately) and project planning.
- Social Studies: TC squared activities, reading comprehension, note taking, case analysis, historical analysis, engaging with multiple texts, evaluating sources and biases.
- Modern languages: reading comprehension units are a focus
- Home Ec: Reading recipes, sewing patterns, lab processes all require literacy skills; critical analysis of news articles using comparison charts and graphs; software use and demonstrations through digital literacies.
- ELL: using rubrics for critical thinking and opportunities for language production
- PE: multi-literacies are embedded in all units (rules, map reading, strategies, score keeping, problem solving)
- English: multi-literacies are integral to all aspects of the English curriculum and classroom.

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

In reviewing priorities in this year's Growth Plan, staff felt strongly that we were trying to do too many things at once and efforts have lacked a clear focus. Engagement and achievement remain critical to learning and we believe this should remain at the core of our growth plan. Central to engagement and achievement as we transition to full implementation of the new curriculum is relevant and authentic assessment practices, which we believe are the underpinning of both engagement and achievement. Therefore, our new Inquiry Question and Goal focuses very specifically on assessment as it relates to engagement and achievement. We have chosen the word "growth" rather than achievement as it encompasses broad concepts such as growth mindset and improvement. This is in line with our shifting focus, for example, to "On a Roll", which recognizes growth, rather than simply academic achievement as measured by marks. Similarly, the word "investment" reflects the concept of "engagement", but is broader and goes deeper.

3. INQUIRY QUESTION (previously known as "Goal")

Our original Inquiry Question has been streamlined to focus on assessment. We feel this will allow us as a staff to grow and strengthen our collective understanding and implementation of relevant and authentic assessment practices. We are curious about the relationship between assessment and its effect on student investment in their learning and growth.

Our new Inquiry Question is:

What is the relationship between relevant, authentic assessment and the fostering of student growth and investment?

Our new Goal (Area of Focus) is:

To develop relevant, authentic assessment practices in order to foster student growth and investment.

4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW PLAN?

Focus student attention on the 3 A's (Attitude, Achievement and Assessment) of Investment at Grade Assemblies and homeroom in September.

Pro-D in 2019-2020 will focus on learning about and implementing relevant and authentic assessment practices.

DRT 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.

Science: continue trialing standards-based assessment in lessons and activities and share these experiments and resources with one another.

Math: introduce the Numeracy 8 course, setting a foundation for math in high school; continue the practice of rewrites in Math 8; focus on our "Prime Time Math Games" with elementary schools to foster the belief that math is fun and not negative or unpleasant.

Fine Arts: Develop assessment goals with students in one-on-one meetings for personal growth.

Drama: Acting 11/12 will work on a project with the food bank/community. The project will be filmed and used during the holiday season to raise awareness of food bank needs.

PE: Field trips; goal setting standards for PE 8-10 students.

Home Ec: Use Department time to work on lab assessment design to align with new assessment practices that are appropriate and cohesive.

English: Work on assessment strategies that ensure more opportunities for group feedback with both group and individual responsibilities, in 2-3 stages.

Library: To support teachers with formative assessment and inquiry projects, the library will be offering structured opportunities to establish reading habits. For example, (A) English 8 classes will be invited to sign up for 1-2 i-time sessions per month for a) silent reading and b) returning, renewing and signing out books; (B) creating a cross-curricular school calendar showing a timeline for Inquiry projects by topic/subject for grades 8 & 9, so other teachers can piggy-back on Inquiries (and help prevent overloading students with too many overlapping projects); and (C) Inviting students doing Inquiry projects to come to the library during i-Time to look up/search for related books.

CST: continue to coach students to communicate with counselors and teachers about learning; continue to offer CST room as an alternative working space for students writing tests and studying.

5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

- Review and revise support plans for this year
 - Pro-D on assessment practices
 - Focus on the 3 A's of Investment: Attitude, Achievement, Assessment with students throughout the year
 - In-house teacher mentoring and support to implement new assessment practices
 - Focus on Core Competencies
 - Develop in-house Indigenous Education Resources

6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

- Revise (If necessary) or repeat indicators from previous plan
- Anecdotal evidence such as: involvement in school clubs and activities, atmosphere in the hallways, improved behavior/fewer discipline issues, "Good News" stories.
- GREEN Card examples of positive student behavior.
- Monitoring progress through Ministry Student Learning surveys and regular Student Forums.
- Baseline student achievement data – report cards, "On A Roll", provincial assessment data (Numeracy and Literacy Assessments).
- Student self-assessment across the curriculum, including on Core Competencies, particularly Communication and the Personal and Social competencies (Positive and Personal Cultural Identity, Personal Awareness and Responsibility and Social Responsibility).
- As a staff, we will review our progress as part of the School Growth cycle and adjust as necessary.

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

- How will we make parents, students and other members of the community aware and involved?

Communication:

Our school website encourages our community members to:

- KEEP INFORMED
- ALWAYS go to our social media sites for various information.
- Do not expect your friends to keep you updated. DIY - DO IT YOURSELF!
- Download the Killarney App to your phone
- Website: killarneysecondary.com
- Facebook: facebook.com/killarneysec
- Twitter: twitter.com/killarneysec (Pauline Wong)

Student Voice: Every year, student leaders are assembled to conduct a Student Forum. The student leaders facilitate a school wide session where a representative cross section of students from every grade level are selected to participate in a learning and sharing session. During the forum, the participants share their values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds, with respect to a focused question pertinent to Killarney Secondary School (usually aligned with school goals). The 2019 school forum was centered on preparing for life beyond high school. The student leaders compiled this data to present to staff and students.



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

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

Killarney's Indigenous Learners by Grade:

- Grade 8: (13)
- Grade 9: (8)
- Grade 10: (8)
- Grade 11: (2)
- Grade 12: (10)

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

- Indigenous students at Killarney continue to receive support services provided by an Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker.
- Indigenous Success Plans are completed each term for individual students by a team consisting of the Indigenous Enhancement Worker, Grade Counsellor, and Grade Administrator.
- Department Heads are researching and acquiring a variety of Indigenous Texts to bring into their classrooms. These texts reflect Indigenous culture, myths, and legends.
- In Law 12 students are learning about Indigenous issues (land claims and reconciliation) through case law
- In Choir, students are singing Traditional Indigenous songs.
- In Foods and Nutrition, students are cooking Bannock and other traditional foods. They also learn about culture and traditions that revolve around food.
- In Science, students are learning about the traditional uses of plants for medicine, and about the principles of “sustainable living”.
- PE classes practice group reflections (Circle of Courage)
- English Department is integrating works by indigenous authors such as Richard Wagamese and Eden Robinson at every grade level.
- IEW leads a circle ceremony in the English 8 classes related to the novel Touching Spirit Bear. Students were taught the purpose and symbolism of circles to Indigenous communities. Students role-played a healing circle.
- Teachers have been trained in the territorial acknowledgement to begin a lesson and a Territorial Acknowledgement is posted in every classroom.
- “First Peoples’ Principles of Learning” posters are in every classroom to help embed Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being in daily learning.
- Indigenous Enhancement Worker, with the support of CST, has partnered with Big Brothers Indigenous Teen Mentoring Program for the past 5 years to identify and train Killarney students who identify as Indigenous to mentor elementary school students at Champlain Elementary.
- Modern Languages: is building awareness and appreciation of Indigenous peoples by including Indigenous music in the French 9 music unit, Indigenous history and cuisine in the French 11 Ethnic Food unit and in Spanish when learning Chilean land titles. In French 12, some reading comprehension exercises come from a French novella about residential schools.
- 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.
- Drama: Attended a play about residential schools “Children of God” at the York theatre; Students in Drama classes always begin in a circle and tell /answer a question of the day (form of storytelling).
- 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.
- VP Darlene Hughes and her family did a surprise presentation to the Killarney staff during collaborative time in June 2018. Darlene shared her cancer journey with the staff and thanked them for their support and her sister did an indigenous presentation of Tsimshian culture and shared their traditional values with the staff. The thank you gift was a unique indigenous print depicting her journey, created to reflect Darlene’s journey through her cancer diagnosis and treatment.

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

- List continuing and new initiatives

- Offer pro-d opportunities to teachers to strengthen understanding of Indigenous culture and history and the confidence to bring this understanding to the classroom (eg. Blanket Activity with VSB's Indigenous Education staff).
- Plan an Orange Shirt Day Assembly and/or Indigenous experience day.
- Incorporate Indigenous music in programs (eg. teaching the Coast Salish Anthem to choirs).
- Promote Field Trips to explore Indigenous Culture and History (eg. Musqueam Learning Centre)
- Continue to bring in speakers on Indigenous Topics.
- CST: work towards including indigenous local stories / music / crafts into CST programming. Killarney volunteers working with elementary students would benefit from the learning.
- CST continues to work with the IEW and share snacks etc. for identified students.
- CST continues to focus on relationship-building as the foundation for all of programs.
- Foster the expectation of mutual respect throughout the school.
- Diversify instruction practices/content/learning objectives to more authentically engage the personal and social curricular competency. Also diversify the context of learning and get out of the classroom.
- Concentrate on basic values of respecting, valuing and honouring difference
- Build community by building relationships; be present, connect with students on a daily basis, provide safe spaces.
- Champion a Multicultural week that allows an appreciation of many cultures to foster tolerance, respect and an appreciation of our similarities, not differences.
- Incorporate Indigenous learning strategies into our classroom practices such story-telling and learning circles.
- Use new textbooks that have Indigenous content and connections.
- Encourage teachers and departments to continue to do all of the above and more.

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

- Include both data-driven and anecdotal examples
- Give opportunities for student, staff and parent voice

The awareness and appreciation of Indigenous culture has grown amongst students and staff as evidenced by adaptations made to lesson plans by teachers in an effort to weave Indigenous culture, traditions, and ways of learning into the regular curriculum.

Workshops and cultural activities are developed and presented by the district on an ongoing basis. These activities are also accessed through our Indigenous Enhancement Worker and Teacher and are helping to build knowledge and confidence in teachers.

A conscious effort has been made to reflect, support and encourage displays of Indigenous art throughout the school.

A team consisting of the Indigenous Worker, the grade counsellor, and the grade administrator will meet with each student during the year to review individual Indigenous Success plans, and take steps, as necessary, to work towards success.