



Vancouver School District

School Plan for David Thompson

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

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

- Update school context if necessary
- Review inquiry question and where the need for this goal came from (evidence, etc.)

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

For September 2020, we are projecting to have 1,308 students enrolled at David Thompson Secondary, including 25 International students. David Thompson Secondary is a comprehensive high school emphasizing academic achievement, student leadership, athletic excellence, participation in the arts, and service to others.

We are located in East Vancouver's Victoria-Fraserview community. The socio-economic status of our neighborhood consists of families predominantly in the lower to middle class. David Thompson's school population is ethnically diverse. The top languages spoken in students' homes include Cantonese (31%), English (21%), Tagalog (11), Punjabi (10%), Vietnamese (7%), and Mandarin (6%). Eight percent of our total student population is enrolled in English Language Learning classes and just over two percent of David Thompson's student population is Aboriginal.

David Thompson offers various programs to meet the needs of our students. The DT Odyssey Program is a District Specified Program, enrolls 150 students, and is known throughout the district for its students' accomplishments in Math and Science. We also offer various Senior level AP courses. We also offer a Youth Trades in Training district program for 12 students and a Career Prep Work Experience program for approximately 100 students. We have 4 District Special Education Programs at David Thompson: Junior Learning Support, Gold, Social Development, and Autism Resource Program. Approximately 10% of David Thompson's student population has been identified as having special needs. Each of these students has an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Inquiry Question from Year 1 School Plan:

How do we effectively integrate the Core Competencies into curricular and extra-curricular activities within the school community?

How can we support students to develop a better understanding of self-care and mental wellness?

Where did the need for this goal come from:

With the new curriculum we wanted to focus on the implementation of the Core Competencies to help increase student engagement and to increase literacy across all curricular areas.

From examining the feedback from student forums, Our School Survey's, staff and the counselling department we recognized the need to help support our students increase their over all mental wellness and to provide them with strategies for self care.

2A. WHAT DID WE SEE?

- Describe the overall strengths as well as the needs of the learners.
- What is going on for them?

David Thompson students are motivated and actively involved in their school community. Our students are very respectful, tolerant, kind, and helpful. Many students participate in teacher led clubs and volunteer at community organizations such as South Vancouver Neighborhood House, Sunset Community Centre, Boys and Girls Club, and Killarney Community Centre to name a few.

Our students are also actively involved with the Community Schools Team (CST). One hundred and forty seven of our students became David Thompson Secondary School CST Leaders this past year where they trained to become after school and Saturday school leaders for 750 local elementary school aged youth. This after school and weekend programming allows students to be more connected to school and their greater community, helps improve students' attendance, and builds/enhances relationships between younger students and older students. Cooking programs focus on health, wellness, and good nutritional habits, and movement programs encourage students' physical literacy, connection to nature, and social responsibility.

Our students are very aware of their impact on the environment and are always working towards reducing their footprint. We have a Green Team club that is involved in various school and community initiatives. We also have a partnership with Fresh Roots who works with our students and teachers to maintain a community garden at our site.

David Thompson students are very motivated and enthusiastic about their learning and work cooperatively with teachers to develop their skills to become lifelong learners.

David Thompson has a very vibrant after school atmosphere. Students often remain in the building after class to work on projects/homework, support school events such as athletics or fine arts performances, and to socialize with their peers.

Physical and mental health are important factors to allow students to reach their potential. Students see physical and mental health concerns as a priority and we are working towards student wellness while decreasing depression, anxiety, and stress.

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

- Outline any changes or adaptations from previous plan. Be sure to include rationale for why these changes should be made and how you believe that it will help.

We will continue working on our school plan as it is. Our staff and students will continue to work together to build a better understanding of the Core Competencies and how we can support our students in applying them to their lives both inside and outside the classroom.

3. INQUIRY QUESTION (previously known as “Goal”)

- Does the original question need to be readjusted/continued/changed given the results outlined above?

We will continue to work on our original inquiry questions,

How do we effectively integrate the Core Competencies into curricular and extra-curricular activities within the school community?

How can we support students to develop a better understanding of self-care and mental wellness?

4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW PLAN?

- Explain plan (i.e. specific activities for year 2) and any changes from previous plans

We will continue to work with students to gain a deeper understanding of the Core Competencies and how they relate to their lives both as students and members of our community

We will do this through,

- Engaging students and staff in meaningful activities related to the inquiry question in and out of the classroom
- Continuing to build a better understanding of the Core Competencies

5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

- Review and revise support plans for this year

We will work together with our school staff to support them in the following ways,

- Curriculum implementation time to support classroom teachers by providing resources and ideas on how promote the Core Competencies within their curriculum
- In service workshops for staff
- Resources on the Core Competencies
- Time – Staff Meetings, Collaborative time, Department Head meetings
- Connecting and collaborating with Community partners
- Professional Development

6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

- Revise (If necessary) or repeat indicators from previous plan

We will examine and evaluate the following information and data to determine if we are on track in achieving our goals,

- Survey results
- Student forum
- Self-reflection sheets
- Teacher and counselor feedback
- Consult/check in with staff through Department Head meetings, Staff meetings, and Collaborative time
- Parent feedback through PAC

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

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

We will share our results with the David Thompson community in the following ways,

- Assemblies
- Staff meeting, Department Head meetings
- PA announcements
- Bulletins – Staff and Student
- Social Media
- Extra-curricular activities
- Posters in classrooms and throughout school
- School website
- Teacher blogs
- PAC meetings



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?

- Include numbers of students, grade levels, etc.

David Thompson Secondary School has twenty seven Aboriginal learners enrolled for the 2019-20 school year: twelve Grade 8 students, six Grade 9 students, six Grade 10 students, one Grade 11 student, and two Grade 12 students. Our Aboriginal learners are supported on a weekly basis by our school's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Teacher (AEET) and our Aboriginal Education Worker.

Our AEET:

Works alongside teachers, support staff, administrators, and parents to monitor and track Aboriginal student achievement and support Aboriginal students with successful grade-to-grade transitions and in meeting graduation requirements.

Collaborates with our School Based Team and other enrolling and non-enrolling and support staff to analyze Aboriginal student needs and to develop individual student learning goals.

Consults with enrolling classroom teachers on Aboriginal student assessment, evaluation, and programming strategies.

Provides targeted instructional support to Aboriginal students by working within the classroom, and in small group settings.

Helps promote and model the integration of Aboriginal cultural and traditional knowledge into classroom curriculum and the overall school setting. Our AEET also shares knowledge of Aboriginal curriculum resources and professional development opportunities with colleagues.

Blair Goodwill worked with our male Aboriginal learners during a number of small group meetings to teach Aboriginal traditional culture, emotional management, brotherhood, and connections.

The Circle of Sisters (Anna Soole) through the YWCA worked with our female Aboriginal learners every two weeks in an empowerment class, which combined self-defense knowledge with identity and Aboriginal cultural teachings.

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

- List examples of pro-d, special events, speakers, curricular integration, routines and customs, etc.

David Thompson Secondary School staff will work to build knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness, and an appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions among all students.

Strategies used include:

David Thompson hosted a Professional Development Workshop for school and district staff on April 29, 2019. The keynote speaker was Dr. Martin Brokenleg and his presentation Topic: "From Darkness to Light: Teachers Leading Their Students". This day-long session explored conditions that affect many students and can interfere with the tasks of learning. Intergenerational Trauma affects many ethnic populations as well as specific families. Resiliency, as in The Circle of Courage is the best medicine to prepare all students for their lives ahead. In modern, culturally diverse cities, skilled teachers can educate in culturally appropriate ways. A youth positive school culture is the best environment for educators and learners.

Department Initiatives:

English:

- First Nations writers, making First Nations Principles a part of classroom conversations, projects using First Nations Principles of Learning, looking at contemporary First People's lives.
- Films featuring Aboriginal narratives
- Presentations by First Nations community members, eg. Residential school survivor Stephon Lytton

Math:

Web site Math catcher – First Nations culture based stories (Math related stories 3-4 minutes), students create their own stories based on previous example.

Science:

Activities using Aboriginal knowledge of local flora to help identify and understand the potential use of certain plants around campus. Currently we are connecting with our AEET and Gene Gallant (DT Physical Education Teacher). Work is ongoing to find alternative resources to enhance our teaching regarding this subject; we meet informally to discuss strategies or we apply for collaborative inquiry time.

Social Studies:

In class sessions with indigenous issues – presented by AEET – blanket activity, guest speakers – Shane Point, Social Studies 8 – 11 – main focus in curricular areas (old and new), field studies field trip to Victoria (SS 10 and 11).

PE, HMEC, TEEd, BE, ELL:

Using First Nations Learning Principles, Aboriginal Tourism, Textiles button blankets, Business Ed discussions around trade and barter system – evolution of retailing covered including First Nation influences, Family Studies Museum of Anthropology trip, creation of story – ELL.

Modern Languages:

French 8 celebrations unit – foods and customs, French 10 Canada unit, songs and videos, French 9 showcase a First Nations celebrity, French 10 Canada unit incorporates discussions on "les Autochtones", Spanish courses all have many opportunities to discuss the peoples of Latin America – Aztecs, Nahuatl, Huichol, Mayan, Inca.

Fine Arts:

Videos, discussions – historical, political, cultural, philosophical.

Library:

The Library's aboriginal cultural enhancement goal include the following: attending a workshop on the role school libraries can play in aboriginal education, liaising with Aboriginal Ed Consultant, Chas Dejarlais and Cultural Coordinator, Trudi Harris, acquiring materials from publishers that focus on First Nations books and resources, facilitated Shane Pointe, (Elder, VSB Knowledge Keeper) for presentations, and AEET in the Library as they worked with David Thompson Aboriginal students.

SPED:

Infuse Aboriginal culture where possible – such as using a medicine wheel to find where the students lack balance (Social Skills and Planning 10). One person is starting a jewelry club and they will be making some things that pertain to Aboriginal culture. Our AEET helps promote and model the integration of Aboriginal cultural and traditional knowledge into classroom curriculum and the overall school setting.

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

- List continuing and new initiatives

We will continue to specifically support our Aboriginal students by:

Ensuring Aboriginal students feel comfortable, supported, and valued in our school community.

- Establishing improvement targets and tracking data with reference to improving success rates in reading, writing, and numeracy for our Aboriginal students, and
- Monitoring the participation rate and completion rate for our Aboriginal students on their provincial exams.

Ongoing dialogue and tracking of the above mentioned data will take place amongst teaching and support staff at department head meetings and staff meetings. Necessary adjustments will be identified and plans made accordingly.

We will measure our school's overall growth in becoming more aware of Aboriginal culture by increasing the number of Aboriginal artifacts displayed around the school, bringing in cultural presentations (for example, Teddy Anderson, Hoop Dancer) and increasing the number of classroom discussions and school conversations specifically related to Aboriginal history, traditions, and culture.

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

English:

Students are very engaged at Grade 10 with specific resources, First Nations Principles can be included in other areas, tales of origin in Grade 8.

Science:

Awareness of ecological connectedness, awareness of First Nations scientific knowledge of the land and that scientists are accessing this knowledge to help better understand ecosystems.

Social Studies:

Greater appreciation of Aboriginal cultural values, aware of past/present injustices.

PE, HMEC, TEEd, BE, ELL:

District Cross-Curricular Pro-D day, shared learning, First Nations woodwork course ideas, speakers and artists visiting classrooms, Family Studies housing project, Business Ed studying currency and trade.

Modern Languages:

Showing empathy toward First Nations, discussing similarities between our cultures and First Nations.

Library:

The Library has acquired a variety of materials relating to Aboriginal culture that is utilized more and more by students and staff. As a result, students have an increased knowledge of Aboriginal histories, traditions, and cultures. Students are also more aware of First Nations Principles of Learning.

Counselling:

Encourage participation in Aboriginal conferences/job opportunities, increased focus on scholarship opportunities, goal-setting meetings with our AEET for all Aboriginal students. Guest speakers – encourage the discussion of cultural aspects in presentations, student referral book for meetings with Aboriginal worker, Blair Goodwill – Young Men’s Circle Aboriginal Group, YWCA First Nations Leadership Group – Sacred Sisters.

SPED:

Some students will talk about the history of Aboriginal treatment in Canada, they have a familiarity with many of the issues, such as residential schools.