

2022-2023 - Year 1 School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY

Our community has high expectations for student success, and a high percentage of our students continue their education at college or university after leaving Prince of Wales. Our staff provide a comprehensive learning program for the approximately 900 students in grades 8 – 12. In addition to strong scholarship opportunities, Prince of Wales students excel in fine arts, leadership, service, and athletics. We have an engaged Parent Advisory Group (PAC) that is very inclusive of our multicultural population. Our parents are active in being part of PW, fundraising and providing support for our school. Prince of Wales is in a stable, middle to high socio-economic community. Fifty-five percent of our students speak a language other than English at home, and about 25% of our students are enrolled as English Language Learners (ELL).

Prince of Wales offers several district programs to meet a diverse range of student needs. These include: the PW Mini School for academic and motivated students in grades 8 – 12; the TREK Outdoor and Environmental Education Program for grade 10s; an inclusive Learning Support Program (LSP) for grades 8 and 9 students with learning designations; and the GOLD program for twice exceptional students in grades 8 – 12. Our school has a strong extra-curricular program, an active Students' Council, a wide range of clubs, and intramural and school sports teams which all offer student opportunities for leadership and contribution beyond the academic program. We field teams in all three athletic seasons in almost every high school sport. Several of those school teams competed at the provincial level this year including soccer, swimming, tennis, track & field, and hockey. Field study experiences are a big part of Prince of Wales. This school year our staff organized/supervised local and outdoor education fieldtrips including grade level teambuilding, gallery walks, curling & community PE activities, and community building activities with several elementary schools.

We celebrate successes big and small from athletic awards to core competency awards, to academic awards, to community building with carnival and clubs days, winter week student council events along with a student/staff variety show, to greeting students as they walk in the door each morning. We value diversity and student-initiated events that honour that diversity with Lunar New year celebrations, 2SLGTBQ+ lips sync/fashion shows and PRIDE week activities, the textile class' Red Dress initiative and display, and band performances that celebrate the musical diversity of our world. We celebrate learning with our Qwalena performance and learning from The Other People group who shared their stories with our students. We continue to explore authentic learning opportunities for the entire community that enhance and continue to support diversity, Indigenous perspectives, place-based learning and belonging for our PW family.

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

The story for our learners is two sided – there are strengths and needs. They are highly motivated students who have a strong desire to pursue some form of post-secondary education. Over 90% of our students go on to post-secondary education and over 80% go directly to a university following high school. The English Language Learner (ELL) program has grown over the past several years, reflecting our changing community; the school now includes approximately 160 international students from all over the world including countries such as China, Korea, Germany, Italy, and Turkey. Many of our students feel a sense of belonging and safety at school and believe there is at least one adult in the building who ‘has their back’. They feel they have opportunities to be curious, to make missteps and recover from them, and get feedback from staff to improve their learning. There is a high rate of volunteerism among our students, and they generally engage in more out-of-school educational lessons and outside activities than the norm. Our students also report anxiety and/depression around performing well whether that be academically, athletically, within peer and adult relationships, making good decisions and self-management at school which has intensified with COVID-19.

What we see is that PW houses within its educational walls a group of learners much like any other school; learners who come with strengths – diligence, perseverance, socio-economic assets, intellectual opportunities, and strong family connections. We also see learners who experience gaps in education, transiency, socio-economic shortfalls, and learning challenges. Yet, they are all learners wanting to do their best, needing direction on what their best can look like, wanting the opportunity to be viewed as individuals in a system of numerous hoops or criteria to be gotten through and wanting to have their strengths recognized and their weaknesses supported. Students here are expected to achieve and move onto post-secondary, deal with perceived and actual increased levels of stress and anxiety, manage the very busy life of school obligations, extra-curricular obligations, home/parental expectations all the while hoping to find out who they are as a person and ultimately grow toward becoming that person. We have heard this from the students, caregivers, and the staff in our community.

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

This information has been gathered from several sources:

- The Youth Development Instrument (YDI) completed in January 2023.
- Department and staff collaborative discussion throughout the school year.
- Anecdotal information from parents, guardians, and caregivers (parent/teacher interviews, counselling/parent meetings, admin/parent meetings) throughout the school year.
- Ministry Survey completed by Gr. 10 & 12 students, parents, and staff in January – April 2023.
- Graduation data, FIT data, discipline data
- Student Survey completed in May 2023 where 650 of our 900 students participated.

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

We are going to be supporting all our learners through focusing on the areas of Inclusion, Intentionality with Flexible Instruction Time (FIT), Belonging & Community, and Reinvigoration of the Core Competencies.

Through these focus areas we will also enhance our instructional capacity, enhance our students' self-awareness and self-regulation, thus supporting their development and growth as lifelong learners.

These focal areas connect with all aspects of the Education Plan and have tendrils that reach through and intertwine with its Value and Equity statements and each of the three goals. Specifically, they most strongly connect with...

- Improving school environments, increasing literacy, numeracy, and thinking, and reporting student results – element in Goal 1.
- The entirety of Goal 2 – increasing equity.
- Continuing PWs Reconciliation journey – Goal 3

NOTE: These focus areas holistically support the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement in all its goal areas. We also believe that these focus areas will refine and further strengthen the work we do with our students. These are not focus areas that wane over time. They are focus areas that are supportive of staff and student development in an ongoing way. They will morph as the needs of the community change. Hopefully, as time passes, they will deepen as we learn together.

5. INQUIRY QUESTION

Our starting point was the question *“How can we increase student engagement through inclusive instruction and relationship building?”* This question came from the fact that staff at PW believe their curriculum and work with students within the numerous interaction opportunities they share with students is valuable. They also believe that our ‘kids’ are valuable and should be honored as human beings navigating a complex system. Ultimately, student engagement is best achieved through inclusive instruction, robust assessment, thoughtful reporting, and **creating community through relationships**.

We examined this concept through a self-reflection lens ... What if we looked at our work in terms of the VSB Education Plan 2026 statements and goals and asked the questions *Where are we now?*, *Where are we going?*, and *How do we get there?* This resulted in some amazing conversations, clarity about our focus areas (#4 above), and some tangible actions that can be implemented within those focus areas. Interestingly, the relationship piece is very important and manifested itself throughout. And when you link this back to the data sources in #3, it all supports the work we are doing and continue to do in our focus areas.

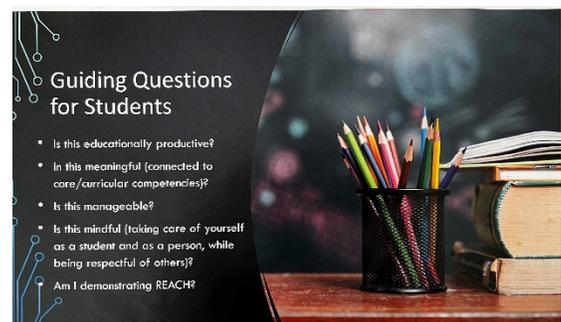
6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? AND #7 WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

Inclusion: The *inclusion* this refers to is in terms of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and reporting. We have spent several years working on this and continue to do so. This means ...

- continued collaboration about differentiated instruction – revisiting UDL.
- learning from and with the Learning Support Services team to promote student agency in their learning environments.
- Continued collaboration and conversations as we unpack the new reporting order supported by admin, DRT, invited experts for pro-d and/collab time to deepen understanding of descriptive, strength-based comments, trusting and using triangulation and professional judgment.
- Creating norms of reference for the proficiency scales within each grade and subject area including at the grade 10 -12 levels. We have worked with proficiency scales for years now – this about refining areas in our practice that need more precision.
- Continued work with Peter Liljedahl theories and practices of vertical learning and randomized grouping.
- Beginning work with Katie White and assessment practices.

Intentionality with Flexible Instruction Time (FIT): How do we work with students to better use this instructional time? As a staff, we have committed to being intentional and explicit with the students about taking responsibility of this time as a means of connecting areas of the curriculum and core competencies. We need to spend time at the beginning of September 2023 revisiting what FIT is. This means ..

- 2 – 3 structure lesson for all students at the beginning of the year.
- Being explicit with expectations and tying that to our code of conduct – REACH and core competencies.
- Being intentional as we engage in conversations with students about how they are using FIT time and use our *Guiding Questions* to support that conversation.
- Honour student choice but build in accountability with our sign-out process but also, challenge student choice when it may not be the best choice – again linking back to our *Guiding Questions*. We hope to challenge staff and students to use this instructional time with respect and ownership. Fostering good decision making and sometimes letting the poor decision-making result in natural consequences creates opportunity for building relationships with students and supporting the development of core competencies in a real-world manner.



Belonging and Community: The big idea here is also inclusion – feeling safe in a diverse group of people, being kind to those around us, creating connections that support the physical and mental well-being of our entire community. This means ...

- Continuing the PW Here4Peers mental health program and training for approximately 20 student per year with the VDP/VCH facilitators. This group has visited several of our feeder schools and conducted Gr. 7 workshops with the mission to improve mental health literacy and help reduce the stigma associated with mental health.
- Looking at awards, grad, and our ways of celebration using an equity lens. This committee’s work will start in September 2023.
- Curating more robust, relevant, and local Indigenous content within/out of Indigenous Focused Grad Requirements (IFGR).
- Reconnecting with our paddle story gifted to us in 2021 from Musqueam.
- Working on our code of conduct – connecting it to core competencies and our paddle story.
- Something very simple greeting our students as they walk through the door, no matter when that happens.

- Continuing with SOGI initiatives. Continuing with mental health initiatives like Green Thumb Theatre's *Still Falling* coming in October 2023.

Reinvigoration of the Core Competencies: It is easy to see the links of the core competencies throughout our other focus areas, but additionally this means ...

- Ongoing dialogue to foster empathy.
- The explicit linking of these competencies to what is happening in classrooms and the walls of our building and the activities our youth engage in.
- Pro-d, speakers, and training and circle and restorative practices.
- Creating a FIT schedule that supports ongoing conversations with students about core competencies and builds in dedicated time for self-reflection and reporting on core competencies.

Other general supports:

- A comprehensive list of the resources from speakers to literature to access to support this work i.e., Indigenous speakers/knowledge keepers, assessment specialist, UDL resources etc.
- Creating space for the ongoing conversations necessary to support good work in these areas i.e., collab time, staff meetings, department head meetings etc.
- Taking advantage of district, pro-d and expert learning opportunities.

NOTE: While *relationship building* is not a specific item in this section, all the items listed above are dependent upon and can in turn foster the development of community and relationship. Relationship that encompasses teacher-student relationships and student-student relationship. Vertical and horizontal. Vertical between admin, staff, and student. Horizontal across the focus areas, reconciliation, and inclusion where each student has an avenue of connection to the PW community. Relationships braid all of this together.

7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

SEE #6

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

The information gathered from our data in #3 could be a baseline marker. We should continue actively engaging parents with the Ministry survey, PAC conversations, and anecdotal information to gather their perspectives. We will continue to use FIT sign-in/sign out data and visual data (kids in the hallway, kids in learning spaces etc.) to see if our strategies have had a positive impact. Student surveys, perhaps more often, will provide insight into how students view things. We will participate in the YDI again next year for comparison purposes. Staff conversations may also provide valuable information as to whether we are progressing or need to adjust. No change in the first year is not indicative of no progress, it may be that more explicit support is necessary. If there are unanticipated changes – that may require deeper investigation.

9. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION?

We have shared with students, staff and parents the following:

- Student successes and achievements; challenges and target areas for growth at our school; curricular change; shifting perspectives on assessment and reporting; changes to the daily schedule (FIT); increasing onus on students to take charge of their own learning; information on school activities and events, the school code of conduct, guest speaker/assembly opportunities.

We have shared this in the following ways:

- Open houses, meetings/discussions through the Parent Walkabout, guest speakers; communication via Synervoice, the biweekly edition of the PW News and our website; PAC meetings and management of PAC website; special school programs such as Mini, TREK and Music host parent nights as well; a very active articulation program to our family of schools.



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?

- Paddle story as referenced in #6 <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/ci/p/19156>.
- Qwalena: *The Wild Woman Who Steals Children*. This presentation tells the story of residential schools in a compelling way.
- Rebuilding the garden with Indigenous connection to UBC garden and learning opportunities there.
- Continuing or learning with book clubs as we did this year with Jo Chrona's Wayi Wah!
- Continuing to revision our entrance way as welcoming to all.
- On going pro-d by staff through PSAs, BCTF and District resources.

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

- Library's indigenous collect being reviewed/evaluated as per Chrona/FNESC/Peters authentic resource evaluation criteria.
- Indigenous food studies unit at gr. 8.
- CAM Team visit implementing IGFR and offering a range of courses to meet student interests. We started with EFP 10 in our TREK program and EFP 11 in the Mini Program this year. Next year we will have EFP 12/10 and Contemporary Indigenous studies classes.
- Ongoing sharing of learning resources amongst staff.
- Paddle story as referenced in #6 <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/ci/p/19156> .
- Work with circles and restorative practices.
- Collaboration on actively practicing First Peoples Principles of Learning in our garden and in our building.
- A high grad rate for Indigenous students.

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

- Continued work in all the areas in #11.
- Connecting our Paddle story to our journey of reconciliation and action within the school.
- Explore becoming a Downie Wenjack school.
- Continue with book clubs.
- Revisioning of celebrating student successes.
- More work connected to pro-d with Jo Chrona.