



Vancouver School District

School Plan for χpeý

Year 3 (2022) of 3 Year Plan, 2021 - 2022

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the suspension of all in-class instruction on March 13, 2020, current school plans have been carried forward to the 2021/22 school year.

On October 23rd, 2017 Macdonald Elementary was renamed χpeý Elementary School to honor our local Indigenous communities on which the school is built. χpeý means “cedar” in the hənq̓əminəm language. Also in 2017, the school was rezoned and its catchment was re-distributed to neighbouring schools. As an Indigenous Focus Choice School, χpeý welcomes both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students from across the district.

χpeý Elementary is located at the corner of East Hastings and Victoria Drive and currently serves 85 Kindergarten to Grade 7 students. Of those, 74 identify as Indigenous. Within its walls χpeý hosts a Strong Start Program for children ranging from 0-5 years old. The school shares its grounds with *Eagles in The Sky* and *Eaglets* who provide both pre and before/after school daycare. χpeý works closely with several external agencies and individuals who support our students’ academic, social-emotional, and physical wellbeing.

χpeý celebrates its unique status as an Indigenous Focus Choice School within the VSB. Our two goals include social emotional learning, and fostering pride in and knowledge of Indigenous culture, language and ancestry. We move toward achieving these goals within Indigenous curricula, structures, and strategies as appropriate. Our vision is to foster academic excellence, strength of self, and pride in Indigenous ancestry and teachings.

2A. WHAT DID WE SEE?

The school consists of over 90% students with Indigenous heritage. Our school’s population reflects the urban Indigenous population of Vancouver which draws from a rich variety of cultures from across Turtle Island. Besides participating in cultural activities here at our school, many of our families are deeply involved in activities at the Vancouver Indigenous Friendship Centre, Native Education College (NEC), Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA), as well as the various Indigenous Daycare centres in the area.

Our students demonstrate a wide range of literacy skills. Teachers incorporate individualized speaking, listening and writing strategies through all grades. Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers alike weave Indigenous materials and pedagogy within the mainstream BC Elementary Curricula.

Social emotional learning and literacy continue to be large foci at χpeý. For social-emotional learning, teachers employ a myriad of individual, classroom and school-wide practices focusing on self-regulation, positive identity, and conflict resolution. The latter are centered on reconciliation through restorative practices, healing circles and cleansing ceremonies where possible and practical. For

literacy, teachers continue to provide individual, small group, and whole-class instruction using a variety of strategies and learning resources. A key component to our work around literacy is our Enhanced Literacy teacher who provides specialized support for our most vulnerable students.

While 72% of our student population are working within the widely held expectations for all learners, 28% are identified by Ministry designations. This number is high and we endeavor to reduce the designation of students and focus on inclusion. Our families enroll their children in our school with the expectation their child will thrive and flourish at our school. Poverty and inter-generational trauma are the largest contributing factors affecting the needs of our children and their families. However, it is essential that whatever supports and approaches we use to address the contributing factors of poverty and inter-generational trauma have a focus on inclusion and creating a community with a sense of belonging and identity.

As we are an Indigenous Focus Choice School, we strive to involve our students in the cultures of the First Peoples of Canada. Our students are learning to be respectful in the acknowledgement of our un-ceded local Nations, as well as the shared values, experiences, and histories of all Indigenous Peoples.

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

In order to foster a sense of belonging amongst staff and students we need to embark on revisiting together what we believe and value when it comes to student learning. Collaboration is key in ensuring this occurs and staff have expressed the desire in collaborating at a more deep and profound level so that it impacts student learning and well being. Therefore a sense of urgency has been created in creating a visioning process followed by collaboration protocols which will enable us to work together as a community.

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

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

- What is leading to this situation for our learners? *We can provide wrap-around support for our students’ academic, social emotional and mental health needs.*
- How might we be contributing to this? *Self-regulation and conflict resolution through healing circles/reconciliation*
- From what we know, what is the most important work that we can do to improve the success for our students? *Indigenous heritage/culture and knowledge – ways of knowing, being and doing drive the beliefs, strategies and structures in our school.*
- What key areas of learning will we focus on? *We will explore in more depth what are the principles of learning that enhance student learning and in particular explore what is collaboration and what structures and strategies promote staff and student collaboration. Follow the basic tenets of Isolation to Collaboration; Reaction to Sense of Purpose; and Compliance to Engagemen/Empowerment.*

Inquiry Question – What structures and strategies need to be in place to create a safe, purposeful, collaborative, and nurturing learning environment for our students?

4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW PLAN?

In order to create a safe, purposeful, collaborative and nurturing learning environment for our students we plan to:

Implement a school-wide social-emotional program with a focus on common language across all grade groups by exploring resources from Seven Grandfather teachings, Shanker (Self Reg), Greene (Collaborative Proactive Solutions), Circle Forward (Circles), Katz (Ensouling our Schools – Teaching to Diversity), and PBIS (Positive Behavior Support) - Updated

Ongoing visioning process with staff, students, PAC and community members in the Fall using the Wholistic Learning Framework (Archibald, et al; 2011)

Determine, clarify and continue data collection throughout the year: DESSA, self-evaluation, teacher anecdotal comments, self-reporting instruments, stories (street data), and parent comments (updated)

Anecdotal and documented administration comments – students reflecting on their learning; student focus groups; incident reports (Updated)

Student behavior and learning documentation - self, staff, admin, district and community support (Updated)

Ongoing School-based Team meetings (weekly) and Class reviews (three times a year) – (Updated)

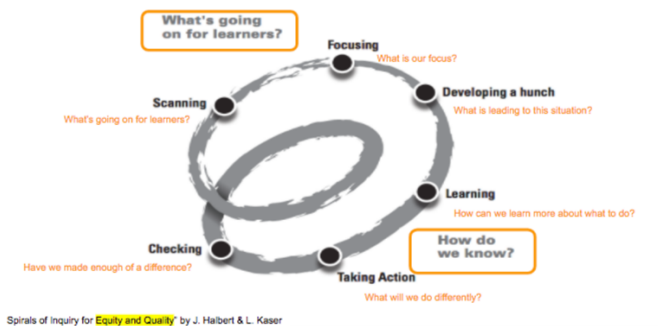
Collaboration – define (what is effective staff collaboration), implement (collaboration times built in the school day) and track (input from staff via surveys on what is collaboration, and its implementation of and effectiveness)

Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing – Seven Grandfather teachings/Land based Learning

Continue with our existing Literacy programs

- Using the Spiral of Inquiry and Collaborative approach to create structures and approaches that foster student literacy (NEW)

Spiral of Inquiry



How can we break it down into a manageable and realistic 3 year plan?

Year 1

- Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing
- DESSA, SELC instruction
- Adoption of school-wide language, values and beliefs
- Ensouling Our Schools – Jennifer Katz UBC; participate in study
- Continued direct literacy focus and instruction

Year 2

- Evaluate data from year 1 and adjust strategies

- Continue with the above but add in land based learning, ceremony, ritual,
- Approaches that are deep and restorative – Shanker, Greene, Circle Forward
- Inquiry based, cultural responsive, and personalized learning within a collaborative milieu
- Wholistic Learning Framework as the foundation that guides the visioning and implementation process

Year 3

Evaluate data from year 2 and adjust strategies

Continue with the above but add in circle gatherings (leader in every chair)

5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

Although social-emotional instruction is currently implemented in our classrooms, this coming year we will again embark on a school-wide, rather than individual approach. Two years ago, we had Holly Vivier come in the late spring to present on Indigenous Focused approaches when working with children in the social emotional realm. The discussions that day outlined the necessity in further discussion on Indigenous beliefs and values that are to be emphasized and prominent when working with students in the school. Therefore, resources that we will need will include, but not limited to:

- Wholistic Learning Framework (Archibald, et.al, 2011)
- Ensouling our Schools – UBD (Universal Backward Design) – Three Block Design and Tiered Support
- Shanker and Greene – collaborative and responsive approaches when working with children under stress and/or lacking skill development in the social, emotional, or learning realms.
- Cultural responsive approaches
- Classroom mapping
- Seven Sacred Grandfather teachings
- Mentors (e.g. Holly Vivier – SELC), DESSA)
- Indigenous Education Enhancement Workers/Youth Family Worker
- Counselling and External Agency Support
- Three tiers of support – structures, strategies and sense of being are articulated through an Indigenous lens.

Literacy continues to be an ongoing focus at our school as our students continue to need direct and small group instruction. As part of the Literacy and Indigenous Cultural goals, our school is committed to acquiring resources written by and for indigenous peoples. Emphasizing oral history and story telling is key and we will do an inquiry based project on a storybook studio. Also a number of staff have been trained in OG (Orton Gillingham) structured reading approach

Social-emotional learning aligns with the redesigned curriculum:

- Positive personal and cultural identity
- Personal awareness and responsibility
- Social responsibility

Literacy aligns with the redesigned curriculum

- Communication
- Creative thinking
- Critical thinking

Indigenous Culture and Knowledge aligns with the redesigned curriculum:

- Across all core competencies

Access to books that foster identity and belonging

- Library had ordered ___ books and the library is now a welcoming place for our students

6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

Social-Emotional Learning

- Improved DESSA scores (mini and full versions)
- Anecdotal information from administration, staff, and parents
- Student Behaviour documentation – self, staff, MDI (Middle Developmental Index)
- In school developed surveys and street date (student, staff and family/caregiver)

Literacy

- Results from formal and informal assessments, e.g. levelled reading
- Anecdotal information from staff and parents
- Formal and informal reporting, including end-of-year summative reporting
- Books signed out in the library
- Access to future play (learning lab)

As part of the inquiry process, we will re-evaluate regularly, e.g. Staff Committee meetings, resource and School Based Team meetings, and adjust strategies accordingly.

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

- The school continues to celebrate the successes of our students, both in academic and cultural realms. We will share our successes through formal/informal reporting and conferences, newsletters, website postings, twitter, displays of student work in our hallway, assemblies, PAC meetings, ceremonies and other cultural events. As well, the PAC is kept updated at our 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?

We currently have 74 students who are self-identified as Indigenous learners which represents over 85% of our school population. Our students come from multiple nations and language groups from around the world. Besides participating in cultural activities here at our school, many of our families are deeply involved in activities at the Vancouver Indigenous Friendship Centre, Native Education College (NEC), Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA), as well as the various Indigenous Daycares in the area.

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

The school has embraced the re-designed BC curriculum and continues to teach it through an Indigenous lens. All students participated in events to learn about the culture of the first peoples on Turtle Island.

Some, but not all, included:

- Cultural and ceremonial celebrations and events for students and the community
- Scheduled times for ceremonies built in at the beginning of the year (at least monthly and themed based)
- Monthly Seven Grandfather Assemblies
- Local Indigenous language instruction in Grades K-3 and K-7 at least twice a week during prep time
- Sing morning song and Smudging
- Daily morning announcements: includes Indigenous words of the week and under the guidance of our Indigenous Education worker announcements are read by students
- Drumming and Singing – at least twice a week during prep time for all students K-7. This replaces Physical and Health Education that took place during Prep time in the past few years
- Classroom visitors from Elders, Indigenous storytellers and artists
- All curricula is taught through an Indigenous lens
- Breakfast, lunch, snack, and weekend food program
- KidSafe (school break care)
- Friendship centre (after school care)
- Community Links funding for vulnerable students

Indigenous focus professional development for staff throughout the year

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

The students will continue to acquire the skills and knowledge to become Stewards of the Land and Waters of British Columbia. The school will continue to acquire a wide range of Indigenous learning resources to support the curriculum and Indigenous culture, knowledge, and history. In hiring staff members, the school will continue to seek candidates who self-identify as having indigenous heritage.

We will also continue to create and support indigenous focused opportunities for our school community

- Indigenous-focused Professional Development
- Ceremonial gathering and events, e.g. Solstice Feast, Indigenous storytelling and art, Indigenous cultural presentations, Grade 7 leaving ceremony
- Curricular integration across all subjects areas
- Breakfast, lunch, snack, and weekend food programs with an Indigenous focus
- KidsSafe (school break care)
- Friendship centre (after school care)
- Ongoing application for grants to support Indigenous-focused projects throughout the school
- Re-apply and advocated for Community Links funding

Our students will continue to:

- Learn about and be involved in the cultures of First Peoples
- Learn to acknowledge local First Nations
- Learn to be respectful of the shared values, experiences and histories of all Indigenous peoples as well as the aspects that make each nation unique
- Learn to be respectful of the shared history between the Indigenous peoples and Canada

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

The administration and resource team will collaborate in the upcoming year to analyze data on literacy and social-emotional growth within our Indigenous student population. 2019 was the first year for the MDI (Middle Years Developmental Index) which was administered to the grade fours and will include the grade sevens next year. The resource and classroom teachers tracks data on individual students as well as cohort groups. The results of collected data, as well as anecdotal examples, will be shared regularly at Primary and Intermediate teacher meetings, as well as Staff Committee/staff meetings. Student performance will be shared through formal and informal reporting and conferences. Our students, staff, and parents, have shared their collective voices in the education provided at this school. Given that this is the only Indigenous Focus Choice School within the Vancouver school Board, local knowledge is greatly valued and sought from our parents, Elders, and community. We look forward to the continued community involvement at our Indigenous Focus Choice School through the 2021-2022 school year.