



# Vancouver School District

## School Plan for Kerrisdale Elementary

### Year 1: 2021 of 3 Year Plan, 2021 - 2022

#### 1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY (TO BE UPDATED EACH YEAR)

- What are the important demographics of our community?
- What are the unique, positive characteristics of the school?
- What are our assets – what do we celebrate (including student intellectual achievement)?

Kerrisdale Elementary, with a current population of 477 students, is a multi-program school comprised of an English, French Immersion, and District FI MACC Program. Our English program encompasses Grades 3-7 and complements the Kerrisdale Annex K-2 program. Our French Immersion program incorporates Grades K-7. The FI MACC is a district program for High Ability Learners in Grades 5-7. Kerrisdale also participates in the International Student Program. With PAC-funded playgrounds, outdoor classroom space, and community gardens, there are many opportunities for students to be a part of the school community and to engage in dynamic learning. These facilities and the school grounds at large allow for students to engage in diverse activities as individual classes, multi-class groupings, and in free play.

Our school mottos, *Nihil Nisi Optimum* (“Nothing but the Best”), and *Is it kind? Is it safe? Is it fair?* guide the students to develop both personally and as part of the greater community. Students are encouraged to reflect on their personal mission and set individual, academic, and social goals. This is enacted through student engagement in community-based activities such as class buddies, volunteering, leadership, extra-curricular activities and fundraising initiatives. We celebrate our learning through individual class, multi-class, and whole-school events and activities which include performances, assemblies, fairs and exhibits, theme days, and collaborative events. Students are encouraged to participate in leadership initiatives through such institutions as Student Council and to maintain and develop a voice for students in the community by becoming involved in the initiation, planning, and creation of activities and events. Our community is also supported by a very engaged PAC which helps to support students, staff, and the greater community.

Kerrisdale’s school goal for 2021-2022 will focus on Place-based Education. With this new goal, we hope to explore different ways to engage learners in better understanding the diversity of our local heritage, cultures, and environment. As we strengthen traditional ties with our Annex and forge new ties with the community and the Musqueam people, on whose traditional territory the school is situated, students will become better citizens and stewards of their school, city, province, country and environment. We strive to develop our understanding of the greater community through activities such as in-house and visiting presentations and performances; field trips, including outdoor education camps assemblies; fairs and theme days including student-driven initiatives; and staff professional development.

## 2. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR LEARNERS? (SCANNING)

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

The focus for the last three years, 2018-2020, was developing resiliency. We addressed student apprehension when taking creative, intellectual and social risks, encouraged them to explore their place in the community, and helped students reflect on successes and challenges and in setting attainable goals which were communicated to parents regularly. As a staff we engaged in on-going professional development which included resiliency-themed book clubs and mindfulness-based education practices.

Students had myriad opportunities to engage in community-based activities and roles, including extra-curricular activities, student leadership, grade-group camps and field studies, buddy classes, recess and lunch-hour mentorship by senior students with kindergarten classes, and external community-based activities and outreach. When opportunities were offered, students were keen to participate.

The challenges that we have faced as a community this year with regards to COVID-19 speak to the importance of community-based programs in helping foster resilience in our students. Not having most activities and community-based integrated learning environments has been difficult for students and many are missing opportunities to develop leadership and engage with the greater community. Several students have expressed how much they miss these occasions and how much they are looking forward to participating again when possible.

Having focused on building resiliency in students over the last three years through personal reflection and goal setting, and through engagement in school activities and events, we will continue to foster resilience in our students by helping them to build stronger ties to their communities through our new focus on Place-based Education. This includes going beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom and providing students with opportunities to engage with other teachers and students in cross-curricular learning which will include the Annex on a consistent basis. We would also like to help our more vulnerable students access greater resource support throughout the year in a variety of ways which will include Community Learning days, Challenge Centres, and collaborative field studies.

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### 3. WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OUR LEARNERS?

#### (SCANNING)

- What is the evidence that we already have that supports this hypothesis?
  - School and district data, letter grades, attendance anecdotal, surveys, etc....EDI, MDI, student voice such as TTFM, etc.

- Our students demonstrated continued initiative in facilitating outreach and fundraising events despite this year's Covid safety restrictions. The school community response to both Covenant House and the Children's Hospital Virtual Fundraising illustrated the degree to which such community engagement are imperative to our students learning experience at Kerrisdale.
- Having lost onsite/Place Based opportunities limited our ability to enhance and support opportunities for parental engagement.
- Other reference tools we have utilized:
- Conflict resolution on our playground areas (Supervision Aids, SSA's, administration) due to limited leadership roles available ( Recess and Lunch Big Buddies, Buddy Class Activities, Athletic Teams...)
- Significant increase in the number of students accessing counselling this year within the school day.
- Student-generated portfolios prompting self-reflections to be applied to autonomous goal setting, MDI, Satisfaction Surveys...)
- Goal Setting Conferences
- Consultations of staff and students via formal/informal surveys

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### 4. WHAT FOCUS EMERGES FROM THIS EVIDENCE? (FOCUSING)

- Which learners and which areas will we be focusing on?
- Where are we connected?
  - How does this focus connect to the district strategic plan? (Quote Strategic plan goal/objective #)
  - How does this focus connect to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement? (Quote AEEA goal/objective)
  - How does this focus connect to the redesigned curriculum including the big ideas, core competencies, curricular competencies, etc.?

- **Goal 2:** "Build capacity in our community through strengthening collective leadership."
- Support professional networking opportunities and collaborative practices for our staff
- Support professional development opportunities for staff in the implementation of the curriculum
- Enhance and support opportunities for parental engagement
- Encourage and appreciate the contributions made by our students, families, employee groups and community partners
- **Goal 3:** "Create a culture of care and shared responsibility."
- "Increase knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions by all students through eliminating institutional, cultural and individual racism within the Vancouver school district learning communities."
- "Respect and celebrate all forms of diversity."
- "Support collaborative relationships with community partners that enhance student learning and well-being."

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## 5. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING) – PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS “GOAL”

- What is leading to this situation for our learners?
- How might we be contributing to this?
- From what we know, what is the most important work that we can do to improve the success for our students?
- What key areas of learning will we focus on?

How can the theories and practices of Place-based Education help our students better connect with their community and become more engaged learners and better citizens?

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## 6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

- What are the actions that we propose to take related to our inquiry. What will we do more of, less of, differently to improve outcomes for our students?
- How can we break it down into a manageable and realistic 3 year plan:
  - Year 1, Year 2 , Year 3

Our plan to implement Place-based educational practices and theories will involve learning about our various communities (school, neighbourhood, traditional ancestral territories, city, province, country) both historically and in the present. Student-driven and teacher sponsored initiatives (Student Council and others) will engage students in stewardship (charities, community outreach, environmental cleanup, mentorship and volunteering, elections and Student Vote)

We will aim to share our learning more widely through celebration of learning expositions (Science Fair, Heritage Fair, Art show). These fairs and celebrations will offer ways for students to connect to other members of the student body, Annex students, staff, parents and the greater community.

We would also like to reach out to parents, alumni and community members to provide further learning opportunities in specific areas that may include potential participation by the Annex

We plan to engage learners in experiential learning through field studies, museum boxes, and mentorship through online and *in situ* presenters. We would also like to initiate community learning days where students would have the choice to participate in teacher run passion lessons/activities ( employing multi-grade groupings and the Annex student inclusion).

Continuing to make use of outdoor spaces and local natural areas like Pacific Spirit Park, we would like to explore how outdoor education can facilitate cross-curricular teaching and environmental stewardship and make greater to connections First Nations Principles of Learning, including learning about the history of the land on which Kerrisdale School is situated and the greater community.

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## 7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

- Summarize what the new areas of learning will be and how we will support that new learning in order to benefit the students (i.e. resources, pro-d, etc.).
- Link these new areas of learning to the redesigned curriculum

We are continuing to develop outdoor learning spaces including tables for outdoor classrooms, garden spaces, and continued maintenance and consideration of the educational potential in the unique topography of the Kerrisdale Elementary School grounds. We will continue to monitor and assess our need for new spaces and the development of current resources.

Release time for staff to collaborate and organize community events and ongoing initiatives. Presenters/mentors tied into our goal of Place-based Education.

Professional Development, including relevant contacts, workshops, and book clubs. Funding for supplies to support community learning initiatives.

Ease of access to eclectic resources (including audio books) to support all learners.

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## 8. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL? (CHECKING)

- How will we know that what we are doing is working and is making a difference for our learners?
- What will we be using as baseline data? How will we chart growth?
- How will we respond if we see no changes?

Students will be able to :

- identify their role in their communities
- identify their responsibilities (civic duties and/or roles)
- identify their civil and human rights and special rights as children
- reflect upon and describe their contributions to different levels of community
- share their understanding of the history of the school and the traditional territory on which it is located

We will attain a greater understanding of our students' successful interactions with community members and First Nations communities. This may include informal documentation of parent involvement and participation.

We will survey and interview staff for the purpose of identifying the levels of community taught and how they are able to connect student understanding and engagement to praxis.

We will survey staff for the purpose of determining outdoor space use.

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## 9. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION? (CHECKING)

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

Various celebrations of learning with student participation and sharing.

Community outreach, inviting community to participate in some school events.

Newsletters and portfolios to better engage parents.

Share learning with the Annex, and invite them to collaborate and share with us.



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

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## 10. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS LEARNERS IN OUR SCHOOL?

- Include numbers of students, grade levels, etc.

We are situated on the *Traditional, Unceded and Ancestral Territory* of the Musqueam People. Kerrisdale currently has four students who identify as Indigenous. We will strive to support them in celebrating their own heritage by engaging in learning and outreach that helps our students build knowledge, empathy and an appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions and cultures. We will help to foster a greater understanding of personal and cultural identity in all our students and their nexus to where we live.

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## 11. 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.

We have a very motivated and engaged staff who has sponsored events, assemblies, collaborative learning, cultural-based presentations and activities, and field studies (including on-line virtual).

Our school community is sensitive of the need to recognize our relationship with Indigenous Peoples in our community but also within the greater boundaries of province and country. We strive to help our students develop an *appreciation for the diverse Indigenous cultures that are part of the cultural identity of Canada*. Through acknowledgements at assemblies and meetings, along with opportunities to learn more about art, music, literature, traditions, cultural and linguistic geography and current events, we try to maintain and further our understanding and appreciation for what it means to be Indigenous in Canada today.

Our highly supportive PAC has funded the expansion of our outdoor learning areas to better facilitate onsite Place-based Learning. Virtual workshops and resources that further inclusion and address racism and discrimination have consistently been made available to staff and students

both virtually and in visible print form in our school hallways. Consequently our students have been engaged in numerous discussions and learning about social justice, civic duties, and one's global responsibilities through field studies and various classroom-teacher-driven events.

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## 12. WHAT WILL WE CONTINUE TO DO IN THIS AREA?

- List continuing and new initiatives

As a community, we will continue to engage in learning that helps us better understand Indigenous cultures and traditions as part of the fabric of our greater communities: local, provincial, and national.

As part of our goal to adopt Place-based Learning, we would like to establish new relationships with our local communities, including the Musqueam Peoples. This could include field studies, presentations, invitations for Elders and Indigenous community members to take part in school initiatives and events, working with the Indigenous liaison at the school board, and taking part in school board initiated events. We would also like to expand our garden to include traditional and native plants that help our learners better understand the people who lived here and how they connected to the land, along with field studies to natural spaces in our community to see these plants in their natural habitat. We would also like to encourage awareness of Indigenous languages, both through exposure to oral and written forms and take the opportunity to learn a variety of Musqueam greetings, place names and terms for local flora and fauna.

To facilitate learning, we would like to expand our library resources in English and in French. This could include book clubs staff and students.

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## 13. 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

Students will reflect on their understanding of Indigenous cultural teachings and connections to our community by grade level.

We will have hosted events/presentations/assemblies and attended Field Studies which will have incorporated the Indigenous Principles of learning for students at all grade levels.

As a staff, we aim to incorporate Indigenous Principles of Learning more organically and to integrate Indigenous cultural teachings and concepts when possible. Having integrated land acknowledgements and Indigenous-focused days, we would like to deepen our learning and understanding holistically and provide more authentic experiences that foster understanding and appreciation for the many Indigenous cultures in Canada.