



## Vancouver School District School Plan for Queen Alexandra Year 2 (2018-2019) of 3 Year Plan, 2017 - 2020

### 1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

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

Queen Alexandra F.A.M.I.L.Y. (Fine Arts Multicultural Integrated Learning for Youth) School is part of the Vancouver Technical Secondary Family of Schools. We are a Tier 1 Enhanced Services school located at Broadway and Clark. In September 2013, we launched our Fine Arts Integration Model and began integrating the Arts (music, movement, visual art and drama) into daily curricular areas. Our vision is to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration and communication skills in our students through inquiry and Fine Arts. We foster students' creativity, self-expression and respect for diversity, and we make every effort to nurture students to develop into successful global citizens.

Queen Alexandra has approximately 165 students in grades K- 7 and a very active Strong Start program. The school community is culturally diverse and representative of the city of Vancouver. 31% of our students are English Language Learners, 24% of our students have been identified as having Special Educational Needs and 42% of our students identify as Indigenous. There is considerable socio-economic diversity in the school community. The Parent Advisory Committee is active in fundraising and supporting our school. The students, families and staff of Queen Alexandra Elementary School work together in an emotionally nurturing environment so all students can succeed academically and socially.

Queen Alexandra makes significant effort to provide diverse curricular and non-curricular opportunities for students. Sports and sportsmanship play a significant role at our school - we provide daily physical activity and encourage students to participate in our team and individual sports. During the 2018-2019 school year, the following sports teams were offered: soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton and ultimate Frisbee.

Queen Alexandra has developed a number of diverse community partnerships which offer programming for our students during and after school. Partnerships include: UBC Learning Exchange, Artists in Residence, Equal Play, Right to Play, York House School, Vancouver Arts Umbrella, the Vancouver Art Gallery, Big Rock Candy Mountain, Writers' Room/Writer's Exchange, Sarah McLaughlan School of Music and Science World. KidSafe, a long-time community partner, offers winter, spring and summer break programs. Our school is grateful to our community partners and proud of each students' learning journey!

Our literacy focus is shown through our continued collaborative commitment to implementing a school-wide balanced literacy program. Regular ongoing assessment,

professional discussions about “Best Practice” and working together to create a safe and engaging learning environment contribute to QA’s culture. Equal care is taken to address the emotional and social learning of the students through a variety of classroom programs. Queen Alexandra is a safe and caring school that places the highest priority on the needs of the students and their families. The staff and families are devoted to creating a respectful environment. Our code of conduct is to care for ourselves, others, our school and our community. Together, staff, families and the community strive to meet the learning and social emotional needs of each student.

Some of the ways that we celebrate our community and learning include: school-wide themes, events and activities, assemblies, daily “shout outs”, our Positive Behaviour Program, newsletters, the website, social media, PAC meetings, Friday Morning Family Coffee, and Winter and Spring Celebrations.

We live, work and learn on the traditional and unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Coast Salish people.

Queen Alexandra F.A.M.I.L.Y. School wishes to acknowledge the history of our community and neighbourhood.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the QA staff reviewed the Inquiry Question: ***How does school-wide direct, targeted reading instruction positively impact primary and intermediate student achievement?***

Given that our learners have multiple stressors related to meeting some very basic needs and come from very diverse home environments, they are well supported at school. Their diverse and complex learning needs are addressed at school and they have excellent access to After School Programming.

Assessment data has been collected and collated from report cards, Resource and Literacy Teacher assessments, AIMS, Satisfaction Surveys, the MDI and other formal and informal assessment tools. It is important to note that this data is reflective of our entire school population.

The report card data indicates the students of QA who were fully meeting or exceeding grade level expectations has risen by 12% since this goal/inquiry question has been issued in year one of the School Growth Plan.

Therefore the importance of the Inquiry Question is still relevant and worthy of continuing as a part of the School Plan.

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## WHAT DID WE SEE?

- **The strengths of many of our learners include:** open to support, empathetic, respond to our school-wide PBIS program, resiliency, identity, acceptance, excitement for learning, pride in sharing learning, resourceful, strong desire for success (especially when connected to an adult), ask for help, kind, energetic, helpful.
- **The needs of many of our learners include:** social-emotional awareness and understanding, self-regulation, academic support, literacy and numeracy skills, school readiness, consistent work habits, community family connections, healthy relationships, school supports, stability, experiences/exposure, oral language development, a need to feel safe/sense of belonging.
- **What's going on for many of our learners:** well supported at school, very diverse home environments, excellent access to After School Programming, access to external community supports, some stress related to family/home dynamics, screen time impacting sleep and interactions, diverse and complex learning needs, need for assessments/diagnosis outside of school, some stress related to meeting basic needs.

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## WHAT DO WE NEED TO RE-ADJUST?

In the first two years of the School Growth Plan, attention was focused on addressing gaps in student understanding, implementing supports like levelled reading groups and literacy assessments. We focused on social emotional learning and reading strategies like background knowledge, comprehension and inferencing and extending knowledge.

We took time to support our actions in the first 2 years of the plan. We did specific literacy assessments and gauged the progress of the students. We provided early literacy interventions and reading recovery programs.

Students who have made progress in their literacy development at their age level move on to learn new strategies; continuous, more rigorous and challenging levels are presented to them. For those students who faced challenges in achievement, the team explored options to support them in other ways and/or adapt and modify methods to help them find success at their level.

Moving into the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the plan, we will continue with ongoing assessments and themes in direct instruction each term. As student achievement in literacy increases so will opportunity for greater extension and inference.

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### 3. INQUIRY QUESTION

The Inquiry Question “How does school-wide direct, targeted reading instruction positively impact primary and intermediate student achievement?” stands. The rate of student success in reading is evident by the growth in the number of students who are meeting and exceeding grade level reading expectations.

Other key areas of focus within this inquiry continue to include:

- Increasing student reading stamina
- Building background knowledge and vocabulary to support student understanding (Ensuring that Intermediate student reading levels continue to improve)
- Using high interest texts at student reading levels (finding the hook)
- Engaging students in literacy learning by incorporating a variety of topics, subjects and activities into literacy instruction (including Fine Arts)
- Developing student comprehension and inferencing skills
- Social Emotional Learning/Learning Readiness

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### 4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW PLAN?

QA will continue to look closely at data and implement interventions to support and strengthen students’ literacy skills. Fountas and Pinnell data indicates that the percentage of students reading at grade level is increasing, especially at the Intermediate grades. We will continue to use this data to address student literacy and guide our practice.

Throughout the 3-year plan, staff will continuously revisit student strengths and needs. The plan remains flexible and will shift to accommodate for the dynamic and complex needs of our learners and community. As we progress forward into the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of our school plan, we will continue to focus on direct instruction for the school.

Our focus for year 3 (2019-2010) will be to continue with ongoing assessments and themes in direct instruction each term. As student achievement in literacy increases so will opportunity for greater extension and inference.

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## 5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

The following strategies and supports will facilitate staff and student learning in the area of Literacy:

- Continued support from QA's full-time Enhanced Literacy Teacher
- Professional development focused on learning readiness and literacy
- Opportunity to collaborate as a staff – strategic scheduling, use of supervision aides, using admin time/supervision for teaching staff to meet
- In-services by our Literacy Teacher (pro-d, lunch and learns)
- Carefully scheduled RT and SSA support to optimize student learning
- Prioritizing Literacy Block scheduling that aligns with grade groups and resource support
- Collaboration and consultation with Literacy Enhancement Teacher and Youth and Family Worker Ongoing Reading Recovery
- Collaboration with the Resource Teachers, Classroom Teachers and Literacy Enhancement Teacher
- Our areas of learning are linked to the redesigned curriculum as follows:

**Big Ideas:**

- Reading fiction and non-fiction (text and/or pictures) can be for purpose, creativity and/or joy,
- Exploring story and text helps us understand ourselves, others and the world,
- People connect through reading, writing, listening and speaking,
- Exploring and sharing multiple perspectives extends our thinking, and being curious and questioning what we hear, read, and see contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens.

**Core Competencies:** Communication, Critical Thinking, Personal and Social

**Curricular Competencies:**

- Literacy is fundamental to all learning,
- Using oral, written, visual, and digital texts, student will comprehend and connect (reading, listening, viewing), and create and communicate (writing, speaking, representing)
- Curricular competencies will vary for each student depending upon their interests, goals, and

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## 6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

- The percentage of students in each grade level working at or above grade level expectations in Language Arts (reading, writing, listening and speaking) will continue to increase.

- Our baseline for Reading assessments and data collection will continue to be Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessments (3x/year) and Report Cards (January and June).
  - Specifically:
    - More students will be reading at grade level
    - Student reading stamina will improve
    - Student reading levels will continue to improve relative to their grade level (rather than plateauing) With an increase in background knowledge and vocabulary, students will demonstrate an ability to comprehend, connect, and infer.
    - Should there be little change in data, we will re-examine and re-consider our application of the following:
      - Assessment strategies
      - Instructional Strategies
      - Literacy Groups
      - Student Strengths
      - Levelled Reading
      - Student Needs
      - Professional Development

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## 7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

- Our Classroom Teachers, Resource Teachers and Support Staff will continue to collaborate on how we can meet student needs, build upon student strengths and support each other and our students in the steps being taken to move forward. Communicating and celebrating student learning will be reported using:
  - Report cards,
  - Student-led conferences,
  - Conversations with families (formal and informal),
  - Displays,
  - Newsletters,
  - Social media and PAC meetings.
  - We will also recognize student accomplishments through
    - Fine Arts Nights,
    - Assemblies,
    - Daily announcements,
    - Class-based acknowledgements and activities.
- Our Grade 7 students will be formally acknowledged and celebrated at the Indigenous Gr. 7 Leaving Ceremony and our QA Gr. 7 School Leaving Celebration.



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

There are 68 indigenous students that are spread out through all of our grade levels at Queen Alexandra.

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

Staff have increased knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions through the following events, activities, lessons and units:

- Orange Shirt Day and Community Awareness March
- Drum Making Protocol Lessons and Drum Playing
- Daily Acknowledgement and Coast Salish Anthem each day
- MOA Information Packs
- Art Projects
- Indigenous Artist in Residence
- Fieldtrips to the MOA and Hobiye
- Parent/Family Coffee
- Reading Week
- Social Studies lessons and units
- UBC, Science World
- Talking Circles
- Story Telling
- Lessons with our IEEW
- Ravens Tales
- Members of the school community speaking about culture and history
- Indigenous Support
- MOA Teaching Kits
- Inquiry projects on Indigenous plants and traditional ways they are used
- Class discussions on contemporary issues/current events

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

### **Within classes:**

- Working with IEW, families, outside agencies
- Drum Making and Learning Local Indigenous/Coast Salish songs
- Collaboration with the learning team
- Approaching learning through the Indigenous Ways of Knowing (holistically)
- Respecting the Indigenous Ways of Knowing (vs. Western views)

### **As a school:**

- Continue to support and plan classroom and school-wide events that support all learners
- Connect topics to special days, guests and fieldtrips
- Consult the school community on renaming the school with an Indigenous name
- Make connections and build relationships with families
- Include a component of our school- wide welcome that includes Indigenous perspectives
- Connecting background history while learning about other

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

QA Staff identified the following as indicators of success:

- Improved student success (social, emotional, academic),
- Improved attendance
- Increased family involvement and sense of community/belonging
- Students expressing feelings fulfillment and excitement for learning at school
- Students expressing that they feel valued and happy
- Staff and students feeling confident in teaching and learning at QA
- Learning is ongoing and embedded rather than isolated/event based