

2022-2023 - Year 2 School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Lord Nelson Elementary School is a K-7 school with a population of approximately 470 students located in a diverse community in the northeastern section of Vancouver near Nanaimo Street and East 1st Avenue, known as Hastings Sunrise. Our students speak many languages including English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Igbo, Dari, Farsi, Hebrew, Japanese, Nepali, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese and other languages at home. Of our population only 8% are English Language Learners.

Our school is a new seismically built school completed in September 2019. It has three levels, the lower two are the school with 5 communities of students with 4 classes in each community. The third level of the building houses Frog Hollow - "The Village" at Nelson Childcare Program. "The Village" is an innovative partnership with the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board. This partnership was designed to co-locate childcare with schools to help to build communities that are more walkable and family friendly. The Village offers programming for children from 3 months to five years of age and includes a school age program providing before and after school care to families. It is a great asset for the families and students here.

Generally, the strength of our school continues to be home-school relationships and our ability to meet the needs of diverse learners and provide opportunities and programs that enrich student learning. Our students have well developed background knowledge and are well versed in issues around social justice. Our parent community is actively involved in the education of their children and has high expectations for academic achievements.

The school thrives on a collaborative model where communities work together to develop programs and support students, this is done through inquiry learning and exploration. We offer many extracurricular opportunities at Nelson including opportunities in afterschool sports programs. We also offer many leadership opportunities such as School Patrol, Primary Lunch Monitors, Student Council, Student Announcers, and Assembly Leaders.

2A. WHAT DID WE SEE?

What is going on for our learners?

The students at Lord Nelson are well informed, very knowledgeable and are voracious consumers of information found on the internet, on various social media platforms and to a lesser degree, via conventional media such as network television or large media outlets. Students are curious about issues around social justice such as Black Lives Matter, the intersectionality of gender, gender issues, SOGI, anti-racism and climate change. There is some noticeable anxiety around high school transition, friendships, resilience, separation anxiety outside the classroom as well as topics of discussion, behaviour of others and content of study within the classroom. It is noted that this has been increasing in terms of teacher time over the years and seems to have been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic. Societal issues (climate change, fossil fuel use) and movements (BLM, Idle No More) are unavoidable and students likely will be aware of them. How students are able to critically think about them and see their roles may give them agency over the societal issue.

Teachers and staff have identified self-regulation, managing anxiety and developing coping skills as a high priority. Followed by related areas such as executive functioning and growth mindset which would help support self-regulation, managing anxiety and developing coping skills.

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

Our Inquiry Question 2021/2022 was:

How might directly teaching a variety of coping skills to self-manage and maintain positive mental health contribute to student overall sense of well-being, self-determination and self-regulation?

It was reviewed over the year by school staff and proposed to change to:

How might directly teaching a variety of coping skills contribute to student resiliency, self-determination and self-regulation?

The revised inquiry question is more refined, allows variety of coping skills to be taught, dependent on the needs identified in different classes. Three areas – resilience, determination and self-regulation focuses the areas to measure.

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

How might directly teaching a variety of coping skills contribute to student resiliency, self-determination and self-regulation?

4. WHAT IS OUR NEW PLAN?

Year 1 2021-2022 into 2022-2023

Workshop on 'Brain Health and Soul Resilience by Alex Dunham of Grit Vancouver for whole staff (April 25, 2022 – completed)

Whole staff professional day on Restorative Justice-the importance of creating relationships. Investigating various programs and professional development opportunities such as the Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE) program, Zones of Regulation, Open Parachute, Michelle Garcia Winner's work on Size of the Problem

Initiating lessons both in individual classrooms and in learning communities

Year 2 2023-2024

Whole staff participation in a professional development series in a program identified by the staff (see list above)

1. Size of the Problem (September 23, 2022)
2. Zones of Regulation (September 23, 2022) purchase of resources and supporting materials
3. Restorative Justice (February 2023)

Carousel sharing of powerful lessons, resources or strategies used in individual classrooms

Continuing lessons both in individual classrooms and in learning communities

Measure progress, revisit focus of the inquiry question and re-adjust as necessary

Year 3 2024-2025

Measure progress and re-evaluate.

5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

Areas of learning for staff:

4. Response to Intervention (RTI) approach
5. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach
6. EASE program (new staff to onboard)
7. "Size of the Problem" by Michelle Garcia Winner (deeper dive)
8. Introduction of Restorative Justice Practices (Staff Professional Day)

Strategies to try:

9. Targeting skills for the whole class, while having the student who needs it the most in mind. Teaching to the whole class, for example, executive functioning skills
10. Cognitive behaviour therapy strategies
11. Teaching students to perspective take through asking questions such as:
 - What can I control?
 - What can I do?
 - What aspect do I have agency over?
 - How can I make a plan?

Tasks to complete by staff:

12. Scope and Sequence development to design new learning for students
13. Identifying common language for the school, link to core competencies

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

Teachers and School Staff will be looking for growth through:

14. Referrals through School Based Team with an Social Emotional Learning component
15. Changes in student/school wide language re: coping strategies, vocabulary
16. Referral to classroom teacher or office for problem solving conversations
17. Adult help either offered to or requested by students

We hope to achieve this through:

18. Direct teaching of strategies in individual classes. Teachers to determine the focus area as each class may have different needs from another. Teachers to articulate the focus area, the strategy (strategies) and one way to measure growth (anecdotally or quantitatively) and share with families.
19. Developing both primary and intermediate language and vocabulary which will be shared with the community.

We will use these sources for local data:

20. MDI each year
21. Student Learning Survey
22. School Based Team referrals

The response(s) if no changes are noted could be:

23. Re-visit the focus area and method of measuring growth – ensure they are aligned
24. Re-visit the format and how strategies are being presented to students
25. Re-visit who uses the common language to support students and whether it is consistent across different sets of staff
26. Look at the physical reminders students may have (posters, assemblies, etc.)
27. Expand the conversation to include parents so that students could possibly have the same language at home

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

28. Individual student level – self-assessment to be included with progress report
29. Class level – class newsletters, whole class discussion/ sharing circle
30. School wide level – assemblies, newsletters, Wednesday Weekly, PAC meetings



District-wide Indigenous Focus (worldviews): To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all learners.

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

Our journey of reconciliation started with names last year - while the name on the outside of the school had to wait, the learning communities inside the school were ready! With the help of our Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker, teachers embarked on a journey of discovery with their students. Teachers dove into what was available to learn about the lands our school is situated on and the importance to Indigenous cultures and people. Each learning community, including the very youngest, completed an inquiry into what existed on the lands before our school and how that connected to them and represented their learning community. At the conclusion of the inquiry, learning communities made a collective decision. At the Truth and Reconciliation Assembly in September, learning community representatives revealed the names to the school and included the importance to Indigenous people and why it represented their specific learning community. It was moving to hear students connecting the land, the animals and their experience to the names they chose for the Alder, Wolf, Salmon, Orca and Bear Learning Communities.

Continuing on with making the learning relevant to our students, the Youth Calls to Action were incorporated into the announcements. Twice per week, a specific act to further a youth call to action is highlighted. Our Grade 7 students explored further, the contents of the 94 Calls to Action. In a Grade 6 class, the teacher is reading *The Barren Grounds* and made bannock with the students as a connecting experience. Our Grade 5 class participated in the weaving of the Promise Blanket at Britannia Community Centre with their teacher. Primary classes read *When We Were Alone*, *Shi-Shi-Etko*, *The Sharing Circle*, *Stolen Words*, *You Hold Me Up*, to name a few. Our hallway walls have orange shirts and feathers adorning them - with messages of the heart. We sing the Coast Salish Anthem at the beginning of each assembly and in late October 2022, made drums with our talented District Vice Principal, Indigenous Education - Davita Marsden for students to use in the singing of this anthem.

Red Dress day was recognized by the school and before the date staff were led in a beading workshop by Brenda Koch to create Red Dress day pins. Staff have voted to spend a professional day next year learning with Takaya Cultural Tours next year. Many classes are planning on attending activities offered by the Aboriginal Friendship Centre or the Drum Across the World Event to recognize National Indigenous People's Day.

In small steps and important ways, staff and students at Lord Nelson Elementary are walking the path towards reconciliation. There are so many more steps waiting to be taken alongside students who self-identify as Indigenous at Nelson, including those who are Indigenous and not yet culturally connecting with their heritage.

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

All of the above listed activities, lessons, field trips and for consideration in the future:

- Continued work on the Indigenous Garden (started 2023)
- Expand the options for presentations in the classes and school as a whole
- Endeavor to work with an Indigenous artist to create a collaborative mural on the school grounds