

2022-2023 - Year 3

Tecumseh School Learning Plan

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, current school plans have been carried forward for the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 school year. This year, 2022/2023, will be the final year of the 3-year school learning plan. New goals and inquiry questions will be created for the 2023/2024 school year.

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Tecumseh Elementary School is a diverse learning community, reflective of the greater surrounding community. The student population of just under 400 students come from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, with approximately 160 or 40% of students being identified as English Language Learners who receive support beyond the regular enrolling setting.

In addition to the 16 divisions of students (K-7) in regular enrolling, Tecumseh hosts two District programs. The District Seminar Program is organized into topic specific sessions, with a students from a range of schools attending. The other program, Multi Aged Cluster Class (MACC), is an enrolling class for intermediate aged students who come to Tecumseh from a variety of schools. Our MACC Class recently hosted *An Evening of Eminence* showcasing student learning projects, skits, and performances in collaboration with the Kerrisdale and Osler MACC programs.

Tecumseh School routinely offers opportunities to students outside the classroom. Various athletic teams or clubs are sponsored, including cross-country, volleyball, basketball, badminton, and pickle ball. There is a robust commitment to fine and performing arts at Tecumseh. Tecumseh has a school choir available to students in the intermediate grades (4-7). The students enjoy the opportunity to perform at assemblies, special events or gatherings, both school-based and district events, such as Celebration of Music and the VSB sponsored Choral Festival. The choir was also a top ten finalist in the CBC Music Canada Program this past year. We take joy in celebrating our learning and accomplishments that involve acting, singing, playing a variety of instruments, dancing and sharing our work through performances shared with the community at events such as the Winter Concert and Spring Concerts.

We have an ongoing relationship with a school-based Artist in Residence, Julie McIntyre who works with all 16 divisions throughout the school year on fantastic fine arts learning projects such as exploring self-identity through self-portraits, connection to animals, and representation with symbols and images. The students were also able to explore Indigenous plants, learn new printing techniques, and experiment with botanical drawing. Our full-time studio has been recognized and shared during learning conferences and open houses.

Some students select to think about the craft of writing and joy of reading through work with our teacher librarians via the Red Cedar Book Club with others enjoying school servicing as library monitors.

We work to bring in experts to share their experience with our students through speaking or active work-related projects and diverse school-based activity programs that involve several classes such as Arts

Umbrella, UBC Science Geering Up workshops, the Vancouver Avian Research Centre, the Burnaby Art Gallery Outreach Programs and the Junior Achievement Society. We also recently invited Author Jeff Cheeba Stearns into the library to work with all classes on authoring and illustrating, while learning from intergenerational stories on family history and cultural identity.

We continue to look to increase opportunities for our students to see quality performances and productions and to work with field artists in the school. We try to bring in experts to share their experience with our students through speaking or active work-related projects, such as Junior Achievement – using real life math.

A range of after-school programs are offered, for all ages. Some examples include staff sponsored athletics, programs through the Community Schools Team from David Thompson Secondary School and the YWCA, such as the program for students in Grade 7 transitioning to high school and some Red Cross Babysitting. In addition, South Van Neighbourhood House supports our students with after-school program offerings. We also work in partnership with Pacific Immigrant Resource Services, a community-based non-profit, serving immigrant and refugee women and their young children. Programs offered include pre-school sessions for young children and language classes for the adults.

Many of our upper intermediate aged students continued participating in student leadership, affording the opportunity for them to grow in the development of recognizing the need for social responsibility within the school and community. We see a direct link between an engagement in leadership opportunities and students' sense of belonging and increased pro-social behaviours. These activities will continue to grow and expand across our school.

Students who need assistance with language or learning needs are supported by staff, so that every student's learning is represented. Students come away from weeks of work on their respective projects understanding that curiosity, seeking out sources of information, persistence, organizing information in a concise, clear and cogent manner and communicating effectively with others are all important aspects of sharing their learning.

We are a school rich in multi-culturalism where diversity is valued and anti-racism education is practiced through classroom and school wide engagements and projects, including Asian Heritage month, Black History month, daily Indigenous Land acknowledgements, Diwali, National Indigenous Peoples Day with consistent dialogue centered around equity and inclusion. These actions are having a direct impact on our students' feelings of belonging and connectedness to the school. We hope that these sustained and focused actions will continue to empower our students and increase their levels of engagement, satisfaction and feelings of belonging within our school community and ultimately contribute to their Social-Emotional Learning.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

Last year, we continued with our two focused goals around Numeracy and Social-Emotional Learning.

For our numeracy goal, we did this based on:

Staff wanting to build on their previous work identifying critical understandings needed, grade to grade. This included how the graded subject content is demonstrated through 'reasoning and analyzing', 'understanding and solving', 'communicating and representing' and 'connecting and reflecting' and how the strands fit under the umbrella of the foundational understandings or 'Big Ideas'.

Continued staff participation in professional development related to the Math curriculum as well as the purchasing of specific resources (related to work with Carole Fullerton and others). Staff feel that over time, they continue to use and share new strategies that support problem solving acquisition. The act of considering 'personalized learning' and 'real life' offerings, with a view to students using critical thinking skills takes time and scaffolding so we continue to explore in learning cohorts.

Staff also shared agreement that under the curricular competency of 'Understanding and Solving', we needed to continue monitoring student progress and develop strategies to engage students in problem solving to make connections between math and real-life.

Evidence that we needed to continue with small group support in the intermediate grades, given the clusters of students struggling.

Continued incorporating of First Peoples worldviews and perspective to make connections to mathematical concepts, whenever possible.

Our shared experience allowing us to understand that the acts of exploration, making connections, using mathematical language, and representing ideas in different ways can look like play versus deepening layers of understanding, that this takes time and that we need to be specific in describing student strengths or areas of growth when we communicate with or report to parents.

We also continued to address Social Emotional Learning because of themes that had emerged within the school such as:

The number of referrals, including self-referrals by students, for individual counselling or Youth and Family Worker support.

The frequency or patterns of office behavioural referrals

Acknowledgement that a growing number of students participated in the VSB Food4Schools program.

Acknowledgement that staff had increasingly met to discuss strategies and actions to support mental health/well-being issues.

Consideration of requests to District Learning Services for intensive support or assistance with the development of strategies centered on Social Emotional Learning for identified students.

The increasing number of requests for 'whole class' instructional support related to friendships or mental health (i.e. depression, anxiety, focus, self-regulation). It was evident that programs, strategies, and tools to promote social emotional learning, shared schoolwide, would support a number of students. We wanted to work towards equipping students with strategies to handle difficult times or challenging tasks. We wanted to support our students in being the best that they could be in taking responsibility for their physical and emotional well-being and realized that an important part of this would include supporting our students in seeing the relationship between how they are feeling and the choices they make regarding keeping themselves safe, happy and healthy.

In alignment with the district's new Education Plan, we look to create a culture of care and shared social responsibility, namely by encouraging, and enhancing practices that support cultural, social-emotional, physical and mental wellbeing. We wondered if we could contribute towards building positive awareness and responsibility and assist students in making connections and forging relationships, if we focused on self-regulation, well-being and self-determination. Hence, we continued learning and using common language, strategies and programs, school wide.

Additionally, many of our students continue to come from hard working families that present a wide range of educational backgrounds, income levels and culturally rich lived experiences. Our student population is from a variety of cultural backgrounds originating in many different countries. Most families have parents working outside the home. Although many of our students are born in Canada, English is often not the dominant language at home and childcare is often provided by non-English speaking grandparents. Approximately seventy-five percent of our student population identifies an additional language, other than English, as the primary language spoken at home. Of the 29 languages spoken in our school community beyond English, ~40% are Cantonese speaking, ~15% Tagalog or other Filipino dialects, ~7% Vietnamese with Spanish and Punjabi rounding out the top 5 languages spoken at home. Approximately 42% of our students have English Language Learner (ELL) designations and are receiving additional English language support.

These demographics have an impact on language learning in relation to numeracy acquisition as well as their ability to access out of school opportunities and available social-emotional learning supports. Our students do enjoy during, and after-school extra-curricular activities provided by staff; however, many do not have the advantage of private lessons or community-based fee for service programs. It is important to continue to bring more experiences to our students and encourage them to connect with both school and community based extra-curricular opportunities that support belonging.

In terms of providing more social-emotional supports, our students share through surveys, anecdotal conversations, and parent feedback that they value being at school and participate fully in offerings made available to them. Our students report valuing relationships with adults and peers but indicate a need for support in developing feelings of belonging to social groups with peers. When considering general health and social emotional development (measuring optimism, happiness, self-esteem, and absence of sadness) according to the MDI (Middle Years Development Inventory), we show slightly greater percentage of students with low well-being compared to those reported in the district. Of these, optimism, prosocial behavior, and absence of sadness are areas needing continued support.

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

In Numeracy we looked at:

- Evidence of academic growth (reports)
- Evidence of increased confidence in intermediate students (survey)
- Tracking students, over time and adjusting our instructional design if we did not see improvement.

When considering Numeracy, snapshots of Report Cards (K-7), student surveys (Intermediate), Student Learning Survey (Ministry – Grades 4 & 7) and Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA) (Grade 4 & 7) have been considered.

~80% of student respondents in our Student Learning Survey feel that they can explain problem solving to others at least some of the time or more.

~71% of our students reported that they agree or strongly agree that they are getting better at math.

Our report card data shows that overall numeracy scales are improving with more students entering the applying and extending ranges of the proficiency scales.

~85% of students feel they can get extra help from at least one or more teachers when needed.

~94% of students feel they are provided with feedback on how they can improve their learning.

~80% say they have chances to show what they've learned in different ways.

From the FSA: In terms of proficiency in numeracy, (Grade 4) 69% of students were classified as being 'on-track'. 12% were classified as 'extending'. Of the 16% identified as 'emerging', the majority were identified as second language learners. 29% of the group of students described as emerging, had been identified as being vulnerable learners requiring significant support. In terms of proficiency, (Grade 7) 67% were categorized as being 'on track' and 16% were categorized as 'extending'. Of the students described as 'emerging', 63% have been identified by the school as needing and receiving language and learning support.

From Report Cards: (Math Proficiency Across Curricular Strands) In upper intermediate, an average of 25% of students are extending their knowledge and skills. In lower intermediate, an average of 26% of students are extending their knowledge and skills. In late primary, an average of 12% of students are extending their knowledge and skills. In early primary, 15% of students are extending their knowledge and skills. In upper intermediate, an average of 68% of students are developing or applying their knowledge and skills. In lower intermediate, an average of 62% of students are developing or applying their knowledge and skills. In late primary, 81% are developing or applying their knowledge and skills. In mid primary, 76% are developing or applying their knowledge and skills. In early primary, 71% are developing or applying their knowledge and skills.

In examination of Social Emotional Learning we:

- Continue to consider resources being used and assess what else is needed within our teaching teams
- Share what's working within student meetings, family meetings, team meetings and staff meetings
- Track themes embedded in referrals to the office and SBT
- Track the needs of students through the lens of support being offered (i.e. YFW/Counsellor/CST)
- Survey students
- Survey staff
- Survey parents

When considering Social-Emotional Learning, snapshots of report card comments, student learning surveys, parent learning surveys, shared staff anecdotal feedback and comments were considered.

- We developed and shared visuals regarding the Zones of Regulation throughout the school. This encouraged identification and use of a common language.
- We shared visuals regarding 'Growth Mindset' and self-talk, in every classroom. This is in support of modeling and utilizing a growth mindset versus a fixed mindset and the relationship to self-regulation.
- We shared visuals regarding 'My Feelings Chart'. (Green → Red)

- We consistently provided student announcements in the morning about positive self-talk. (i.e. Instead of telling yourself “I made a mistake,” think: “Mistakes are an expected part of learning.”)
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- Staff became more aware of escalation-de-escalation practices
- We routinely supported students with strategies, including size of the problem, flexible thinking, calm identification of the need for movement breaks or alternate activity, identification of accurately identifying emotions.
- An Increased awareness of preventing problems versus reactively stopping them and increased discussions about what a student seemingly cannot do versus what they will not do (reframing the behavior)
- We supported regular involvement of our YFW in classrooms: flexible thinking, friendships, friendship groups and problem-solving groups, Roots of Empathy), activities for supporting highly anxious students, whole body listening, Incredible Flexible You / Superflex: social thinking, mindful breathing, mental health and transitioning to high school.
- Students continue to be able to identify a number of ‘calm-down’ strategies that they liked to use, including deep breathing, positive self-talk, counting slowly, taking a break, going to a quiet spot, reading, drawing, humming or singing quietly, and listening to music.
- In terms of addressing the SELC pillars of “self-awareness”, “self-management” and “social awareness”, staff were asked to consider the focus of their classroom activity. Examples of classroom-based focus and support included: Zones of Regulation, Whole Body Listening, Flexible Versus Rigid Thinking, Recognizing the Size of the Problem, Mindful Breathing, Second Step (Early Intermediate), Go Zen and Open Parachute.
- This year we continued to work on promoting a culture that encourages growth in personal and social competencies for our students.
- We continued to limit our language if/when behaviors escalated.
- In terms of teaching Emotional Regulation, we were able to consider the process of initiating, maintaining, and changing the occurrence, intensity or duration of feelings.
- We supported and promoted class wide SEL learning through the Open Parachute Program and Go Zen, as supported by our Area Counselor
- In terms of teaching Behavior Regulation, we continued to work on strategies that support the organization of social interactions with others for some students.
- Ministry Student Learning Survey: Last year, on the Ministry Learning Survey, 46% of our Grade 7 students reported feeling stressed or anxious about school some, most or all the time. This proportion has dropped to 39% this year, another consecutive improvement. It was also noted that 68% of these students agreed or strongly agreed that they are learning about how to care for their mental health (anxiety or stress management, anger management and relationship skills). Growth is evident in our Grade 4 population also. 74% of our Grade 4 students indicated that they are learning to care for their mental health some or most of the time. Similarly, 62% of these students feel that they are using words to solve problems. 72% of our Grade 4 students feel that they are trying to solve problems peacefully, with an understanding that personal choices affect others.

We have seen that our focus on programs, strategies, and tools to promote social emotional learning, and a shared school-wide target is having a positive impact on our student population. We have made good growth and will continue to do so as we navigate an increasingly complex world with new stressors and anxieties that have continued to surface in our ‘post-covid’ world. Our data tells us that we need to continue with this valuable work.

4. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

We continue to involve various members of our learning community and share progress through our daily morning announcements, school wide gatherings, community celebrations of learning, regular community updates, monthly PAC meetings, monthly Staff Meetings, school website and student Teams school wide page and classroom page usage. Ongoing examination of our communications and stakeholder engagement will support our desire to reach and engage all school community members.

5. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

We will continue to examine our teaching practices in numeracy and social emotional learning. We will also continue to work to support our students and families by reflecting on our progress and re-examining our path towards new goals in the areas of social-emotional learning and community connectedness. We will continue to work on active communication with all stakeholders in the growth and development of our school community. We have begun discussions around continuing and highlighting our work that models and supports an equitable learning environment where every child can experience a deep sense of belonging and is free to pursue pathways of learning in ways that are authentic to themselves.

We continue to recognize the importance of supporting students in developing social/emotional strength and the positive impact that strength in this area has on academic growth and success. Long term, we want our students to feel a social connection and sense of belonging that is representative of themselves and their community. We see the importance of supporting our students in being aware of social and ethical norms related to behavior and in assisting them to regulate their emotions, thoughts and behaviors, in different situations. We think it is important to assist students in managing stress, controlling impulses and setting personal and academic goals. We are in the continuing stages of building positive awareness and responsibility in our students and assisting them in making connections and forging relationships.

In ongoing efforts to work towards reconciliation, while focusing on equity and support for mental well-being, we are beginning discussions on how to work towards developing and celebrating a culture of shared responsibility and mutual respect between all members of our school community. We want to link our next school learning plan to the Truth & Reconciliation Committees Calls to Action and examine our role in working towards a more just and equitable society.

A desire has been expressed to prepare students and community members to be active, productive and socially responsible citizens, to be disposed to others with respect and work cooperatively with them, to act upon the values and principles that make us human, and to care for ourselves, others and the planet.

We will begin to ask the questions of how to develop and celebrate a culture of shared responsibility and mutual respect that values each member of our school community in support of equity, inclusion, and ongoing reconciliation.

We will continue to seek alignment with the VSB Education plan, ensuring our goals seek to improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging through the lenses of equity building and a committed engagement in our Reconciliation journey.



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

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

In the 2022-23 school year Indigenous learners at our school reflect an individualized range of needs and academic growth. Our Indigenous students are well integrated into the fabric of the school and share the knowledge that Tecumseh School strives to be an inclusive, welcoming, and caring place to be. The school has an ongoing focus on increasing knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions and our Indigenous learners, with the active support of staff, share their stories, art and culture. Vulnerability (attendance, school readiness and forging of strong family connections to the school) is in evidence for some of our Indigenous learners and we will continue to make it a priority to work towards supporting additional successes and removing barriers to such successes.

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

In terms of Integrating Indigenous World Views and Principles of Teaching and Learning, a great deal of work continues to be done. Some examples at Tecumseh include:

Student Announcers: Daily land acknowledgement and recognition that we live, work and play on the lands of First Nations before all student-led announcements.

Through consultation with school and district staff and the community, the library collection continues to grow (fiction/non-fiction).

Continued Recognition of the significance of Orange Shirt Day school wide.

Increased discussions on the relevance of the National Day of Truth & Reconciliation

Many staff heard from students about the significance of land and identity and that our cultures and identities are deeply rooted in where we come from. Equally, many students took away the understanding that Indigenous peoples use many forms of communication to share knowledge and understanding. The entire school was impacted by increased understanding of the connection to family and place.

We hosted and sponsored two student teachers from the Indigenous Peoples Teacher Education Module at UBC and shared in a great deal of learning with them.

Professional development: Whole staff involvement in the Indigenous Focus Day of Professional Learning; Four Seasons of Reconciliation focus group; VanDusen Gardens – Indigenous Perspectives and Natural History of BC; FNEESC Learning First Peoples Summer Institute; Indigenous Education PSA Conference.

Discussions and watching videos with in-depth ongoing discussion about the reciprocal and respectful connection between Indigenous Peoples and the environment.

The students have been introduced to several local plants and animals that are significant to First Peoples.

Use of the Six Cedars book, as a springboard to talk about the special traits of important animals (salmon, raven, bear, beaver, wolf, orca) and how these traits can help us develop core competencies (i.e. Wolf: good communicator – I can be like a wolf).

Reading stories and engaging in art workshops, that help to make connections between different cultures.

Studying and exploring the outdoor environment, incorporating principles of teaching and learning and core competencies. (i.e. perspectives on resource extraction)

Integrating the First Peoples principles of learning across the curriculum, as part of instructional planning.

Encouraging a framework of reciprocity in the classroom: how students relate to each other and the world around them. Encouraging younger students to talk with parents and grandparents about schooling, to garner an intergenerational perspective and share in talking circles.

Engaging in practices and discussions that allow the ‘classroom’ to be seen as being a community or family, living and working together.

Visuals in the room reinforcing ways of learning and working together as a community and this is supported through school-wide morning announcements, suggesting areas for students to think about and focus on when framing their behavior.

Celebration of Learning projects. Discussions that the world is respected as the “mother” that gives and when something is taken it should be renewed, not misused, wiped out or wasted.

Embedding critical thinking in class discussions and seeking videos to support understanding.

Discussions about Aboriginal astronomy and how it led to knowledge about the tides and the seasons.

Much of the work in this goal area will simply continue to be part of instructional practice and learning opportunities for students. This includes:

Being thoughtful and selective in considering titles to add to our library, intermediate and primary collections. (i.e. For next year, the library will have more additions from Strong Nations supporting the competencies Personal and Cultural Identity, Social Responsibility and Communication.)

The continued practice of making recommendations for often used resources such as “Fatty Legs” and “Raven Tales”.

The Purchase the Six Cedars posters for our YFW and all classrooms. There is tremendous opportunity to use the posters (Orca, Beaver, Bear, Salmon, Raven and Wolf) as visual springboards towards working on the competencies, relating connections to the School Code of Conduct and the study of Indigenous art.

Thoughtfully considering activities and productions/performances that can be brought to the school that share and uplift Indigenous voice, art and culture.

Continuing collaborative teaching partnerships with teacher-librarians.

Sharing project-based learning plans and outcomes, novel studies and Literature Circle discussions at team meetings and taking time at committee/staff meetings to share what we are doing and possible options to consider enhancing what is being done.

Working together to participate in field study programs that will provide rich learning experiences for our students.

We will continue to incorporate, promote, and celebrate Indigenous culture and principles of learning in our school community. We will listen to the needs of our indigenous parents and act on their specific concerns. We will continue to increase our collection of Indigenous literature, voice, and art. We will continue to work with community partners and stakeholders in support of our journey through Reconciliation.