



# Vancouver School District

## School Plan for Walter Moberly Elementary School

### Year 3 (2021) of 3 Year Plan, 2018 - 2022

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the current school plan has been carried forward to the 2021/22 school year.

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## 1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Moberly Elementary School is located in the culturally diverse Vancouver community of Sunset. We are a learning community with over 470 learners coming from families who partner with the school in their children’s learning. There are at least 27 other languages being spoken within our school community, with Punjabi and Tagalog being the main languages. Approximately half of Moberly learners are identified as English Language Learners. We have a number of Indigenous learners whose families come from the traditional lands of the Coast Salish and beyond. We also have a District Elementary Learning Support class on site. Moberly has completed seismic upgrading. We share our premises with the Newcomer Welcome Center (NWC). Moberly School also has a provincial Strong Start Centre.

We are a Tier 3 Inner City school which provides targeted support for our vulnerable learners and their families. We have a strong connection to our Community Link Team and, with their support, offer numerous after school programs. In addition, we have a school-based summer school program called “Knowledge Infusions” which targets support for learners not yet within or minimally meeting learning expectations.

Moberly supports and facilitates different programs through community connections provided by South Vancouver Neighborhood House, South Vancouver Family Place, Pacific Immigrant Resource Society, Big Brothers of Greater Vancouver, One to One reading, Reading and Math Buddies, Chinese language classes and Punjabi language classes, Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre, and the Sunset Community Center. We are the home base for Squadron 888 – Avengers Air Cadets with an active membership of over 200 young people.

We have a strong focus on supporting learners with diverse learning needs and will continue to work collaboratively with our onsite programs and district staff to provide significant, targeted support for our most vulnerable learners. Our educator team is supported by over 10 student support workers who work closely with educators to support our learners with special learning needs. We have a vibrant library learning commons area that is supported by a teacher-librarian.

We believe in developing strong ties with our parent community and other community partners in order to work as a team to support learning. We have a growing group of dedicated parents who are committed to extending time and efforts to building school community and connections through events and engagements.

We are committed to engaging our learners through innovative teaching and practices. Collaborative planning and teaching between professionals is an important part of our school culture. We value strong relationships and open communication to promote the sharing of ideas and practice. We are committed to student learning and success and strive to provide increased opportunities to connect learners to their learning.

We are continuing in our current school plan and building on ENGAGEMENT – Engaged MINDS, Engaged BODIES, and Engaged COMMUNITY. As we progress through the year, we will direct our focus to enhance and elevate towards EMPOWERMENT – fostering an empowered LEARNING COMMUNITY for our entire school community.

## 2A. WHAT DID WE SEE?

In the 2017-2018 year, we began to see the need to not just focus on teaching “the curriculum” but also looking at how our learners’ needs drive the learning environment and teaching practices. We began to see that our learners were active citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century fully immersed in the digital age of online engagement and ready for and motivated to take on learning challenges that had relevance and application.

We are continuing this examination of our practice and how it translates into the learning community at Moberly.

Throughout the 2018-2019 year, we explored how innovative and collaborative teaching practices and learning spaces might positively affect our learners’ learning experience and ultimately facilitate and support their learning growth and success.

Here are some of the innovative and collaborative actions we undertook:

- **One third** of the educators in our school moved into new spaces to increase collaboration through proximity. We used the following article as the impetus for our actions to increase collaboration through proximity: <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/01/09/in-schools-classroom-proximity-breeds-collaboration-study.html>
- We tried something new in our school building – the collaboration of 5-7 educators working with a group of learners with the mindset of seeing them as a learning community rather than 3 separate classes of learners. 3 of these educators would be traditionally labelled as “enrolling teachers” and the other 2-4 educators would be traditionally labelled as “non-enrolling teachers” and “support staff”
- We created spaces within our school building that were furnished with “flexible” furniture to encourage innovative teaching practices and learner ownership of space. Teachers wanted to create different learning experiences, with the understanding that not everyone learns best sitting at a desk all day - teachers wanted to see changes that allowed for increased physical movement during the learning process, provided learners with choices of being social or solitary in their learning space, and provided resources for visual learners. We followed the learning blogs of NaturalPod for regular inspiration: <https://naturalpod.com/research-how-often-do-teachers-change-their-classroom-configuration/>
- With the support from a generous donation from a community partner, we were able to transform our computer lab into an “Innovation Lab” – what was once a single purpose space has now become a learning space that presents the potential for innovative engagements for our learners and for cooperative and collaborative engagements for our educators.

So, what did we see?

- Most of our educators expressed that they experienced a rich collaborative environment with those whom they were closer in proximity with especially if their learners were close in age and learning levels
- We witnessed the liberation of learning experience for a community of grade 4/5/6 learners – they expressed joy and motivation and clearly articulated pride and purpose for their learning engagements
- Accessibility to flexible space provided options for learner engagement that augmented the learners’ individual experience in their regular classrooms – learners were able to make personalized choices that supported their learning needs and styles
- Our learning community embraced significant change (a cornerstone of their previous learning environment, i.e. computer lab, was dismantled) and were able to demonstrate adaptability, flexibility, and growth with the next possibilities presented by the new Innovation Lab

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

Our school goal continues to align with the first goal of the VSB District Strategic Plan – “**Engage** our learners through innovative teaching and learning practices”. Each of the supporting facets of this goal are relevant to Moberly’s School Goal: to enhance support for learners with special needs; to support the implementation of the curriculum; to enhance assessment and reporting strategies to support teaching and learning; to provide increased opportunities to connect learners to their learning.

Our school goal also continues to align with the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) in that innovative teaching practices and learning environments also encompasses Indigenous cultures and traditions and approaches to learning and understanding. We will look for ways in which the Indigenous Principles of Learning could incorporate to our updated focus.

Our school goal also continues to align with the redesigned BC curriculum in that innovative teaching practices and learning environments also addresses the core competencies of communication, creative thinking, critical thinking, positive personal and cultural identity, personal awareness and responsibility, and social responsibility. The new curriculum aims to connect learners with the skills that they need to succeed in their next chapter – our school’s goal is to provide learning opportunities, experiences, and spaces for them to be engaged in their learning and for them to foster the skills and competencies that they will need to succeed.

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

Where we are headed for our **second year** is a **sharpening** of our vision of how innovative and collaborative teaching practices and learning spaces might positively affect our learners’ learning experience and ultimately facilitate and support their learning growth and success. To that resolve, we will focus on **ENGAGEMENT** – Engagement of our learning community’s **MINDS**; Engagement of our learning community’s **BODIES**; and, Engagement of our learning **COMMUNITY**.

As we progress through the 2020/21 year, we will shift to **EMPOWERMENT** – fostering an empowered learning community that inspires possibilities and where learners take ownership to become creative, critical thinkers who change the world.

## 4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW PLAN?

**ENGAGED MINDS:** We plan to provide learning experiences that will engage our learning community from a variety of avenues. We will look at outdoor learning engagement with the growing of an outdoor garden as well as outdoor seating. We will look at fine arts learning engagement with partnerships with artists in residence – potential projects (pending grants approval) are: stop motion video film making, school mural project, and Cinema Organica that utilizes local plants and non-toxic ingredients from the garden and kitchen as the basis for an array of eco-art projects including Super 8 filmmaking, Cyanotypes, Phytograms and Direct Animation. With our goal of engagement, we are looking at all members of our learning community. As such, these endeavours will also provide opportunities for our educators to work collaboratively with community partners and to explore and engage in new ways of thinking and expression to deepen learning in curricular and core competencies.

**ENGAGED BODIES:** We plan to provide active experiences that will engage our learning community by expanding their level of activity and supporting their levels of wellness and wellbeing. One major change in the school culture has been the practice of outdoor recesses which has been presented to our community through these crucial reasons for outdoor play: 1. our bodies need sun; 2. our bodies need active play; 3. unstructured time increases executive function; 4. outdoor play increases risk taking; 5. unstructured time augments socialization that is learned within the classroom; 6. appreciation of nature – especially the understanding of how to be properly equipped for the elements. One feedback from learners is the lack of activities that they could be engaged with during recesses outdoors. We will explore this further in year 2 to support our goal of engaged bodies. We have also started morning boot camps for our educators and will look to expand these engagements in year 2 to explore further ways to support wellness and wellbeing.

**ENGAGED COMMUNITY:** We plan to provide meaningful experiences that will engage our learning community with our extended community – e.g. parents, community partners. In the past few years, the activity of our parent community has increased significantly. This year, the PAC's focus was on growing the parent involvement within the learning community. In year 2, we will partner together to explore further ways we can increase engagement of our community to augment the learning experience. Some ideas that will be explored further are: Parenting in a Digital Age; The New Curriculum – what's it all about? We will also encourage our educators to look for opportunities to invite community partners into our learning community to increase engagement and enrich learning experiences.

**EMPOWERED LEARNING COMMUNITY:** We want to enhance and elevate our current focus on engagement to a paradigm of empowerment.

- Fostering a place where learners are given choices AND where they are inspired by possibilities
- Fostering a place where learners experience differentiated instruction AND where they co-create an adjustable and personalized learning experience

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## 5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

**District Supports** – we are excited to be a part of the VSB’s collaboration with the BroadBand program called FuturePlay - a sustainable and scalable educational program aimed at fostering digital and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Design, and Mathematics) literacy. With the support of the program, we will look at creating engaging and well-equipped learning spaces for learners, and providing deep professional development for teachers to support them as they use these spaces.

**Community Supports** – we will continue to work positively with our parent and extended community partners to look for ways to support engagement in our learning community. As our community realizes that they are welcome participants and contributors in our learning community, we are excited to see the different engagements that will be presented.

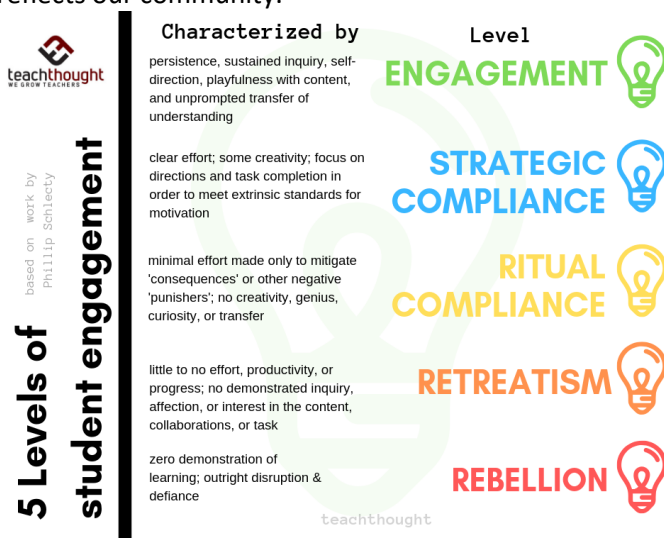
**Learner Voice** – as the main gauge of our goal for engagement, we will be looking for support from our learners to provide their input on what has engaged them, what is engaging them, and what will engage them. As their voice is increasingly valued, we are excited to see how our learning community will evolve by their input.

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

At the onset of year 2, we will be looking at Engagement from the lens of Phillip Schlechty's book, "Engaging Students: The next level of working on the work". Schlechty contends that rather than viewing schools as teaching platforms, schools must be viewed as learning platforms. Rather than seeing schools as knowledge distribution systems, schools must be seen as knowledge work systems. Rather than defining teachers as instructors, teachers must be defined as designers, leaders, and guides to instruction. The book also includes useful questionnaires that will facilitate discussion, analysis, and action planning at both school and classroom levels. We will invite educators to join in a community book study of this book throughout the year.

[https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/engaging-students-the-next-level/9780470640081-item.html?ikwid=shlechty&ikwsec=Home&ikwidx=0&s\\_campaign=aff-001-4361162-Ebates+Canada+Inc-Ongoing\\_Site\\_Indigo+Redirect\\_Text-10437934-7620525&cjevent=cb0f4bbf7f2911e98061017e0a1c0e14](https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/books/engaging-students-the-next-level/9780470640081-item.html?ikwid=shlechty&ikwsec=Home&ikwidx=0&s_campaign=aff-001-4361162-Ebates+Canada+Inc-Ongoing_Site_Indigo+Redirect_Text-10437934-7620525&cjevent=cb0f4bbf7f2911e98061017e0a1c0e14)

We will also use the following graphic to help us assess the level of engagement within our learning community. As the year progresses, we will revisit the graphic to customize it to become one that truly reflects our community.



Source: <https://www.teachthought.com/pedagogy/levels-of-student-engagement-continuum/> (Terry Heick, Dec. 3, 2018)

We will also be utilizing measurement tools such as the MDI, a self-report questionnaire completed by our learners in Grade 4 and Grade 7. It asks them how they think and feel about their experiences both inside and outside of school. We will look at our MDI results with the lens and question of: How engaged are our learners? The areas that the MDI focuses on that will also frame our discussion of levels of engagement are:

### **Physical Health & Well-Being**

Children evaluate their own physical well-being in the areas of overall health including body image, nutrition and sleeping habits.

### **Connectedness**

Children are asked about their experiences of support and connection with the adults in their schools and neighbourhoods, with their parents or guardians at home, and with their peers.

### **Social and Emotional Development**

Children respond to questions about their current social and emotional functioning in 7 areas: optimism, self-esteem, happiness, empathy, prosocial behaviour, sadness and worries.

### **School Experiences**

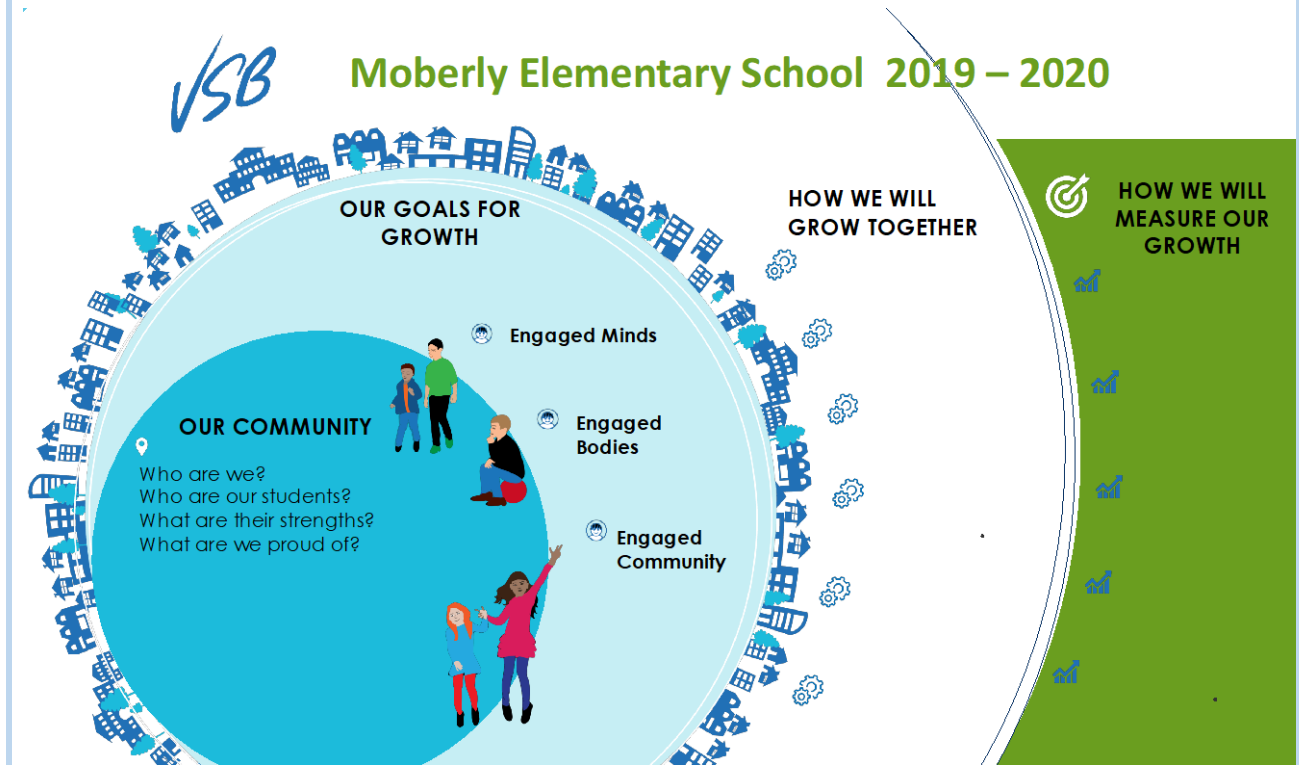
Children are asked about their school experiences in 4 areas: academic self-concept, school climate, school belonging, and experiences with peer victimization (bullying).

### **Use of After-School Time**

Children are asked about the time they spend engaged in organized activities such as sports, music and art, as well as the time they spend watching TV, doing homework and playing video games.

## 7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

We are creating a **one-page** infographic that summarizes our school plan for our learning community. As the year progresses, we will add to the infographic to keep our learning community updated on our actions and how our community can be involved. The outline design of the infographic is below:



*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?

In total, we have 12 Indigenous learners in our school community. They are spread quite evenly throughout the grades: K (1); Gr. 1 (1); Gr. 2 (2); Gr. 3 (1); Gr. 4 (2); Gr. 5 (0); Gr. 6 (4); Gr. 7 (1)



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

The collection of indigenous themed books in our Library Resource Centre continues to expand based on district and teacher recommendations. The school's teacher-librarian hosted a multi-day exposition where teachers could preview the materials that were in our library.

Teachers are committed to infusing indigenous themes into regular classroom work and continue to work towards this goal with the help of the links provided in the BCED plan. Examples include: career exploration video series inclusive of indigenous people, food studies using aboriginal food examples, historical study timeline reflective of indigenous peoples' history, poetry, and government unit.

The Aboriginal Information Management System (AIMS) is used to provide anecdotal comments for supports in place, work habit comments, and general comments on the learners' progress. The Indigenous Education Enhancement worker has been tracking the kinds of interventions in place for each learner in order to better plan for their success. We have learned that not only is the sense of belonging for each child important, but a sense of belonging for their families is equally so. Getting to know each learner, their families, and what makes them feel a better sense of belonging is critical.

All whole school engagements begin with the acknowledgement that we learn, work, and play on the traditional and unseeded territories of the Coast Salish peoples – the Musqueam, the Tsleil-Waututh, and the Squamish Nations.

Our Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker (Kim Kondra) has provided academic and social support for classes, small groups, and individuals and has engaged learners in traditional indigenous practices (e.g. cooking, creating tools, or crafts). More significantly, she is recognized as a valuable resource and member of our learning community – her voice is valued and respected.

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

We will continue to increase knowledge and awareness by continuing to engage in the activities listed above. Some of the actions will become the culture and practice of the school community (e.g. Indigenous acknowledgement, Orange Shirt Day).

We will move towards acceptance and appreciation by engaging our learners beyond one-time activities to ongoing interactions and exchanges with Indigenous people. This aligns well with our school plan as we focus on engagement – mind, body, community – and further explore innovative learning spaces (e.g. outdoor learning space) and invite Indigenous elders to guide the learning in those spaces.

In 2019-2020, we will commit our learning community to an intentional exploration of Indigenous Principles of Learning and explore how they will also align with our goals for increasing engagement:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge. Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

(<http://www.fnesc.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/PUB-LFP-POSTER-Principles-of-Learning-First-Peoples-poster-11x17.pdf>)

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

We believe that we are working towards our District-wide Indigenous Goal when our school community is better able to articulate and demonstrate their knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions. We will be exploring more opportunities for our school community to engage in activities that will demonstrate these attributes and to elaborate on the purpose of engaging in such activities. We will also know that we are working towards our District-wide Indigenous Goal when the indigenous learners of our community express growing identity and pride coming from the knowledge that their learning community has increased their knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness, and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions.