



Vancouver School District

School Plan for Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary

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

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

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School is a Kindergarten to Grade 7 school. It is in the south-east area of Vancouver near Marine Drive between Fraser and Main Street. Many families have relatives in the immediate area giving our school a strong, vibrant, stable community base.

Our school offers a variety of academic, physical, and social programs that support students and their families. In addition to our school programs, in the past there have been very strong, ongoing links with community organizations such as Pacific Immigrant Services, One to One Reading, Books for Me, and Learning Buddies. Other community and school-based volunteers have offered their time and expertise in our school to further support student learning and success. As well, the John Oliver Community Team has organized or provided various programs for our students at lunch and after-school (e.g., dance, arts and crafts, Lego club, Gearing Up science, sports, etc.). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of these supports were suspended until such a time that volunteers and outside agencies can become a part of the school community again. We look forward to resuming these connections. We have continued to work with the John Oliver Community Team to provide out-of-school time activities to some families during the winter and spring breaks.

Our school has a diverse, multi-cultural population with approximately 55% of our families speaking additional languages. Within our school, we have 19 different language groups represented. They include English, Punjabi, Tagalog, Hindi, Tamil, and Cantonese. In addition, we have an Aboriginal population that represents less than 1% of our school. Some of our students have a Ministry of Education Special Education Designation that represents their learning needs. Trudeau is also host to a Vancouver School Board District Primary Autism Program and in the 2020-2021 school year we welcomed the district Mandarin bilingual program to our school.

The rich, diverse, exciting cultural population supports our belief in global citizenship and the interconnections of the world. We maintain that our students demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning, social responsibility, leadership, literacy, and mathematics. For our beginning kindergarten students, we would like them to build relationships, engage in all learning activities, develop self-regulation skills and social-emotional awareness. We would also like them to increase their awareness of the world by using literacy and hands-on learning experiences. In our school, emphasis has been placed on increasing awareness of math in our world and to developing an increasing passion for learning, becoming fluent, proficient readers, writers, and speakers of English. It is our hope that our school provides students with the skills to be respectful, compassionate, and responsible world citizens. We are very proud of our multi-sensory room that helps students become ready to work on their individual educational goals. We value our school as a safe, caring, and exciting learning place for students and their families. We are very proud of our Artist in Residence Studio Program that provides all students with socially relevant, equitable, high quality, and consistent access to visual arts education. We have tied learning in this space to our school goals and

this year focused on the expression of self, place and belonging. Each year, at the end of the residencies, we celebrate our successes by showcasing the work done throughout the year.

In the 2020-2021 school year we had access to funding which allowed us to build the capacity of the school to engage in outdoor learning. We were excited to start building an outdoor classroom space which includes rock benches, indigenous plants, vegetable planters and shade trees. This, along with the creation of outdoor kits, will enhance the outdoor education experiences for all our students.

For the past number of years, our school has continued to work with the Core Competencies. We saw this, and continue to see this as a need, based on discussions at staff meetings, school-based team meetings, referrals to the office, referrals to the counsellor, discussions with parents, and a general sense of needs based on report cards and teacher assessments. We asked ourselves, what could we do to help move students along the learning continuum in the Core Competency of Social Responsibility. We focused on the following:

- Year One – Personal Awareness and Responsibility
- Year Two (and Three) – Positive Personal and Cultural Identity

Throughout the past three years, we have seen growth in both areas and, for year three, we are going to focus on Social Responsibility; more specifically, in the areas of:

- Contributing to community and caring for the environment
- Solving problems in peaceful ways
- Valuing diversity
- Building relationships

This third area of the competency encompasses all areas that have been touched on in the past three years. We will continue to build on the work we have done in the past three years with the goal of having students be able to self-assess in this competency.

Throughout the past three years, students have been able to express themselves in a variety of ways not only in their day-to-day interactions with one another, but we have also been fortunate to incorporate our Artist in Residence Studio Program into our learning. Staff and students have learned alongside one another. Students have worked to better understand their relationships with one another, family, and the environment. Having this core competency as a school goal has allowed staff to strengthen their strategies for teaching a diverse group of children the skills they will need throughout their lives.

At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, we anticipate that we will be in a good place to move onto another inquiry.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

The learners at Trudeau have been working on the Social Responsibility goal since fall of 2018. Overall, we have seen a steady growth among our learners. Because this competency is so big, we decided to split it into three sections so that we could look more deeply each year at one area.

In year one we noticed that progress had been made in all grades around personal awareness and responsibility. Teaching students how to self-regulate, how to show self-determination and take care of their well-being were the main areas of teaching and learning in this year. Self-regulation is an area that is always taught but in the areas of self-determination and well-being, by the end of the year, most students had shown improvement in how well they could demonstrate self-determination and discuss their own and others' well-being.

Year two took us on the path of learning about positive personal and cultural identity. This led into a two-year focus due to the pandemic and it was beneficial to spend the extra time in this area. We have a diverse community at Trudeau and there is a strong sense of pride within cultures.

We took the time in these two years to, not only celebrate our own cultures and cultural contexts but to celebrate and understand more about other cultures and contexts. With guidance and teaching from staff, students were also able to discuss personal values and choices with an understanding of the consequences that come with choices that we make and that choices are made based on personal values. This is sometimes more challenging for younger students as they are developing their sense of being and becoming more aware of others' needs but the children at Trudeau rose to the challenge.

Staff have provided feedback regarding their assessment of how children have progressed, but students have also done self-assessments of the Core Competency. We have noticed that the children often focus on the areas that they feel confident in but their areas for growth are more difficult for them to articulate. They continue to require teacher support in this area, which is to be expected in elementary school and will be something that we continue to work on in the 2021-2022 school year.

For year three, we will be looking at Social Responsibility in the areas of:

- Contributing to community and caring for the environment
- Solving problems in peaceful ways
- Valuing diversity
- Building relationships

This strand is a culmination of the past few years and will give us more of an indication of how the learning is being applied and extended. Our target is for all students to show movement along the learning continuum and by the end of the school year be able to articulate:

- "Where they are at" (strengths)
- "Where they are going" (areas for growth); and
- "How they can get there" (ways to support their own learning)

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

We assessed students in the fall and spring of 2021 and found:

- Students in every grade level had showed movement along the learning continuum
 - The most dramatic change was in the primary children where the shift moved from most students being in the beginning or beginning/developing stage in the fall to the majority shifting to the developing/applying or applying stage in the spring
 - The intermediate children showed a steady movement along the continuum with a larger number of students moving into the applying, applying/extending, and extending stages
 - Students were becoming more competent in being able to self-assess their own learning in this area
- Staff noted that:
 - Some students have really flourished around contributing to the community and caring for the environment with one student announcing “I can’t wait until June...because you have lots of work in the library in June and hopefully, I can help”
 - Other students are now showing more patience, empathy for others, are being kind, helping others, becoming very tuned into mindfulness, and are acknowledging the need to appreciate and respect diversity. This has been demonstrated by students in a multi-grade classroom who are becoming good mentors and assisting younger students to complete learning and life tasks, while other students are more consistently using “I statements” such as “please stop, I don’t like it” instead of yelling or shouting when they are upset.
 - The kindergarten teacher noted that their class has been doing an inquiry on “Connecting to Me” and family. They have been talking about languages they speak at home and talked about coming from other countries. They have shown pride in their family and heritage and the teacher has noticed many connections that the children have been making.
 - Students have been learning many ways to calm down their nervous systems through work with the Youth and Family Worker and the EASE program. They look forward to the sessions and are now demonstrating a solid understanding through discussions and assessments.

While there have been many successes as mentioned above, the staff continue to see further growth being needed as follows:

- Diversity, human rights, social justice, problem solving, building relationships, and the need to strive for compassionate understanding of others. While the children have studied and learned about these areas in the classroom, the understanding does not always seem to translate into their daily lives and interactions. Staff noted that, although much student growth has been demonstrated, there is still a need for them to practice how to interact with each other in peaceful, respectful, friendly manner, even when the adults are not close by watching.

3. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

Information was shared with parents via PAC meeting, bulletin boards and newsletters and during conferences with teachers. Students shared their work with others in class, during conferences and we had Artist in Residence Exhibits to showcase the work being done.

4. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

As we begin to plan for next year, we are going to work towards the third phase of our three-year plan. Our inquiry question for the final year is:

If we implement specific strategies and continue to build on the strategies from the previous three years, will students show growth in the Personal and Social Competency, more specifically around Social Responsibility?

We will continue to use and consolidate the strategies outlined in the previous two years. As well, in the spring of 2021, staff met and discussed these strategies and suggested adding the following:

- The grade 6/7 learning group talked about addressing the first two aspects of the goal via some form of garden/outdoor education project. The second two aspects could be addressed by existing components of the curriculum relating to human rights, social justice, and stereotypes. It was discussed that there was a possibility of extending the digital literacy program with the teacher librarian to include a component that addresses stereotypes in the media
- Staff are interested in extending our use of outdoor equipment with children to keep them active post-pandemic. The increase of outdoor education and physical activity this year has been beneficial at all grade levels
- We would like to explore the possibility of having presentations around neurodiversity (e.g., autism) and recognize autism acknowledgement month in April of 2022

In the fall of 2021, we will discuss if other strategies are needed based on the baseline data and conversations that we have. We will look at the assessment rubric in our staff meeting to discuss (in grade groups) some specific activities that may be needed to support to this new rubric.

Throughout the past three years, we have had discussions about what we see the needs being in the school. While we have other areas of need that are curricular and that will continue to be a focus at the school, our primary focus for the 2021 – 2022 school plan will continue to be social responsibility. At the end of the 2021 – 2022 school year we will determine if we are ready to move into another area of focus.



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

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

Although Indigenous learners represent less than 5 percent of our population, we feel fortunate to have this group of students and their families in our school as they bring a rich perspective to our community. We believe strongly that all our students and their families, as well as our staff, are one community that provides strength, perspective, culture, and learning.

In grade 6, throughout the year, one teacher and her students have engaged in discussions of human rights, social justice and the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship. Novels were read relating to human rights and resilience including the novel “Red Wolf” which is set in Northern Canada and details the impact of residential school on indigenous peoples. There are many examples such as this happening at Trudeau.

Primary teachers have commented that students are becoming more confident in storytelling and are showing an awareness and appreciation of indigenous art and images. They are stating that they have been incorporating the First Peoples’ Principles of Learning much more this year than in previous years or their teaching.

Several staff commented how impactful the district professional development had been this year. Considering the pandemic, teachers have been finding ways to make connections between the cultures in the school and different indigenous cultures. Using different media to support student learning has really sparked their interest and students have been heard saying such things as “First Nations’ art is cool”, “First Nations’ music is cool”, “This is fun learning about indigenous cultures”. One student who moved to BC from another province noted “This school is different, people are interested in native stuff, no one cared at my other schools”. Some students have commented that they are also listening to the music in the background while working on schoolwork at home.

Numerous teachers have been reading books by indigenous authors and have used self-directed professional development days to further their knowledge and teaching repertoire in this school goal.

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

Our second goal, as it has in previous years, continues to generate rich conversations among members of the school community as we learn more about the history, tradition, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous people. We continue to gain more insight by focusing on the impact that our Indigenous people have had and continue to have within our school and the greater community. The school community is becoming more acquainted with these traditions, cultures and contributions that have been made throughout time. Examples of activities, routines, etc. that we have done, and will continue to do, to support this goal over the past three years are:

- Invited guests to speak to classes and the school community about their knowledge/ experiences formally and informally (e.g., Indigenous Enhancement Worker)
- Incorporated Indigenous content and ways of learning throughout all areas of the curriculum
- Continued to share professional development opportunities and field trips that highlight Indigenous education and culture
- Symmetry and traditional art
- Ongoing stories by indigenous authors and reflections and conversations about these stories
- Reconciliation reflections, learning about colonialism and looking at resilience and revival as a way of becoming part of the reconciliation process
- Field trips to see indigenous murals and contemporary art downtown
- Powwow and potlatch presentations and exploration following a powwow dance
- Urban hikes to connect to traditional stories about the territories we are living on
- Learning about Indigenous knowledge about local lands, reading about the two sisters
- Colonial history and contemporary Indigenous lives and the lessons they teach all of us about resilience and diversity
- Ravens Tales traditional myth and social responsibility conversations
- Highlighted and acknowledge aboriginal culture and heritage in assemblies and performances
- Indigenous Enhancement Worker continued to liaise with classroom teachers, resource teachers, principal, staff members, SBT members and families
- Continued to expand the school collection of literature with Indigenous content
- Staff self-directed, and district facilitated, professional development (attending workshops, professional reading, etc.) and personal commitments to continue to learn and be active participants in the reconciliation process

In the coming year, we will continue with the above strategies as appropriate and available and incorporate new strategies and activities when the opportunities arise. We would also like to investigate having presentations that incorporate animals and, if we are able to, ask an Elder to come to the school for storytelling/information sharing about indigenous plants/animals.