



# Vancouver School District

## School Plan for Sir William Van Horne Elementary

### Year 1: 2020

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

#### General School Story (to be updated each year)

What are the important demographics of our community?

What are the unique, positive characteristics of the school?

What are our assets – what do we celebrate (including student intellectual achievement)?

Sir William Van Horne Elementary School is in a diverse neighborhood in the Oakridge - South Slope area of Vancouver. It currently enrolls 398 students in 18 divisions from Kindergarten to Grade 7. Due to the current pandemic, about 90% of our enrolled students attend in-class instruction leaving about 10% in the transition back to school option. We have 91 students who are designated as English Language Learners (ELL) which represents about a 10% increase from previous years. 40 students have Ministry Designations with is consistent with past data.

The Van Horne school community is proud to partner with the PAC (Parent Advisory Committee). We have a shared value revolving around a growing recognition of our community's diversity, a growing commitment to environmental issues and challenges (especially around the topic of transportation), and a working relationship between school and parents based on the values of transparency, cooperation, and seeking to make a difference in the lives of the students. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, this relationship continues to thrive.

Van Horne has a varied and diverse staff that overall supports a holistic development of a student. Staff focusses and interests involve: developing academic rigor, providing extra-curricular opportunities (when possible), and improving core competencies of each child. Students are challenged to improve in many areas of learning as well as becoming contributing members of our community. Staff work collaboratively to discuss students' needs, strengths, and how to best support students. Our highly dedicated staff provide varied learning experiences including project and inquiry-based learning to Van Horne students.

Van Horne is designated as an Early Intervention school. Kindergarten to Grade 2 students receive some additional literacy support from a designated Resource teacher. Designated Grade 1 students receive one-to-one Reading Recovery support, a designated literacy intervention.

During a typical school year, Van Horne Elementary School offers additional opportunities for various students around Arts, Sports and Student Leadership. Examples of this include: choir, cross-country, volleyball, basketball, badminton and track and field. There are also student leadership opportunities such as Student Council, Playground Leaders, Safety Patrol, PA announcers, student-led assemblies, Library Monitors, and Big Buddy/Little Buddy classes.

The Van Horne School community is a great place to be.

## What do we know about our learners? (Scanning)

- Describe the overall strengths as well as the needs of the learners.
- What is going on for them?

Before the pandemic, the Van Horne School community was working on a School Growth Plan that was centered around providing students with some choices in their education. The goal was to improve student learning by allowing students to make some decisions about what they wanted to learn about. Data has suggested that learning improves when students have an opportunity to decide what they want to learn about as it aligns with what their own personal goals may be for their own lives.

Up to spring of 2020, students were given an opportunity to sign up and attend short term workshops being offered by staff around various topics. Some of the topics that were offered were: mathematics, art, science, leadership and learning more about the self, visual media, music, and construction for STEM. All available staff participated in the offering of workshops including non-enrolling teaching staff such as the counsellor, resource teachers, librarian, and the principal.

Some data was collected around student self-assessment just before the pandemic resulted in changes to how school was conducted. This data showed an over-whelming majority of students (> 95%) found value in the opportunity, felt it was time well-spent, and advanced their learning in the subjects of the workshops they attended. Students overwhelmingly supported a continuation of these opportunities.

When the pandemic is over, Van Horne will return to this as the main focus of its school growth plan. In the meantime, in light of the racial tensions in North America, our learners can benefit from a refocus on the expectations at our school in what we value and how we treat ourselves and each other.

## What evidence supports what we know about our learners?

### (Scanning)

What is the evidence that we already have that supports this hypothesis?

- School and district data, letter grades, attendance anecdotal, surveys, etc....EDI, MDI, student voice such as TTFM, etc.

The school has had to work with a few students who have needed reminders about the values the school supports in regards to behaviour expectations. Sometimes those students have been referred to the office for additional support. Furthermore, the school counsellor has been working with several students and their classes in this same area. With the increased protocols around the pandemic, several students have needed frequent reminders on following the new protocols.

## What focus emerges from this evidence? (Focusing)

Which learners and which areas will we be focusing on?

Where are we connected?

- How does this focus connect to the district strategic plan? (Quote Strategic plan goal/objective #)
- How does this focus connect to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement? (Quote AEEA goal/objective)

- How does this focus connect to the redesigned curriculum including the big ideas, core competencies, curricular competencies, etc.?

Since the Code of conduct addresses how we treat ourselves and each other, the Code of Conduct is a good place to focus our efforts.

All students will be involved in this endeavor and as an additional benefit, the Code of Conduct also applies to all adults in the school.

The VSB District Strategic Plan addresses 5 guiding principles. They are: collaboration, engagement, excellence, inclusion, and transparency.

This action specifically addresses Goal 3 in the plan, “Creating a culture of care and shared social responsibility.” Specifically:

- Ensure school communities are safe spaces where racism and discrimination will not be tolerated.
- Encourage and enhance practices that support cultural, emotional, physical and mental well-being.

This also supports the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. The agreement contains 3 goals and this action specifically addresses goal #3 – Culture and Community: To increase knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions by all students through eliminating institutional, cultural and individual racism within the Vancouver school district learning communities.

## Inquiry Question (Focusing) – previously known as “Goal”

What is leading to this situation for our learners?

How might we be contributing to this?

From what we know, what is the most important work that we can do to improve the success for our students?

What key areas of learning will we focus on?

Van Horne school community consists of a variety of ethnicities and on the surface everything appears to be operating smoothly with no issues of racism being present. But, as we have now learned, implicit bias exists in all people so an in-depth look at implicit bias is good practice. Furthermore, recent events in North America along with a district wide focus on equity are providing us an opportunity to re-examine ourselves and our practice – a chance to look more deeply past the surface at ourselves.

Ultimately, this is a look at our values. What do we value? Are our values explicitly stated? How do we express our values? What systemic structures and qualities do we have that need to be re-examined for implicit bias?

This will be our opportunity to revitalize our school’s code of conduct.

The question we ask is: What do we value (where are we now?) and how will explicitly state this?

Our product, through a series of activities and consultations with various stakeholder groups (students, staff, and parents), Van Horne will redraft a new school code of conduct.

## What is our plan? (Planning)

- What are the actions that we propose to take related to our inquiry. What will we do more of, less of, differently to improve outcomes for our students?
- How can we break it down into a manageable and realistic 3 year plan:
  - Year 1, Year 2, Year 3

This will only be a one year plan as our ongoing school growth plan is being interrupted by the global COVID pandemic.

We have a multi-step plan that generally consists of the following:

1. Through various means, the school will inform stakeholders that we are beginning the process of revitalizing our school code of conduct.
2. Through various means (which will include online meetings and classroom tasks), the school will provide more information and ask deeper questions to all stakeholders around: a desire to build a caring and inclusive community, the need to develop a code of conduct based on the beliefs of how we should treat each other and also meets the requirements Vancouver school district
3. These tasks will go through a cycle of generating ideas, refining ideas, seeking feedback, refining ideas based on feedback, until a conclusion of a final draft is reached.
4. Publishing and celebration of the new School Code of Conduct.

## What supports will we need? (Planning)

- Summarize what the new areas of learning will be and how we will support that new learning in order to benefit the students (i.e. resources, pro-d, etc.).
- Link these new areas of learning to the redesigned curriculum

1. Learning in safe schools by Faye Brownlee and Judith King
2. Schools current code of conduct
3. Anti racism and discrimination response plan for administrators by the VSB June 2020
4. Developing and reviewing codes of conduct; A companion to the provincial standards for codes of conduct ministerial order and safe, caring and orderly schools; A guide 2004 by the Ministry of Education British Columbia
5. District code of conduct: a resource book for school-based administrators

## How will we know we're successful? (Checking)

- How will we know that what we are doing is working and is making a difference for our learners?
- What will we be using as baseline data? How will we chart growth?
- How will we respond if we see no changes?

Once our code of conduct is completed, we will know it is successful if we are able to use it to guide our conduct in the school. The code of conduct will be infused and how we carry forth our daily duties. We will use it and refer to it and determine whether it is being followed and if it is useful. We will check in with all stakeholders to see how successful we have been so far.

## How will we share this information? (Checking)

- How will we make parents, students and other members of the community aware and involved?

We will publish the Code of Conduct and distribute.



*District-wide Aboriginal Goal: To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.*

## What do we know about the Aboriginal Learners in Our School?

- Include numbers of students, grade levels, etc.

## What have we done at our school to support all learners in regards to this goal?

- List examples of pro-d, special events, speakers, curricular integration, routines and customs, etc.

## What will WE continue to do in this area?

- List continuing and new initiatives

## How do we know that we are being successful in this area?

- Include both data-driven and anecdotal examples
- Give opportunities for student, staff and parent voice