

**2023-2024 - Year 1**  
**School Learning Plan**

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**1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY**

David Livingstone Elementary School was built in 1912 and opened in 1913. Located in the northeast quadrant of Vancouver's Riley Park neighborhood, adjacent to Prince Edward Park, Livingstone has a population of about 300 students that includes English Language Learners (ELL), students with Ministry designations and students of Indigenous heritage. Livingstone families are from a variety of cultural backgrounds and valuing and celebrating their diversity is one of the main foci of the school community. Livingstone is one of 8 elementary schools that make up the Sir Charles Tupper Secondary family of schools. Our close proximity to Tupper has facilitated a cooperative relationship between our two schools.

We have relatively strong literacy scores in our school that are reflected in the Collaborative Early Learning Initiative scores for our primary students and the intermediate literacy folders. Our students enjoy project-based learning and are passionate about social and environmental issues. Students want to learn more about Indigenous people and have an understanding that our Indigenous Acknowledgement talks about colonial disenfranchisement of Indigenous people's rights to their land and way of life. Our children understand that our country has been built upon painful practices such as placing Indigenous children in residential schools and taking them away from their families and safety of their communities. They are learning about intergenerational trauma in ways that are appropriate for their age. Our school is seeking ways to increase our students' understanding of the vast and varied knowledge and cultural traditions of Indigenous people who have lived in this country since time immemorial. Our students want to discover and share the stories of black history and excellence and be able to take pride in their own cultural traditions at school. Our parent advisor council is eager to support our schools' celebration of the cultural diversity in our midst.

There are many collaborative teaching opportunities where students from different classes and often different grades come together to share, learn and discover. Our staff team has great collegial spirit and are open to new ways of supporting student learning to increase student success and sense of belonging.

We have just moved back to our seismically upgraded school as of February 6, 2023. We spent approximately a year and half at the South Hill swing site. Our learning community is so happy to

be back in our neighborhood. As pandemic restrictions have lifted and we can now gather together we are feeling the great connection between our families and the school team.

Livingstone families are very involved in supporting their children's learning. Livingstone's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) organizes several community building and fundraising activities throughout the school year. Families and school staff at Livingstone work together to prepare our students for success

## 2. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

We see that our students enjoy the opportunity to express their personal views on many social and environmental issues. Students are learning to work effectively in teams to complete projects within their classroom teams and with other classes as well. They are learning to listen to each other in groups and to use respectful language to share different opinions. In all classes our students are presenting their learning to each other and taking pride in their work.

### **Valuing Diversity Strengths**

- Many students are inclusive of others and understand that we are all unique with different needs and a variety of cultural backgrounds.
- We sadly acknowledge that there has been some misguided use of racist language on our playground and we are working to bring kinder more inclusive language to replace these words. We are committed to build our students' appreciation of cultural diversity and provide a safe and respectful environment for all children, families and staff at Livingstone.
- With support students are expanding their understanding and appreciation of our community's diversity in culture, heritage and traditions.
- Despite being able to identify the needs of others, students don't always offer to help as this is still a challenging process for them.

### **Building Relationships Strengths**

- Many students can work and play cooperatively with friends.
- Students can be extremely kind and caring.
- Students are learning to identify and differentiate between healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Students are learning to identify when others need support, and when to seek out school staff.
- Students are learning to have empathy for others and consider how their peers feel.

### **Social Emotional Learning**

- Students are continually learning to monitor their feelings and understand how they impact their learning and social interactions.
- Students are learning to apply coping strategies to manage their feelings and ask for a break when needed.
- Students are learning that big feelings can get in the way of effective problem solving and that they need strategies to calm down before they are able to manage conflict. Seeking an adult for support is often a safe alternative.

### **Adult Learning Journey**

Staff are constantly learning new methods to enhance our students' social emotional learning (SEL) and sense of well-being. Staff acknowledge that effective SEL systems in their classrooms ultimately support student self-regulation and thereby create an environment for greater academic success. Each day staff look to balance their time teaching new learning outcomes while supporting students' SEL needs. We are all at different places in our learning journey, but it is our schoolwide goal to build opportunities for the staff to increase their knowledge and efficacy. We all must create and value the time for student check-ins, class meetings, problem solving discussions and calm spaces for mindful breaks when students need them.

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## **3. WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE LEARNERS?**

We have multiple sources of evidence to gain insight into our learners:

From the Student Learning Survey submitted from grade 4 and 7 students and the Middle Years Development Instrument data from the grade 6s (spring 2023) and 7s (spring 2022 ). From these surveys we can see that the majority of our students have trusted adults at home and at school that they can talk to about problems they are having. They also feel like they are making positive progress in their work habits. The data we have garnered from the Mini Devereux Student Strengths Assessment demonstrates that we have many children in our school community who are able to:

- accept responsibility.
- do something nice for somebody
- speak about positive things
- pay attention
- perform the steps of a task in order
- show care when doing school work
- follow the advice of a trusted adult

We have gathered across primary and intermediate grades in literacy from the Collaborative Early Learning Initiative and from the intermediate literacy folders we have been using since 2021 to assemble a picture of student strengths and needs.

We also have gathered anecdotal evidence from school staff from our professional development sessions in the spring of 2022 and spring of 2023 that looks at areas of strength and needs in our students' areas of learning and our school's culture. We are listening to the voices in our student leadership group to learn what they are passionate about.

#### 4. WHAT IS THE FOCUS FOR OUR COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS BASED ON THE EVIDENCE?

Livingstone will engage in a three-year commitment to a School Wide Positive Behavior Support Model.

##### **Alignment with the Vancouver School Board's Education plan as we will focus on:**

###### **Goal 1**

*The Vancouver School Board will improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by:*

- Improving school environments to ensure they are safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive places for students and families.

###### **Goal 2**

The Vancouver School Board will increase equity by ...

- Eliminating racism and discrimination in all forms.

<https://www.vsb.bc.ca/page/4996/education-plan-2026>

##### **Alignment with the Vancouver School Board's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement Culture and Community**

To increase knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions from all students through eliminating institutional, cultural and individual racism within the Vancouver school district learning communities.

<https://www.vsb.bc.ca/page/5235/aboriginal-education-enhancement-agreement>

##### **A Three Tiered Approach to support all learners:**

When building our **Positive Behaviour Implementation Strategies**, we will use the 3 Tiers approach to teach all students positive social emotional and behavioural skills.

- Tier 1 refers to the teaching and support of all school learners in all settings. <https://www.pbis.org/pbis/tier-1>
- Tier 2 practices and systems provide targeted support for students who are not successful with Tier 1 supports alone. <https://www.pbis.org/pbis/tier-2>
- Tier 3 supports are aimed at supporting individual student needs with additional guidance from District Learning services or outside agencies who will advocate and provide targeted support for the unique needs of a particular student supporting. <https://www.pbis.org/pbis/tier-3>.

As a school community, we will review our Code of Conduct: Be Kind, Be Safe and Be Responsible, and expected behaviours in different settings and scenarios throughout our school. In classrooms and school assemblies we will share proactive lessons regarding behavioral expectations, role modeling and role-playing positive behaviours.

The focus on celebrating and reinforcing positive behaviours will be a great part of our work. Staff, parents, and guardians will continue to learn and provide input into this model, and we will use data via office referrals and staff, parent, and student feedback to inform our strategies

moving forward. Livingstone staff will continue to collect data to learn how we are successful in this endeavor and where we still need to shore up our approach. This social and emotional programming that aligns with the foundation of the Positive Behaviour Support Model and culturally Informed teaching.

We will simultaneously be discovering the rich cultural traditions and stories of our learning community from Kindergarten through grade 7 this year. We hope to build powerful understanding amidst our learners of who the learners are in our community, and what their stories are. First, we will have students explore who they are by speaking to their families to share about their culture, language, traditions and their family's journey to live in the Livingstone community. We will showcase our student diversity throughout our school and celebrate each child's story. We believe this process will help to enrich individual student pride and self-esteem, while simultaneously building an awareness of the unique and varied stories of the children and families in our learning community. We want our children to see that there is great beauty and strength in the many cultural traditions in our school community.

#### **Adult Learning Journey**

- We will be having Adrienne Gear share her strategies from her book, **Powerful Understanding** <https://www.readingpowergear.com/store/powerful-understanding> at our school professional development day on September 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Input from the VSB's district social emotional learning team.
- Comparison of our journey with reference to the First People's Principals of Learning to ensure that we are looking at equity and access for all learners in our work. <https://www.fnesc.ca/first-peoples-principles-of-learning/>

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## 5. INQUIRY QUESTION

**How can we build a positive and safe school culture that celebrates the contributions of all learners to the Livingstone school community, thereby increasing a sense of belonging?**

We recognize that there have been several factors impacting on the social emotional well-being of our learning community. We have all had to navigate the different levels of social isolation during the pandemic which may have impacted our children's social problem-solving skills. Livingstone began its seismic mitigation project during Covid 19 restrictions to the South Hill swing site. Our students demonstrated great resiliency as they adapted to the South Hill school site but we know this was one more change for them to manage. Now that we are back at our home site of Livingstone we are once again learning what it means to share a space that is brand new to many of our younger students and unfamiliar to some of our staff.

As a staff team we have reflected during our professional development sessions on how we would move forward. We believe a social emotional learning goal with a focus on belonging and emphasizing positive behaviour in our school is the appropriate choice at this time. We will continue to develop school wide language to talk about social emotional learning and positive behaviour, and continue to use programs in classrooms such as:

- Mind Up
- Open Parachute
- Zones of Regulation
- PBIS - Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports

## 6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN?

### Mind Up

- teaching about parts of the brain: the Amygdala and Prefrontal cortex
- learning to use mindful strategies to balance our thoughts and find calm moments to ground themselves throughout the school day. <https://mindup.org/>

### Open Parachute

- Mental Health and well-being online lessons for kindergarten to grade 7 students. Teachers access through a district log in code. <https://www.openparachute.ca/>

### Zones of Regulation

- A tool for students from K- 7 to categorize their feelings and talk about coping strategies or self-regulation to manage their feelings in a safe way. *All feelings are good we just need to learn how to be safe when we have them.* <https://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html>

### Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Implementation of the Positive Behaviour Supports:

1. Positive Behaviour Matrices to teach students and guide staff on a what this looks like in key places in our school, to enact Kind, Safe and Responsible behaviour.
2. Celebration and school wide recognition of students who follow the positive behaviour guidelines at assemblies and in communication sent to families.
3. Increased opportunities for student leadership and voice: teaching students how to lead monthly assemblies, student leadership meetings continue, playground leaders, lunchtime buddies.

A systems approach to building positive school wide experiences for all students with an equity lens. Creating culturally responsive discussions about our school community's shared values, beliefs and dreams for all learners to find success. <https://www.pbis.org/resource/pbis-cultural-responsiveness-field-guide-resources-for-trainers-and-coaches>

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## 7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

- We will be having Adrienne Gear share her strategies from her book, Powerful Understanding <https://www.readingpowergear.com/store/powerful-understanding> at our school professional development day on September 25<sup>th</sup>. We want to excite our students' understanding of their own cultural perspectives on the world. By show casing and celebrating each child's unique world view and social experience we believe this will build an appreciation and understanding of the diverse world views and cultural traditions in the Livingstone learning community.
- Input from the VSB's district social emotional learning team.
- Comparison of our journey with reference to the First People's Principles of Learning to ensure that we are looking at equity and access for all learners in our work. <https://www.fnesc.ca/first-peoples-principles-of-learning/>
- Ongoing monthly input from the PBIS Staff advisory team at Livingstone reviewing how we are doing in building a positive and inclusive culture at our school.
- Input from student leadership members, seeking feedback on how our school is building a sense of belonging, safety and pride for our students.
- Input from families through our parent advisory council.

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## 8. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

- We will track the success stories we are hearing from teachers about their classroom experiences, utilizing the Mini Devereux Student Strengths Assessment in the fall and spring, and through anecdotal evidence from all staff.
- We will seek student feedback to have them assess their sense of belonging and emotional safety through class meetings and surveys with students. Asking them how they rate different areas of the school in terms of safety and inclusion. We will seek student feedback in September/October asking them what areas of the school on the map are safe and people are following positive behaviour strategies, which areas are yellow where there is sometimes problems, which areas and times appear could be labeled as red as there are always problems in these areas and students don't always feel safe when their peers aren't being kind, safe or responsible there.
- As a staff we will track what physical areas we are having challenges with around our school and what the issues of concern are with what age/grade groups. These issues of success and concerns will be brought back to the SEL advisory committee and then the larger staff team and parents to look at how we might respond to data. We will continue to look at the information we gather from the Ministry of Education's Student Learning Survey as well.

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## 9. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION?

We will share our progress through classroom communications home to parents on Classroom Teams, emails and school wide newsletters. Students will continue to share daily in their classrooms, and during school wide assemblies.



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

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## 10. WHAT LEARNING HAVE WE DONE AT OUR SCHOOL TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS AND KNOWLEDGE?

- We know that our learners understand that the land our school is situated upon is traditional Indigenous land that was taken by the Canadian government through several traumatic acts of colonialism from our host Nations. Our students are learning about Truth and Reconciliation and that many acts of the Canadian government and the tenants of the Indian Act have hurt Indigenous people in Canada over many generations <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/>. Our desire is for our children to discover the resilience and strength of Indigenous people and how their world views can inform the way we relate to each other and the environment. We want our students to understand that increasing our knowledge of Indigenous ways of knowing this world and understanding the systemic racism they have faced is an act of reconciliation.
- [https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the\\_indian\\_act/](https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_indian_act/)

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## 11. WHAT EVIDENCE OF UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS AND KNOWLEDGE HAVE BEEN FOSTERED WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

- Evidence from teachers regarding classroom learning focus.
- Student's ability to share their learning at monthly assemblies during the land acknowledgement. Students will use this opportunity to share a point of interest they have learned at school about the Local Indigenous Nations (this will a w tradition for us).
- Student knowledge of the host Nations people, land and traditions.



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

We will continue to seek professional development opportunities that enrich our staff knowledge of ways to infuse Indigenous content into daily curriculum. We honor Indigenous perspectives in our classrooms and acknowledge the history of Residential school for Indigenous people in our Country. Children honor Indigenous Residential school survivors by wearing orange shirts to school this fall. We have utilized key anchor texts to introduce the Truth and Reconciliation message to our learners. We continue to seek out Indigenous learning resources that are created by Indigenous people to support our work. We refer to the First Nations Education Steering committee (FNSEC ) <https://www.fnesc.ca/> to guide our choices when acquiring Indigenous materials for our classrooms and library. We strive to emulate the First People's principals of learning in our practice <https://www.fnesc.ca/first-peoples-principles-of-learning/>

The Principles are as follows:

- 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.

They represent an attempt to identify common elements in the varied teaching and learning approaches that prevail within particular First Nations societies. It must be recognized that they do not capture the full reality of the approach used in any single First Peoples' society.