

2022-2023 - Year 1 School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY

wəkʷaṇəs tə syaqʷəm enrolls over 300 students in 14 divisions, from kindergarten to grade 7. Our community is culturally diverse, and families represent a wide range of cultural and linguistic groups. The parents are supportive and actively involved in the school through the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and assisting with activities at home. The students benefit from large support networks, including grandparents who live with them. Teachers work to enrich the experience of students beyond the classroom to include a range of field studies, and student leadership groups.

We have implemented various programs and initiatives to enhance the learning experience. For example, we have a School Garden program that promotes place-based learning, an Artist in Residence program, and a newly built facility. Our staff is attentive to the social and emotional needs of students, and we are fortunate to be close to regional parks, allowing us to utilize community resources like the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE), several local parks and outdoor spaces. The parents are very supportive, and the students demonstrate a cooperative attitude. Our school fosters active engagement and interest from parents and families, creating a multigenerational and multicultural environment.

We value and celebrate the diverse home cultures of our students. We have an Artist in Residence program at our school. We emphasize socially responsible global citizenship through activities such as Terry Fox runs, Orange Shirt Day, UNICEF initiatives, and food bank contributions. Environmental stewardship is also a priority with programs like the Salmon Enhancement Program and the Garden to Table program. Our students are known for their artistic talents, good manners, and respect for each other and school property. The school staff promotes inclusivity and collaboration, creating a supportive and inclusive environment. We celebrate student learning through open houses and portfolios, and we make sure to acknowledge and appreciate the diverse celebrations that reflect our students' heritages, such as Day of the Dead, and Lunar New Year.

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

Strengths:

- Numeric Literacy (ex. number sense, computation), self-awareness of cultural backgrounds, their traditions, strong sense of pop culture and online knowledge (latest trends, video-games), kind, empathetic, caring, creative (ex. art), value education and strong desire to achieve
- Kindergarten students arrive with some readiness skills, although this seems to be decreasing.
- Students are cooperative, and eager to learn and improve reading skills.
- The overall number of designated ELL students seems to be slowly but consistently decreasing over the last few years

We see a need for improvement in areas such as social-emotional, solving peer conflict, self-regulation, with writing historically not as strong as reading ability.

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

Literacy data is gathered from areas such as teacher reports, in-class assessments, school-wide writes, journal samples and reading levels (year-end LA assessments), spring assessment data and CELF data.

In math, students seem better with skills practice (competitive). Verbalizing their thinking and use of mental math strategies are still new to many. Explaining mathematical thinking is a challenge for some of our students. Reading comprehension and writing in the areas of mathematics and other content areas is identified as a need.

We looked at various types of data: street data - what classroom teachers see day to day (ie. what students wear/bring to school for lunch), map data - math quizzes, spelling tests, other formative assessments and satellite data - ex. school wide writes, where we see data across classrooms & grades. From these types of data, we have gathered the following:

- Kindergarten protocol, Observation survey/Reading Recovery results and writing samples tell us that we have gaps in writing, strong decoders but comprehension skills aren't always as strong.
- Phonological awareness assessments indicate that students have letter knowledge but have difficulty to blend/segment sounds, and need more oral language practice

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

How will focusing on teacher learning, collaborative planning and school-wide scope and sequence of skills help to improve student writing skills and confidence across the grades and curriculum?

- Based on collaborative discussions, a common concern was identified in the area of language arts, especially in the area of writing. our community of learners based on the evidence (student behaviour during lessons and student output) Parents report sharing concerns with their children's reading and writing abilities.
- During the process of evaluating the possibility of becoming a CELI school, it became clear that, in addition to supporting early learners with respect to their reading and pre-reading skills, one of the most pressing areas requiring our attention was writing.
- It was decided we should focus on ALL learners based on their specific needs: communication (oral, pictorial, writing) creative thinking, building confidence as writers. Students often say: "I don't know how to write" or "I don't have anything to say".
- Building up student skills and confidence was also identified as an area of need. Students seem to avoid taking risks, appear not to understand story structure, repetitive (sounds like a list), brief (one sentence or one word) difficulty with expanding on ideas in writing.
- Kindergarten students lack phonological and phonemic awareness. They are not familiar with the spelling of their names and we find that they are not being read to at home. We find that the primary students are struggling with being able to express ideas and formulate complete sentence. At the intermediate level, there are concerns with conventions and spelling errors.
- Examples of evidence include writing samples, in-class observations, writing lessons, student journals, writer's workshop, story workshop and writing conferences.
- Early intervention, writing in the primary (K-3); At risk learners; writing samples; kindergarten assessments, literacy data (reading) identifying at risk readers which is reciprocally related to writing
- Strongly connected to students' prior knowledge and interest; favouring non-fiction writing, lack of awareness of purpose/audience; fine motor challenges which impact the mechanics of writing

5. INQUIRY QUESTION

Inquiry Question

How will focusing on teacher learning, collaborative planning and school-wide scope and sequence of skills help to improve student writing skills and confidence across the grades and curriculum?

- Our inquiry question is related to student progress in writing. We are curious to determine through assessment and evaluation where our students are regarding creative and content-based writing. We hope to discover if a school-wide focus on student writing, as well as a systematic focus on teacher learning will have a positive impact on student confidence as well as basic writing skills.
- We have a hunch that factors such as too much time spent on devices and screens, students shorted attention spans, busy families with students 'overscheduled' for activities outside the home after school, as well as the impact of the global pandemic have all had a negative impact on students acquiring and using basic writing skills.
- Our learning community got here by previously focusing on reading skills that resulted in our school committing to becoming a CELI school. As part of the preparation for deciding to become a CELI school. Now the focus is on writing, but it is subjective when it comes to assessment. We have more resources and access to support students with their reading skills but resources in writing is more limited.
- The most important work we can do to improve success for our students is by being creative in our teaching, collaborating with colleagues, reconsidering assessment practices and providing prompt feedback. We should also consider what we are using for assessments (e.g. checklists, rubrics) so that there is some consistency within the school. We would like our students to be reflective of their learning and to set goals to improve their writing.

6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN?

Leadership Actions

1. Collaborative grade groups to look at: assessment and evaluation practices, support the development of teaching and learning activities to address the wide range of student need and ability in classrooms (e.g. UDL).
2. CT/RT/SSA teams to work together to support all students to access learning opportunities with specific attention given to those students requiring support to successfully access the curriculum.
3. Work with Pro D Committee to plan activities that support teacher learning as it relates to our inquiry question.
4. Teacher Book Study to learn and implement the activities (See two titles listed below).
5. Collaboration among staff will ensure scope and sequence expectations for each grade are communicated among staff members and provide a framework for learning and goal setting.

Year One Focus

1. Assessment practices to determine where students currently are with respect to their writing.
2. Develop and share rubrics for student assessment.
3. Continue focus on improving Communicating Student Learning process and practices to better help students and parents understand: “Where am I now? Where am I going? What do I need to get there?”
4. Focus on expressive oral language: If a student can’t say it they can’t write it.

Year Two Focus

1. Teaching and learning opportunities driven by teacher assessment and evaluation.
2. Build student capacity through student self-evaluation.

Year Three Focus

1. Explore the extent to which a school-wide scope and sequence plan for writing across the grades would promote student learning.
2. Explore teaching and learning resources along with a procurement plan supported through school-based funding.

7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

New Areas of Learning

1. Assessment for Learning focus to improve teacher learning and capacity.
2. Teaching and learning activities developed using the framework of Universal Design for Learning.
3. Student self-evaluation as it relates to specific writing skills.
4. Improving consistent practice when communicating student learning in order to facilitate parent understanding of student progress.

Resources and Professional Development

1. Six Plus One Writing Traits; Ruth Cullum
2. Writing Power: Teaching Writing Strategies That Engage Thinking
3. Teacher release time to support collaboration

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

We will track student progress through:

- Ongoing, daily assessment of student progress
- Student work
- Student self-reports (self-assessment)
- Base-line data such as school-wide write and written reports

We will adjust teaching as necessary based on the above reports.

9. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION? (CHECKING)

We will share our progress with respect to student and teacher learning in this area through a variety of methods:

- Regular ongoing communications with parents (Communicating Student Learning)
- Whole school events such as celebrations of learning
- Parent/Teacher/Student conferences
- Reports to PAC from Principal and from teachers regarding School Plan progress



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

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

The following reflects the various cross-curricular learning opportunities which reflect embedded activities of reconciliation at wəkwə́nəs tə syaqwəm.

- Pro-D: Anti-racism, Indigenous environment (New Brighton Park) (Hastings Park - Lori Snyder), Indigenous Hoop Dancers, Indigenous workshop (at the start of COVID; district-wide)
- Events: Orange shirt day
- Salmon enhancement program
- The Talking Stick Program
- Core competencies (animals & six cedars)
- First Peoples' Posters
- Library - Indigenous book displays, reading stories by Indigenous authors
- Staff with Indigenous background read stories
- Indigenous acknowledgement (land)
- Indigenous Pro-D run by district
- Drum making, beading workshop, singing workshops
- Guest speakers
- Aboriginal story telling
- Morning read-alouds w themes of Indigeneity
- Performances
- field trips such as UBC MOA
- Artist in resident program planning to go on nature walk with Indigenous elder/guide to learn about local flora and fauna,
- Enhancing Garden Club through the use and care of the indigenous rain garden
- Learn about Indigenous artists through VanArt Gallery virtual workshops,
- both a district and school wide pro-d on anti-racism,
- including first peoples' perspectives in math and art through discussions about indigenous shapes, colours - medicine wheel

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

- Intermediate classes – learning about residential school
- Students respectful of the environment
- Nature walks / time spent outdoors
- Students respectful of others, accepting
- Cedar workshop / Bannock making
- Understanding of Indigeneity (worldview & knowledge) is interwoven in Science Probe textbooks, Social Studies textbooks, What in the World readings
- Lots of resources in the library
- Indigenous Land Acknowledgements
- Integration of aboriginal ways of knowing are embedded in class meetings, social studies units, science, sharing language (Indigenous words translated into English)
- Healthy Habits of Mindfulness that reflects the First Peoples belief in balance between mental, physical, social, spiritual parts of the self
- Artist In Residence integrated art with concepts of bio-diversity and the Medicine Wheel
- our salmon enhancement program brings in the importance and respect of nature of the environment
- school name change reflects students' sense of place and aboriginal culture
- students can identify various Indigenous vocabulary and concepts when discussing traits of animals, indigenous shapes, the meaning of orange shirt day, etc.
- Students recite the land acknowledgment

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

- Pro-D
- Bringing in experts / speakers / elders in the community
- Opportunity to collaborate
- Opportunities to collect school wide data (students)
- Commitment to use more Indigenous authors
- PAC - connect / collaborate with PAC for more opportunities (funding)
- Pro-d: lots of different voices represented (leaders/students)
- Field trips, guest speakers, activities/ideas that we can weave into our everyday
- Acknowledgment of land at the beginnings of meetings
- Use of existing materials (ie textbooks) that represent Indigenous voices & perspectives
- Renaming of our school (even though we don't have a say in this)
- Post the Indigenous land acknowledgment posted in every classroom in the school
- Planting native plants for new school landscaping that have traditional importance
- A formal traditional blessing of our new school
- Follow up with students regarding why we have the land acknowledgment
- Discuss place names - new build renaming
- Continue to invite artists and speakers to classrooms
- Continue to work with VSB Indigenous Education Department for speakers and presenters