



General School Story:

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, current school plans have been carried forward to the 2021/22 school year. This plan has been updated with data from the current 2020-2021 school year.

Renfrew School, with its majestic view from the top of Rupert hill across to the North Shore Mountains, is an old and well-respected school that has been a part of the Renfrew Collingwood neighbourhood since 1928. Many of the local residents attended Renfrew as children and their children or grandchildren now attend our school. A good number of our families live in detached houses with grandparents residing with them or helping provide childminding support. We also have many families that live outside our neighbourhood school catchment that choose to attend Renfrew or one of our district programs. Our enrollment is approximately 480 students between our neighbourhood-310 students, Montessori- 160 students and Social Emotional Learning Centre (SELC) – 6 students) programs. About 81% of our students are Canadian-born students. Furthermore, we are fortunate to have students from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds: 50% of our families identify themselves as English speaking households; 50% of our population list one of 22 other languages as their home language. The largest of our other language group speakers is Chinese languages/dialectics at 25%, 6% Tagalog or Filipino dialectics the next most commonly spoken language. Renfrew families are very supportive of our school and we continue to work at improving communication and parent participation. Our PAC is actively involved in our school community by holding monthly meetings and fundraising. Renfrew is part of the Windermere Family of Schools. After School Programs are provided at Renfrew by the Community Links Team (CST).

The Renfrew staff is dedicated to creating a positive and supportive learning environment that values and respects the self-worth and uniqueness of each individual. Students are supported to help them reach their full potential intellectually and in their development of the core competencies. Students have utilized technology in their learning by accessing the school FuturePLAY Lab for STEAM activities (science, technology, engineering, art and math), using laptops and iPads, Smartboards in some classrooms and robotics kits. Our FuturePLAY Lab became fully functional in January 2021 and is a huge asset to the school and student learning. This lab is a room that teachers can book to bring students to engage in a myriad of STEAM related activities. The room is equipped with many resources including a laptop cart containing 30 laptops, moveable furniture that includes tables that can be used as whiteboards, Microbits, Edison Bots and a variety of seating options.

Renfrew offers students the opportunity to take on many service and leadership roles within the school and during non-COVID times provides access to many extra - curricular activities in sport, music, drama and creativity. Our students are responsible and socially conscious. They can be counted on to positively contribute to the school and greater community through their participation in service and initiatives. In their learning, students are engaged and they follow our school Code of Conduct, with a focus on taking care of themselves, each other and the community. Anti-racist education has been top of mind, anti-racist activities interwoven with much of what we do.

In the area of literacy, many students are competent in the areas of decoding. They may have difficulty with using comprehension strategies that go deeper into the reading material. When doing written assignments students may follow simple sentence structures and utilize limited vocabulary. As many of our students speak another language at home and are English Language Learners (ELL), we continue to work at expanding their vocabulary and opportunities to communicate with adults and peers in a variety of settings. We are wanting to deepen students' understanding of language and background knowledge by providing more hands-on experiences and learning opportunities that take them outside of the classroom. We are attempting to spark greater enthusiasm for inquiry-based learning in order to increase student engagement and participation. We are looking to provide more opportunities for our students to connect with one another and collaborate in meaningful ways. Resource teachers are working collaboratively to establish a culture of continuous formative assessment to inform our practice.

This year all classroom teachers used the Communicating Student Learning Tool to report to parents. Resource Teachers develop Competency Based Individualized Education Plans (CB - IEP) for all students with Ministry designations.

We have identified our inquiry question as: How can we use reading data to improve instruction in the area of reading comprehension? Our focus has included establishing criteria for learning activities and making learning visible for all students by communicating why we are engaging activities and assisting students in identifying where there are now in a particular area of learning, where they are going, and how they are going to get there. Skills are taught and utilized in authentic application within projects. Teachers speak with students about the fact that improving reading comprehension will positively impact all curricular areas and core competencies. Our school focus and plan align with the VSB Strategic Plan and the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement.

2a. What did we see?

Assessment data indicates approximately 7% of our students are at the beginning stage of proficiency in language arts and 6% are at the beginning/developing stages of proficiency in language arts. What do we see?

- Many students have trouble going deeper into an issue (analyzing, inferring, etc.) and answering higher level analytical or synthesis types of questions and thinking about their reading in a meaningful way.
- Students continue to find it difficult to create thought provoking questions.

In 2020-2021 we worked to develop and implement:

- building vocabulary in and outside classroom will help with reading comprehension; exposure to language, especially vocabulary will increase understanding
- listening comprehension to accommodate early readers (early primary students first experiencing school, need time to adjust and learn skills to listen, read and comprehend)
- students developing patience when asking and responding to questions
- explicitly teaching reading comprehension skills and emphasizing the impact of these skills in all learning activities, in all subject areas; strategies include providing more opportunities for “thinking aloud”
- more project and inquiry-based learning
- opportunities for students to be able to express their learning in a variety of ways
- targeted reading instruction including guided reading, novel studies, literacy centres, Adrienne Gear’s Reading Power and Powerful Understanding, phonological awareness instruction
- using Adrienne Gear’s strategies to develop listening skills (Connecting, Visualizing etc.)
- teachers focusing on scaffolding and using questions to engage learners
- differentiating instruction
- teaching students about the beginning, middle, end
- teaching students to use the finger retell visual
- providing instruction and practice for students in finding the main idea and details for non-fiction
- students working in small groups and pairs using oral language
- incorporating oral storytelling and narrative text that reflect our school’s different cultural perspectives and select materials with content or main characters that our students can relate to and are culturally representative

2b. What do we need to re-adjust?

- Our goal will remain the same for our third year.
- We will continue to focus on social emotional learning to increase comfort levels in order to increase participation and to amplify student voice.
- Continue to look for opportunities for the diverse cultures and experiences of our students to be represented as a way to engage students more deeply in their learning.
- Teachers may begin a book club to look more deeply at reading comprehension and aligning practice.
- Primary and intermediate teachers will determine which assessments will be used to determine progress in this goal and when the assessments will be administered (May 2021)
- We will continue to work with our students on meaningful and on-going self-assessments and contributions to CSL reports.

Inquiry Question (previously known as “Goal”)

We are going to continue with our year 1 inquiry question:
How can we use reading data to improve instruction in the area of reading comprehension?

What is your new plan?

We would like to continue to focus on reading comprehension for all learners. Our activities for year two will include:

- Devote time at staff, resource, primary and intermediate meetings to discuss progress, and adjust/refine our practice accordingly.
- Explore the possibility of a book club with a focus on comprehension and aligning strategies
- Discuss common language that can be used to teach reading in intermediate, primary and resource meetings.
- Teach and use common language about reading comprehension.
- Align and further investigate ways to assess reading comprehension (MAZE, DAZE, CARS, RAD etc.)
- Reflect and review progress of previous years and current context and adjust accordingly.
- Focus on vocabulary development.
- Enhance and highlight student voice and passions to further engage them in their learning.
- Opportunities to work with parents to learn how to engage their child in comprehension-related activities.
- In September send material home to families of Kindergarten and Grade 1 students that parents can use when reading with their child at home.
- Consider sending home reading visuals home for families at the primary level.
- Group students of similar ability across classes for more intensive resource support.

What supports will we need?

- Continue to discuss our school goal as a regular agenda item during staff, primary, intermediate and resource meetings.
- Continue to support and encourage staff collaboration.
- Consider using school Pro-D days and other opportunities such as Lunch & Learn activities to explore reading comprehension and assessment strategies. Explore the possibility of a further professional development with Adrienne Gear.
- Continue to enhance our book collections and teaching resources to reflect our multicultural and diverse population.
- We continue to participate in the CELI Project (Collaborative Early Literacy Intervention) Project that includes Reading Recovery.
- Continued commitment to UDL and a resource model that utilizes Response to Intervention.
- Staff is committed to developing skills and knowledge in Universal Design for Learning and continue to attend and provide workshops.
- In the 2021-2022 school year, continue to provide the following supports for our struggling learners, while aligning with COVID-19 guidelines: support to student through One to One Literacy, Reading Recovery, extra 1 to 1 time with teachers, SSA support, on-going communication with parents, utilizing different strategies and differentiating instruction, Learning Buddies program and SEL tools/tool kits.

How will we know we're successful?

- We will continue to collect assessment data; this data will include data collected from the school wide assessments, classroom/resource room assessment and CSL report card data. These results will be analyzed to determine where we are now, where we are going, and how we are going to get there. Data will be compared from term to term and year to year.
- We will continue to look at the results during Staff Committee meetings to help adjust our plans as we proceed.

How will we share?

All progress and achievement made on our focus will be shared through:

- Communicating Student Learning Conferences
- Celebrations of Learning
- Social Media/digital platforms - emails, school website, class blogs, Fresh Grade
- PAC meetings and Parent Information Nights/Workshops
- School Assemblies
- School Displays and Bulletin Boards
- School Newsletters



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?

- There are a number of Indigenous students at Renfrew Elementary both at the primary and intermediate level.
- All of the students are making gains in their learning.

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

- Renfrew School celebrates diversity and recognizes cultural identity. By celebrating the similar but unique aspects of cultures represented in our school we are able to relate to the experiences of others. This includes relating our family immigrant history to that of the First Peoples' experience with early European settlers.
- We continue to focus on the principles of the Aboriginal Ways of Knowing: learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors; learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational-focus on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place; 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 and learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.
- Every student participated in activities around Orange Shirt Day in September 30, 2020. All staff participated in an Indigenous Focus Day in November 2020. As a result of this powerful learning, Renfrew established an Anti-Racism Committee to focus on continuing professional learning and conversation.
- Each morning and at all assemblies, we formally acknowledge those whose unceded traditional territories we live, work and play on. Students have been taught to respond to this acknowledgement with their arms raised and responding verbally with "huy ch q'u" thank you in the Halkomelem language of the Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh Coast Salish People.
- During the 2020-2021 school year, many classes have had the opportunity for students to write their own, individualized acknowledgements. These acknowledgements are shared as artwork in the halls and given by students at the beginning of school events. This work will continue in 2021-2022.
- There have been many examples of learning opportunities such as nature walks, sharing circles, music listening, drum-making and song sharing with Davita Marsden (VSB) and Indigenous Storyteller Kung Jaadee's Haida Stories video modules.
- Staff utilized a portion of their learning resources funds to purchase books for student guided reading with Indigenous content and voice. At the primary level, 'Raven Tales' and 'Strong Readers' are used in support of this goal.
- Teachers and students read Indigenous novels and picture books which lead to greater understanding and appreciation for Indigenous culture.
- The use of oral storytelling interwoven in classrooms to share experiences, build connections and deepen understanding of Indigenous tradition and culture.
- Library resource purchases continue to focus on Indigenous content and voice.
- Two of our Grade 3/4 and 2/3 classes learned about Indigenous history and culture from their experience of raising and releasing salmon back into their natural environments.
- Many classes participated in outdoor learning opportunities that included discussions of Indigenous culture and our connectedness to the land.
- Many opportunities for our students to experience and create Indigenous art.
- Many of our classes learned about the origins and cultural significance of oral storytelling and its role in Indigenous culture.

What will WE continue to do in this area?

School Staff will continue to facilitate the following initiatives:

- Artistic initiatives (art, drumming, classroom cultural experiences etc.)
- All gatherings, assemblies and our daily morning announcements will begin with an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement
- Experiential learning opportunities that build connections and relationships with Indigenous culture (salmon raising, field trips, nature walks and sharing circles)
- Student leadership opportunities (community, school service, school initiatives)
- Building family connections and community outreach (PAC support, Welcome to Kindergarten, Ready-Set-Learn, parent and student focus groups)
- Instructional strategies and accessing cultural resources. Our librarian will continue to purchase more Indigenous-focused material based on VSB lists.
- Continue to complete Aboriginal Success Plan for all our Aboriginal students
- Indigenous Education professional development
- Focus on Aboriginal Principles of Learning
- Identify ways to help students, staff and parents see that our Aboriginal goal goes beyond serving Indigenous students only and is designed to develop everyone's understanding of all Indigenous contributions to Canadian culture.

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

- Aboriginal Cultural Enhancement activities are shared and communicated through assemblies, newsletters, displays and through formal and informal student reports.
- Positive attitudes and experiences are also communicated by students in self assessments.
- All families have had the opportunity to meet formally with staff throughout the year (administration, teachers, support workers and Youth and Family workers).