



Vancouver School District

School Plan for Sir Alexander Mackenzie Elementary

Year 1: 1 of 3 Year Plan, 2021 - 2022

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY (TO BE UPDATED EACH YEAR)

Sir Alexander Mackenzie Elementary is in an urban, culturally diverse and caring community. The student enrollment for the 2021- 2022 school year was 427 students. Mackenzie has a diverse student population with several different languages being spoken at home with several students on individualized programs. We also have District personnel and an amazing Life Skills Class on site. The beautiful older building was built in 1930. Projections for the 2021 – 2022 school year indicates stability in student numbers.

Students in our catchment area continue to enter Kindergarten with some ‘vulnerability’ as reported in the Early Developmental Inventory (EDI) and also with the Middle Years (MDI). These areas of vulnerability include social, emotional, physical, language, and communication domains. Mackenzie utilizes a Resource Team Model that successfully reduces these identified ‘vulnerability rates’ for many of our students, especially those with more needs. Our ELL students also receive excellent support in English Language acquisition through collaborative efforts of Classroom and Resource Teachers.

Mackenzie’s Strong Start Program is a Ministry of Education initiative that promotes the integration of three and four-year-old children into the school community with the inclusion of parents as active participants in the daily morning sessions.

The Mackenzie staff enjoys a collaborative work environment with several committees that meet regularly to discuss direction, budget needs, and cooperative teaching such as: platooning, resource support, curriculum planning, and assessment practices. Our School Based Team (SBT) also meets regularly to discuss the learning needs of individual students who have been referred by classroom teachers.

Mackenzie Elementary has been fortunate to have established strong partnerships with our parents. Mackenzie’s Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is very supportive and actively involved within the school and larger community, which benefits all. Mackenzie also has strong ties to our Community Links Team through John Oliver Secondary, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, and other agencies offering numerous opportunities for our students. In addition to other community agencies we also have onsite before and after school care provided by the YMCA.

With many parents involved in organizing and participating in school activities, the varied cultural groups all contribute to the Mackenzie mosaic with many families viewing the school as a positive and integral part of the community.

Through professional dialogue, Mackenzie staff, while still embracing the variety of curriculum, have agreed to the focus on: Strengthening a sense of belonging with a focus on resilience among all members of our school community and to increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness, and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.

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

(SCANNING)

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Our world is rapidly changing and research demonstrates that people who have a strong sense of belonging as well as those who have developed a strong sense of resilience, demonstrate greater creativity and flexibility, and a solid sense of self while navigating our world. The Covid pandemic has demonstrated the human need to truly belong, especially in a time where we have largely had to stay apart. A large base of the BC Curriculum focusses on Social-Emotional instruction, and the staff would like to work towards developing a deeper sense of belonging in the Mackenzie community. Due to starting off the school year coming off of the first Covid experience in the Spring, staff missed their students. Conversations started in the Spring regarding how we could bring people together again. In September, all staff and students worked together to great a very large “We Are All Together” decorated paper chain that is looped throughout our main hall for each individual to be represented in a whole community. Students and staff also readily participated in our Kindness Tree that frames our main entrance. The tree is decorated with leaves of random acts of kindness that have been noted around the school.

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

(SCANNING)

In the Spring of 2020, Mackenzie Elementary came together for the first community act of kindness by holding a Covid safe community Used Blanket and Towel Drive to benefit the B.C.S.P.C.A. In the fall of 2020, Mackenzie again held a Covid community bonding event, this time a Clothing Drive that benefitted two organizations, Employ To Empower and the Triage shelter. We also started outreach to our immediate community making and delivering Valentine’s Day cards to our neighbours and senior care homes. Letters, cards, emails, phone calls, and participant/receiver interactions have strengthened our belief in our Mackenzie Dragons community. During the Covid world wide pandemic, we have searched for ways where we can be together as Mackenzie Dragons, yet still be safely physically apart. Students, staff, and parents are feeling this centering need to belong.

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

We will be focusing as a school community as a whole, that we are all in this together, and every individual deeply matters as a Mackenzie community member. We are all interconnected in our actions, as well as consequences. Every person needs to be seen and valued.

Our goal directly connects with the VSB's District Strategic Goals; "To create a culture of care and shared responsibility", "Build Capacity in our community through strengthening collective leadership", and "Engage our learners through innovative teaching and learning practices."

This goal focus also connects to the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement's goal of

Belonging: To increase Aboriginal students's sense of pride, self-esteem, belonging, place, acceptance and caring in their schools.

This goal is directly linked with the BC Curriculum's core competencies of communication, thinking, and personal and social competence.

Adult learning and student learning is symmetrical. This focus and inquiry will benefit all in our school community.

5. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING)

How can we strengthen a sense of belonging with a focus on resilience among all members of our school community? Two years ago, we began a School Spirit Club student and staff committee. This year we began a School Culture Committee with staff, looking at where we are and where we want to go. The School Spirit Committee and the School Culture Committee work together in looking at and creating opportunities for Mackenzie Elementary to strengthen our sense of belonging as a whole, from Kindergarten to Grade 7 inclusively. We will be looking into how we can build on this base to strengthen our individual and collective sense of belonging.

6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

Mackenzie will be diving into Anti-Racism training directly at the start of the year as well as starting with an individual student survey to help gain data to gauge where we as a school community are at. This data will help guide us to where we need to go. Depending on Covid health and safety protocols, we will be exploring where we are in September 2021, and how we can move deeper into strengthening our Sense Of Belonging. We will continue to build and grow on what we have started this year.

7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

- Full school team professional development
- VSB Strategic Plan
- Kindness Counts and the Virtue Project
- Growing resources in our Learning Commons
- VSB and Provincial SEL programming and Resources
- BC Curriculum Core Competencies and performance scales
- Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement

8. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK? (CHECKING)

- Street data collection
- Student, staff, and parents interviews, stories, and artifacts
- Beginning of the year student survey/End of the year student survey analyses
- Ongoing School Culture Committee and School Spirit Club meetings throughout the year
- Partner, small group, large group discussions and gathering of feedback

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

- Student Announcers from the Spirit Club (K-7) will continue
- Celebrating and sharing through letters home, the school website, classroom teacher and parent communication, as well as PAC Meetings
- Discussions with PAC Executive
- CSL reporting and student conferences
- Classroom and Resource activities shared home through Teams and communication home



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?

- We will continue to track individual progress through AIMS, class evaluations, and general school expectations. We are always open to providing additional resources/support/enrichment through school, district, and external sources.
- We will continue to build awareness and appreciation for Indigenous cultures, traditions, and histories both with our Indigenous learners and the entire student body. It was through collaborative discussions with staff that we recognized many of our students have limited knowledge or experience with Indigenous people.
- Additionally, we believe that Indigenous cultures are rich resources of history, culture, and language that can benefit all our students and staff. We hope that our Indigenous learners will be considered co-partners in our desire to raise awareness of issues specific to their lives and to help create a more inclusive learning environment.

11. WHAT EVIDENCE OF UNDERSTANDING OF INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS AND KNOWLEDGE HAVE BEEN FOSTERED WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY? PLEASE SHARE HOW IT IS EMBEDDED THROUGHOUT.

- Continued class team teaching with our Indigenous Worker
- A staff Resource teacher has completed her Masters program in Indigenous Education and is a strong on site daily resource
- Continuous school-wide team teaching and resources through our Teacher Librarian and the Learning Commons
- Student Art installation on Reconciliation (Project Heart) is now complete and beautifully framed. It's presence graces our main hallway
- Schoolwide online performance Th'owxiya: The Hungry Feast Dish
- Primary Resource Indigenous Guided Reading Program
- Incorporated Indigenous crafts, cultural practices, and histories into Resource, classrooms, and the Learning Commons
- Staff have participated in District Professional Development centered on Anti-Racism, the Truth and Reconciliation process, and Indigenous teachings and learnings
- Integration of Indigenous art and teachings into the curriculum for all classes
- Improved awareness of the contributions, diversity, and some of the challenges for Indigenous peoples
- Improved achievement for Indigenous students (report cards, guided reading, test results)
- Greater understanding of some historical challenges for Indigenous students and how we can work to dispel myths and misinformation across all grades
- Students positively engaged in learning about Indigenous customs
- Greater awareness of cultural commonalities and transference of knowledge
- Linking Indigenous learning with each student's cultural background
- Picture books and novel unit studies
- Embedding Indigenous knowledge throughout cross-curricular school subjects
- Increased understanding and visual participation in Orange Shirt Day
- Increase of lessons being taught outside in Nature (Memorial Park) incorporating Indigenous teachings
- Incorporation of the Seven Sacred Teachings
- Drumming sessions with our Indigenous Worker

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

- Incorporate more Indigenous print and electronic teaching aids into class instruction
- Continue liaison with UBC Indigenous partnership (e.g. Museum of Anthropology)
- Utilize Indigenous community members for presentations/workshops
- Continue to support many aspects of the Reconciliation program
- Continue to add more First Nations art, music, and dancing into our programs
- Use Experiential Outdoor Education as a vehicle to teach connections between nature and academic learning
- Utilize our brand new outdoor learning classroom
- Infusing First Peoples Principles Of Learning throughout our school day
- Support “Aboriginal Worldviews & Perspectives in the Classroom: Moving Forward”
- Continue to use the AIMS instrument to track progress of our Indigenous learners
- Encourage staff who are involved in Indigenous education both here at school and through the University to share their passion and expertise
- Continue to add to our collection of print and electronic Indigenous material
- Utilize the skills and passion of our Indigenous Support Worker, our District Principal of Indigenous Education