

## 2022-2023 - Year 1 School Learning Plan

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

Our community is made up of a diverse range of learners and families. We have students from a mix of socio-economic families. The community is comprised of a mixture of older and new single-family dwellings, moderate to high-priced rental units, and cooperative and subsidized housing projects. Many of our students speak multiple languages. At present we have over 34 home languages in our school community. Cook Elementary presently enrolls 460 students.

Cook is a school with students that are proud of their community. The Cook students are fierce advocates for each other and are very supportive. We are a Tier 2 Enhanced Services (formerly Inner-City) school. We have a great deal of need at our school: students who live in poverty, with special needs, trauma, a large refugee population and more. The Cook community is diverse, strong and beautiful. Our students create amazing projects within our school and out in the community. We have a very active student body that loves to make our community and the world better!

The school, which has been identified as meeting District vulnerability criteria, receives Community School Team (CST) Enhanced Services, which also provides a full-time Youth & Family Worker (YFW) as well as a large number of after-school Killarney CST (KCST) programming support. Through Enhanced Services, various grants and the KCST, Cook has been able to offer additional school programs such as a Weekly Grocery program, Cold Lunch Program, District Literacy Teacher, five One-to-One Readers, Arts Umbrella, Lego, Games and Arts & Crafts, and Kidsafe.

We are also fortunate to have a thriving StrongStart Centre for families with children ages 0-5 that operates daily every morning at Cook. In addition, Cook practices The Early Intervention Model and Reading Recovery programming.

At Cook we “Take care of ourselves, take care of others and take care of this place.” We are in the midst of decolonizing our practices. From community meetings taking place outside and in a circular fashion to a food security program that is overwhelmed with need, our literacy program has made huge strides with our reading rates and we celebrate student achievement and participation with a Hands Across the School initiative.

Our learners are eager to participate in school life beyond the classroom. We have had several successful student initiatives: Chess club, Uno club, Origami club, Languages Club, multiple fundraisers and more have all been student created and run. We have highly attended sports teams: basketball, cross-country, volleyball and track and field. We also host Global Citizens, Gardening, High Tech, High Touch Science programs, HUB cycling, the LEAD program, our Dance program, Library monitors, Playground Leaders,

Student Leadership Committee, Buddy Classes, Daily Announcements, and much more. High participation in these areas tells us that our students are eager for opportunities to be leaders in their community. Of course, none of this could happen without the support of our engaged staff.

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

Our learners are strong, resilient and loyal. Our students are creative, hard-working, collaborative and self-starters. We are a student-centered school with countless opportunities for leadership, participation, and action in our school community. Our students also need an intense amount of support. Our diverse learners require academic and social-emotional support. We view everything in our school through a trauma-informed lens.

Our literacy rates are on the rise! We identified a serious deficit in literacy rates schoolwide. Our reading group intervention has experienced incredible success and students are engaged and motivated to improve. The data tells us that we are making a difference and the intervention is working to improve overall literacy in our school. We utilize BAS (Benchmark Assessment System) assessments to collect literacy data for all of our students.

We track student behavioural issues with “Think Sheets” where students are encouraged to describe what happened, how they could have done something different, and what they plan to do next time. These are collected and reviewed by administration to help plan our monthly community meetings. This approach ensures that students are learning from their actions. As a school, we utilize restorative practice rather than taking a punitive approach to support for students

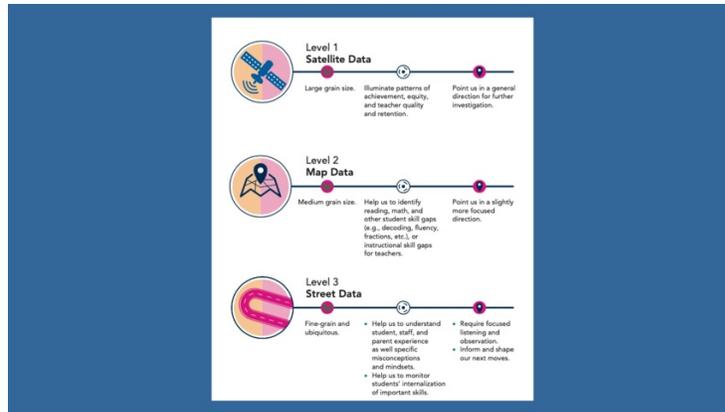
Student voice is honoured here at Cook. We have a staff that is inclusive and willing to provide opportunities for those that seek it out. You can witness student voice throughout our school.

Our Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) survey results show that we are below the Vancouver average for students who identify as “thriving” and students who feel like they have an adult they trust in our school. This is something that we want to prioritize immediately. Interestingly, the same survey shows us that our students view themselves at a higher rate of empathetic behaviour than the rest of Vancouver schools. The survey also informed us that while 87% of our students feel a medium or high sense of belonging, we have 13% of our students who have a Low sense of belonging. We would like to improve that over the next couple of years.

### 3. WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE LEARNERS? (SCANNING)

We are also focused on Street Data which is “asset based, building on the tenets of culturally responsive education by helping educators look for what’s *right* in our students, schools and communities instead of seeking out what’s *wrong*.”

Student voice is critical to our success at Cook, “Equity is first and foremost pedagogical. We must democratize knowledge and rebuild a pedagogy of student voice.” (Safir, Street Data)



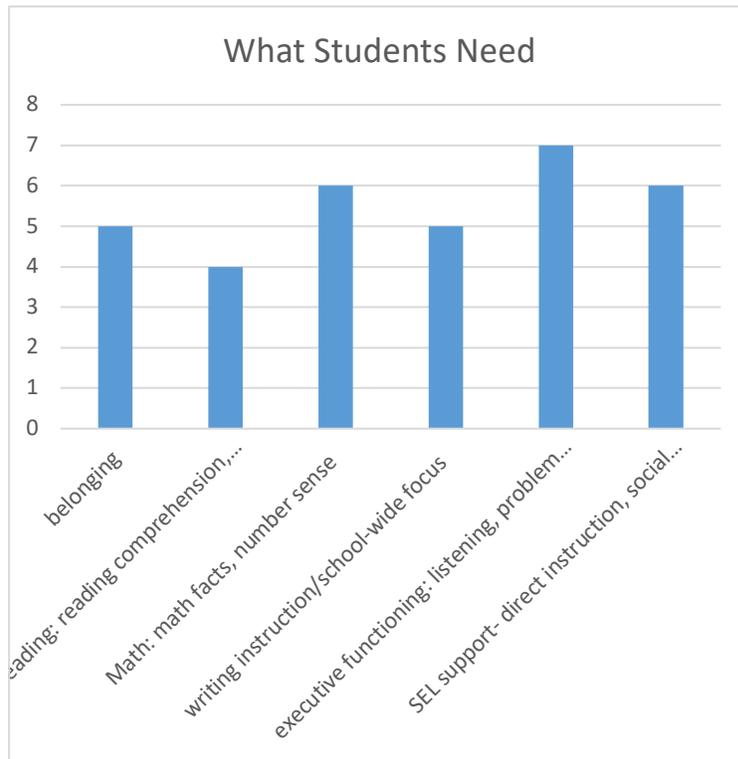
Satellite Data: MDI, Student Learning Survey

Our satellite data tells us that Cook school is having a positive impact in the community. Our student, parent and staff feedback is generally successful with positive points of emphasis on feeling safe at school and empathy.

Map Data: BAS assessments, Guided reading, Reading Recovery

Our Map data identified a deficit in literacy. We have prioritized this as a point of emphasis school-wide and our data tells us that we are making rapid improvement! We track every students’ literacy progress through BAS assessments and with Guided Reading groups. For students at least one year behind in reading, we have been able to bring students back up to grade level and beyond. This will continue to be a point of emphasis for years to come and we hope to integrate a schoolwide numeracy intervention in the next year or two as well.

Street Data: Class reviews, School Based Team meetings, Community Meetings, Hands Across the School program, Think Sheets, Playground Leader feedback, Counsellor demand/load, student engagement with sports, clubs and other activities.



The graph data comes from scanning sessions with staff members. We collected information and data at the end of the year to make staffing decisions and decide on a resource model.

We are seeing great student engagement at Cook. Most students participate in a club, team, activity here at the school. This is something that we can gather more data on this year as we understand what makes students happy and engaged here. Several students have asked to start clubs and activities at Cook over the last two years and we look to support that student leadership as much as we can. We want to honour student voice and provide as many opportunities for leadership and feedback as we possibly can.

What stands out the most in our data collection at all levels; students, staff, community is that our population needs literacy support.

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

“Creating a space where kids feel safe means that we must create a space where we share power. One can let go of power without letting go of control.” (Minor, We Got This)

The data tells us that we need to improve our literacy rates. We have seen steady growth with our Guided Reading program and we will continue to focus on our students who are struggling with literacy. We are targeting students who are two years below grade level in reading. As we see progress and improvement based in our BAS assessment data, our focus will split to improving our student writing which has been noted by staff members as another area that needs attention.

**Our literacy focus connects to the Vancouver School Board Education Plan goals.** The VSB is committed to improving student achievement, “increasing literacy, numeracy and deep critical, and creative thinking.” With improved literacy rates we are also confident that community well-being will be reflected in this improvement. Our students will gain confidence through their successes.

**Our literacy goal connects to the VSB goal of increasing equity by** “eliminating gaps in achievement and outcomes among students”. Our most vulnerable students are often in need of literacy support as they have not had access to support. Our goal is to focus on our most vulnerable population and provide those extra supports to engage them in every subject and activity in the school.

Finally, through our literacy focus students can access more information to “increase knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions.”

**Our literacy focus also connects to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement goals of Belonging, Mastery and Culture and Community.** While we must be aware of not colonizing our practices in literacy education, improving our literacy rates schoolwide will have a ripple effect on our Indigenous education practices, as well as our Indigenous students. Our literacy efforts focus on inclusion and equity practices and will connect to improving the sense of belonging in our school community. We can utilize this improved literacy to connect with 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.” We can identify success as we “Focus on individual student academic success through the use of Student Success Plans which are completed three times during each school year.” Our focus on reconciliatory practices in decolonizing our school will not only meet the Education Plan goals set out by the VSB but it will also aid in improving the mental health and overall health of all our students.

**This focus is also interconnected with the BC curriculum; the big ideas, the core competencies and curricular competencies.** One of the big ideas of the Language Arts curriculum is that “Language and story can be a source of creativity and joy.” This is fundamental to our success at Cook, we believe that increasing our literacy rates will lead to our students experiencing joy and finding a new sense of creativity.

Our focus on literacy is supported by our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum. Many of our staff are participating in a Trauma Informed Practices collaborative inquiry group to learn and share best practices. Our staff hopes to combine these SEL best practices in combination with our literacy instruction to improve the student’s Communication, Thinking and Personal and Social skills.

“Imagine a school system that is designed for students’ complete self-actualization and how young people would emerge from their time within such a school system—fully aware of their greatness and infinite potential.” (Chris Emdin)

## 5. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING)

How can consistent, school-wide, structured efforts improve the literacy rates of our student population and give them improved chances of success in life?

- Part 1 – Reading
- Part 2 – Writing

We have identified a deficit in our literacy rates at Cook Elementary. Several factors have contributed to this deficit. Most of these factors are out of our control but there are some variables that we can change and start to address our learning gaps. Covid has been a foundational contributor to our literacy deficit; many of our students have lost 2 full years of access to schooling. The Option 4 learning model was difficult for many of our students as they missed out on focused academic support from a teacher in a classroom setting for a full year. Our literacy data shows us that our grade 3 cohort is the most at-risk and they struggle in areas of decoding and reading comprehension. This highlights that these students missed out on 2 foundational years of reading instruction and are now behind.

The most important work we can do for our learners with literacy deficits is already happening at Cook. We provide targeted reading interventions for every student who is 1-2+ years below grade level in reading. This targeted intervention is small guided reading groups where we are seeing massive success schoolwide. With a quick glance at our data you can see the improvement of every student in our school. We use the BAS assessment to assess each student throughout the year. This strategy will continue on and we can chart our success as we see fewer and fewer students requiring guided reading groups.

Once we have reached a critical mass of students that are at grade level for reading, we will work to split our focus to writing instruction. It has been noted by many staff that while we are addressing the reading gap we are seeing a growing gap with student writing. We must maintain our focus on reading in order to take on the writing challenge as well. Our literacy goal will evolve from solely focused on reading (decoding and comprehension) to provided targeted intervention for writing as well.

As our population improves their reading and writing output, our students will be able to access and engage with so much more. Through this we can approach reconciliation efforts with improved comprehension of the issues at hand. Students can engage in their own well-being, belonging, equity and reconciliation with a renewed sense of confidence.

Our hope is that our school community comes together to celebrate all of these values and recognize that they are all interconnected. This interdependence will accelerate our understanding of the Indigenous Principles of learning and will set the table for continued acts of reconciliation and decolonization at Cook Elementary.

## 6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

### Leadership Actions –

Before we can focus on literacy we need to ensure that our community is comfortable and confident in what we are doing here at Cook. This approach requires building community relationships and listening to all of the school community stakeholders. This is the reason we value student voice at Cook. If students are engaged they will improve as learners and citizens. Without the feeling of belonging and community, our students will continue to struggle with their academic literacy. Our goals throughout the 3 year plan:

We need to build trust and cohesion within our school team, we need to connect our staff members and work together on a co-created and shared purpose.

We need to engage our family community to be a part of our school. When the families buy into what we're doing and our purpose is reflected in the home, we will see results in the school

We need to embrace our families, provide space for them in the school and truly listen to their questions, feedback and thoughts

We will empower our students to continue to lead and continue to create opportunities for themselves

We are actively working on more inclusive schoolwide practices and promote the connectedness to self and the school as a community as an even more inherent practice.

We will continue having monthly community meetings with our student population for team building and working towards our school Code of Conduct.

### 3 Year Plan:

#### **Year 1 – LITERACY FOCUS**

Continue to sort through our literacy data (Schoolwide BAS assessments)

Record baseline data in September

Understand what our learners need

Prioritize our Resource Model to target those deficits

Organize our staffing around the literacy data

Continue our Guided Reading intervention

Compile grade by grade data that includes how much students have improved, how many students are at grade level, how many students are below grade level and how many students are 2+ grades below grade level

Encourage all classroom teachers to learn the BAS assessment so that there can be ongoing assessments throughout the year of every single student

Scan for what kind of writing intervention will be required

#### **Year 2 – LITERACY/WRITING FOCUS**

Review the data from the previous year and strategize next steps

Analyze success levels and re-allocate resources to supporting our most at-need/risk students  
Introduce the writing intervention to staff and co-create what it will look like in practice  
Compile schoolwide writing data  
Check in with all stakeholders for feedback  
Enact writing intervention where needed and develop tracking measures  
Collect feedback about writing/reading interventions for analysis

**Year 3 – LITERACY/WRITING/NUMERACY FOCUS**

Review the data from the previous year  
Analyze and implement strategies based on the feedback from the year before  
Check-in with staff to ensure that this is still a schoolwide priority  
Roll out Numeracy intervention  
Continue to track all data points

“Before asking themselves if they are meeting benchmarks or standards, teachers must ask themselves if they are creating a joy for learning and curiosity for knowledge or if they are maintaining the status quo that is more concerned with being better than being whole...” (Chris Emdin)

“Anything that abridges opportunity or compromises our responsibilities to one another is our enemy. As such, if we are not doing equity, then we are not doing education.” (Cornelius Minor)

## 7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

In order to support our continued efforts to improve the literacy in our school we will need to take advantage of the supports that are already in place, re-allocate other resources and creatively find new solutions and strategies.

Our most important support is always our staff. Our school staff will provide students with targeted, differentiated support so that all students will have an opportunity to learn and engage with the materials. In addition to that; we will have our **Literacy Enhancement Teacher** as part of our Enhanced Services team lead the way with our literacy instruction and strategies. The Resource model will skew towards literacy providing targeted interventions, small groups and guided reading for all students who are more than a year below grade level in reading.

We would like to employ a **Home reading program** that is initiated and executed in cooperation with classroom teachers and resource teachers. This will be integral to raising our literacy rates. Anecdotal evidence this year has suggested that students that are reading regularly at home are finding greater success in school and are improving more rapidly with their reading scores.

We will continue to use **Fontas and Pinnell** as the backbone of our guided reading program. The program provides us with assessment tools, guided reading instructional books, home reading materials, small group reading materials and more.

Cook has secured a grant that is strictly used for books that students will read. The resource team has thoroughly researched and ordered literature that is intended to engage our neediest students who may have barriers to entry when it comes to reading. This will be used as a way to introduce the “joy of reading” to those that have not previously been excited about reading.

We will use **Professional Development** days to improve our pedagogical approach to literacy.

We utilize our **Resource teaching team** to support literacy and our most vulnerable learners.

In order to achieve our goals of improving literacy and an improved sense of belonging in our school community for all stakeholders we need to continue to professionally develop as a staff. That means seeking out new opportunities to learn. We must demonstrate the risk-taking behaviours and growth mindset that we are hoping to instill in our students. Through Pro-D, SCM Staff meetings, Community Meetings, clubs, activities, sports, daily engagement in the classroom, a friendly and engaging environment in classrooms, hallways and outside we can increase our sense of belonging and our literacy rates for all of our students.

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

Tracking this data will require participation from all school community members from Kindergarten to Grade 7. Because we are using a schoolwide approach (The BAS reading assessment) we can track students from K all the way to grade 7 and look at their progress from year to year. Every student is assessed throughout the year and we can see how much each student is improving. With all of our data collection at the start of the year we will be able to see how our readers that started the year below grade level are doing. If we have more students reading at grade level halfway through the year and at the end of the year we will know that our program has been successful. We will continue to use the BAS assessments for reading data.

Our data collection is currently housed in a shared Excel document that includes every student in the school. We can track year to year process through this model as well. Resource teachers and classroom teachers have access to editing this document and it is up to the moment data.

We would also like to analyze the MDI and student learning survey data on Belonging and Happiness to see if there are any correlations between improved literacy rates and sense of belonging.

If our data suggests that our approach is not working we need to adapt and change our approach. The data will also tell us if there are unanticipated changes to student literacy and we can adapt our approach to this as well.

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

- Teachers will share their students' learning journeys with the students, their classroom, and their parents
- PAC Meetings and communications
- Learning Conferences
- Student learning will be consistently displayed throughout the school
- Regularly scheduled schoolwide Community Meetings to recognize student contributions and learning
- Hands Across Cook throughout the school that celebrates students helping each other
- Sharing aloud with each other, in classes, on the P.A., and schoolwide gatherings
- Oral conferencing with students, presentations, and fairs
- Documentation of student growth oral stories by students, teachers, and parents
- Posting student work and learning on the school website
- Publishing and displaying work and learning through schoolwide projects
- Bi-weekly newsletters communicating school events and happenings



*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?

The Cook community is dedicated to decolonizing our practices and embracing First People's Principles of Learning. Our interdependent approach to learning and literacy comes from Indigenous knowledge and an understanding that all things are connected. Every student in our Cook community has been given an Orange Shirt to celebrate Indigenous People's day, we sing the Coast Salish welcome song at some community gatherings, our IEW integrates into many of our classrooms providing Indigenous education and experiences to our students and staff. We hope to duplicate our moving Drum Awakening Ceremony from September 2022 this year.

We are committed to living and teaching using the Indigenous ways of learning principles and honouring the land that our school inhabits with daily acknowledgements and gratitude. Rather than point to a singular "Indigenous goal" our efforts are concentrated on Indigenizing curriculum, our community practices and the way we interact with the land and the people on it.

In practice this looks like monthly community meetings where we discuss taking care of each other, ourselves and this place. We meet in a circle to ensure that we can all have an equal say and pull the hierarchy out of "assemblies".

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

Our IEW works with all members of our school community to broaden our understanding of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge. They co-teach with classroom teachers, collaborates with resource teachers and directly supports our Indigenous students.

We are very proud of the Witness Blanket that our students created. This was a school-wide project; this mosaic of student art and expression stands proudly at the entrance to our school and is an every day reminder to our staff and students of the oppression, discrimination and pain that colonial Canada has inflicted on the Indigenous populations of this land.

Our teachers work hard to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing into their every day classroom experience. We believe that this knowledges needs to be embedded into our curriculum every day rather than taught as a separate subject. Our students have completed assignments and projects about Residential schools, First Peoples Ways of Knowing and much more. More importantly we attempt to weave Indigenous knowledge throughout the curriculum; our school code of conduct which is “Take care of yourself, others and this place” reflects Indigenous knowledge and the idea that we are all interconnected and that interdependence lends itself to overall success of not only our school ecosystem but the community at large.

Our grade 6/7 classes take part in overnight camps which focus on understanding the land we live on. Indigenous leaders will visit the students to provide knowledge to the students about the responsibilities that go along with living on the land. Our staff participates in professional development throughout the year and we have prioritized Indigenous knowledge and ways of being as one of our professional development goals. We organize school-wide events, such as Indigenous Peoples' Day, Orange Shirt Day, or National Indigenous History Month, to raise awareness and celebrate Indigenous cultures and contributions. We also create opportunities for students to actively participate in cultural activities, such as traditional crafts, storytelling, or Indigenous games.

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

“In schools, urban youth are expected to leave their day-to-day experiences and emotions at the door and assimilate into the culture of schools. This process of personal repression is in itself traumatic and directly impacts what happens in the classroom. Students exist in a space within the classroom while the teacher limits their understanding (of the student) to what is happening in the classroom place.” (Chris Emdin)

We look forward to bringing more experiential learning that focuses on Indigenous perspectives and knowledge to our students. We can have more Indigenous guests, performers, knowledge holders attend Cook School and teach our students.

Our Youth and Family Worker will continue their “Parent Coffee” gatherings, welcoming parents into the school to build relationships.

We will attempt to do as many interdependent activities as possible in the coming years here at the school. These school-wide initiatives that honour the people and the land will sustain and enhance our understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

We would also like to see our students lead the way. Our students are very aware of the historical implications that colonialism has had on the Indigenous people of this land and we would like to empower them to lead the learning in our school.

Our reconciliation efforts will continue with how we select our curriculum, how we select the texts we choose to read, the organization of our community meetings, our continued efforts at outdoor education and most importantly re-learning how we teach and learn within the walls of this school.

*“The hard part of knowing that oppression lives in systems too is understanding that systems don’t change just because we identify them; they change because we disrupt them.” (Cornelius Minor)*