



Vancouver School District

School Plan for Chief Maquinna Elementary

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

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY

Chief Maquinna is an East Vancouver school with a culturally diverse population. We currently have an enrollment of 190 students. Many parents and grandparents, who are caregivers for their grandchildren, do not speak or read English fluently. English Language Learner students represent 55% of our population and we have 18 home languages represented. The school community is extremely tight-knit and understands the need for wrap around support for students and families who might be struggling. As we moved through phases of the pandemic, we had more and more families who needed extra help from the school.

2. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR LEARNERS?

Some students demonstrate strong leadership skills and are eager to help with tasks. We have weekly assemblies where students set-up and tear down, play introductory music and do spoken presentations. We are hopeful we will be able to resume this long-standing Maquinna tradition when Covid conditions allow. We have noted a decline in our students' reading comprehension abilities. Primary teachers and intermediate teachers alike have been observing this phenomenon-students are able to adequately or expertly decode but show little understanding of what they are reading. We revised the Code of Conduct at the beginning of our previous school plan cycle. Staff and students embraced the First People's principles of learning embedded within it; we feel like we still have leagues to go in examining practices in terms of an antiracist and Indigenous lens.

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

Reading levels are below grade level in 60% of our students. As stated above, they are able to adequately decode, but struggle to make meaning of what they have read. Student achievement on the FSA tests point to their writing being stronger than their reading (it should, in theory, be the opposite as writing builds on reading).

4. WHAT FOCUS EMERGES FROM THIS EVIDENCE?

- ***Goal 1: Engage our learners through innovative teaching and learning practices.*** Enhance assessment and reporting strategies to support teaching and learning.

We want to examine guided reading practices that enhance our students' ability to understand what they are reading and then express that understanding. We are mindful of the hazards of using a "program"-cost is beyond what Maquinna can afford, materials might stale date quickly, lack of control over content. We are wondering if we can learn to use guided reading methods with any materials. We also note that traditionally, guided reading declines as students reach intermediate levels.

Goal 3: Create a culture of care and shared social responsibility.

- Ensure school communities are safe spaces where racism and discrimination will not be tolerated.
- Increase knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions by all students through eliminating institutional, cultural and individual racism within the Vancouver school district learning communities.

We wish to align with district anti-racism and Indigenous goals. We feel like we do not know enough about our current practices to pursue change. Our first year of this plan will be spent examining practices and searching for underlying difficulties. We also recognize that although we have incorporated Indigenous Peoples' perspectives in our curriculum they still feel like an add-on in many ways rather than just being embedded in our ways of doing.

5. INQUIRY QUESTION

1. What guided reading techniques can we embed in our practice to more fully develop our students' reading comprehension?
2. What underlying, unquestioned practices may exist that perpetuate racist structures?
3. How do we further what we have already done so that Indigenous practices become deeply embedded in our teaching and learning?

WHAT IS OUR PLAN?

Year 1

Focused professional development on guided reading techniques. Begin to explore implementation at all grade levels.

Examination of practices that are explicitly or unconsciously biased or racist. Include student voice in this inquiry. Who holds the power? What gets taught?

How do we build on what we have already done surrounding Indigenous practices without it feeling like an add-on/artificial?

WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

Aligning our pro-d to match our school goals. Indigenous Education Department support. Staff meeting time devoted to examining our goals, planning for teaching/implementation. Reading materials to support all goals.

6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

Years two and three will pivot to implementation. By year three we are hoping to see an improvement in reading comprehension and to make any significant changes we need to to our practices to address racism and Indigenuity.

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION?

Keep parents up to date through newsletters and PAC meetings. Integrate student voice through focus groups. Invite community participation where appropriate. Share successes and challenges.



District-wide Aboriginal Goal: To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.

8. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ABORIGINAL LEARNERS IN OUR SCHOOL?

- Include numbers of students, grade levels, etc.

Maquinna has three students across grade levels who are classified as Indigenous learners. Attendance can be an issue for these students (late arrival is common, absence is higher than in general)

9. WHAT HAVE WE DONE AT OUR SCHOOL TO SUPPORT ALL LEARNERS IN REGARDS TO THIS GOAL?

- List examples of pro-d, special events, speakers, curricular integration, routines and customs, etc.

Curricular integration of Aboriginal perspectives. Acknowledgement of territory. As above, we have worked at integrating the Seven Sacred Teachings into our way of being at the school.

10. WHAT WILL WE CONTINUE TO DO IN THIS AREA?

- List continuing and new initiatives

Embracing the Indigenous Sacred Teachings will reinforce cultural identity in our Indigenous students. We want to ensure they are embedded going forward.

11. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE BEING SUCCESSFUL IN THIS AREA?

- Include both data-driven and anecdotal examples
- Give opportunities for student, staff and parent voice

As above, give opportunities for both student and parent voice as we examine ways to deeply embed Indigenous ways of being in our practices.