

2022-2023 - Year 1 School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY

Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith Elementary is located in South-East Vancouver. The school was built in 1955. The school has a large playing area that enhances the facility and has recently been upgraded to include an outdoor classroom. Our building has been seismically renovated.

Kingsford-Smith Elementary has a stable population of about 285 students. Our students speak many languages including: English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, Tagalog, Punjabi, Vietnamese and other languages at home. 64% of students are English Language Learners.

Students' educational needs are supported through a variety of services and programs including learning support teams, a counselor, English Language Learning assistance, an Indigenous Education Worker (new in 2023), and access to educational psychologists and speech and language pathologists.

Students participate in a variety of before and after school athletic programs, and there is a comprehensive physical education program taught by a specialist.

Kingsford-Smith is a member of the Killarney and David Thompson Community School Teams. We offer many opportunities to demonstrate leadership within the school through a variety of monitors and helpers, announcements, and assembly leaders. We have also run an in-house Rainbow Club to promote the gifts every child brings.

Kingsford-Smith has an active PAC supporting and initiating many school events. The PAC has been instrumental in fundraising efforts for school programs and resources, as well as planning and implementing special events. There is a very strong sense of community.

Sparetime Childcare Society operates a before school and after school daycare in the Kingsford-Smith Multipurpose Room.

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

Based on the 2019-2020 reported data we will shift our school focus to mental health literacy; specifically teaching all students strategies to deal with anxiety and stress and working towards an even better sense of belonging and connection to school and to their communities. These skills are applicable and embedded in *all* BC's core competencies and are undoubtedly the foundational skills to improve academics and flourishing students.

The research is clear, “strengthening students’ sense of self in their school community actually increases their motivation to learn and their aspirations for greater knowledge and academic achievement” (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, and Walberg 2004).

Student Learning Surveys showed the following strengths:

- Students feel increasingly happy, safe at school, and feel like they belong.
- They report they get the support they need with their school work and there are many adults, often more than 4, who students feel care about them
- More students are reporting that they are learning about their mental health

The **DESSA** scores (fall 2020) reported many positives:

- **Decision Making:** A child’s approach to problem solving that involves learning from others and from his/her own experience and **Personal Responsibility:** A child’s tendency to be careful and reliable in her/ his actions and in contributing to group efforts. These two domains were areas of strength for the whole school
- All domains were typical for students or in areas of strength. There were no areas that fell into the category of being in need.

Student Voice, Observations, and Conversations:

When we asked students about this data themselves initially report similar findings. However, through many one-on-one conversations there are many underlying concerns that students themselves voiced.

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

Student Learning Survey finds:

- Grade 4 and 7: students are feeling more stress and are self-reporting they are more anxious.
- Grade 7: students are reporting a decline in their own mental health

Student Voice, Observations, and Conversations:

Through many one-on-one conversations, observations, and student journals there are many underlying concerns that students themselves voiced. Some of the themes include:

- Feeling stressed and overwhelmed with school work and pressure
- Low self-esteem and timid to share feelings
- Overwhelmed, not feeling confident, or feeling “not good enough”
- Not knowing what to do when they felt this way

Comparison of **literacy and numeracy data** from June 2021, 2022

- This comparison shows us that as students are feeling more stressed and anxious at school their literacy and numeracy scores are also decreasing.

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

After reviewing all the data, it showed throughout the grades, there was a wide range of reasons for why students felt stress and anxiety and there was good sense of connection between students and each

other, but not as a whole school. Therefore, we felt the focus for the 22/23 school year would be on strategies that all students could use when they felt stress and anxiety and also focus on school wide community building activities.

VSBC Education Plan

Our goal directly aligns with the Educational Plan Goal #1 to improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by:

- Improving school environments to ensure they are safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive places for students and families.

The more we see stress and anxiety decrease, we will continue to see a direct and positive impact in academics.

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA)

The goal of this agreement is “to increase Aboriginal Students’ sense of pride, self-esteem, belonging, place, acceptance, and caring in their schools.” We have a few Indigenous students and have recently been assigned an IEW to help ensure their voices are heard, highlighted, and valued. Ensuring this will also lead to the second goal of the AEEA of Mastery and increased academic success.

Curriculum Connections; Core Competencies

The Core Competencies are sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need in order to engage in deep, lifelong learning. Along with literacy and numeracy foundations, they are central to British Columbia’s K-12 curriculum and assessment system and directly support students in their growth as educated citizens. Specifically, our goal supports the personal and social competency as it encompasses what students need to thrive as individuals, to understand and care about themselves and others, and to find and achieve their purposes in the world.

5. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING)

The factors that lead us to focus on supporting social and emotional skills was the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic and the need to feel connected. There continues to be much worry and anxiety over COVID and/or other reasons. The students are often very quiet and compliant, but there is a lot going on underneath and it is starting to come out in lower academics and concerns with mental well-being. Therefore, our inquiry question is:

How can we support social and emotional skills; specifically belonging and connection, and stress and anxiety to promote excellence in our school?

6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

For the 2022/2023 school year there has been a specific focus on:

- Strategies to recognize and understand the brain and how it functions.
- Strategies for what to do when you are feeling stress or anxiety.
- Building a greater sense of belonging with the whole school.

Taking Action:

- Classroom based SEL lessons from the classroom teacher and at times with the area counsellor (Mind Up, Second Step, Zones of regulation etc.)
- Morning and afternoon check ins and check outs – understanding relationships before curriculum
- Class meetings – examining the whole child and not just behaviour
- Reflection journals
- Guest speakers
- Weaving mental health supports through the core competencies
- Restorative Justice model for problem solving behaviour
- Use of Universal Design for Learning concepts to support our diversity of learners
- Friendship and small group lessons with the area counsellor, classroom teacher, and admin
- One on one support for students in need with the area counsellor, classroom teacher, other agencies as needed and admin

7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

Areas of new learning this year include: learning about the brain, how to conduct meaningful class meetings, and working collaboratively with the counsellor. There has been a substantial focus on learning about outdoor learning, nature, and how to weave this into both curricular and core competencies.

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

Triangulation of Evidence

Observations and Conversations

- What do we see and hear from and between staff and students?
- Do we see evidence of increased cohesivity and positivity?
- What do we hear in class meetings, on the playground?

Artifacts

- Student work; for example, journals, art work, class meetings
- MDI and EDI
- Student Learning Surveys
- Stress and Anxiety student surveys
- CSL report data to investigate if SEL skills are increasing, do we see the increase in academic proficiency

Self-reflections

- Using the core competencies
- Ask, what are you learning about and why does it matter?
- Goal setting

If there is no change in the progress of our students we will have to carefully examine why this happened; for example, were we consistent in the way we measured learning, was there a specific segment of the student population that did or did not progress and can that be linked to the teaching methodology, how did we teach SEL and what did we learn that may reveal why students did not progress as expected, or do we need more time to see the desired results?

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

- Assemblies
- Weekly communication with the community
- Use of the school website
- PAC meetings
- Open houses and conferences



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?

At the core we are a community of learners who are working to learn, unlearn, and relearn history and the stories from an Indigenous perspective. If we want to enact change, it has to start with ourselves and we as adults are committed to being a model for our students.

We are learning to question whose perspectives we are learning from and who is missing from the story understanding that it is all people who are affected by only hearing the colonial perspective. We are beginning to move away from doing this work because we “have to” and understanding the importance of it and moving toward “wanting to”.

Some ways we do this work, is trying to embed First Peoples Principles within our everyday work, we visit each others classrooms and spaces so we see how this work can be done and feel more comfortable and confident leading Indigenous content. Appreciating how many adults feel nervous to dive into discussions and actions of reconciliation with fear that we will do it wrong, we will be brave and do our best.

We also are looking at ways to make reconciliation more overt and visible within our school site; some of these ideas include: story workshop, sharing circles, story books, outdoor learning, Indigenous languages and videos, direct lessons, creating an Indigenous plant mural, reimagining the front entrance of our school foyer to be more balanced and inclusive of the history of the land upon which the school sits, and the theme of reciprocity across our primary grades, what can we give back.

Other ways we work toward reconciliation:

- Curricular Integration
- Understanding and incorporating the First Peoples Principles of Learning
- Professional Development
- Indigenous winter/holidays, seasons, hunting/gathering and the cycles of the seasons
- Uninterrupted time connected to nature; for example, Field study Fridays
- Learning about privilege
- Use of a restorative practice model for supporting student discipline
- Start all staff meetings with a short piece of information or story and an acknowledgment
- Infuse Indigenous history, culture, and community into school wide assemblies

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

- According to the Student Learning Survey, an increasing number of students have reported they are learning about Indigenous worldviews and knowledge since 2018; however, we still have work to do in this area.
- Students are interested and inspired, students share a genuine excitement, interest, and passion through student self-reflection and feedback
- Knowing that we as teachers were successful, would be seeing the students supporting each other, and working together in their communities to leave it a better place than what is was before
- We as staff and students continue to learn, take risks, and try shows that we are on our journey by using land acknowledgments more frequently and with meaning

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

- Take part in immersive experiences with our students
- Increase Indigenous resources in our school
- We will continue to actively source new ways to engage our students in learning about Indigenous Peoples, look for opportunities to learn more about how to present Indigenous Peoples history/information into other forms and subjects, continuing to develop student connections to our Indigenous Garden, and how the plants were used and can still be used today
- Field Studies and Professional Development for both staff and students
- Bringing more Elders and guests into the school accessing their knowledge and experience
- Continue with the curricular integration and the aforementioned activities.