



Vancouver School District

School Plan for Nootka Elementary

Year 3 (2021) of 3 Year Plan, 2017-2021

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, current school plans have been carried forward to the 2021/22 school year.

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Nootka Elementary School is located in the residential neighborhood of Renfrew-Collingwood on the east side of Vancouver. Still Creek and the Renfrew Ravine border our grounds which enrich our commitment to place-based learning and our playing fields rest on a plateau that affords our students an inspiring view of the North Shore Mountains. Nootka's student population reflects the rich diversity of our community which is comprised of families who identify with numerous Indigenous and settler cultures from within Canada and around the world. Nootka students are engaged and enthusiastic learners who arrive at school ready to learn. Our students come from diverse backgrounds both culturally and socio-economically and due to our 2 district programs live in neighborhoods throughout the city. As a result of our school's rich diversity our students bring a broad range of experiences and needs to school each day.

In 2020-2021, we had 19 divisions with nearly 420 students. Nootka is home to three programs: the Classic Program, a catchment K-7 program, the District Fine Arts Program, also K-7 with an emphasis on Fine Arts, as well as the District Elementary Learning Support Program (ELSP) for grade 4-7 students. Comprised of approximately 60 dedicated individuals, our staff work closely together as a collaborative, supportive team led by a principal and a vice principal. The Nootka Staff put great value in celebrating equity and inclusion and are committed to ensuring each of our students experience a strong sense of belonging in their classrooms and at our school. Nootka is part of the Windermere Family of Schools and, as such, students can participate in a variety of after-school programs offered by the Windermere Community Schools Team.

Our building opened for instruction in 1959 as Lord Beaconsfield Annex, and in 1963 became Nootka School. As a result of a growing community, Nootka was expanded and opened a new wing in 2003 to accommodate 13 additional classrooms as well as a spacious Learning Resource Hub. Our building also includes a Library Learning Commons, a dance/activity studio, a drama room, a FuturePLAY room and a gym with a stage. The unique horse-shoe shaped design of our school encloses a central courtyard and playground area. Our grounds feature playing fields, raised garden beds, playground equipment, open spaces and outdoor musical instruments. This unique range of indoor and outdoor learning environments ensures our students are engaged in a variety of inquiry experiences that ultimately enhance learning and create opportunities for success. Our school supports the district's Indigenous Enhancement Agreement. We fuse indigenous content into all curriculum areas across all grades.

We have high expectations of our students and our teaching teams couple differentiated instruction with the promotion of a positive growth mindset to ensure our students are achieving success. Our primary teachers are involved in an *Equity & Access through Story Workshop* inquiry project and many of our teachers, both primary and intermediate, are exploring Universal Designs for Learning using centres and stations. Our comprehensive Student Code of Conduct outlines expectations for behaviour and emphasizes our philosophy of restorative action to repair harm incurred from behaviour that is contrary to our code.

Nootka values fostering advocacy and encourages our students to participate in our many leadership initiatives including: Library Monitors, Crossing Guards, Assembly Team, Peer Helpers, Communication & Poster Peeps, the Spirit Committee and Lunch Monitors. Many classes have participated in the Talking Peace curriculum and utilize Learning Circles to build empathy and shared understanding of social-emotional strategies, goals and practice navigating social situations. Monthly assemblies provide students with the opportunity to showcase and appreciate their own accomplishments and those of others.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

The learners at Nootka are curious and energetic. They have proven to be resilient and responsible throughout the pandemic. They strive to be the best version of themselves and demonstrate that they want to get their work done. Our students also demonstrate meaningful connections to their teachers and our staff recognize the benefit of inclusive classrooms. In response, our resource model has shifted from being a pull-out model to almost exclusively a push-in model. Students have benefited from both the opportunity to have the learning referenced in a whole-class context and from being involved in all aspects of the classroom day. Classroom learning is enriched by the teaming of the classroom and resource teacher. Students, consequently, are growing increasingly aware of what is expected from them both academically and socially. In a survey of upper intermediate students, 78% stated they felt successful at school while only 66% expressed that they enjoyed learning at school. This has motivated an examination on how we ignite curiosity, instill the First Peoples Principles of Learning, acknowledge that learning takes patience and learning takes time, in order to have our students arrive at a place where they love learning at school.

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

Our inquiry question was, “In what ways can we increase student self-regulation and Social Responsibility through school-wide, class-wide and individual strategies and interventions so that at least 75% of students are at least Applying in the Social Responsibility Core Competency.

For the first three years of this plan Nootka put emphasis on our School Code of Conduct, “We Care” hosting monthly themed assemblies, class awards for Excellence, Bucket-filling contests, scripted morning announcements, staff collaboration, identifying target students for support, related Professional development, recess and lunch clubs, and connections with district programs and staff.

Covid-19 Safety Protocols demanded a shift in school organization and instruction delivery. During which Nootka students demonstrated adaptability and resiliency. We have continued to focus on social-emotional learning, and in particular self-regulation. Instruction and learning activities that center on the Social Awareness and Responsibility Core Competency have been integral to our focus. A comprehensive approach has been key in supporting student success in this area. Teaching teams that include our student support workers, our area counsellor, our Youth & Family Worker, our Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker and the Vice-Principal in addition to the Classroom and Resource Teachers ensured that children were being supported in developing an understanding and building a repertoire of strategies to assist them in resolving problems and in building positive relationships. Social Thinking Skills, Mindfulness, common language, Zones of Regulation, Talking Peace were among some of the programs we explored. Further, we recognized that there was a need to foster intrinsic motivation to self-regulate and that many students needed support co-regulating.

The implementation of an organized restorative practice approach when responding to behavioral challenges was put into place. During recess and lunch breaks, the staggered schedule has allowed for increased supervision and reduced number of students out on the playground. These changes have supported students in feeling connected, safe and encouraged. Not only is support available for conflict resolution, but it is also there to boost confidence, resiliency and self-esteem. Office referrals have decreased significantly (close to 80%). Students demonstrate an increased ability to “own their actions” and regularly approach teachers and administration to brainstorm ideas for growth for our school community.

3. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

- Monthly assemblies, in person and then virtual
- Bulletin boards highlighting student work and featured in newsletters
- Portfolios sent home to parent (both paper and electronic)
- Communications home to parents via teacher
- Admin newsletters
- Progress reports and parent-teacher conferences
- Teachers engaged parents in conversations related to student social emotional development and achievement.
- Goal-setting conferences

4. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

Though this year has been challenging, we feel we have made some great progress and success with our goal over the last four years. We have started to have conversations about our next steps beginning next year. We are going to continue to work on self regulation and social responsibility but will be moving on to a new goal involving literacy or numeracy. No matter our goal, our work in self regulation will continue to be a focus – a strategy used to work towards our next goal.

Some other areas of focus moving forward:

- Foster Diversity equity inclusion through literature resulting in love of literature and increased reading comprehension skills
- Foster curiosity
- Early learning framework: ensure centered approach and push-in model happening
- Inclusive Handbook: stations and some ability grouping with groups within a class



District-wide Indigenous Focus (worldviews): To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all learners.

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

This focus is essential in encouraging student understanding about the place where we all live and the first peoples that have lived and continue to live here. Indigenous cultural enhancement teaching practices further enrich the learning of all of our students as we embrace the traditional teachings of our West Coast Indigenous peoples through dance, art, storytelling, and field experiences.

This is a focus for all staff, including both enrolling and non-enrolling teachers, our SSAs, Admin, and our Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker.

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

- Explore the establishment of an Indigenous space within our school to house resources, host learning experiences and be mindful.
- Lessons and activities in classrooms with our Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker.
- Indigenous acknowledgement at our meetings and assemblies.
- Fusing inquiry of ancient civilization with Indigenous culture
- Using coast Salish greetings during assembly
- Student of Indigenous plants and knowledge with the new addition of our garden boxes and outdoor learning resources.
- Teacher Lead for Anti-Racism and Indigenous Allyship
- Dedicated spot on staff meeting agendas for reporting
- Dedicated channel on Teams for sharing resources (Anti-Racism and Indigenous Allyship)