

2022-2023 - Year 2

School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

University Hill Elementary School is a kindergarten to grade 7 school with a population of 415 students, located in the Pacific Spirit Park, near Acadia Beach and the University of British Columbia. We are happy to work, learn and play on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

The student population is composed of permanent residents in the catchment, as well as children of UBC employees, students, and visiting professors. We also have students coming to Vancouver with their families to learn English. Our current student population includes 180 English language learners, 2 International students, and 18 Indigenous students. Many of our students are multi-lingual and our school population has 33 different home languages. The cultural diversity of the school lends itself to meaningful cultural learning.

Generally, our students have well developed background knowledge and are familiar with adult negotiated conversations and ask lots of questions. Parents and caregivers are actively involved in the education of their children and have high expectations for academic achievement.

Our Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is very active with an elected executive that is committed to providing amazing opportunities for students. The PAC helps facilitate after school activities like basketball, chess, Lego Robotics, yoga, and various other clubs. The PAC also holds parent education sessions on various pertinent topics, and the PAC has spearheaded several events, such as a Multicultural Fair and an Arts Festival. Volunteers are plentiful in the school and students benefit from the many learning opportunities and sense of community.

Our school offers unique learning spaces for students. Being in Pacific Spirit Park, University Hill Elementary School has direct access to a network of trails in the forest, a freshwater salmon stream, and Acadia Beach. We have two outdoor classrooms with large rocks arranged in a circle. These spaces are used to help facilitate class meetings, drama activities, cooperative games, and other activities. We have a Ready Bodies Learning Minds lab, 5 small break out spaces, and a calming room. As a school we recognize that students learn differently and these spaces help provide students the opportunity to regulate and be better prepared to learn. Our school also has an All Nations Room. This room is a break out space for our Indigenous learners, a space for our Indigenous enhancement worker, and for Indigenous cultural teachings. Through the generous support of FuturePlay, we have redesigned our library into a modern learning space with flexible furniture, open space, large whiteboards for ideation, and technology to support inquiry-based learning. The diverse spaces for learning are conducive to place based learning, self-regulation, and implementation of an inquiry model of teaching and learning. Students are invited to ask curious questions to drive their learning and understandings of the world. Our teachers provide opportunities for students to refine their questions to engage students in making observations, predictions, creating and testing hypotheses, and using a variety of language skills to communicate understandings.

The proximity of the school to UBC and downtown Vancouver provides easy access to extension opportunities at educational venues, as well as mentorship opportunities. This creates a multitude of

unique conversations and learning opportunities. Mentors have included Dr. Hart Banack from the Faculty of Education / Outdoor Education, Dr. Dave Ng from the UBC Biodiversity Genetics Department and Carrie Serwetnyk, former Canadian World Cup Soccer player. Community partners include the VSB Community School Team, the Vancouver Public Library, Pacific Spirit Coastal Health, UEL, UNA and UTOWN @UBC.

2A. WHAT DID WE SEE?

Our students are keen and engaged with their learning and enjoy coming to University Hill Elementary. Our students have strong background knowledge, are able to ask thoughtful questions, and have solid numeracy and English language skills. We know that COVID has limited our students' social interactions and are in the process of reestablishing connections. Our students are looking for more opportunities to share their cultures and personal identities, and to feel a deeper sense of belonging within their community. Students and staff identified that learning can be disrupted by social-emotional challenges. As a staff we have begun to explore how we can best support students to develop social-emotional skills and therefore enhance learning in all areas.

Report card data indicates student proficiency in Numeracy and English Language Arts.

Student, staff, and parent/guardian/caregiver surveys have been a source of evidence in understanding the social-emotional needs of our students. Students participated in 3 different surveys: The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI), the Student Learning Survey (SLS), and teacher led surveys. Each survey shows common trends indicating a desire for student development of develop social-emotional skills and to develop a deeper sense of belonging.

Anecdotal data during play and cooperative learning, as well as opportunities for student voice (student self-assessment of competencies, reflections, rubrics) indicate the challenges students have in identifying and managing their feelings, coping with stress, and problem solving.

Our students need opportunities to reconnect with peers and to develop a deeper sense of belonging through opportunities to share their identity. Our students need support to develop and apply a toolkit for use when they are having difficulty managing emotions and self-regulating.

2B. WHAT DO WE NEED TO RE-ADJUST?

1) Implement our new Code of Conduct

In May 2021, the school went through the process of rewriting its Code of Conduct. The new Code of Conduct uses inclusive language to help develop a sense of belonging while also clearly outlining expected behaviour. It has language and a framework for students of all grade levels to use to guide and reflect on their behaviour. At University Hill, we *Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other, Take Care of this Place*. The Code of Conduct also has a guiding metaphor grounded in Musqueam knowledge—*Take care of each other, come together, and hold one another up*. In year one, we look to fully embrace the new Code of Conduct, use the common language throughout the school, and use it to guide class codes of conduct.

We are planning to adjust the student voice in the Code of Conduct.

2) Student Self-Assessment and Goal Setting

In each classroom students will use the personal and social core competencies to self-assess their social-emotional strengths and stretches. Using the 'I can' statements, students will identify and document growth in areas of ability. Students will also identify 'I can' statements to set goals. They can document their progress with examples of experiences at school.

3) Identity Celebration

Developing a new schoolwide event that celebrates our diverse school population. The whole school investigates the concept of identity and it culminates in a schoolwide celebration. This is an opportunity for teachers to co-plan and co-teach.

4) Skill Building

Using established social-emotional programs as a base for skill building. These programs will be explicitly taught and intertwined in activities throughout the curriculum. The school will expand skill develop with targeted lessons focusing on the big ideas and curricular competencies from the Physical and Health Education curriculum. Students will also have the opportunity to refine their social-emotional skills through increased student leadership opportunities. We will partner with University Hill Secondary students to train student leaders. The school will support and participate in SOGI and anti-racism initiatives initiated by the school district.

3. INQUIRY QUESTION (previously known as “Goal”)

How can we support social-emotional and physical well-being in our students, along with a sense of belonging, both individually and as a school community?

4. WHAT IS OUR NEW PLAN?

1) Reevaluate the use of space

Working with staff, students, and the community to look through the lens of social-emotional and physical well-being to evaluate our use of school space. Our building has 6 break-out spaces, an All Nations room, a multipurpose room, a library learning commons, 18 classrooms, a gym, and a calm down space. We have surveyed staff and students to bring to revision a more effective, inclusive, and equitable use of these spaces.

2) Increase student voice in the Code of Conduct

Students played an active role in developing our school Code of Conduct. We are now looking to increase student voice in defining examples of kind behaviours and ways to 'hold each other up.' Student voice will help increase a sense of belonging and ownership of our Code of Conduct.

3) Identity Celebration

We will continue developing a new schoolwide event that celebrates our diverse school population. The whole school investigates the concept of identity and it culminates in a schoolwide celebration. This is an opportunity for teachers to co-plan and co-teach.

4) Skill Building

We will continue using established social-emotional programs as a base for skill building. These programs will be explicitly taught and intertwined in activities throughout the curriculum. The school will expand skill develop with targeted lessons focusing on the big ideas and curricular competencies from the Physical and Health Education curriculum. Students will also have the opportunity to refine their social-emotional skills through increased student leadership opportunities. We will partner with University Hill Secondary students to train student leaders. The school will support and participate in SOGI and anti-racism initiatives initiated by the school district.

5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

University Hill students and staff will be working together to create an environment of safe, caring and creative space for children to improve their social-emotional skills. A full day of professional development will be dedicated to the continued exploration of resources available, understanding the lived realities of the school's diverse student population, and challenge ourselves to go further as a school community.

We can work with PAC to design and offer parent information sessions on important social-emotional topics.

Welcome a diverse presenters and volunteers to the school including Elders, dance groups, authors, musicians, etc.

6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

If we are successful, we will see a gradual shift in behaviours, especially during unstructured times. We will also see results in our The Middle Years Development Instrument, The Student Learning Survey, and teacher led surveys that indicate a greater sense of belonging and ability to solve problems in peaceful ways. We will also see evidence of growth in our student self-assessments.

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

Open House at the school, assemblies, digital presentations.

Student and staff contributions to the classroom and school newsletters sent out via email.

Reporting and Assessments: Report Cards, student/staff/parent Conferences, Celebrations of Learning, Portfolios.



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

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

- Embedding Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into all curricular areas
- Indigenous Acknowledgements at the beginning of assemblies, formal meetings, and other events
- Embedding Musqueam knowledge into our Code of Conduct and using it as a framework for guide our practice
- Showcase Indigenous dance and music through school-wide performances
- Explored place-based learning through regularly scheduled outdoor learning opportunities
- Develop an Indigenous plant garden and research about how the Musqueam people used the plants for a variety of purposes
- Creation of 2 outdoor learning spaces that includes a circle of 12 stones that provides seating for a class of students exploring the power of using a circle for sharing, medicine wheel teachings, and other aspects of Indigenous culture
- Unveiling of the Spindle Whorl Carving by Richard Campbell commissioned by the school with donation from school, grant and parents
- Mounting and display of print by Susan Point with the spindle whorl theme
- Weaving projects
- Presentation by the Sto'Lo Dancers comprised and narrated by members of Indigenous families at the school. Two students were able to demonstrate their dancing skills wearing their regalia
- Fieldtrips to The Museum of Anthropology, the Reconciliation Pole
- Participation in Orange Shirt Day and The Walk for Truth and Reconciliation
- School representation and viewing of the Opening of the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre – UBC Aboriginal Portal
- Teaching about residential schools and Canadian cultural genocide in an age-appropriate way to students using appropriate resources
- Our grade 7s build Indigenous drums and gave a class set to our school
- Purchase of new texts and online resources to accurately represent Indigenous culture in Canada

Purchase of books with Indigenous authors, illustrators, and information to support teaching and learning

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

As a school community, we will continue to look for opportunities to enhance student learning and create a sense of belonging for all students, especially our Indigenous students. All the initiatives mentioned will be carried forward into next year with the addition of acknowledging more often when we are learning about Indigenous knowledge, culture, and history. Student feedback informed us that students are not aware when they are learning about local Indigenous cultures, and we plan to make their learning more visible. We look forward to refining and enhancing activities and making a meaningful impact on all our students.