

2022-2023 - Year 1 School Learning Plan

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY

Collingwood Neighbourhood School (CNS) is located in the heart of East Vancouver's Renfrew-Collingwood neighbourhood. This small, urban annex to Graham Bruce Elementary opened on January 14, 2002 with fifty-four students. CNS is part of the same development as our local community centre, Collingwood Neighbourhood House, and we share a gymnasium with them. Located on the boundary of Burnaby and Vancouver, the neighbourhood is a major transit hub and contains a growing, bustling mixture of new commercial development and tower housing located alongside long-time businesses and single-family dwellings. Like our neighbouring schools, CNS is part of the Windermere Family of Schools.

A Kindergarten to Grade Three school, we currently have 156 students in nine divisions including the district TEIR program. Our student population consists of eight students with special needs, four indigenous students and we have 90 English Language Learners. CNS families are ethnically diverse and speak a variety of languages including Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, Korean, Punjabi, Arabic and Hindi. The district TEIR (Targeted Early Intervention Resource) program provides targeted reading instruction to students in Grade Two who have been identified with a significant delay in acquiring literacy skills. Each September and January, we welcome eight students from around the district who join this class for 16 weeks (about 3 and a half months).

CNS is connected to the community. We host an extremely popular Strong Start Program with between 370-400 newborn to pre-Kindergarten children registered. Each school day approximately 20 students and an accompanying adult attend one of two sessions. Strong Start also runs an I-PALS program for 3-5-year-old children and their parents who have permanent residency or refugee status. During these 8 sessions children and their parents are introduced to a classroom environment focused on play and strengthening community connections. Many of our Strong Start students continue into Kindergarten at CNS. The partnership between Strong Start and CNS' Kindergarten program is something we value, and we are committed to strengthening the early years to kindergarten transition through collaboration and strong relationships. Each Spring our staff collaboratively plan the Welcome to Kindergarten event and in 2022 the staff worked together to set up a Mud Kitchen in our school garden to be used by both student groups. Additionally, we are home to an Out of School Care Program operated by Collingwood Neighbourhood House which provides care for 25 of our students before and after school as well as all day during school holidays. Relationships and belonging are central to our work at CNS and reflect the First Peoples' Principles of Learning that "learning is not an individual act but happens in relationship with people, materials and place."

CNS has a long-standing tradition of daily runs around Gaston Park. Rain or shine, this fifteen-minute exercise time involves all grades 1-3 classes and contributes to our students' sense of belonging and to their physical and mental well-being. Because of this program, we have many strong runners, many of whom join our Cross-Country running team.

The school garden, enclosed in our back courtyard, is a place for teaching, gathering, eating, playing, and learning to be together in community. In our 6 raised garden beds are Indigenous plants, a mud kitchen, and

edible plants and herbs. A few large trees offer shade to several concrete picnic benches where students can enjoy lunch outside on nice days.

Recently, CNS has re-committed to a school-wide music program which introduces all students to the fundamentals of Music including rhythm, beat, movement, song, and instruments without notes (i.e.: rhythm sticks, triangles, bells, scrapers, etc.). An evolving program, there is a growing interest in place-based learning in our music classes.

Student achievement is seen as an opportunity for belonging and celebration. Each Spring classes engage in an ADST project which culminates in a school-wide activity. Depending on the project focus, this could look like having parents come in, view the projects, and engage with their children around their learning. At other times it could look like students teaching and playing games they created.

The school recognizes that healthy eating and self-regulation are connected and offer the option of a Quiet Lunch for students who prefer to eat somewhere other than the lunchroom. At various times during the year, teacher-run lunchtime clubs are available. In recent years, there have been an Indoor Games Club, Garden Club, and Running Club.

Our Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is a small group of parents who meet regularly at the beginning of each month. Recently, the PAC has supported school-wide initiatives including Gymnastics, Bollywood, Hip Hop, school-wide field studies as well as improvements to our school garden. This commitment to providing opportunities for all students works towards our common goals of equity and belonging.

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

While CNS students are friendly, enthusiastic learners, the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are evident in our school population. Parents and students are being introduced to and becoming more familiar with in-person learning, school routines and expectations. As a Kindergarten to Grade 3 school, belonging, school readiness and early learning skills are the focus.

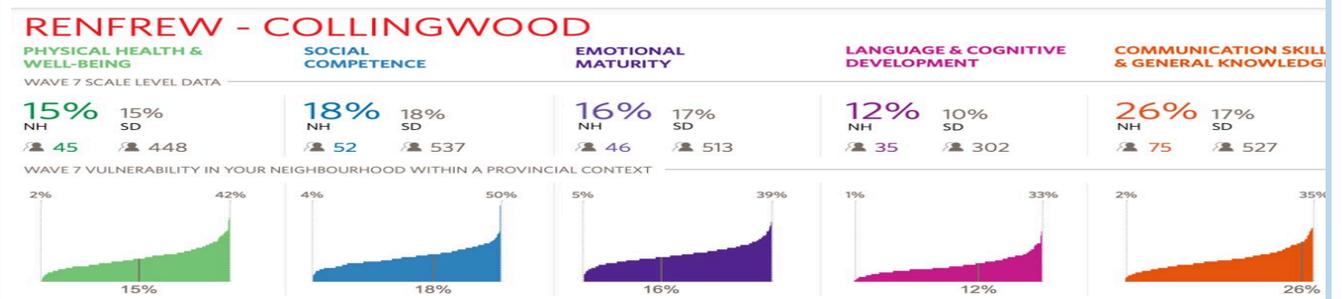
More than half our students are English Language Learners who began their school career outside of Canada. Currently there are 27 different home languages and 52% of our students are English Language Learners with the two most identified home languages being Tagalog and Spanish. Thus, many of our students speak more than one language. Largely from working class families, grandparents, extended family, baby-sitters, or Out of School Care support parents by caring for our students before and after school. Our school currently participates in the bagged-lunch program, receiving about 10 student lunches each day. Dental health is a need for our community. Prior to Kindergarten, many of our current students did not receive dental check-ups.

School readiness skills such as those foundational to functioning in a school community are a need for the learners in our community. Students' ability to successfully engage with peers, display expected play skills and participate in group learning have also been identified as areas of need. While teaching problem solving skills and positive behaviour expectations is happening in classrooms, there is a need for a school wide approach. Staff have identified a disconnect between classroom expectations and expectations outside of the classroom, including, but not limited to the lunchroom, playground, and hallways. However, the desire to connect with others and establish relationships with trusted adults is evident. Most Grade 2/3 students can identify at least one staff member who believes in them and who they see as a supportive adult.

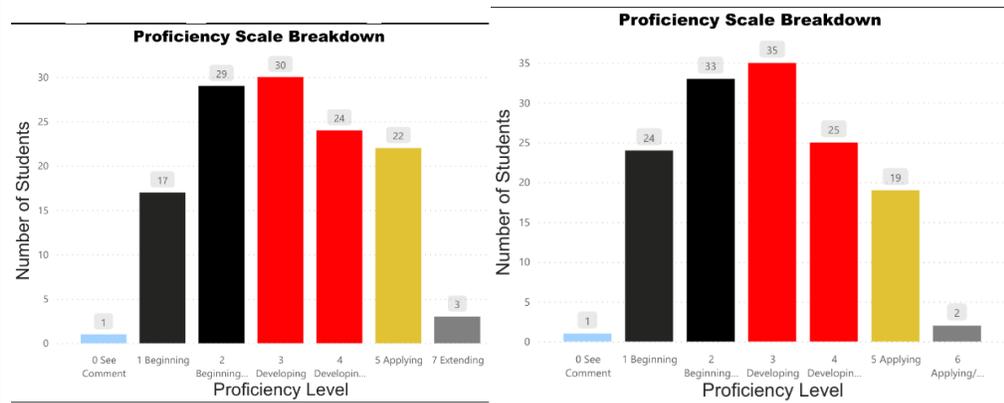
Staff have observed that students have lagging skills in literacy, specifically in establishing the sound-symbol relationship which manifests in difficulty learning to read.

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

A variety of evidence supports what we know about our community of learners. The Early Developmental Index (EDI) gathers data, in part, from kindergarten teachers throughout the province. It looks at young children’s development in the areas of Physical Health and Well-Being, Social Competence, Emotional Maturity, Language & Cognitive Development and Communication Skills & General Knowledge. In the Renfrew-Collingwood neighbourhood, 41% of children are identified as being vulnerable in one or more areas, a higher percentage than both the provincial average and the district average. Specifically, children in our neighbourhood are most vulnerable in Language & Cognitive Development and Communication Skills & General Knowledge. The graphic below compares the neighbourhood (NH) to Vancouver School District (SD). Vancouver Coastal Health’s Kindergarten dental screening indicates that 38% of that grade group have broken enamel, pain or infections and require immediate dental attention.



Report card data extracted from fall of 2021 illustrates that as a school, 60% of students are between beginning and developing on the English Language Arts proficiency scale (graphic on the left). Report card data from fall of 2022 illustrates that 66% of students are between beginning and developing on the sliding scale in English Language Arts



While English Language Arts covers more than just reading, reading is a large component, especially in the primary grades. This data is one way to measure how the students are doing with their reading.

Behaviour data gathered since 2021 illustrates a need for school-wide positive behaviour interventions and supports. Our Primary Think-Sheets, Positive Behaviour Support Plans, classroom conversations, guided reflections, and office referrals from support staff during outside playtimes reveal that many students are

struggling to be in community. Classroom expectations are set by individual teachers. However, there is a perception that those same expectations do not apply outside “*their classroom*,” including different teaching environments across the school, other classrooms, and communal areas. Oral student questionnaires confirm this as only 57% of students report knowing the school rules. When asked to list the school rules, the responses varied and included everything from “don’t hit or kick people” or “don’t take anyone’s food” to “sit criss-cross applesauce.” When these students were asked how they learned these rules, many students said that when they saw others getting in trouble for something, they realized it was something not to do. Some students said they learned the rules in pre-school (Strong Start) while others said the teacher repeated them over and over. Many parent conversations with teachers and administration have focused on student behaviour, behaviour expectations and communicating about behaviour.

The number of students receiving reading intervention support from a Resource Teacher is one way to measure a school’s need for targeted instruction in phonics. Classroom teachers have observed that more and more students are having trouble learning to read. Given that young children in our neighbourhood are particularly vulnerable in Communication skills, it is not surprising that the number of students classroom teachers identified as needing reading intervention from a Resource Teacher has increased. Over the past few years Resource Teachers have noted that large numbers of students, in some cases over half the class, were being referred for reading interventions. In the 2022/23 school year approximately 48% of our students received small group targeted instruction. This small group targeted instruction, known as a tier 2 intervention, is typically for 10-15% of a school population.

Students at CNS do report a sense of belonging. Through an informal 2022/23 survey, 95% of all Grade 2/3 students identified at least one supportive staff member.

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

Based on the evidence, CNS has two focus areas. The first on School-Wide Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) and the second on Reading. An Indigenous framework of Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity, known as the Circle of Courage, helped our community establish our focus areas. This will continue to frame the on-going work around our School Learning Plan.

Focus: School-Wide Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports

Establishing and understanding school-wide expectations will help create belonging among CNS staff, students, and parents. From the First People’s Principles of Learning we know that learning supports the well-being of self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors. Using positive language that talks about behaviour in terms of what we want to see, SWPBIS is a multi-tiered framework to help make schools, and their communities, more effective places. It establishes a social culture, and the behaviour supports needed to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for all students. SWPBIS is flexible enough to support student, family, and community needs. Its three features (systems, practices, and data) work together to promote positive, predictable, and safe environments for everyone in a school setting.

SWPBIS is interconnected to student learning and to the Personal and Social Core Competency as it is associated with improved academic performance and improved social-emotional competence for all students. Understanding the expectations, practicing the expectations, being able to demonstrate the expectations independently and having staff who can provide consistent correction when needed, all support students’ self-regulation. When students are regulated, students are better able to learn.

Focus: Reading

To ensure all students are provided a solid foundation of pre-reading and early reading skills, CNS is committed to a focus on reading. Specifically, we want to ensure all students receive explicit reading instruction. An evidence-based practice known as the Science of Reading and Language (SOLAR) provides a structured literacy approach different from most previous reading instruction. One major difference is that explicit reading instruction happens universally, in all classrooms with all students, rather than as a targeted intervention. A Structured Literacy approach includes a strict scope and sequence. This means assessment measures identify gaps and mastery across grade levels and also means that skills are taught in a logical sequence built on previously learned skills. Structured Literacy focuses on decoding (word reading) and encoding (spelling), as well as reading comprehension and written structure (language) by teaching: phonological awareness, word recognition, phonics and language (vocabulary and syntax) at the sentence and paragraph levels. Overall, Structured Literacy focuses on the essential need for explicit, systematic phonological awareness and phonics instruction. Reading is a foundational cross-curricular skill and focusing our efforts here will assist students in all areas of their learning. A Structured Literacy approach begins with a focus on letter sound, rather than shape, thus targeting oral language and the Core Competency of Communication. It must be mentioned that this teaching goes far beyond the sound-symbol relationship (learning to read) and continues into complex, multi-syllable words (reading to learn). This focus reflects the First People's Principles of Learning that "learning involved patience and time." Curricular competencies of reading include language features, structures and conventions, letter knowledge and phonemic and phonological awareness.

CNS' focus on SWPBIS and reading both align with Vancouver Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement's second goal, Mastery. By teaching school-wide positive behaviour and reading to all students we are "ensur(ing) aboriginal students achieve increased academic success in Vancouver schools and that they participate fully and successfully from Kindergarten through to Grade 12."

5. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING)

CNS' learning community was curious how to make a big and lasting difference for all our students. The First People's Principles of Learning states that "learning is reflective." This was certainly true at CNS! Our conversations, guided reflection, and evidence gathering held over time kept coming back to school behaviour expectations and reading.

These two areas are fundamental to improving student success. We wondered why we are spending so much time on these two topics, without seeing any change. We have two questions:

How can we ensure all students gain the strategies and skills necessary to be in community (demonstrate expected behaviour)?

How can we ensure all students gain the strategies and skills necessary to support success in reading throughout their school career?

6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

Meaningful change takes time. Actions to support these changes include: a commitment to deep learning through teacher-led initiatives (i.e.: book clubs/inquiry groups), professional development through attending presentations and specialized training.

Year 1 – teacher learning (investigating, exploring, comparing, conversing, training). Most notably, teachers engaged in Sounds-Write training. Sounds-Write is a structured phonics program based on the science of reading. This is an on-line 6-week Certificate course that includes quizzes as well as on-line assignments. Teachers connected with other VSB school teams doing structured literacy for collaboration and problem-solving. Teachers participated in mock reading assessments to determine a suitable one for Collingwood students.

Year 2 – developing school-wide systems and structures

Year 3- refining classroom/universal practice

7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

The new areas of learning will be SWPBIS and Structured Literacy.

Establishing SWPBIS will require:

- Gathering and collating baseline data
- Resources: The PBIS Team Handbook, District Learning Services support, School-based Counsellor input
- Establishing school settings for common expectations
- Agreeing on 2-3 positively worded expectations for each setting
- Developing a plan for teaching and subsequent practice of these expectations to all students
- Creating and posting visuals and written expectations in common areas
- Beginning a positive reinforcement system
- Creating a system for addressing behaviour corrections
- Building connections with neighbouring schools that have adopted SWPBIS
- Community-building activities focused on our expectations
- Communicating the SWPBIS Plan with parent and wider-school community

Establishing Structured Literacy will require:

- Use of a standardized screener to assess student skills and to identify those needing intensified teaching and practice
- Classroom support from administration for conducting screening throughout the year
- Creating homogenous groupings (based on skill, not grade) for daily structured literacy instruction
- Resources: SOLAR “boxes” that establish the scope and sequence and accompanying lessons, story studio, decodable books/reading resources
- Creating reporting practices that reflect SOLAR assessments
- Re-visiting our Resource Teacher model
- Continued connections to other school/district teams: system for keeping up to date with the TEAMS channel, improving SOLAR TEAMS channel, in-person school visits and/or meetings for sharing ideas and problem-solving, consultation with school-based SLP and Psychologist
- Developing a system for parent involvement

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

SWPBIS:

- Student surveys conducted each spring will indicate an increasing number of students will say they know the school rules and be able to recite them
- Office referrals by support staff will decrease over time
- The number of Primary Think-Sheets will decrease over time
- The number of students needing a Tier 2 or 3 intervention will decrease over time
- Surveying parents on school-wide expectations; an increasing number will be aware and knowledgeable about them
- Using the triangulation of data model (observation, conversation and product) to assess progress
- Accessing District Learning Services support if no change or unanticipated changes are seen
- Demonstrate flexibility to consider other options for instruction, reinforcement, consequences...

Structured Literacy:

- Baseline data gathered from agreed upon screeners will indicate an increasing understanding of the structured literacy components (phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension...)
- CSL (report card) data will indicate an increasing number of students receiving Applying in English Language Arts
- The percentage of students needing a Tier 2 or 3 intervention will decrease over time. An expected percentage is between 10-15% of student population.
- Using the triangulation of data model (observation, conversation and product) to assess progress
- If no change is present, we will access pro-d, create learning/grade group teams to develop lessons together and consult with district/school supports

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

Making parents/guardians, students, staff and other members of the community aware and involved will include:

- PAC meetings
- Visuals/Posted expectations in common areas
- Newsletters
- Family Nights – ie: “celebration of reading”
- Coffee at Collingwood – conversations between parents and school counsellor
- Student and parent surveys



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?

- Explored more intentional and explicit supports for all staff through district wide professional development days.
- Focused discussion specific to a primary environment
- Performances on the environment
- To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions all students participated in weaving activities developed specifically for each class.
- Moved our library collection of Indigenous books out of special shelving and into the general collection
- Participated in “Orange Shirt Day” on that day as well as several other school-based days throughout the year
- Re-visited the land acknowledgment during Staff Meetings and with students in class
- Students in grade 2 and 3 learned several Indigenous songs, rhythms and games in Music. The lessons also focused on the background and significance of each.
- Delivered place-based lessons in Music, in Kindergarten’s Mud Kitchen and in our school garden
- The garden club planted indigenous, edible plants
- Staff explored ‘In Our Own Words: Bringing Authentic First Peoples’ Content to the K-3 Classroom”

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

- Through conversation and story students are able to identify the traditional territory we learn on
- Units on past and present have fostered an increased awareness of the people in our community who came before us
- Units on past and present have fostered an increased awareness of our community (land) pre-contact
- We remember that in K-3 we are supporting students’ journey towards mastery and that learning takes time. This is modeled through using Growth Mindset language with students.
- Using the Circle of Courage to guide our planning discussions: consider Mastery, Belonging, Independence and Generosity

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

- Use staff meeting to introduce the “Moving Forward” document created in 2015. Its contents include topics such as: Responsive Schools, Indigenous Perspectives and Worldviews, The Power of Story [HERE](#)
- Introduce Circle of Courage framework to students through bulletin board and month by month focus
- Creating opportunities to come into community to foster relationships and a culture of belonging: announcements, celebrations, acts of service, spirit days, big buddies, assemblies
- Intentional use of First People’s Principles of Learning language. I.e: with students in assemblies, when solving problems, when introducing new learning
- Create opportunities for students to develop independence and leadership: teach older students how to supervise/organize games for the younger grades.
- Provide opportunities for connectedness: experiential learning in the garden, engagement with land/nature/outdoors, field studies into nature
- Acknowledge the power of story: setting up a story studio/ loose parts in the library