



Vancouver School District
School Plan for ᓃx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown Elementary
Year 2 (2019-2020) of 3 Year Plan, 2018-19, 2019-
20, 2020-2021

✓ May 25/21

1. **GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:**

NOTE: DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, CURRENT SCHOOL PLANS HAVE BEEN CARRIED FORWARD TO THE 2021/22 SCHOOL YEAR.

DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE SUSPENSION OF IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION ON MARCH 13, 2020, CURRENT SCHOOL PLANS (2019-20) HAVE BEEN CARRIED FORWARD TO THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR.

Enrolling Kindergarten to Grade 7 students for the first time in September 2017, ᓃx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown Elementary is located in a growing urban area of Vancouver, BC. Intersecting the communities of Gastown, Chinatown, and Yaletown, ᓃx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown Elementary currently serves a diverse student population of approximately 315 in-catchment students (30% ELL; 10% Ministry identified). For the 2019-20 year, projections indicate welcoming approximately 380 in-catchment students (an increase of 65 in-catchment students). Of the 380 students, 27 students (14%) will hold a Ministry Designation for learning (a 4% increase from last year). This will mean additional staff and resources will be made available to Crosstown for 2019-20. To further illustrate this staff increase, in 2018-19 ᓃx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown had a staff (teachers & support Staff) of approximately 30 members. For 2019-20, Crosstown is projected to welcome a staff (teachers and support staff) of approximately 40 members.

With a capacity for approximately 500 students, ᓃx^wwəq^wəθət Crosstown is a four-storey facility built into a Residential Tower. Each floor is comprised of learning studios (classrooms), common learning areas, and communal educator offices. Larger gathering spaces in the school include: a library Learning Commons, a Gymnasium, two Multipurpose Rooms, two 'Outdoor Teaching Green Spaces' accessible from the third and fourth floors, and a 'Servery' (fully-equipped teaching kitchen). Crosstown Elementary is also home to an on-site Daycare (Vancouver Society of Children's Centres). Crosstown's playground is shared with the community and is maintained by the Vancouver Parks Board. The playground is a City of Vancouver public space where Park Rangers (employees of the City of Vancouver) are on-site from 7:00am to 11:00pm daily to support safety and security in the neighbourhood. Additionally, Park Rangers ensure that a 'sweep' of the playground takes place four formal times each school day (at 8:30am; at 10:30am; at noon; and at 2:30pm) to comb the area for unsafe debris.

Located at 55 Expo Boulevard with Rogers Arena, BC Place, Olympic Village, the Vancouver Art Gallery, Chinatown, VPL Central, and Andy Livingstone Park in the neighbourhood, ʔxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown is a unique urban school poised to be a success as students explore opportunities and engage with their community in many different ways. With safety and security as our first priority, students, staff, and parents have continued working together this year to: build positive working relationships, learn how to 'live safely' in the new space, and further develop and refine our School Code of Conduct.

In September 2017, ʔxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown enrolled 12 Divisions. In September 2018, ʔxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown enrolled 15 Divisions. In September 2019, ʔxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown is projected to enroll 18 Divisions. With this steady increase in enrollment comes the rapid addition of new staff. This means that, as a staff, we are engaged in a continuous conversation about 'how to build and sustain a positive school culture and how to ensure ALL students, staff, and parents feel welcome and included. With each new school year, staff are consistently engaging in dialogue to ask the following questions to guide practice: What's working? What's not? What are we learning?

This year, staff initiated continued participation in the District-Led Communicating Student Learning (CSL) Reporting Pilot. All staff participate in this reporting opportunity. Staff engaged in Study Sessions both at the District and School levels. Updates to the ʔxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown Parent Advisory Council throughout the year continued to be provided. This is a unique early opportunity that allows staff to work (inclusive of newer staff) together and to engage in consistent conversations about student learning.

Specific to ʔxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown's story are the growing relationships with community partners: the Vancouver Police Department (VPD School Liaison Officer), Vancouver Society of Children's Centres (VSOCC), the City of Vancouver (Park Rangers). These community partners have been instrumental in helping to support safety and security in the school community. This year has involved: daily 'check-ins' as needed, meeting formally as needed, engaging in ongoing communication updates as needed. Conversations are now looking ahead to next year with more plans to: plan for parent meetings, plan safety workshops for students (Stranger Danger, Litter/Refuse Awareness on the grounds, reporting).

ʔxʷwəqʷəθət Crosstown's story also includes adding an Indigenous Name to the Crosstown name. On March 9, 2020, we were gifted with the name ʔxʷwəqʷəθət. This name is from the language of henqimenu, the ancestral language of the Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh people. The name reflects our community and the area. Elder Larry Grant explained: "ʔxʷwəqʷəθət references a mode of transportation used by Musqueam people whereby they caught the tide as a shortcut from False Creek to Burrard Inlet. The meaning of this name is generally translated as 'the place from which one can catch the tide.'"

2A. WHAT DID WE SEE?

Overall, there continues to be a strong sense of enthusiasm among students, staff, and parents to be learning together in an innovative new urban space. As we are learning about learner strengths, staff have continued to engage in a number of dialogue structures to identify and support student learning needs:

- Kindergarten Team Meetings (weekly);
- Staff Committee Meetings (bi-weekly);
- School-Based Team (twice monthly);
- Primary Team Meetings (monthly);
- SSA Meetings (weekly);
- Supervision Aide Meetings (once a term);
- Resource Team Meetings (monthly);
- Parent Team Meetings (as needed);
- District Support Meetings involving Learning Services (as needed)

As we continue to build relationships with one another, each of our students and their parents, we are learning more specifics about student learning needs. In this work, we have discovered that supporting student learning with a focus on social/emotional development continues to be a priority. One of the overall strengths of students in this community is their individuality and thoughtful way of expressing themselves. When guided, students are able to clearly articulate their thoughts and feelings. This is evident on the playground, during class meetings, and during our 'learning assemblies'. This focus on social/emotional learning through student leadership is contributing to creating a culture that says 'Crosstown is a 'safe space' and students have a voice'. Student leadership at Crosstown has been taking many forms (leading Assemblies; assisting in buddy classes (Peer Helpers); announcing 'Crow Call-Outs, engaging in service to the school (lunch time monitors, library monitors, playground beautification project, assisting with Welcome to Kindergarten events).

Through the 'Student Reflection/Thinking Sheets' (opportunities for students to write about or draw their feelings), Professional development opportunities on Social/emotional learning, and day to day observation, staff have identified the following as areas where students require the most assistance:

- ways of resolving peer conflict in peaceful independent ways;
- strategies that assist with entering a social opportunity (game);

Specific ways students have excelled this year include:

- being respectful of safety boundaries around the school ('no go zones'),
- self-identifying break times (staff have identified a number of 'quiet work spaces around the school' and students are recognizing these as study spaces and are electing to use these spaces more consistently.
- Working closely with our Youth & Family Worker (YFW) and Area Counsellor (AC) in small Friendship Groups and in whole Class Program Opportunities (eg: Roots of Empathy, Zones of Regulation, Safe Bodies, Strong Kids) to assist with identifying strategies to support the development of positive social interactions;

This focus on supporting students to further develop social/emotional strategies will continue.

*Vibrant
School + Community*

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

At this early stage in our school's opening and with 25% of staff being new to Crosstown in September 2018, our evidence of student progress in social/emotional learning continues to be anecdotal. Information pertaining to this work has emerged from: class meetings (student voice), recorded reflections by students (student 'thinking sheets', 'self-assessments'), sharing during 'teaching assemblies', dialogue with staff, and conversations with parents.

What's Working? – The following has been working during the 2018-19 year:

- the ongoing development of positive relationships among students, staff, parents, and community members;
- success 'stories' experienced by students who hold a variety of learner profiles;
- successful growing connections with community members who support the school tirelessly (BC Place Neighbours providing Turf Time for students; VPD providing support to educate students as well as review guidelines with the law; Park Rangers--City of Vancouver Personnel dedicated to keeping our community safe and free of litter/debris; VPL (local Library being enthusiastically involved in our Ready Set Learn and Welcome To Kindergarten Programming); VPT (Vancouver Paediatric Team); regular School Nurse visits;
- increasing the purchase of resources (we now have a developing collection of social/emotional picture books and student & teacher resources that support SEL);

What's Not?

- the lack of 'free play space' in the Crosstown neighbourhood is proving to be a challenge as school enrollment grows (to address this for 2018-19, the VPD identified some lunch time dates to play soccer & basketball in the gym with students; the Community School Team (CST) identified lunch time dates to provide supervised physical activities for students; BC Place has provided 'Turf Time' for all students for identified times; Andy Livingstone Park is available to Crosstown students for limited time (one two-hour time every two months with a City of Vancouver-Provided Permit);
- the lack of long term relationships. For example, unlike established schools, Crosstown does not have the special bond of knowing a community from Kindergarten through to Grade 7 yet.

What are we learning?

- that building relationships and developing a positive school culture takes time;
- that students are resilient and creative and can successfully adapt their 'outside play' for the conditions;
- that we continue to be 'living in an era of newness' at Crosstown Elementary and with that comes the consistent need to keep dialogue with students, staff, and parents open, transparent and consistent;
- the role of direct instruction in the area of Social-emotional Learning (SEL) from K to Grade 7.

As we look ahead, staff are engaging in plans to explore assessment tools that could assist us to collect baseline data around social-emotional learning. With the support of the District Resource Teacher for Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), staff will be considering using the standardized assessment tool called the Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment-mini (DESSA mini). This tool will assist us to further identify areas of student need and provide a focus on how to better support learning in relation to SEL.

3. INQUIRY QUESTION (previously known as "Goal")

Inquiry Question #1: We are continuing to grow rapidly as a school community. Given this, how do we continue to support student leadership with a focus on social/emotional learning and building a caring community?

Context: Currently, Crosstown enrolls 15 Divisions with:

- 74% of students enrolled in Kindergarten to Grade 3; and
- 26% of students enrolled in Grades 4 to Grade 7.

4. WHAT IS YOUR NEW PLAN?

At this time, staff have expressed a readiness to engage in collecting baseline data in the form of an assessment tool called the DESSA mini. The plan is to complete this process two times over the next months. The first time in the Fall of 2019 and the second time the later Spring of 2020. The hope is that through focused professional dialogue as a staff, we would become better informed as to how we may proceed in supporting learning in SEL work.

In addition to using the DESSA mini, staff will continue to have students engage in the completion of reflection/thinking sheets that assist students to think about problem-solving strategies. These reflection sheets will be more formally tracked as a school in 2019-20 with all completed forms being collected and stored in a confidential space in the Office. The intent would be to engage in a review of this 'street data' ('listening to the voice of the student' as outlined by Shane Safir in the book, *The Listening Leader: Creating the Conditions for Equitable School Transformation*) in the Spring of 2020 and analyze this information in relation to the data collected on the DESSA mini. An additional assessment tool, the Middle Years Developmental Instrument (MDI) will also continue to be administered for Grades 4 and 7 at Crosstown. Staff are expressing an interest in further analyzing the results of this inventory to gain further information about social/emotional learning.

5. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED?

Through consistent communication with our District RT for SEL, we will collate and analyze results of the mini DESSA and engage in collaborative steps to determine the approach we will be taking to address student needs and improvement goals in SEL. In addition, as a staff we will continue to:

- review and analyze our 'reflection sheets' through School-Based Team experiences;
- carve out times within Staff Committee Meetings for focused professional dialogue;
- meet regularly as our Code of Conduct Committee to further refine our Code of Conduct work, engage in 'Call-outs' and further refine our 'reflections sheets' on an as needed basis;
- explore social/emotional programs available through the Vancouver School Board;
- support staff to team teach in consultation with Resource Teachers, Area Counsellor, and the Teacher-Librarian with the goal of integrating literature studies into social/emotional learning opportunities;
- explore staff training either on-line or as part of Pro. D. to learn about programs like: Ready Bodies Learning Minds (3rd Edition by Athena Oden), Second Step – Fourth Edition, for example.
- Continue to work with YFW, Area Counsellor, district staff, and site-based staff to utilize learning resources available at the District for our use (programs/resources like: Mindful Games, Mindful Movements, Should I or Shouldn't I Games, Whole-Brain Child).

6. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL?

As a start, we are thinking that by completing the DESSA twice—once at the beginning of the year and one later, information will be gathered that shows beginning trends in successful work in the SEL area. As we refine our data collection processes, using this information to track our growth in the area of SEL, our intent is to see how the data celebrates our successes!

We will know if we are successful by:

- monitoring students and staff using common language each day;
- increasing opportunities for student leadership around the school so that this becomes an integral part of our developing school culture (having students: lead assemblies, lead announcements, lead outside play opportunities);
- formalizing the tracking of problem-solving 'thinking sheets' completed by students to consider if reflections show improvements in learning how to problem-solve;

7. HOW WILL WE SHARE?

We will be sharing and celebrating our work with the community through:

- Assemblies, newsletters, PAC meetings, PAC Executive meetings, and Staff Committee Meetings;
- Engaging in activities and ceremonies in honour of our newly added Indigenous Name once this process is complete;
- Using school-wide communication tools with parents (Freshgrade, Bloomz) to highlight progress and successes consistently in all areas of the curriculum);
- Pro. D , learning conversations during Staff Committee Meetings; newsletters, PAC meetings;
- Community Events (Family Nights, Movie Nights, Sports Day)
- CSL Conferences, student-led conferences and school open house;



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?

Inquiry Goal #2: How can we increase awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions among all students?

Currently, Crosstown enrolls 10 students who identify as Indigenous. Our students are experiencing successes this school year in the following ways:

- Students have been engaging as a class in a variety of activities held each week led by our Indigenous Enhancement Worker;
- Families have consistently reported feeling comfortable in the school and feeling welcome;

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

At Crosstown, we have been engaged in the following to support all learners:

- Intermediate students worked on projects that focused on learning about Residential School History;
- Novel Studies were selected based on Indigenous authors and themes;
- Class workshops –weaving and Medicine Wheels;
- Learning Commons-organization of Indigenous literature, display of Indigenous Alphabet;
- Indigenous Success Plans;
- K team focused their bear unit with links to the Indigenous community;
- School-wide process & consultation with the District for the adoption of an Indigenous name to add to our Crosstown name (currently underway);
- Acknowledgement shared during some morning class times and at gatherings (Acknowledgement includes sharing: “We acknowledge that we live, work, and play on the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish People (Squamish, Tsleil-Watuth, Musqueam Nations”);
- Family Breakfast hosted by our Indigenous Enhancement Worker where each Indigenous Family was called personally and invited. All students/families were invited to participate on the day of this celebration as a ‘pop-up Mix & Mingle experience’;
- Pro. D. Workshop (January 2019) on the Medicine Wheel and on Indigenous Baking led by our Indigenous Enhancement Worker provided to all staff;
- Some primary classes have had storytelling sessions, Medicine Wheel Lessons, and Seven Sacred Animals Sessions with our Education Enhancement Worker;
- Fieldtrips to plaes like the Bill Reid Gallery, YVR for their Indigenous Art Collection, Trout Lake for National Indigenous Day.

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

At Crosstown, we will continue to:

- Expose students to Indigenous literature, support the Library Commons to be a resource to access literature;
- Practice our Acknowledgement and share it at all of meetings and community gatherings;
- Encourage new staff to be aware of our growing diverse collection of resources;
- Continue to collaborate as a school-based community to complete Success Plans (three times per year);
- Invite teams in from our Indigenous Education Department at the VSB, plan for a ‘Community Celebration’ once we have finalized the Indigenous Name that will be added to our Crosstown Name.

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

When students are consistently using the language of their learning in every day settings we will know we are being successful. In reviewing the self-assessments of all learners, we will gain a better understanding of student perspective and their beliefs around 'what success looks like'.

Our hope is that once our Indigenous name is added, students will continue to explore their learning of Indigenous history as they have started to do. As parents have expressed interest, our hope is to invite parents in to share Indigenous history through storytelling experiences with students.

