



1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

- Update school context if necessary
- Review inquiry question and where the need for this goal came from (evidence, etc.)

Vancouver Technical Secondary School was established in 1916. In its earliest years, the school was a technical school (with all of the expected technical facilities) and served an exclusively male population. Girls were admitted to Vancouver Technical in 1940, major additions were built in 1954 and in 2011 a seismic upgrade was concluded. Today Vancouver Technical is a thriving learning community, proud of the many innovative programs and initiatives offered, in what has become the tradition of this ever dynamic and evolving (but also century-old) school!

Who are our learners?

Currently, Vancouver Technical serves approximately 1620 students. Our population includes students from neighborhoods with the highest proportions of vulnerable students in the city, as well as students attending the school from farther afield for one of its many District Programs - Flex Humanities (English and Social Sciences) and Summit (Science and Math) support enriched and accelerated curriculum for 30 students in cohorts from grades 8 – 10; French Immersion, for students who have successfully completed the early or late immersion program at the elementary school level and wish to receive a bilingual Dogwood Certificate; District Skills Program (DSP), designed to meet the needs of 10 students with low incidence special needs; Junior and Senior Links, which support 15 students respectively who require a modified curriculum; Learning Assistance/Life Skills, which supports 15 students who require a modified curriculum, many with language and learning disabilities; and the Learning Support Programs, one each for 15 grade 8 and 15 grade 9 students with severe language difficulties. In addition, Advanced Placement courses are offered in English Literature, Biology, Physics, Art, Calculus, and European History. Vancouver Technical is proud to support learning through diverse curriculum and program opportunities.

Diversity at Vancouver Technical further includes the second largest secondary school enrolment of Indigenous students in Vancouver and over 52 languages spoken in students' homes. 12% of our students are identified as having special needs. Vancouver Technical provides an English Language Learning program to support approximately 60 students, including new Canadians and International Students.

Vancouver Tech receives funding for Enhanced Services. The School Meal program provides subsidized hot lunches for more than 200 students in need. The newly established, student-run Breakfast Club feeds upwards of 50 students each day of operation. Our Community Schools Team supports vulnerable students with after school activities, academic supports and snacks; and liaises with the Van Tech "Family of Schools," providing support for grade 7s transitioning into high school. In addition, valued community partners run a number of programs on and off-site designed to meet the needs of vulnerable students.

Concerns about student wellness are long-standing at Van Tech. As a result, the school entered into a partnership a number of years ago to assess the social-emotional wellness of the community, develop priorities and implement a long-term plan for school wellness promotion and prevention. As a result of this assessment, the first two priorities to receive attention were sleep hygiene and time management. For the first few years of this partnership the school's goal was:

Student Wellness

To build the school community's awareness, knowledge and capacity regarding sleep hygiene and time management in order to improve student's health and wellness in order to support academic success for each learner.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

- Outline indicators and targets
- Outline support and activities throughout the year

Vancouver Technical is in Year 5 of a 5 Year Wellness Initiative in partnership VCH, supported by UBC's Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Centre and funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research. The purpose of this initiative is to enhance the social-emotional health of the school community. A comprehensive wellness survey has been conducted at Van Tech as part of this initiative for each of the last 4 years. As a result of this survey and the resulting data, the school's Wellness Initiative and School Plan have focused attention and intervention over the last few years on sleep hygiene, time management and has now turned its attention to food security. Food security has been our focus for 2016-17. Data from our most recent survey (conducted in April 2017) indicate:

Hunger

Students were asked to report how often, in the past month, they went to bed hungry and skipped breakfast because there was no food at home to eat. Just under 25% of students report food insecurity in the past month. This is a slight decrease from previous years when just over 25% reported food insecurity in the past month. However as in 2016, number of students experiencing food insecurity every day has increased since 2015 at .7% (.8% in 2016 going to bed hungry compared to .3% in 2015).

	<i>Went to bed hungry, no food at home to eat (past month)</i>		<i>Skipped breakfast, no food at home to eat (past month)</i>	
<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Never	982	77.3	965	75.9
one or two times	193	15.2	146	11.5
about once a week	47	3.7	43	3.4
several times a week	21	1.7	30	2.4
almost every day	8	.6	39	3.1
every day	9	.7	36	2.8
Missing information	11	.9	12	.9
Total	1271	100.00	1271	100.00

In response to this concern, we began the year with a focus on food! To that end:

- We enrolled in the BC Fruit and Veggie Program
- We started a student steering committee around Food Security which resulted in a further survey and the beginnings of a breakfast program
- We organized a Grade 8 Family Welcome in September which focused on wellness and healthy food, providing; food to families, a voucher for \$10 at a curbside Farmers' Market (set up for the event), support in many different languages to explore the newly developed Food Asset Map developed, cooking demonstrations, garden tours, prizes and a wellness fair featuring local community partners
- We joined and celebrated Foodshare's Great Big Crunch
- We provided student leaders with Food Safe training, to enable them to take leadership and action around issues of food insecurity
- We started a Breakfast Club, run by student groups, feeding upwards of 50 students per day of operation (currently Monday, Wednesday and Friday)
- We provided more than 80 families with Holiday Hampers, in partnership with Student Council and community donors
- We continued to support more than 200 students on our School Meal program with lunch and information about community resources available to families experiencing food insecurity
- We continue to explore partnerships and opportunities to grow our capacity around food security at Van Tech
- We have revisited our Vending Machine Contract with the vendor and asked the company to comply with the Healthy Food Guidelines and moved our school store sales into compliance as well

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

- Outline results

While the opportunities to impact students' experiences of food insecurity outside of our school building are limited, we have been able to provide more information, education and food for students at Van Tech this year.

We have observed:

- Increased student awareness of food security issues and available resources
- Consistent demand for and use of available supports and programs at the school
- Student commitment to and participation in leadership opportunities around food security

4. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

- How will we make parents, students and other members of the community aware and involved?

We have continued this year to share information through our school website, announcements, emails and tweets. An app has been added to our communication arsenal, which can provide daily updates in a multitude of languages (as selected by the user). We launched the Food Asset Map through a special homeroom class early on in the school year.

Staff have discussed issues of food security at numerous meetings, and participate in support of a number of our new initiatives.

PAC receives an update each month at their meeting, which is shared with other parents through our school website.

5. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

- What will we be doing as we begin to plan for next year and the next multi-year goal?
- What discussions have we had as a staff around what we see in our students, where we see areas of need, etc.
- Will we continue with the same goal or will we move to another area and why?

Staff have begun the process of scanning, asking "what is going on for our learners".... We will continue this and move on to focusing, developing a hunch, learning and taking action over the next year. We have decided to dedicate Collaborative Time to this work over 2017-18, in addition to the discussions at Staff Meetings that have become the norm.

As we have begun to discuss our learners and a multi-year goal, our sense is that we are not finished with the work that we want to do around wellness, though we may see the focus shifting. Recent staff discussions have highlighted concerns around mental health and wellness (stress, anxiety, isolation, and depression have emerged as issues). Relationships, along with digital media and distraction have also emerged as topics we would like to explore further.

The Wellness Initiative has provided Van Tech with a solid foundation and focus on Wellness. This will definitely continue into the coming years!

Initiatives that we began this year, in response to our concerns around food insecurity will continue next year, as they have become a part of the fabric of our school community – Grade 8 Family Welcome, Breakfast Club, Holiday Hampers, BC Fruit and Veggie Program, and the Great Big Crunch. Student leaders will also continue to meet and guide this wellness-focused work!



District-wide Aboriginal Goal: To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.

6. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ABORIGINAL LEARNERS IN OUR SCHOOL?

- Include numbers of students, grade levels, etc...

Vancouver Technical currently enrolls 86 students of Aboriginal heritage, 23 in Grade 8, 26 in Grade 9, 12 in Grade 10, 10 in Grade 11 and 15 in Grade 12. We anticipate an even larger number next year, 95 students of Aboriginal heritage are registered for 2017-18.

Our students of Aboriginal heritage are supported by a full-time Aboriginal Education Enhancement Teacher and Aboriginal Education Enhancement Worker. In addition, we have a strong leadership team overseeing this focus and directing this work at Van Tech.

Van Tech currently offers 2 blocks of First Nations Studies 12. Next year we will have 3! Interest in Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions is growing in our community, as are acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation. Staff and students at Van Tech demonstrate a strong desire to make a difference in the lives of all young people, particularly those of Aboriginal heritage.

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

- List examples of pro-d, special events, speakers, curricular integration, routines and customs, etc...

Our school's current goal is

Aboriginal Cultural Enhancement

To support our Aboriginal students in graduating from high school ensuring a sense of belonging and mastery while honoring culture and community.

In support of this goal we have offered:

- ✓ Indigenous Awareness Week – Opening Ceremonies, workshops, Closing Ceremonies
- ✓ Staff discussions at Staff Meetings
- ✓ Workshops on Professional Development Days
- ✓ Provided additional Indigenous resources to be taught in the English Department, brought Aboriginal history into the curriculum, taken steps to increase inclusiveness in classrooms
- ✓ Team teaching – AET and AEW with teachers across curricular areas to teach history and the impacts of colonization
- ✓ Classroom activities, embedding this focus into the curriculum
- ✓ First Peoples' English 12
- ✓ Support for staff and students
- ✓ Encouragement and leadership opportunities for students of Aboriginal heritage
- ✓ An Indigenous Student Council
- ✓ A Potluck, welcoming and celebrating families

In addition to this focus on our students of Aboriginal heritage, we are committed to the District goal of increasing everyone's knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions. To that end we have established:

- the custom of recognizing the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil Waututh Coast Salish peoples' traditional and unceded territory at the beginning of gatherings, meetings, and events
- a permanent display of traditional cultural art work representing the 3 nations on whose traditional and unceded territory we learn
- an Indigenous Education Leadership Team, meeting regularly

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

- List continuing and new initiatives

We will continue all of the initiatives listed above, and further, plan to:

- Partner with another group to survey our community and establish baseline data so we can track knowledge and attitudinal growth at Vancouver Technical
- Expand understanding of the recognition of the traditional territories at the opening day Staff Meeting and opening assemblies for all grades
- Establish an opening assembly for students of Aboriginal heritage, along with another half way through the school year
- Utilize one set of the monthly Grade 8 and 9 assemblies to focus on Indigenous Education, staff would be prepared to follow-up on the assembly at the Collab Day prior to
- Establish an Indigenous Student Voice group at Van Tech, to bring student voice to students and staff, to inform our School Plan goals and objectives and to allow us to reflect on our progress
- Establish a club for Indigenous students and allies
- Introduce a Grade 8 Welcome Dinner for families of students of Aboriginal heritage, in advance of our Grade 8 Family Welcome (which includes everyone)
- Increasingly partner with staff to display student work in the allocated display cabinet
- Investigate the possibility of a camp (start with a day-long retreat if necessary) in the fall for our students of Aboriginal heritage
- Establish a SOUP Group (informal professional dialogue opportunity, offered over lunch)
- Provide and make use of the First Peoples' Principles of Learning as they inform work on the Core Competencies
- Offer a Capacity Café for parents of our students of Aboriginal heritage
- Seek funding and support for a project which would see an artist work with students on a welcome piece to install in our school's front entrance
- Continue to provide opportunities for open, respectful, professional dialogue (through Collab Days, Pro-D Days, Staff Meetings) around issues of colonization, institutionalized racism, etc...

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

- Include both data-driven and anecdotal examples
- Give opportunities for student, staff and parent voice

Anecdotally, we have reports of increased knowledge, awareness, empathy, and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions at Vancouver Technical. We have strong student involvement in leadership opportunities, very strong interest in First Nations Studies 12 amongst our student body and increasing comfort in identifying as Aboriginal in our community. As mentioned above, we plan to utilize a survey to gather data and then monitor our progress on an ongoing basis.

In reflecting on this year:

- Indigenous Awareness Week was a huge success
- An increased number of students at Tech have self-identified as Aboriginal
- The First Nations 12 course has been very successful and sign-up is strong for next year
- We have observed: increased student awareness, willingness and interest to speak about First Nations issues; good rapport and communication; improved attendance and class participation; lots of positive reflections; strong evidence of learning in classes
- Students of Aboriginal heritage have taken on leadership roles at Van Tech
- Non-Aboriginal students have verbalized their surprise at the history and conditions
- We have had engaging discussions about racism