

Vancouver School Board

## **SCHOOL PLAN**

### **2015-2016 Summative Review**



### **2016-2017 Plans for the Future**

It is our collective responsibility as a school district to ensure the highest quality learning experiences for all students, with a focus on student engagement, learning and development in a safe, inclusive environment.

#### **Vancouver Technical Secondary School**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**Vancouver Technical Secondary School provides a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment in which students develop their intellectual, social, ethical, aesthetic, physical and emotional intelligences; respect the individual; embrace diversity; and participate in the community.**

#### **2015-2016 GOALS**

##### **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.

##### **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.

## SCHOOL COMMUNITY CONTEXT

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 almost century-old) school!

### **What are the demographics of our learning community? Who are our learners?**

Currently, Vancouver Technical serves approximately 1600 students. This very diverse student 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 low incidence special needs students; 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 Program, for grade 8 and 9 students with severe language difficulties.

This population is ethnically diverse with the second largest secondary school Aboriginal student enrolment in Vancouver and over 52 languages spoken in students' homes. Additionally, 12% of students are identified as having special needs. Vancouver Technical is proud to support learning through diverse curriculum and program opportunities. Vancouver Technical provides an English Language Learning program to support both immigrants and international students. Classes are multi-grade and multi-level and offer a tiered program of Transitional English/Language/Social Studies support. Advanced Placement Grade 12 courses are offered in English Literature, Biology, Physics, Art, Calculus, and European History.

Recent survey data reveals that 25% of our students experience food insecurity. The School Meal program provides subsidized hot lunches for more than 200 students in need. 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.

Vancouver Technical has a teaching, support and administrative staff of approximately 135 people, including an Aboriginal Enhancement Teacher (non-enrolling) who supports students and staff in achieving our goals for students of Aboriginal heritage and for our community. This model has provided strong and valued leadership for the entire school community.

The staff at Vancouver Technical are guided in their daily work by the following principles:

- Develop the diverse talents and gifts of all within the community
- Provide accessible public education
- Make our school safe and welcoming
- Foster the growth of social awareness and responsibility
- Serve our extended Family of Schools

**What is our vision of success for learning for each student?**

Staff have identified the ideal Van Tech graduate as a respectful, independent, curious, motivated, socially responsible, well-rounded, literate, employable, contributing global citizen with passion, financial literacy, self-advocacy, critical thinking and communication skills.

## 2015-2016 SCHOOL PLAN - SUMMATIVE REVIEW

### Goal - 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.

#### Objectives:

- To engage student voice in implementing our action plan in supporting sleep hygiene and time management
- To host events to promote sleep hygiene and time management, including:
  - Sept 14-18 student led Sleep Olympics
  - Oct 21 Panel on Mental Health including an evening panel meeting and inviting our partner groups in to showcase their supports
  - Monthly student assemblies on key topics
- To train students as peer mentors in aiding their peers in sleep hygiene
- To engage our staff in dialogue through staff meetings, collaborative time, grade level meetings and department discussions on how they can build capacity within their classrooms and school wide opportunities to promote sleep hygiene and time management
- To engage with our parent community on their role in supporting both sleep hygiene and time management through PAC, website, Synervoice, newsletters, etc...
- To survey in April 2016 (year 3) to continue tracking our longitudinal research in order to continue on this path or make adjustments as necessary
- Address Food Insecurity through dialogue with Jennifer Cook, Manager of Food Services as well as the implementation of the BC Fruit and Veggie program which begins in September 2015

### What steps did we take to address the identified student(s) needs?

- ✓ WIN Committee
- ✓ Sleep Committee
- ✓ Sleep Week - Wake-a-Thon, Sleep Baskets (distributed to all homes)
- ✓ Assemblies
- ✓ Classroom Activities: breathing, time management, discussions and conversations
- ✓ Staff Meeting Discussions
- ✓ Student Wellness Initiative Survey (we are in the third year of four)
- ✓ School Meal Program
- ✓ BC Fruit and Veggie Program

### **What was the evidence of success for each student?**

- Observations: students are calmer, well-rested; increased awareness and ownership, improved attitude and understanding
- Parents feel more responsible
- Survey results revealed: stability in students' perceptions of support and connection, well-being, relationships with peers and parents, and food security (which really is insecurity, in our case; slight decreases in the use of self-injury as a coping strategy, students reporting they feel safe at school, and the amount of negative verbal comments about sexual minorities; and a slight increase in the number of students waking feeling rested. Taken together, the researchers posit that the stability and change in the school appears to be in line with the Wellness Initiatives intentions to improve the well-being of community members.

### **How did we communicate and celebrate student success?**

- ✓ Messages via Synervoice, on school website, in newsletter, with Sleep Baskets
- ✓ Media attention for the Wake-a-Thon
- ✓ Sharing at Staff Meetings, PAC Meetings, student assemblies
- ✓ Posted student work
- ✓ TLC cards and prizes

### **Goal - 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.

#### **Objectives:**

- To continue to work with students and teachers to improve the graduation rates of Aboriginal learners.
- To continue to build awareness of indigenous education models and to build capacity for utilization in the classroom.
- To increase teachers' understanding of the on-going impacts of colonization in Canada and the effects on students and the education system.

### **What steps did we take to address the identified student(s) needs?**

- ✓ Indigenous Awareness Week – Opening Ceremonies, workshops, Closing Ceremonies
- ✓ Staff discussions
- ✓ 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 – AEET and AEEW with teachers across curricular areas to teach history and the impacts of colonization
- ✓ Staff commitment
- ✓ Classroom activities
- ✓ Offering First Peoples' English 12
- ✓ Support for staff and students offered by key staff – Liz, Robin and Jalena
- ✓ Encouraged students of Aboriginal heritage to be leaders

### **What was the evidence of success for each student?**

- Indigenous Awareness Week was a huge success
- An increased number of students at Tech have self-identified as Aboriginal
- The First Nations course has been very successful and sign-up is strong for next year
- Observations: 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 and strong evidence of learning in classes
- Students of Aboriginal heritage have taken on leadership roles at Tech
- Non-Aboriginal students verbalizing their surprise at the history and conditions
- Discussions about racism

### **How did we communicate and celebrate student success?**

- ✓ Indigenous Awareness Week
- ✓ Media coverage of Indigenous Awareness Week
- ✓ Showcase of visual biographies; art and history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada
- ✓ Sharing at Staff Meetings, PAC Meetings, student assemblies
- ✓ Potlucks for students and their families at Van Tech
- ✓ Discussions and celebrations with students and their parents
- ✓ UNYA visits to the school

## **2016-2017 SCHOOL PLAN - PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

Given that the 2016-2017 school year is one of transition as we move to the *Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Model*, we intend to continue with the current goals as outlined in our reflections for 2015-2016.