

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.

Charles Dickens Elementary School

MISSION STATEMENT

Together we bring alive our commitment to develop each child's potential in all domains through a long established philosophy built on mutual respect, continuous learning and opportunities for leadership within a child-centred, multi-aged framework

2015-2016 GOALS

1. **Social Responsibility:** To improve students' understanding and the use of self-regulation skills to positively affect them as learners within our school community – with a focus on seven K/1/2, two 3/4 and one 5/6/7 classes.
2. **Aboriginal Enhancement Goal:** To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY CONTEXT

What are the demographics of our learning community?

Who are our learners?

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

Charles Dickens Elementary School is a part of a community that is located in an area of East Vancouver that is changing and growing. Presently we have 492 students enrolled in 20 divisions. For the 2016-17 year, we are experiencing a slight increase in enrolment as we make plans to welcome 506 students in 20 enrolling divisions. In the years to come, Dickens is projected to continue to rise in enrolment numbers. For our current 492 student population, 40 students have identified special needs, and 58 students are English Language Learners (ELL). Seven students attending Dickens are self-identified as learners of Aboriginal Heritage. Our student population is diverse and includes a number of immigrant families. Our largest groups by 'language spoken at home' are English, Vietnamese, Chinese and Tagalog. The physical space of our school building is well utilized. With its wide corridors, sliding glass garage-style doorways, and adjoining classroom spaces, it is conducive to the child-centred, group learning philosophy that the community has embraced for many years.

At Dickens, we continue to have an increasing number of special education students. There continues to be strong parent support, through the Parent Advisory Council and various community partnerships such as Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House and Cedar Cottage Neighborhood House which run pre-school programs and out-of-school care programs.

At Charles Dickens, our child-centred program is based upon what we know about learning and optimum social and emotional development. The main tenets of our beliefs are that the child is the focus of education; that social responsibility and decision-making must be fostered; that learning is continuous and that the purpose of evaluation is to promote further authentic learning.

Dickens offers a variety of extra-curricular activities sponsoring teams at the primary and intermediate levels for cross-country running, basketball, and track and field. Primary and intermediate students also have opportunities to participate in other physical activities that may be offered throughout the year with invited guests (ex. Ultimate Frisbee and Badminton). Student leadership is supported through a variety of school opportunities such as student-led assemblies, buddy reading and activities, school-wide announcements, student leadership teams (Students' Council, Green Team) and school monitors (ex. Library monitors, Welcoming/School Host monitors).

To support our beliefs, the school is organized around four core tenets:

1. **Multi-age Classrooms:** two to three age groups organized together with the same teachers for two or more years (where possible).
2. **Team Teaching:** two teachers are generally responsible for all aspects of programming for one group of multiage children.
3. **Authentic Assessment:** criterion-referenced non-letter grade report cards (letter grades are available to parents upon request), portfolio assessment, student-led conferences, student self-assessment and goal setting.
4. **Varied Instructional Learning Strategies:** student centred, cooperative

learning, large and small group instruction, project-based learning, multi-literacies and multiple intelligences maintaining commitment to the curriculum.

Parents work as active partners and are part of our professional teaming community. Recently, the PAC completed the 'Greenway Project' in collaboration with the City of Vancouver. It is now being fully utilized now by students, staff, and members be our community. This year, PAC has been instrumental in leading fundraising opportunities to support our technology initiatives in the school. Working closely with the Vancouver Foundation and within the parameters of the VSB Accounting protocol, parents have enthusiastically contributed their time and talents in supporting our curricular work in this area. Many parents are actively involved in volunteering in the school and support the school programs that may be offered (ex. Chess Club, Strings Club, Community Link Sports, Ultimate Frisbee). Our parents have established a collaborative way of working as a whole group with our staff regarding all aspects of School Planning. Charles Dickens continues to be a school that prides itself on providing a safe and attractive place for students to learn.

PART A: 2015-2016 SCHOOL PLAN, SUMMATIVE REVIEW

What were our goals?

1. **Social Responsibility:** To improve students' understanding and the use of self-regulation skills to positively affect them as learners within our school community – with a focus on seven K/1/2, two 3/4 and one 5/6/7 classes.
2. **Aboriginal Enhancement Goal:** To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all students.

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

Social Responsibility Goal:

The following outlines the strategies and structures used to address student needs in social responsibility (self-regulation) with a focus on identified classes. A 'learning team model' was used by staff to address this goal area:

- providing opportunities for teachers to collaborate about self-regulation instruction and learning and how it connects with the Re-Designed Curriculum (Principal/Vice-Principal as part of learning teams assisted to provide access to collaboration time. The following opportunities to provide release time are available on an on-going basis: Supervision Aide release time, Professional Development Days, Professional Learning Teams sharing at Staff Committee Meetings:
- providing opportunities for teachers to work with District staff around self-regulation and social emotional learning (SEL Professional Development at

Garibaldi Annex)

- using programs such as 'Zones of Regulation', 'Incredible Flexible You', 'Ready Bodies, Learning Minds' and 'Mind Up' to facilitate teacher instruction and student learning; and as a means to provide consistency between colleagues and to create a 'common language' throughout our school community
- teaching students to use a consistent and common language with regard to self-regulation. Some examples of language used include: 'chime time', 'movement breaks', 'cozy corner', 'mindful breathing', 'expected vs. unexpected behaviours'
- using multiple modes of demonstrating their learning and understanding self-regulation skills and strategies taught (ex. Zones of Regulation, mind mapping, class meetings, Brain Teaser activities, sensory diets and tools)
- weaving self-regulation into curriculum and daily classroom routines to maximize student receptivity to academic learning (ex. Chime Time, class meetings, DREAM Time, Social Detective Stories, Brain Science/Biology, Core Competencies with in the Re-designed Curriculum)
- working collaboratively with our Resource Team, Supervision Aides, Student Support Workers, and Teacher-Librarian to further extend consistency in use of common language to impact all type of learners
- working collaboratively with our Area Counselor and Youth and Family Worker to provide whole-class, small-group and one-to-one student support and instruction on self-regulation skills, the Zones of Regulation and other self-regulation programs.
- working collaboratively with Occupational Therapists of Vancouver Coastal Health to access resources surrounding sensory diets and tools
- working collaboratively with our Aboriginal Enhancement Worker to further extend consistency to impact our students of Aboriginal Heritage
- accessing the progress/profile of each student on a regular basis (ex. individual conferences with students to 'check in' about their learning, class meetings)
- surveying and conferencing with students and engaging them in a reflective process of their ongoing development of self-regulation skills
- using our 'Learning Team' structure where applicable. This dialogue invites interested staff to come together regularly to discuss student learning. An important success to be documented is at the conception of this goal, we had 10 classes committed to focus on self-regulation. Over the course of the year, all 20 divisions have now embraced this goal to varying extents.
- reporting out and sharing our 'Learning Team' progress to the larger collective staff through Staff Committee Meetings (SCM) (*In this case, teachers of the 10 classes focusing on self-regulation and social responsibility would report out to the larger staff community for a focused dialogue. This model has worked well in a variety of circumstances at the school and has proven to be a valuable structure.*)
- engaging our Finance Committee to set aside funds in our Staff Professional Development account for release time for teachers to: visit other classrooms both within the school and at other schools focusing on self-regulation and social responsibility, attend workshops/professional development or to bring in professionals to our school to speak more to this area of instruction
- engaging our District Office to access more support in the areas of self-regulation and social responsibility (Regular Visits to Dickens by SELC Team; Regular Visits by MIST Team)

Aboriginal Enhancement Goal:

The following is in place to support our work in this area:

- In collaboration with the Resource Team, the Aboriginal Enhancement Worker developed a 'schedule of support' for weekly visits to classes at Dickens. When this is consistently implemented, there is success noted. For example, developing relationships are forming between the Aboriginal Enhancement Worker and identified students, developing relationships are forming between the Aboriginal Enhancement Worker and staff members as plans are made for support activities. During these regular visits, the Aboriginal Enhancement Worker is kept consistently apprised of meetings and, therefore, has attended some School-based Team meetings and Individual Education Plan meetings for our students.
- At each Assembly or Community Gathering, our 'Aboriginal Acknowledgement' is shared which is as follows: 'We acknowledge that we live, work, and play on the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish People'. This 'Acknowledgement' was renewed for the 2015 – 2016 school year, in collaboration with our Aboriginal Enhancement Worker.
- Of our seventeen (for 2015-16) Aboriginal students, five of them are in Grade 7 and is, therefore, moving onto Secondary School. As a staff, focus and attention has been in place to ensure that the transition is positive. Work is in place with our Community Links Team to visit Secondary Schools and to meet staff. Our Grade 7 students and their families have been invited to attend this year's 'Grade 7 Aboriginal Honouring Ceremony'. We know of its success from the past and will continue to extend invitations to have students and their families attend.
- Part of the Dickens Philosophy involves high student leadership and creating a sense of belonging for all. Staff make this an integral part of each and every day. For several of our Aboriginal learners, they have benefitted from remaining with the same teacher for two to three years, as per the practice at Dickens. For several of our Aboriginal learners, they had the opportunity to be involved in leadership roles around the school: Assembly leaders; Master of Ceremonies for our Winter Concert; Being on the 'welcoming committee' for school events.
- Staff make consistent connections with parents of all learners. This has been successful in working to support our Aboriginal Learners.
- Classroom projects and routines have also enhanced the understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and heritage to all students of a school community. These included: story telling units and literature circles for English Language Arts and Social Studies, and Fine Arts (Drama), mask design and construction for Fine Arts (Visual), learning about Aboriginal significance of plants and vegetation in Science, adopting the 'talking circle' framework in class meetings, participating in Fieldtrips to Grouse Mountain Longhouse and inviting our Aboriginal Enhancement Worker and our VSB Knowledge Keeper to facilitate lessons and workshops on various themes and foci.
- Professional Development Committee has met this year to move forward with providing additional professional development for Dickens staff for the 2016 – 2017 school year to more effectively incorporate Aboriginal heritage, culture and teachings into the Re-designed Curriculum (BCTF Workshops, District Aboriginal Education mentors and consultants)

What was the evidence of success for each student?

Social Responsibility Goal:

The following outlines our assessments and evidence of student success:

- a common and consistent language/terminology was developed and adopted by the school community to promote the awareness and articulation around self-regulation and social-emotional awareness.
- surveying/gathering information (formally or informally) about our students with a focus on self-regulation skills suggests and shows that students are able to identify and articulate how they are feeling and what 'zone' they are in and why. Students are also able to select and implement the appropriate strategies to help themselves manage their bodies and emotions.
- using Report Card data and Social Responsibility comments as a measure of success
- data on office referrals due to discipline/conduct related issues of students has decreased by 24% – demonstrating students' ability to manage their conduct, emotions and decision making
- using self-assessments, class meetings, interviews with parents and students, and literacy opportunities such as writing logs/journals about self-regulation and Zones of Regulation as anecdotal data to measure success
- creating ongoing safe and multi-modal opportunities to share student learning and reflections about self-regulation
- ongoing conferencing with the teacher around learning styles and strengths
- using BC Ministry of Education Satisfaction Survey data
- One of our Learning Teams provided leadership in developing a social-emotional rubric to marry self-regulation teachings/concepts with the 'I-Statements' and the profiles of the Core Competencies of the re-designed curriculum.
- In our reflective dialogue with staff during our goal setting processes, we have come to the realization that the Dickens philosophy coupled with the Learning Team Approach afforded us the opportunity to examine the re-designed curriculum more deeply and to celebrate our whole school successes focusing on self-regulation and social-emotional learning

Aboriginal Enhancement Goal:

- a strong network of support and community was built and fostered in collaboration with our Aboriginal Enhancement Worker
- during Professional Development Days and Curriculum Implementation In-Service Days, robust and rigorous discussions were held with staff on how we can renew our Aboriginal Acknowledgement at our weekly assembly and school gatherings (see above) and how we can access more district support and resources to learn how teaching professionals can authentically and meaningfully weave Aboriginal heritage, teachings and culture into the Re-designed Curriculum
- celebrating the successes and achievements of our Grade 7 students with Aboriginal Heritage at the 'Grade 7 Aboriginal Honouring Ceremony'
- successful completion of the Aboriginal Success Plans in collaboration with our Aboriginal Enhancement Worker
- accessing district-level Aboriginal supports such as T. Harris, C. Desjarlais and our Knowledge Keeper, S. Pointe to make Aboriginal teachings, heritage and culture more accessible to all students in our learning community

- accessing BCTF supports and workshops to make Aboriginal teachings, heritage and culture more accessible to all staff in our learning community

How did we communicate and celebrate student success

Social Responsibility Goal:

We communicated and celebrated student success by:

- sharing in student term report cards
- sharing in student-led conferences, goal-setting conferences, parent meetings
- providing frequent opportunities for students to share their learning and reflections in whole class and multi-class presentations, assemblies, newsletters
- displaying work on bulletin boards, on the school website and in classrooms
- sharing and celebrating student successes at the PAC General Meeting in the Spring (April, 2016)
 - staff developed an iMovie that involved staff and students sharing their successes in relation to their positive experiences in working on their social-emotional learning. This sharing opportunity engaged staff and parents in a rich discussion that highlighted how valuable common language and opportunities for group reflection are when we are learning. This was a positive experience for all.

Aboriginal Enhancement Goal:

We will continue to communicate and celebrate student success by:

- sharing in student term report cards
- sharing in student-led conferences, goal-setting conferences, parent meetings
- sharing of the Aboriginal Success Plans
- providing frequent opportunities for students to share their learning and reflections in whole class and multi-class presentations, assemblies, newsletters
- displaying work on bulletin boards, on the school website and in classrooms
- sharing and celebrating student successes at the PAC General Meetings
- encouraging families and school community members to attend the 'Grade 7 Honouring Ceremony'

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.