



1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

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

Tecumseh Annex is a primary annex of Tecumseh Elementary School. There are a total of four divisions serving 86 children from Kindergarten to Grade Three. About half of our students are English language learners, speaking a variety of other languages including: Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Spanish and Arabic. In addition, 10% of our students are Aboriginal, encompassing a variety of nations.

Tecumseh Annex is very proud of our active parent and grandparent community. Our open houses, student performances and parent-teacher conferences are well attended. We have a strong and active Parent Advisory Council which helps provide many opportunities including performances, field trips and learning resources.

Tecumseh Annex is a Reading Recovery and Early Intervention school which places a great emphasis on literacy skills and a love of reading. In addition, there is a school wide focus on leadership - many students choose to take part in leadership opportunities such as being library monitors, members of our Green Team and serving as Community Leaders. We are fortunate to have a music specialist teacher work with all divisions weekly leading our school choir.

The entire school has adopted a very successful Positive Behaviour Support model, which we call ROCK (Respect, Open Mind, Community, Kindness). Students are encouraged to be Tecumseh Annex ROCK Stars. All divisions have had good success with this shared language and vision for behavior.

This year we had two school wide goals, one in the area of Aboriginal education and one in the area of Social Emotional Learning. Social Emotional learning has been a long-standing focus of Tecumseh Annex. Our school wide Positive Behaviour Support program, ROCK, was begun in 2014-15 to great success. We wanted to build on that success and extend our thinking to work on the connections between social emotional learning and academic success. It is a shared belief among staff members that strong social emotional skills help students be academically successful. Through discussions about both our current practice and the revised curriculum, it was decided that inquiry learning and developing student agency was a natural place to extend social emotional learning consciously into academic programming. Our goal became: to increase social emotional learning with a focus on inquiry based teaching to develop student voice, confidence and students' sense of agency around their own growth.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

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

In support of our goal, we continued our school wide Positive Behaviour Support program, ROCK stars, and also tried some new activities, including:

- Goal setting for each term by individual students
- Goal setting conferences with parents held in October
- Resource team member led Social Emotional Learning groups for select students
- Community Leader program involving specifically trained and mentored Grade 3 students offering support to other students in a variety of ways (eg. on the playground, a buddy to eat with in the lunch room, loaning playground equipment)
- Wonder Wall – photos of each student and staff member in a questioning pose with an individual “Wonder Question” thought bubble were displayed on bulletin boards throughout the school to celebrate inquiry. Parents and care givers were invited to write their own wonder questions on a multi-lingual Wonder display in the library
- Individual classes have incorporated inquiry learning and SEL in different ways including a focus on independent research projects, skill development (“I wonder if I could...”)
- Spring Concert, Kindergarten to Grade 3, with a theme of ROCK Stars and community

In addition, we engaged in some professional development for staff in support of our goal.

- Teachers worked with the Blingja program, a social emotional/mindfulness curriculum that helps children learn to recognize and deal with their emotions in positive and empowering ways
- Lunch and Learn sessions in the areas of “Zones of Regulation” and “Collaborative Problem Solving”

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

The ROCK Star program continues to be both popular and fun for the students and successful in terms of building social/emotional skills. The ROCK Star language is used by all staff members, in the classroom, lunch room, gym and on the playground. The ROCK Star expectations are modeled by classroom teachers in September and reinforced throughout the year. In addition, the ROCK Star language is used regularly to celebrate achievements in assemblies, newsletters and with parents and families. One indication of the program's success is the continued decline in office referrals. There has been a 40% reduction in the number of students requiring extra problem solving assistance through the Vice Principal's Office from the previous year. When students are referred to the office, the emphasis continues to be on social/emotional skill development as students often use a ROCK Star problem solving sheet to help.

This year we had two "Rock Everything And Play" celebrations (and are planning a third) as students collectively earned 250, 500 and 750 "ROCK Stars" respectively. These special play sessions are both a school celebration and an opportunity for students to make choices about where they would like to play.

In terms of linking social/emotional skills to inquiry learning and students' sense of agency around their growth, we conducted a survey to determine the students' perspectives. In early May, all Grade One, Two and Three students were asked about inquiry, choice and their sense of themselves as learners. The results are summarized below.

I can make choices about what I learn:

Yes	Usually	Sometimes	No
29	16	16	2

What I learn in school is important to me:

Yes	Usually	Sometimes	No
46	7	10	0

This year I am learning about inquiring and asking questions:

Yes	Usually	Sometimes	No
16	13	22	11

I am good at learning new things:

Yes	Usually	Sometimes	No
34	20	12	1

I am a reader:

Yes	Usually	Sometimes	No
46	6	4	5

I am a writer:

Yes	Usually	Sometimes	No
34	8	16	2

These results indicate that although we need to be more intentional with our focus on inquiry and asking questions, our students do express confidence in their abilities to learn. Furthermore, generally, Tecumseh Annex students have a self-identity consistent with a successful, engaged learner.

4. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

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

As noted above, all members of our community, including parents, other family members, students and all staff are engaged in the ROCK Star positive behavior program. The common values of respect, open mind, community and kindness are celebrated in numerous ways including slide shows, assemblies, in newsletters and in all classrooms. Our spring concert is another way to share our success and ROCK Star knowledge with our parents and families.

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?

Through focused discussions, we have made the following observations:

- Our learners tend to feel safe and connected – strong sense of community
- Our learners tend to be stronger in reading than writing
- Many of our learners have challenges stating opinions, identifying main ideas and details, and organizing their ideas (we see these challenges in both oral and written work)
- Most of our learners identify as “readers” (ie have a sense of agency around developing their reading skills); not as many identify as “writers”
- Generally, our students have strong reading skills, but weaker writing skills (at the end of Term Two, 70% of Gr 1-3 students were reading at Grade level; the vast majority of students not reading at Grade level are English language learners)
- We wonder about the reasons behind this – difficulty with analytical thinking skills (ie ability to plan writing), lack of motivation (writing is generative and challenging; it also conflates many different skills – fine motor, higher level thinking skills, attention span), learning English (issues like sentence structure, spelling, vocabulary may be daunting), lack of agency (ie feeling they have “nothing” to say)
- Thinking about our students’ general success with reading skills, we observe:
 1. Students respond well to shared experiences
 2. Students respond well to things that are connected to their own lives
 3. Shared language within the school is valued and often picked up by the students (our school wide Positive Behaviour Support program and our school wide home reading program)
 4. Students respond well to choice

These observations, combined with our past successes in the areas of social emotional learning and reading, lead us to formulate a new goal. We would like to build on what we have learned through a whole school approach in social emotional learning to create shared language and a school wide focus around writing as self-expression with the twin ideals of choice and expression. We would like to continue our strong literacy practice and extend our focussed teaching of reading to include writing, again learning from what has worked with reading – notably, choice, student agency and celebration of achievement. We have some ideas about things to try next year:

- Publish student writing in Newsletters and on the Website
- Create writing tasks that have authentic audiences outside of the classroom
- Provide choice for students – choice of genre, audience, voice
- Encourage goal setting around writing
- Celebrate writing achievements school wide (assemblies, bulletin boards)
- Professional development for staff around writing and the revised curriculum

In summary, our goal is to improve our students’ writing skills through providing choice and an authentic audience wherever possible; to have our students see themselves as ‘writers’, as active participants in a shared conversation.

We see this goal as being in alignment with Goal One of the VSB’s Strategic Plan: “Engage our learners through innovative teaching and learning practices”, particularly “provide increased opportunities to connect students to their learning.”



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.

There are 11 students at Tecumseh Annex who identify as being Aboriginal. These students are in Kindergarten to Grade Two.

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.

At Tecumseh Annex, we view the infusion of Aboriginal perspectives and knowledge as a shared responsibility for all educators and one that benefits all students. In support of this goal, we have done the following:

- Our Aboriginal Enhancement Worker, D. Galay, works with three classes weekly, providing instruction and guidance through Talking Circles, stories and lessons
- Elder Shane Pointe visited with all students
- First Nations literature has been identified in library with spine labels
- All students watched and discussed “Raven Tales: The Movie”
- BC Aboriginal maps are on display in all classrooms and the library
- Several classes are using levelled early literacy books written by Aboriginal authors with Aboriginal themes (ie. Eaglecrest Books)
- Posters about the “First Peoples Principles of Learning” are on display in classrooms and in the library
- Individual classes have incorporated learning in specific ways:
 - elder art
 - salmon unit (science, socials, stories)
 - creating and colouring animals inspired by Haida art
 - science (sun, moon)
 - math (counting)
 - learning about residential schools
 - art appreciation (sketching Aboriginal art on display in school)
 - animal legends and the connection between local Aboriginal cultures and animals

In May 2016, we surveyed Grade One students, asking them about the Aboriginal acknowledgement that is said at the beginning of each assembly. Their collective responses indicated that the purpose behind the acknowledgement or even the meaning of the words was not well understood. In response, this year, our Aboriginal acknowledgement at the beginning of each assembly has been turned into an interactive teaching time. The students are asked questions about the land, the names of the Nations, why we are talking about them, any people they know from those Nations, how many years Aboriginal people have been here, etc. Rather than simply hearing the same phrase each week, the students are engaged in actively constructing the Aboriginal acknowledgement and explaining it to each other.

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

- List continuing and new initiatives

In addition to the initiatives listed above, which we plan to continue, we are planning to celebrate National Aboriginal Day throughout the week of June 19. On the Monday, we will have an assembly with storytelling, short video clips and music. On the Thursday, the entire school will be going to UBC to attend an Axis Theatre production of “Th’owxiya: The Hungry Feast Dish”. Throughout the week, we will be having school wide music appreciation sessions with Aboriginal music.

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

The clearest evidence of our success in this area comes from both our Aboriginal learners and our non-Aboriginal learners. Most of our Aboriginal learners seem to feel comfortable talking about their families, their cultural knowledge and experiences. We have tried to create an openness and sense of respect that allows them to share who they are. We have also seen an openness in our non-Aboriginal students to learn about Aboriginal cultures and knowledge. Students are generally respectful and engaged. An example of this is the number of Aboriginal themed books that all children choose to read.