



Vancouver School District

School Plan for Tillicum Community Annex

Year 3 (2016-2017)

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

Tillicum Community Annex is the annex to Hastings Elementary School, belonging to the Templeton family of schools. Tillicum Annex currently enrolls 94 students from kindergarten to grade four. The school population reflects the diverse surrounding community with 25% aboriginal students and 45% English Language Learners. Supporting the successful inclusion of all learners in classrooms is of high importance to the staff at Tillicum School as 32% of the student population has been identified with special needs.

Tillicum Annex has met the District vulnerability criteria at a tier two level and has been provided with additional resources to support our students and families. We have a fulltime Youth and Family Worker, an Aboriginal Education Enhancement Worker, and a hot lunch program available to all students. Our Community Schools Team (CST) offers additional support to our school in the area of student attendance, school transitions, and connecting families to various programs offered in the area.

We have a very strong community of registered volunteers at our school. We welcome various programs, such as One to One Readers, Book Buddies, and Books for Me to enhance our educational programs. Kiwassa Neighbourhood House is our closest community partner as it is situated next to the school and provides many programs and services to our students, such as the hot breakfast program and a variety of after school programs. We are also fortunate to have a Strong Start Center, for families with children ages 0-5, that operates daily out of Tillicum Annex and provides children the opportunity to increase their school readiness skills.

Our school excels in the area of teaching and modeling Social Responsibility and Self Awareness. The development of self-regulation strategies for students is integrated throughout all activities at Tillicum Community Annex. The students' ability to engage in their classroom tasks is enhanced when paired with strong self-regulation skills. Jump Start, school-wide Mind Up, and silent lunch are activities offered daily at the school to support the development and awareness of self-regulation. Introductory workshops on self-regulation have been facilitated by staff at Tillicum School for parents and community partners to offer a deeper understanding and encourage the use of these strategies with our students in different contexts.

The students at Tillicum take pride in their school and community as they volunteer for leadership opportunities offered throughout the year, such as Classroom Buddies, Assembly Hosts, Lunch Monitors, Morning Announcers, and Kindness Club. We celebrate our students' achievement in this area through our Student of the Month assemblies.

It is of high importance for the staff at Tillicum Annex to involve family in school activities to promote continued growth in student learning. Activities, such as BINGO night, Christmas Breakfast, Camp Read A Lot, and family reading our monthly *Be Excited About Reading* (BEAR) events, have all been very well attended. Our school extends invites to our monthly assemblies and special performances to encourage parents and guardians to celebrate in our students' successes. Tillicum School has a committed Parent Advisory Council (PAC) who enriches the school experiences for our students by their fundraising and collaborative efforts.

2. WHAT DID WE SEE?

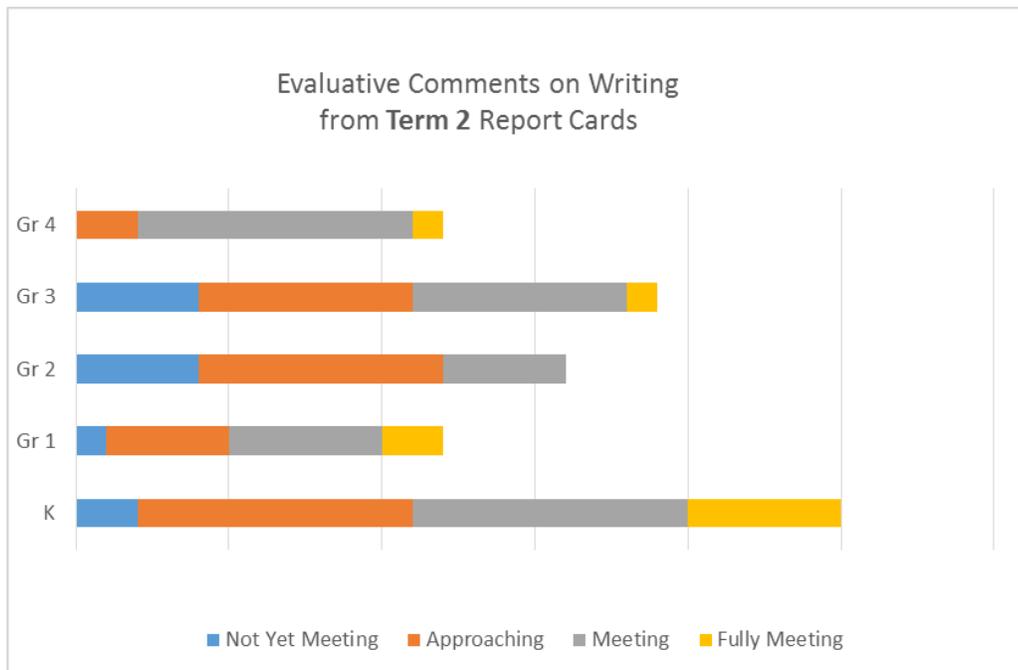
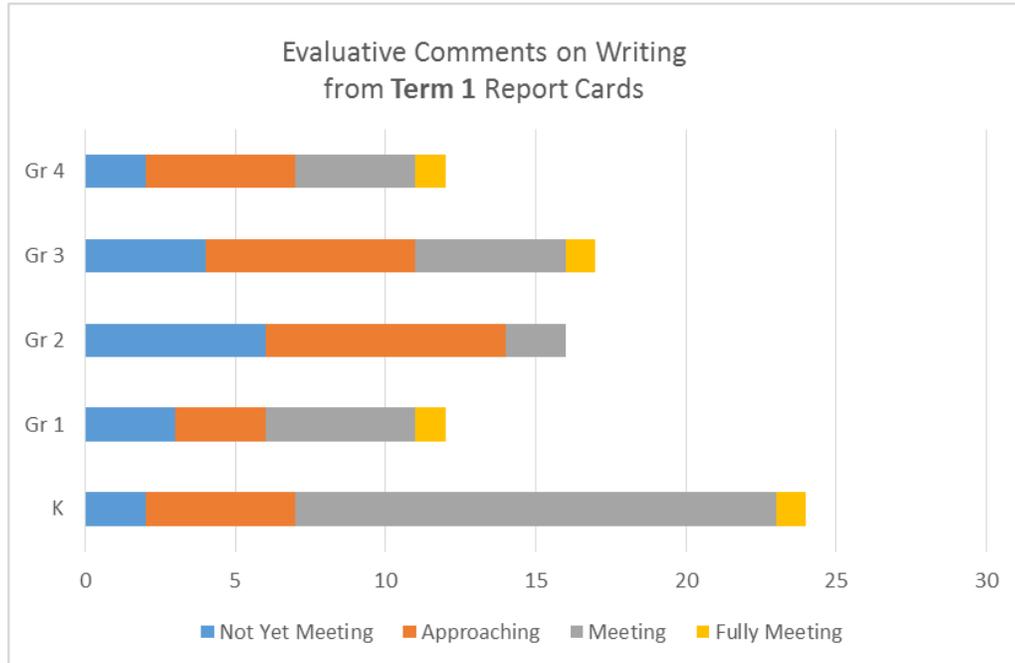
Target: To support student skill development in the area of writing with a focus on attitudes toward writing, idea generation, writing fluency and increase in number of correct writing sequences.

Support/activities:

- Ongoing collaboration between the teaching and resource staff to conduct regular assessments, review of writing data, and determination of appropriate supports
- Common assessment tools and grade group collaboration around the use of the B.C. Performance Standards.
- The District Literacy Teacher from Hastings has been providing intensive one-to-one writing support for students at Tillicum that have fallen behind in their writing skills.
- To increase engagement and positive attitudes toward writing, teachers have introduced fun ways to teach and celebrate writing in class such as
 - literature circles (fiction and non-fiction)
 - the use technology (*Book Creator, K-Note*)
 - Writer's Workshop
 - author visit/ author studies
 - mini lessons on writing (recipes, thank you letters)
 - school-wide writing events (Camp Write A Lot)
 - morning messages delivered to the whole school through the Public Announcements (PA) system
 - kindergarten students creating their own mini-books
- Direct teaching of foundational writing skills through various strategies:
 - Topic Pockets
 - interactive writing
 - pre-writing strategies (graphic organizers, think pair share)
 - journal and free writes (with idea starters)
 - *Stages of Writing* - kindergarten and grade one students are able to identify where they are as a writer and set goals to improve
- Improving reading, self-regulation, and executive functioning skills, and regular attendance plays a large role in the successful development of writing skills; therefore, various supports and techniques have been incorporated throughout the classrooms in these areas, such as:
 - intensive reading skill development for vulnerable students (Reading Recovery, Early Intervention Model)
 - ongoing reading assessments reviewed by resource and classroom teachers to determine appropriate supports
 - OT Centers 3x/week for students in kindergarten to grade 2 (fine and gross motor development)
 - Jump Start – daily (self-regulation)
 - Mind Up – daily (self-regulation)
 - weekly connections to families that require additional attendance support

3. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

Student success in the area of writing is evidenced through data gathered from the evaluative comments on writing skills in the report cards for term 1 and 2:



We collected information from surveys given to all the students in the school regarding their *Attitudes Toward Writing*; 68% of the students that were surveyed had overall positive attitudes towards writing, including enjoyment with writing stories, sharing stories with others, and writing in their spare time. Teachers have observed an increase in students' engagement to writing tasks this year; for example, students are choosing the 'writing station' during choice activity time, they are demonstrating excitement for 'free writes', they are able to focus on their writing tasks for longer, and are proud to show their writing to others.

4. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

- The use of display cases and bulletin boards to celebrate student writing and aboriginal history, storytelling, and art work
- Teachers shared their students' learning improvements with the students regularly and with their parents during Student Led Conferences
- Students' writing displayed throughout the school and in monthly newsletters
- Student of the month assemblies to recognize student achievement
- Oral conferencing with students
- Student work created during Camp Write-A-Lot was bound into a book and shared in each classroom; it was available for students to share with their families during the monthly *Be Excited About Reading* event
- Creating writing projects on iPads and sharing with families during Student Led Conferences
- Monthly book giveaways to students provided by the *Books for Me* program
- A visit from Canadian author, Claire Eamer
- Sharing writing with Buddy Class

5. WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

With new staff members starting at Tillicum next year, we discussed the benefits of working collaboratively to provide the necessary information about our school community and to continue to use school-wide programs and supports to best address the needs of the students. Aligning the professional development days with the areas of inquiry and goals in the school plan are important to the staff. Strengthening community partnerships will contribute to an increased sense of safety and security for the students. The staff would like to focus on strength-based learning, allowing students to take risks and ensure that supports are in place. Respecting and celebrating all forms of diversity are a value to the team at Tillicum

Staff have reflected upon the increase in anxiety and the need for social skill development for many of our students. The lack of food, home, and emotional security has the greatest impact on the social and academic development of a child. It is important for students to feel a sense of belonging in a safe setting before academics can be developed; therefore, our staff are committed to focusing on strategies to make students feel connected with everyone at the school through enhancing their social skills and developing their self-regulation and problem solving strategies.

The route of next year's inquiry aligns well with the goal presented in the Vancouver School Board's Strategic Plan 2016-2021: Create a culture of care and shared responsibility. The staff would like to focus on how best to encourage and enhance their practices to support the cultural, social-emotional, physical, and mental well-being of the students.



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.

We have 22 students with Aboriginal and Metis Ancestry in kindergarten to grade four at Tillicum Annex, which makes up 25% of our school population. These students belong to a variety of Bands, including Squamish, Nuxalk Nation-Bella, Soda Creek, and Williams Lake.

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

- Lessons in Aboriginal studies are threaded throughout our curriculum in social studies, science, language arts, and music
- Integrating Aboriginal culture and customs during special events, assemblies, community activities with the students, staff, and community partners
- Student leaders state the traditional acknowledgement at the beginning of every assembly
- Daily involvement of our Aboriginal Education Enhancement Worker (AEEW) with the staff and students, supporting self-regulation and social relationships
- Classroom sharing, storytelling, and teachings from our AEEW
- Classroom art that reflects the teaching from stories and our AEEW
- To increase accessibility of the learning of Aboriginal culture, recommended books have been purchased this year for our library collection
- The use of supplemental teaching material to demonstrate how Aboriginal culture is weaved throughout our daily school life
- Workshops for our kindergarten students about First Nations Storytelling using watercolors provided by Artist, Susan McCallum, through the Artists in Residence Program
- Field studies, such as *Big House* studies during Grade 4 camp at the Cheakamus Center, teach students about the history of Aboriginal peoples, daily living (making bannock) and storytelling; First Nations cultural program offered at Híwus Feasthouse on Grouse Mountain for grade 3 and 4 students
- Performance and workshops provided by Jeanette Kotowich from Raven Spirit Dance, on *Steppin'* which weaves Metis Cultural traditions with contemporary dance influences

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

- continue to provide high level of First Nations support, education, and programming at our school
- incorporate the teachings of Native plants and how they were used with the Aboriginal people in, our school-wide Gardening program
- integrate the teaching of student self-assessment with the Core Competencies with Aboriginal Education to increase students' awareness of their learning in this area
- refer our students to the visuals in our hallways, such as 'First Peoples Language Map' and the 'Principles of Learning'
- support students in learning more about their heritage and promote activities that increase pride of all cultural backgrounds

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

Students in grades 2, 3, and 4 were asked questions regarding Aboriginal Education, these were the results:

- 82% of the students responded *Yes* to "Do you have an understanding of Aboriginal culture and traditions?"; some of the examples:
 - *Coast people live near lakes and rivers and use cedar*
 - *They use all the body parts of animals and trees*
 - *They celebrate hunts and teach kids about hunts*
 - *The older people tell stories to the young*
- 79% of the students responded *Yes* to "Do you enjoy learning about the aboriginal culture?"
- 64% of the students *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the statement: "It is important to learn about the Aboriginal culture and history"

Parent's voice:

- notice the aboriginal artwork that children bring home and the display cases in the front foyer with representations of the history of Aboriginal people
- children really enjoyed hearing stories told by the Aboriginal Enhancement Worker
- children are choosing First Nations books from the selection in the library during reading time with volunteers (Book Buddies)
- parents are appreciative of the type/amount of teaching and learning being done at Tillicum in this area

Staff voice:

- students are having difficulty reflecting on their learning of Aboriginal education and seeing how First Nations traditions and culture are woven into their daily lessons
- teachers are interested to find out how to increase students' awareness in this area
- suggested to have more clarity with what language used and how topics are presented
- concern that some students may be unaware of their heritage or feel shame based on historical events
- students often have a variety of cultural backgrounds, it is important for students to develop a positive self-identity; staff want to see growth in students' knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of all cultures