



Vancouver School District School Plan for Lord Byng Year 1: 2018 of 3 Year Plan, 2018 - 2021

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY (TO BE UPDATED EACH YEAR)

MISSION STATEMENT

At Lord Byng Secondary School we provide a safe learning community that enables students to challenge their intellectual and creative abilities and allows them to meet their full potential as citizens.

SCHOOL GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Goal # 1: To strengthen mindfulness, resilience, and balance in our school community.

Objectives:

- To improve students' connection to the classroom, to the school and to the community.
- To support the development of positive mental health and balance in our community.
- To promote the development of non-cognitive skills (self-control, optimism, curiosity, persistence, grit), a sense of passion and purpose, and a resilient, growth mindset at Byng.
- To engage students intellectually in learning that is relevant, authentic and meaningful to them.

Goal # 2: To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all members of our school community.

Objectives:

- To ensure students have increased access to Indigenous resources at Lord Byng
- To support the inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing in classrooms
- To identify community needs and look for additional opportunities to develop partnerships with Indigenous community organizations
- To seek out partnerships with Indigenous community groups interested in working with our staff and students on various projects

DEMOGRAPHICS OF OUR LEARNING

Lord Byng is located on a nine acre site at the western end of the Vancouver peninsula in an area called West Point Grey, approximately two kilometers from the campus of the University of British Columbia. The school serves all of West Point Grey, as well as parts of the Kitsilano and Dunbar neighbourhoods. The catchment area of the school includes the provincial electoral district of Vancouver-Point Grey and Vancouver-Quilchena. Census data tells us that the top three occupations in these areas include: teacher, professor, and professionals in science.

OUR LEARNERS

Lord Byng is a comprehensive secondary school with a population of 1297 students in grades 8 through 12. It offers a full program with high enrolment in both academic and elective areas. The school is home to a Learning Assistance/Life Skills class, which is a district program. Our DSAP, the Byng Arts Academy, offers an outstanding program to 450 students from across the school district with a Fine Arts orientation. Entrance to the Byng Arts Academy is by audition and the program spans grades 8 to 12. Work Experience enrolment at Byng is upwards of 120 students this year. Within our student body there are 12 students who identify as being of Indigenous ancestry, along with approximately 140 who are identified as having special learning needs (although there are a range of designations at Lord Byng, the most often occurring is Gifted); 89 English language learners and 14 International students add further to the diversity to our student body.

OUR VISION OF SUCCESS FOR LEARNING FOR EACH STUDENT

Building on our strong academic foundation, character development and citizenship at Byng, we continue to emphasize and reinforce the importance of wellness and the impact that “being well” can have on overall student success. The following focus areas have emerged from our inquiry work around success for each student and have been reinforced by the results of the OurSCHOOL Survey Report on Student Outcomes and School Climate: positive mental health, wellness and balance; the growth mindset, grit and resilience; community, belonging and connectedness: and intellectual engagement in meaningful learning experiences. As part of this plan we are looking at how to engage with teachers in order to model these traits in order to better meet the wellness needs of students. There is also work to be done in the building of relationships with the parent community so that they are better informed on the social, emotional, and academic well-being of their children.

2. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR LEARNERS? (SCANNING)

Overall, students at Lord Byng are high achieving academically and continuously push themselves towards higher and higher achievements. Students consistently seek out opportunities for enrichment and specialized courses as evidenced by the overwhelming interest in enriched courses, Advanced Placement programs and exams, as well as the number of off timetable courses students take in a year. Our students strive for excellence and this is reflected in the district reputation as well as the provincial standing that the school enjoys. For the majority of students the educational setting at Lord Byng allows them to pursue academics, athletics, volunteer opportunities, and field studies that they find stimulating and rewarding. There is an underlying belief however that what a student does or, in some cases, does not do will irreparably impact their educational trajectory. The pressure students feel to achieve high marks has, for some students, led to unhealthy behaviour and an inability to cope with perceived failure.

Within the context of success, achievement, and academic rigor there does exist a subset of students that struggle to find their place at Lord Byng. According to our counselling department there are students in each grade struggling with mental health issues such that it impacts learning and other students dealing with chronic absenteeism due to a lack of connectedness to the school or surrounding community.

3. WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OUR LEARNERS? (SCANNING)

The evidence that supports this includes:

- The OurSCHOOL survey data – which included questions around positive role models and overall well-being
- District data (program enrolment, DRPC requests, registrations for new students)
- School based data (Principal's List, Honor Roll, student attendance records, timetable requests)
- Informal interviews with students/staff/parents
- Student/Parent requests for Ministry Designations (R/H)
- Anecdotal evidence through PAC meetings, Tea and Talks, Test Anxiety Workshops, student council feedback
- Feedback from Q&A session with UBC President Santa J. Ono at Lord Byng
- Mindfulness workshops
- Collaborative Time working groups
- Discussions from teacher book club *Mindful Alignment: Foundations of Educator Flourishing* by Cherkowski, Hanson, & Walker
- Referrals to Child & Adolescent Response Team

4. WHAT FOCUS EMERGES FROM THIS EVIDENCE? (FOCUSING)

- Which learners and which areas will we be focusing on?
- Where are we connected?
- How does this focus connect to the district strategic plan? (Quote Strategic plan goal/objective #)
- How does this focus connect to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement? (Quote AEEA goal/objective)
- How does this focus connect to the redesigned curriculum including the big ideas, core competencies, curricular competencies, etc.?

The focus of our inquiry is to impact the mindfulness and wellness of all students through engaging staff to be models of wellness and resilience. This focus aligns with the Vancouver School Boards' (VSB) Strategic Plan (2021) goal of creating a culture of care and shared responsibility. Our shared objective is to encourage and enhance practices that support cultural, emotional, physical, and mental well-being of students. Through our work we have found the idea of wellness is increasingly becoming part of curricula across Canada, as well as internationally. Recently, there has been a push towards ensuring that students, staff, and parents have access to wellness training in order to best support student learning within education and beyond. Our focus is also supported by the redesigned British Columbia curriculum particularly in the core competencies. Specifically, the core competency of personal awareness and responsibility which centers on wellness, resilience, and self-determination.

5. INQUIRY QUESTION (FOCUSING) – PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS “GOAL”

The question we are using to guide our inquiry is:

In our goal to build a healthy school culture, what positive and sustainable behaviours can we practice as a staff to model wellness, connection, and resilience for our students so they may better adapt to and thrive in a changing school environment?

In exploring this question we aim to effect change in the behaviour of students within our school community. Through a variety of formal and informal processes we as a school have arrived at the notion that the overall wellness of staff and students is not as robust as it could be. As we narrowed our inquiry focus we found that in order to begin to address student wellness we first had to identify how we as educators were modeling wellness. We have contributed to the situation that students have found themselves in through our commitment to academic rigor and rigidity in adhering to curricular objectives.

6. WHAT IS OUR PLAN? (PLANNING)

Over the three years included in this growth plan we aim to be more intentional in relating curriculum to wellness and creating opportunities for students and staff to reflect on

Year 1: Create an inquiry question and define the parameters from which to move forward.

Year 2: Determine ways in which teachers can begin to model wellness and create a baseline for measuring wellness of staff and students. Making specific changes at the departmental level to change behaviours of teachers and students.

Year 3: Measure and assess the actions taken to address wellness for both staff and students.

Throughout this three year plan the focus remains on students and how to best to support each learner. While there are a number of things we are doing very well at Lord Byng there is an acknowledgement from staff and students that we could be doing more in the areas of mindfulness and wellness. Attempting to mitigate feelings of anxiousness, building resilience, and promoting mindfulness are some of the areas that staff have identified as being areas that could be targeted in order to impact student success.

7. WHAT SUPPORTS WILL WE NEED? (PLANNING)

The areas of learning in this plan center around the idea that wellness is crucial to student success. The notion of wellness is embodied in the redesigned curriculum in various Curricular Competencies as well as the Core Competency of Personal Awareness and Responsibility.

What we will need:

- Student voice training and structure
- Access to research around teacher wellness, work-life balance
- Experts on wellness and mindfulness
- Work more closely with Peer Counsellors on wellness, mindfulness, and resilience

8. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE SUCCESSFUL? (CHECKING)

By establishing definitions around wellness and mindfulness we can then begin to ask staff and students to self-report on their perceived levels of wellness. Over the course of three years we hope to see the number of students reporting as struggling or feeling overwhelmed at school begin to decline. We also hope to see the perceived ability to persevere in the face of difficulty increase for students. We will be using the results of the OurSCHOOL survey to establish the baseline data around self-reported wellness. In order to establish a baseline around staff we will be using work done during collaborative time to identify areas where immediate impacts can be made.

We feel this work is very important to the well-being of our students, especially given the educational context that many students find themselves in with extra tutoring sessions, demanding schedules, and extrinsic motivators for academic excellence. If we do not see any changes we may have to be more intentional with how we model wellness and expand the strategies used.

9. HOW WILL WE SHARE THIS INFORMATION? (CHECKING)

As we proceed toward this goal we will be updating staff, parents, students, and other stakeholders through the following means:

- PAC meetings and parent nights (Walkabout, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Course Planning Night)
- Electronically – through school website and electronic announcements
- Presentations to staff and students (Professional Development Days, student assemblies, collaborative day sessions)
- Student Assemblies



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

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

- Include numbers of students, grade levels, etc.

We currently have 12 students who identify as having Indigenous ancestry in grades 8, 9, 10, and 12. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds which include Métis, Inuit, Status, and Non-Status and living on-reserve at Musqueam. Our Indigenous students include some who require specialized support and/or cultural enhancement opportunities.

11. 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.

In order to support learners in regards to the goal of increasing knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures and contributions among all members of our school community we have done the following:

- Ensure the offering of English 12 First Peoples and BC First Nations Studies 12 within course selection and timetabling processes
- Developing and maintaining our AIMS plans for all Indigenous learners in school
- Actively support the inclusion of First Peoples ways of knowing in the classroom

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

- List continuing and new initiatives

Continuing Initiatives include:

- Connecting students to First Peoples ways of knowing – beginning in grade 8 during Grade 8 Camp
- Place-based learning in the traditional territories of the Musqueam
- Renewing relationships with the Musqueam Band
- Focusing on the importance of place (providing historical context)

New initiatives that we are excited to begin include:

- Set-up staff learning opportunities with the Musqueam Learning Center (social and professional)
- Including speakers from Musqueam in school events

13. 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

In order to obtain feedback in this area we will be looking at the following instruments to inform our practice:

- Indigenous student success plans
- Student forums
- OurSCHOOL- Student Satisfaction Survey
- Feedback from community members
- Enrolment in courses that focus on First Peoples (English 12 First Peoples and BC First Peoples Studies 12)