



Vancouver School District

School Plan for McBride Annex

Year 3 (2016-2017)

1. GENERAL SCHOOL STORY:

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

McBride Annex is a small K-3 school with 4 divisions.

The community is evolving and the demographics have changed quite significantly over the past several years. There are many new families with young children moving into the community.

There is a significant amount of parent participation in the school. The PAC is very active and hosts many activities and fund raising events throughout the year. The parent community is very involved in the school and actively participates in many school events such as field trips, noisy reading, assemblies, Sport's Day, etc. The parents are very passionate about the school and the learning experiences their children engage in.

Our learners are enthusiastic and excited to come to school. They come with many experiences and they like to share those with others. They are active learners and are compassionate and empathetic towards each other.

The vision of success for our learners is to develop skills and competencies that are important and valuable in the society they live in today. In today's world, the skills that students need to succeed in the world are different than the skills that were once needed (ie. familiarity with rapidly changing technologies, employers looking for creative problem solvers and an ability to work collaboratively with others). Our world is changing rapidly and new ideas are continuously evolving. We live in an information filled world and we want our students to develop the skills they need to navigate through the vast amount of information in a critical way and to be adept at finding answers to questions they have. We want our students to have a desire to explore their world with a sense of wonder and curiosity and to ask deep questions about their world which can be explored further. We want our students to be able to work collaboratively and to be flexible creative thinkers and innovators so they can be confident problem solvers and make decisions which will have a positive impact on our society. We want them to be respectful, kind and empathetic and to be able to use multiple strategies to solve problems. We want them to be able to persevere and to be able to rethink their ideas if they are not successful and to be resilient in times of uncertainty.

The school goal evolved from conversations with staff and parents about a vision of success for students, the core competencies and philosophy of the redesigned curriculum and the VSB strategic plan. This work has also been deeply embedded in several collaborative inquiries the staff have been involved in.

WHAT DID WE SEE?

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

Collaboration is a very important part of our school community and much of the work we do at the school level involves the entire school population working together. We have been so fortunate to be able to offer many opportunities for students to develop creative thinking skills throughout the year. We have also greatly benefitted from the professional learning the staff have been involved in through our collaborative inquiries and work with specialists.

In the fall the entire school went to UBC farm and spent the day learning about urban farming. The students also worked with an artist in residence who had the students create art out of natural materials found on the farm. The students also went for a walk through the forest at the farm and learned about local plants and animals.

The students and staff worked with a drama specialist for 10 days throughout the fall and winter. The students were faced with deep and interesting problems they had to solve by coming up with creative solutions for the problems. The students created puppets, masks and became characters who approached the problems in different ways. An inquiry based approach was used and the students had say and ownership over their learning. The staff also benefitted greatly from this experience and have continued to apply what they learned in their teaching.

Throughout the winter and spring the students and staff have been working with two visual artists in residence. One of the artists worked with the students on creating a variety of textiles that the students will use to create story. Some of the techniques the students learned about were dyeing fabric and yarn with a variety of natural materials (ie. avocado pits, onion skins, black beans, etc.). The students also learned about techniques for pulling color from plants and applying it to fabric. Students transferred color and pattern directly onto silk using hammers. The students also used natural indigo dye to create pattern on cloth using traditional African and Japanese techniques. The other artist focused on using paper to create structures the students will use to create stories. The redesigned art room was foundational in allowing the artists, students and staff a space to use that had all of the essential components in it.

Throughout the month of May, the students and staff are working with a dance specialist focused on creative dance. The approach used will also be an inquiry based approach and the students will have many opportunities to express their ideas through dance and movement. This work will also be directly connected to what the students are learning about in the classroom.

In June, the entire school will be going on a field trip to Iona Beach. The students will be expanding upon the learning they have been doing in the classroom and will have a hands on opportunity to learn about scientific concepts they have been studying (the environment and plants and animals in the community). The students will also have the opportunity to work with the dance specialist and visual artist in residence and will dance outdoors and create art out of natural materials.

Some of the classes have been involved in using story workshop in their classrooms. Story workshop is a wonderful opportunity for students to explore and develop story through inquiry and play. The stories that have evolved out of story workshop have been rich and creative and have developed well beyond what we might have imagined. The use of story workshop has greatly expanded the students' ability to create stories. Some of the classes have put together books of stories that the students have created. They include pictures and text and have been embraced by students and parents.

The entire staff was engaged in a collaborative inquiry on creative thinking, inquiry based learning and story. As you can see by the examples presented, this collaborative inquiry was a very important component of the learning that took place throughout the year. The learning for the students and the staff was deep and meaningful.

Some staff members participated in a District collaborative inquiry on the documentation of student learning. The staff worked together to create documentation panels for the students and the parents to make the process of learning visible.

Two staff members participated in a third collaborative inquiry on documentation of student learning.

Three staff members visited a math class to learn more about an inquiry based approach to teaching math as well as how to encourage and support students to use creative ways to solve math problems.

All of the collaborative inquiries were connected. They were also connected to the school plan, the core competencies and redesigned curriculum as well as the strategic plan.

We were very purposeful in the resources we purchased throughout the year to support inquiry and creative thinking. Many wonderful picture books (ie. *What Do You Do With an Idea*, *The Most Magnificent Thing*, etc.) were purchased to allow for jumping off points into creative thinking as well as professional resources (ie. *ThinQ Kindergarten*, *The Innovator's Mindset*, etc.) to support the staff's learning journey.

2. WERE WE SUCCESSFUL?

- Outline results

We were highly successful in developing deep and meaningful learning opportunities that allowed students to further develop their creative thinking skills. The work with 4 different artists was highly engaging and provided the students with unique, hands on learning experiences. The staff also felt that these experiences not only benefitted the students but also benefitted the staff. The staff learned more about ways to implement inquiry based learning, facilitate creative thinking learning opportunities, how to question “in the moment” so that the learning could go deeper and how the arts (drama, dance and visual arts) can be used to teach creative thinking and be integrated into other subject areas.

The work with the drama specialist inspired staff to try out what they learned and to work collaboratively on an inquiry leading students to use creative problem solving. The students had the opportunity to develop many creative solutions to important problems which were posed. They were also able to ask questions and inquire more deeply into important concepts in our world.

The work with the visual artists was very open-ended which allowed the students lots of room for voice and choice in their learning. They learned different art techniques but were allowed the opportunity to use their own creativity to develop materials for story.

The work with the dance specialist really focused on the ability to think creatively and how to incorporate this into movement and dance. It allowed the students to see multiple points of view and learn that art can be interpreted in a variety of ways. They also learned that different points of view can foster, inform and deepen our own thinking.

The work was highly connected to our collaborative inquiries and we often used examples of the work with artists in our discussions as a way to further explore the creative thinking, the inquiry process and story.

3. HOW HAVE WE SHARED?

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

The staff applied for a grant and purchased a color printer and color ink with the grant. A group of teachers were part of the District Collaborative Inquiry on the documentation of student learning and received iPad minis to use to document student learning. Other teachers were part of another collaborative inquiry on documentation. These tools and the collaborative inquiries allowed the teachers to find ways to share the work with students and families. The iPad minis were used to take photographs and video of the student work. The staff learned how to use the iPads to print pictures on the color printer. The teachers found ways to make the documentation process a natural part of the daily routine in the classroom. The staff are currently using these tools to help the students learn about self-assessment of the core competencies.

The staff who were participating in the District Collaborative Inquiry set up a meeting with a small group of parents to ask them what they could do to make the learning process more visible to the parents and students. The staff used the input from parents to create opportunities for parents to have more insight into what was happening in the classrooms and into the learning process.

For student led conferences, the staff created documentation panels in the hall ways and the art room which used student voice to show the process of the learning the students were engaged in with the drama specialist and the visual artists. This was a very intentional way of bringing families into the learning without all of the focus being on the product.

Some teachers created books of students' stories that were shared with the students and families, these have become highly revered artifacts that are revisited daily.

The newsletter was used to keep the parents informed of the work that was being done at the school level.

The PAC meetings were used as another opportunity to share what was happening at the school and in the classrooms.

The parents were informed when the artists were working in the classroom so they had the opportunity to come in and observe if they were able.

Some teachers had the students write questions in their agendas that the parents could ask so the students had an opportunity share what they had done in class.

Staff engaged parents in informal conversations to explain the work that was taking place.

One teacher had the opportunity to write a written reflection about her journey into documentation which will be shared with educators across the district.

4. 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?

Based on numerous factors including the decreased amount of time available to fully discuss the direction of the school plan (school planning day was used as a curriculum day), change in staffing for next year, etc. the staff would like to use time in September to fully explore the direction of the school plan in the upcoming years.



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

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

- Include numbers of students, grade levels, etc.

There is one aboriginal learner in the school.

6. 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.

This school year the staff had a presenter come in and show the staff how to incorporate First Peoples Principles of Learning into art.

Some staff members attended professional development.

Shane Pointe and Loretta Williams worked in a 2/3 classroom this year which was studying different components of aboriginal culture. The students worked on an inquiry project on different aspects of aboriginal culture.

Purchased new resources to support the learning in this area.

The Big Book series for Socials (community) and Science (seasons) was purchased and used by staff.

The Raven Tales series was borrowed from the district and viewed by students.

The staff explored the redesigned curriculum to find ways to embed First Peoples Principles of Learning.

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

- List continuing and new initiatives

Will continue professional conversations and explore ways to incorporate aboriginal content and perspectives and embed First Peoples Principles of Learning.

8. 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

Students said they did not know much about local aboriginal cultures now the students say they know more about aboriginal culture.

Looked at seasons – compared what we do in the different seasons, and compared what aboriginal cultures do during the seasons.