

School Learning Plan

2023-2024

THE CURRENT CONTEXT

École Lord Tweedsmuir Elementary School is a dual track school from Kindergarten to Grade 5 offering both Early French Immersion and English programming in the West End of New Westminster. We have a diverse population of 432 students in 22 divisions and our mission is to provide inclusive educational programs that are diverse, student centred and engaging for all learners.

One of the First Peoples Principles of Learning states *that learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors*. Another principle states *that learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationship, and a sense of place.)* Place-based learning can embed Indigenous and environmentally focused approaches to education by first recognizing the deep, physical, mental, and spiritual connection to the land that is a part of Indigenous cultures. Infusing Indigenous and place-based pedagogy into curriculum will help all learners in our community feel welcome, safe, respected, and valued as we continue to build positive and caring relationships that strengthen our school climate.

‘Place-based learning is a method of practice that uses places and the resources found there to learn across disciplines. This can include a place’s cultures, history or geophysical features. With place-based learning, the hope is to foster a sense of place for individuals within their community. This practice helps encourage good citizenship and helps students understand, appreciate and care for their communities’. ***Research has shown that outdoor learning can have huge benefits on student mental health and academic performance. Students are often calmer and better able to focus when learning in nature, and teachers have reported better behaviour and social interactions with fewer disciplinary issues.’**

OBJECTIVE: WHAT WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE

To infuse Indigenous and place-based learning into the curriculum to ensure that all learners feel connected with themselves, with nature and with their community.

DESIGN: HOW WE PLAN TO MEET OUR OBJECTIVE

Action Plan

1. Review school data (MDI, EDI, SLS, CHEQ).
2. Engage in professional development on Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being, Outdoor learning, DEIA, Natural Curiosity, 4 Seasons of Indigenous Learning, Walking Together
3. Provide opportunities for staff to connect, collaborate and celebrate place-based learning successes (staff meetings and collaboration days).
4. Submit a climate action grant proposal to focus learning opportunities for students to continue to nurture respect for the earth and how to have a positive impact on our environment.
5. School-wide engagement with the anchor text ‘Walking Together’ by Elder Dr. Albert D. Marshall which weaves together the strengths of Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of knowing to nurture respectful and responsible relationships with the earth and continue with “Be a Good Ancestor”.
6. Classes identify/ prioritize actions that students can take to ‘walk together’ and document their progress and reflect on their journey.
7. Continue to infuse stories of the land in our teaching, using the wealth of authentic Indigenous authors/ texts now available. Make explicit connections between the geography around us, Indigenous knowledge and language, and the current state of the environment (walking field trips, reading Indigenous books, visiting local places, learning history and making connections).
8. Purchase outdoor learning teaching resources for library and staff use.

Timeline

1. Review of School Data
2. Professional Development (ongoing throughout the year including, non-instructional days, collaboration afternoons, after school sessions, etc.)
3. 4 Seasons of Indigenous Learning book club
4. Provide opportunities for school wide events to build community around place-based learning.
5. Provide leadership opportunities for the older students with environmental initiatives.
6. Place-based Learning embedded in daily practice.

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9. Increase number of learning activities for students in the school garden as an outdoor classroom.
10. Arrange for Artists in Residence with an environmental or Indigenous focus for Fine Arts
11. Provide outdoor learning opportunities for prep coverage.
12. Continue to embed First Peoples Principles of Learning and Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Being (engaging in professional development).
13. Teach new students the school garden song and continue to focus on Protect, Respect, Connect and Reflect.
14. Lunch and Learns
15. Land Acknowledgments – gratitude and thankful
16. Indigenizing our spaces to explore identity through an Indigenizing spaces lens
17. Incorporating Indigenous language into the classroom.
18. Explore apps with Indigenous place names and localized stories.

SUCCESS INDICATORS: HOW WE WILL KNOW THAT OUR ACTIONS ARE HAVING THE DESIRED IMPACT

Key Results

- Students continue to build a sense of community through a connection to place.
- Students connect with nature and show a deeper understanding of the relationship with the land.
- Student agency, equity and community are improved.
- Use of nature journals to capture, communicate and celebrate their learning.
- Students will develop curiosity using questions and observations to demonstrate a sense of wonder.
- Whole school participates in 'Walking Together.'
- Outdoor Family Friday
- Salmonid Program
- Local trips to Byrne Creek, Grimston park, neighbourhood walks, time in the school garden
- Place-based outdoor buddy activities
- Lip-dub with Earth Day focus
- Core competency reflections show growth in communication, personal awareness and social responsibility
- Shifting the mindset of outdoor learning expectations
- Reflecting on students' learning with gardening practices and production (thinking about what we are planting, the meaning behind the chosen garden items)
- There will be less litter on school grounds

COMMUNICATION: HOW WE WILL SHARE OUR LEARNING JOURNEY WITH OUR COMMUNITY

- Student conferences
- Newsletters
- PAC meetings
- School Communication (emails, school messenger, webpage, teacher bulletins)
- School bulletin boards
- Assemblies
- Instagram Account – SLP focus to share story
- Photo showcase