

AUGUST 2016

School District No. 40 (New Westminster)

Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms

A District Blueprint for Learner Success



School District No. 40 (New Westminster)

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
Executive Summary	3
Introduction and Consultation Process	5
Introduction.....	6
Consultation Process.....	7
Next Steps.....	9
Key Findings from the Literature Review	10
The Provincial Context	11
Engagement and Personalized Learning	12
Social and Emotional Well-being and Healthy Lifestyles	15
Communicating Student Learning	17
Technology and Learning	18
Shared Belief Statements	20
Engagement and Personalized Learning	21
Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles	22
Communicating Student Learning	23
Technology and Learning	24
District Priorities, Goals and Action Plans	25
Engagement and Personalized Learning	26
Success Indicators:.....	32
Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles	33
Success Indicators:.....	39
Communicating Student Learning	40
Success Indicators:.....	43
Technology and Learning	44
Success Indicators:.....	46
Concluding Comments and Bibliography.....	47
Conclusion	48
Bibliography	50

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A special thank you goes to the members of the *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms Working Group* who led the discussions and played a pivotal role in the development of this document. The Board of Education would like to extend thanks to the following working group members who often met weekly from January to June 2015 and beyond to discuss and refine the plan and to integrate comments from the broader educational partner groups:

Students:	Raunaq Singh, Grade 12 Student, New Westminster Secondary (NWSS) Peter Sun, Grade 10 Student, NWSS
Parents:	Anne Bélanger, Herbert Spencer Parent Ross Chilton, NWSS Parent
Support Staff:	Beverly Bleasdale, Educational Assistant, NWSS Karen Bower, Student Learning Services Assistant
Teachers:	Kathryn Kreiser, Resource Teacher, Qayqayt Elementary Sarah Ormerod, Teacher, Queensborough Middle
Principals and Vice-Principals:	Stacey Burke, Acting Vice-Principal, Glenbrook Middle Kathleen Chad, Vice-Principal, NWSS Chris Nicholson, District Vice-Principal Belinda Scott, District Vice-Principal
Senior Management:	Janet Grant, Associate Superintendent
Board of Education:	Jonina Campbell, Board Chair Michael Ewen, Trustee

School District No. 40 (New Westminster)

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

A District Blueprint for Learner Success

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2014, the Board of Education for School District No. 40 (New Westminster) commissioned the “*Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms Working Group*” to engage district educational partners in a discussion that would inform a strategic plan focused on student success through the delivery of high quality educational programming and a personalized approach to meet the needs of our diverse learners.

After a review of the current literature, four important themes were identified:

- **Engagement and personalized learning** is a key element of the current educational transformation in British Columbia. It is important to tap into individual learner preferences and passions to ignite their motivation and desire to learn. Inquiry-based and project-based learning shows promise in engaging students as do other frameworks such as *Universal Design for Learning* as a method for personalizing learning to accommodate learner differences and preferences.

It is also important that we engage our parents and our community as key educational partners in support of our students’ learning success. We believe that a holistic approach to child development that includes community engagement contributes to positive learning outcomes to students.

- **Social and emotional well-being** and **healthy lifestyles** are also critically important to learning success. Students who can self-regulate, set positive goals, show empathy, maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions are better equipped to be successful citizens. The core competencies that are embedded in the Ministry of Education’s redesigned curriculum are also important components of social and emotional learning.

We want caring, compassionate and nurturing learning environments where individual differences are understood and celebrated. And we also want to promote healthy lifestyles in our schools because of the important link between health and improved learner outcomes.

- **Communicating student learning** is another key feature of our *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms Working Group* findings. The purpose of assessment is to communicate clear and specific feedback for teachers, students and parents to guide instruction. We acknowledge the important role of descriptive, formative assessment to teaching and learning success. And we also see the need to allow students the opportunity to communicate their learning in a variety of ways. The Ministry’s redesigned curriculum provides the opportunity for educators to examine

assessment practices- assessments *for, as* and *of* learning- to select the assessment methods that are best suited to the content or competency being assessed.

- The fourth theme that emerged pertains to the **use of technology** as a transformational educational tool for teaching and learning. This will require significant infrastructure upgrades in our district, but we will accomplish this by developing a strategic plan focused on employing those technologies that optimize learning for students. We need to be selective and constantly evaluate the effectiveness of our use of technology so that we know it is improving the educational outcomes for students.

An important part of the use of technology for learning is promoting the responsible use of technology. We also need to be critical consumers of the vast amount of information available in our digital age. We also need to re-examine the role of the teacher in the classroom- no longer the ‘sage on the stage’ but rather the ‘activator’ and ‘facilitator’ of learning.

This document provides a district blueprint for learner success and outlines priorities and action plans related to each of the above-mention themes. It will be a “living-document” that will be reviewed annually and revised as action plans are implemented and new trends and needs emerge. As part of this process, the document was circulated for further consultation and feedback in the fall of 2015 and the winter of 2016.



The Plumbing Apprenticeship Program at New Westminster Secondary School.

School District No. 40 (New Westminster)

TEACHING AND LEARNING IN DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

A District Blueprint for Learner Success

Introduction

We live in a society of constant change. The world we grew up in is so different from the world of our children; and will be different again for the lives of our children’s children. These rapidly changing times require that our school district examine our practices so that we may stay current in order to best meet the needs of our diverse learners. This requires that we focus our attention on the skills and competencies that students will need to be productive and successful citizens in a rapidly changing world.

A key feature of the changes we face is found in the digital world where information is readily accessible and communication is immediate. We live in a technology rich, digital age and this requires us to rethink our practices in today’s classrooms. Another key feature of our learning community is the growing diversity in our population – not only ethnic diversity but in the learning needs of individual students. Today’s classrooms are a rich tapestry of different cultures, backgrounds, learning styles and needs.

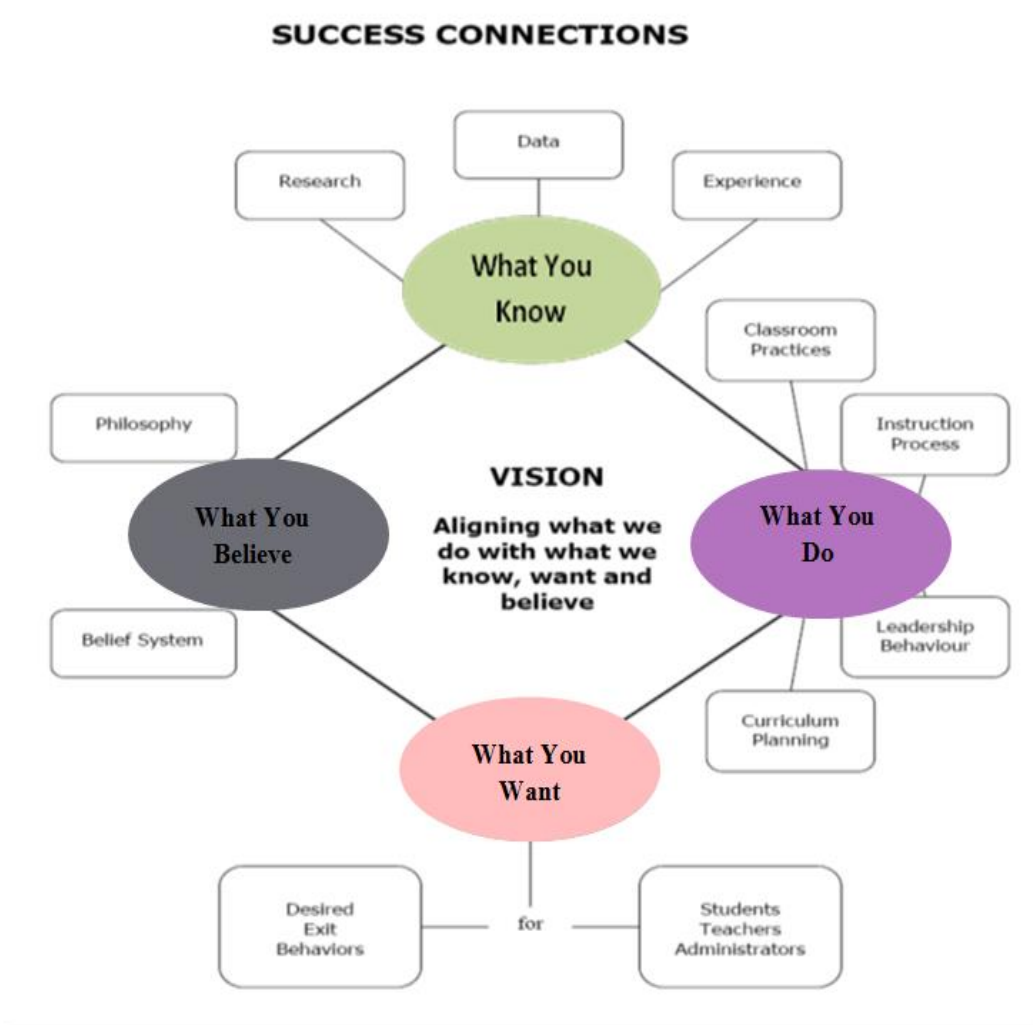
In the fall of 2014, the Board of Education for School District No. 40 (New Westminster) commissioned the “*Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms Working Group*” (hereafter noted as the TLDC Working Group). The purpose of the working group was to engage educational partners in a discussion that would inform a district strategic plan focused on student success through the delivery of high quality educational programming and a personalized approach to meet the needs of our diverse learners.



Education partner representatives (Board of Education, Senior Management, Principals and Vice-Principals, Teachers, Support Staff, Parents and Students) brought their district experiences and engaged in an in-depth discussion over several weeks focused on “*Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms.*”

Consultation Process

The model used to frame the *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* discussion was the “Success Connections.”



Adapted from the “Outcomes-based” approach to education (1992)

What Do We Know about *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms*?

The first task for TLDC Working Group was a comprehensive literature review of what we know about effective practices related to teaching and learning in diverse classrooms. Books, articles and websites from a variety of sources along with education plans from other jurisdictions were reviewed in addition to local data (please see the bibliography on page 50 for details).

From the literature review, seven themes emerged that later were consolidated into four themes (not listed in any particular order):

- **Engagement and Personalized Learning;**
- **Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles;**
- **Communicating Student Learning;**
- **Technology and Learning.**

A summary of the literature review findings is found in Section B of this document.

What Do We Believe about *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms*?

The next order of business for the TLDC Working Group was to articulate draft belief statements related to each theme.

At this point in the process, the TLDC Working Group convened “**touch back**” sessions with each of the broader educational partner groups to share the results of the literature review and to solicit feedback to further refine and develop the draft belief statements. Touch back sessions were held with each educational partner group in March and April 2015. An invitation went out to all educational partner members to participate in the discussion. For those educational partners who could not attend the touch back sessions, an on-line feedback form was available for them to provide input.

What Do We Want &

What Do We Do related to *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms*?

In the next part of the process, the TLDC Working Group was asked the key question:

*Given what we KNOW about effective educational practices in diverse classrooms, and,
Given what we BELIEVE about teaching and learning in diverse classrooms;
What do we WANT in terms of goals and priorities in this area;
and based on those goals and priorities,
What is it that we DO when it comes to teaching and learning in diverse classrooms?*

In response to this key question, the TLDC Working Group identified goals and priorities related to each theme area. And from there, a draft action plan was created for broader feedback and input.

SECTION B:

What Do We Know about Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms?

Key Findings from the Literature Review



StrongStart Early Learning Centre

The Provincial Context

The *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* discussions happened at the same time that the Ministry of Education was in the process of redesigning the curriculum for Kindergarten through to Grade 12. Since the redesigned curriculum is as much about how we engage students in learning as it is about curriculum, there were significant linkages to the discussions in the district.

The redesigned curriculum places particular emphasis on developing solid foundations of literacy and numeracy while supporting the development of responsible citizens who are effective communicators and competent thinkers (*Introduction to British Columbia's Redesigned Curriculum*, August 2015).

A key feature of the redesigned curriculum is the focus on personalized learning which acknowledges that not all students learn successfully at the same rate, in the same learning environment, and in the same ways. Personalized learning involves the provision of high-quality, engaging and relevant learning opportunities that meet the diverse needs of all students. Inquiry-based learning is encouraged to promote a sense of wonder and curiosity among students. As well, technology is acknowledged as a powerful tool to facilitate collaboration between students, educators, and parents and to allow access to experts from around the world.

The core competencies are an integral feature of the curriculum redesign. They are developmental in nature and are evident in all curricular areas:

- **The *thinking competencies* that involve creative and critical thinking.**
- **The *personal and social competencies* that are related to positive personal and cultural identity; personal awareness and responsibility; and social awareness and responsibility.**
- **The *communication competencies* that involve oral, written, visual and digital competencies and the ability to collaborate and reflect.**

The redesigned curriculum also places emphasis on social emotional learning. CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) defines social emotional learning as the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Self-regulated learning is also promoted—this involves metacognition—the awareness of one's own thinking and learning.

The *First Peoples Principles of Learning* and the Aboriginal voice and perspective are also a feature of the redesigned curriculum (Learning First Peoples, n.d.). The curriculum transformation has incorporated Aboriginal expertise at all levels to ensure that the best information has guided the work. “An important goal in integrating Aboriginal perspectives into curricula is to ensure that all learners have opportunities to understand and respect their own cultural heritage as well as that of others.” (*Introduction to British Columbia's Redesigned Curriculum*, August 2015)

As part of the redesigned curriculum, assessment will shift from ‘reporting’ to ‘communicating student learning’ with an emphasis on on-going communication between teachers, students and parents.

The 2015-2016 school year is a time for teachers to explore the redesigned Kindergarten to Grade 9 curriculum with full implementation in September 2016. The Grade 10 to 12 redesigned curriculum will be explored in 2016-2017 and implemented in 2017-2018. The District's *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* discussions have been very timely and nicely coincide with this significant Ministry curriculum redesign initiative.

Key Findings from the Literature Review

As previously mentioned, seven themes emerged from the literature review that were later consolidated into four themes (not listed in any particular order):

- **Engagement and Personalized Learning;**
- **Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles;**
- **Communicating Student Learning;**
- **Technology and Learning**

The Literature Review findings are listed below under each theme.

Engagement and Personalized Learning

What Do We Know about ENGAGEMENT AND PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

Increasing student engagement is one of the key elements of educational transformation. The focus on personalized learning and the use of technology all seek to increase student engagement, thereby leading to deeper learning and improved literacy and numeracy skills. Student engagement may be defined as “the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught. Generally speaking, the concept of ‘student engagement’ is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired, and that learning tends to suffer when students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise ‘disengaged’ (Glossary of Education Reform, 2015).

Several key themes emerged from a literature review on student engagement. At the outset, it became clear that increased engagement is necessary for all members of the learning community including students, teachers, support staff, principals, parents and members of the community. Further, a strength-based approach, focusing on developing student and teacher talents, is more effective than a deficit-based approach (Gordon, 2006). And teachers and principals who are motivated, passionate and are able to create and cultivate positive relationships are in the best position to engage and empower learners and the learning community.

Engaging the school community is also important. Partnerships with the community provide opportunities for additional resources that may support children's social, emotional, physical development needs. And the resulting networks and relationships create a sense of community belonging and communicate the importance of education (Martin Black, 2004).

Bob Sullo (2007) stresses the importance of intrinsic motivation in learning and states that our biggest challenge is not how to motivate students to learn, but to create learning opportunities that tap into students' intrinsic motivation thus increasing the likelihood that they will actively engage in learning.

Inquiry based approaches to teaching and learning were found to be highly effective (Colyer & Watt, 2014). An inquiry based approach harnesses the student's natural curiosity through open-ended questions that require learners to think critically, creatively and reflectively. Questions stemming from the learner's natural curiosity make learning relevant and connected to real-world issues – another key feature of educational transformation. Colyer and Watt (2014) remind us that inquiry based learning works best when there are high academic and behavioural expectations, coupled with a caring, cooperative and curious classroom culture.

The redesigned curriculum places a lot of emphasis on personalized learning as a means to engage learners. The term 'personalized learning' refers to a diverse variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interests, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual students. Personalized learning is generally seen as an alternative to the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to schooling (Glossary of Education Reform, 2015).

Personalized learning acknowledges that not all students learn successfully at the same rate, in the same learning environment, and in the same ways. Personalized learning focuses on enhancing student engagement in learning and giving student choices—more of a say in what and how they learn—leading to lifelong, self-directed learning (*Introduction to British Columbia's Redesigned Curriculum*, August 2015).

"Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results."

*John Dewey
(1859 – 1952)*



There are no ‘typical’ learners: diversity is everywhere. The question then arises: How do we personalize learning? *Universal Design for Learning* (UDL) is one framework for differentiating learning in the classroom. UDL has three core principles, that when used in the planning process, result in more personalized learning for students (Rose & Meyer, 2002):

- **Provide multiple, flexible methods of presenting concepts;**
- **Provide multiple, flexible methods for students to express and demonstrate what they’ve learned;**
- **Provide multiple, flexible options for students to engage in learning by tapping into individual learner passions and preferences.**

Jennifer Katz (2012) outlines a model to complement *Universal Design for Learning*. She emphasizes the link between emotion and academics and stresses the importance of inclusive educational practices which acknowledge that learning is a continual process. She also notes the importance of systems and structures within schools that provide the leadership required to set the vision and direction for UDL.

There are many different methods for differentiating instruction but the first step is that students must believe that they can learn and that what they are learning is useful, relevant and meaningful. They also need to know that they belong in the classroom and that they are responsible for their own learning as well as their own behaviour. Educators need to build community in their classroom and really get to know their students and develop learner profiles.

“Fair doesn’t mean giving every child the same thing; it means giving every child what they need.”

Richard Lavoie
(1989)

The physical environment is another way to personalize learning. *The Third Teacher: 79 Ways You Can Use Design to Transform Teaching and Learning* (2010) encourages us to re-think the traditional classroom set-up and explore new settings for teaching and learning. The ‘one size fits all’ classroom design doesn’t work for all learners and we need to explore different options for chairs and desks. An environment rich in sensory experiences helps students retain and retrieve what they’ve learned.

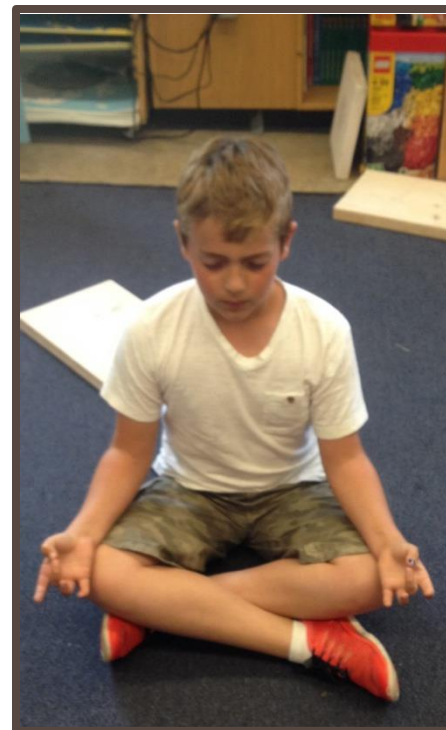
“Tell me and I forget; teach me and I remember; involve me and I learn.”

Benjamin Franklin
(1706-1790)

Social and Emotional Well-being and Healthy Lifestyles

What Do We Know about SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING and HEALTHY LIFESTYLES?

CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) states that social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions; set and achieve positive goals; feel and show empathy for others; establish and maintain positive relationships; and make responsible decisions. SEL programming is based on the understanding that the best learning emerges in the context of supportive relationships that make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful (SEL defined, n.d.).



An aspect of SEL is self-regulation. Roy Baumeister & Kathleen Vohs (2011) define self-regulation as the ability to 1) attain, maintain, and change one’s level of energy to match the demands of a task or situation; 2) monitor, evaluate and modify one’s emotions; 3) sustain and shift one’s attention when necessary and ignore distractions; 4) understand both the meaning of a variety of social interactions and how to engage them in a sustained way, and 5) connect with and care about what others are thinking and feeling—to empathize and act accordingly. Stuart Shanker in his book *Calm, Alert and Learning* (2012) notes that self-regulation strategies support learners in five important domains: Biological (health, sleep and nervous system); Emotional (self-awareness, self-management and relationship management);

Cognitive (executive functions such as planning, working memory, problem-solving and metacognition); Social (social intelligence, co-regulation); and Prosocial (empathy, respect and belonging).

“If kids come to us from strong, healthy functioning families, it makes our job easier. If they do not come to us from strong, healthy, functioning families, it makes our job more important.”

*Barbara Coloroso
(2009)*

The literature and our experience tell us it is important that there is an understanding of individual learner differences in order to “demystify” them and thereby create a sense of belonging and well-being for each student. David Sousa tells us how the special needs brain learns (2006) and how the English Language Learner brain learns (2010). However, it goes beyond understanding how different students learn; we must re-examine our views about students as learners. Norman Kunc, in a presentation to staff at New Westminster Secondary School (2014), cautioned about the “narrative of correction” that we often use when it

comes to persons with “disabilities” which “implants an identity of inadequacy.” He says that our belief that teaching for “ability” which in turn leads to “opportunity” is flawed—it is opportunity that leads to ability which then leads to even more opportunity.

We also need to be mindful of our students who face poverty. Eric Jensen (2009) warns us that the stress caused by poverty is cumulative and our “brains are designed to reflect the environments they’re in, not rise above them” making it critical that we work on building assets for these students.

In the discussions about understanding individual learner differences, we cannot forget our Aboriginal learners who still bear the lingering scars of residential schooling and other atrocities in the past (*Truth and Reconciliation Canada*, 2012). Reconciliation is not easy as the damage is deeply rooted and severe, but we must continue to strive to repair and rebuild the relationships.

“You can’t change what’s in your students’ bank account but you can change what’s in their emotional account.”

*Eric Jensen
(2009)*

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.”

*Aristotle
(384 – 322 BC)*

Lord Kelvin School Greening Project



And, we need to also be mindful of our boys. Barry MacDonald (2005) reminds us that our boys have more behavioral problems in school. We need to make them feel connected and competent and he provides lots of strategies for parenting and teaching.

The importance of healthy lifestyles is another feature of well-being and successful learning. Evidence shows that the health of students is linked to their academic achievement. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention notes that schools, health agencies and communities share a common goal of supporting the important link between healthy eating, physical activity and improved academic achievement (Health and Academic, 2014).

And the importance of connecting with nature in today’s “wired generation” is noted by Richard Louv in his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder* (2013). Louv brings together a growing body of research indicating that direct exposure to nature is essential for healthy childhood development and for the physical and emotional health of children and adults. Dan Siegel (2011) also speaks to the importance of natural environments that promote calmness and well-being and says that even the natural shade of green relaxes our mind and enhances cognitive abilities.

Communicating Student Learning

What Do We Know about COMMUNICATING STUDENT LEARNING?

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process and drives curriculum. It is critical in informing instruction, determining next steps in the learning process and monitoring student progress toward learning goals. Well designed and fair assessment practices can move learning forward, increase student engagement and motivation, and help teachers to make important decisions about what comes next.

There are many assessment methods used by teachers in their classrooms. Assessment *for, as* and *of* learning all play important roles in student outcomes. Balanced assessment practices require teachers to select the methods that best fit the purpose of moving student learning forward.

Based on the literature review on assessment, we found that quality, authentic assessment:

- Personalizes learning by involving students in self and peer assessment, criteria development and goal setting (assessment *as* learning);
- Allows for a collection of student work to be gathered over time to provide a full profile of the learner and learning;
- Communicates clearly to the learner and parents where the student is, what they are working towards and the ways the learning can be supported;
- Makes learning visible and celebrates successes;
- Uses ungraded formative assessment to monitor student learning, providing valuable, descriptive feedback to both students and teachers regarding where they are in the learning process (assessment *for* learning);
- Uses summative assessment to evaluate achievement (assessment *of* learning);
- Separates data about achievement from data about attitudes and behaviours (e.g. taking marks off for handing in late assignments).

The redesigned curriculum provides the opportunity for educators to examine assessment practices and to select assessment methods that are best suited to the content or competency being assessed.



Technology and Learning

What Do We Know about TECHNOLOGY and LEARNING?

In the digital age, the role of the teacher is changing. No longer the ‘sage on the stage’, teachers must be the ‘activator’ who facilitates learners’ access to information and, perhaps more importantly, their growth in becoming critical consumers of the vast amount of digital information available within a click or a swipe of the hand.

The literature review supports the use of technology as a transformative educational tool for teaching and learning. Michael Fullan (*Stratosphere*, 2012) believes that technology allows for:

- Teaching and learning opportunities that never existed before;
- Expanded opportunities for communication between students, teachers and parents via e-mail, texting and other social media channels;
- Student choice in presenting their understandings of core concepts;
- Student access to information presented in multiple digital formats (text, sound, video, animation, etc.).

"In a world of rapidly changing technology, students today routinely navigate through more information in a single year than their predecessors likely encountered in a decade."

Fullan also reminds us that to effectively integrate technology into education, it must be:

- Irresistibly engaging for both students and for teachers;
- Elegantly efficient and easy to use;
- Available 24/7; and
- Grounded in real-life problem solving.

BC Ed Plan 2015/Focus on Learning

The District recognizes the challenges in making the effective use of digital technology a reality. We need a District Technology Plan to upgrade the infrastructure — and provide the support—for all stakeholders to have the resources, skills and attitudes to make teaching and learning in the digital age a hallmark of the District. The literature review has shown us that we are not alone. A 2011 survey of more than 1,000 high school teachers, district technology staff and students revealed that:

- Only 8 percent of teachers fully integrate technology into the classroom.
- Some 43 percent of students feel unprepared to use technology as they look to higher education or their work life.
- Only 23 percent of teachers feel that they could integrate technology in the classroom.
- The organizational support for the use of technology in schools is badly underdeveloped (availability of digital media, shared vision, school culture, technical support, leadership at the school, district and state levels, assessment systems, and so on). (*Integrating Technology*, 2011).

However, there are lots of things that teachers can do—and are doing—right now that support educational transformation through the use of technology. In *Digital Natives to Digital Wisdom* (2012), Marc Prensky suggests a 10 point list:

1. "Tell" less while allowing students to research the answers to guiding questions on their own.
2. Connect what is taught with real-world outcomes.
3. Help students distinguish the unchanging "verbs" (skills) of education from the rapidly changing "nouns" (tools).
4. Treat students as learning partners.
5. Employ students' own tools (particularly video and cellphones) for learning.
6. Use more peer-to-peer teaching.
7. Offer students far more choices, rather than mandating what all must read or do.
8. Allow students to be the primary users (and maintainers) of classroom technology.
9. Share success via short videos posted on sites such as YouTube or TeacherTube.
10. Regularly connect students with the world via free, secure tools such as Skype and ePals.

"If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow."

*John Dewey
(1859- 1952)*

"These are exciting times for learners of all ages in the District", Dean Shareski emphasized during his February 23, 2015 meeting with the TLDC Working Group. He also spoke about the changing role of the teacher in the digital age. We need to empower teachers to try new technology and encourage a culture of risk. He reminded us that teachers don't have to know everything about technology—they just have to stay committed to learning. There has never been a more exciting time to be a learner.

Alan November (*Who owns the learning? Preparing students for success in the digital age*, 2014) says that one of the most important questions an educator faces today is "What is the design of the assignment?" He speculates that 80 to 90 percent of today's assignments are "googleable" and that many assignments still used today were prepared before the onset of the internet or without due consideration of its impact. Assignment design is critically important if we are to have our students reach higher levels of thinking (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOAIxIBeT90>).

"Students need opportunities to develop competencies required to use current and emerging technologies effectively in all aspects of their learning and life. Technology can facilitate collaboration between students, educators, parents, and classrooms while also providing schools with rich online resources. Today's technology enables classrooms, communities, and experts around the world to share digitally in a learning experience, wherever they may be" (Introduction to British Columbia's Redesigned Curriculum, 2015).

SECTION C:

What Do We Believe about Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms?

Shared Belief Statements



After much discussion, the literature review related to *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* led to the development of the following belief statements for each of the themes.

Engagement and Personalized Learning

What Do We Believe about ENGAGEMENT and PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

- We believe that the engagement of all members of the school community is fundamental to learning.
- We believe that curiosity and wonder is fostered through creative, critical and reflective thinking.
- We believe that community engagement contributes to improved positive outcomes through a holistic approach to child development.
- We believe that differentiation is central to teaching and learning.
- We believe that diversity enriches the learning environment.
- We believe that the physical learning environment impacts student performance and well-being.



**The Professional Cook Apprenticeship Program at
New Westminster Secondary School**

Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles

What Do We Believe about SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING and HEALTHY LIFESTYLES?

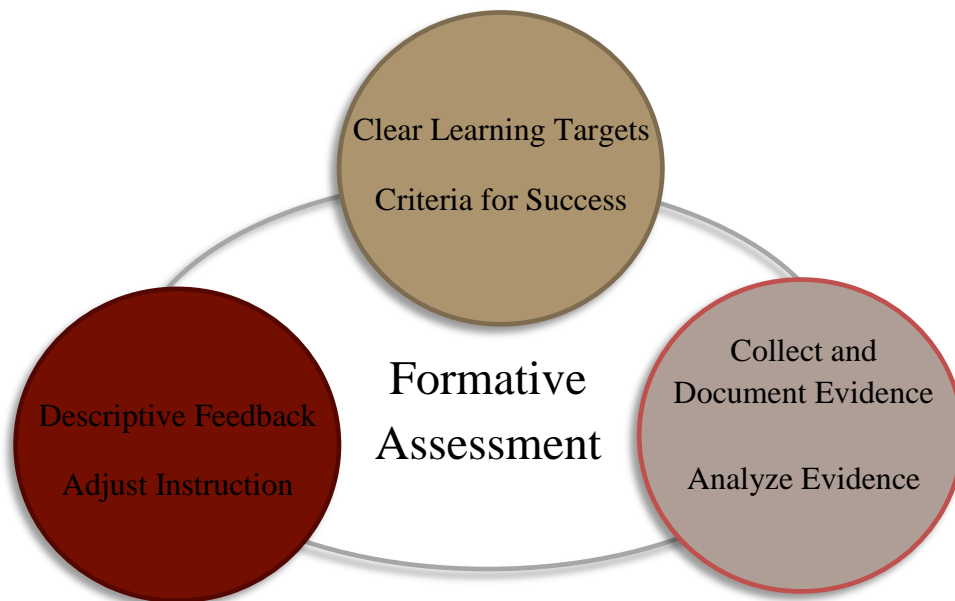
- We believe that students must be at the heart of our decisions.
- We believe all behaviour is communication which needs to be understood.
- We believe in establishing and nurturing caring and compassionate relationships so all individuals feels safe, successful and valued.
- We believe that social-emotional well-being and healthy lifestyles increase learner success.



Communicating Student Learning

What Do We Believe about COMMUNICATING STUDENT LEARNING?

- We believe that the purpose of assessment is to communicate clear and specific feedback for teachers, students and parents to guide instruction to improve learning.
- We believe that student learning should involve flexible, responsive and effective formative and summative assessments.
- We believe that students should be actively involved in the assessment process and be able to demonstrate their learning on an on-going basis.
- We believe that student learning can be communicated in a variety of ways.



Technology and Learning

What Do We Believe about TECHNOLOGY and LEARNING

- We believe that technology provides the opportunity to enhance engagement and amplify learning.
- We believe technology supports the critical role of the educator to facilitate student learning.
- We believe that all members of the school community must be responsible digital citizens.



SECTION D:

What Do We Want and

What Do We Do about

*Teaching and Learning in
Diverse Classrooms*

District Priorities, Goals and Action Plans



**Feeding Change: Organic Smoothies Program
at Lord Kelvin School**

The following priorities, goals and proposed action plans were developed by asking the following key question:

*Given what we KNOW about effective educational practices in diverse classrooms, and,
 Given what we BELIEVE about teaching and learning in diverse classrooms;
 What do we WANT in terms of goals and priorities in this area;
 and based on those goals and priorities,
 What is it that we DO when it comes to teaching and learning in diverse classrooms?*

Engagement and Personalized Learning

- We believe that the engagement of all members of the school community is fundamental to learning.
- We believe that curiosity and wonder is fostered through creative, critical and reflective thinking.
- We believe that community engagement contributes to improved positive outcomes through a holistic approach to child development.
- We believe that differentiation is central to teaching and learning.
- We believe that diversity enriches the learning environment.
- We believe that the physical learning environment impacts student performance and well-being.

Engagement Priority Area 1: Focus on the re-designed curriculum as a platform for engaging students.

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
<p>E. 1a. Provide opportunities for educators to become conversant and aware of the key components of the redesigned curriculum focussed on effective teaching practices (see also Assessment).</p>	<p>Curriculum Facilitators to work with school staff, departments, and grade/subject specific teachers: professional development, planning and co-teaching the redesigned curriculum— K-5; 6-8; and 9-12 (see also Assessment).</p> <p>Use staff meetings to focus on the redesigned curriculum; e.g. in-service and collaboration about what the re-designed curriculum looks like.</p> <p>Work with our Aboriginal Education Team to support teachers with embedding Aboriginal perspectives, knowledge and worldviews in the new curriculum (K-5,</p>	<p>Continue in 2016 - 2017</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017</p>

	<p>6-8; 9-12) for regular and Early French Immersion (EFI) teachers.</p> <p>Provide professional development on the <i>First Peoples' Principles of Learning</i>.</p> <p>Explore and share the use school-wide themes (K-5; K-7; 6-8) to explore the new curriculum—build school-wide collaboration and conversations about the new curriculum (e.g. Lord Tweedsmuir's school-wide theme for 2015-2016).</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017</p> <p>Establish a Book Club focussed on effective teaching practices.</p> <p>At secondary level, explore opportunities to collaborate with colleagues from other districts; opportunities to share what the redesigned curriculum looks like in secondary classrooms.</p>
<p>E.1b. Facilitate focussed conversations on the role of the teacher in today's classroom; e.g. re-examine the teacher as the deliverer of content.</p>	<p>Facilitate conversations on the role of the teacher in today's classroom as part of the <i>Communicating Student Learning Inquiry Team</i>.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Curriculum Facilitators to establish a discussion group on the topic of <i>Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age</i>.</p> <p>Establish a <i>Student Engagement Inquiry Team</i> to facilitate discussions on the role of the teacher in today's classroom.</p> <p>Establish a Book Club to discuss the role of the teacher in today's classroom.</p>
<p>E. 1c. Increase student engagement through inquiry and project based learning and personalized learning.</p>	<p>Offer <i>Innovation Learning Grants</i> to support school teams with inquiry based/ action research focussed on student engagement and personalized learning. Findings will be shared.</p> <p>Continue with the <i>UDL Action Team</i> as a way to find multiple ways to tap into individual learner passions, interests and talents to engage learners (K-5; 6-8; 9-12).</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017</p>

	<p>Explore the use of SET BC grants to support innovative practices to personalize student learning.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017</p> <p>Establish mechanisms to profile and highlight innovative practices in our classrooms and schools. Explore establishing a digital platform to share lessons and ideas (see also Technology).</p> <p>Examine more ways to engage English Language Learners, especially refugees and international students.</p> <p>Establish a <i>Student Engagement Inquiry Team</i> that will take a collaborative approach to planning, implementing and sharing of inquiry and project based learning and ways to personalize learning (K-5; 6-8; 9-12). May involve planning cycles and side-by-side teaching.</p>
<p>E.1d. Focus on literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p>Develop a renewed plan to improve literacy and numeracy skills in our students. Re-work school and district improvement plans (align with new Ministry direction).</p> <p>Implement early literacy screening assessments for all students.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Offer more literacy resources at the Pre-K level.</p> <p>Re-visit the SMART Learning and SMART Reading strategies.</p> <p>Offer more English Language Learner (ELL) Pro. D opportunities.</p> <p>Develop a system to track and monitor Aboriginal students' reading, writing and numeracy skills. Where needed, develop targeted intervention plans (see also the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement).</p>

<p>E.1e. Begin implementing the core competency skills across the curriculum.</p>	<p>Facilitate focused discussion on the core competencies and begin implementing them across the curriculum K-9 (through <i>the UDL Action Team, Communicating Student Learning Inquiry Team</i>).</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Establish a <i>Student Engagement Inquiry Team</i> to implement the core competencies across the curriculum.</p>
<p>E. 1f. Increase student engagement through learning that is hands-on and relevant.</p>	<p>Promote K – 12 Interdisciplinary projects; e.g. NWSS Community Garden.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Expand opportunities to put learning into context to make it relevant; e.g. Continue to expand ACE IT programs, Secondary School Apprenticeships, career exploration, work experience programs.</p>

Engagement Priority Area 2: Create opportunities for professional collaboration.

<p>Goal: “<i>What Do We Want?</i>”</p>	<p>Action Plan: 2015-2016 “<i>What Do We Do?</i>”</p>	<p>Action Plan: 2016-2017 “<i>What Do We Do?</i>”</p>
<p>E. 2a. Increased flexibility within our school organizational structures to allow for educator <u>collaboration within schools.</u></p>	<p>Create ways to release teachers; e.g. clustering students, longer days to allow for collaboration time during the day; e.g. NWSS</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p>
<p>E. 2b. Increased opportunities for educators to collaborate with other schools/sites—<u>collaboration across schools/sites.</u></p>	<p>Provide intentional opportunities for educators to share with colleagues at other schools/sites; e.g. Shared Professional Development; Book Clubs; <i>Communicating Student Learning Inquiry Team; UDL Action Team, Innovation Learning Grants</i>. Use the redesigned curriculum as a focus K-5; 6-8; 9-12.</p>	<p>Establish a <i>Student Engagement Inquiry Team</i>.</p>
<p>E. 2c. Increased opportunities for students to collaborate on areas of interest <u>within schools and across grades.</u></p>	<p>Explore providing opportunities for classrooms to work together; e.g. projects, problems or design challenges.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Explore linking classrooms through technology such as MysterySkype.</p>

<p>E. 2d. Increased opportunities for students to collaborate on areas of interest <u>across schools and across grades.</u></p>		<p>Encourage classroom/student linkages between schools in the district.</p> <p>Encourage classroom/student linkages between older and younger students.</p>
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Engagement Priority Area 3: Build capacity.

<p>Goal: “What Do We Want?”</p>	<p>Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”</p>	<p>Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”</p>
<p>E.3a. Increased support to educators in developing the skills and strategies to differentiate instruction and personalize learning.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for educators to explore differentiation; e.g. professional development; collaboration time (see also Social Emotional Well-Being). Learning discussions at school staff meetings or creative scheduling to allow for collaboration.</p> <p><i>Director of Instruction and District UDL Facilitator</i> to work with teachers (K-5; 6-8; 9-12) to explore access to technology as a tool for differentiating instruction (see also Technology).</p> <p>Encourage educators to recognize and share personalized learning initiatives that are already happening in classrooms through the use of a share drive; e.g. UDL and Board Maker share drives (and eventually a digital sharing platform).</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Create a data base of differentiated lessons, ideas and resources (K-5; 6-8; 9-12). Create a digital platform where teachers can share (see also Social-Emotional Well-Being and Technology).</p> <p>Explore opportunities for educators to see what’s being done in other classrooms, schools, districts; e.g. SET BC, ARC BC. Observe and meet other teachers who differentiate learning.</p>

Engagement Priority Area 4: Create mentorship programs.

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
E. 4a. Implement a Teacher Mentorship Program: support to new teachers and the opportunity to reflect on teaching practices.	Explore creating a Teacher Mentorship Program opportunity for new teachers.	Continue in 2016-2017. Develop a mentor/protégé system for teachers to learn from each other and grow in their practices.
E. 4b. Re-establish a Leadership Development Program: support to school leaders in establishing and nurturing engaged school communities.	Offer sessions for school leaders on a variety of topics; e.g. How to create engaged schools; wellness within school communities etc. Sharing of effective practices across schools.	Continue in 2016-2017.

Engagement Priority Area 5: Explore the relationship between the physical learning environment and student outcomes.

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
E.5a. Increased awareness of how the physical learning environment can affect learning and how it can be changed to support learning.		Provide in-service and training using the expertise of our Occupational and Physical Therapists (OT/PT).
E.5b. Increased awareness of effective physical learning environment options available to support students’ needs, learning styles and preferences.	Continue to explore classroom environments through the <i>UDL Action Team</i> .	Continue in 2016-2017. Share ideas generated by the OT /PT for classroom use—explore the development of a guidebook on classroom environment options. Conduct an environmental scan of classroom environment options that already exist to support student learning.

		<p>Create posters and visuals of classroom environment ideas (e.g. ideas in the <i>Third Teacher</i>, 2010).</p> <p>Share videos of different classroom environments.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for educators to share ideas (e.g. staff meetings).</p>
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Success Indicators:

Increase in educator collaboration and awareness about the redesigned curriculum as evidenced by participation in *District Inquiry Teams* and *Innovation Learning Grant* initiatives.

Increase in educators' use of resources related to Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum; e.g. increase in educator consultation with the District Aboriginal staff; increase in the circulation of Media Centre resources related to Aboriginal content; and evidence of authentic use of Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum.

Increase in student engagement and personalized learning as evidenced by the annual sharing and celebration of *Inquiry Team* and *Innovation Learning Grant* teachers' findings.

Increase in the number of locally developed courses to engage students and personalize the learning.

Increase in the use of early literacy screeners and interventions to reduce the number of at risk students.

Increase in support to new teachers through the development of a Mentorship program; increase in support to new vice-principals and principals through a Leadership Development program.

Improved student achievement as measured by:

- Student achievement indicators from district and school Learning Enhancement Plans;
- Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Grade 7 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Provincial Exam results for Grades 10 through 12;
- Six Year School Completion Rates;
- Grade-to-Grade Transition Rates;
- Satisfaction Surveys;
- Local literacy and numeracy assessment tools.

Decrease in student vulnerability as measured by Middle Development Index (MDI).

Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles

- We believe that students must be at the heart of our decisions.
- We believe all behaviour is communication which needs to be understood.
- We believe in establishing and nurturing caring and compassionate relationships so all individuals feels safe, successful and valued.
- We believe that social-emotional well-being and healthy lifestyles increase learner success.

Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles Priority Area 1: Nurture caring, compassionate and positive relationships.

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
SE. 1a. Increased understanding of individual needs: ‘Demystifying’ learner differences.	<p>Provide professional development and explore programs (e.g. Rick Hansen, Roots of Empathy etc.) to create awareness and understanding (K-5; 6-8; 9-12) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual learner needs and strengths; • Honouring cultural and linguistic differences; • Gender and sexual diversity. • Learners with special needs; • Difference between “fairness” and equity; • Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner and Thomas Armstrong); • Response to Intervention (RTI). <p>Continue to track and monitor Children in Care at the schools using the new tracking system. District follow-up with Principals for each child in care.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017</p>
SE. 1b. Increased awareness of the recommendations from the <i>Truth and Reconciliation Canada Commission</i> .	<p>Make classroom resources available to teachers related to residential schools and other atrocities related to our Aboriginal peoples.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Provide professional development on the findings from the <i>Truth and Reconciliation Canada Commission</i> related to education.</p>

		<p>Work with the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee to begin implementing the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Canada Commission.</p> <p>Expand opportunities to highlight and celebrate Aboriginal culture (see also the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement).</p>
SE. 1c. Increased awareness of the impact of poverty.	Continue to participate in the Ministry of Children and Family Development <i>Poverty Project</i> initiative.	Continue in 2016-2017.

**Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles Priority Area 2:
Promote Social Emotional Learning.**

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
SE. 2a. Create a toolkit of strategies for educators and students to employ to be calm, alert and ready to learn. Increase educator and student social-emotional well-being.	Explore frameworks for social-emotional learning: teacher and student training in <i>Restitution; e.g. Mindfulness; Zones of Regulation; Self-Awareness; Self-Regulation.</i>	Continue in 2016-2017.
	Continue the District’s connection with the <i>Canadian Self-Regulation Institute (CSRI)</i> . Foster self-awareness so that individuals may articulate and communicate their needs.	Continue in 2016-2017.
	Promote and share the use of <i>Brain Breaks</i> and other opportunities to move around during class.	Continue in 2016-2017.
	Provide support for educators to use social-emotional learning strategies in the classroom (K-5; 6-8; 9-12); e.g. sharing through the <i>UDL Action Team</i> .	Continue in 2016-2017.
	Expand the <i>Growing Up Calm and Strong</i> program to more grades as an intervention for students who are anxious and worried.	Continue with expanded programs.

	<p>Explore other programs; e.g. <i>Virtues Project, Skills for Growing, Random Acts of Kindness.</i></p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Invite guest speakers; e.g. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl.</p> <p>Establish a “Tool Kit” series on Self-Regulation</p> <p>Share West Vancouver’s resource: <i>Strategies in the Domains of Self-Regulation.</i></p> <p>Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the <i>Mind-up</i> Program and other mindfulness programs used in classrooms; e.g. workshops, webinars.</p>
<p>SE 2b. Design physical classroom environments to support self-regulation.</p>	<p>Create learning environments that foster self-regulation. Provide opportunities for educators to share practices (explore a digital sharing platform—see also Technology).</p> <p>Provide professional development opportunities on designing classroom environments to support self-regulation.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p>

Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles Priority Area 3: Nurture positive classroom and school communities.

<p>Goal: <i>“What Do We Want?”</i></p>	<p>Action Plan: 2015-2016 <i>“What Do We Do?”</i></p>	<p>Action Plan: 2016-2017 <i>“What Do We Do?”</i></p>
<p>SE.3a. Encourage a culture of sharing.</p>	<p>Continue to provide opportunities for educators to collaborate (see also Engagement).</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Encourage the sharing of ideas, lessons and resources within schools and across schools through the use of a share drive (K-5; 6-8; 9-12). Explore a digital sharing platform (see also Technology).</p>

		<p>Establish a digital platform to share lessons and ideas (see also Engagement and Technology).</p>
<p>SE.3b. Create opportunities to share and celebrate successes (educators and students)</p>		<p>Establish bulletin boards with kudos; share notes of appreciation; create celebration and recognition events etc.</p>
<p>SE.3c. Nurture positive school cultures</p>		<p>Explore implementing <i>Positive/Effective Behaviour Support</i>.</p> <p>Explore the <i>Link Crew</i> concept to develop student leaders that will mentor younger students.</p> <p>Find ways to meaningfully engage parents to share what is happening in our schools and seek “two way” communication.</p> <p>Collect data on how students view their educational experience—e.g. Do they like school? Do they have at least one significant adult they trust at school? Do they feel safe at school?</p>
<p>SE.3d. Create smooth transitions.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to further enhance the transition planning for students: classroom-to-classroom, school-to-school and school –to-community.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Begin focussed tracking and monitoring of the grade-to-grade transitions of Grade 10 – 12 students. Develop an intervention plan where needed to support these transitions.</p> <p>Continue to track and monitor the transitions of all Aboriginal students and develop an intervention plan where needed (see also the <i>Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement</i>). Consider implementing a “Graduation Coach”.</p>

**Social Emotional Well-being and Healthy Lifestyles Priority Area 4:
Encourage student empowerment and self-advocacy.**

Goal: <i>“What Do We Want?”</i>	Action Plan: 2015-2016 <i>“What Do We Do?”</i>	Action Plan: 2016-2017 <i>“What Do We Do?”</i>
SE.4a. Increased student involvement in Individual Education Plans, Annual Instructional Plans; transference of learning strategies to outside the school setting.		<p>Establish a pilot project where students present their Individual Education Plan (IEP) to the School-Based Team and parents (e.g. West Virginia Self Determination Model). Students are actively involved in the IEP process; e.g. identifying and reviewing goals and strategies.</p> <p>Provide a session for parents of students with special needs to support them on their journey from “protecting” their child to “preparing” them for independence.</p>
SE.4b. Increased student awareness of physical classroom environments that support their learning.		<p>Provide student choices in the physical set-up of the learning environment. Support students in being self –aware of optimal physical environments for their own learning.</p> <p>Set up classrooms with comfortable furniture; e.g. couches and chairs.</p>

**Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles Priority Area 5:
Provide flexible learning environment**

Goal: <i>“What Do We Want?”</i>	Action Plan: 2015-2016 <i>“What Do We Do?”</i>	Action Plan: 2016-2017 <i>“What Do We Do?”</i>
SE.5a. Explore outdoor learning environments to enhance learning.	Explore more opportunities for Community Gardens (e.g. NWSS Community Garden).	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Find ways to connect learning with the natural world; e.g. explore classroom nature programs.</p>

		<p>Encourage educators to share ideas, lessons and resources (K-5; 6-8; 9-12). Explore the use of a digital platform where educators can share (see also Engagement and Technology).</p> <p>Produce a guidebook on local nature programs and experts; e.g. list of nature sites to visit in New Westminister and who's available in the community to help make the connection to nature (possible collaboration with the City). Be explicit about how to interact with nature.</p> <p>Explore the possibility of planting more fruit trees on school District property (possible donations by local nurseries).</p>
<p>SE.5b. Increased awareness of the importance of unstructured play for child development.</p>		<p>Offer professional development and print resources/articles on the importance of play to healthy child development. Liaise with the <i>Kids New West</i> Committee.</p> <p>Provide information for parents on the importance of unstructured play to children's health and development.</p>

**Social Emotional Well-Being and Healthy Lifestyles Priority Area 6:
Promote healthy lifestyles.**

<p>Goal: <i>"What Do We Want?"</i></p>	<p>Action Plan: 2015-2016 <i>"What Do We Do?"</i></p>	<p>Action Plan: 2016-2017 <i>"What Do We Do?"</i></p>
<p>SE.6a. Develop a framework for <i>Comprehensive School Health</i> to tap into the established link between healthy students and improved educational outcomes.</p>	<p>Work collaboratively with community partners (e.g. Fraser Health, Ministry of Children and Family Development, City of New Westminister, Service Providers) to focus on the four inter-related pillars of <i>Comprehensive School Health</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and physical environment; • Teaching and learning; • Healthy school policy; and, • Partnerships and services. 	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p>

SE.6b. Explore ways to improve and possibly expand school nutrition programs for students.		Explore possible additional funding sources to support school nutrition programs.
SE.6c. Explore more opportunities for Sexual Health Education.		Explore more opportunities to incorporate sexual health education in our schools.

Success Indicators:

Increase in the awareness and use of programs for social-emotional learning and self-regulation in classrooms to reduce the number of students presenting with anxiety and difficulties with executive functioning.

Increase in the numbers of students surveyed who feel safe and that they belong in school.

Decrease in student vulnerability as measured by Middle Development Index (MDI).

Increase in the awareness and understanding of individual learner differences as evidenced by active participation of educators in in-service sessions.

Increase in student social emotional well-being as evidenced by the annual sharing and celebration of *Inquiry Team* and *Innovation Learning Grant* teachers' findings.

Increase in student involvement in their educational programs; e.g. IEPs.

Increase in student health through the development and implementation of a Comprehensive School Health Framework for the District.

Improved student achievement as measured by:

- Student achievement indicators from district and school Learning Enhancement Plans;
- Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Grade 7 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Provincial Exam results for Grades 10 through 12;
- Six Year School Completion Rates;
- Grade-to-Grade Transition Rates;
- Satisfaction Surveys;
- Local literacy and numeracy assessment tools.

	<p><i>Director of Instruction, Learning and Innovation and Curriculum Facilitators</i> provide workshops and in-service on formative assessment to guide student learning and also provide feedback to teachers, students and parents (assessment <i>for</i> learning). Explore “backward design” and the importance of pre-assessment.</p> <p>Establish a <i>Communicating Student Learning Inquiry Team</i> to discuss the use of descriptive comments to improve learning. Also discuss whether formative assessment should be for marks.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Create report card templates that reflect the importance of formative assessment to authentic summative assessment.</p> <p>Establish a School Wide Numeracy Assessment. Explore the Vancouver Island Diagnostic Math Assessment.</p> <p>Focus on the language used to communicate student learning and the importance of plain language. Create more translated documents for parents.</p> <p>Review the Performance Standards with students and provide them with exemplars of what a 4, 3, 2, 1 looks like so they may analyse their own work.</p> <p>Re-visit the consistent use of School Wide Reading (SWR) and School Wide Writing (SWW) Assessments. Re-instate exemplars and anchoring. Explore new topics and reading passages for the SWW and SWR. Communicate the purpose of the SWW and SWR.</p>
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		<p><i>Director of Instruction, Learning and Innovation and Curriculum Facilitators</i> provide workshops and in-service on summative assessment to communicate student learning.</p> <p>Share what educators are already doing with formative assessment (K-5; 6-8; 9-12). Explore using a digital sharing platform.</p> <p>Develop a District document on effective, research-based practices in assessment and reporting (K-5; 6-8; 9-12).</p>
<p>CSL.1b. Establish clear criteria in assessment.</p>	<p>Explore the use of digital portfolios as a means to communicate student learning to parents in real time or close to real time.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Explore the use of the Early Learning Framework for primary grades.</p> <p>Involve students in the assessment and evaluation process so they understand and help develop the assessment criteria—clear criteria of what marks represent for students and parents (parents have access to the criteria as well).</p> <p>Define fairness vs. equity as it pertains to assessment in diverse classrooms (see also Social Emotional Well-Being).</p> <p>Establish assessment practices that separate achievement from attitudes, behaviours and work habits. Ask the question: “What are we measuring?”</p> <p>Develop a <i>Frequently Asked Questions About Assessment</i> document for students and parents (K-5; 6-8/ 9-12).</p>

Success Indicators:

Increase in the use of formative assessment in classrooms throughout the District.

Increase in the use of student portfolios; e.g. improved “real time” communication with students and parents.

Increase in the number of choices and modes of communication for teachers to communicate learning with students and parents.

Increase in the communication of student learning to students and parents as evidenced by the annual sharing of *Inquiry Team* and *Innovation Learning Grant* teachers' findings.

Increase in the use of assessment tools to inform teaching and intervention practices.

Improved student literacy through the use of District-Wide early literacy screening assessments and targeted interventions.

Improved student achievement through the use of local data to inform instruction: implementation of District Reading, Writing and Numeracy assessments.

Improved student achievement as measured by:

- Student achievement indicators from district and school Learning Enhancement Plans;
- Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Grade 7 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Provincial Exam results for Grades 10 through 12;
- Six Year School Completion Rates;
- Grade-to-Grade Transition Rates;
- Satisfaction Surveys;
- Local literacy and numeracy assessment tools.

Technology and Learning

- We believe that technology provided the opportunity to enhance engagement and amplify learning.
- We believe technology supports the critical role of the educator to facilitate student learning.
- We believe that all members of the school community must be responsible digital citizens.

**Technology and Learning Priority Area 1:
Upgrade the District’s Technology Infrastructure.**

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
T.1a. Develop a district technology infrastructure upgrade plan.	<p>Install WIFI in all schools/sites; increase the bandwidth; replace and re-evaluate the use of servers.</p> <p>Re-evaluate our organizational structures for the use of technology; e.g. the computer lab.</p> <p>Explore the INTRANET as a means to share ideas/ lessons/ conference with colleagues throughout the district</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2107.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Establish a Technology Committee to steer the direction for the District.</p>
T.1b. Provide equitable student access to personal devices.		<p>Find ways to get devices into the hands of students; e.g. Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD). This will require a plan for the equitable access to devices for students (e.g. those students who don’t have their own devices). Design a plan to support BYOD; look at other district’s BYOD implementation plans.</p>

**Technology and Learning Priority Area 2:
Promote safe, responsible access to technology.**

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
T.2a. Establish a shared understanding of digital citizenship/digital responsibility.		<p>Create a common understanding of what digital citizenship/digital responsibility looks like (K-5; 6-8; 9-12). “Why, what and how.”</p> <p>Provide the resources to support digital citizenship/digital responsibility. Explore existing programs and curriculum in other districts. Establish a scope and sequence for Kindergarten through Grade 12. E.g. Media Smarts etc.</p>
T.2b. Teach students about internet safety.	<p>Implement the <i>Kids in the Know</i> program for grades K-8.</p> <p>Engage parents in internet safety – it is a shared responsibility.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Embed internet safety with other kinds of safety.</p>

Technology and Learning Priority Area 3: Implement Learning Commons.

Goal: “What Do We Want?”	Action Plan: 2015-2016 “What Do We Do?”	Action Plan: 2016-2017 “What Do We Do?”
T.3a. Transform libraries into Learning Commons.	<p>Conduct an environmental scan of Learning Commons initiatives in other Districts.</p>	<p>Continue in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Pilot a Learning Commons initiative at Fraser River Middle School.</p> <p>Position Teacher-Librarians to be curators, facilitators and mediators of digital media. Develop lesson banks on navigating and conducting research on the internet, finding age appropriate websites etc.</p>

Success Indicators:

Development and Implementation of a District Technology Plan:

- WiFi available at all sites;
- Social media and digital citizenship protocols in place;
- Transition of libraries into learning commons;
- “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) model implemented and supported;
- Teacher led workshops and in-services about integrating technology in the classroom;
- Artifacts of student work completed via technology through a digital portfolio or upload to a share drive.

Increase in the effective use of technology to enhance student learning as evidenced by the annual sharing of *Inquiry Team* and *Innovation Learning Grant* teachers' findings.

Increase in student achievement through improved communication to students and parents in “real time” through the use of technology.

Increased use of digital resources to support inquiry based learning.

Improved student achievement as measured by:

- Student achievement indicators from district and school Learning Enhancement Plans;
- Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Grade 7 Foundation Skills Assessments in Writing, Reading and Numeracy;
- Provincial Exam results for Grades 10 through 12;
- Six Year School Completion Rates;
- Grade-to-Grade Transition Rates;
- Satisfaction Surveys;
- Local literacy and numeracy assessment tools.

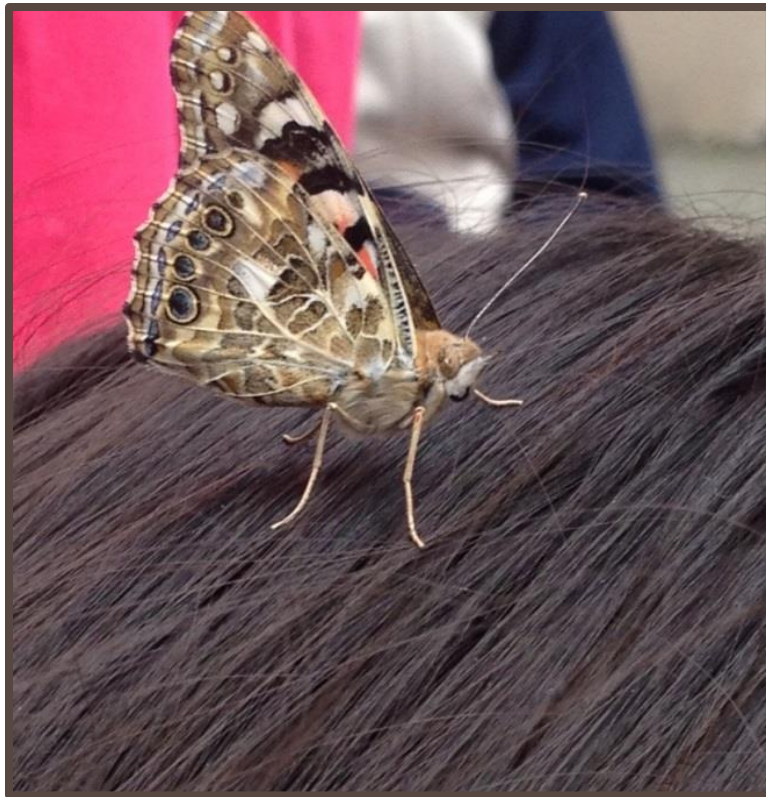
**Elder Se'qwa:ye'nte'n and District Aboriginal Education Coordinator, Bertha Lansdowne,
at the signing of the second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement**



SECTION E:

Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms

Concluding Comments and Bibliography



“Metamorphosis”

Conclusion

The *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* discussion has been rich and has paved the foundation for our future actions in the New Westminster School District. We have identified four important themes upon which we will focus our attention:

- **Engagement and personalized learning** are key elements of the current educational transformation in British Columbia. It is important to tap into individual learner preferences and passions to ignite their motivation and desire to learn. Inquiry-based learning and project-based learning show promise in engaging students as do other frameworks such as *Universal Design for Learning* as a method of personalizing learning to accommodate learner differences and preferences. There is no longer anything ‘special’ about special education—diversity is the norm in today’s classrooms and it is our imperative to address learner differences.

The conversation about engagement, however, goes beyond how to engage our students. It is also important that we engage our parents and our community as key educational partners in support of our students' learning success. We believe that a holistic approach to child development that includes community engagement contributes to positive learning outcomes for students.

- **Social and emotional well-being** and **healthy lifestyles** are also critically important to learning success. Learners who can self-regulate, set positive goals, show empathy, maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions are better equipped to be successful citizens. The core competencies that are embedded in the Ministry of Education’s redesigned curriculum are also important components of social and emotional learning.

We want caring, compassionate and nurturing learning environments where individual differences are understood and celebrated. And we also want to promote healthy lifestyles in our schools because of the important link between health and improved learner outcomes.

- **Communicating student learning** is another key feature of our *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* findings. The purpose of assessment is to communicate clear and specific feedback for teachers, students and parents to guide instruction. We acknowledge the important role of descriptive, formative assessment to teaching and learning success. And we also see the need to allow students the opportunity to communicate their learning in a variety of ways. The Ministry's redesigned curriculum provides the opportunity for educators to examine assessment practices – assessment for, as and of learning – to select the assessment methods that are best suited to the content or competency being assessed.
- The fourth theme that emerged pertains to the **use of technology** as a transformational educational tool for teaching and learning. This will require significant infrastructure upgrades in our district, but we will accomplish this by developing a strategic plan focused on employing those technologies that optimize learning for students. We need to be selective and constantly

evaluate the effectiveness of our use of technology so that we know it is improving the educational outcomes for our students.

An important part of the use of technology for learning is promoting the responsible use of technology. We also need to be critical consumers of the vast amount of information available in our digital age. We also need to re-examine the role of the teacher in the classroom—no longer the ‘sage on the stage’ but rather the ‘activator’ and ‘facilitator’ of learning.

We live in a time of rapid change so the discussion about *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* will continue as we continually strive for greater student success in the New Westminster School District. While this document provides a district blueprint for learning success, it will be a “living document” that will be reviewed annually and revised as action plans are implemented and new trends and needs emerge.

We are all lifelong learners- students, staff, parents and community members- and it is important that we continue the dialogue and continue to reflect about *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms* in the best educational interests of our students.



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