

2023-2024
School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

Gladstone Secondary School is located in East Vancouver’s Kensington-Cedar Cottage community. We draw our students from a neighbourhood that is predominantly lower middle to middle-class in socio-economic status and is characterized by cultural diversity. Our students’ families include a higher-than-average (for Vancouver) proportion of low-income households. In our neighbourhood, fewer residents report English as their first language as compared to the city-wide average. Gladstone’s student population mirrors the community from which it is drawn. Our students speak a multitude of languages at home, with Chinese, English, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Spanish being the most common. Gladstone’s multicultural mix is a hallmark of the school, and is celebrated and valued by staff and students alike.

The school has approximately 1000 students with a number of different programs including Lifeskills in grades 8-12, Learning Assistance Lifeskills in grades 8-12, Mini School grades in 8 and 9, Learning Support Program in grades 8 and 9, and the Pre-Employment Program in grades 10-12. For a small school, we offer a full range of electives including some AP courses, Culinary Arts, Dance, Robotics, Music, Theatre, Strength and Conditioning, Foods, and Technical Studies.

The school community prides itself on being a safe and friendly place. The student council is strong and active and has invested time and energy to making the community more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

Our Staff, represented by Department Heads, want to share that our school maintains strong ties to recent graduates and alumni, that when people come to work at Gladstone they really want to stay here because of the nature of the community, and that we pride ourselves on being a safe and welcoming community in which students are accepted as they are and supported to excel.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

The community is diverse with many different languages spoken in homes (582 out of 982 students identify a language other than English as the language spoken at home). Our community has many first or second generation immigrant students (318 of 982 students were not born in Canada). Demonstrating need, 318 students are on the lunch card program, many receiving both breakfast and lunch. Many students have some or all of their school fees / expenses subsidized or waived. 37 students have declared Indigenous ancestry (almost all of from nations and territories outside of our Host Nations).

The majority of the students in our community require teachers to communicate with them directly about their achievement, understanding and future learning. For many, parents and guardians do not access communication of assessed learning.

Gladstone students perform well in extracurricular areas of student choice. Senior Boys Basketball and the Track and Field Team went to Provincials this year, Junior Girls Volleyball won City Championships, and wrestlers won Gold at National Championships. The Chess team won the East Van Chess tournament. In curricular areas that can involve external recognition, The Dance Teams place in the top 4 at many competitions. The Jazz band and Choir are award winning and have been recognized by the CBC.

Participation in the Youth in Trades program is increasing and seems to be an option for success that may appeal to more students. Students entering the trades often rely heavily on school staff to help navigate processes.

Gladstone students would benefit from conditions that might improve scores in literacy and numeracy assessments as well as course marks. We hope that adjusting procedures for FIT and teacher collaboration focused on student learning can improve output on these assessments and in course learning.

Programs within the school are PREP, LALS, LSP, LS. Students from PREP and LSP are integrated in all their electives. LALS students have one or two mainstream electives. LS students participate in Culinary Arts in a Modified program and a few other locations informally.

For many students, often the first incident of discussing a mental health concern or crisis seems to be with a staff member. Often, students depend on staff to assist them in accessing follow-up mental health care as appropriate.

This school community can hold events with a level of trust that students will carry themselves in a manner that is respectful of each other and the school community itself. We know that our students, for the most part, comply with expectations in classes and in the school.

AS A SCHOOL COMMUNITY, WE ARE WORKING ON THE FOLLOWING TO:

Improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and belonging

- As schoolwide work, we aspire to develop more staff wide knowledge and competency in recognizing and mitigating the effects of anxiety and depression on our students. We intend to have counsellors organize learning sessions for teachers and students. We currently see a relatively high number of mental health crises with students. Success will look like more students seeking support before there is a crisis, resulting in fewer crisis incidents for counsellors.
- Targeted work will be to have our most skilled and highly trained resources/staff available to our students most vulnerable to suffering from mental well-being challenges in a more consistent and reliable manner.

Improve equity

- Recognizing real barriers to student success, rather than assuming them, so we can support students graduate with dignity and options. Setting up procedures with counsellors and program staff to support students in accessing non-traditional paths to graduation like trades programs.
- Working with stakeholders to determine and implement targeted supports for ELL learners. For example, we will restructure ELL programing to include push in supports with an ELL specialist.
- Structure and re-structure programs, procedures, and plans to reflect UDL principles within the limits of staffing and collective agreements.

Continue on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit

- Continuing to offer Indigenous Education courses.
 - Continue to advocate for more targeted, accessible, and consistent staffing, supports and space for Indigenous students
- We will engage with our potential Indigenous Ed. Worker or teacher to track student progress and supports over time.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

Improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and belonging

- While difficult to measure, our counselling team, admin, and staff should be able to report on the effectiveness of strategies on a schoolwide, gradewide, and individual basis. Whether strategies be schoolwide assemblies/speakers, gradewide foci, or individual strategies, we should be able to speak to effectiveness in reducing anxiety and depression.
- We will have adjusted programs and staffing so that our most skilled and highly trained resources/staff available to our students most vulnerable to suffering from mental well-being challenges in a more consistent and reliable manner.
- We will see fewer lates and absences as students belong more in the learning spaces and communities in them.

Improve equity

- We will have identified internal barriers to student success and put in place strategies to demonstrably mitigate them.
- We will have identified and implemented targeted support for ELL learners.
 - Our procedures and programs will have been changed where needed to reflect best student learning. We will implement student centred practices in FIT and Collaboration Time. This means more structure in FIT to increase student time in learning spaces with teachers (especially our Grade 8's and 9's with a gradual increase of responsibility as they grow into later grades). This also means increasing and revising teacher led Collaboration Time so teachers can work with colleagues focused on issues of student learning in planned ways.
- We will see a greater number of students accessing non-traditional paths to graduation.

Continue on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit

- Enrolment in Indigenous Education courses will hold or rise.
- Whether through Admin, Counsellors, or Indigenous Ed Dept staff, we will see more consistent and stable connection and support for our indigenous students, increasing rates of graduation with dignity and options.