

2023-2024 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

The Prince of Wales community takes pride in setting high expectations for student success, with most graduates advancing to college or university. Our staff provides a comprehensive program for approximately 930 students in grades 8-12. Celebrating both big and small victories, we honour achievements through athletic awards, service awards, core competency awards, and academic accolades. Alongside strong scholarship opportunities, students excel in fine arts, leadership, service, and athletics.

Over the last number of years, PW community has reflected a middle to high socio-economic community, however, we are currently seeing growth in the neighborhood towards greater inclusivity, with developments in new apartment buildings, rental projects along the Arbutus Greenway, townhouse projects, and a new Skytrain line stop which will soon transform the landscape and make our community even more dynamic and diverse.

The Prince of Wales community embraces diversity, as 55% of students speaking a language other than English at home, and 25% enrolled as English Language Learners (ELL). Our commitment to diversity is evident in events such as Lunar New Year celebrations, multicultural fairs, 2SLGBTBQ+ lip sync/fashion shows, PRIDE week activities, Red Dress initiative of the textile class, and band performances reflecting global musical diversity.

We offer several district programs, including the PW Mini School, TREK Outdoor Education Program, Learning Support Program (LSP), and GOLD program for twice exceptional students. Our school emphasizes extracurriculars, with an active Students' Council, numerous clubs, vibrant leadership class, math and science contests, and sports teams competing at the provincial level. We prioritize learning experiences that support diversity, student choice, Indigenous perspectives, place-based learning, and that create a sense of belonging for the entire PW community. The PW Library fosters the exchange of ideas across the PW Community and beyond through book talks, author visits and curricular support. Field study experiences, local and outdoor education field trips, and community-building activities are integral to our approach to developing lifelong learners in addition to complementing classroom learning.

Some examples of activities that enrich our school community include:

- Grade 8 Camp
- Back to School Blast/ Clubs Day – hosted by Student Council
- Science Olympics and Science Fair
- Holiday Variety Show- hosted by Leadership
- Fine arts concerts and plays, arts nights, and poetry recitation contests.
- District music festivals and live theatre performances
- UBC Ennovate entrepreneurship program
- Model UN
- Gingerbread Contest at the Hyatt Hotel

Our students connect with the wider community through initiatives like the Leadership program's partnerships with seniors' homes and pen pal letter writing with Trafalgar and Shaughnessy schools, as well as connection and mentorship with Chief Maquinna Elementary. Peer mentorship for student health and well-being is fostered through the "Here for Peers" program. Renewal of the PW School Garden this year reflects our ongoing commitment to place-based learning and environmental stewardship and participation in traditional gardening initiatives. The garden has led to community involvement projects, such as creating planter boxes for Trafalgar Elementary and encouraging students to explore trades, which are also important aspects of our curriculum.

Our Parent Advisory Group (PAC) stands as a vibrant and inclusive community within Prince of Wales. Comprising parents from diverse cultural backgrounds, the PAC serves as a true reflection of the diversity in our student population. This inclusive approach ensures that a wide range of perspectives and experiences are considered in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of belonging for all families involved.

This year, as a staff, we are focusing on five main areas of growth: belonging and community, inclusion, intentionality with Flexible Instructional Time (FIT), reinvigoration of the Core Competencies, and Indigenous Enhancement. Central to this endeavor is our commitment to amplifying student voices in the decision-making processes. By incorporating more student input, we aim to create an environment where every individual feels heard, valued, and actively involved in shaping the direction of our school. This initiative involves not only acknowledging the perspectives of our students but also actively integrating their ideas, opinions, and feedback into key decisions that impact the school community. Through inclusive student forums, surveys, and collaborative discussions, we seek to empower students to play a pivotal role in shaping the policies, programs, and activities that directly influence their educational journey.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

PW accommodates a range of learners, each with strengths and challenges. They seek guidance, individual recognition, and support in navigating academic, athletic, artistic, and personal aspects of school life. Despite facing stressors, they aspire to post-secondary success and personal growth. This sentiment is echoed by students, caregivers, and staff in our community.

There is a high rate of volunteerism and school spirit amongst the students, staff, and parents. This is exemplified in our school code of conduct: REACH (respect, effort, attitude, contribution, and honesty). Many learners experience a sense of belonging, support, and connection to peers and teachers, with ample opportunities for curiosity, growth, and involvement in clubs, electives, and athletics; however, despite their achievements and engagement, many students report feelings of stress, anxiety and depression.

Our learners at PW demonstrate a strong drive for post-secondary education, with over 90% pursuing it after graduation, and 80% heading directly to university. Our strong STEAM presence is notable, with many students graduating with the intention of pursuing STEAM fields at the university level. The ELL program has grown to include approximately 150 international students and 100 local students. By fostering a supportive environment that recognizes individual strengths and provides targeted support, we aim to ensure the holistic well-being of our students as they navigate their educational journey.

Through staff discussions this year, we have recognized changes in our community:

- We acknowledge the increasing number of students facing mental health concerns and the need for enhanced support.
- Our diverse learners make up over 10% of our student population as identified with a ministry designation; however, there are many students without a ministry designation also requiring support.
- There is a need for more universal support for all students, including ELL students.
- Our student body is a mixture of those from within the catchment area and those coming from all over the city, influenced by new developments.

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

This year, as a staff we are looking at five main areas of growth: belonging and community, inclusion, intentionality with Flexible Instructional Time (FIT), reinvigoration of the Core Competencies and Indigenous Enhancement. Central to this endeavor is our commitment to amplifying student voices in the decision-making processes alongside staff.

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

To improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and a sense of belonging, we are implementing several initiatives. We teach students how to manage stress and distinguish between normal stress and mental health issues, while also building resilience and grit through challenges. Our Grade 8 and 9 students have seminars with our Safe and Caring Worker to discuss topics such as navigating your social world, positive friendship strategies and support. We host school wide sessions on online safety and responsibility to help support our students and their digital safety. Between workshops in Physical Health Education and school wide workshops/presentations, we support our students with education in sexual health, consent and healthy relationships, exploitation and cyber bullying, mental health, anxiety and depression, substance use/abuse and prevention.

Our CLE 10 curriculum incorporates wellness lessons, and we provide meaningful avenues for students to deal with stress, including involving the school psychologist to assess stress levels and provide professional support. We emphasize the importance of well-being through excellence and educate students on using Artificial Intelligence (AI) properly to produce authentic and accurate work. Additionally, we are thoughtful around assessment, offering various options and opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning, which helps to relieve stress and encourage overall well-being.

During the school year, we allocated 10 FIT sessions as homerooms. In these homerooms students worked on self-reflection and goal setting, reporting on the Core Competencies in addition to a variety of student activities. These activities provided opportunities for student voice and for students to build connection as a community.

This year we hosted a multi-day student forum with students from grade 8 -12, focused on improving student belonging and connection to PW and each other. Facilitated by school administration, students discussed and collaborated on several topics that they felt needed improvement. They worked together making action plans moving forward to target several areas in the school where they felt belonging and connection could be improved: school spirit, support for athletics home games, clubs and FIT time, physical spaces in the school, announcements and advertising events, intramural sports and washrooms.

Improve Equity

To enhance equity within our facility, we are working to provide additional all-gender washroom and change room spaces in addition to looking at ways to make our facility more accessible. We are currently engaging in conversations with staff and students to identify their needs and preferences.

In our school, we are making a conscious effort to amplify diverse voices and ensure representation across all departments. This involves actively working to improve equity within our school resources.

Our students are committed to building equity within our community through various club initiatives and participation in the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) student conference. Additionally, our Leadership classes create awareness through school-wide initiatives such as Autism Awareness, Black History Month, and Asian Heritage Month.

To further our commitment to equity, we are taking several important steps. We aim to provide more laptops for students' use as needed. We have also established a Peer Tutoring Club, which is well advertised and scheduled at accessible times, to accommodate students who may not be able to afford a private tutor. Moreover, we are considering the impact of class size and composition on equity within departments and classrooms, ensuring that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed.

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

Continuing on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities involves integrating Indigenous perspectives across various aspects of our school community. We are offering courses taught through an Indigenous lens, enriching our curriculum with traditional knowledge and cultural insights. Our Leadership class initiated a gallery walk around the school this September, showcasing Indigenous leaders and sharing their impactful stories with students and staff. During our morning announcements, we have highlighted Indigenous music, celebrating cultural richness and diversity. At all formal events, we acknowledge the traditional territories with a land acknowledgement, honoring the Indigenous peoples who have stewarded the land for generations.

Furthermore, we are infusing Indigenous stories, resources, First Peoples principles of learning and land-based learning opportunities throughout our educational practices in a meaningful way. We are actively trying to connect with Musqueam to learn more about the [Hul'gumi'num \(hə́ŋqəmiŋəm\)](#) language, incorporating its teachings and presence in various aspects of school life, fostering deeper cultural understanding and appreciation.

Many of the PW field studies support students in participating in activities at Indigenous sites, where they learn about cultural practices and engage firsthand with Indigenous elders, knowledge, and traditions. This year, students had the opportunity to experience UBC Musqueam House Posts through a self-guided tour, Camosun Bog, the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre in Whistler, the Audain Art Museum in Whistler, Indigenous plant garden, the *čəsnaʔəm*, “The City before the City”, “True Tribal” exhibit at the Museum of Vancouver and the Andy Everson presentation, “Star Wars and the Strong Parallels to Colonialism”. This experiential learning is essential in deepening our students' understanding and respect for Indigenous cultures and histories.

In recognition of students' commitment to truth and reconciliation, we are introducing an award for graduation based on demonstrated competency in truth and reconciliation practices, encouraging active engagement and leadership in advancing these important principles. These initiatives reflect our ongoing dedication to fostering respectful relationships and understanding with Indigenous communities, promoting a more inclusive and equitable educational environment.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

To ensure we are on track with the entire school plan, we implement various monitoring strategies. These include conducting regular surveys and hosting student forums to gather comprehensive feedback on our initiatives and progress across all areas of the school. We actively seek input from stakeholders, including students, parents, and staff, to ensure their perspectives are considered in decision-making processes. Additionally, we rely on teacher recommendations and collaborative discussions to inform strategic decisions that align with the broader goals of the school plan. These efforts are crucial in evaluating our effectiveness in fostering a supportive learning environment that promotes academic achievement, well-being, and community engagement throughout our school community.

Professional development opportunities for staff are also integral to our approach. We aim to work as a staff to provide training that equips teachers with the knowledge and skills to be receptive and proactive in implementing changes that support equity, belonging, and Indigenous perspectives. These professional development sessions are designed to foster an inclusive mindset and practical strategies for promoting these values in the classroom.

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