



Memorandum *VS*
vancouver school board

ITEM 2 a

March 25, 2015

TO: Education and Student Services - Committee III

FROM: Maureen Ciarniello, Associate Superintendent
Jessica Land, Supervisor Enhanced Support

RE: **Enhanced Services Update**

INTRODUCTION:

This report is for information purposes.

BACKGROUND:

In March 2014 the Board adopted the Final Report for Re-visioning Inner City and CommunityLINK Resources in Vancouver Schools which contained a number of recommendations for implementation over two school years from 2014-2015 through to 2015-2016.

This report provides an update on implementation activities from September 2014 to February 2015 including: consultation processes; data trend updates; and food services planning.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS:

From November to February, there have been several aspects of the implementation process that are under development concurrently (see Appendix 1). These included the following actions.

Strategy Development

- Consultation process occurred with all schools as to whether the draft goals, objectives and strategies for Enhanced Services described what vulnerable students required in order to be successful with their personal education goals. The draft goals are in the areas of academics (Literacy specifically), social emotional learning/development, and community connectedness.

Staffing:

- Reassignment of Community Schools Coordinators (CSC) to new hubs in February 2015, with the remaining CSC transitioning to new hubs in the summer of 2015, to facilitate the new delivery model and to participate in planning with their new hub schools.

Collaboration and Partnerships:

- Scheduled meetings with Vancouver Coastal Health to identify areas where additional supports are required and to generally better align programs and services between the organizations.
- Scheduled meetings with staff at Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation to share Enhanced Services strategy, as well as to request further collaboration around the development of procedures and information sharing processes to encourage more joint programming and services between the large public agencies.
- Preparation of a consultant's report on Pre-Kindergarten School / Life Readiness.
- Confirmed pilot sites and community partner agencies to deliver parent engagement programming for Summer Early Learning Program 2015.
 - Cook Elementary – South Vancouver Family Place
 - Selkirk Elementary – Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House
 - Nightingale Elementary – Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House
- Continued work on place-based activities through the Graduation Strategy in the Strathcona / Ray Cam community.

CONSULTATION THEMES:

During these consultations a number of themes were mentioned consistently and were also reflected in the Inner City / CommunityLINK Revisioning document from last year. Themes tended to focus on supports for students, and on the organizational structures and processes that enabled those supports.

Themes Focused on Supports for Students

- **Provision of Food Services** – A recognition that students who required food services in elementary are likely to continue to require these services in secondary, and that continuity and security of access to food is important.
- **Literacy** – A need for consistent delivery of literacy programs at all grade levels. A recognition that targeted literacy supports are needed at the Grade 8 level for transitioning students.
- **Numeracy** – There was interest expressed in developing consistent assessment tools, and in providing increased support for consistent numeracy instruction.
- **Attendance** – There was significant interest in district support for a comprehensive attendance strategy around promoting and supporting regular attendance in schools across the district.
- **Transitions** – There is a need to continue to develop and support mechanisms that enable smooth transitions for vulnerable students from pre-K to K; annexes to main schools; Grades 7

to 8; and from Grade 12 to post-secondary. Transitions within the day, and from school time to Out of School Time activities was also raised as an area of focus.

- **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)** – Consistent program delivery of SEL programs based on the District recommended SEL and Prevention programs was identified as desirable and that these programs become more integrated into classroom practice.
- **Physical Literacy** – Consistent program delivery of Daily Physical Activity (DPA) was deemed important as well as noting the importance of physical health in support students’ academic learning and social emotional health.
- **Student Engagement** – A recognition that there is a need to examine ways of engaging students with these goals, objectives and strategies in a meaningful manner.

Themes Focused on Systems / Operational Changes to Support Students:

- **Goals, Objectives and Strategies** - Generally the draft set of goals, objectives and strategies captured the essential elements of what vulnerable students require from an education system in order to be successful in their learning. This statement is based on an assumption that student’s fundamental needs are also being addressed (e.g. food, clothing, shelter).
- **Mental Health** - Mental health issues (of the child and/or family) continue to be a significant barrier for vulnerable students and their families and can prevent students from reaching their personal education goals. More coordination and collaboration with external agencies, particularly VCH Mental Health, is essential to better support students and their families.
- **Parent Engagement** - Meaningful parent engagement continues to be of paramount importance, and might be fostered and strengthened through purposeful transition and attendance initiatives.
- **Professional Development** – When working with vulnerable students, trauma informed practice was brought up frequently as a much needed form of professional development for school staff, to assist them with recognizing and appropriately responding to students who have been impacted by traumatic stress.
- **Partnerships** – It was recognized again that working in a place-based model builds partnerships with local community agencies which in turn helps systems anticipate and respond to child and youth needs in a locally meaningful way.

DIRECTIONS:

In the next several months, meetings will be held with district and school level staff, internal stakeholders and partners, and with external agencies to continue developing strategies and actions in support of the themes listed above.

DATA TRENDS:

When the Re-visioning Inner City and CommunityLINK Resources in Vancouver Schools was presented in February 2014, the report reviewed several different sources of data to determine where the critical mass of students who live in poverty attend school.

“In the last two reviews, the District has relied heavily on the Social Services Index (SSI) – a figure provided by the Ministry of Education identifying the numbers of families with children attending the schools who live on Income Assistance, and the numbers of children in the school who are in care. In the current revisioning process, the SSI is being used again for two reasons. First, the index is a source of school-specific data that is tracked over time. Second, there is a very strong correlation between the SSI and other data derived from school enrolment and neighbourhood information.”(p.6)

Historically, inner-city review reports have focused on identification of schools where there is a high concentration and number of students who are vulnerable due to poverty-related determinants. The February 2014 report noted that:

“...Although it is true that poverty exists throughout the school district, it is very much concentrated in a smaller number of schools. In developing recommendations we attended to the schools with highest concentrations of poverty because the needs in these schools are so great. Yet, we have also attempted through our recommendations to address the fact that students who come to schools where there are smaller numbers of students disadvantaged by poverty also need support.” (p.7)

When the February 2014 report was written, the available SSI data at that time was from 2011-2012. Since then, there have been two updated SSI summaries, for 2012-2013, and 2013-2014. District staff have reviewed this recent data, looking at trends over both a 3 year and 5 year period. The schools referred to as Tier 1 and 2 schools continue to be those with the highest complexities related to poverty. This is unlikely to change, and these schools continue to have significantly higher needs related to poverty in relation to other schools in the district.

Beyond these schools, however, the data confirms that there are noticeable shifts in populations of vulnerable students, which have also been anecdotally recognized at the school and community level. Students are appearing in greater numbers and percentages at schools not traditionally described as ‘inner city’. The shifts are significant enough that determining a set of Tier 3 schools, as outlined in the February 2014 report, and confirming a 5 year set of supports for those schools, will likely have the unintended result of increasing inequities for students.

District staff is considering options that might increase the district’s ability to be responsive to these shifts, on an ongoing basis, and to annually review supports. Further information will be brought to the Education and Student Services Committee meeting April 15, 2015.

APPENDIX 1

Status of Actions Related to Report Recommendations:

Actions: March 2014 – September 2014

- Update was provided to Education and Student Services Committee meeting September 17, 2014

Actions: September – Dec. 2014

- Establish Committee for Implementation and Monitoring of Enhanced Support (recommendation 11) *Meeting scheduled for early April 2015*
- Conducted review of school meal programs (recommendation 4)
- Continuing to develop the 'logic model' with clear goals, specific outcomes, and targets with timelines for monitoring impact and success of the enhanced supports, on student academic and social/emotional health. (recommendation 5)
 - o Meetings held with all Tier schools
- Consultation on pre-K options occurred (recommendation 1)

Actions: January – September 2015

Staffing:

- Develop staffing model for Sept. 2015, based on providing service and supports directly related to the identified goals, targets and outcomes, including:
 - o Defining role and responsibilities of Literacy Teacher positions. Work with HR and VESTA to articulate the position details in terms of collective agreement provisions. (recommendation 1)
 - o Realign the role of Youth and Family Worker to work directly with other enhanced staffing in the identified schools. (recommendation 8)
 - o Refocusing of Community Schools Coordinator position (recommendation 7)

Recording and reporting:

- Develop a template for the annual report for the Enhanced Support Schools goals, to be integrated with School Growth Plans and CommunityLINK reporting requirements.
- Implement a system for tracking progress of vulnerable students as identified through the case management process. (recommendation 6)

Ongoing

- That the Board continue to advocate for a poverty reduction plan in British Columbia and for adequate funding in education. (recommendation 12)
 - o Continued work through Board Advocacy Committee and other Board communication and decision-making structures