

**School:** Bowen Island Community School

**FESL Year:** 1

**School Context:**

Bowen Island Community School is a Kindergarten to Grade 7 elementary school of 320 students and 50 staff members. Approximately 10% of the population of Bowen Island is a student at BICS.

We benefit from a magnificent location. Our forested back playground is attached to Metro Vancouver Regional Park Crippen Park. Within minutes, students can access Terminal and Killarney creeks, a beautiful meadow, and a bit further on, Killarney Lake. The school site itself is beautiful with a large forested back play area, two large fields, a tennis court, and large front playground with a variety of play equipment. Many areas of the playground look towards Ch'ich'iyúy (meaning "twins" in Squamish referring to the Lions). Recently, a pole was carved on site that now welcomes people to the school and to the forest. The outside and inside of the school include beautiful works of art from mosaics to carvings and teachers hang beautiful student work throughout the building.

The school has a strong history of sustainability education with students, staff and community taking great interest in helping children understand their important role as engaged citizens and stewards of the environment.

**Inquiry:** (What do you think is driving your plan for student success?)

Question of Inquiry:

*How will engaging students in a place-based learning approach improve students' abilities to develop, reflect on, and communicate their learning, enhance their well-being, and further their care for others and the communities to which they belong?*

School Goal:

*We will engage students in a place-based learning approach to improve students' abilities to develop, reflect on, and communicate their learning; enhance their well-being; and further their care for others and the communities to which they belong.*

Based on our school scan, the driver of our learning plan is to pursue a pedagogical approach that will address the following:

- The Global Climate Crisis

- Student Health and Well-Being
- The opportunities within the curriculum to connect learning Horizontally (among subjects) and Vertically (Grade to Grade)
- Increasing student engagement in useful, interesting, and important learning
- Promoting citizenship, both as students and global citizens
- Enhancing what students *know, understand* and what they can *do* as well as what they *want to do*.

**Scanning:** (What do you know about your students – their successes and challenges - what’s going on for them?)

Successes: (with the understanding that we strive for continued growth and improvement)

2018 FSA Data\*

95% of Grade 4 Students On Track or Exceeding Expectations in Reading

100% of Grade 4 Students On Track or Exceeding Expectations in Writing

90% of Grade 4 Students On Track or Exceeding Expectations in Numeracy

97% of Grade 7 Students On Track or Exceeding Expectations in Reading

100% of Grade 7 Students on Track in Writing

83% of Grade 7 Students on Track or Exceeding in Numeracy

\*some students are excluded from FSA testing either by parent request or because their academic learning is differentiated far beyond the scope of the testing.

Challenges:

2018 FSA Data

Grade 4s only scored 63% of correct answers in Numeracy

Grade 7s only scored 56.4% of correct answers in Numeracy

BICS could have had far more students in the Exceeding or high area of On Track categories in all areas (Numeracy, Reading, Writing).

Acadience Reading (formerly DIBELS (Reading))

Many of our young learners struggle to attain reading proficiency. By Grade 4 most do; however, we want to lessen the interventions and difficulties students are having.

Student Learning Survey

BICS scored slightly under the District average in the areas of “Do you like school?” and “I feel I am getting better at Math/Reading/Writing”. A pedagogical approach that

enhances engagement through personalization and making the curriculum relevant is important.

EDI (2015) + MDI (2017-2018)

Bowen Island continues to show some vulnerabilities in EDI and MDI data with respect to Social and Emotional development and Well-Being.

**Focusing:** (Identify the most important work you can do to improve the success of your students? On which key areas of learning will you focus?)

We feel our students can be engaged to a greater level. We believe a focus on Place-Based Learning is the best approach to engage students in their learning. It can also promote aspects of physical and mental well-being and is a terrific pedagogical approach to supporting deep and meaningful inquiry that connects learning from subject to subject and grade to grade.

Our approach will focus on head, heart and hand:

Head: *improve students' abilities to develop, reflect on, and communicate their learning*

Heart: *enhance their well-being*

Hand: *further their care for others and the communities to which they belong*

**Evidence/Data to support:** (How will you know that you have achieved your goal? What evidence/data will you collect?)

We are looking for improvements in the following areas and will make use of the following evidence to track progress:

1. Enhance ability for students to communicate their learning
  - a. School-Wide Writes
  - b. Collaborative and personal reflections on learning experiences
  - c. FSA Data (Grades 4 & 7)
  - d. Teacher's classroom writing assessments
  
2. Enhance their well-being
  - a. MDI Data
  - b. Student Learning Survey
  - c. Teacher Observations
  - d. Select a focus group in various classes to track over three years
  - e. Anecdotal teacher observations

3. Further their care for others and the communities to which they belong
  - a. An increase in student-directed service, both in school and in their actions outside of school
  - b. Less recycling and garbage collected at school

**Key Learnings:**

1. Develop a greater understanding of Place-Based Learning:
  - a. Developing Principles of Place-Based Learning that work for our school
  - b. Enhance abilities to personalize curriculum and connect it to place
  - c. Gain greater familiarity with ecological principles that underlie natural systems
  - d. Incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge in all subject areas
  - e. Incorporate Learning of Indigenous ways of knowing, place-names for local areas, and help students learn indigenous languages
2. Develop a greater understanding of movement and the outdoors in enhancing well-being
  - a. Develop teaching skills to learn while moving
3. Provide meaningful service learning opportunities for students that are, when possible, intrinsically motivating

**Developing a Hunch:** What is leading to this situation?

Our school can better connect the learning journey of our students by connecting learning (strategies, pedagogical approaches) from grade to grade. Alignment of strategies (literacy, place-based learning) and highlighting big ideas (i.e. “flow”, “development”, “cycles”) that anchor curriculum, will help students feel their learning journey from grade to grade is more connected and mutually enhancing (i.e. learning in Grade 2 does not just progress from Grade 1 but continues to reveal the lessons of Grade 1, possibly in a new light).

**New Professional Learning:** (Summarize the new areas for professional learning and how you will go about designing new learning for yourself and your staff that will impact your learners.)

We will focus our learning on:

- Place-Based Learning Strategies with FESL Group, develop principles specific to BICS, possibly in the areas of:\*
    - Local to Global Context
    - Learner-Centred
    - Inquiry-based
    - Design Thinking
    - Community as Classroom
    - Interdisciplinary Approach
- \*From [Teton Science Schools](#)
- Deepening learning through inquiry as evidenced by improved abilities to communicate
    - Study [ecological principles](#) that are embedded in many subjects within each grade.
  - Deepening understanding of the places and people of Bowen Island that uncover the curriculum
    - professional development days; learning from the draft *Bowen Island Marine Atlas*
    - Professional Development days as field experiences
  - Incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge
    - Indigenous Education Committee to support teachers
  - Service Learning
    - Use *The Complete Guide to Service Learning* to foster self-motivated and self-directed service

### **Taking Action:** What will we do differently?

To address our Head, Heart & Hand goals, we will:

- Head: Engage students in a place-based approach to learning more consistently, including developing as a staff principles of place-based learning that work for our school.
- Heart: Learn more about Restorative Justice and restorative circles.
- Hand: Provide embedded and extra-curricular service learning opportunities.

### **Communication Strategies:** (How will you communicate your inquiry and your results to the school community?)

We plan to keep parents informed of our inquiry via blog posts, parent presentations (Opening Day, Curriculum Night, PAC Meetings), and most importantly, through the learning of students.

We hope parents witness changes in their children that communicate the work they are doing; specifically, that students will be:

- More engaged in learning
- More aware of the place they live and their place in the world
- More aware of ecological principles that are the foundation of healthy natural and community systems
- More inclined to help their community and the environment

We may also participate in highly visible community activities such as a school-wide field trip and service projects (e.g. beach cleanups, invasive species removal).

**Parental/Community Involvement:** (How will you work together as a school community to do this work?)

Continue to include parents in our FESL Group.

Work with PAC to provide parent education evenings that support indigenous education, place-based learning, and service learning.

Our Indigenous Education Committee, consisting of teachers and parents/guardians, will provide learning evenings for parents, possibly including educational film nights.

**Connection to the District Pillars:** (How does this plan connect to our 3 district pillars of inquiry, digital literacy and self regulation?)

Our plan develops the District Pillar of Inquiry. Place-based learning focuses on the development of big ideas that help students understand the place they live, and their place in the world. Field experiences provide terrific provocations for students that spark questions and curiosity. Our focus will also be on how students share their learning (Communication Competency) with others.

**Connection to the 7 Principles of Learning:** (Which of the principles align with your plan?)

Our plan will focus on several of the 7 Principles of Learning, particularly:

- *Recognizing individual differences;* students' relationships with place are personal, far beyond observation to feelings of connection and stewardship.
- *Emotions are integral to learning;* our intention is to engage students by making learning relevant and ensuring it is seen as important by students, something they care about.
- *Building horizontal connections;* place-based learning, including a focus on exploring big ideas, includes a holistic understanding of topics that present numerous opportunities for interdisciplinary study.

**Signing Off Page**

	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Principal</b>		
<b>Parent Representative</b>		
<b>Student Representative</b>		
<b>WVTA Representative</b>		
<b>WVMEA Representative</b>		

**Approval of the Board and Superintendent:**

**Board Chair Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Superintendent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_