



Indigenous Education School Plan 2019 - 2020

1. School: Bowen Island Community School

2. School Aboriginal Education Committee Members:

Parents/Guardians:

Simon James

Jane Miller-Ashton

Fraser Simmons

Victoria Jay

Taylor Kretschmar

BICS Staff:

Cindy Fairbank (Teacher)

Sarah Haxby (Community School Coordinator)

Breanna Lloyd (Vice-Principal)

Carmen McKay (Teacher-Librarian)

Sara Nicolson (Teacher)

Megan Roughley (Teacher)

Scott Slater (Principal)

Victoria Van Schouwen (Teacher)

3. School Main Contact Person(s):

Scott Slater

4. Activities, events, speakers, presentations, projects etc. that have occurred at your location over the past two years:

2018-2019



Professional and Community Learning

On September 21st, 2018, our professional development day at BICS focused on Indigenous Education. The day started with all education staff participating in the Blanket Exercise. Following this exercise, teachers and education assistants explored a variety of online resources from FNEESC, ERAC, and DeltaLearns to better understand the many indigenous resources now available. Resources related to the story *The Six Cedar Trees* were also shared and the accompanying posters which highlight the six Core Competencies (created by DeltaLearns) were given to teachers to put up in their rooms. All 15 classrooms at BICS will use common language and imagery from *The Six Cedar Trees* to teach about the Core Competencies.

On October 13, 2018, we screened the film *Indian Horse* free of charge for the community of Bowen Island. Sahplek, Bob Baker, introduced the film and shared some of his experiences in the residential school system. He also led participants in singing “Eagle Song” following the film which was quite a hopeful and powerful conclusion to the evening. In promoting the event, we shared authentic indigenous resources about how families can learn about the Indian Residential School system with our school community via newsletter and in the local paper.

Student Learning

Orange Shirt Week

BICS recognized Orange Shirt Day October 15-19. Students wore cutouts of orange shirts to recognize that “Every Child Matters.” The shirts read, “I will _____, because Every Child Matters.” The intention of the inscription was to demonstrate that each person has a responsibility to ensure that all people are valued; we each have a role in ensuring that every child matters.

We had two assemblies: one for intermediate students with specific information about residential schools as shared by students; and second, a school-wide



assembly featuring information and videos from the Orange Shirt website noting the intentions of Orange Shirt Day as described by Phylis Webstad.

Pole Carving + Raising

Throughout the year, artist and BICS parent Winadzi (Simon Daniel James), carved a Welcome Pole in our outdoor learning classroom. Students had a chance to visit and learn more about the carving and its Kwakwaka'wakw association. As Winadzi is not a Squamish artist, a ceremony to commence the artwork led by Xwalacktun (Rick Harry) of the Squamish Nation was held in September which gave students an opportunity to learn some of the relevant protocols.

The pole was unveiled during a ceremony, also led by Xwalacktun, involving dozens of students, parents, and community members and included meaningful participation from many of our students with indigenous ancestry as they learned and practiced some of the protocols of the Squamish Nation.

2017-2018

Student Learning

In the Spring of 2018, schools in our District were gifted with an engraved canoe featuring the Squamish name for the location where the school is located. On May 17, Sahplek visited BICS for our Whale Day Celebration. During a school-wide assembly, he presented the school with our canoe and explained a brief history of Kw'ilakm – Bowen Island. Following the assembly, Sahplek led a small group of students and staff with a ceremony to hang the artwork in a prominent location in our school. This was not a naming ceremony but some protocols were learned and observed.

Earlier in the year, Sahplek visited BICS to teach students “The Eagle Song.” Sahplek visited with each class so that they could learn the words for the Eagle Song. Ms. Fairbank, our school’s music teacher, also helped students learn The Eagle Song in subsequent weeks.



“The Eagle Song”, while not an anthem, is a reference to being on the traditional lands of the Squamish Nation and the Eagle Song was used as such during the year, including at our Whale Day assembly as a more participatory territorial acknowledgement than having speakers recognize traditional territory.

Parent Education & Community Partnerships

For the second year, BICS continued a Diversity Group. The group read *The Colonial Problem*, by Lisa Monachlin. The book provides insights into the Government of Canada’s deliberate attempts to eliminate various indigenous cultures. BICS staff and parents/guardians will continue participating in the diversity group, and through reading *The Colonial Problem* and other conversations, learn more about the history and legacy of residential schools and other laws and practices that have oppressed indigenous peoples in Canada.

5. Action Plan for 2019/2020

In 2019-2020, BICS will:

Student Learning

Orange Shirt Day

- Recognize Orange Shirt Day by encouraging staff and students to wear orange shirts and having students make paper shirts with the inscription, “I will _____ because every child matters.”
- The Indigenous Education Committee will share age-appropriate lesson ideas with teachers to use in classrooms as well as share websites and books with parents/guardians to teach about truth and reconciliation at home.



'Pre-Contact' Learning

- BICS Grades 4-5 students will participate in the two day Cultural Program at the Cheakamus Centre Longhouse in October. The program supports many of the First People's Principles of Learning; particularly with respect to learning involving "generational roles and responsibilities," "patience and time," and it is "holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)."

Language Learning

- We plan to acquire and use the Squamish-English Dictionary (2011) to learn more about the Squamish language.

Ongoing Professional Learning

- Our 2019-2022 FESL focuses on place-based learning with the intention of students helping understand their place, and their place in the world. The First Peoples Principle of Learning, "Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)," will guide our work in this area.
- Teachers will explore the [DRAFT Indigenous Education Resource Inventory](#) from the Ministry of Education (in association with FNEESC, BCTF, and Métis Nation British Columbia)

Community Learning

- We plan to host two community learning evenings, similar to in 2019: one sharing a film (TBC) that teaches community members about indigenous peoples; and second, hosting an Inclusion Literacy speaker to speak about inclusion generally

6. District support and resources needed this year. Please be as specific as possible in your requests.



We hope to work with Sahplek (Bob Baker) and Yeltsilewet (Faye Halls) on a number of areas:

- Helping students meaningfully learn and pronounce some words from the Squamish language:
 - Which dictionaries/resources would be helpful?
 - What words would be meaningful and doable?
 - What have other schools done in this regard?
 - Teaching students words and pronunciation.
- Helping create a K-7 unit of inquiry that celebrates indigenous cultures in Canada (specifically the Squamish) and recognizes contributions of these cultures in the daily lives of Canadians; i.e. ways of being/doing, knowledge of place, place-names, living sustainably, etc.
- Supporting our Framework For Enhancing Student Learning; specifically helping students become keen observers of place, and developing insight into ways of knowing that allows them a greater capacity to understand their place and an awareness of varying perspective