



Framework for Enhancing Student Learning School Plan



COWICHAN SECONDARY



Our Story

Cowichan Secondary is located on the traditional, unceded lands of the Quw'utsun people and we are grateful to work, learn, and play on this beautiful land.

Cowichan Secondary is a Grade 10 to 12 school with an enrollment of approximately 800 students for the 2021 – 2022 school year. Cowichan Secondary was established in 1950 and we are excited about transitioning to a new building in Spring of 2024. Our school is located in the city of Duncan, surrounded by the Municipality of North Cowichan. We have students that walk, drive, and ride the bus to school, some coming from a great distance.

Cowichan Secondary students come from diverse backgrounds. Approximately 23% of the students are Indigenous, primarily Cowichan Tribes members. Approximately 10% of our students are International students coming from many different parts of the world including Asia, Europe, and South America. Our school is a dual track school with both English and French Immersion programs with approximately 13% of our students graduating with Dual Dogwoods.

At Cowichan Secondary we have many programs that allow students to focus their area of study. We have a half day Rugby Academy, half day Environmental Stewardship Program, a linear Humanities 10 POD system, and a very successful Dual Credits and Apprenticeship program partnering with Post-Secondary institutions.

Having a large population of students in the graduation years, grade 10-12 program, we are able to offer a vast array of electives and academic courses. We have students graduate from Cowichan Secondary each year, prepared for further learning in Trades, Sciences, Arts, Athletics, Languages, Computer Studies, and much more.

Cowichan Secondary has a proud tradition of offering opportunities for students to become involved in a large variety of extra-curriculars including athletics, arts, and clubs.

Our Learners

Students were asked the following questions via individual one-to-one interviews (Street Data):

What are your favourite things about school?

What aspects of school do you feel should be improved?

What can your teachers do to help you learn better?

Share a story about when someone made you feel especially included in learning?

What do you feel is the role of school in your life?

Our learners have identified that they feel the primary role of school is to prepare them for their future years beyond graduation and to meet people.

Our Strengths

Student street data identified their favourite things about our school. The two items that were indicated more than any other was their time with friends and their positive relationships and learning with teachers.

Our Stretches

Student street data surveys identified a desire from students to see more varied instructional approaches. Two issues that were recurring were concerns with behaviour in the washrooms and the maladies of being in a very old building.

Our staff identified our learners strengths as:

- Diversity
- Resilience
- Arts
- Athletics
- Academics
- Ability to have rich assessment conversations when led by the teacher
- Adaptable

Our staff identified our learners stretches as:

- Attendance
- Being self-motivated to reflect
- Commitment to using every opportunity for learning
- Literacy is a struggle for many

Our Goals

As a staff, we have focused the past two years on expanding the Indigenous content in our classes, as well as Indigenous world views, and First Peoples principles of learning in our pedagogy. We have dedicated Professional Learning Community (PLC) time, Professional Development sessions, and teacher leadership team time to learning and growing.

At Cowichan Secondary we offer First Peoples content, ways of knowing, and principles of learning in all of our classes as part of the revised curriculum. However, we also offer Indigenous focused courses in Art, Physical Education, Indigenous Technologies, and the Hul'q'umi'num language.

Goal one is to continue to improve and increase the amount of Indigenous content, ways of knowing, and First Peoples principles of learning in all we do. Actions and Measures include:

- The use of street data to enhance student voice and ultimately student agency.
- Increasing the number of students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, engaged in Indigenous themed courses.
- The use of PLC time and learning agenda time during staff meetings to learn and celebrate.
- Increase the number of cultural sharing opportunities
- To have every student and adult engage with our Coast Salish Weaving project.

Goal two is to improve our data collection.

Our ministry Student Learning Survey participation rates are a concern, and we need to find a way to increase participation. We also know that this may not be the best way to collect data, and we wish to enhance our capacity to gather effective Street Level data.

Our ministry Student Learning Survey Data showed that 50% of grade 10's and 36% of grade 12's participated. The data collected is valuable, but we are concerned the resultant data is biased by who completes the survey, and who does not fill it out. One worry is that at times the data appears quite positive; however, if only the most willing participants are those that complete the data, then it is incomplete and does not represent all.

We see a third goal emerging and that is towards literacy. At the grade 10-12 level, literacy still remains a stretch for many, however, even for those fully proficient, there are opportunities to grow a deeper understanding in our reading, writing, and speaking skills. We are waiting on our Grade 10 literacy results to have some baseline "map" data to begin with. Following 2021/2022, we will also have Grade 12 literacy data to engage in. While literacy is always a focus for our English department, we have had groups of teachers working towards improving their literacy instruction the past year, and we hope to improve this core aspect of learning for all educators in our building.

Our story is beyond . . .

The single unifying thought from our surveying of staff and students was that we are a school that does so much for so many. Some schools across B.C. identify or even attempt to brand themselves as "university prep," "trades," "athletic," or "arts." At Cowichan Secondary we value the richness in diversity and pride ourselves on preparing students for success in the areas that they desire. We have students that graduate with full ride scholarships to post secondary for academics and athletics. We have students graduating with certifications in hair and culinary arts. Students graduate Cowichan Secondary already completed their first year of their apprenticeship to a trade already complete.

An Ecocycle is a graphic representation of what stage an initiative is in its life cycle. Initiatives begin as seeds that need planted, then tended to, harvested, and finally composted and either replanted or replaced. At CSS we placed our initiatives onto the following ecocycle. Please take a look to see where we are at in our growth process.

