

Lake Trail Middle School Learning Plan

Context

Our building is 60 years old and considered the lighthouse of our community despite suffering considerable ambiguity about purpose over the past 12 years. Last year the School Board decided to move students registered in grade six into our school creating a 6-9 grade configuration. Of our 320 students, 156 are registered in grades 6 or 7; just over half of our students are new to Lake Trail. We also had a considerable number of teachers leave last year so half of our teachers are also new to our school.

We serve a community that is very diverse with a significant percentage struggling to meet the basic needs of their children. Some of our parents are very highly educated and involved in the lives and schooling of their children, but many are not having personal struggles of their own. We are also fortunate enough to have 1/3 of our student population with aboriginal heritage.

Focus

How can we make each student's life better?

- We will increase the feelings of connectedness our students feel. This includes connectedness to our school and to what they are learning. Our goal is that by the end of the year each student will be able to identify two adults, at least one of them being a staff member of our school, that they know believe that they can and will be successful.
- We will reduce the feelings of bullying many of our students report as feeling.
- We will increase the sense of community within our school.
- We will increase student learning in core areas (reading, writing, numeracy).
- We will increase student learning and proficiency in the eight Successful Learner Traits.
- We will increase each student's development of the Core Competencies.

Through extensive consultation last year with students, parents, and teachers and by looking at research and best practice examples, we developed a plan for the 2017-2018 school year to help us to be unique, valuable and attractive to our community. Drawing from this information and data collected throughout the past year (Health Canada's Canadian Student Tobacco Alcohol and Drugs Survey; Foundation Skills Assessment results organized by cohort; student, parent, and staff satisfaction surveys) our teachers and School Planning Council met and developed this focus for the school year.

Learning and Action

In the spring our teachers sat down and looked at our grade breakdown – 82 in grade 6; 74 in grade 7; 89 in grade 8; and 75 in grade 9 – as well as our number of designated students – 11 in grades 6 and 7; 10 in grades 8 and 9 – and decided that the best way to meet our diverse

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student needs is by having 7 divisions of 6/7 split classes and 6 divisions of 8/9 split classes. Each teacher has a teaching partner and between them they are responsible for the learning of the 43 – 54 students they serve. Structurally, their rooms are either beside or across from each other and the teaming teachers have the same prep-time twice a week.

In addition to the experience we have and the work we have done related to meeting the needs of 11-14 year olds, our teachers have actively sought professional development to become more skilled at supporting children who have experienced trauma. They have been working to align some of their instruction by using the eight traits of Successful Learners as a common language. Many teachers have also begun work towards continuous reporting to support student growth and development mindful of our school district's Guiding Parameters for Assessment. Work in these areas will continue all year.

1. **We will increase the feelings of connectedness our students feel.** This includes connectedness to our school and to what they are learning. Our goal is that by the end of the year each student will be able to identify two adults, at least one of them being a staff member of our school, that they know believe that they can and will be successful.
 - Student engagement is key. We believe that if we increase student choice and voice they will be more engaged. Our students registered in grades 8 and 9 will have many electives to choose from and will spend half of each day studying diverse areas of choice through the elective offerings. Also, students in these grades will be working towards an individual, self-designed project in an area of passion.
 - Our Aboriginal Students will receive additional support from our Aboriginal Support Workers who will focus on connecting students to their culture and connecting our whole school community with the diversity of these cultures.
 - Embed authentic aboriginal activities into what we do.
 - We will create and support an active student government.
 - Target resources for our least engaged/connected students.
 - Have all students involved in leadership activities.
2. **We will reduce the feelings of bullying many of our students report feeling.**
 - Through direct teaching and modelling, we will help students understand and prevent bullying.
 - We will be vigilant and active in addressing any bullying we are aware of.
 - Work with student council to create programs/awareness supporting student safety.
3. **We will increase the sense of community within our school.**
 - We will create and support events that build a sense of community such as a pancake breakfast on the first day of school; Terry Fox Run/Walk; Cops for Cancer; assemblies; sports teams

- We will work with Lake Trail Neighbourhood Connections to continue to connect our students with community members through activities like Fly Fishing and the Senior Volunteers Project.
 - Student Leadership will create and produce activities designed to build our community.
 - Various events will be organized for parents and our community members to have them come into the school such as Dr. Claire's presentation on Sexual Health; sessions on educational reform such as the screening of Most Likely To Succeed and subsequent panel discussion; Celebration of Excellence; Meet the Teacher Night; etc.
 - Gerald will produce a weekly Newsletter to communicate with our school community.
4. **We will increase student learning in core areas (reading, writing, numeracy).**
- Grade 6/7 team assessed the reading level of all students and will develop strategies and goals to improve student reading
5. **We will increase student learning and proficiency in the eight Successful Learner Traits.**
- We will focus on one Trait/month: September – Compassion; October – Industrious; November – Strategic; December – Thoughtful; January – Enthusiastic; February – Creative; March – Risk-Taking; and April – Confident. In May and June we will work with all eight in concert with each other.
 - We will continue to work with Susan Bannister to develop our skills in helping students develop their proficiency in these eight traits.
6. **We will increase each student's development of the Core Competencies.**
- Each student registered in grades 6 and 7 will have an electronic portfolio where they will report on their growth and development in each of the six Core Competencies.

Evidence

In order to assess our success, we plan to collect some base-line data through surveys, i.e. one in early October and one again in May. We will track participation rates of students in the many activities they will be offered. We will track our discipline rates, as we believe that as we improve our student's lives their behaviours will improve as well. We will track our attendance rates. Finally, we will use student self-assessment on the Core Competencies as a way to get feedback about how they are feeling about their own growth and development and about their time in our school.

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of the year each student will be able to identify two adults, at least one of them being a staff member of our school, that they know believe that they can and will be successful.

- Attendance rates
 - Satisfaction survey
 - Participation rates on our teams
2. We will reduce the feelings of bullying many of our students report feeling.
 - Satisfaction survey
 - Tracking of bullying related incidents through MyEd discipline reports
 3. We will increase the sense of community within our school.
 - Surveys
 - Participation rates in different school activities
 - Tracking of student initiated events
 - Track community/adult participation in School organized events
 4. We will increase student learning in core areas (reading, writing, numeracy).
 - Demonstrated progress in each area by every child
 5. We will increase student learning and proficiency in the eight Successful Learner Traits.
 - Each student will be able to identify all eight Traits, their understanding of them, and give an example of when they have used each Trait effectively
 6. We will increase each student's development of the Core Competencies.
 - E-portfolios by the students registered in grades 6 and 7

Reflect: How can we make each student's life better?

End of Term 1 – November 10, 2017

1. We will increase the feelings of connectedness our students feel. This includes connectedness to our school and to what they are learning. Our goal is that by the end of the year each student will be able to identify two adults, at least one of them being a staff member of our school, that they know believe that they can and will be successful.
 - Weekly newsletter to keep parents informed and connected with what's happening at our school
 - Every student is in a homeroom and is part of a two homeroom team that works on all Core Courses together and in 6/7 work on Exploratories as well
 - Students in grades 8/9 volunteering at the Soup Kitchen
 - Student in grades 8/9 volunteering at Ecole Puntledge Park
 - Celebrated Orange Shirt Day school wide
 - Class meetings, i.e. 677 and 894
 - Increasing our awareness and sensitivity related to trauma
 - Breadth of elective offerings that reflected student requests
 - Reduced the number of teachers the students see in order to strengthen connections

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- We offered students the opportunity to play on several sports teams (soccer and volleyball) this term and now are shifting to basketball
 - We added another full-time Aboriginal Support Worker (Lincoln)
 - Many of our teachers are working with electronic portfolios which we hope will help parents connect with the learning their children are doing
 - We started our Community Connections Program which is designed to address the needs of our most vulnerable students registered in grades 8 and 9
 - Added support from John Howard Society and MCFD
 - Added a drop-in group 1/week for student wellness
 - Daily interactions with students
 - Boys Group – Boys registered in grades 8/9 selected to receive additional supports/opportunity to work with outside agency supports to receive support through a “Boys Group”
 - GSA and a rainbow cross-walk
 - We have a number of clubs/teams up and running:
 - Improv
 - Dungeons and Dragons
 - Audio-Visual
 - Grade 8/9 Leadership
 - Students went to Courtenay Elementary to help students learn to ride bikes safely
 - Hackergal/Codesters project
 - Gotcha!
 - End of term awards were given to reward what we want students to emulate not academic prowess
 - Fitness/Weightroom is open for students to use for mental and physical health
 - Flex time (Gr8/9) – space and support for students to pursue areas of personal interest
 - We have introduced a Mindfulness course for some of our high-profile students registered in grades 8/9 who struggle with anxiety and self-regulation
 - We have purchased a program to support all staff and students working on their mindfulness and inner self
 - We are in the process of starting a Student Council to represent our students
 - We have initiated and are developing a MakerSpace to connect students through hands-on learning and growing a Maker Mindset
2. We will reduce the feelings of bullying many of our students report feeling.
- We have worked actively to support our students with conflict resolution
 - Green Thumb Theatre presentation re: diversity, compassion, and kindness
 - GSA and Rainbow Crosswalk
 - Focused on the Successful Learner Trait of ‘Compassion’ in September
 - Many of our homerooms are having weekly meetings to discuss related themes

3. We will increase the sense of community within our school.
 - Pancake Breakfast to welcome everyone
 - Fun afternoon activities at end of first week
 - Halloween Dance
 - Halloween Costume Assembly
 - 80's spirit day for students registered in gr6/7
 - Salad Bar that is free for everyone on Wednesdays
 - Remembrance Day Assembly
 - Monday morning meetings with all staff who want to attend
 - Secret Pal Program
 - Teaching Staff Dinner on November 23, 2017
 - Terry Fox Run/Walk
 - Cops For Cancer Assembly
 - Many Homerooms have class "meetings", some weekly, where the discuss different themes and experiences
 - Community Connections: Students requested opportunity to learn something "meaningful" and wanted a 'hands-on' project. Class is now constructing a Go-Cart from scratch using the metalwork tools and supplies available.
 - Grade 8/9 Leadership
 - EDAS project for homeless people
 - Green Thumb Theatre presentation re: diversity, compassion, and kindness
4. We will increase student learning in core areas (reading, writing, numeracy).
 - Gr6/7 team spent time in September getting base-line data for all three areas (measure) and teachers are building programs in their teams to address the needs identified in these assessments
 - Received a SETBC grant to support struggling readers with technology supported interventions
 - All grade 7 students, except 4, participated in the FSA (measure)
 - We are working with Shelley Moore to increase our skills and awareness of meeting diverse student needs inclusively
 - Reading Challenge for Star Wars launch
 - On Fridays we are providing extra support for students struggling with Math
 - Teachers of students in grades 6/7 focusing on increasing literacy through a Humanities approach
5. We will increase student learning and proficiency in the eight Successful Learner Traits.
 - Introduced and developed Compassion, Industry, and Strategic during the term focusing on each for a month
 - Gotcha! cards
6. We will increase each student's development of the Core Competencies.
 - Student self-assessment for Term One on at least one of the Core Competencies

- Pre-taught what they are and used the language throughout the semester
- Gr6/7 team did this in their e-portfolios
- In grades 8/9, students reflect on their learning through answering reflective questions related to each of the 6 core competency headings. Students then set learning goals in each of the core competency areas.
- Reachout Psychosis presentation