



Cumberland Community School

Learning Plan 2017-2018

Context

Cumberland Community School is unique in that it is the only Kindergarten to Grade 9 school in School District 71. This enables many multi-age connecting opportunities and the unique ability to develop a student over a 10 year period. We are a true community school as we really are the only school in our community. This community extends in grades 7-9, as we welcome our neighbours from Royston. The civic minded community ethos is very visible at our school through the Cumberland Community School Society, which operates a lunch program, breakfast program, youth centre and afterschool programming for students. They are a true partner in the educational experience at CCS.

The Village of Cumberland, while rich in history as one of the earliest settlements on Vancouver Island, is also experiencing a period of rapid growth. Many young families have chosen to make Cumberland home, which has resulted in the population of the school increasing by almost 100 students over the last 3 years. Residence in Cumberland by choice has resulted in a community that is very future-oriented and progressive. This is reflected in the school by the level of diversity and acceptance of that diversity by students. At the same time the many historic buildings, landmarks and the wonderful local museum allow us to explore the history of the region in a meaningful place-based way. This history extends to the school itself which is one of the oldest in the region. This history is kept alive by artifacts such as the "Lamp of Learning" which has been awarded annually to the top all around student graduating from Cumberland since 1935.

Our geography not only creates a community, but puts access to nature at our fingertips. This nurtures an environmental ethic and active lifestyle for our students and gives us abundant opportunity for nature-based learning. This is reflected in not only our K-2 nature program, but through a new school wide commitment to outdoor stewardship and learning. Our campus itself allows many opportunities to learn and play in nature amongst our three main buildings.

Our unique campus layout also allows us to take advantage of the great facilities with all students getting opportunities to use the shops, foods and art rooms and gain access to the specialist teachers through buddy class groupings.

Over the last five years the school has undergone significant change as it morphed from an elementary and junior high into the current K-9 configuration. After the predicted implementation dip, the energy and enthusiasm by staff, students, parents and the community seems to be again on the rise. We have a lot of work to do but a great foundation on which to build!

Focus

CCS Student Learning Plan Meetings 2017

June 13	CCS Staff – exploring the data (24 staff in attendance)
June 15	CCS PAC – exploring the data (16 parents in attendance)
June 30	CCS Staff – determining focus areas (26 staff in attendance)
August 31	CCS Staff – building a professional learning plan to support our goals (28 staff)
September 19	CCSS – exploring the data (Meeting was cancelled)
September 28	CCSS exploring the data (Feedback received through email) (only 1 submission received)
October 10	CCS Grade 9 Leadership Students – exploring the data (25 students)
October 10	CCS Staff – reviewing the draft SLP document – opportunity for feedback (only 2 staff members submitted written feedback)
October 12	CCS PAC – reviewing the draft SLP document – opportunity for feedback
October 15	CCS Learning Plan Submitted to the District
October 17	CCSS – reviewing the draft SLP document – opportunity for feedback
October 19	CCS PAC – SLP feedback
November 14	CCS Staff – creating assessment tools

With each stakeholder group we reviewed SD71 District Goals and then explored CCS data around Foundation Skills Assessments, Ministry Satisfaction Surveys, and the Early Development Index. We supplemented this data by looking at counselling, learning support, and administrative referrals. Each stakeholder group explored the data and identified ***what stood out for them, what they believed the data did not show, and what areas they would like to see focussed on for growth***. (See attached documents) After synthesizing the feedback the following theme areas emerged.

Nature and Place Based Learning, Social/Emotional Learning, Numeracy, Community

The school has chosen the areas of Nature and Place Based Learning and Social/Emotional Learning as our primary focus and growth areas at this time as we believe these two areas can work in tandem to improve student well being. We will still work on Numeracy and Community Building, but put a greater focus on them next year.

The Learning and action and evidence pieces were drafted by admin and put forward to our staff during the October 10th staff meeting. With multiple solicitations for input from the CCS Pro-D committee prior to the meeting. After multiple adjustments based on the feedback from staff, the Student Learning Plan was then communicated to parents at the PAC meeting on October 12th. On October 17th the document was reviewed by the CCSS and on October 19th PAC had a further opportunity to suggest improvements to the plan. The SLP is a standing item on our Staff, CCS and CCSS meeting agendas.

There are many areas we need to address to improve our process. For this reason we are glad that the SLP is a living document. Our process was inclusive, however we need to involve the Village of

Cumberland in the process over the next couple months. The Cumberland Community Forest Society is also becoming another valuable partner that we would like to engage more in the process. Both the student input and CCSS input were not as in depth as we would have liked. We would like to do some more in depth work with the Community School Society as unfortunately their September meeting was cancelled. Our grade 9 leadership class does not represent all students so we need to seek input from a broader student demographic.

The decision of which focus areas to address first was made by the teaching staff this year, as the timeline didn't allow us the in depth consultation needed with all groups before the start of the school year. In future, we would like to see all stakeholders involved to a greater degree in determining the focus areas before the teachers focus on the Learning and Action Plans. Feedback from our Parent Advisory group reflected that they would like to see more focus on the Fine Arts in future. Our grade 9 leadership students echoed that they would like to see a more robust band/music program.

Learning and Action

What is our plan to enhance our students learning?

To determine whether nature and place based education, along with Social/Emotional Learning can improve student well being.

We plan to work on the explicit teaching of Social Thinking to students from K-9. We also plan to develop student respect and connection to the local environment through Nature and Place Based Learning.

At the same time, we are looking at creating school-based assessments of math skills in order to create a more accurate data trail to start focussing on improving Numeracy from K-9. In the meantime, we will work to have the Diagnostic Math Assessment completed by as many students as possible as we feel the FSA is not the ideal assessment tool.

We also continue to work to build community through student, staff and community events like dances, concerts, story nights, award ceremonies, monthly assemblies, and house competitions.

What is our action plan to enhance student learning as well as to work toward our focus goals?

We plan to start by bringing in resources and local experts on Social/Emotional Thinking. We will then put our professional learning into action by explicitly teaching Social Thinking at all grade levels.

We will connect with the local Nature Based Education experts and organizations to create more opportunities for CCS students and take advantage of the in house expertise developed through our Nature K-2 programs. During the 2017-2018 school year every class at CCS will undertake some type of purposeful nature and place based learning.

We also believe it is important to communicate our work to stakeholders so that they can help use common language and support the school based learning.

What will we focus on in our Professional Learning?

Professional Learning Plan


August 31 – Nature and Place Based Learning

- Buddy Grouping Triads - [2017-2018 Buddy Classes.docx](#)
- Wildsafe BC Community Coordinator Cali Barton - cumberland@wildsafebc.com - Here is a link to the Junior Rangers Program <https://wildsafebc.com/jrp/> Cali is also available to present to classes



September 12 - Nature and Place Based Learning

- Tribune Bay Outdoor Education Society <http://tribunebayoutdoored.ca/>
- Vancouver Island Mountain Sports Society <http://www.vimountaincentre.com/> - Haeley Campbell

September 26 – Social Emotional Learning

- Social Thinking with Morgan McDonald  [Encouraging the Development of Basic Social Communication--Cumberland Staff Copy to Use or Modify.pptx](#) - Morgan is happy to support any primary teachers interested in introducing the "We Thinkers" series in their classroom.
- Resources available through the CCS library:
 - *We Thinkers Volume 1: Social Explorers - Winner*
 - *We Thinkers Volume 2: Social Problem Solvers - Winner*
 - *Social Thinking Thinksheets for Tweens and Teens - Winner*
 - *Social Behavior Mapping - Winner*
 - Social Thinking Teacher Resource - Winner

October 10 – Communicating Student Learning (Authentic Evidence)

-  [CSL DRAFT policy 2016.pdf](#)
-  [Operating regulation draft portfolio October 2017.pdf](#)
-  [Operating regulation draft reports cards October 2017.pdf](#)
-  [Exemplar report card Fall 2017 \(1\).pdf](#)
- Kara Dawson - E Portfolio - [Kara's Learn 71 E-Portfolio Page](#)

October 24 - Nature and Place Based Learning



- Cumberland Community Forest and Comox Valley Land Trust land-use conversation with the history, bio ecology, watershed, and conservation at the core

- Developing values around Nature and Place Based Education at CCS
- Cumberland Community Forest Society- Executive Director, Meaghan Cursons
 - website: <http://www.cumberlandforest.com/>
- Comox Valley Land Trust – Executive Director, Tim Ennis
 - Website: <http://www.cvlandtrust.ca/>

November 28 – Social Emotional Learning

- Executive Functioning – Judith Mansfield
- Zones of Regulation - Louise Ellis
- Resources - available in the library
 - *Zones of Regulation* - Winner

January 30 – Nature and Place Based Learning

- Nature K-2 Sharing Session -Briar, Erin and Erika (Forest Practitioners’ Course)
- Creating values and guiding principles for Nature and Place Based Learning
- Check out the Natural Curiosity Handbook  [NaturalCuriosityManual.pdf](http://www.naturalcuriosity.ca/NaturalCuriosityManual.pdf) Website: <http://www.naturalcuriosity.ca/>
- Child and Nature Alliance Canada/Forest School Canada Guide  [FSC-Guide_web.pdf](http://childnature.ca/forest-school-canada/FSC-Guide_web.pdf) Website: <http://childnature.ca/forest-school-canada/>
- Resources Available in the Library
 - *Place Based Education* - Sobel
 - *Last Child in the Woods and The Nature Principle* - Louv
 - *Outside Our Window* - McCaw
 - *Coyote's Guide to Connecting With Nature* - Young

February 27

- Mindfulness – Michael Copes

May 22

- School Learning Plan Review and Refinement

June 26

- 2018-2019 Professional Development Plan Creation

What is our plan to address struggling learners?

All learners struggle at places in their educational journey. For those that have more challenges in the Social Thinking arena we will use our counsellor to re-inforce specific skills that will help them be successful. This will take the form of regular additional 1 on 1 or small group lessons. We will also use our behavior resource aides to help the everyday reinforcement of these tools to be more successful socially.

The K-5 Learning Support teachers will work with the *We Thinkers, Social Thinking, Zones of Regulation and Story Grammar Markers* to facilitate teachers in using the resource to explicitly teach social/emotional skills.

Our grade 6-9 Learning Support Teacher is working on a yearlong project to improve executive functioning skills for grade 9s this year in order to help prepare them for the transition to high school. In the spring this project will have a technology focus. We believe that by improving their executive functioning skills it will enable them to be less anxious and contribute to their emotional well being.

Our Speech and Language Pathologist will work directly with teachers and classes with the *We Thinkers* curriculum and the *Story Grammar Markers* to help build social/emotional skills.

At the administrative level we will use the social emotional framework to work with students who are sent to the office based on their inappropriate behaviors. We will use the unexpected and expected framework at the Primary level and the *Thinksheets* at the Middle level where applicable.

Evidence

What is our plan to gather evidence of student learning? What information, data, facts, evidence will we use and why?

1) We will use the Ministry Satisfaction Survey as it is an existing tool that gives us the ability to compare our current results with historical data. We will use the following questions:

Student Survey

At School, are you learning how to do things to care for the environment?

Do you know how your school expects students to behave?

Parent Guardian Survey

Does your child's school provide clear expectation for student behavior in the school?

Staff Survey

Are you satisfied with the efforts at your school to teach students about climate change?

Does your school provide clear expectations of behavior in the school?

We will create school specific questions for next year's satisfaction survey

1.

2.

2) We would like to have a better baseline data set to use in improving numeracy at the school. We have so far accessed the FSA, as the results are readily available and give us a historical context. We see the

limitations in the FSA as it gives us a small sample size and the test like setting may not give an accurate representation of student abilities. Many students may also not write the exam for political reasons.

We see the DMA as a better tool to use as it has a much larger sample size because of the range of students that can write it from grades 2-9. It is an Island Based assessment that has multiple components that can give a more accurate representation of student abilities. Unfortunately, the DMA has not been updated since the new curriculum has been put in place and therefore many questions are no longer valid at certain grade levels.

We would like to develop an in house tool to measure our student numeracy progress. While this assessment tool is being developed by teachers, we will attempt to have as many students as possible write the DMA this year to give us a good sample size to plan our Numeracy focus around next year.

3)While we appreciate the information the Early Development Instrument gives us and can use the data specifically around the strands of Social Competence and Emotional Maturity, it is difficult to directly measure growth in these areas as the assessment only takes place in kindergarten and not even with every cohort. We are currently looking as a staff for a tool to measure Social Competence and Emotional Maturity at various grade levels.

We have also explored developing a Student and Staff Survey around empathy and anxiety?

4)We will track office referrals and counselling referrals regarding behaviors around social thinking issues.

We will track the number of nature and place based field trips in the school.

5)Student Voice will be an important and authentic tool. Post field trip we will have students reflect on what was surprising, what was interesting and what they are still wondering. Videos, blogs and pictures will also be used.

How will we know when our students are successful? How do we know we have made a difference?

The simple answers is:

We will see a positive trend in the data we have collected, and we will see less students referred to the counsellor and office.

However this needs to be developed into a bigger inquiry question that we refine and work on answering throughout the year. Eg. "How is our Community a better place because of our focus on Nature/Place Based Learning and Social/Emotional Learning?"

How will we communicate our evidence of our learning?

It will be important to communicate evidence of our work to our community. This will take the form of results reporting of data and process through our school website, and directly to students and the Parent Advisory Council. Distribution of our results to our other identified major stakeholder groups

(The Village of Cumberland, Cumberland Community Schools Society, Cumberland Community Forest Society) is also important. It would be ideal if a report was submitted in person at one of each of their meetings yearly.

Reflect (Coming later this year)

Was our focus evident in our findings?

Do we need to adjust our focus? Why or why not? What information (data used) did we consider when making this decision?

What are our next steps? Collect more data to follow up, continue with explicit teaching of Social Thinking.

Next focus? Numeracy and Community

Appendix A

School Growth Plan Data

SD71 District Goals

1. Education Evolution

- a. Engage students in relevant and meaningful experiences to inspire a love of learning now and in the future
- b. Integrate ways of Aboriginal learning and knowing into our K-12 classrooms
- c. Create and support innovative practice and learning environments
- d. Broaden student learning through engagement in opportunities which enrich and enhance cognitive, social and emotional capacities
- e. Support alignment of the new curriculum, instructional strategies, assessment practices, and communicating student learning

2. Community Engagement

- a. Celebrate and share our successes as a learning community
- b. Engage students, parents and staff in leadership opportunities
- c. Engage the broader community in the challenges and opportunities in public education

1. Organizational Sustainability

- a. Maintain and expand our financial resources to provide learning opportunities for our students
- b. Continue to value, attract, retain and develop employees whose primary focus is to support learning
- c. Maintain and improve school district facilities to be flexible learning environments

CCS School Planning Data

1. FSA Results 2015/2016 Cumberland Community School

- a. Grade 4 (87% participation rate)
 - i. Reading 25% Not Meeting *SD71 23% Not Meeting*
 - ii. Writing 82% Meeting but only 3% Exceeding *SD71 24% Not Meeting*
 - iii. Numeracy **25% Not Meeting (2014/2015 48% Not Meeting)** *SD71 23% Not Meeting*
- b. Grade 7 (96% participation rate)
 - i. Reading 22% Not Meeting (Steady improvement over the last 5 years) *SD71 23% Not Meeting*
 - ii. Writing 0% Exceeding (By far the best score in the last 5 years) *SD71 16% Not Meeting*
 - iii. **Numeracy 41% Not Meeting** (Still an improved score and the best in the last 5 years) *SD71 38% Not Meeting*

2. Early Development Instrument (EDI)

- a. 2014/2015 (44 students)
 - i. Physical Health and Well-being 9% Vulnerable (*SD71 21%*)
 - ii. Social Competence 11% (*SD71 21%*)
 - iii. **Emotional Maturity 14%** (*SD71 23%*)
 - iv. Language and Cognitive Dev 9% (*SD71 11%*)
 - v. **Communication Skills 14%** (*SD71 17%*)
 - vi. Vulnerable on one or more 30% (*SD71 40%*)

3. Satisfaction Survey (% reporting all or most of the time)

- a. Student Survey (34 grade ¾ students and 47 grade 7 students responded)
 - i. At school, are you learning about art?
 - 1. Grade ¾ 24% SD71 39%
 - 2. Grade 7 9% SD71 26%
 - ii. At school, are you learning about music?
 - 1. Grade ¾ 74% SD71 66%
 - 2. Grade 7 2% SD71 43%
 - iii. At school, are you learning how to do things to care for the environment?
 - 1. Grade ¾ 53% SD71 49%
 - 2. Grade 7 32% SD71 39%
 - iv. At school, are you learning about how to stay healthy?
 - 1. Grade ¾ 31% SD71 49%
 - 2. Grade 7 24% SD71 38%
 - v. If you do eat or drink foods or beverages that are not very healthy, do they come from school?
 - 1. Grade ¾ 29% SD71 31%

- 2. Grade 7 59% SD71 44%
 - b. Staff Survey (11 staff members responded)
 - i. Do you have opportunities for input in school decision-making?
 - 1. 9% SD71 50%
 - ii. Are parents involved in decisions at the school that affect their child?
 - 1. 40% SD71 60%
- 4. Counselling
 - a. Increase in referrals (about 25% of students have self referred or been identified to Counsellor by their teacher)
 - b. Anxiety is the issue seen most often
- 5. Learning Support
 - a. K-5
 - i. Reading is okay
 - ii. We are seeing some improvement in writing and numeracy but more needed
- 6. Admin
 - a. Discipline
 - i. Huge decrease in drug related incidents and fighting
 - ii. Defiance towards the teacher, non performance in the classroom

Appendix B Raw Feedback Data