

Pleasant Valley Elementary

Year: 2021-2022

Principal: Diane McGonigle Vice-Principal Sara Tyson



Our School Story

What are the unique, positive characteristics that we celebrate in our school/community?

This is a very different year for our Pleasant Valley community as our school undergoes a major seismic upgrade. For the 2021-2022 school year, we are located at the former Rutherford School site and have a 'Camp PVS' theme for the year. Our staff worked together last year to prepare our students, staff, and families for the move to 'Camp PVS' to allay any anxieties or concerns and focus on the opportunities and adventure this temporary move would give us.

Pleasant Valley is a school with a strong sense of community that is welcoming to all. This is often commented on by new students and families as well as visitors to our school such as presenters and TTTOCs. We like to tell everyone that we live up to our name and are a pleasant place to be. More than ever we wanted to ensure a sense of belonging and a sense of community at our temporary home for the year. We also wanted to take advantage of the adventures possible at a different site for a year including exploring the neighbourhood, especially the beach close to us.

What are the important demographics of our school and community?

Pleasant Valley Elementary School is located on the unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw peoples. We support close to 400 students, almost equally half primary and half intermediate, arranged into 17 divisions, many of them multi-grade classes. Approximately 13% of our students are of Indigenous ancestry and approximately 6% hold a Ministry designation. We celebrate the uniqueness of all of our learners and encourage them to be proud of who they are and where they come from.

Supporting our students are: 8 Educational Assistants, an Indigenous Cultural Student Support Worker (ICSS) four days per week, a full time Principal, part time Vice-Principal (who teaches 80%), part-time counsellor, full-time Child Youth and Family Support Worker (CYFSW), a full time and a part time Inclusion Support Teacher, a part time Speech and Language Pathologist, a fulltime and a part time secretary, classroom teachers, a librarian, and a Fine Arts teacher.

Our School Goals

Our school goal is to develop social-emotional well-being by increasing sense of belonging/school connectedness for disconnected students identified based on their responses to our sense of belonging survey.

This school goal fits with the district goal of 'safe, caring and healthy learning and working environment that is inclusive of the diversity of our entire learning community.'

Our School Celebration Story

As schools navigate the growing needs within our environments, we are having to use creativity in planning for our students with diverse needs. This year we had two Indigenous students who were experiencing past and ongoing trauma. They didn't have a sense of belonging at school and we were looking for ways to enhance how they felt. Our actions in response to these students and their needs tended to be reactive in nature and we wanted to turn this into proactive care. Our team wrapped around these students to thoughtfully create connection, breaks, and opportunities to be helpers around the school. This included things like helping with our food cart breakfast delivery program (also giving them a chance to connect with the CYFSW and ICSSW). We also had personalized schedules that included breaks to play basketball outside with an available adult, and art/craft breaks for the other student. Our CYFSW was also able to think outside the box and contact Tillicum Lelum to see if they would be able to help in any way. Both students' families were not able to connect them to counselling services outside of school but were supportive with plans at school. Tillicum Lelum provided us with a counsellor who came weekly to support both students with counselling services and time together.

We saw this as a success as we were focusing on proactive planning to support our students and our school and district goals.

NLPS Board Goals

Safe, caring and healthy learning and working environment that is inclusive of the diversity of our entire learning community.

NLPS Board Objective(s)

Students feel welcomed, safe, connected and have a sense of belonging and increase the number of students who feel there are two or more adults at their school who care about them



Collaborative Inquiry Goal

PLAN

Scanning: Students have been through a lot recently with the pandemic and global warming events. Our students will also be going through a major change with our whole school moving sites for one year due to a seismic upgrade. Through our class review process, teachers were identifying more students struggling socially/emotionally. We decided to survey our students (see attached) to find out how they are feeling, determine their sense of belonging and see if they are identifying adults they feel care about them. Feeling safe, connected and a sense of belonging is key to academic learning taking place.

Focusing: Our goal is to increase sense of belonging, as a means of increasing social-emotional well-being for those students who identified as disconnected based on their answers on the survey – especially about being an important member of the classroom and school and identifying adults who care about and believe in them. Our results confirmed our speculations for some students and surprised us for others. Staff may not realize how some students are feeling based on how they

ACT

New Action:

All teachers will work on Tier 1 classroom trauma-informed practices that support their students in building resiliency and managing anxiety and worries. They will look at their classroom structures and routines to see where changes may be made to support this (e.g. sort start, change time of DPA). They will have a mechanism for regular check-ins. This work will be supported by SBT members. All staff will incorporate language about the size of the problem and what is the worst, best, and most likely thing to happen.

Counsellor and CYFSW will team teach in classrooms with the classroom teacher.

New Learning:

More about trauma-informed practice

Difference between anxiety and worry – session with Julie Ann Richards

Review EASE training

Explore picture books and read-aloud novels to support this social-emotional learning

OBSERVE

Checking: Have we made “enough” of a difference?

Re-administer the survey at the end of the school year and compare results – both individual and classroom results.

Anecdotal observations in classrooms and outside at recess breaks and office referrals

Evidence: How do we know? What evidence do we have to show our impact?

Re-administer the survey at the end of the school year and compare results – both individual and classroom results.

Anecdotal observations in classrooms and outside at recess breaks and office referrals

Lessons Learned: How and when will we share our progress and insights?

Share progress and ideas ongoing at staff meetings and regular SEAL team meetings.

Next Steps: What are our next steps for students? What do we need to learn more about?

To use the knowledge gained to help our students transition back to our ‘home’ site.

To make connections right at the beginning of the year with some students we anticipate having some difficulties transitioning.

Redoing the survey early in the fall.

Social/Emotional Learning at Pleasant Valley

Name: _____ Date: _____

1) I am happy at school.



2) I am happy outside of school.



3) I feel comfortable and safe at Camp PVS.



4) I feel like an important member of my classroom.

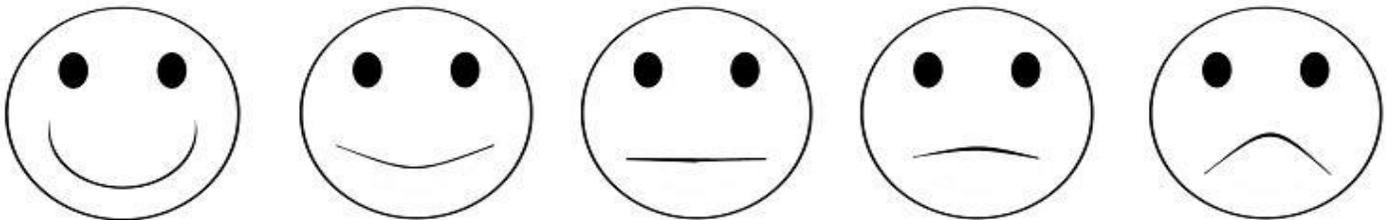


5) I feel like an important member of my school.



6) How many adults at Pleasant Valley do you think care about you and believe in you? 0 1 2 3 4 or more

How do you know they care about you?



| | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Almost all of the time | Most of the time | Some of the time | A few times | None of the time |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|

REFLECT

Teachers shared and reflected on strategies they used this year to support social-emotional learning in their classrooms. Many decided they would continue and/or expand upon strategies they used this year. Some examples are:

- 1) One primary teacher had used talking circles in the past. This year she changed the focus to social—emotional learning. She found throughout the year that she was able to expand upon the circle and that students were sharing very thoughtfully and the circle set the tone for the day.
- 2) One intermediate teacher had been doing monthly check-ins with her students using a google form. She changed to weekly check-ins and found that they gave her important and helpful information about how her students were doing. Many students opened up with these check-ins. The teacher was able to follow up with other staff if needed (e.g. counsellor, CYFSW, admin) as well as with the parent if needed.
- 3) One teacher that had never really focused on social emotional learning added it to his routine when the students were eating lunch. The teacher noticed a difference in classroom climate.
- 4) A couple of classes changed the structure of their day and started with a ‘soft’ start (e.g. Art in an intermediate classroom). They noticed that it changed the tone for the day.

We had a very active SEAL (Social, Emotional, Academic Learning Team) at our school that included classroom teachers, non-enrolling teachers, and admin. The SEAL team helped gather resources to share with the staff at our monthly staff meetings including sharing about different books to use and activities with the books. We noticed a difference with our students with all staff incorporating common language about the size of the problem and what is the worst, best, and most likely thing to happen.