

STRATEGIC PLAN

2021–2023

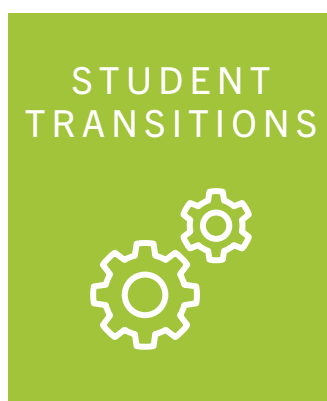
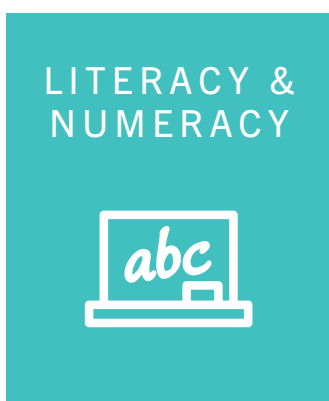




In alignment with the [B.C. Ministry of Education's Framework for Enhancing Student Learning](#), our district has developed a Strategic Plan to outline the steps we are taking to fulfill our vision for Learning by Design.

This vision outlines our guiding values and beliefs which not only include a focus on learning and engagement, but also highlight equity and our commitment to truth and reconciliation. Consistent with the First Peoples' Principles of Learning, this is our learning story and it anchors us in place and in our history.

Learning by Design anchors the district's work, and is summarized in three parts: Learning, Structures and Tools. The implementation of our vision for Learning by Design, is guided by what we call our Priority Practices of Curriculum Design, Instructional Strategies, Quality Assessment and Social and Emotional Learning. Finally, our priorities of inquiry focus on the following:





These three components, as a whole, form our strategic foundation. Learning by Design is our Vision, Priority Practices are the roots of our instructional design, and Transitions, Literacy and Numeracy, in addition to Well-Being, are the District Inquiries that cause us to continually ask three questions:

*How are we
doing?*

*How do we
know?*

*How is our
evidence
informing and
adjusting our
practice?*

We have an enormous array of evidence, context and information in each of our Priority Practices. In a summary Strategic Plan, we want to use supporting evidence to highlight the areas of inquiry that drive how our vision becomes a reality. This inquiry process is used at the district level and by individual schools in their annual plans, which are evaluated by the Assistant Superintendent team. Our district directions both inform, and are informed by, school level planning and inquiry.

LITERACY & NUMERACY

CONTEXT

Literacy and numeracy skills are the foundations of lifelong learning and full participation in society. These skills empower students to make meaningful decisions, think critically and creatively, and reach their full potential. Throughout the Grades, the development of literacy and numeracy skills is embedded across all areas of learning.

The Ministry of Education defines literacy as, “the ability to understand, critically analyze, and create a variety of forms of communication, including oral, written, visual, digital, and multimedia, to accomplish one’s goals. Literacy helps students apply reading, writing, speaking and listening skills across a variety of subject areas.” Numeracy is “the ability to understand and apply mathematical concepts, processes, and skills to solve problems and make decisions in a variety of situations, including real-life scenarios.”

Our Strategic Plan includes the following steps related to the development of literacy and numeracy:

- Improving and expanding Early Learning opportunities in all schools with a specific focus on schools considered highly complex.
- Continually evaluating the evidence of learning and how it informs adjustments to practice.
- Re-emphasizing our commitment to literacy across the curriculum.



STRATEGIC GOALS AND EVIDENCE

Our strategic focus in these areas is on the primary years. We want to develop a strong early foundation for learning, which is critical for future success. Our primary assessment tools are the Early Literacy Phonemic Awareness Test (ELPATS) and What Do They Know (WDTK).

The ELPATS is a district-based oral assessment of phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to hear and identify sounds in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is one of the best predictors of how well children learn to read during the first two years of reading instruction. Where assessment results demonstrate limited phonemic awareness, our evidence consistently shows that with careful and intentional intervention, substantial gains are made, even with our most vulnerable learners.

WDTK is used by kindergarten teachers to capture learners' foundations in numeracy. The WDTK tasks focus on patterning and subitizing. Patterning refers to the ability to recognize and create repeated designs or recurring sequences. Subitizing refers to the ability to immediately identify numbers of items quickly without needing to actually count them. These two skills are essential to helping students learn complex number concepts and mathematical operations.

Our district inquiry is to expand the use of ELPATS and of WDTK as a means to inform and guide our levels of support and interventions required in specific schools and Grades.



Goal: To increase the numbers of schools using the ELPATS and WDTK framework. Our current numbers are 26 schools and we would like to double this by the end of this strategic-planning cycle.



Quantitative Evidence: We have typically been about 5% below the provincial average in Grade 4 numeracy as evaluated by the FSA and typically 2–3% higher than the provincial average in Grade 7 numeracy. We feel these trends support our focus on early intervention. We see similar trends and gains in the differences between Grade 4 and 7 literacy.

TRANSITIONS

CONTEXT

Transitions refer to changes or movement from one stage to another, at significant points in our students' lives. Transitions are disruptive and, as a result, require the provision of extra care and attention to student needs, which in turn further informs our practices and our supports. When we think of transitions we think of moments in time such as:

- The move from early childhood to kindergarten and the formal structures of school.
- Ensuring a continuity of play and learning as students move through their elementary school years.
- Moving from elementary to secondary school, where students begin to see more adults and establish more cross-student connections.
- The Graduation Program in the final years of Grades 10–12 is when students lay down the foundation for life after leaving our school system.
- The emergence into adulthood and life after K–12 are the years when former students will continue to develop their independence and the educational seeds that were sown during their time with us will allow them to pursue their adult passions and interests.



STRATEGIC GOAL AND EVIDENCE

For Surrey schools, we will examine the evidence of student transitions with a focus on the stories of students who are not successfully transitioning from Grade-to-Grade in the secondary years. Our evidence shows that there is a stark decline in Grade-to-Grade transitions beginning in Grade 9 as students move to Grade 10. The decline is most significant for students with diverse abilities or disabilities, Indigenous students and students in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

Our district inquiry will examine grade-to-grade transitions specifically between Grades 9–12 and to disaggregate the data for the sub-populations of Indigenous students, students with diverse abilities or disabilities and Children in Care.

Our inquiry will focus on the evidence we have on the levels of literacy, numeracy and students' sense of well-being as they proceed through the secondary years. Our goal is to unearth the impact of these factors on grade-to-grade transition as a means to inform our practices of intervention and support.



Goal: To increase the grade-to-grade transition rates specifically in Grades 10–12 for Indigenous Students and for Students with Special Needs.



Quantitative Evidence: From 2013–2016 we saw steady gaps from 12–18% in the difference between Indigenous Grade to Grade transitions specifically in Grades 10–12. The cumulative gap (Grade 11+ Grade 12) going into Grades 11 and 12 was between 27% and 31% from 2013 to 2017. In the past two years, we have narrowed that gap to 16% and 14%. For example, in 2015–16, the Grade 10–11 transition rate was 12% below non-Indigenous students and the Grade 11–12 transition rate was 18% below non-Indigenous students. In 2019/20, those same two comparisons have decreased to 5% and 9% below non-Indigenous learners.

We are seeing similar positive trends for students with special needs, specifically for students with H designations (Intensive Behaviour, Serious Mental Illness). In 2015–16 the Grade 10–11 and 11–12 transition rates were 74% and 68% respectively. In 2019–20 they were 83% and 90%.

WELL-BEING

CONTEXT

One of our Priority Practices as a district is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Our district has a longstanding commitment to SEL and it is the foundation for much of our work. The pandemic, has elevated the importance of our commitment to the social and emotional as well as physiological wellness of our staff and students. As we prepare to work through this first phase of our Strategic Plan into the 2021–22 school year, we know that the emotional and mental health needs of our community will be front and centre in our work.

We also want to declare that when we talk about the adults in our system, we are not talking solely about teachers or educators, which would include principals, vice-principals and many district staff. Rather, we are talking about all adults regardless of their role in the system. In turn, this focus on staff translates to a focus on students as the latter will find themselves surrounded by caring and committed adults.

To that end, in order to support our adults in the system, we have a deeply embedded mentorship program. We believe in the power of relationships and the necessary learning that occurs when you are connected to networks with similar values and beliefs.

STRATEGIC GOAL AND EVIDENCE

The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) is the primary tool for measuring student well-being. The MDI is a self-assessment of student wellness and includes physical, intellectual, and community measures. The Early Years Development Instrument (EDI) is an assessment instrument used by kindergarten teachers to assess students' early development and well-being.

In the 2021-22 school year, we will continue to use both EDI and MDI as pieces of evidence to inform our decisions on staffing and resources in areas of particular vulnerability. We will also use the ELPATS and WDTK evidence to inform our efforts to develop literacy



and numeracy competencies. We will annually review and compare our EDI and MDI data to analyze trends and to adjust programs as required.

To promote staff well-being, we have implemented both coaching and mentorship programs and we use surveys to conduct qualitative assessments to gauge the welfare of staff. Our early research in this area has demonstrated that those who participate in coaching and mentorship programs have an increased sense of well-being and report being more confident in their daily work.

Our goals are to continue to target staffing supports towards mentorship and coaching programs and to continue monitoring the effectiveness of these supports through staff surveys. In addition, our instructional strategies and regional SEL teacher leads will continue to work with teachers to develop individual comfort and competence with SEL and surveys will be our main instrument of data collection.



Goal: To strategically align our resources and mental health support structures to the areas determined to be highest in need according to MDI and EDI.



Quantitative Evidence: Students who make multiple transitions in their school lives are more at risk for not succeeding. We mapped the Social and Emotional Indicators from MDI to further understand student transience as a factor of vulnerability. What we discovered was that those schools with high transience had multiple factors working against them (low sense of well-being, no homework, sadness, high video-game play time, going to sleep after 12 and rarely eating dinner with adults). The results of this study have caused us to focus our community school supports and our mental health structures in district regions (and in schools) that we might not normally have identified. We have formed stronger community partnerships and are doing more outreach in this complex area of well-being and school and community connectedness.





Our Focus on Evidence

CONTEXT

As a common thread throughout our work, we have a deep commitment to evidence-informed practice. Evidence takes the form of both qualitative and quantitative information. We are fortunate to have a research department who work hand-in-hand with our data team which focuses on our student information system. Our top priority is to gather evidence and provide analysis to help inform our district inquiries and direction.

Our evidentiary framework goes beyond our strategic planning. Our goal is to develop a culture that strategically uses evidence to inform practice, and we have several initiatives and examples underway. Many of these examples rely on our use of our internal data warehouse, as well as being supplemented by Ministry data.

CURRENT EVIDENCE AND EXAMPLES OF USE

Transitions – We have dedicated analysis dashboards which look at the pathway for students as they move from Grades 7–12. These tools can disaggregate data based on a range of demographic features.

Response – These tools have shone a light specifically on the stories of Indigenous learners. Working with our Indigenous Peoples department and regions, we use this evidence to target interventions in schools, down to the individual student level.

Vulnerable Schools – We have a sophisticated tool that examines over 40 factors including demographics, Human Resources, MyEDBC, and Census information to look at the concept of school complexity. We are able to map complexity across the district.

Response – We use this set of tools to identify schools that require additional resources and we specifically tie this information to some staffing and budget adjustments. There are many other uses for this information.

Well-Being – We have collected all the Middle Year’s Development Instrument data and are correlating it with our Early Years data to map social and emotional well-being of students across the district. We map the data by school catchment.

Response – there are a myriad of uses for this data including using a partnership with Fraser Health to target mental health supports specifically to regions that are showing high levels of anxiety. We are also using the evidence to carefully consider all programs offered by our Community Schools Partnership department to ensure that the outcomes desired are targeted to the areas in most need. This evidence is fundamental to our work on student well-being.

FSA and Marks Analysis – We have done extensive work and have an evidence framework examining the extent to which FSA is a predictor of future success and transitions. Our marks analysis is also tied to student attendance and we monitor attendance as an indicator of student vulnerability.

Response – We cross-reference the evidence on attendance and marks to student transitions. This allows us to follow up with schools on specific student situations. We also use this evidence to inform other structures of support for schools. Our exploration with FSA has found that it is not a good predictor of future success or marks and we continue to examine what evidence we can gather specifically at the elementary level to inform transitions and school completion.

COVID Analysis – Surrey has been an epicentre of COVID cases. We have dedicated dashboards and analysis tools to look at trends and we use this data to directly intervene and provide support where needed.

Response – Our Health and Safety plans are supplemented by additional requirements for universal, targeted and intensive schools as identified by emerging exposures. These responses go as far as looking at cumulative lost instructional days for students and staff and inform how we provide support.



Ministry Data Analysis – We continue to monitor the Ministry-provided required evidence as part of the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL). This framework includes nine required measures and there is a generic report that is provided for all districts in B.C. That report is attached to this Strategic Plan.

Response – This report can and should be supplemented by the evidence contained in the Ministry’s Data Warehouse. Specifically, the evidence that we use as a focus is the Completion Rate information and how it, combined with the Ministry’s Completion Rate Dashboard, can help inform how our transitions work. It will also help inform our continued examination of the transitions and completion rates for Indigenous students, children with special needs and Children in Care.

Sense of Belonging – Learning is deeply connected to a sense of belonging. As a district, we should be working to examine any instances of discrimination and injustices in our system. From individual instances to systemic discrimination, the heart of equity is a sense of belonging and our collective responsibility for all children.

Response – We are currently in the process of documenting the lived experiences and stories of students, staff and community members about their experiences with Surrey Schools. We want to make meaningful connections to systemic inequalities and to ensure systemic and sustainable racial equity and social justice. We have over 30 listening circles currently underway and we anticipate a report back to the district by June 30th, which will inform our needs and direction forward.



Current Evidence Partnerships

Hybrid Models and Equity - University of British Columbia. We are currently engaged in a research partnership to examine the hybrid/transition models that were developed during the pandemic, with a specific focus on how these models did or did not support vulnerable learners. The research will conclude by December 2021.

Structures that support Equity in Surrey Schools - Asia Society and Policy Study Associates. We are engaged in a research project that takes a deep look into the educational structures in our school district and how our vision, structures and programs focus on equity at the heart of learning. This analysis emerged as a result of ongoing work with the National Centre for Education and the Economy and the Global Cities Education Network, which is part of Asia Society. Surrey was the case study for Social and Emotional learning in their Global Symposium this past April and we continue this research and partnership with them. This research is due to be completed by September 2021.

Student Success and School Leavers - Social Research and Demonstration Corporation/Education Policy Research Initiative. We have engaged with SRDC and EPRI in a year-long research partnership that has three specific threads. The focus areas are: transitions (including school completion), student success (including the roles that literacy and numeracy play), and school leavers (what factors contribute to students leaving school and where do they go in the labour market or education after they leave?). This project will include external labour market and K–12 provincial data. In each of the focus areas, there will be a specific examination of Indigenous learners, children with special needs and children in care. This is an ongoing project that also includes guidance and advice on the optimal way that Surrey Schools can keep track of, organize and use evidence to support student success.

The Public Face of Strategic Planning and Evidence

Surrey believes in transparency in our planning and achievement. Our vision for Learning by Design and all supporting documentation are hosted on a [single public website](#). This site includes full descriptions of our vision for learning, our Priority Practices, and documents our Strategic Plan. It also includes our commitments to truth and reconciliation as well as diversity, equity and inclusion.

A significant component of this public page is our [evidence framework](#) which includes specific measures and comparisons on literacy and numeracy, grade-to-grade transitions, well-being, graduation rates, and transitions to post-secondary institutions. This evidence framework also enables users to disaggregate the data for all learners, for Indigenous learners, for Children and Youth in Care (under guardianship of the provincial director of child welfare), and for students with special needs.

This evidence is updated routinely as new achievement evidence is released by the Ministry of Education.

Appendix 1: Requirements of Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

REQUIREMENT	COMMENT
Publish and submit an annual report to the Minister between June 30 th and September 30 th	Published June 30 th , 2021 and presented to and received by the Board of Education on June 9 th , 2021 at a public meeting of the Board.
<p>Demonstrate evidence of a continuous improvement review cycle; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> show evidence of a review cycle that includes the district and schools; articulate how the plan will be implemented, monitored, evaluated, and communicated; and how regular engagement will occur with education stakeholders, Indigenous peoples and Indigenous rightsholders; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> examples include: Indigenous Education Councils; First Nation Education Councils; Métis Chartered communities; District Education Committees; District Parent Advisory Councils; community forums; evaluate the impact of implemented strategies to improve student success and how they will address emerging areas of need; show adaptations to strategies as required; and show re-alignment of resources to support adapted strategies as required 	<p>The body of this plan includes the district inquiry and planning processes and comments on how the school level process both informs and, is informed by, district planning.</p> <p>Through our Education Leadership team which includes our senior Aboriginal leads, the plan is shared and feedback is sought. We specifically interview our Indigenous Leaders about our Strategic Plan and our priorities.</p> <p>We also have this as a standing request for our Aboriginal Education Council to be able to present the plan and to seek input. Our next meeting is September 21st.</p> <p>We also present our plan annually to the District Parent Advisory Council at both their executive and at one regular meeting a year.</p> <p>We also have a Learning Liaison Committee which is a standing committee of the Board and with specific terms of reference to oversee the Strategic plan and evaluate its effectiveness. The Committee meets six times per year and includes Aboriginal representation as well as student representation.</p> <p>Our financial planning is also aligned with our Strategic Plan.</p>

REQUIREMENT	COMMENT
<p>Interpret and report the results of the provincial, district educational outcomes and measures for the school district;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provincial results provided by the Ministry to districts annually as per the Framework Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intellectual Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FSA results Grade 10 literacy and numeracy results Human and Social Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Learning Survey results Career Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion rate Post Secondary Institute (PSI) transitions additional relevant local measures and results (qualitative and quantitative) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contextual information including the identification of trends. 	<p>All of these results and their interpretation is part of our planning cycle and our evidentiary framework.</p> <p>As mentioned in the plan, there is a careful analysis of FSA.</p> <p>We also regularly analyze Grade 10 literacy and numeracy results as compared to class Grades.</p> <p>We use MDI and EDI data alongside the student learning survey for human and social development.</p> <p>Completion rate and grade-to-grade transitions are key indicators for us.</p> <p>We use evidence of post-secondary transitions as part of our district's "transitions" focus.</p> <p>We supplement provincial measures with local measures including marks, attendance, EDI, MDI, ELPATS, and WDTK.</p> <p>We also have internal surveys and evidence on teacher well-being.</p> <p>Our analysis includes examinations of trends and a consultancy partnership with SRDC/EPRI around how we effectively gather and use evidence from a variety of sources.</p>
<p>Interpret and report the results for all students and separately for each of the following student populations: Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with disabilities or diverse abilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provincial results provided by the Ministry to districts annually as per the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Policy; additional relevant local measures and results (qualitative and quantitative); contextual information including the identification of trends as applicable. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on reserve and off reserve student data attendance data graduation quality additional measures required by existing Local Education Agreements, Equity Action Plans and/or Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements. 	<p>Yes, all these data are gathered, analyzed and reported out publicly in both an aggregated and disaggregated manner.</p> <p>We also review our Enhancement Agreements and our Equity scanning processes to determine how these measures can support our planning.</p>

REQUIREMENT	COMMENT
<p>Demonstrate adapted goals and strategies identified to address emerging areas of need;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include an evaluation of the impact of implemented strategies to show district success in improving student success and addressing the emerging areas of need; and show the adaptation to strategies as required. 	<p>Our strategies are reviewed and evaluated annually. We have adapted our strategies in the past year specifically to focus on the success of students in blended programs and to track/monitor student attendance in our concern for students who may be struggling more than normal during a pandemic year.</p>
<p>Be published and communicated to the public annually; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include the weblink to the district Strategic Plan; be accessible using a variety of platforms; be posted on the home page of the district website, along with all public-facing strategic planning and operational documents, and updated annually; and be consistent with the FOIPPA requirements. 	<p>Yes, all data is publicly reported and is hosted on Surrey's Learning by Design webpage.</p> <p>We also present our Strategic Plan, including evidence, two to three times per school year at public meetings of the Board of Education.</p>
<p>Demonstrate progress in district-wide implementation of a multi-year Strategic Plan and individual school plans including goals, objectives, strategies, measures; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> indicate the current year of the lifecycle of the Strategic Plan e.g.: year 1 of 3 years; include a brief description of district local context; reflect the components of effective strategic planning previously outlined; include evidence of alignment of district operational plans; and include board of education approval, e.g. Board Chair signature or board meeting public motion; and reporting of results must be consistent with the FOIPPA requirements. 	<p>Next year will be year two of our current Strategic Plan which follows a three-year window.</p> <p>We believe we are making significant progress particularly in the area of refining and streamlining our evidentiary framework including our data sources.</p> <p>All schools have a well-established inquiry cycle for their own planning and these plans are reviewed annually by Assistant Superintendents within their family of schools.</p> <p>Our Board of Education receives the Strategic Plan through motion at a public meeting of the Board.</p>

