

Park Ave Community

Year: 2022-2023

Principal: Darren Dickie



Our School Story

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

Park Avenue truly is a community school. There is a strong, positive, active parent community. The school is extremely high use of the facility after hours. The staff is positive and is supportive of the diverse needs of our student population. We have many students who are second and even 3rd generation members of the school community.

What are the important demographics of our school and community?

Park Avenue Community School serves a diverse socio-economic community. The school community is undergoing a transition. There are new and planned housing developments in the area. Despite this, there is evidence of increasing vulnerability at the school. This recognition has been realized through a dramatic increase in the need for food for students at the school. Some of the significant student population groups are: Indigenous Learners- 18%; Low Incidence Special Needs- 8%; Students on Student Improvement Plans-18%. We see an population that that is striving for support in achieving meaningful justice and equity. We strive to create a truly inclusive school community that reflects our local community.

Our first goal is for 100% of our students to be able to have the capacity to feel ready to learn at some point during the day. We view this as a fundamental underpinning of the tenants of the School District's Justice, Equity, and Diversity (J.E.D.I) Framework

Our second goal is to have 90 % of all students achieving at a proficient level in Literacy knowledge, skills, strategies and processes.

Our School Goals

Our first School Goal is to create a welcoming building in which 100% of our students have the capacity to feel ready to learn at some point during the day. We view this as a fundamental underpinning of the tenants of the School District's Justice, Equity, and Diversity (J.E.D.I) Framework

10-20 % of students in each class have moments of extreme dysregulation during the school day. For some individuals this is a moment in time. For other students, the dysregulation is present multiple times a day. We notice this through formal and informal observations. We see it in our students. We feel it in the energy of the school. It is noticeable in the number of formal designations that we have that present as overt behaviour. It matters, because dysregulation causes a diminishing state of learning for the individual and their peers in the classroom. We feel that by flattening the power structure that inherently exists in classrooms we can positively impact our school population.

We plan to implement a school wide universal soft start in each classroom. This will be supplemented by a formal plan to support those students who are most significantly impacted by dysregulation. We contribute to the dysregulation when we fail to approach the issue on a holistic basis and provide solely individual interventions, as opposed to universal strategies.

Soft starts are a strategic mechanism through which we hope to restructure the traditional power dynamic within a classroom. In many classrooms the power dynamic is quite clear. The teacher is the center of power. Our aim is to redistribute that power structure within the classroom by creating environments in which there is a shared energy as all students have the opportunity to start their day in an adaptive way. Through this simple, yet meaningful change we feel that we will establish classrooms that are centered around the indigenous ways of love, respect, kindness and generosity,

This year we are fortunate to be supported by the Student and Family Affordability Fund. We have collaborated with our Parent Advisory Council to facilitate the tenants of the J.E.D.I framework. We have identified areas, such as: school photographs, clothing, fundraising, and hot lunches as areas that do not necessarily include those who see a lack of justice and equity in a bureaucratic system that can appear to be non-inclusive as a result of its maintenance of its historical organization. We have been able to enhance the impact of our support by providing a wholesome and nutritious breakfast and lunch program. We have strategically removed any barriers that may exist by normalizing and destigmatizing the program by making it available to all students. Lunches are prepared and ready prior to the start of schools. Students can walk through our HUB at any time to pick these items up. The refrigerator, freezer and all food preparation items have been moved to the HUB, which is staffed all day by our CYCFSW and/or Counselor. Additionally, we have a snack bin by the office that is full all day with nutritious snacks. It is there for anyone to utilize

We fully acknowledge that, despite school-wide universal strategies being applied, some students will need further support. For these students, we have targeted groups and individual support. Based on both formal and informal observations, we will schedule personnel to provide direct support, as available. For our learners who need a lesser level of support, we have created groups to support them in finding an increased level of regulation to become ready learners throughout the day. This process also contributes to our second goal, which is to have 90% of our students demonstrating Grade level understanding in reading when supported by adaptations to support the demonstration of their literacy output.

We have noticed a lack of literacy strategies amongst most of our Primary Students. We will use individual reading assessments to create a literacy profile for each student that includes their: reading level, knowledge of strategies, and direct and indirect comprehension of what they have read.

Focusing:

We plan to implement a school wide universal soft start in each classroom. This will be supplemented by a formal plan to support those students who are most significantly impacted by dysregulation. We contribute to the dysregulation when we fail to approach the issue on a holistic basis and provide individual interventions, as opposed to universal strategies.

Our School Celebration Story

Subjectively, we have noted a remarkably calm tone in the hallways. To us, this is demonstrative of the fact that students are not becoming dysregulated and seeking alternative spaces to be. Students are well-supported in finding an inclusive, calm environment in their classroom that is welcoming and respectful of their needs. We continue to look at methods to transition from our soft morning routines to more formal learning methods. Moreover, we continue to uncover additional ways to support our learners who need more time or different spaces to become more ready for formal learning, both in the morning and throughout the day.

We hope to celebrate this by explaining to students what we are doing and why we do it. Through this, we hope to carry on the celebration of this success over time by making it a teaching point that children and others may connect to over time in their lives away from school in their own way.

