

SOUTH CANOE OUTDOOR LEARNING PROGRAM

Mission

The mission of our school community is to inspire learners to act wisely by cultivating healthy relationships with nature, community, and self.

Vision

Among staff, we aim to work collaboratively to develop and deliver curriculum and best practices for optimum learning outdoors. Staff at the Outdoor Learning School will encourage, critique, and fuel each other's practice so as to be better able to support all staff throughout the district in the delivery and growth of their own Outdoor Learning programs. At a macro level, our aim is to develop a successful program that is replicable in our district and beyond, while contributing to the cultural shift in education towards human and planetary health.

Philosophy

We believe that thoughtful and active learning outdoors in a supportive community allows us to connect and relate to others and to the natural world, which together enables and inspires us to act wisely.

We believe that Outdoor Learning is most effective when all four dimensions of wellness are exercised: mental, physical, emotional, and social.

We believe that learning is about who we are, how to live well with others, and how to grow joy and balance.

We believe that nurturing a sense of connection grows compassion and responsibility: to oneself, to others, and to the natural world.

Our aim is to develop and run an outdoor learning school where students are taught the B.C. curriculum through nature's lens and where learning supports the four dimensions of health (mental, physical, emotional, and social) through the following pedagogical approaches:



The circle is a symbol of connection, unity, and harmony and is recognized as a theoretical framework of Indigenous philosophy. The circle represents the Indigenous belief system of wholeness and balance, which symbolizes inclusion and equality for all.

Mental Wellness: Inquiry-based learning

Learning through curiosity, asking personally meaningful and relevant questions, wondering and seeking solutions, story, play and a balanced academic program. Developing life-long learning habits such as problem solving, creativity, and reflection.

Physical Wellness: Experiential learning

Learning through doing, exploring, trying, failing, reflecting, and bravely trying something new. Learning how to take appropriate learning risks. Making sense of the world through real lived experiences.

Emotional Wellness: Place-based learning

Learning outdoors, growing an understanding of the natural world, and finding our human place within nature. Becoming familiar with the animals, plants, physical features, history, and intricate interconnectedness between components of the natural world, and thereby developing a sense of connection. Learning how to balance care of self and others.

Social Wellness: Learning within a Community

Developing strong and compassionate relationships within all the communities of which we are a part, such as a class, multi-age groups, whole school, neighbourhood, city, etc. Deliberately nurturing gratitude, compassion, resiliency, collaboration, emotional regulation, and confidence.

GOALS

Program and Pedagogy

- Deliver an outdoor-focused program founded on inquiry, place-based learning and experiential education
- Provide learning experiences that enable reflection on the concept of all things being inter-connected.
- Provide transformative outdoor experiences that are awe-inspiring, imaginative, self-reflective, challenging and cooperative in nature.
- Develop an educational program that is thoughtful, effective and (to some degree) replicable.
- Support the professional growth of staff and parents (eg. first aid, certifications, Pro-D)
- Provide resources and experiences for other schools in our district, including inviting other classes to visit the school and offer a ‘learn-by-doing’ approach for students and Pro-d for teachers.
- Deliver a balanced outdoor-focused program, using the BC curriculum, and including strong foundations in numeracy and literacy.

Organizational

- Build an organizational culture of experimentation (ie. embody experiential ed)
- Establish a network of supportive community partners
- Establish a team of teachers and support staff, admin, parents (PAC), advisors and volunteers that are
- positive, inclusive, and supportive of each other’s ideas and work.
- Cultivate a process-based mindset – the end goal has value but the steps to getting there must be exciting, fun and creative.
- Achieve organizational stability & develop/implement a sustainable growth plan.
- Achieve reputation as a model school for outdoor learning in our region and beyond.

STUDENT ATTRIBUTES

The following are a list of attributes the OL committee recommends should be fostered through the proposed program:

- Gratitude
- Positivity
- Empathy/Compassion
- Literacy (Eco and Language Arts)
- Problem solving
- Resiliency
- Collaboration
- Inclusion
- Creativity
- Self-confidence
- Self-regulation
- Self-care (Well-being/fitness/nutrition/sleep)
- Humility
- Communicativeness
- Adaptability
- Mindfulness
- Risk takers and Risk managers
- Reflectiveness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Honesty
- Acceptance