

School District 69 (Qualicum) Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023



Student Centered Learning
Quality Teaching and Leadership
Social/Emotional Learning

The Board of Education of School District 69 (Qualicum) believes that leadership, stewardship and relationships are the hallmarks of effective governance. The Board further believes that vision, mission, values, and guiding principles developed in collaboration with employees and the broader community are foundational to the work of establishing policy and managing the fiduciary responsibility of allocating resources in ways that best meet the educational needs of learners in our communities.

The face of education in our province is changing. We know more now than we have ever known before about how children learn. We have been challenged to be part of a transformation agenda that will create new learning environments for our students that will feed their curiosity, engage their interest, and prepare them for success in a world that challenges the boundaries of our imagination.

While a future focus is crucial, the Board of Education believes that there is a compelling case for enhancing and building on our past educational successes if we are to chart a course forward that will honour community work and values that have us in the place of strength that we currently operate from. Our District is held in high regard around the province for the good work that has been done in areas such as early learning, assessment of learning, Indigenous Education and innovative community partnerships. We need to continue our trajectory in these areas.

Strategic Planning Process

The 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan emerges from the good work done in the community five years ago, when a series of community engagement sessions built consensus around the Board's vision, mission, values, guiding principles and strategic priorities. Much of that work from 2013 remains unchanged in the 2019 plan, which speaks to the consistency of the fundamental beliefs on which this new plan is built.

By way of context, those engagement sessions asked people to, *"Imagine a time in the future when people around the province look to our School District as a learning community where students of all ages are provided with a world class educational experience that is both engaging and relevant."* People were asked: What kinds of programs, systems and structures are in place; and, which aspects of this imagined future make you most proud?

People were also asked about: current programs, structures and practices that best represented an effective education system; one thing that could help us provide improved educational experiences for students; and, emerging trends, innovations and dynamics that could transform our schools in this rapidly transforming world.

Over 1000 people had a hand in creating, shaping and prioritizing the data that was gathered in this process over the course of a full year. This plan builds on that foundation and is the result of extensive planning discussions carried out throughout 2018, most notably with students.

What we heard from our community in 2018 as part of an online survey included:

- Letting students guide their own learning gives them confidence, responsibilities and courage without pressure.
- Teachers have been excellent at seeing the individual strengths of my kids and figuring out how to personalize their lessons accordingly.
- An increased focus on schools becoming involved and connected to their community is needed to expand students' world vision and building of connections and relationships.

Students shared what they are looking for from education in the 2020s:

- Being able to choose classes that are of interest to them
- School-wide activities/events and extra-curricular activities/sports
- Caring, supportive, knowledgeable and available teachers
- Opportunity for hands-on learning in a variety of fields
- Field trips for educational experiences
- Flex blocks/time at school to do work beyond regular classes
- Value of creativity in the arts – not just science
- Student leadership opportunities
- On-line/self-directed classes
- Opportunities to rewrite exams/quizzes
- Upgrades to facilities and resources
- Post-secondary planning
- More time between classes
- Earlier guidance toward post-secondary options
- Increased personal space for learning
- Credits that are transferable to other provinces or to post-secondary institutions
- Support for mental and physical health

Students were equally clear about what they want less of:

- Lecture-style classes
- Homework
- Political perspectives forced on students
- Focusing on grades rather than on subject matter
- Transitions/Connections blocks
- Unreasonably firm timelines
- Teachers purchasing supplies with their own money
- Unreasonable expectations

Based on the extensive consultations of 2013 and the follow-up with students and community members in 2018, the Board is able to commit to the following vision, mission and values as a precursor to its declaration of strategic priorities for 2019 to 2023:

Vision:

*Preparing today's learners for tomorrow's world.
Intruisons nos jeunes pour la monde demain.*

Mission:

The Qualicum School District is a dynamic, flexible learning community that:

- Provides personalized educational experiences that complement traditional disciplines and structures to honour the unique needs, strengths, interests and learning styles of our students;
- Maintains a learning environment that fosters the development of empathy, respect and social responsibility in our learners through strong partnerships between home, school and the broader community;
- Embraces a spirit of curiosity and a passion for lifelong learning that prepares our students to become educated citizens and challenges them to become informed, confident, and creative designers of their own future;
- Is committed to weaving Indigenous learning throughout the educational experiences of all learners; and,
- Brings a trauma-informed lens to the work that we do with learners.

Values:

In the Qualicum School District, we value:

- Student voice, choice and partnerships;
- Support for students' engagement in their learning
- Hands on learning that builds skills, knowledge and competencies;
- Inclusion of all learners and system wide support for diversity;
- Community partnerships in support of learning
- Choice and flexibility in educational programming and structures;
- Experiential learning that builds relevant skills, knowledge and competencies;
- Personalization of learning based on an understanding of the unique needs, strengths and passions of each student;
- Educating the whole child – heart, body and mind;
- Social responsibility and environmental sustainability;
- A collaborative mindset and the time for meaningful, focused collaboration;

- Innovation as a means of ensuring that we respond and adapt to a changing world and new understandings;
- Use of technology to enhance learning;
- Our connections with place and community;
- Recognition and celebration of success, effort and accomplishment; and,
- Experiences that bring joy in the pursuit of learning.

Guiding Principles for Organizational Decision-making:

- Our primary focus is to meet the needs of all learners where they are, and planning for the next steps in their journey.
- The foundation of organizational health and success is trust relationships – we commit to clear, open communication that builds personal and public confidence in the work we do with and for our learners.
- Parents and the broader community are our partners in education - we must ensure that they are given meaningful roles in helping to shape the educational experience provided to students.
- People are the most valuable asset in our organization - we invest in this asset when we provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to further their own knowledge, skills and competencies in deep, purposeful and relevant ways.
- Stewardship of the public investment in education in our community is crucial – this requires an unwavering commitment to fiscal responsibility and allocation of resources based on identified needs and strategic priorities.
- Leadership is most powerful when responsibility and accountability are spread across the system at all levels – we expect everyone in our district to demonstrate a commitment to system change and improvement.
- We care deeply about the impacts of our work – that is evident when we access and use credible information to develop plans, measure progress and inform decision-making.
- Public education has a key role to play in creating an understanding of the harm caused by colonialism and residential schools, as well as an obligation to move forward on a path toward reconciliation.

Strategic Priorities:

The strategic priorities in the 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan flow from the priorities of the previous plan, which were:

- Increasing engagement of learners by providing personalized educational experiences
- Responding to the diverse social/emotional needs to increase their chances of success
- Ensuring that the structures that shape and support learning are flexible and responsive to the needs of learners
- Integrating technology effectively in order to broaden and deepen learning for all

These four priorities remain central to the new plan, and will remain profiled throughout the district in the form of window postings in all schools and district locations. The following three priorities for the 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan align with the first three from the previous plan, but given the extent to which technology has become pervasive and transparent in its use throughout the district, the fourth priority (technology) no longer needs to stand alone.

For 2019 to 2023, the three strategic priorities, and their critical components, are:

Strategic Priority 1	Components
Student-Centered Learning (Learner Focused)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student choice in their learning • Student choice in their assessment methods • Student voice in the design of learning • Indigenous understandings at the forefront • Recognition of and support for unique needs • Flexible and responsive structures and programs • Varied and differentiated learning environments • Multiple pathways to success for learners • Inter-disciplinary approaches to teaching and learning • Co-curricular (complementary) learning opportunities • Technology as an embedded component of learning

Strategic Priority 2	Components
Quality Teaching and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner-focused instruction and support • Multiple points of entry to learning for students • Differentiated instruction • Competency-based focus for teaching and learning • Commitment to the new curriculum • Improved assessment and evaluation practices • Continuous communication of student learning • Instruction oriented to “next steps” in learning • Support for experiential learning experiences • Commitment to self-reflection as part of learning • Use of technology as a support for learning • Collaboration with colleagues

Strategic Priority 3	Components
<p>Social/Emotional Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All learners “bringing themselves fully” to learning • Use of a trauma-informed lens in service to children • Focus on belonging, inclusion and connection • Commitment to health and well-being of all • Focus on supports for self-regulation of learners • Support for learners developing resiliency • Taking a growth-oriented approach to all learning • Ensuring optimal supports for vulnerable learners • Accessing all available resources in our communities

Next Steps:

- Senior staff will work with district-wide leadership teams, including teachers, support staff, principals and vice-principals, parents and community partners, to share these strategic priorities and engage in dialogue about how they come to life every day.
- Senior staff will ensure that all planning and documentation, including the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Enhancement Agreement* and the school district *Enhancing Student Learning* plan, reflect and build on the strategic priorities.
- The Board and senior staff will use the strategic priorities in annual and ongoing budget and facilities planning.
- Senior staff will work with district leaders, including principals and vice-principals, to develop means of monitoring success in relation the components of each of the strategic priorities, and will then track and report those trends over time.