

Accreditation Standard #1

**Teaching and Learning: Mission, Beliefs, and Expectations
for Student Learning**

Guiding Principle

The school's mission statement describes the essence of what the school as a community of learners is seeking to achieve. The expectations for student learning are based on and drawn from the school's mission statement. These expectations are the fundamental goals by which the school continually assesses the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Every component of the school community must focus on enabling all students to achieve the school's expectations for student learning.

In the early spring of the 2008-2009 school years, the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics professional educators' Community began the process of aligning our Mission Statement with our actions. Our primary goal was to align its contents to reflect our beliefs about the work that we do. We engaged in the process over several weeks in order to ensure we would all be willing to commit to the values and principles of our mission statement and engage them in our daily interactions with every student. Each staff member participated in several revisions with all feedback taken into serious consideration. After this period of thoughtful deliberation and discourse, we now have a mission statement which we take personally and strive to enact professionally, as well as the values and principles which feed into it. A framed copy is hung in each classroom as a reminder.

Students were first acquainted with our mission, beliefs and expectations during our September 2009 "welcome back" showcase. Being a School of Arts and Academics, we engaged the ASB officers in the process of presenting the information to students. They created a Documentary which was student-centered and engaging. The goal: Create a memory and connection to the Mission Statement and encourage its relevance in daily student life. In addition to reinforcing the mission, beliefs and expectations during their daily interactions with teachers, students also attend advocacy every Friday and Monday. There they participate in lessons on becoming a student, learning practical skills for the real world, and developing, as well as, contributing "Best Work" to their Culminating Assessment Portfolio.

We remind ourselves about the Mission Statement, Values and Principles on a regular basis. We use the concepts articulated in them to ground our decision-making whenever major program decisions are being considered. Some ways in which we can improve in this area center regarding standards 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5, specifically in the area of measuring progress. It is difficult to measure civic and social learning by anything other than anecdotal evidence. We invite your perspective, suggestions and assistance.