

Accreditation Standard #3:

Teaching and Learning: Instruction

Guiding Principle

The quality of instruction in a school is the single most important factor affecting the quality of student learning, the achievement of expectations for student learning, the delivery of the curriculum, and the assessment of student progress. Instructional practices must be grounded in the school's mission, beliefs, and expectations for student learning, supported by research in best practice, and refined and improved based on identified student needs. Teachers are expected to be reflective about their instructional strategies and to collaborate with their colleagues about instruction and student learning.

Our self-assessment of practices validates we are meeting the Teaching and Learning Standards for Instruction very well. We do recognize that as a staff, indicator 3.3 is an area we can focus upon ... specifically the feedback from students regarding the actual learning outcomes. The school has at its disposal the Rapid Responder and Survey Monkey. Our plan is to be more intentional with using these modalities to gather data and use the information to inform our next steps.

Our professional development is based upon collaborating to learn and reflecting upon instructional strategies, effectiveness, and cultivating authentic engagement. We meet 1 hour every other week in self-selected Professional Learning Community to organize and implement. This is not a new idea to the Vancouver School of arts and Academics community. Our color teams are already established and high-functioning PLC groups. However, some of the processes are new such as: Developing Norms; Facilitating Discussions; Writing specific SMART Goals and sharing work in a public forum twice per year. This has been a phenomenal area of growth for us. I look forward to orchestrating a more effective plan next year.

We have not been intentional, building-wide with addressing standards. Some academic areas, specifically Science, have worked diligently to articulate to students exactly what they are learning and the standard to which it relates. Our goal is to encourage this practice in all of our academic classes but a protocol for doing so has not been developed at this point. The administrative team has employed the walk through strategy with the intent of informing teachers about Powerful teaching and Learning strategies as best practices. Additionally, PLC groups have been highly encouraged to observe one another's work. Although we don't have accurate data at this time, our belief is over 50% of the staff have observed another teacher at least once. Many other best practices can be found in Vancouver School of Arts and Academics classrooms: Socratic Seminar; Exit Slips; Fundamental Questioning; Collaborative Group Presentations to name a few.

Teachers gain feedback from a variety of sources: Observations, professional PLC conversations to name a few. However, the most significant feedback comes from Self-Analysis and Reflection. Being we expect that process from our students, we are striving to model it for them.