

Accreditation Standard #6:

Support Standard: School Services

Guiding Principle

Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support programs and services. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of integrated resources to enhance and improve student learning and well-being and to support the school's mission and expectations.

Students need to be supported in a variety of areas during their attendance at Vancouver School of Arts and Academics. Overall, many of the support standards identified for our school are being met but regularly discussed and improved upon.

Taking the time to look at these standards has brought to light a few areas which need additional observation and possible adjustments, specifically counseling services (6.11) the ratio of counselor to student is 20% larger than it should be. Our counselor does an amazing job but I know she goes home tired every night from her valiant attempt to meet student, parent and staff needs. We hope to change this scenario within 1 or 2 school years by adding a part-time position.

Although counseling services should never be replaced, we make a concerted effort to monitor students socially and emotionally... basically be aware of their well-being. We have an advocacy program in place which strives to address those needs. Each Advocacy is comprised of approximately 22 students' grades 6-12. The Advocate plays numerous roles: Advocate; facilitator; monitor of progress; teacher of organizational skills; main support for student-led conferences and presenter of the student's diploma at Graduation. This is a valuable program in our school and one which we look forward to your feedback regarding how we can do better!

We understand academic needs must be met and that the classroom doesn't always suffice. To offer more support, teachers have posted office hours; National Honor Society members tutor for community service hours and our PTSA funds classroom support specialists where needed.

We would like to see parents attending informances and performances given by our students, open houses and other activities as planned. The trend students share is their parents are coming to the events they participate in less and less. This is a concern for our staff which we will address in the Fall. Preliminary data shows a drop of 30% in students' perception of parent involvement! We also believe that much of Vancouver knows Vancouver School of Arts and Academics is a quality school but they seem to miss understand our primary Mission. We are not a conservatory model but a school which has a balanced approach to both the arts and academics. We know we need to work harder to have staff, students and parents share our story appropriately.

Overall, after looking over the standards, we believe the needs of our students are being adequately addresses. However, there are systems we can refine and improve. Given the environment for resources which help students is reducing, we must be creative in our efforts.