



Maples Met School

SCHOOL PLAN 2021-2022

Drafting Process:

The school plan was created over a period of time whereby staff, students, and families were asked to reflect both individually and collectively about the year past and the year ahead.

As a result of the significant changes brought about by COVID-19, this year's School Plan, much like last year's, will be a moving target, and we anticipate that changes to the priorities laid out here may be required throughout the school year as health officials make changes to the status of provisions and protocols and as we uncover the various challenges surfacing as a result of the immense disruption we have all experienced.

Our priorities are borne out of the lived experiences of advisors and students at Maples Met, the foundational principals of Big Picture Learning, as well as the needs of our student body, and the values of the Seven Oaks School Division.

Students are frequently engaged in discussions about how to improve school culture and norms. Their feedback is woven throughout this document.

1) Truth and Reconciliation

Rationale:

Since our inception as a country, Indigenous Canadians have had to battle racism and oppression in our laws, institutions, and interactions with fellow citizens. The same is true for many who immigrated to Canada. At Maples Met, we recognize the hardships and wrongs done to Indigenous Canadians and newcomers, both current and historical, including the damaging role that many schools played in that history. Given our commitment to have an educational space that is progressive and inclusive of all members of our community, we re-commit to reinforcing educational initiatives around Indigenous perspectives as well as ensuring non-western ways of living, learning, and knowing are incorporated into our work.

Further to this, we recognize that the process of colonization created many euro- centric structures, such as schools, that in some instances have created inequitable and unsafe spaces for many members of our community. In the spirit of reconciliation and in acknowledgment of the role these structures still play in shaping our collective identities, we commit to engaging in further research and dialogue to improve the quality of our education wholesale.

Goals:

- We commit to increasing the use of land-based educational settings in the work we do as a means of broadening student understanding of pedagogy beyond traditional Western ways of knowing.
- We re-commit as a staff to personal introspection that includes an analysis of our own worldviews and the impact that colonization has had on the ways in which we live and experience the world both personally and professionally.
- We re-commit to ensuring elders are a frequent presences in our school and in conversations with students and staff.
- We commit to engaging critically in our academic and pedagogical approaches to literacy. The resources we use to inform our practice and expose our students to the world will include a diverse range of voices.

How will we know when we have succeeded?

- We will see reflected in the resources we are using to inform our practice, a diversity of voices and worldviews, such as the presence of elders in our school discussions, the diversification of ethnicity, race, and religion in authorship, and leaving to learn experiences that bring us in touch with the land and non-Western originated ways of knowing.
- Students will have greater agency and control of their own learning, seeing themselves reflected in the creation of rubrics, experiences, and culture.
- Students and staff will continue to question and study the structures of our society, including schools, with new lenses that take into account the perspectives of those who settled this land prior to colonization, as well as those who have come to Canada from elsewhere, and helped shape our identity.

2) Thinking Classrooms

Rationale:

Math has long been a subject that can serve as either a confidence builder or breaker for students. We know through research that students will begin to form an identity of themselves as learners (and people) as early as Gr. 2. In order to help students see math as something that they are not only capable of finding success with, but as a critical skillset for future learning, we are drawing on the expertise of Dr. Peter Liljedahl and his “thinking classrooms” approach to Math. In essence, this model uses collaboration, movements, and a student-centred focus to attack Math with more involvements than in traditional settings. Many of our staff have engaged in PD sessions with Dr. Liljedahl, have read his book, and are actively practicing his techniques.

Goals:

- Continue actively talking with students about their personal “math narrative” and help build confidence about themselves as actively engaged learners
- Make mobile technology and other materials available to support classroom learning
- Continue engaging in staff discussions, reading assignments, and PD sessions focused on “thinking classrooms”
- Apply the concept of thinking classrooms across all subject matter

How will we know when we have succeeded?

- Students will speak more confidently about themselves as learners in mathematics
- Students will be visibly mobile and collaborative during math classes
- Student grade percentage averages will increase
- Discussions about math instruction will occur during staff meetings

3) **Mental Health and Well-Being**

Rationale:

This goal is a continuation of previous school plan commitments. We are building on the success we have found through a multitude of support systems. We know that kids are at their best when they are free to learn and grow in safe, respectful, inclusive, and nourishing environments. Technology and other global changes have given rise to new opportunities, but it has also come with a number of challenges related to things such as sleep, mood, relationships, and physical fitness. As the world grapples with many new and old challenges, many stressors have been introduced into the homes of our students and their families. At Maples Met, we know that in order for academic success and achievement to occur, students must be of sound mind, body, and soul. As such, we are committed to building on past practices and creating new structures to support healthy living and wellness.

Goals:

- We re-commit to using outdoor spaces for learning more frequently and working health/fitness breaks into our days.
- We re-commit to continuing our cell phone policy that limits non-educational use of technology during class times.
- We re-commit to continuing our breakfast program and offering meals to students as needed.
- We re-commit to continue providing families and students with resources that help establish and maintain healthy ways of living.
- We commit to continuing a Mental Health and Wellness Club at Maples Met where students and staff can gather to share and support one another.

How will we know when we have succeeded?

- Students will be outside more often during the day, including in green spaces around the school, during both academic and non-academic periods of class.
- A Mental Health and Wellness Club will be established and meeting weekly.
- Healthy snacks will be onsite daily and available to students in an easy and accessible way.
- Families will continue to be provided with resources in newsletters, advisory updates, and other school communication that helps them address wellness and mental health issues in accessible language and with the support of Maples Met staff.

4) Critical Literacy

Rationale:

More than ever, students are engaging with the world through technology. One of the challenges that young people face as a result however, is the massive amount of information that presents itself through various social media feeds. Students are having difficulty understanding what is credible and what is not. Furthermore, social media companies are targeting populations through the use of algorithms and advertisements that create “eco chambers”. We must use the classroom as a space to explore different media platforms, sources, and distinguish between what can or cannot be trusted as a legitimate piece of information.

Goals:

- Students will have free access to an online and physical copy of the Winnipeg Free Press every day.
- Students and staff will engage in ongoing conversations in Advisory about how social media platforms work, including targeted advertisements, algorithms, and fake news.
- Students will learn how to identify credible sources of information in both online and print news, across various platforms.

How will we know we have succeeded?

- Students will read 1-2 articles in the newspaper throughout the week that will contribute to project work, classroom conversations, or internships.
- Students will begin to question the origins of information and identify key indicators to verify credible news sources.
- Students will have a broadened network of sources beyond traditional social media platform to access information from.

5) Ongoing School Reflection on Professional/Student Learning

Rationale:

Every year, staff in the Seven Oaks School Division are required to submit an Annual Reflection of Professional Learning (ARPL), that speaks to their growth and development as an educator. Last year, Maples Met staff made the decision to create a website that would serve as a “living document”, covering several areas at the foundation of our work as a Big Picture Learning school. Our goal is to continue updating this website for years to come. It is meant to serve as a hub for families, students, staff, and community members to learn more about the work we do.

Goals:

- Use the website as a platform to reflect on our work as a BPL school
- Update the website regularly with new contributions that highlight project work, experiences, and internships
- Increase the number of visitors to the site as a means to garnering a deeper understanding of the work we do
- Model the site for students as they develop their own versions

How will we know we have succeeded?

- We will confidently point visitors to the website as a means to learn more about the work we are actively undertaking as a school
- Updates will be made on a monthly/bi-monthly basis
- The number of visitors to the site will grow over the course of the year
- Students will use the site as a model for their own portfolios and project design

In addition to these specific items noted above, some student feedback drew attention to the need and desire for thinking classroom approaches to be applied not just to math instruction, but across subject areas. Furthermore, focusing time and energy towards post-secondary pursuits and connections with Maples Met alumni was expressed as an important area to consider, especially for our Gr. 12 students.

Summary:

The school plan is always an evolving document. It must respond to the ongoing and ever changing nature of our school, community, and society as a whole. Thank you to those who provided feedback and direction. We are thrilled to welcome students back for another year at Maples Met, one that we are confident will be filled with wonderful experiences, meaningful projects, deep relationships, and purposeful dialogue.

To learn more about the Maples Met School, please visit our website or reach out to Ben Carr.

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<https://www.7oaks.org/school/maplesmet/Pages/default.aspx#=>