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## EPIC SCHOOL PLAN

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**SUMMARY**

This document represents the latest version of our 2022-2023 School Growth Plan, as of September 2022.

At Gulf Islands Secondary School, we recognize the SD64 Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement and are committed to creating structures and strategies through our EPIC School Plan that impact progress towards the goals of the Agreement.

**SIGNATURES:**

**PRINCIPAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**PAC CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT** \_\_\_\_\_



**SCHOOL IDENTITY/CONTEXT**

We are a Grade 8 to 12 Secondary School in SD64 Gulf Islands, serving students and families from Galiano, Mayne, Pender, Salt Spring, and Saturna Islands. We offer a Career Education Program, an International Program, an Alternative Education Program, a Performing Arts Program, and a French Immersion Program. The student population for 2022-2023 school year is approximately 650 students.

**OUR STORY**

This year's plan builds on our past successful School Growth Plan that stated that "We, as a school community, ensure success for all our students on their learning journey towards graduation. Every student will cross the stage with dignity, purpose and options." This year, guided by our SD64 EPIC School Plan Framework and our Provincial mandate to support development of "educated citizens", our EPIC School Plan takes our collaborative learning deeper into building student success in the areas of Human and Social Development (dignity), Intellectual Development (purpose) and Career Development (options.)

**THEORY OF ACTION(GOAL STATEMENT)**

If we create equitable and meaningful learning environments in our school and in our classrooms, with effective, research-based, student-centred instructional design, assessment, and support... Then ALL students will demonstrate proficient foundational skills and apply core and curricular competencies in the areas of Human and Social Development, Intellectual Development, and Career Development. As educated citizens, they will positively transform themselves, their communities and the environment. Every student will graduate with dignity, purpose, and options.

**AREAS OF STRENGTH/GROWTH**

Developing strengths include school-based structures to monitor individual student's progress in real time and using and RTI (Response to Instruction) approach to collaboratively build targeted support interventions through our School Based Team, Counselling Team, Indigenous Education Team and Focused Intervention and Transitions (FIT) Team, to support vulnerable (and all) learners to achieve success in all classes. Another developing strength is the impact of Graduation Assessment support teachers who collaborate with classroom teachers to design and implement interventions that build skills and support students, increasing achievement rates on Graduation Assessments. Areas of growth in this plan include collaboratively identifying, defining, implementing, and reflecting, through continuous cycles of growth, research-based pedagogies that maximize impact on achievement in foundational skills and core and curricular (deep learning) competencies.

**EPIC REFLECTIONS**

*"I firmly believe that if all of the "If" are in place, all of the "Then" will come to pass. Effectively implementing the Theory of Action requires a deep delve into instructional design and assessment to ensure we are targeting the outcomes we wish to see. Also, we need to be very explicit in sharing these intentions and goals with our students so that they can have a more active part in the course of their learning."*

- Gulf Islands Secondary School Teacher

# FOCUSING DIRECTION

## PROCESS FOR REVIEW/REVISING/DETERMINING

Understanding the First Peoples Principle of Learning that: "Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors" guides the moral purpose behind what we are committed to in our work as a learning community.

To build a focused direction, we began with the end in mind, asking our community "What does success look like at Gulf Islands Secondary School in terms of Human and Social, Intellectual and Career Development?" Through synthesizing this input we created our '[Attributes of a GISS Learner](#)' document, which describes the desired results of our EPIC School Plan.

We next collaborated as staff on the question: What classroom strategies would have the most impact in creating these desired results? This led to the creation of a second document, [the Six Impactful Strategies](#).

In 2022-2023, the EPIC School Plan Planning Team, consisting of Admin, Staff, Student and Parent Representatives, will meet quarterly to analyze recent results and recommend adjustments to the EPIC School Plan structures and strategies

## PURPOSE – DATA RATIONALE

Data collection, sharing and analysis is an area that we continue to develop and refine. This year, we will create ways to use formative and summative assessment of our progress towards the goals and objectives of our EPIC School Plan with a more complete data set. See our [GISS Data Dashboard Website](#) for our 2021-2022 data set.

We celebrate our success in the steady increase in our Six Year Completion Rates, with an 89.6% rate for 2020-2021.

Our initial analysis shows variation in the area of Human and Social Development (Dignity). Students report they feel welcome at the school and that they respect people who are different from them (think, act or look different.) Students also report challenges in learning and development of their Health and Wellbeing.

Our initial analysis shows variation in the area of Intellectual Development (Purpose). Overall, our Course Final Mark distribution shows strong achievement, and our Numeracy and Literacy rates are above provincial averages. However, overall, we still have roughly 30% of our students not Proficient or Extending (C+ or better) in terms of their classroom final marks, and roughly 20% of our students not scoring Proficient or Extending on the Graduation Assessments.

We also note limited access to measures of application of core and curricular competencies, but survey results show that students generally do feel they are developing as creative, critical, and collaborative thinkers, but less so as deep learners and lifelong learners.

Our initial analysis shows the need for growth in the area of Career Development (Options). Survey results indicate that students generally feel they are not being prepared for post-secondary or for the job market.

## EPIC REFLECTIONS

*"Focusing direction is where we have been slowly building and engaging with staff, students and families over the past two years, through the pandemic. I feel the foundation is being laid slowly and needs to be continuously revisited, so the entire community connects with the why, how and what of our EPIC School Plan"*

*- Gulf Islands Secondary Administrator*

# FOCUSING DIRECTION CONT'D

## ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

We continue to develop a student data system to monitor each individual student's progress in real time. We use this system to make decisions and design targeted classroom and individual interventions to support all learners through our School Based Team, Administrative Team, Counseling Team, Indigenous Education Team and Focused Intervention and Transitions (FIT) Team. These targeted support interventions lead to improved course completion rates and/or support credit recovery. Successful course completions lead to increased grade-to-grade transition rates. With improved grade-to-grade transition rates, our graduation rates also increase.

Graduation Assessment Support Teachers collaboratively support classroom teachers in developing skills and support to improve achievement on Graduation Assessments.

Additional actions to Focus Direction are being developed through our plan this year. They include:

- An engagement campaign to build familiarity and deepen understanding of the EPIC School Plan with all our students, staff, and families
- Processes to develop and make explicit our Shared Values and Theories/Principles of Learning that will support the foundation of our school and EPIC School Plan
- Exploring ways to build the goals of the SD64 Enhancement Agreement goals more explicitly into our EPIC School Plan
- Building and refining language about what we mean by “meaningful, equitable learning environments” and “effective classroom supports”

Actions with staff will focus on capacity building through continuous development of shared understandings about effective research-based pedagogies and supports to develop foundational skills and core and curricular competencies identified in the 'Attributes of a GISS Learner.'

Specifically, staff will collaboratively design, implement, reflect and refine effective, research-based classroom strategies including the Six Impactful Strategies: Collaborative Learning, Authentic and Real World Learning, Cultural and Personal Identity Responsive Teaching, Purposeful Learning, Descriptive and On-going Feedback and Assessment.

Also, a new role of Collaborative Partner Teacher has been created to support building collective capacity. Collaborative Partner teachers will work directly with Classroom Teachers to co-plan, co-teach and co-assess units with a goal of developing and improving the quality of the above teaching strategies. Results and reflections of these partnerships will be shared with the entire staff at staff meetings and professional learning sessions.

Actions with students will focus on developing structures for students to create, monitor and take ownership of personal learning goals related to the desired results of our EPIC School Plan.

# COLLABORATIVE CULTURES

## ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

We engage and inform our school community and the greater community regularly on the process and progress of our EPIC School Plan throughout the year using various media including our school website, social media, and email updates. We produce a "How Are We Doing?" data report that monitors key data multiple times per year.

We engage, inform, and seek feedback and input on our EPIC School Plan from families and students in a variety of ways including at PAC Meetings, in classroom meetings and student assemblies, focus groups, and through school-based and ministry surveys.

We seek opportunities to empower individuals and groups of students, staff and families to engage in and lead the work of implementing the EPIC School Plan. This plan engages stakeholders through designed moments of Elevation, Pride, Insight, and Connection. Look for our EPIC Moments descriptions and reflections in the EPIC Reflections side-tabs in future versions of this plan.

## STAFF/SHARED WORK

Staff/Shared Work:

Staff are engaged in the EPIC School Plan in many ways. Staff meetings activities are designed for collaborative EPIC School Plan implementation, progress monitoring, reflection and associated Professional Learning and Development.

Staff Professional Learning Committee activities will support the plan on School Based Professional Learning Days. We will focus building capacity for the structures and strategies identified through the School Growth Plan process.

Some areas for development and focus for Cultivating Collaborative Cultures on staff next year include:

- All staff meetings will model best practice in instructional design, assessment, and support by using and being explicit about the Six Impactful Strategies
- Design structures that support increased opportunities for staff collaboration supported by clear expectations and focused tasks

We engage with Principals and Vice Principals and our SD64 Senior Admin Team to consult and get feedback on our Plan, and we continue seek opportunities to share and collaborate with other schools, districts and experts in relation to our EPIC School Plan.

## STUDENT VOICE

We consult and get feedback from our students in a variety of ways that include School and Ministry Surveys, in-person discussions in classrooms, school assemblies and focus groups, and through emails and social media.

By using an equitable and student-centred approach, we build structures to allow students to engage with the goals of the plan by creating their own learning goals, monitoring their progress, receiving feedback, and reflecting on and planning next steps. Student progress and voice will be documented and shared through the "How are we doing?" data report and demonstrated in classrooms and at Exhibition of Learning/Performance Events.

## EPIC REFLECTIONS

*"Just like we give students time to practice their skills, we are educators need time to practice our skills. There is a wealth of expertise and knowledge - we have to tap into it. But we need the time to do that."*

*- Gulf Islands Secondary Staff Member*

# DEEPER LEARNING

## WHAT WILL STAFF NEED TO KNOW TO LEAD/PERFORM THIS WORK?

Our staff will be supported through effective professional learning structures and strategies. These include regular EPIC School Plan learning at staff meetings and sessions at school based Professional Learning and Development Days. The school-based Professional Learning Committee is also exploring ongoing embedded learning experiences including professional book clubs, supportive learning partnerships and building online repositories for shared learning resources. Some areas of development and focus for staff in terms of Deepening Learning include:

- Collaborate, build, and develop understanding of pedagogies for deepening learning and the connections with the new curriculum, competency-based assessment, and student engagement and well-being
- Design ways for staff to share and co-assess student progress towards deep learning outcomes/goals

## WHAT SKILLS WILL WE FOSTER WITH STUDENTS FOR THEM TO EXPERIENCE SUCCESS?

What skills will we foster with students for them to experience success?

This plan engages students in deeper understandings about their personal development in the areas of Human and Social, Intellectual and Career Development.

Students will learn and develop skills related to their personal learning goals including goal-setting, monitoring, refining, receiving feedback, reflecting and planning next steps. Some areas of development and focus for students in the area of Deepening Learning include:

- Developing structures for students to take more ownership of their learning through developing personalized learning goals
- Identify and share exemplars of deep learning to build understanding for students

We will foster these skills through effective, research-based instructional design, assessment, and support approaches.

## APPROACH TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Using a strengths-based approach, staff will develop a shared understanding and common language for precision in pedagogy. We will continue to explore effective and research-based structures and strategies as we innovate and improve our approaches.

We will seek learning partnerships with other schools, districts and experts to gather feedback and share our learning.

We seek to incorporate Indigenous Ways into our approach to Professional Learning.

## EPIC REFLECTIONS

*“One needs to understand what 'deep learning' is all about before they can encourage others to engage in it. For students to want to learn more, they have to be motivated and interested in doing that. From my experience, students are more than happy to just learn what we want them to learn as it is easier for them but harder for us.”*

*- Gulf Islands Secondary School Staff Member*

# ACCOUNTABILITY

## HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL?

What evidence would convince us that all students are achieving success?  
 We are in the development stage of identifying and selecting the measures that will inform our success. Measures selected must describe progress for all students towards desired results as described by the 'Attributes of a GISS Learner.'  
 What it will look like, sound like, and feel like is that every student, regardless of background or circumstance, will be able to demonstrate proficient foundational skills and apply their core and curricular competencies through their learning tasks in classrooms and in Exhibitions of Learning events.  
 Anecdotally, we will see evidence of a culture of learning where growth and development and instructional and assessment approaches and supports are discussed regularly in all formal and informal settings.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

We continue in the development stage on decisions about evidence that we will use as our 'goal posts' for measuring our progress regarding the desired results identified in this plan. Some examples of sources of evidence being explored are:  
 All students graduate on time (100%, 5-year Graduation Rate)  
 All students experience the support interventions they need and are successful in every course (100% course completion rate)  
 All students accepted into a post-secondary institution (100% Post-Secondary Acceptance Rate)  
 All students report a sense of safety and belonging at GISS  
 All students demonstrate Proficient or Extending, on BC Graduation Assessments  
 All students demonstrate Proficient or Extending on Creative, Critical and Collaborative Thinking Core and Curricular Competencies across all three areas of development (Human and Social/Dignity, Intellectual/Purpose, and Career/Options)  
 All students will have personal learning goals that they monitor, receive feedback on, refine, reflect on, and use to plan next steps.  
 All students demonstrate application of their Core and Curricular Competencies/Attributes of a Gulf Islands Secondary Learner at presentations of learning/performance events in front of authentic audiences  
 All students demonstrate success through sharing their achievements related to their personal learning goals.

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE EVIDENCE

Students will connect and identify with our desired results through seeing their progress in their self-assessment and reflection of personalized learning goals. They will be able to articulate their understanding through their learning tasks in classrooms and at Exhibitions of Learning/Performance Events. They will also be able to share their understanding and connection to the learning goals through their digital portfolio and Capstone Project.

## EPIC REFLECTIONS

*“Authenticity of showing one’s learning is crucial. Very few students move beyond the poster or the power point to show what they have learned. Sometimes it is because it is easier, or they truly are unsure of other ways.”*

*- Gulf Islands Secondary School Staff Member*

*“I think this will be a learning curve for everyone and that the overall results will be really positive for students.”*

*- Gulf Islands Secondary Staff Member*