R.E. Mountain Secondary
Action Plan for Learning 2014 – 2015
Langley School District #35

Names and Signatures of School Planning Council

Parent:	Peter Pretorius	
Parent:	Michelle Smith	
Parent:	Wendy Watson	
Student:	Catherine Tu	
Principal:	Magdy Ghobrial	

Board Approval

Suzanne Hoffman, Superintendent	
Board of Education Chair	
Date Approved	February 24, 2015

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 35 (LANGLEY)

Action Plan for Learning

R.E. Mountain Secondary

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	Michelle Smith	
Student:	Catherine Tu	
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School Context:

R.E. Mountain is a public school in the Langley School district that offers programs for students in Grade 9 to 12 and has strong traditions in academics, fine arts and athletics. The school's population of 983 is made up of an ethnically diverse population resulting from both a strong International Program and the demographics of the community that surrounds it. As well as the regular provincially prescribed curriculum leading to graduation, there are a number of special programs offered at the school. R.E. Mountain features the International Baccalaureate university preparation program for senior students preceded by a Pre-IB Honours Program for junior students. The school offers courses in visual and performing arts at all grade levels. We also offer courses to students with a trade or career focus. We have well-equipped labs and shops and strong connections with trades programs at the local post-secondary institutions. R.E. Mountain is also home to the Provincial Resource Program for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. R.E. Mountain is seen in the community as a safe and welcoming school with an ability to serve students on an individual basis.

Inquiry Question(s):

- How will the implementation of 21st Century strategies in the classroom impact student and teacher engagement and learning?
- Current technologies have made information accessible in ways it has never been. As a result, the value of content in the classroom has been reduced significantly. Instruction must change in order to engage students in learning in a world where information is so readily available. These technologies also provide opportunities for students to present their learning in creative ways that reflect the way information is represented today. Current technologies provide an avenue for learning to be personalized, reflecting student interests and passions.
- Our question is directly linked to the districts mission of learning, integrity and change. We believe that the strategies being implemented at REMSS will impact instruction in the classroom, improving engagement and learning and positively impacting transitions. Already, we have seen significant changes in teachers' strategies.
- It is hoped that implementing strategies such as these will positively impact student transitions from grade-to-grade and through graduation by engaging them more in their education and providing a more relevant and personal framework for their learning.

Actions:

- A focus on 21st Century learning strategies at many staff meetings, at the school improvement day, design assessment days and school-based professional days over the years. These include:
  - A shift of control from the teacher to the student
  - Constructivist-based practice
  - Inquiry
  - Project-based school work

    - Extending the classroom beyond the school
    - Balanced Assessment
    - Technology tools that support these practices
- The above strategies have been presented for teachers to select from so that they reflect the needs of their classes and their comfort and abilities around the instructional strategies
    - May 2014, a workshop presenter spoke about differentiation. Significant links exist between these concepts and constructivist/concept-based concepts discussed in the past
- A student consultation group will be formed to provide feedback to teachers and administration around teaching strategies that are helping to engage them and prepare them for their lives after high school
- Support provided by teacher/librarian, teaching staff, administration and on-site tech.
- Two Digital Literacy Coaches will attend district meetings and provide support for teachers at Mountain
- Five teachers enrolled in the SFU Learning and Teaching with Technology Program – REMSS hosted this program to make it more accessible to teachers
    - (2014) Three are now continuing to earn their Masters degrees in the same area
- Laptops distributed to all teachers who have requested them
    - (2014-15) New laptops expected to be delivered by November for all teachers
- Projectors installed or available in all classrooms
- Enterprise wireless installed in the school
    - (2014-15) upgrade expected in the next year
- (2014-15) 40 iPads have been purchased centrally, by the school, to provide departments with better student access to online resources and apps. 10 more have been purchased by the French department, while the Social Studies department has increased their allocation to 15. The Math department currently has 6 iPads. Once the new teacher laptops arrive, the laptops currently being used by teachers will be repurposed into 2 mobile labs of 15 laptops to support learning in the classroom.
- (February 2015) The new K-9 curriculum closely mirrors that of the International Baccalaureate Programme. Both encourage a concept-based instructional framework. In order to align our teachers with the new Ministry of Education curriculum and our IB and regular program streams within the school, approximately 12 teachers from both streams will be attending IB Middle Years training in February. This represents 25% of our classroom teachers. Adding these teachers to those already trained in IB would increase the number of IB trained teachers of the core academic classes to over 80%.

Information is disseminated at all parent meetings, including PAC, SPC and at enrollment and course planning meetings. The school focus has been communicated to over 700 parents at various times this year.

Staff are engaged at various levels in the school. Initially, many staff superimpose the new technologies over their existing practice. Over time, the technology helps them to promote differentiation in the ways in which students submit work (written, on video, simulations, presentations). Some have branched out further, using their curricular content to support broader skills and concepts that will serve them as they enter the current global and digital world. Engagement in the plan is affected by teachers' comfort with technology, current access to technology in the school and the requirements of the curriculum.

Evidence:

- The district has purchased an online tool to measure technology impact on the school. Baseline data will be collected and monitored through this tool in order to inform the implementation of our plan.
- We will monitor provincial exam results, district numeracy, satisfaction survey results

- We will also gather narratives from teachers as to the changes they are implementing and their impressions around student engagement and learning

We are aware that changes in practice may not increase achievement results immediately. Engagement might also initially drop, as teachers attempt to use technologies in the classroom with which they lack confidence. While quantitative data will be monitored during the implementation of the plan, it will not be the focus in the initial implementation in order to allow teachers to feel free to experiment and take risks while changing their practice.

Reflection:

We have encountered a number of problems as we attempted to implement our plan last year. These problems have impacted our not only our ability to implement the plan, but to gather data on the plan's effectiveness.

- Connectivity was a significant source of frustration with our staff last year. Issues with our Internet bandwidth plagued us throughout the year. As a result, our ability to use online resources or to allow students to connect using their personal devices was significantly impacted. The issues were compounded by the fact that certain areas of the school lack robust enough wireless access to handle the number of students and/or teachers who want to access the network or the Internet. Lack of bandwidth and wireless access has diminished enthusiasm for technology use in our school. The Technical Support Services department worked hard all year to correct the problems, but because many of them were related to bandwidth, they were limited in their ability to act as bandwidth is controlled by PLN, a Provincial Service.
    - TSS has worked over the summer to add access points and a Shaw service to try to draw devices off the main network. It is hoped this will alleviate some of the bandwidth issues realized in 2013/14.
    - Upgraded wireless will be installed by Christmas, 2014, hopefully, correcting the issues related to access and increasing teacher enthusiasm toward using online resources.
- Our major source if data gathering last year was to be done through a program purchased by the district called BrightBytes. This program surveyed teachers, students and administrators to assess the effectiveness of technology use in a school and district. Circumstances beyond the control of the school have delayed the implementation of this program. Given the issues surrounding Internet access, last year may not have been ideal for gathering baseline data.
    - This year, teachers will be completing the survey when they receive their new laptops. A process for delivering the survey to students will be determined and implemented this year as well.
- Even with these challenges, our students continued to do some amazing a creative work with technology. Projects have included: Creating games to test people's knowledge around social issues, touring castles through 3D modeling programs, developing websites around the decline of the middle-ages, extensive use of Langley's online data-bases to help to generate arguments for their debates, a math class used online tools to discover the math that can be found in various images, science classes used online simulations to develop electrical circuits and senior math classes used iPads to help them to understand complex equations.
    - Stories around the impact of technology on student achievement and engagement will be gathered and added to the Action Plan reflection at the end of this year.
- Provincial and other test results will be posted in the fall after June exams.