

2021-2024

NEW HUMBLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Three-Year Education Plan





Message from the Board Chair

It all starts with a seed.

New Humble Community School is in its first year as a public charter school. It has been a challenging and rewarding journey to get here, and we are excited to showcase how our unique charter goals and outcomes will ensure success with the domains of assurance under the Assurance Framework. We are confident that by fully supporting our students and staff, and implementing our strategies, we can ensure success, balance, and growth at New Humble Community School.

Although we are a new school with a new board, we are already committed to open and honest communication with staff and stakeholders to ensure that we are receiving reports and feedback on our methods and outcomes. We look forward to also receiving information about the domains of assurance to continue improving student outcomes.

Sincerely,

Kristen Kuhn

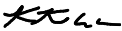
Board Chair, New Humble Community School Association

Accountability Message

New Humble Community School's Three Year Education Plan was prepared by the Board of Directors in accordance with the responsibilities under the Education Act (2020). This plan was developed in the context of our first year of operation and the Government of Alberta's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used the information and details of our Preliminary Application, Final Application, and Commencement Information in this plan, as well as stakeholder input from the initial months this school year. We are committed to research-informed innovation, and continuous improvement, and will implement the strategies outlined in this plan to improve student learning and results.

The Board approves the Education Plan for 2021-2024 on May 31, 2022

Signed board chair and vice-chair__



Kristen Kuhn (May 31, 2022 10:48 MDT)



Megan Olynik (May 31, 2022 10:49 MDT)

Introduction

The assurance framework is guided by the Alberta Education Business Plan (2021-2023); Alberta Education Funding Manual (2022/2023), and Ministerial Order #28/2020 [Education]: Student Learning. This is a three-year, rolling Education Plan.

The vision of New Humble Community School is to foster the growth of each individual learner through innovative academics, stewardship and agricultural literacy. Our mission is to provide learners with a unique educational environment that: expands learning through innovative agricultural and experiential land management education; fosters a joy of learning and instills curiosity and confidence; fully supports and engages their needs, abilities and growth; develops opportunities for genuine collaboration and self-reflection; and is guided by compassionate, hands-on, creative educators who will represent and impart these skills and values in all learners. By keeping these goals and values in mind, we have developed this three year plan, which will guide all aspects of our charter, including determining priorities, outcomes, measures and strategies and more.

Engagement

Successful school engagement needs to be occurring in many spheres of influence simultaneously. Students must be engaged in their own learning, their classes, their school and their community. Teachers and staff must be engaged in their lessons, the charter goals, their own development and their community. The same follows for other stakeholders. New Humble Community School is proud of our continued achievements in these areas. To paraphrase our preliminary application, we proposed the name of this school to include *Community*, because we firmly believe that community plays an integral role in education and a healthy society, and that when we support the community and the community supports us back, success will follow.

There are many ways to promote and encourage engagement in the school. At New Humble Community School, we work hard to maintain and increase these relationships with our school families, our wider community, and beyond. We have a very strong Parents' Group society that plans and carries out events, fundraisers, and other programs. Through the Parents' Group, our community can contribute in many ways: various enhancements to learning, fulfilling teacher's wish lists, providing nutrition programs (while following all Public Health Guidelines), helping with field trip costs, hosting seasonal carnivals or events, and others. All of these things are done with the help and support of community members who are engaged with the school.

We are proud to say that we have established a research partnership with Dr. Bonnie Stelmach, Professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. Dr. Stelmach brings experience and enthusiasm for rural school contexts and parent involvement in schools. Through our partnership and future research studies, we will be able to increase community and wider engagement.

Important support also comes from engaged individuals and businesses who want to be part of the school by providing donations of goods or services, or financial support. It is important that our partners, donors and sponsors feel continued engagement with New Humble Community School. It will be a crucial part of all of our committees to ensure that this happens.

Other important areas of engagement include:

-School Council - Our school council has been established and is already partnering with another local school to bring in a presentation from leadership expert David Irvine. All staff, families and community members are invited to participate as well.

-Our Superintendent has organized a number of 'teams' at the school. The teachers and principal form a team, the principal and superintendent form a team, the superintendent and board members form a team, and so on. These teams meet regularly.

-Monthly meetings of the New Humble Community School Association board, as well as separate meetings of the various board Committees (which include parent and community members).

-Monthly meetings of the Parents' Group and student council.

-Meetings of the LNST (Literacy and Numeracy Support Team) to address the learning gaps caused by interruptions to learning due to COVID-19 over the last 20 months.

-Clear, open and transparent communication between all appropriate levels of school and community. This may include both formal and informal surveys.

-Our research partner, Dr. Bonnie Stelmach hosted a community dinner and research conversation in April 2022, which was open to all parents and many stakeholders. This very successful event was sponsored by the Kule Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Alberta.

It is also very important that NHCS establishes and maintains a high level of support and engagement back to our wider community. We are committed to fostering the betterment and growth of our community outside our school as well as in. We have already worked towards this in a number of ways, including establishing and promoting a seasonal "Twelve Days of Giving" campaign, promoting awareness and collecting donations for our local food bank, and other charitable causes such as the Mustard Seed and Hope Mission. We cannot expect engagement and support if we do not engage with and support our community and its needs.

It should be noted that our engagement and support for our community has not gone unnoticed. The Town of Calmar recently held their annual Volunteer Celebration, where Megan Olynyk, vice-chair of NHCSA, was awarded the Robert Royer Volunteer of the Year Award. We are immensely proud of this accolade, which inspires us all to continue to engage at all levels with our school, community, and beyond.

Domains of Assurance

Using the domains of assurance framework, NHCSA will identify the areas in which we must establish our process to explore, develop, take action and evaluate. The plans and reports that New Humble Community School Association shall provide to Alberta Education, including this document, as well as our AERs when they are completed after each school year, shall serve as both products and evidence of our perpetual growth, or continuous improvement. The core documents shall demonstrate our accountability and provide assurance to Alberta Education. Further to this, we declare that these documents will show that our unique teaching methods can and may be used by other interested educators across the province to enhance student learning and support all areas of education. We are firmly committed to that aspect of the public charter school: that it serves as an example - or even experiment - in education, and that our successful methods be shared in order to elevate learning in our wider communities.



Perpetual Growth (continuous improvement)

Perpetual growth is the very basis of education and life. Our unique focus on agriculture makes us even more keenly aware of this, as it occurs both in nature and our created structures. We will ensure perpetual growth in students, staff, organizational structures, methods, and all other areas through a cycle of continuous improvement.



Local and Societal Context

The importance of community, in all of its definitions, cannot be underestimated. Not only in terms of crucial support and engagement, but also in that we must fully understand how it affects our students, staff and families. The demographic data, emergent needs and other contextual factors play an important role in ensuring that we understand the needs, interests and motivations of our community, and allow us to establish meaningful and growth oriented DEI commitments.

Domain One: Student Growth and Achievement

The impacts of COVID-19 on student learning over the past nearly two years has been unquestionably detrimental. Students are struggling acutely to meet grade level expectations, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcome:

Teachers and staff will use a variety of methods, including hands-on experiential learning and the lens of agriculture and stewardship, to increase student engagement and respond to the needs of students. The Literacy and Numeracy Support Team will be an effective means to reduce the learning gaps identified in our Fall Assessments.

Students will achieve growth in learning and personal development beyond the gaps identified as caused by COVID-19 related educational challenges. In addition to key literacy and numeracy skills, students will use agricultural literacy and stewardship concepts to deepen their knowledge retention in all areas of curriculum and life skills.

All students, teachers and school leaders will learn about First Nations, Metis and Inuit perspectives and experiences, treaties, agreements and the history and legacy of residential schools.

Strategies:

We have created a Literacy and Numeracy Support Team (LNST) at New Humble Community School, which consists of teachers, support staff, administration as well as parent volunteers and any additional resources available pending funding. Roles will range from direct one-on-one support, small group support, and full class support. This team will provide a mechanism for effective collaboration and coordination of resources and services. Additional resources, including materials and manipulatives, continue to be identified as needs arise.

Students who are identified as needing additional support in areas such as mental health and learning disabilities, beyond the capacities of school staff and resources, may be referred to

specialized assessment services. In consultation with families, NHCS may provide financial assistance on a case by case basis to cover these costs.

NHCSA will ensure that all students, teachers and support staff acknowledge and build on their understanding of FNMI teachings. Teachers and staff at NHCS are attending a Professional Development day in order to build strong relationships with teachers and administration at Mother Earth's Children's Charter School, which is Canada's only Indigenous Charter School. This visit comes with the purpose of both immediate learning, and also relationship building, which will ensure that teachers and staff have personal, meaningful, and understandable knowledge. NHCS staff will gain an enhanced perspective from the educators and administrators and use that to continue to build their understanding about the marginalization of the FNMI community and learn corrective actions to honour and respect the land on which they now call home. Additionally, our schools can facilitate field trips to broaden all student's perception and understanding of the innovative way in which each charter school is embracing the Alberta curriculum. Our two schools will continue to build collaborative and fulfilling partnerships between staff, students and boards. In addition, NHCSA staff will take opportunities for professional development to enhance their own FNMI understanding. To facilitate this, the Principal will organize and lead dedicated PD days for all staff, so that our understanding remains current and informed, and staff can implement their own learning into their classrooms. Staff and student visits will require transportation and the costs associated with it.

Evidence of Outcomes: We are in our first year of school at this time. Evidence of outcomes is being observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed.

Domain Two: Teaching and Leading

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcome:

Teachers with an understanding of agricultural literacy are informed about the complexity and interconnectedness of learning and teaching. They are able to use their own growth and professional development to ensure that students' needs are met, and

contribute to the cycle of continuous improvement at New Humble Community School.

Strategies:

Professional development will be focused on the desired outcomes at NHCS. A minimum of half of the total PD days for staff will be dedicated to enhancing their understanding and education to satisfactorily meet charter goals. Remaining PD days can be geared towards general or other identified educational development. Examples of such PD include staff attending other agriculture based schools in Alberta, such as Altario School. These visits must be constructive to the goals of NHCS and should have a strong purpose. Teachers, staff, board members and administrations have all met with staff at this school and toured their facility. We aim to build a strong and mutually beneficial relationship. Other PD will be led by our research partner Dr. Bonnie Stelmach, to build goals, strategies and framework for including the pillars of agricultural literacy into core lessons.

Teachers will provide feedback in the form of regular communications, as well as focus groups and structured reporting. Administrators and school board members will listen, review and provide support to teachers, while also maintaining accountability to our specific charter goals and outcomes.

Evidence of Outcomes: We are in our first year of operation at this time. Evidence of outcomes will be observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed. Teachers have created templates for lesson planning with a focus on Charter Goals and outcomes. These templates assist teachers with effective planning, and also facilitate open communication between all teachers, as well as other staff and board members. The use of these templates will allow for both positive results and indicators for improvement to be easily assessed and built upon.

Domain Three: Learning Supports

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcome:

Our school community is inclusive, supportive, and safe. We respect and celebrate our similarities and our differences. All members of our community understand and respect their shared roles and

respect our commitment to DEI. NHCS will use all available resources to support the learning needs of all students.

Students, staff and families will be able to understand their own mental health strengths and challenges. They will build and understand strategies to support their own and each other's wellness.

Strategies:

We will utilize resources efficiently and effectively as needed to support the unique learning of each student. We will also continue to apply for any available support to enhance student learning and achievement. This includes engaging our stakeholders both internal and external to optimize support.

Support learning for students and staff by encouraging the use of our outdoor learning spaces, indoor experiential learning spaces, and traditional classroom settings enhanced by technology where beneficial. This gives learners more possibilities to feel included when one method of learning is not best suited to them. Multi-grade groups during school-wide learning to promote engagement and build relationships and skills outside of grade groups will also be beneficial.

Evidence of Outcomes: We are in our first year of operation at this time. Evidence of outcomes will be observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed. One example of learning supports is our individual learning opportunities for students. This initiative has shown indicators of success for many of our learners, particularly those who have experienced a learning gap in core subject areas. A schedule for these identified learners to have one-on-one dedicated learning time in specific subject areas with either an EA or teacher is resulting in reduced learning gaps. These one-on-one learning opportunities often take place outside of the classroom, in another designated space either inside or outside the school building.

Domain Four: Governance

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcome:

New Humble Community School is governed effectively and efficiently by a strong, engaged and dynamic board.

Strategies:

Governors will seek out perpetual growth by continuing to follow the cycle of continuous improvement in all areas of the school and association. Governors may take part in school Professional Development days where appropriate. This will allow for opportunities to be part of both learning and providing key knowledge to staff members, and also increases the bonds of respect, professionalism and teamwork between all levels of the school community. Yearly accountability surveys will be conducted to gauge parent and community satisfaction.

Governors will work to engage students, teachers, staff, families, stakeholders and our wider community in our shared charter vision and success at New Humble Community School.

Governors will prepare and ensure proper implementation of resources in a fair and balanced budget to address educational and operating needs.

Evidence of Outcomes: We are in our first year of operation at this time. Evidence of outcomes will be observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed. Feedback from both internal and external sources around the school community indicates that the board of governors are seen as highly engaged. All governors have freely volunteered many hours in the school that are not directly necessitated by their board roles.

Charter Goals and Methods

New Humble Community School Outcomes

The following measurable outcomes are as listed in our Final Application, submitted August 10, 2020:

- 1 - Students will recognize and understand agricultural literacy
- 2 - Students will demonstrate problem solving through adaptability, resilience and critical thinking.
- 3 - Students will understand the values of goals and outcomes.
- 4 - Students will achieve academic success while displaying leadership.

Measuring the outcomes of agricultural literacy shall be done in conjunction with creating and establishing appropriate benchmarks within the Albertan and Canadian context. Currently these do not exist. The National Agricultural Literacy Outcomes: Benchmarks related to agricultural literacy and academic achievement¹ provide a strong and adaptable foundation, but must be recognized as an American resource. New Humble Community School Association, through our partnership with Dr. Bonnie Stelmach of the University of Alberta, shall utilize this resource and adapt the outcomes at our school's level so that we can accurately assess our targets and expectations. Through further determination of priorities and assessment of benefit to student learning, these outcomes could be further developed into Alberta Agricultural Literacy Outcomes, and/or the Canadian National Agricultural Literacy Outcomes. Regardless of the level or authority of these outcomes, they will be available to anyone, and can be implemented in schools easily and effectively.

Outcome 1 may be assessed in the 2021/2022 school year by a student portfolio or learning journal project. Each teacher will develop the required content based on their students' grade level. Depending on the outcomes of this assessment, it may be adjusted in subsequent years. Clear and open communication between teachers will be an effective and integral part of the perpetual growth cycle.

¹ Spielmaker, D. M., & Leising, J. G. (2013). National agricultural literacy outcomes. Logan, UT: Utah State University, School of Applied Sciences & Technology.

Outcomes 2-4 will be assessed using the strategies outlined below. These are described as suggested and initial strategies; the teachers and staff will continually assess the effectiveness of their application to the outcomes, and make determinations on what was successful and what might require adjustments. Teachers and staff shall have open and constructive communication so that each can build on the efforts of others.

The principal and superintendent, with support from board and other stakeholders, will establish measures for these outcomes that can be used to assess their effectiveness and ensure that targets and expectations are being met. The results will be documented and used in the continuous improvement cycle.

Action Plan/ Strategies:

Through open and frequent communication, constructive feedback, and stakeholder support, teachers will support students to achieve our measurable outcomes. The structure of classes and lessons, as well as our learning spaces have continued to grow and change in our first few months of school, and will continue to expand. As more outdoor structures are added to our facility, teachers will be strongly encouraged and also supported to find the best ways to utilize these resources to continue to achieve the best outcomes for learning.

Suggested and initial strategies and instructional methods for achieving our Charter goals can be found in our Final Application. There are no modifications to these strategies and measures at this time, but these will be reassessed annually and used in our continuous improvement cycle. Of the strategies listed, strategy number 1 (experiential learning) is the priority strategy for all outcomes. Teachers, with the support of the principal and administration, will determine through their lesson planning which of the other strategies will be most effective, depending on the desired outcome(s). These may include but are not limited to:

1. Experiential learning
2. Educational workshops with leading industry experts- this includes large group presentations, small group instruction, and the potential for one-on-one individualized education.

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3. Multi-grade projects- students of differing age and grade levels will form cohort groups and work together on communal projects to enhance learning, leadership skills, and foster inclusivity
 4. Individualized Program Plans (IPPs) to meet the unique needs of individual students (an example of differentiated instruction)
 5. Educational field trips relevant to agricultural industries and environmental stewardship- demonstrations to gain first-hand experience and knowledge while under the supervision of experienced professionals
 6. Independent student research projects- project-based learning
 7. Tiered lesson planning- an educational approach which provides the students with “different paths toward understanding a particular concept” (Adams & Pierce, 2006, p. 5). Students can take whichever path most appropriately appeals to them and their individual learning style and arrive at the same conceptual understanding and essential (task) understanding as the rest of the class (Adams & Pierce, 2006).
 8. Learning Journals- monitor progress and have students evaluate themselves
 9. Sensory, graphic, and interactive scaffold learning to support and eventually allow students to become independent thinkers and learners.
 10. Teacher-centered instruction- traditional pedagogical approach but tailored to our alternative programming. The Government of Alberta (2020) offers free resources “to help teachers integrate agriculture into the curriculum” (Agricultural education- Lesson plans). These lesson plans are organized by grade level and are directly connected to the appropriate Science and Social Studies programs of study (Government of Alberta, 2020).
 11. Hybrid style of learning- blending the individual teacher’s personality and passion with student needs and curricular goals
 12. STEM learning

Lesson plan templates have been created to help implement these strategies in a consistent and constructive manner. These templates aid in planning by requiring the teacher to name the lesson or activity, describe it in summary, then identify the agricultural and academic outcomes, select the

appropriate methods (as listed above), as well as identify any other charter goals or outcomes that apply. Teachers have received professional development and additional support and resources to ensure these plans can be carried out effectively and efficiently.

Budget and Facilities

New Humble Community School Association's Three Year Education Plan and 2021-2022 Budget can be found on our website at www.newhumbleschool.ca It is also attached to this document.

New Humble Community School is located in the same facility as the former New Humble Centre School. It is the oldest school in Alberta still in its original location, the first Humble school having been established in April of 1900. It has been part of multiple school divisions throughout the decades, most recently (until 2020) falling under the jurisdiction of Black Gold School Division. NHCSA has a lease agreement with BGSD for the school and grounds. The grounds comprise approximately 5.75 acres. This allows us generous space for our recently installed playground equipment, recreation structures and sports fields including a skating rink. Additionally, we have ample open, level ground for both dedicated and flexible outdoor learning spaces; we have a small animal pen, dual chicken coop, and garden boxes, a large barn (confirmed, delivery expected summer 2022), a professional greenhouse (donation secured, installation pending weather), and many more enhancements to facilitate our unique student learning experience.



Image: Social studies course work being done at the outdoor learning space, fall 2021.

Conclusion

The school and facility have a unique and vital role not only in the education of young learners, but as a hub for our community: offering space for activities, encouraging gathering and sharing, and engaging with one another. As we continue to grow, so too will the opportunities to enhance public education across the province, and also to strengthen and build this community foundation. Stronger learners will create a stronger community and stronger society. Our perpetual growth, our dedication to meeting the assurance framework, and our practicable strategies will ensure that our Education Plan is achieved. We look forward to sharing our successes and contributing to excellence in education.