

2026-2027 School Growth Plan

Dr. D.A. Perley Elementary

Jon Dowswell, Principal



Purpose and Vision:

School Plans are school-specific strategic plans that are

- Collaboratively developed
- Focused on student learning goals
- Aligned with the District Strategic Plan
- Evidence-informed using a cycle of improvement
- Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound

Be Curious

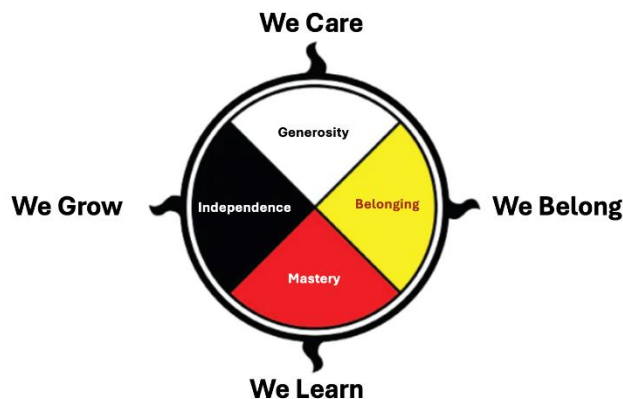
- Spring surveys of staff and students indicate that our school has shown improvement in regulation and connection/belonging
- Teachers have noted anecdotally a struggle with resilience and social emotional skills
- Office visits overwhelmingly include dysregulation, disconnection, and struggles with social skills
- Attendance continues to be a big concern for many students – families report struggling with children who don't want to come to school, the frequency of absences is high in our most vulnerable learners (students with IEPs and Indigenous learners)
- Families and children shared in spring surveys and conversations that they love Perley and feel connected but they also often share about “mean kids” or “bullying”. With further discussion it seems that we need to work on many of the core competencies to address these issues as some of it is mean behaviour and much of it is dysregulation and/or conflict.
- Assessments such as the FSA show that students give up quickly and struggle to stay engaged and focused on tasks

Get Intentional

- Students are not arriving at school with social emotional skills fully developed
- Students feel they belong at school but do they feel they belong as learners?

- Our Circle of Courage work has only scratched the surface of what it could be and we want to find ways to expand it K-7
- The Circle of Courage uses *positive psychology*, rooted in shifting the focus from “fixing flaws to building strengths” (Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern, 2005).
- Will exploring the Circle of Courage quadrants together as a school for a full year cycle help build resilience, social emotional skills, and positive school culture?
- Our goal is to deepen our use of the Circle of Courage framework so that all students strengthen their sense of belonging, self-awareness, and capacity to learn and contribute. We want every child to be able to say:
 - I belong as a learner.
 - I learn by persevering/effort.
 - I grow by taking increasing responsibility for myself.
 - I care about myself, others, my school, and my community.
- The Circle of Courage also aligns with traditional research around resilience and Self-worth

Resilience Research	Circle of Courage	Self-Worth Research
• Attachment	• Belonging	• Significance
• Achievement	• Mastery	• Competence
• Autonomy	• Independence	• Power
• Altruism	• Generosity	• Virtue



- Perley’s motto, “We Belong, we learn, we grow, we care”, is rooted in the values across this research

Make Time for Learning

- We need to learn about the Circle of Courage – lots of resources and conversations from/with the Indigenous Facilitator both formally (in staff meetings and ProD) and informally (conversations in the hallway, lunch room etc).
- Reclaiming Youth at Risk book
- Circle of Courage SEL Program

Action with Intent

- We will start by implementing a school-wide SEL program rooted in the Circle of Courage. This includes a monthly theme to explore in classroom lessons, daily announcements, and a family connection activity for home.
- All staff meetings/ProD will include the Circle of Courage quadrants as a way to explore/demonstrate how this could be done in a classroom.
- Principal Jon Dowswell's Professional Growth plan will center around the Circle of Courage
- Assemblies and connection with caregivers will also follow this framework (newsletter including the headings "We Belong" "We Learn" "We Grow" "We Care")
- Intermediate classes will engage in talking circles to reflect on this work including classroom teachers and supported by the Indigenous Facilitator

Thoughtful Sharing

- Staff, students, and families will be invited to provide feedback via survey midway through the year and then towards the end of the year
- Teachers will provide feedback on the SEL program as they begin using it – we will adjust as the year progresses (in consultation with Indigenous Facilitator)
- The SEL program has built-in reflection points for students and staff as well (at the end of the exploration of each quadrant so 4 points in the year)