

## **Visions West Outreach School**

### **Mission**

To provide a flexible and positive learning environment that accommodates all types of learners in an effort to assist students meet their diverse goals.

### **Vision**

Providing hope to students while helping them achieve their diverse goals.

### **Values**

- ✓ each student is worthy of time and attention in whatever format they need
- ✓ meet with each student individually to work through an appropriate plan
- ✓ offer more than just an academic piece – grow and develop the whole child
- ✓ help students see and reach their full potential while dealing with their unique realities

### **School Demographic Information**

We serve the community of Rocky Mountain House and surrounding area including the communities of Sunchild and O'Chiese. We have 78 students enrolled, 18 of whom we share with our local high school. The majority of our students are enrolled in high school courses as only five of our students are in junior high.

### **Student Learning**

Our goal is to help students achieve their individual academic goals in a flexible fashion. We believe that all students can learn given the proper environment, program and supports. To that end, we work with students and their families to plan and structure their learning to meet their needs. We do this by offering a variety of programming options (including ADLC work – both print and online, FLEX programming and in-house courses). Additionally, we work with students to arrange their schedule to best meet their needs. This means some students pop in when they require assistance and others are scheduled for anywhere from an hour through six hours one day up to every day of the week.

Students begin with a smaller work load and build into more classes if they desire and prove themselves capable of being successful with a larger course load. This flexibility allows students to master one or two subjects at a time and gain a deeper understanding of the content as they move at their own pace within a suggested completion framework.

## Student Engagement

Recognizing the diverse needs of our learners and the fact that for many of them this is their last hope for success in an educational setting:

- We meet with each student to go through their individual needs, passions, strengths and areas of challenge. Together we design a program that allows students to work at a reasonable pace and maximize their opportunity to experience success in coursework.
- Work experience
- RAP program
- Build individualized programs with student and parent involvement based upon the needs of the individual and base programming on those needs
- Restorative work as opposed to instant disciplinary action
- We work with our colleagues at WCHS to connect with community partners to help students become valuable participants in society
- We build relationships with our students, families and stakeholders
- We provide choice and voice by allowing students to choose their timetables, schedules and the order in which they complete their courses
- We will create Google surveys to solicit feedback from students as to what they want, like and need
- We will provide the opportunity for students to display their gifts and talents

## Healthy Learning/ Working Environments

**Physical:** students are allowed to take breaks as required. Moreover, we encourage them (and each other) to go outside and grab a breath of fresh air.

We provide students with a safe, understanding and empathetic environment.

**Nutrition:** There is always a basket of granola bars, oatmeal and fruit snacks as well as a bowl of fruit and water, coffee and tea available for students. We received a grant from the Next to New for these breakfast items for our students. We encourage them to bring their lunch. We have written a grant proposal in hopes of finding community sponsorship for a bi-weekly hot lunch program for our students. Currently the staff makes soup for the students approximately every two weeks.

**Wellness:** Our FWW, an integral part of the school team, works with students and their families in a comprehensive support model. We work collaboratively with Alberta Mental Health, Child and Family Services, McMann Youth and Family Services, Family Support for Children with Disabilities, the RCMP and other community agencies as necessary.

**General:** We have scheduled weekly PPT meetings - these meetings include SSF, FWW, teachers and administration. We have our major professional development activities based on collaborative practice and incorporate a collaborative model into our regular processes; provide meals together for staff a few times a year to promote positive social interaction; encourage and offer to support to students, staff and families.

## **Staff Learning**

Being as we are such a small number, we work together as a staff to support not only our students but each other. As a collective we have a great deal of knowledge and spend time together on a daily basis working to best support our students. Moreover, we collaborate to develop our PD plans, staff meeting agendas, daily routines, schedules, etc.

We have planned two collaborative PD days with our Outreach colleagues in Drayton Valley. It is our hope that we will be able to learn from each other, share resources, etc.

We combined our First Aid PD with students as we believe this demonstrates the need for lifelong learning as well as allows us to model our learning alongside students.

PGPs are living and breathing documents used to facilitate individual growth. Staff meet with administration in a collaborative discussion model

## **Summary of 2014-2015 Major Accomplishments**

Through much trial and tribulation, the staff at Visions worked through the challenges of not having their own space for the first part of the school year while meeting the diverse needs of their students.

The focus of 2014/15 was to move to the new center in the old provincial building and establish the new school as an identifiable entity, to identify and populate the staff appropriately and create a feeling of staff unity.

The staff at the end of the year is highly unified and identify themselves as the staff of Visions West Outreach School. They are proud of their school and their students. Students are looking to Visions as a viable way for them to achieve their educational goals and to do so in a welcoming, caring, flexible environment.

Students were able to enroll in courses throughout the year. This offered a great deal of flexibility and assisted in 15 students in our community graduating. These students were otherwise not expected to graduate. Furthermore, not only did 15 students graduate, many others who previously felt they had no hope of completing a high school program are continuing in their studies this year. The staff nurtures all aspects of the student – ranging from feeding students regularly, through counselling them through a variety of trauma, accompanying them to their addictions counselling meetings, working with them academically. Data cannot always track these support systems and the positive impacts on student success.

## **2014-2015 PAT Results**

Students at Visions did not write PATs last year.

## **Accountability Pillar Overall Summary**

In discussion with staff at Visions – both present and past - it does not appear that Visions West students and staff had access to this survey. There are questions surrounding from where the data came as no one has ever received nor conducted a survey for staff and students at Visions West. As such, we question both the reliability and validity of the presented data.

## **2015-2016 Professional Development Plan**

In addition to divisional foci, our PD plan for the year is designed to meet the overarching needs of our students and school in addition to each staff member's individual professional growth plan. As such, we have planned to share two days with our colleagues at Drayton Valley Community Outreach School. A specific focus for us on other days is the RTI model where we look at each student in our school and determine how to best meet individual needs. We have spent some time already this year looking at mission, vision and values statements and will revisit our drafts from time to time so that by year's end we will have statements with which we all agree reflect the nature of our unique school.

## **Planning Process**

This document was created in collaboration with staff – both present and past.

## **Go Forward Plan**

We recognize the diverse needs of our students. In order to meet those needs, we collaborate as a team – not only in our school, but with others in our division and the province. In the near future we will design a survey for our students to gather data specific to their needs. Using data from our students will better enable us to meet their needs. Moreover, when we use the information students provide to us, they see that their thoughts, ideas and opinions are both valuable and worthwhile.

It is our hope that as time passes, more of our students will write PATs and diploma exams. We believe that we have made steps in this direction by registering our school as an exam writing center. We believe this will alleviate some of the anxiety our students have when needing to attend an alternate location in which to write their exams. Additionally, we hope to engage more of our stakeholders in the AERR survey so that we have reliable and valid data. By developing a School Council in the New Year, we feel we will have another line of communication in which to encourage our parents to complete the survey as well as share their thoughts with us.