

THREE YEAR EDUCATION PLAN

DRAYTON VALLEY COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH SCHOOL

2015-2016 School Year

# INTRODUCTION

**FOUNDATION STATEMENTS**

**VISION**

Creating healthy, resilient, and happy individuals who are confident, respectful, and productive community members participating in the enrichment of healthy relationships in their families and community.

**MISSION**

To inspire and mentor students in a flexible learning community to enhance wellness, lifelong learning, and active citizenship.

**VALUES**

Wellness	Lifelong Learning	Active Citizenship
relationships dignity individuality self worth self respect self confidence resiliency	critical thinking work ethic skill development passion	connections peer mentorship empathy respect for others equality social justice

**ESSENTIAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Drayton Valley Community Outreach School provides support to Grade 7 to 12 WRSD students in Drayton Valley. These are resilient students for whom learning has been compromised because, primarily, they have ‘avoided’ attending regular school classes or attendance has created severe anxiety problems. This avoidance has occurred for many reasons but, even with provision of ‘in-house’ supports at other schools, including administration, teaching staff, School Support Facilitators and Family Wellness Workers, these young people have not been successful at achieving success in coursework. Fortunately, now these students have reached a point in their lives where they wish to achieve academic success and earn a high school diploma in order to improve life’s possibilities as they move ahead.

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- Currently, as of November, 2015, we have 110 students registered with DVCOS. Please note that often new registrations are taken weekly throughout the school year.

GRADE	NUMBER OF REGISTERED STUDENTS
Grade 7	1
Grade 8	1
Grade 9	6
Grade 10	14
Grade 11	22
Grade 12	66

- Of these 110 students, 10 are 'overage' and included in the 'grade 12' number stated above. Unfortunately, because of funding issues, we have had to place a limit on the number of 'overage' we can serve even though the demand has been higher than the 10 registered.
- 12 students are shared with other schools including FMHS, DCS, and HW Pickup.
- We draw students from the following communities surrounding Drayton Valley:
  - Drayton Valley
  - Breton
  - Wildwood
  - Alder Flats
  - Buck Lake
  - Warburg
  - Tomahawk
- 28 students have noted 'independent status', meaning that they are not living with parents or guardians
- 8 students have returned to education after being out of school for more than 2 years
- 58 of the 110 students are 'continuous' students, meaning they were registered with DVCOS last year
- 10 students have checked 'Metis' or 'First Nations' on the registration form
- 25 of the 110 students have received special education coding
- About three quarters of the student numbers have sought out or have been referred to our Family Wellness workers.

## SCHOOL TRENDS, ISSUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

### TRENDS and ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- There have been increases in the following:
  - number of student registrations
  - number of students from surrounding communities and school divisions
  - number of students needing referral to Family Wellness Workers
  - awareness and involvement of community members and agencies
  - academic success of students with an increasing number of students taking courses such as English 30-1, Science 10, Biology 30 and Math 10C.
  - number of students pursuing post-secondary programs
  - teacher development of course materials and less use of ADLC materials and resources
- There have been decreases in the following:
  - support for meeting basic student needs from community businesses, due to the current economic climate of our community.
  - amount of one-to-one time and assistance teachers can provide to our most vulnerable students (due to increasing student numbers)

### ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

#### 1. FUNDING

- The needs of our students are very high and varied, demanding a great deal of support. In fact, some of our young people need assistance meeting the basic needs of housing, food, clothing, transportation and safety before learning can be focused on. Attending to these needs is of primary importance so, therefore, the use of our 'teaching time' cannot be compared to teachers in other settings. **Therefore, we recognize that comparing our student : teacher ratio numbers to averages in regular classrooms is not a fair comparison.**
- Many of our students are limited in the amount of time they can focus on learning and school work for a variety of reasons, including full time employment. As a result, the **average CEU's earned by these students is relatively low.**
- Another reason why the number of CEU's earned by our students is low is that, of the 110 students registered with us, 18 students have currently earned an Alberta High School diploma and are **returning only for upgrading** These students are returning to DVCOS to 'upgrade', increasing marks in certain courses or taking one or two additional courses to qualify for post secondary programs. Quite often, they only generate 5 or 10 CEU's in a school year.
- CEU funding is not received for the '**overage**' students. Because of this funding issue, these 10 students are charged \$50 per credit as part of the registration process.

## 2. STAFFING

- We have made strides **during the last year in improving the overall number of staff members.**
  - The number of teachers has increased to 2.7 positions (from 1.85 in September of 2014).
  - We have also gained the support of a 0.5 Student Support Facilitator.
  - We currently have 1.5 Educational Assistant positions funded by Student Services.
  - We have 10 hours per week of Family Wellness Worker time.
  - We have 2 Admin Assistants working with us, both working part time.
- However, it is important to recognize that **the number of students has increased dramatically** and we are taking in **new registrations every week.** Last year, we discovered that these new registrations continued throughout the entire school year.
- Right now, our biggest issue surrounds **meeting the needs of all of our students.** By concentrating on those we refer to as 'active' (attend and achieve regularly), we are unable to reach out to those who have registered but are currently inactive.
- A significant staffing issue surrounds that of the **time we have been allotted for Family Wellness workers.** We have 2 amazing workers with very limited time to connect with individual students, given the needs that exist.
- Another area that we are not finding the time to address is that of **Work Experience.** As said earlier, many of our students are employed and would qualify for the credits they could earn. However, we are **finding it difficult to assign the required teaching time** to ensure that we are following through with the requirements and many students are missing this opportunity. Our current number of registered students is only 11.

## 3. FACILITIES

- We are currently located in downtown Drayton Valley in a rented facility that allows us work in a one room school model of learning. Location and model are perfect!
- An issue we are facing, though, is in the **total amount of space.** With the increasing numbers of students, there are many times when it is crowded and not conducive to a quiet learning environment.
- The most significant problem with the current facility is the **lack of adequate plumbing.** The area designated as 'kitchen' has no source of water. There is only one washroom facility and it is not unusual to see students lining up to enter.

## 4. SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

- Unfortunately, many of our students move through periods of time being 'inactive' in academic accomplishments. Investing time and energy addressing the needs of these students at these times is very difficult. Connections and relationships are essential for the success of these young people.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

### **Student Numbers**

- This is a difficult prediction to make. Our expectation is to continue receiving the current numbers of registrations, between 100 and 125.
- We recognize the need to spend more of our time focusing on working with students to earn maximum credits and meet the needs of a high school diploma, thereby increasing the overall number of CEU's. In order to do this, we will need to define the students who are simply registering with no intention or ability to focus on learning ( a very difficult thing to do!)
- However, the primary goal of every staff member will continue to be developing connections with all our registered students with the belief that change will happen with patience and determination.

### **Funding**

- We are making a concerted effort to ensure that the average number of CEU's earned by our students during this school year are greater than last year.
- We are also reaching out to the community by completing a grant application with Alberta Health Services to address the basic wellness needs of our students. This will help to reduce the needs for items like groceries in our submitted budget.
- We are also making an effort to credit students for Work Experience, RAP and Green Certificate.
- An application to Alberta Works for financial support for overage students will be pursued. In the meantime, we have increased the registration fees for these students to \$50 per credit.

### **Facilities**

- The layout of our current facility is generally suitable. However, the items of overall size, washroom and kitchen facilities are becoming barriers. Because the term of the current lease contract expires in June, 2016, we are encouraging a consideration of moving to a new facility for the next school year.

### **Community Support**

- As our local community citizens, agencies and businesses become more aware of the program offered by DVCOS, supports provided are increasing. Putting in the time and energy required to develop these community connections is vital to the future success of DVCOS. We are continually reminding our students of the importance of volunteering in our community...the students hear us say, 'if we want to get, we have to give'.

## **Student Academic Performance**

- Clearly, we are seeing many of our students achieving success in more challenging courses. Last year, DVCOS became a writing center for diploma exams and we have administered these in November, January, April and June. Providing designated accommodations and a less stressful environment have been reasons for the movement towards increased confidence and success.
- Efforts are being made to connect our students to post-secondary opportunities. We are inviting speakers and representatives to meet with students as well as arranging field trips to open houses at the colleges.

# 2014-2015 RESULTS REPORT

# **SUMMARY OF 2014-15 MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS and FUTURE GOALS**

## **2015 ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR RESULTS**

### **COMMENTS**

The Accountability Pillar was administered in the spring of 2015 to DVCOS students and teachers. However, when reviewing the results, it is clear that the limited number of responses resulted in suppressed results in many categories. Also, 2014-2015 is the first year DVCOS existed as an outreach program not attached to FMHS, making trends less informative and reliable. However, these results have been used as part of the summary of major accomplishments and setting of goals.

## **DESIRED OUTCOME ONE: EVERY STUDENT IS SUCCESSFUL**

### **RESULTS**

- The overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard on diploma exams is acceptable, although the overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence is an area of concern.
- Also, areas of concern are dropout rates, post-secondary transition and students eligible for the Rutherford Scholarship.
- An 'excellent' standing was recorded for the performance measure that demonstrated satisfaction with students modeling characteristics of active citizenship.

### **COMMENTS**

- 23 of our students 'crossed the stage' in June, 2015, meaning that they were within reach of earning a high school diploma and were able to participate in Commencement exercises. In September, it was learned that only one of these 23 students was not successful in the writing of a diploma exam and has not earned the Alberta High School Diploma. This number of 23 represents a significant accomplishment for DVCOS because of numbers of graduates in previous years.

### **GOAL**

Increase student academic success with increased attendance patterns and course completions.

### **STRATEGIES**

- Focus of staff will continue to be on developing connections and relationships with individual students.
- A focus will be on the creation of an effective 'intake process' that will outline clearly expectations and services.

- Clear 'learning plans' will be developed for all students within reach of 'graduating' early in the school year and follow-up will happen on a regular basis throughout the school year.
- 'Exam coaching' and 'diploma prep' services and workshops will be provided to students scheduled to write diploma exams.
- Assistance will be provided to students interested in making application to post-secondary institutions in an effort to increase student confidence in this area.

## **DESIRED OUTCOME TWO: ALBERTA HAS QUALITY TEACHING AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

### **RESULTS**

- Concern was expressed as far as the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies.

### **COMMENTS**

- In the past, expertise in teaching higher levels of math and science were a definite concern. The 2015-2016 teaching staff was selected based on an effort to ensure that expertise in a broader range of subject areas would be provided. At this time, our teachers have experience and training in humanities, math and science. As well, we are able to provide instruction in physical education, many CTS credit areas and the area of fine arts (Art 10, 20 and 30).
- As well, we have direct involvement in WRSD's Flex Program with one of our teachers playing a significant role in the development of Flex course materials as well as Dual Credit programming.

### **GOAL**

Increase opportunities to successfully take a broad variety of courses with direct instruction.

### **STRATEGIES**

- Continue to ensure that our teachers have expertise in all the core courses needed by our students.
- Provide opportunities for our teacher to collaborate with colleagues in similar programs re: access of course materials and resources.
- Continue to encourage our students to use materials and resources created by the WRSD Flex team.

## **DESIRED OUTCOME THREE: ALBERTA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM IS GOVERNED EFFECTIVELY**

**SPECIFIC OUTCOME:** The education system demonstrates collaboration and engagement.

### **RESULTS**

- A high percentage of teachers, parents and students was satisfied with the overall quality of basic education.

### **COMMENTS**

- One of our goals last year surrounded 'community perception' of Outreach programming and students. Based on current contacts and involvement, community members are reaching out to provide assistance, demonstrating encouragement and support for our students.

### **GOAL**

Continue to reach out to community members for support and encourage students to volunteer time and energy as a sign of appreciation and an understanding of the concept of 'teamwork'.

### **STRATEGIES**

- Develop a student leadership team that will focus on the development of programming designed to meet the needs of the students through collaboration and engagement.

**SPECIFIC OUTCOME:** Students and teachers have access to safe and healthy learning environments.

### **RESULTS**

Results are very high for agreement that students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school. The results also indicate that respondents feel that there have been improvements in the provision of a safe and healthy learning environment.

### **COMMENTS**

A strong belief in the development of DVCOS has been that our students will be resilient, overcoming barriers to their education and success in life. In other words, they will move from 'can't to can' and will be able to develop 'dreams into plans'. And, we also believe firmly that, in order for this to happen, we have to focus our energy on ensuring a safe, healthy environment with caring relationships with our students.

## **GOAL**

To focus on the development of an ongoing safe, healthy environment for our students based on caring adult/student relationships.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Increase bonding with our students by creating 'advisory groups' for our staff. The students in a staff member's advisory group will receive regular contacts by the adult and availability to answer questions and express concerns.
- Set clear, consistent boundaries regarding behaviors and expectations.
- Teach life skills such as problem solving strategies and goal setting.
- Provide caring and support by doing such things as ensuring basic needs are met and celebrating success.
- Ensure we are always communicating a 'power in positive thinking' attitude and a strong belief in the abilities of our students.
- Invite guest speakers and arrange field trips on topics related to wellness.

## **DESIRED OUTCOME FOUR: FIRST NATIONS, METIS, AND INUIT STUDENTS ARE SUCCESSFUL**

## **RESULTS**

Students who have identified themselves as First Nations, Metis and Inuit is a very small number and the results are suppressed.

## **GOALS**

Ensure that all students who are First Nations or Metis identify themselves and welcome supports available to ensure success.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Use the intake process as an opportunity to have conversation with the students about the importance and significance of identifying themselves as First Nations or Metis.

## **2015-2016 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

DVCOS teachers will engage in the following:

- Collaborative Response Model instruction provided by Kurtis Hewson
- Mental Health First Aid certificate training program
- Collaboration with colleagues from other Outreach schools re: programming and provision of services
- PowerSchool training

# CONCLUSION

## PLANNING PROCESS

- Teachers meet every Friday afternoon to collaborate about individual students as well as discuss goals and strategies.
- One of our 'hopes' is to reach a point in the future of holding a community meeting involving parents, students, and community members to review and discuss our goals and future plans.

## SIGNATURES

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Patricia Jeffery, Principal, DVCOS

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Kim Desmarais, Teacher, DVCOS

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Brad Volkman, Superintendent of Schools, WRSD