

WESTMOUNT



CHARTER SCHOOL

**Assurance Framework
Three-Year Education Plan
2021-2024**

Submitted to Alberta Education
May 2021

Message from the Board Chair

"Fostering gifted education from the inside out."

Westmount Charter School is a public charter school committed to providing an excellent education for our students who are gifted. As we engage in the new three-year planning process under the Assurance Framework, we continue to focus above all on the social and emotional well-being of our students. By working through the domains of assurance in harmony with our inside-out Charter, we strive to help our students become the best they can be, not only on the academic front but also as valuable and contributing members of both the school community and the larger community.

As with all schools and all branches of our society, we have struggled with the challenges of the pandemic over the last many months. Also, as with other parts of society, we have adapted our methods of operation (instruction and administration) and our interaction with the school community. For example, we have seen increased participation of parents in our monthly School Council meetings and various information sessions as online platforms have replaced in-person gatherings. We will continue to learn from this and to adapt future engagement with stakeholder groups. We have also found it particularly important during this stressful time to ensure we are supporting our teachers and leaders, both in enhancing their skills for the current environment and in monitoring and improving their own health and well-being.

The Charter Board will continue to receive reports and feedback regarding our charter outcomes and will now also receive information about the domains of assurance. In addition, the Board receives regular reports on events, activities, professional development and student anecdotes from both the elementary campus and the mid-high campus.

It is fitting that we are celebrating our 25th year of operation while embarking on the future with a new set of plans and strategies.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Rockwell
Board Chair

Accountability Statement

The Education Plan for Westmount Charter School (WCS) commencing September 1, 2021, was prepared under the direction of the Board of Directors in accordance with responsibilities under the *Education Act (2020)* and the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act (2004)*. This plan was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used its performance results to develop the plan and is committed to implementing the strategies contained within the plan to improve student learning and results.

The Board approved the Education Plan for 2021-2024 on Wednesday, May 19, 2021.



Kathleen Rockwell
Board Chair



Joe Frank
Superintendent

Introduction

This assurance framework is guided by the: Alberta Education Business Plan (2019-2023); Westmount Charter School Charter (2016); Westmount's Annual Education Results Report (2019-2020); Alberta Education Funding Manual (2020-2021), Appendix B; and Ministerial Order #28 (2020).

As mandated by Westmount's Charter, our mission is to provide students who are gifted with an authentic educational experience that: supports need, ability and potential; provides opportunities for inner growth; develops genuine relationships; and is facilitated by empathic, passionate, creative educators whose ethical practice develops lifelong learners.

We believe students who are gifted are capable of exceptional performance. Additionally, we believe these students require comprehensive, specialized educational programming if they are to understand and maximize their varied abilities. We also believe parents and guardians are vital partners in their children's education, and members of the community at large have an important role to play in the education of students who are gifted.

Stephanie Tolan (2016) reminds us that giftedness is a lifelong, internal reality of mental processing that is *outside the norm*. The internal difference is likely to include emotional intensity, unusual awareness, tolerance of complexity and paradox, and a potential of extraordinary moral development. These attributes may enhance or interfere with performance and development.

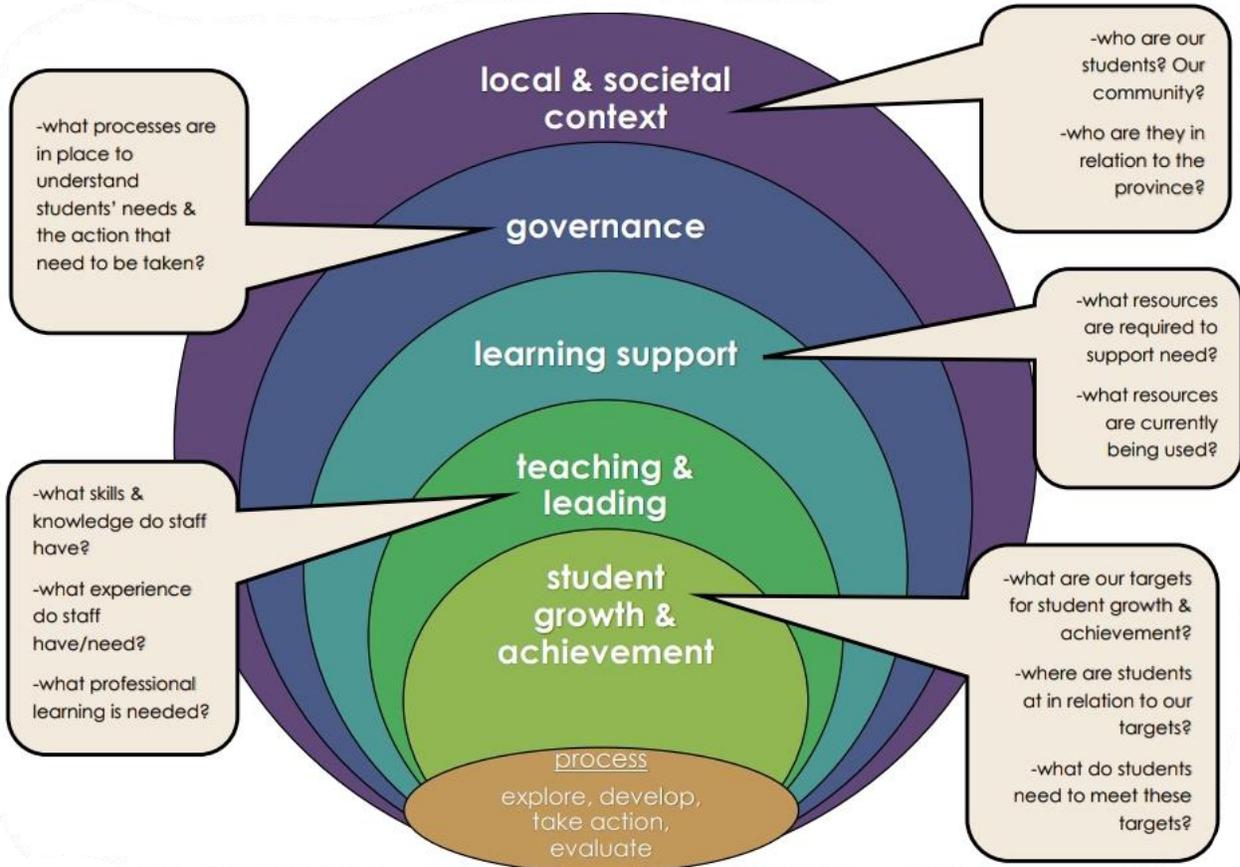
Engagement

Westmount Charter School facilitates stakeholder engagement throughout the school year. This commitment is realized through multiple avenues and informs a variety of our priorities and concerns. Stakeholder input and feedback are valued on a range of topics. Engagements include:

- School Council (SC):
 - monthly general meetings,
 - coffee talks between SC chair and parent liaison person,
 - parent information sessions,
 - discussions regarding school operations and student development and achievement, and
 - the Westmount Charter Board of Directors (Charter Board) annually appoints a board member liaison to the school council;
- monthly meetings between the superintendent, school administrative teams and central office personnel;
- regular meetings of school leadership teams (administration, learning leaders and coordinators);
- monthly meetings of teacher grade group or department teams;
- monthly campus-specific all-staff meetings;
- weekly meetings with student services teams;
- various in-school committees including:
 - staff committees,
 - staff and student committees, and
 - staff, students and external representatives such as the to-be-formed Executive Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Council and the Indigenous Committee;
- Student Advisory Councils established by the principals; and
- local and external surveys.

Domains of Assurance

The domains of assurance framework identifies what we examine, how we organize ourselves and how we engage in this work as a learning community, providing evidence of the effectiveness of our work.



Funding Manual 2020-2021, Appendix B, Alberta Education, pp.16-19.

Continuous Improvement Cycle

The success of the work, within and across the domains of assurance, is examined using the continuous improvement cycle. The key processes include:

- Evidence-informed decision-making, where data informs next steps.
- Effective engagement of education partners working together for positive change.
- Ongoing learning and capacity building for change and improvement.

Funding Manual 2020-2021, Appendix B, Alberta Education. p.20.

Domain: Local and Societal Context

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcome:

WCS engages with our community of students, staff and families, responding to emergent needs and concerns.

Strategies:

- strive to live the practice of inside out, by developing relationships with students, so as to understand their unique characteristics, needs, interests and motivations;
- target individuals' well-being, personal growth and development as human beings, which, as a by-product supports life long learning and achievement; and
- establish a DEI for the school.

Evidence of Outcomes

- Engagement feedback summaries
- Demographic data
- Examples:
 - Individual Program Plans (IPP) - our approach
 - Well-being initiatives
 - DEI Council work

Domain: Governance

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcome:

Westmount Charter School is well governed and managed.

Strategies:

- utilize a capacity building cycle of evidence-based, continuous improvement to inform ongoing planning and priority setting;
- continue as governors to engage students, staff, families, and community members towards implementing a dynamic, shared vision for student success as defined in our Charter; and
- prepare budget to address educational and operational resource needs.

Evidence of Outcomes

- Assurance Survey Results
- Review of the AERR 2019-20
- Local surveys
- Monthly School Council meetings, Coffee Talks, Parent Information Sessions
- [Current 15 Year Charter](#) in effect until 2031, reviewed regularly
- WCS's [Administrative Procedures](#) (APs), reviewed this year
- [Stakeholder Reporting](#) (Budget, 3 Year Educational Plan, Capital Plan)

Domain: Learning Supports

Outcomes and Strategies

Outcome:

- Our communities are safe, caring, respectful and inclusive, acknowledging similarities and honouring differences.
- Education partners fulfil their respective roles with a shared understanding of WCS's inclusive education practices.

Evidence of Outcomes

- Assurance Survey results
- OHS training schedule
- WCS [Administrative Procedures](#)
- DEI work and events
- Supports in place for our

Strategies:

- facilitate annual training for all staff regarding Occupational Health and Safety (OHS);
- apply resources needed to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement;
- adapt learning environments as necessary to meet learner needs, emphasizing a sense of belonging and high expectations for all students;
- engage education partners (internal and external supports) to optimize learning;
- utilize cross-ministry initiatives and wraparound services to enhance conditions for learning;
- support student and staff use of technology to enhance learning, through Information Technology (IT) department team initiatives;
- provide transportation support to include students from all quadrants within Calgary city limits; and
- review facilities continuously to maintain and enhance the learning environment through Plant Operations and Maintenance budgets and Capital Plan submissions.

- Indigenous students
- Number of students with additional learning needs beyond giftedness
- Programming adaptations provided and their effectiveness
- Inclusive education supports implemented
- Alberta Health Services (AHS) utilized:
 - Speech pathologists
 - Occupational Therapists
- IT Network supports
- Inclusive (Assistive) technology supports
- Number of buses to serve WCS students across the city
- [Stakeholder Reporting](#)

Domain: Teaching and Leading

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcome:

- Teachers and leaders respond with continuously acquired skill and competence to the unique learning, interest, cultural, social-emotional needs of our students.
- Staff are supported in their continuous professional development (PD), and health and well-being.

Strategies:

- provide clearly articulated and relevant programming for learners who are gifted, incorporating the Alberta Programs of Study;
- encourage and support a culture of innovation, which manifest in research and development to support evolving practices;
- participate in teacher and leader collaborative engagement processes of growth, supervision and evaluation;
- use a range of data emerging from teacher and leader practices, to inform cycles of evidence-based continuous learning;
- support university teacher education, university leadership education and on-going professional learning programs, to prepare teachers and leaders to meet the standards for professional practice, and
- hold teachers and leaders accountable to standards of professional conduct and professional practice.

Evidence of Outcomes

- Assurance Pillar results
- Differentiated and adapted instructional strategies
- Staff PD and well-being
- [WCS Knowledge Skills and Abilities](#) pp.6-9 (Charter)
- Staff Indigenous Education Committee
- Current research projects
- Professional Partner work
- Data for certificated and non-certificated Professional Growth Plans
- Data for staff evaluations
- Professional Learning opportunities
- Standardized assessments
- Teacher and leader data for Master's and Doctorate degrees
- Pre-Service Teacher Partnerships
- [WCS APs](#)

Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Outcome(s) and Strategies

Outcomes:

- Students are successful and achieve prescribed provincial learning outcomes, demonstrating strengths in literacy and numeracy.
- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students are successful.

Strategies:

- advance reconciliation by acquiring and applying foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit experiences;
- demonstrate understanding and respect for the uniqueness of all learners;
- provide ongoing assessment feedback to students to reflect continuously on their progress, identify strengths and areas of need and set new learning goals;
- encourage students to be active and healthy; and
- teach and support students to apply knowledge, understanding and skills in real life contexts and situations.

Westmount Charter Outcomes:

- Students will understand giftedness in general and their own specific giftedness, from the inside out.
- Students will demonstrate increased resilience.
- Students will recognize the importance of goals.
- Students will understand the connection between personal development, well-being and strong communities.

Strategies:

- infuse opportunities into classroom lessons for students to explore the nature of giftedness, gifted characteristics and the effects on individual students;
- select materials and themes which reflect the diverse and complex experiences of gifted learners;
- teach and model self-awareness, self-regulation and self-advocacy;
- support development of critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making;
- teach and support goal setting;
- engage students in developing and implementing IPPs in learning activities; and
- employ instructional practices that inform healthy lifestyles, ethical citizenship and pro-social interactions.

Evidence of Outcomes

- Provincial Achievement Tests
- Diploma exams
- Assurance survey results
- Demonstrated application of acknowledgement and application of Indigenous ways of knowing
- Student Diversity Council
- Student Wellness Action Team
- Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) Club at mid-high campus
- Self-reflection/appraisal of work
- Interview and observational data
- Data for the various clubs and activities in the school and in the communities
- Principals' Student Advisory Councils' work
- Examples of student work
- Reflections/observations from:
 - Students, teachers and parents
 - WCS survey data
 - Joint University of Calgary and WCS Research study
- Goal-setting in classroom work, IPPs and life goals
- Well-being and mental health initiatives

Budget and Facilities

Westmount Charter School's Three Year Education Plan, Budget 2021-2022 and the Capital Plan Summary 2021-2024 may all be accessed at: [Stakeholder Reporting](#)