**EPSB and VERNON BARFORD**

**Foci, Culture, Systems Overview**

**EPSB:**

* **Vision** = Success: One student at at time
* **Core Values** = Accountability, Collaboration, Equity, Integrity (ACE I)
* **Priorities**:
  + Growth and Success for every student
  + Welcoming, High Quality Learning and Working Environments
  + Enhancing Public Education through communication, engagement, and partnerships
* **Goal** = Every school will improve and show gains in student learning and achievement.

*------- Intentional living is the art of making our own choices before others choices make us -------*

**VERNON BARFORD:**

* **Foci** = a) Ensuring Learning b) Positive Dev. of whole child (Academic + Social habits)
* **Mission** = *We believe all students can learn and it is our moral responsibility to ensure they do*
* **Culture** = Behaviors we teach, model, and desire for ourselves and others
  + Ensuring Learning = **SEARCHING** for and using strategies that work best for clients
  + Pos. Development and Habits:
    - Academic = Focus on curricular outcome **skills and processes**
    - Social = **True BLUES** (Big Hearted, Leaders, United, Engaged, Successful)
  + Big Ideas = Focus on **Learning**, **Collaboration**, **Results**
* **Systems/ Ensuring Learning Questions** = Our collaborative, intentional, systematic response
  + Who are the learners? Example = Students and Us
  + What should be learned? Example = KUDOS
  + What strategies promote maximal learning and retention? Example = Collective learning and application (e.g., Make it stick, Mindset, etc)
  + How will we know what has been learned and to what level?
  + How will respond if/ when students struggle to learn? Example = LEAP
  + How will we respond if/ when students learn quickly or easily?
  + How will we share information about the learning journey?

*-------------- A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step -----------*

**Vernon Barford - Ensuring Learning Culture**

**SEARCHING**

**Our Realities, Rights, and Obligations:**

* We are Educated and Highly Trained
* We have completed a training and certification process
* We have guidelines for behavior and conduct (i.e., Code of Conduct)
* We possess and are expected to utilize informed professional judgement
* Our ongoing practice is governed by a set of common expectations
  + Teacher Quality Standard, Principal Quality Performance Standard, etc.
* Our practice is informed by relevant research, collective wisdom, and experience
* We are expected to remain current and model the habits of a lifelong professional learner
* **Ongoing focus is SEARCHING for and using solutions that work best for our students.**

**Desired Culture, Attitudes, and Behaviours = SEARCHING:**

1. **S** = Students First at all times. Primary focus is what is best for our clients (students).
2. **E** = Committed to Ensuring Learning and Educational Equity.
3. **A** = Always striving to improve as individuals and a team. We embrace change as the path to getting better. We remember that everyone likes improvement but nobody likes change.
4. **R** = We are Results Oriented and Research Based. We collect and use data to guide decisions. We seek out and apply research on human learning and retention, effective school practices, etc. to improve our practice in an ongoing manner.
5. **C** = Ongoing Collaboration and use of Collective Wisdom are essential.
6. **H** = Honoring of tension between need for both unity and diversity.
7. **I** = Intentional. Plan -> Try -> Check impact -> Adjust -> Repeat. Focus on solutions (not problems). Model what we ask our kids to do in terms of having a growth mindset, learning new things, trying things that are uncomfortable, honesty about celebration and growth areas.
8. **N** = Nurturing of clients as a whole person, our school, and our profession. Positive outlook, communication, habits, choices, and presentation. We constantly work to build confidence in our profession, educational professionals, and value of informed professional judgment.
9. **G** = Galvanized to action. We learn by doing. We accept the reality that path to success is never a straight line. We pursue constant individual and collective improvement in all areas.

**Vernon Barford - Positive Development Culture**

**True BLUES**

**At Vernon Barford we want all our students to know and model the habits of being True BLUES**

**B = Big Hearted**

* The habit of seeing, respecting, responding positively to the needs of others by sharing one's time, talents, and treasure. Examples = Terry Fox run, Food fundraiser, etc.

**L= Leaders**

* The habit of both seeing and accessing opportunities to provide leadership. Examples = Welcoming new to VB students, Acting as a VB mentor, In and outside of class leadership.

**U = United**

* The habit of seeing diversity as a strength and recognizing that while we are all different, we all have value and need to be respected. Helping all members of our school community be and feel valued and connected as BLUES.

**E = Engaged**

* The habit of being fully and positively present and productive in all situations. Examples = Coming to school on time, prepared, and ready to learn. Staying focused and doing one’s best to avoid and minimizing distractions for yourself and others inside and outside of class (e.g., appropriate phone use).

**S = Successful**

* The habit of having a growth mindset and trying your best in all that you do. Recognizing that trying to give your best can be a bit scary but making the choice to do it anyway. Examples = Being willing to learn new things and stretch yourself, Being honest about areas of celebration and areas in which you need help, Being willing to both give and accept help from others, Giving your best regardless of outcome or result.

**Vernon Barford - Ensuring Learning Systems**

**ENSURING LEARNING QUESTIONS AND THINGS TO CONSIDER**

* **Who are the Learners?**
  + Discover Background knowledge, Learning style, Situational confidence, Willingness to risk, Growth areas
  + Build relationships, Understand Personal Story and Interests (find ways to connect)
  + Get learners to trust you enough to risk giving their best and be honest about celebrations and challenges in an ongoing manner.
  + Model habits and attitudes of a lifelong learner. We are the lead learners.
  + Key focus at the beginning of each term. Seek both formal and informal data.
  + Access collective wisdom about how to connect with and help students
  + Use RESOLVE if/ when conflict arises (see attached).
* **What should be learned?**
  + Focus areas = Curricular learning and Positive development of the whole child
  + Goal = Ensuring that curricular knowledge, skills, and attitudes are applied to academic and real world situations in an ongoing manner. Implies building habits.
  + Sources - Program of Studies, Essential Learning Outcomes, PAT Results/ Blueprints, Ongoing analysis of student learning data (informal and formal)
  + Two aspects of planning (think about learning as a journey):
    - Long term destination (Clarity re ELO definitions, priority, time allocation, sequencing, etc.)
    - Short term steps to destination (individual steps that lead to long term. See KUDOS below)
  + Provide and Discuss collaboratively agreed upon KUDOS each day in every class. Needs to be a collective habit.
    - **K= Know** (Facts, dates, terms, definitions)
    - **U = Understand** (Concepts, Big picture, Links to real world)
    - **D = Demonstrate** (Skills students should be able to demonstrate at the end of lesson. Checked by self assessment or assessment for learning)
    - **O = Outline** (Overview of scheduled activities in point form)
    - **S = Special Days/ No Secrets** (Teacher and Students should know what they are expected to learn and to what level each day). Teach assessment as celebration.
* **What strategies promote maximal learning and retention?**
  + Passion, Enthusiasm, Curricular expertise, Willingness to work as part of a team. Desire for ongoing and never ending individual and collective improvement in all areas is foundational for classroom and school success.
  + Seek out and employ effective research based strategies from Make It Stick Book (**GMC SIRES**  in which:
    - **G** = Generation
    - **M** = Mnemonic devices
    - **C** = Calibration
    - **S** = Self Quizzing (Practice retrieving new learning from memory)
    - **I** = Interleaving (Including the study of different problem types in each memory session)
    - **R** = Reflection
    - **E** = Elaboration
    - **S** = Spacing out retrieval practice
  + Honor Brain research around learning and retention including:
    - Be clear on learning goals. Use stories and connections to real world to engage, make it personal, interesting, and relevant
    - Differentiate Instruction (varied process, products, activities, etc.)
    - Incorporate technology in an ongoing manner
    - Questioning Techniques, Wait Time, Chances for all students to respond
  + Ensure equity and positive common experience for learners through:
    - Intentional collaboration to both plan and reflect
    - Solution orientation and commitment to accessing collective wisdom
    - Loyalty to school and group decisions in public and private word and action
  + Determine final destination (Grade 9 PAT, True BLUES) then determine starting point and scaffold learning across grades to get to desired outcome
  + Use systems based approach to handle tension between need for unity and need for diversity leading to positive growth and change. Implies
    - Know what we currently do
    - Talk about possible enhancements in the group
    - Determine what strategies will be attempted
    - **Check impact on learning through evidence including formative and summative assessment review**
    - Adjust strategies as necessary
  + Allow for and build on different teacher giftings (destination remains constant but paths to destination do not have to be identical). Recognize need to be both loose and tight.
  + Learn new things, Do action research, Be willing to risk, Embrace change as the path to constant individual and collective improvement.
* **How will we know what has been learned and to what level?**
  + Build confidence and success through frequent feedback and assessment. Find ways to do this without you as teacher having to mark everything (teach kids the rubric as this will help them learn and apply it more effectively)
  + Focus on Outcomes and Levels of proficiency related to each outcome
  + Common Assessment and Assessment reporting practices across the same course. Continue to strive for educational equity.
  + Practices in courses in same area aligned with school/ departmental goals
  + Informal and Formal assessment should include:
    - Assessment For Learning – ongoing with goal of improving performance (e.g., exit pass)
    - Assessment Of Learning – End of Unit exam
    - Assessment About Learning– Confidence and willingness to risk kids feel.
    - Collection of evidence from a Variety of sources over time (Conversations, Observations, and Products)
* **What will we do if/ when learners struggle to learn or learn very quickly/ easily?**
* Desire for student success and “No Stone Left Unturned” philosophy is evident in words and actions.
* First Question = Why are they not learning? “Can't” vs “Wont”?
* Second Question = How do I modify Time - Support – Learning triangle to ensure learning (not punitive).
* Third Question = How/ When do we engage additional school, home, or community support as needed.
* Timely and ongoing encouragement and support from Peers, Teacher, Parents, School Support, Administration. Learners must see support as an expression of care and love.
* Make effective use of LEAP (Literacy, Learning, Enrichment, Application, Practice) in an ongoing manner
* Access formal supports (Grade 7 Transition team, STAR/ Grade Level Coordinators, specialized knowledge and supports inside and outside the building, etc.
* **How will we share information about the learning journey?**
  + Purpose
    - To enhance and stimulate further learning
    - To expose and prepare students for future realities (e.g., Career job descriptions)
    - To include parents and students as partners
    - To meet EPSB Assessment Plan requirements
  + One interim reports at midpoint of each term via school zone. One formal progress report at the end of each term.
  + Curricular connections visible and reflected in assessment
  + Organized around Essential Learning Outcomes
    - Organized around Essential Learning Outcomes (not tasks or behaviors)
    - Ongoing search for evidence of learning level using Marzano 1-4 scale. Final exams serve as additional evidence and need to be reported accordingly
    - **Use Professional judgment** based on all evidence collected
    - Employ Outcome Based Assessment in line with school and departmental agreements. See separate “Reporting agreements to date” document.
  + Clear Alignment Evident = Course outline -> Course delivery -> Course Assessment -> Assessment reporting.
  + Honor EPSB guidelines regarding informing parents in advance when sexual or religious topics will be addressed.

**Vernon Barford - Ensuring Learning Systems**

**RESOLVE**

**ROCKS IN THE SHOE**

* Are a reality in any group. Are painful but will usually not kill us (Remember the difference between an Inconvenience and a Problem)
* Only get more painful and harder to treat if ignored or treated incorrectly
* Require action to be resolved
* Even if positive action is taken, it takes time for healing to occur
* Begin by employing 24/ 48 hour rule so that you can provide a response that considers multiple points of view and allows for effective resolution (vs simply venting or expressing frustration). If something is bothering you take 24 hours before you respond. If you leave something more than 48 hours, then let it go.

**RESOLVE**

**R** = Right Motives and Assumptions

* Believe the best of each other
* See differences as making us stronger

**E** = Ensure confidentiality

* My role = Talk to the person directly
* Faculty member role = Support direct person to person conversations

**S** = Seek first to understand

* What actually happened?
* Why does it bother me?
* What are the various points of view?
* What are possible, realistic, win-win solutions?

**O** = Right opportunity

* Right time (Consider the other person and myself)
* Right Place (One on one with time)

**L** = Lead with love and appreciation (I love/ appreciate that you…)

**V** = Right Vehicle/ Format

* Confirm agreements (Could we agree that we are both want what is best for students?)
* Right Message (“When this happened I felt/feel” vs “You did”
* Right Messenger (Is it me?, Admin? Or??)

**E** = Ensure we continue to build relationships

* Love Dare (Get closer/Get to know vs Pull away)
* Deliberately honor and value each other in an ongoing manner
* Speak the truth with love in private, stand united around agreements in public