



# BROCKLEHURST MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Dear Grade 7 Students and Parents,

Schools in British Columbia are exploring innovative ways to provide learning opportunities for students through **Project Based Learning**: a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. In addition, the Ministry of Education is seeking to incorporate Aboriginal education into lesson plans and learning activities for all students.

Here at Brock, we are following the lead of some innovative schools in BC. For the past two years, we have run a program called Explorations, in which a cohort of grade eight students learned through the combining of Science, Socials, and English curriculum areas in a project-based format. Next school year, we would like to expand on this program, and provide a class called TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge). This program will incorporate the First Peoples Principles of Learning and hands-on cultural activities that cover the curricular competencies of English 8, Social Studies 8, and Science 8.

**What does this look like?** Four blocks – two each day – will be spent investigating, problem solving, and collaborating. A medicine wheel approach to learning, in which circles, talking groups, elder-student dialogue, and mentors will guide the activities and instruction.

**What kind of projects will students be doing?** The main project, that will be the basis for much of the core instruction and curriculum, will be carving a traditional Secwepemc dugout canoe. Student interest and inquiries will guide other smaller projects throughout the year, and will be infused with Aboriginal content and history.

**Why would students and parents take this opportunity?** This is a departure from the traditional classroom setting. There will be time spent in the classroom, but there will be an equal emphasis on application outside of the classroom. Students will build relationships with community members while celebrating and honouring the aboriginal culture. By applying their skills and knowledge in new, interdisciplinary situations, and by placing focus on “doing”, learners will develop competencies such as:

Critical thinking and problem-solving

Collaborations and leadership

Communication and digital literacy

Personal and social responsibility

Creativity and innovation

Global and cultural understanding

**What are your questions?** Please forward any questions to [cfineley@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:cfineley@sd73.bc.ca) or [vmochikas@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:vmochikas@sd73.bc.ca)