



**Board/Authority Authorized Course  
Vernon Secondary School  
BAA Peer Assisted Learning 12**

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| <b>School District/Independent School Authority Name:</b><br>Vernon School District | <b>School District/Independent School Authority Number (e.g. SD43, Authority #432):</b><br>SD#22 |
| <b>Developed by:</b><br>Andrea Shiiler                                              | <b>Date Developed:</b><br>March 31, 2016                                                         |
| <b>Superintendent Approval Date (for School Districts only):</b><br>June 3, 2019    | <b>Superintendent Signature (for School Districts only):</b>                                     |
| <b>Board/Authority Approval Date:</b>                                               | <b>Board/Authority Chair Signature:</b>                                                          |
| <b>Course Name:</b><br>Peer Assisted Learning (PALS) 12                             | <b>Grade Level of Course:</b><br>12                                                              |
| <b>Number of Course Credits:</b><br>4                                               | <b>Number of Hours of Instruction:</b><br>120                                                    |

**Board/Authority Prerequisite(s):** Peer Assisted Learning 11

**Special Training, Facilities or Equipment Required:** None

**Course Synopsis:** Peer Assisted Learning (PALs) 12 is grounded in the evidence-based practice of Peer Mediation Instruction & Intervention (PMII) and equips senior students with the skills and knowledge needed to successfully include peers with autism and other disabilities in their schools and communities. Students will develop communication, coaching, peer-mediation strategies, leadership, role-modeling, conflict management and ecologically valid social skills. They will gain an awareness and improved understanding of the diversity of students with special needs (e.g. autism, intellectual disability, ADHD), along with specific strategies for supporting successful social interactions with these students.

**Goals and Rationale:****Goals**

Develop an understanding and awareness of the diverse needs of peers with social challenges.

Develop knowledge and skills to interact successfully with individuals with diverse needs at school and in the community.

Develop the knowledge and skills required to advocate for and support students with diverse needs in the school community.

Develop critical thinking skills and thoughtful observation as related to building a community where everyone is recognized and celebrated for their strengths and individuality.

**Rationale:**

Given the increased diversity found in academic classrooms today, further specialized training and support will ensure typical peers are successful and feel supported in their journey of including students with diverse needs in their communities. Research supports equipping peers with Peer Mediation, Intervention & Instruction (PMII) strategies to interact with and support students with ASD, in terms of positive outcomes for both typical peers and those with disabilities. Benefits for typical students may include "higher grades, improved academic performance, enhanced personal growth, increased awareness of disability issues, development of new friendships and interest in pursuing careers in special education," (Hughes & Carter, 2008, p. 9) health, and social work. Other benefits include lasting friendships, a sense of accomplishment and personal growth, appreciation for diversity and individual differences, increased self-confidence and responsibility, and additional attention and feedback from adults (Carter, Cushing & Kennedy, 2009)

"Merely increasing proximity to peers without disabilities does not lead to increased social interactions for students with ASD. Instead, research suggests planned intervention efforts are needed to ensure the opportunities and supports are in place that set the occasion for peer interaction and shared learning (Hochman, Carter, Bottema-Beutel, Harvey & Gustafson, 2015, p. 96). Benefits for students with disabilities include enhanced social perception, increased acceptance into peer groups, and increased opportunities to practice skills in natural, real-life settings (Thiemann & Kamps, 2008). Not only are typical peers more plentiful than adults in our schools, but they are also better positioned to use and practice ecologically valid social skills, conversation skills, and increase reciprocal social interactions overall (Cole, 2015).

Successful delivery of PMII requires training and follow-up support time with peers supporting target peers. Also central to the outlined PALs model is that peers help to set goals for the number and type of interactions, rather than rely on teacher or para-professional prompts to interact, meaning the interventions are well-planned and systematic. Engaging peers to be actively involved in the process increases the number of overall interactions both in class and during unstructured times, and it also increases the "likelihood that such behavior will generalize across people, settings and time (Hughes et al., 2013, p. 2).

**First Peoples Principles of Learning:**

As a PAL'S leader/ student, learning is reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place). Learning involves patience and time (e.g. PALS students must get to know their peers before setting goals, progress may be slow, but it will better meet student needs). Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions (e.g. PALS students will understand their role in the bigger picture of including students with ASD and other social challenges in the school community). Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities (e.g. PALS students may be paired with younger peers or those who are more vulnerable or socially delayed). Becoming a PALS leader/ student involves recognizing that some learning is sensitive and should only be shared with permission and in certain situations (e.g. diagnoses, confidential information).

**Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives:**

A Positive, Learner-Centered Approach (both PALS students and their peers' needs inform the goals, strategies, content)

Flexibility (scheduling, program/ course configuration, grouping); PALS can be offered within the timetable or outside of the timetable depending on student needs/ preference, groupings will be varied and diverse

Community Engagement (PALS asks students to reflect on their communities and how to better engage and include students with diverse social challenges)

Experiential Learning (while the training portion of the content is teacher driven, the learning takes place in large part as PALS students apply their learning to real contexts with their peers, for example examining how to more effectively include a target student in a Science 10 class)

**BIG IDEAS**

|                                                                                  |                                                                             |                                                                     |                                                                                            |                                                                                                  |
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| Communication and social interactions are shaped by the ability to self-regulate | Individuals with ASD benefit from successful social interactions with peers | Learning about those with diverse needs helps me learn about myself | We each have a role in accepting and including people with diverse needs in our community. | Increased mental health awareness can positively impact social and emotional health and wellness |
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## Learning Standards

| Curricular Competencies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| <p><b><i>Students are expected to do the following:</i></b></p> <p>Reflect on their own skills and awareness of students with diverse needs in their community</p> <p>Demonstrate 3-5 strategies to elicit reciprocal conversation in target peers</p> <p>Be able to repeat, clarify, or explain in another way if peer does not understand</p> <p>Be able to redirect repetitive conversation, as well as initiate conversations</p> <p>Use person first language in everyday conversation</p> <p>Design goals related to learning track implementation and reflect on the success/failure of their peer support plan</p> <p>Implement monitor, and adjust a plan to support social success in target peer, and assess the results with little to no adult intervention</p> <p>Analyze assumptions and beliefs, and consider views which do not fit with them</p> <p>Develop criteria to help target peer reflect on their learning and achievement</p> <p>Discuss and explore concepts related to social justice &amp; disability</p> <p>Use self-assessment and reflection to develop awareness of peers' strengths, preferences and skills</p> <p>Help create an atmosphere of respect within the class and school as a whole</p> <p>Develop a strong working relationship with the sponsor teacher and peer</p> | <p><b><i>Students are expected to know the following:</i></b></p> <p>Characteristics, strengths, and needs of students with autism (ASD) and others with social difficulties</p> <p>Signs to watch for in peers who are struggling socially</p> <p>Principles of peer mediated instruction and intervention</p> <p>Communication skills necessary for supporting peers</p> <p>Signs and symptoms of adolescent wellness and mental illness</p> <p>Strategies and resource for supporting mental wellness in self and others</p> <p>Steps and process for using a variety of ecologically valid social skills so that they can teach the skill to peers</p> <p>Procedures and expectations around confidential handling of sensitive information</p> <p>Principles and rationale behind person first language</p> <p>Principles of inclusion</p> <p>Characteristics of a leader, coach, role model, and friend</p> <p>Strategies to initiate, engage, and support students with social difficulties in the school community.</p> |

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| <p>Evaluate personal attributes, characteristics, and skills in relation to role as a<br/>PALs</p> <p>Student but also evaluate attributes, characteristics, and skills of their target<br/>peer/s identify strengths and areas for growth</p> <p>Take initiative and demonstrate confidence in navigating social interactions with<br/>target peer</p> |  |
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## Big Ideas – Elaborations

**Self-regulate** e.g. controlling one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts in the pursuit of long-term and social goals

**Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning:**

Should individuals with ASD change to fit societal norms?

What does it mean to really listen?

How does self-regulation (good or poor) affect social interactions?

How do our communications and interactions represent who and how we want to be in the world?

**Individuals with ASD benefit from successful social interactions:** e.g. students with ASD learn social skills best from direct instruction and contextual practice with peers; having one or two close friends predict later adjustment in life, can buffer the impact of stressful life events, correlates positively with self-esteem, independence; correlates negatively with depression and anxiety

**Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning:**

How can we increase opportunities for students with ASD to practice social skills/ successful social communication social communication?

What is my role in creating opportunities for others?

**Diverse needs:** e.g. everyone is unique and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. Embracing Diversity is about recognizing and valuing differences.

**Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning.**

What is my story?

What am I getting out of this class?

How do we capitalize on strengths and interests to help make meaningful contributions in the world?

How does language change how we see ourselves, or people with disabilities (e.g. person first language)?

How is diversity expressed in my school and community?

**A role in accepting and including people with diverse**

**Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning.**

How can I help make my classroom/ school community more inclusive?

How can we create more inclusive communities?

Why should we care?

What makes a good advocate?

How can we make a difference in the lives of others?

Does inclusion work?

**Social and emotional health and wellness:** e.g. coping skills, healthy relationships, self-care, risk assessment and decision making

**Sample questions to support inquiry-based learning.**

What does it mean to be emotionally well?

How can I take care of my mental health?

## Curricular Competencies – Elaborations

**Reciprocal conversation:** Students with ASD and other social difficulties often have difficulty initiating and ending conversations in appropriate ways, and in maintaining turn-taking; peers benefit from learning and applying proven strategies to elicit reciprocal conversations, as they are often not comfortable doing so either, especially with those with diverse needs

**Person First language:** The language we use to refer to persons with disabilities shapes our beliefs and ideas about them. Words are powerful; old, inaccurate, and Person inappropriate First descriptors Language: perpetuate negative stereotypes and attitudinal barriers. When we describe people by their labels of medical diagnoses, we devalue and disrespect them as individuals. In contrast, using thoughtful terminology can foster positive attitudes about persons with disabilities.

**Peer support plan:** Peers will observe target peers in their class and generate ideas to support them through various aspects of their classes, e.g. What are the student's primary goals for this class? What happens at the beginning of class before instruction begins? What happens when there are lectures or large group instruction? What happens when there are small group activities?

## Content – Elaborations

**Characteristics functioning skills, of rigidity, students with inflexibility, autism and common others with social issues, the difficulties:** spectrum e.g. of ASD acceptance and understanding, cognitive processing differences, executive functioning skills, rigidity, inflexibility, common sensory issues, the spectrum of ASD.

**Signs anxiety, to watch frustration, for in peers:** bullying, e.g. voice fitting in, prosody literal/ concrete sensory thinking, perspective taking, theory of mind, reciprocal interactions, topics of interest, social filters, anxiety frustration, bullying, voice prosody

**Principles structure of and peer scaffolding mediated instruction and intervention:** e.g. peers as experts, increased opportunities for natural social interactions and generalization; careful structure and scaffolding

Communication with skills. -diverse e.g. needs components of active listening, interpersonal and communication skills and reciprocal conversation strategies needed to support students with diverse needs

Signs illnesses and such symptoms of bipolar, adolescent anxiety, dual wellness and diagnoses, mental the link illness; between strategies poor to social support networks e.g. for drugs young and adults alcohol, with peer ASD pressure, and the depression, increased risk suicide, of mental illness such as bipolar, anxiety dual diagnosis, the link between poor social networks for young adults with ASD and the increased risk of mental illness; co-morbidity; self-care, community resources, sleep, hygiene, electronics

Steps and process for using a variety of ecologically valid social skills so that they can teach the skill to peers: e.g. reciprocal conversations, applying a social filter, joining and exiting conversations, handling minor conflict, the social take

**Person first language:** e.g. history self-evaluation, understanding the person comes before disability

**Principles of inclusion:** e.g. the right to receive a public education in the regular classroom, that inclusive education benefits students' needs and their peers, each student is unique and needs an individualized approach to education to meet his or her intellectual, physical, social and emotional career development goals, student participation in all aspects of school life is vital to a rich education experience, importance of "doing with" rather than "doing to"

**Characteristics of a leader, coach, role model, and friend:** e.g. outline role differences and decide which will be the best way to engage with peers. Strategies to initiate, engage and support students with social difficulties in the school community. E.g. Finding common interests, asking leading questions, using appropriate humor, coaching, look for ways to include them in small group interactions, connecting outside of the class.

**Recommended Instructional Components:**

**After school Training/ Direct Instruction:** includes time for sharing new strategies, topics for conversation, data collection review (4-5 weeks)

**Monday Support Block/ Lunch Period:** Individual time to check in with sponsor teacher and complete reflections, goal setting and other assignments during assigned PALs block or over lunch

**Throughout the Week:** Support target peer with strategies, record progress

**Instructional methods:**

Direct instruction

Ecologically valid social skills training (e.g. participate in PEERS Curriculum)

Role play demonstrations/ Scenarios/ Interactive instruction/ Modelling

Coaching with Performance Feedback

Guided reading of articles relevant to peer mediated support

Online module(s) -AFIRM modules for PMII

Experiential learning

Reflective writing

**Recommended Assessment Components: Ensure alignment with the Principles of Quality Assessment****Post-Assessment:**

is fair, transparent, meaningful and responsive to all learners

focuses on all three components of the curriculum model - knowing, doing, understanding

provides ongoing descriptive feedback to students

is ongoing, timely, specific, and embedded in day-to-day instruction

provides varied and multiple opportunities for learners to demonstrate their learning

involves student in their learning

promotes development of student self-assessment and goal setting for next steps in learning

allows for a collection of student work to be gathered over time to provide a full profile of the learner and learning

communicates clearly to the learner and parents where the student is, what they are working towards and the ways that learning can be supported

**Examples of Assessment:**

Pre and post assessment rating scales (PEERS Curriculum)

Attendance and participation, e.g. in teacher facilitated discussion

Teacher observations

Logbook/ journaling

Peer assessment

Self-assessment

Exit interview

Social validation criteria - has there been a benefit to what students have learned in the course?

Has target peer demonstrated improvement in social literacy or successful social interactions?

**Learning Resources:**

AFIRM (Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules) Retrieved from: <http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/node/137>

Mental Health Clinician guest speaker to learn about teens issues including drugs and alcohol, peer pressure, depression and suicide.

Appropriate community referral processes and emergency services are discussed, and information shared with students, via bulletin boards, classroom visitations, and individual contact. Time is spent learning about mental illnesses such as bipolar, generalized anxiety disorder, and schizophrenia to reduce the stigma attached to some of these illnesses.

Social Scripts/ Written Cues/ Visual Supports for initiating and sustaining Conversations (AFIRM)

Progress monitoring and self-monitoring forms adapted from AFIRM

Weekly peer reflection form adapted from VSS Peer Tutoring program

Access to internet, videos, articles regarding ASD, mental health resources (e.g. Kelt Mental Health Resource Centre, CYMH)

The PEERS curriculum for school-based professionals. Social skills training for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder

Peer buddy programs for successful secondary school inclusion

**References:**

Carter, E.W., Cushing, L. S., & Kennedy, C. H. (2009). Peer support strategies for improving all students' social lives and learning. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Cole, C. L. (2015). Peer-mediated intervention for social communication difficulties in adolescents with autism: Literature review and research recommendations. *International Journal of Medical, Health, Biomedical, Bioengineering and Pharmaceutical Engineering*, 9(4), 347-350.

Hochman, J. M., Carter, E.W., Bottema-Beutel, K., Harvey, M. N., & Gustafson, J. R. (2015). Efficacy of peer networks to increase social connections among high school students with and without autism spectrum disorder *Exceptional Children*, 82(1 ), 96-116. doi: 10.1177/0014402915585482

Hughes, C., & Carter, E. W (2008). Peer buddy programs for successful secondary school inclusion. Baltimore, MD: Paul H Brookes.

Hughes, C., Harvey, M , Cosgriff, J., Reilly, C., Heilingoetter, J., Brigham, N., Kaplan, L., & Bernstein, R. (2013). A peer delivered social interaction intervention for high school students with autism. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 38(1), 1-16.

Laugeson, E. (2014). The PEERS curriculum for school-based professionals: Social skills training for adolescents with autism spectrum disorder. New York, NY: Routledge.

Thiemann, K., & Kamps, D. (2008). Promoting social-communicative competence of children with autism in integrated environments. In R. L. Simpson & B. S. Myles (Eds), *Educating children and youth with autism: Strategies for effective practice*, 2nd ed, (pp. 267-298). Austin, TX: Pro-ed.



Ministry of  
Education

## BOARD/AUTHORITY AUTHORIZED (BAA) COURSE FORM

### PART A: BAA COURSE VERIFICATION STATEMENT - To be completed by District Superintendent, Independent School or Offshore School Principal

Prior to submitting the attached BAA Course Framework to the Board/Authority for approval, I Joe Rogers, Superintendent verify that I have reviewed the BAA Course to ensure that it is fully compliant with the *School Act* (if offered by a Board or Offshore School), the *Independent School Act* (if offered by an Independent School Authority), the *Board Authorized Course Order*, policy document *Board/Authority Authorized Courses: Requirements and Procedures*, and for ELL courses the ELL Guidelines: *Template for BAA Language Acquisition/Culture Courses*.

By signing below, I verify that the BAA Course:

- is not preparatory, remedial, or modified
- does not significantly overlap with current provincial curriculum
- name reflects the subject area and includes the grade level
- assigned grade level reflects the appropriate level of instruction
- credit value appropriately reflects the length and scope of the course
- synopsis clearly outlines what a student has gained when the course is completed
- rationale outlines the reasons for wanting to offer opportunities to study the course
- organizational structure outlines the specific topics, units or modules which include the learning outcomes, instruction and assessment components, and time allotments
- learning outcomes are assessable and observable and can be understood by students and parents
- instructional component clarifies learning outcomes and provides a range of pedagogical opportunities
- assessment component provides formative and summative opportunities to assess student achievement
- learning resources are age appropriate, support learning outcomes and diversity of learning rates and styles.

Course Name Peer Assisted Learning (PALs) Grade 12 Course Code

School District Name and Number 22 (Vernon)

Independent School Name and School Number

Name of District Superintendent/Independent or Offshore School Principal Joe Rogers, Superintendent of

Signature [Signature] Date 06/19/2019

### PART B: BAA COURSE AUTHORIZATION STATEMENT - To be completed by Board/Authority Chair or Designate

A signed copy of this document must be submitted to the Student Certification Branch. The original document and accompanying BAA Course Framework must be retained by the district/school for submission to the Ministry upon request.  
(Board Authorized Course Order, M285/04, s. 3; Educational Standards Order, M41/91, s. 5 (2)(c))

Name of Board/Authority Chair or Designate Robert Lee, Board Chair

Signature [Signature] Date 06/19/2019

I declare that this BAA course is approved by the Board/Authority

### PART C: FOR INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS ONLY BAA INSPECTOR CONFIRMATION

To be completed by Inspector of Independent Schools or Designate during regular inspection/monitoring visit

A signed copy of this document (Parts A and C) must be retained for submission to the Ministry upon request.

The BAA course noted above is fully compliant with the *Independent School Act* and the BC Ministry of Education requirements outlined in the policy document *Board/Authority Authorized Courses: Requirements and Procedures*. (Educational Standards Order, M41/91, s. 5(2)(c))

Name Inspector of Independent Schools or Designate

Signature Date

Send Completed Form to Student Certification Branch  
Email [student.certification@gov.bc.ca](mailto:student.certification@gov.bc.ca)

Revised October 26, 2016