



University
of Victoria

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

AAREN TOPLEY

BA (University of Victoria, 2015)

**“Sprouting School Gardens: Assessing the Development and
Sustainable Use of School Gardens in Victoria”**

Social Dimensions of Health

Tuesday, November 27, 2018
10:30 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B017

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Patti-Jean Naylor, School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, University of
Victoria (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Trevor Hancock, School of Public Health and Social Policy, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Jennifer Black, Faculty of Land and Food Systems, UBC (Outside Member)

External Examiner:

Ms. Meghan Day, Population and Public Health, BC Ministry of Health

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Jonathan Clapperton, Department of History, UVic

Abstract

School gardens are a place to increase food literacy and food system education, empowering students to take control over their own health and food system. The core components of sustainable school gardens use have been identified within the literature. This study aimed to describe school gardens in School District 61 (SD61) on South Vancouver Island and explore what school stakeholders identified as important to supporting their school garden and what elements of sustainable garden integration were present. To address these questions a school garden survey and observation tool was adapted by a stakeholder group from existing instruments and administered to 24 schools in SD61. Sixteen schools completed the survey, and there were 22 garden observations conducted. Descriptive statistics were used to explore the data. The analysis showed that 8 out of 16 school gardens were well integrated into their school but could use more support in some sustainability areas. Overall, SD61 could offer further organizational and physical infrastructure, resources, and support to strengthen the institutionalization of gardens. Further research is required, specifically on the surveying, monitoring and evaluation of gardens in order to make continued adjustments to program delivery to ensure their use and longevity.