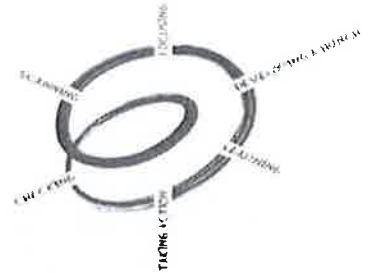




## School Growth Plan 2020 – 2021

# Cassie Hall Elementary



### Mission Statement

It is our mission at Cassie Hall Elementary School to offer all learners an instructional program of the highest quality, in a caring and safe environment. In partnership with parents and the community, we as a team, will continue to build an educational climate that enhances the development of self-esteem, a love for learning and a respect for self, others and the land.

Our motto:

**Back to Basics, Back to the Land**

## Our Code of Conduct

### Cassie Hall ROCKS

- R** Respect ourselves, others, and the land.
- O** Own our words and our actions responsibly.
- C** Cooperate with one another.
- K** Kindness shown towards others.
- S** Safety in our work and our play.

## Demographics

Cassie Hall Elementary is a kindergarten to grade six school that is located on Tsimshian Territory. Our neighbourhood is culturally and socio-economically diverse.

We currently have 167 learners and 29 staff members including classroom teachers, resource teachers, arts education teacher, counsellor, librarian, educational assistants, First Nation Support Workers, Food Coordinator, Strong Start coordinator, secretary, custodians, noon hour supervisors and administrators. Our learners are made up of 75% First Nations including Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Haida, Haisla, Tahltan, Metis and Gitksan.

16% of our learners receive additional services for ELL (English Language Learners)

17% have Ministry Designations and receive support with social/emotional, physical/health and/or learning needs

We have a significant rate of transiency. Many of our current learners were new to Cassie Hall for the 2019-2020 school year. Included in this movement are former learners returning to Cassie Hall.

We are very proud of our school and the accomplishments that our learners have made. Making connections with our learners and their families is a real focus in our day to day work. There is a definite team approach that we take in engaging our learners and ensuring that personalized learning is at the heart of our work together.

## Program Strengths

- \* A caring, supportive staff that works collaboratively to foster the development of all of the core competencies (communication, thinking and personal and social competency) that our learners need to be successful in and out of school.
- \* A common Literacy Framework (CAFE) to support our learners with a common language.
- \* Literacy Stations with 3 adults per classroom (K-3) for 55 minutes daily. Literacy instruction with 2 adults per classroom for all intermediate classes.
- \* Literacy Blitz Room that provides additional support for approximately 30% of our learners. Support is provided for 30 minutes per day per child with a small group instruction. Instruction is targeted to phonological awareness, reading, writing and oral language needs.
- \* Teacher Librarian led writing instruction following the CAFÉ framework for each class.
- \* School-wide assessment for phonological awareness skills. The data is used to inform instruction and plan for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.
- \* A Library that is filled with rich, engaging and culturally relevant literature. The library program supports all classes with their reading programs with weekly lessons. Our focus has been on reading "Good Fit Books" that children choose for themselves and providing time and explicit instruction to increase their strategies.
- \* PALS program for families of our kindergarten learners and their families.
- \* Small group numeracy support provided by one of our Resource Teachers.
- \* Numeracy Blitz support, that provides additional support for Number Sense.
- \* Cultural celebrations that include feasts, a study of the Tsimshian seasonal rounds, Aboriginal Day celebrations, and culturally relevant materials embedded into classroom practice.
- \* Focus on healthy living with daily physical activity provided by the classroom teacher.

*Adapted from Dr. Judy Halbert and Dr. Linda Kaser "Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality"*

- \* A healthy foods program that provides breakfast, snacks and lunch to our learners. The BC Fruit and Vegetable Program, the School Milk Program and the Kermode Friendship Society Soup Program also encourage healthy eating.
- \* Opportunities for learning outside of the school that include trips to the community garden, involvement in the Salmonid Enhancement program, the trades shops at Caledonia, Ferry Island, Kitselas Canyon, Shames Mountain to ski, forestry field trips, neighbourhood walks, local farm visits, swimming pool, various hiking spots, community garden, plant walks, the Terrace Public Library.
- \* Outdoor School. Our Kindergarten teachers take their learners off campus once per week for 3 months to learn about Forest, Farm, Stream, and Garden.
- \* A supportive PAC that plays an important role in helping to make our school community safe and caring. They have assisted with events including hot lunches, movie nights, installation of new playground equipment, Aboriginal Day celebrations, pancake breakfasts, turkey lunches, school garden, school feast and bike rodeo.
- \* A Strong Start Program that provides play-based learning activities for our families with young children from birth to 5.
- \* Ready Set Learn events including school tours, information sessions, PLAY 4 READiness Open Houses and a Welcome to Kindergarten. These events target our 3 and 4 year olds and their families.
- \* A "Back to the Land" garden project that is intended to engage all learners in building and maintaining a school garden.

## Scanning

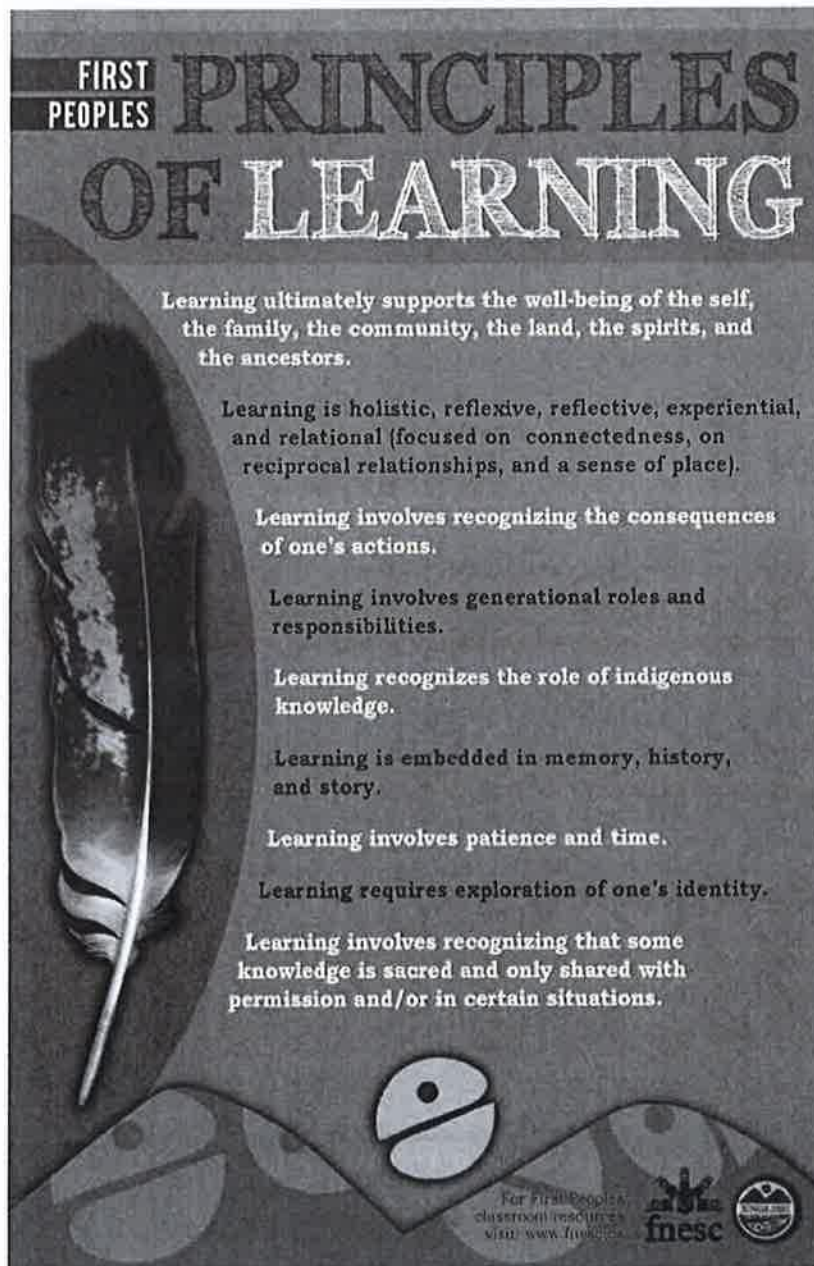
On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, we had a wonderful opportunity for our District in-service day to collaborate with the staff on a topic that is very relevant to our school demographics. That topic is trauma informed practices in the classroom. We started out with a power point (see **Additional Documents** on the last page), that first explained what trauma is caused by such as; accidents, sexual exploitation, child abuse, and harmful social conditions, to name a few.

We then went into an in-depth discussion in small groups around: specific traumas that our students have or are experiencing, what are some of the things we already do at our school/classrooms that might work as trauma informed practices and what are some new ideas we can try?

The staff did a great job of formulating ideas, understanding the traumas that our students experience, and figuring ways to help our school population.

## Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Our school continued to focus on increasing understanding of identity and giving all of our learners a stronger sense of place. Expanding on our locally developed Tsimshian Seasonal Rounds program, we began to dig deeper into appreciating the rich culture of the traditional territory that our school is located on. We have made a strong connection to the Kitsumkalum community to verify and seek advice on ensuring what we are doing culturally in our schools is authentic and true to the Tsimshian ways. Imbedded into the learning were the First Peoples Principles of Learning. Each classroom will also have the Tsimshian Law displayed to better understand the Tsimshian ways of Respect and Honour. (see **Additional Documents** on the last page)



*Adapted from Dr. Judy Halbert and Dr. Linda Kaser "Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality"*

- \* The SWW will be marked by another teacher to encourage more objectivity
- \* Learn about the Story Grammar Marker (SGM) program and practice using it from K to 6 (younger students can start by thinking of stories orally and be scribed when possible)
- \* Have the teacher librarian review the SGM when classes visit the library

## **Developing a Hunch**

### **Our hunch is that:**

~ our students will benefit from learning how to be in nature and will realize how therapeutic being outdoors can be.

### **Our hunch is that:**

~ if we provide our students with the opportunity to socialize with their peers and the adults in the school that they will be more prepared for day to day challenges in that they will have communication tools to deal with conflicts, should they arise.

### **Our hunch is that:**

~ our students will notice a sharp increase in positive, kind, and uplifting adult interaction during their "Blitz wee" which will lead them to realize that they can trust and go to all adults in the school for help.

### **Our hunch is that:**

~ if our students have the SGM as a tool for writing and they are introduced to it starting in kindergarten, their writing success will flourish in the older grades.

## **Professional Learning**

- \* We will invite guests to our staff meetings on occasion to share their expertise and ideas around trauma-informed practices.
- \* We will utilize You Tube, Ted Talks, and Brene Brown videos to share positive messages to our staff throughout the year.
- \* We will share relevant materials with our students around self-esteem, positive relationships, and empathy throughout the year.
- \* We will invite [REDACTED] to guide our learning around the Story Grammar Marker tool and how to bring it into the classroom.

## **Taking Action**

We believe that through a collaborative approach that has "all hands on deck" for all learners, we can better meet the needs of our learners.

Our plans for the 2020-2021 school year include:

EMPATHY, UNDERSTANDING, VULNERABILITY AND COMMUNICATION

## Focusing

### Guiding our Practice – Trauma-Informed Practices with a focus on EMPATHY

We learned from our collaborative scanning as a staff that 64% of the grade one to six students have experienced or are experiencing some form of trauma. We have yet to learn about our new students coming into kindergarten as well as our new registration students' stories. We learned a lot from the Brene Brown's video on *Daring Classrooms* and the difference between empathy and sympathy and also the difference between humiliation and shame. Based on what we learned, discussed and collaborated about in the morning session, the staff felt well-equipped to decide on what our focuses could be for the year.

#### NATURE, KINDESS, AND ADULT/STUDENT CONNECTIONS

**Focus 1** – We noticed that when students get time to socialize freely within class time, with both peers and staff, that it is more likely that a positive connection will be established. Peers will get to know one another and staff can make a meaningful connection with students and share their story and learn more about the student's stories. We commit to:

- \* Making time in class for social communication and collaboration
- \* Establish "buddy classes" where primary classes connect with intermediate classes to do activities in their classes and around the school

**Focus 2** – The staff felt that a good way to regulate and ground our students with trauma would be to get out in nature. We feel it would be beneficial for our students to experience a variety of ways to experience nature in a variety of settings as a class and as a school. We commit to:

- \* Utilize the garden as a school, growing flowers, vegetables, and harvesting in the fall
- \* Using the Seasonal Rounds format to get outdoors picking berries, campfire salmon cookouts, picking rosehips, and going on plant walks
- \* Going on hikes/walks as a class or as a school

**Focus 3** – The staff felt that many of our students with trauma go unnoticed if they are the quiet, shy type. Or, alternately, they may be the kind of student who acts out and often receives only negative attention. In order to address this concern, we decided as a staff to connect positively and with kindness to all of the students who have or are experiencing trauma. We commit to:

- \* Choose five students at random to put on our *Cassie Hall ROCKS* bulletin board in the hallway to be recognized school-wide
- \* Every staff meeting there will be a permanent section on the agenda for *Kid Talk* where the staff can learn about students that are going through a difficult time and remember to look out for them in the hallway

#### ACADEMIC

**Focus 4** – The staff felt that they would like an academic goal included in the school growth plan and decided on the need for a writing goal. The School Wide Write (SWW) marks compared to the Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA) data aren't consistent in the results. It is important to have consistency in both assessments. In order to do this, the SWW needs to follow the guidelines set out by Adrienne Gear's *Writing Power*. We commit to:

- \* Following the 3-step writing process as outlined by Adrienne Gear

*Adapted from Dr. Judy Halbert and Dr. Linda Kaser "Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality"*

## Checking

- \* **Spending time in nature:** track the times that classes and the school spend time in nature. Informally track behaviours, good news stories, and teacher feedback, as well as observation.
- \* **Informal Conversations:** staff will informally report their positive, social interactions with students, and observations will be made to see if there are more interactions between *all* staff and students.
- \* **Positive Blitzing:** we will get a feel for how students are feeling about themselves and staff can share how they positively influenced the 5 students of the week.
- \* **Story Grammar Marker:** we will get an idea if the SGM program is helping to generate story ideas based on the first SWW in comparison to the final SWW of the year.

School Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. Wallace", written over a horizontal line.

*Additional Documents on the next page as mentioned in the document.*

### **Additional Documents**

- \* The following PDFs are the posters to display in each classroom: A Tsimshian Law ~ Respect and Honour.
- \* The following link brings you to the PowerPoint we shared with the staff at the 2019 District in-service around trauma-informed practices.

[https://cmsdbcca-my.sharepoint.com/personal/1453\\_cmsd\\_bc\\_ca/Documents/Trauma%20Informed%20Practice%20district%20in-service.pptx?web=1](https://cmsdbcca-my.sharepoint.com/personal/1453_cmsd_bc_ca/Documents/Trauma%20Informed%20Practice%20district%20in-service.pptx?web=1)