



Hazelton Secondary School School Growth Plan 2020 – 2021

OUR QUESTION:

How can we continue to improve the culture and climate in the school to positively affect growth in the areas of school/student pride, efficacy, academics and cultural identity?

1. **School:** Our mission at Hazelton Secondary is to create a community of lifelong learners who are respectful, responsible, and successful citizens of the society in which we live.
 - Hazelton Secondary is a grade 8-12 school in the Hazeltons.
 - It offers a range of academic and elective programs, including Gitksan Language and Culture, Introduction to Trades, our Game Changer Program (self-paced learning), a Life Skills program, French Immersion, Fine Arts, and business and marketing run through our new school based restaurant.
 - The school community is comprised of several small townships and seven reserves from two separate nations: the Gitksan and the Wet'suwet'en; students come to HSS from three district elementary schools and four independent schools.
 - We have a diverse student population with multifaceted skill sets. Our students have a wonderful sense of humor. Our students want to make connections with adults in the building.
 - Ninety percent of our students travel to school by bus; over half of those spend an hour on a school bus each day.
 - The student population is projected to be approximately 370 students, 90% of whom are First Nations.
 - 50% percent of our students can be identified as "at-risk" or "in-risk".
 - 27% of our students are Ministry-identified.
 - Unemployment remains high in the area and there is a lack of resources which has added to the socioeconomic problems within the communities.
 - We need to provide opportunities for our teachers to socialize with

2. **Scanning:** What's going on for your learners? How do you know?

⇒ *What student achievement evidence are you looking at? Include the evidence (non-student specific, i.e. Benchmarks, School Wide Writes, DMA (Island Net Math), Literacy 10 and Numeracy 10 assessments, 6-Year Completion)*

- Evidence of student achievement is based on School Wide Writes, Island Net Math, and the most recent 6-year Completion rates.

Figure 1

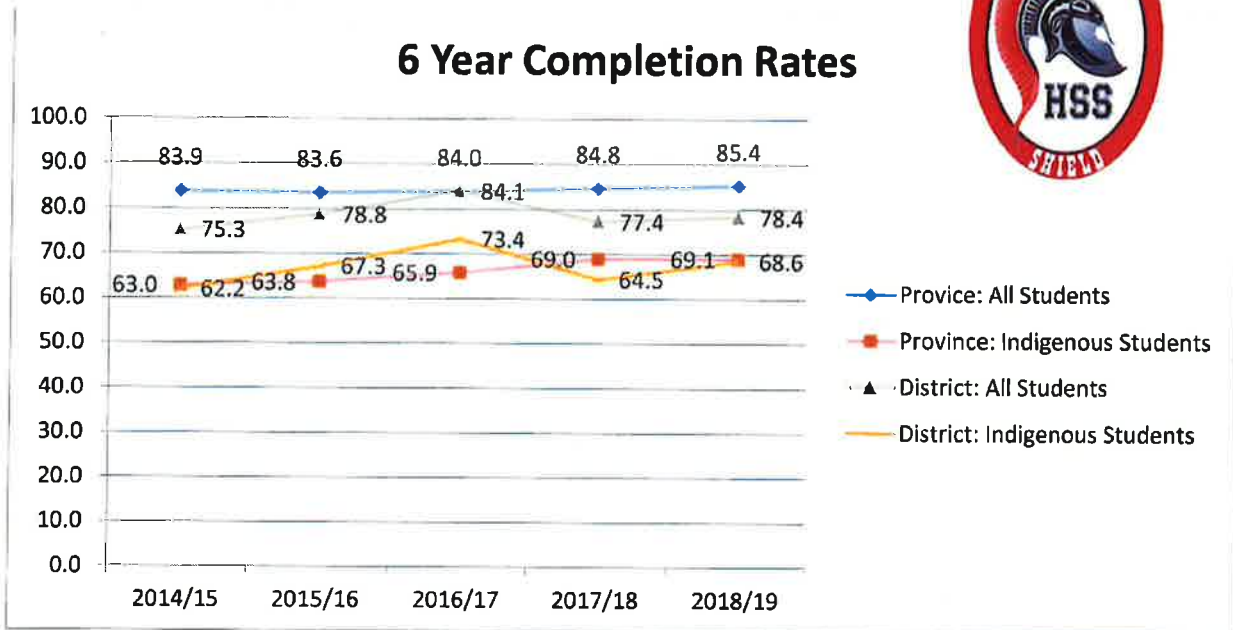
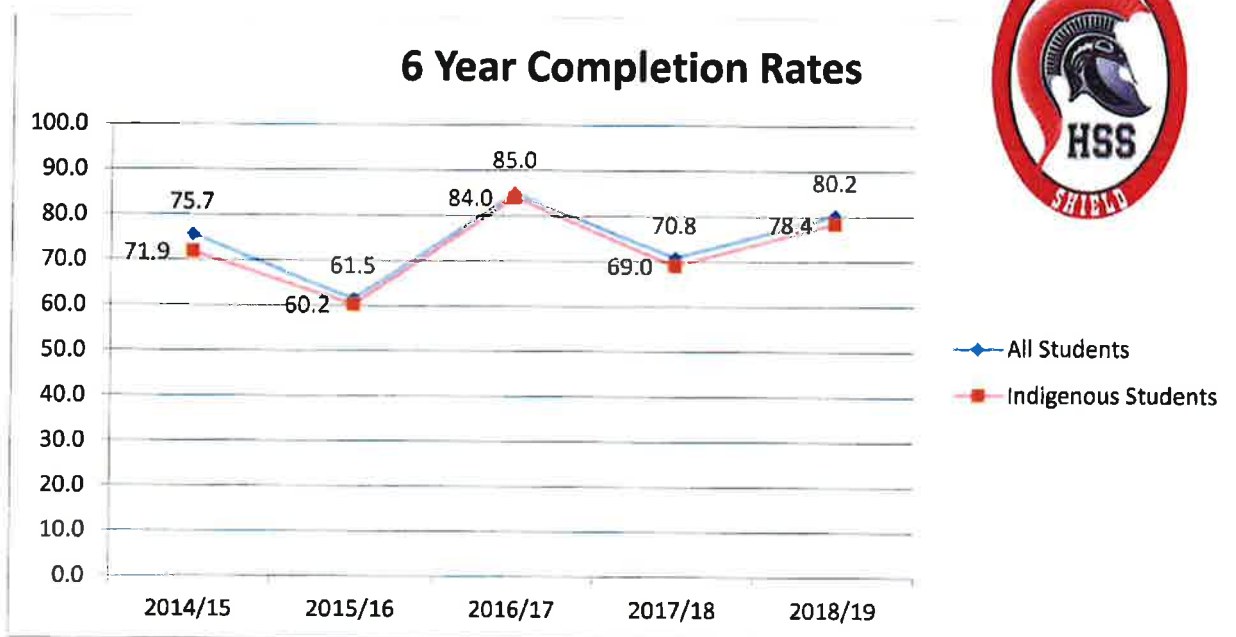


Figure 2



Due to COVID-19, we were unable to do School Wide Writes. Going forward, we need to use this data to track trends in student writing and look towards ways to support our students. However, we need to have consistent assessment of our students reading and writing as they move from grade 8 to grade 9. We currently do not have a formal assessment tool to use for reading, but are pursuing this with support from the district. Teachers are using BC Performance Standards to assess timed writes, but need more training and practice in the effective use of this tool.

In looking at the data we have, we want to track reading and writing data of cohorts from the spring of grade 8 to the spring of grade 9. Identifying areas that need intervention and putting appropriate interventions in place will be critical for student improvement in these areas.

⇒ *What are the opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing?*

- We need to integrate hands on learning experiences in our language programs to reinforce concepts.
- Having Elders in the school to share their stories/ language/knowledge and experiences.
- We have a traditional drumming club that meets in our First Nations Resource Room.
- Continue to provide appropriate cultural programming that employs the protocols of Gitxsan culture in promoting language, culture and tradition through our First Nations Resource Centre and Gitxsan language and culture classes, as well as our Gitxsan art classes.
- Our students need to build strong, positive connections with all our staff. Our students need to feel safe and welcome in our school and all our classrooms. This has to be our first priority.
- Our students need support to establish strong **goals** and visions for their future. Feedback from students, parents, and community indicates that helping students develop a vision of what their future could look like is important. This, among other things, is done within our morning assemblies.
- Many of our students are hands-on learners; it is important that teaching styles reflect their learning styles.
- Mental health issues are a significant concern (depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicide ideation) and are placing heavy demands on counseling and other staff. These issues affect students' resiliency and engagement in school.
- We have completed the seventh year of linear programming in core courses for Grades 8 and 9 which was implemented in part to help students' build better connections to school and their teachers.
- Attendance problems continue to be a significant problem for a number of students, in spite of various interventions. On any given day, on average, approximately 50 students are absent. This continues to be an area of concern, and new interventions need to be explored.
- We will look at continuing "online" courses for students who might miss any length of class time.
- As keepers of the land, we will continue with land-based learning opportunities



3. **Focusing:** Where does your focus need to be? What is your specific inquiry question? Why is this important? Where would you concentrate your focus to change the results and

the experience of your learners? Must reflect one of the Board Goals and a focus on Indigenous students.

Our first focus needs to be on building strong, positive relationships with our students and communities.

- Weekly morning assemblies are in place to build a sense of community and to develop a positive climate where students, staff, community and families can create and be part of a nurturing and respectful learning environment. These are supplemented with morning homeroom meetings where students can discuss the same topics as in the assemblies, but in a smaller, more intimate environment for the purpose of promoting conversation with our students.
- We have created the Hazelton Secondary Leadership Project Society under which we are running a small business called the Spartans Bagels and Pizzeria. We see this as great opportunity to bring community members into the school and also give students an opportunity to gain work experience and use the business as a working template for our marketing, entrepreneurial and business courses we are rolling out this year.
- Strong connections will support resiliency, engagement and academic success.
- We are inviting students to be part of a Principal Advisory Group to share concerns and look at problem solving to improve overall school success and wellness.
- We are having an Elders Tea every week to invite Elders into the school to meet with students, administrators and First Nations support workers.
- We need to continue to honour our students' Indigenous heritage, worldviews, and the First Peoples' Principles of Learning, by incorporating authentic Indigenous content throughout the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities, and making stronger connections with our communities.
- We need to focus on welcoming our students and community into our school and classrooms. This will be our focus with a community welcoming ceremony in September. We will also use strategies such as: welcome signs on our doors greeting our students as they enter our school and classrooms, and keeping our classroom doors open and unlocked. Students have the cafeteria where there are ping-pong tables and foosball tables.



4. Developing a Hunch: What practices in your school are leading to this situation? (*Focus on the areas over which educators have control – not parents, the system or the learner.*)

- Our students are entering high school with a lack of readiness for behaviour and academic skills. Morning assemblies and homeroom blocks will be used to provide life lessons and other topics relevant to our students.
- The School Counsellor will implement *Mental Health School Based Team Meetings*, including counsellors and First Nations Support workers. She will also be implement the *Mental Health & High School Curriculum Guide*; and the *Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Skills*. She is also going to introduce small groups for group counselling. Ideas of groups that could be potentially implemented. All of these supports will target grief and loss,

small group for specific DBT skills, self-esteem, relational aggression girls' groups, communication skills, anger management skill group, vision board groups, mindfulness groups, skills to deal with anxiety

- We are going to implement support blocks once a semester during our mosaic periods for all students in grades 8 and 9. These support blocks will offer help to students in literacy, numeracy and mental health for 5 week blocks once a semester.
- Implement Music Therapy Group – Students will write lyrics for songs, discuss the lyrics of popular music that may relate their current situation, learn guitar chords in order to express their own feelings.
- We will continue with Individual Counselling. Students needing support could have scheduled sessions (brief therapy) where they would learn valuable skills in sessions.
- We need to ensure all staff subscribe to the idea of “all hands on deck”. All students are all our responsibility.
- We need to enable our students to find purpose and meaning in their education; they need to clearly understand learning intentions and learning outcomes.
- We need to enable students to find and share their voices – to be able to express themselves in a variety of ways, with pride and competence.
- We need to help students develop strong critical thinking skills and resiliency skills in order to navigate through the challenges of the world they live in.
- We need to ensure our students have access to a range of support services – mentorship, role models, peer support, academic support, counseling, work experience, career exploration, technology – to help them establish goals and vision for the future and to address issues that may impede the path to success.
- We need to provide students with opportunities to deepen their engagement with their learning, to find relevance in their learning to the world we are preparing them for, and to support their academic and social-emotional needs.
- Our Graduation Advisor provides academic support to senior students and their families to ensure students stay on track for graduation.

5. **Professional Learning:** What do the professionals in your building need to learn? How will this learning occur? What resources can you access? How will you build in multiple opportunities for learning?

- Staff need to continue to take the time to teach students behaviour expectations and to build connections with our students.
- Staff need to continue to develop strategies for inviting students and community into their classrooms and our building.
- Staff want collaboration time and training in RTI and growth mindset. We need to re-establish our RTI team.
- Mental Health Training for Teachers Some topics could include:
 - How to de-escalate a student in crisis.
 - How to respond to a student who self-injures.
 - How to help a student who states that they are suicidal or having suicidal ideation.



- Staff need more training in formative assessment practices.

- Administration needs to incorporate time for “learning walks” – administration and teachers visiting classes, engaging in activities, discussing strategies, providing feedback, sharing.
- Administration will utilize staff meetings and department head meetings for meaningful discussion around student learning and areas involving student conduct, wellness and assessments.

6. **Taking Action:** What are you doing about it? What will staff do differently? How will you know if it’s working? (Incorporate the 3 levels of Response To Intervention and a focus on First Peoples Principles of Learning)

- ⇒ *What are the roles of Teachers, Support Staff, Principals and Vice-Principals in the inquiry?*
- ⇒ *What actions/ changes are happening based on what the students have identified as barriers to learning?*
- ⇒ *How are you communicating this to parents and incorporating their feedback?*

- All hands on deck: all staff have roles in supporting students emotionally, behaviourally, and academically.
- We will continue to implement the school messenger call out system to keep parents updated when their children are missing/skipping classes.
- Continue with a timetable that better supports students, teachers, and community; this includes continuing with our assembly time and encouraging teachers to use this time to collaborate and to have more time with students who need extra support with literacy and numeracy (Tier 1 supports).
- Continue using the MyEd Conduct tracking system to connect with parents when student behaviours start to decline.
- Increase our literacy support and numeracy support for classroom teachers and small groups that need specific supports, with added support blocks and team teaching.
- Use increased resource time to provide more interventions for students in their classes.
- Departments will review goals/plans for the year at the beginning of each semester. Regular department meetings need to focus on the goals, how they are being met, and the collection data/evidence to support our goals.



- Continue with a formal timed write process; teachers mark as a group and use data gathered to inform instruction, plan interventions and instruction to support literacy.
- Continue and increase resource time to support numeracy.
- Continue to collect and use students’ responses to the four key questions: What are you learning? How is it going? Where to next? Can you name two adults in the building who believe in you? Use data collection to guide interventions and support.
- Implement school wide positive behaviour intervention system (this was developed throughout this year through the input of students and staff). All staff will work with students on behaviour.
- Continue to communicate information about learning, achievement, etc., to staff and parents, through the morning assemblies, school website, school newsletters, meet the teacher nights, PAC, etc.
- Create more opportunities for staff to connect with communities.
- Share and celebrate successes (examples: feasts, showcase).



7. **Checking:** Have you made enough of a difference? What evidence will you be seeking to know you are making a difference?

⇒ *When will you check in and how often?*

⇒ *How can you do it in a way that allows for immediate adjustment?*

- Feedback from students and parents
- Improved attendance rates
- Lower numbers of Conduct Reports on MyEd
- Improved course completion rates at the grade 10 level
- Higher graduation rates
- More staff using formative assessment and RTI practices to guide instruction, assessment, and interventions

• School Principal Signature: _____



• School Vice Principal Signature: _____

