

**Coast Mountains Board of Education
School District 82
School Growth Plan 2020 2021**

MOUNT ELIZABETH MIDDLE SECONDARY SCHOOL

1. School Mission Statement: "Success for All Learners"

We at Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School believe in an environment in which self-respect and respect for others are developed as we strive for personal and academic excellence. We are committed to:

- Building capacity for all learners in a collaborative culture intent on maintaining positive connections
- Supporting student centered strategies that promote engagement, inquiry, and a love of learning

Mount Elizabeth is a dual track (English/French Immersion) school: Grades 7-9 Middle School and Grades 10-12 Secondary. We are located in Northern British Columbia in the city of Kitimat, on the Ancient Territory of Haisla Nation.

Mount Elizabeth receives students from four elementary schools: Nechako Elementary, Kildala Elementary, St. Anthony's, and Haisla Community School. We also welcome new students from outside of our community.

Our student population in September 2020 is estimated at approximately 450 students with 55 staff members. We have a large population of Indigenous learners (26%) and approximately 80 identified learners. We project 70 Grade 7 students, 85 Grade 8 students, 85 Grade 9 students, 80 Grade 10 students, 80 Grade 11 students and 50 Grade 12 students. All projections include English/French programs. In addition, we have approximately 5 students returning to complete their Graduation Program.

Our school provides many educational programs and extra-curricular activities. Programs include but are not limited to: Academic, Outdoor Education, Physical Education, Home Economics, Technical Education, Robotics, Mechatronics, French Immersion, Fine Arts, Youth Train/Work in Trades, Special Education, Modern Languages, Career Life Education, First Nations Support, Personal Wellness Initiatives, and various Clubs and Teams

2. Scanning:

Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School strives to meet the needs of all students — from Grades 7 to 12 in the community of Kitimat and surrounding areas such as the Kitamaat Village.

The evidence we consider includes:

- Student Voice — Student Forums
- Year-end IEP reviews and Student Intervention tracking
- Attendance
- School Based Team meetings
- Student Learning Surveys
- Report Cards
- Graduation Rates
- Numeracy Assessments including Foundations Skills Assessment (FSA)
- Literacy Assessments
- Office Referrals
- Inter-Agency meetings

Indigenous students comprise 26% of our student population at Mount Elizabeth. We are living in an environment that is deeply rooted in Indigenous Culture. Focusing on Indigenous ways of knowing and of learning is key for our student population. Opportunities which develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing are being provided through course offerings such as English First Peoples 10-12, which Mount Elizabeth has been offering for 7 years now.

We will continue to increase visibility of the Haisla Culture within our school, nurturing the sense of belonging for our Indigenous learners and supporting our Haisla perspectives. We will continue to provide opportunity and encouragement for our senior Indigenous students to work with younger students as role models. We are committed to integrating First Peoples Principles of Learning across all curriculum areas.

All students have access to our Cultural Room where two First Nations Support workers, First Nations Role Models, Elders and Haisla Youth Workers are committed to share stories of success and come to facilitate and lead a variety of activities such as Aboriginal Day Celebrations, button blankets, drum making, dream catchers, cedar bracelets and weaving, fried bread making, and dancing.

3. Focusing:

The Mount Elizabeth Staff recognizes the importance of building relationships with students. We also acknowledge and understand that we must strive to provide educational experiences which aim to enhance the engagement of our learners. Continuing to build cultural awareness and developing intervention strategies to create a true sense of belonging will help address these issues.

We will continue to focus our efforts on student engagement and a sense of belonging while taking into consideration the feedback from our student forums this past Spring.

The question that will continue to lead our growth is:

"How can the Mount Elizabeth staff continue to build a sense of belonging while deepening Indigenous World Views within our school population in order to improve graduation rates and student achievement?"

We will continue to observe, discuss and review relevant data. We want to ensure that students have a growth mindset allowing them to see themselves as learners, nurturing the belief that success is within their reach and that everyone has the capacity to learn.

4. Developing a Hunch:

Finding ways to improve student engagement will help develop a stronger connection to the school, improve the sense of belonging and lead to greater academic success for our learners. Staff recognizes that many of our students are hands on learners and that it is important for teaching styles to reflect and accommodate learning styles, thus leading to the focus on experiential learning. This is in keeping and strongly rooted in our Renewed B.C. Curriculum.

5. Professional Learning:

The staff of Mount Elizabeth is committed to work as a team to develop a comprehensive professional learning plan, identifying the tools, support and professional development required to meet the needs of our students.

Administration is committed to collaborate with staff around professional opportunities during regular staff meetings which will support meaningful participation and discussion around student learning.

6. Taking Action:

Mount Elizabeth staff will continue to build on its team approach where all the students are at the center. We will continue working to ensure that every student has a connection with at least two adults in the building because we know that a student who feels a sense of belonging will have a greater chance of being successful.

We will work to incorporate experiential learning into our daily practice. Research supports that an experiential love of learning increases the opportunity to establish connections and promotes intrinsic motivation.

We will keep parents/guardians and families informed about new initiatives and student learning. We are committed to do this regularly through PAC meetings, newsletters, informal conversations, the school website, and through our Social Media platforms.

7. **Checking:**

As a school team we will know that we are making a difference when students are having conversations about what they are learning, how they are learning, and where they are going with their learning.

We are committed to continue:

- School Wide Writes — having teachers administer and assess these writes as a team at different times throughout the year. These writes will be scheduled so that progress can be determined and appropriate interventions can be put into place for students who are at risk and need to build skill as well as those who will benefit from enrichment
- To have our First Nations Support workers make connections, build relationships with students and parents in our Indigenous community. We have found that their role is invaluable as they work directly with students and families. In addition, First Nations Support workers will continue to work directly with teachers to ensure that students are following their education plans and that parents are being kept informed about their child's progress. This tracking has allowed us to identify those students who are emotionally, socially and/or academically at risk and to put interventions in place in a timely manner
- To gather staff feedback around student learning through regular Staff meetings, Department Head meetings, and School Based Team meetings
- To monitor attendance data to ensure that contact with home is made regarding attendance
- To examine patterns in the data provided by the Ministry of Education and use this data to put interventions in place for our students to ensure that they are on track for graduation
- To continue to hold student forums which focus on student voice and use this feedback to guide practice

- To continue to have meetings with the Haisla Education Coordinator, Mrs. Angie Maitland, three times a year as per the LEA to discuss the progress and education plans of our Haisla students and invite her (along with parent consent) to take part in student case reviews and planning meetings throughout the year

In summary, the staff of Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School are **committed to building strong relationships** by staying connected to our learners, listening to them, and engaging them with their learning. Teachers are committed in taking the time and the training to become aware and skilled with supporting our students. Teachers are also committed to initiating positive behaviours and supportive interactions with all students.

School Principal Signature: Mrs. Christine Byrd

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