



NECHAKO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

School Development Plan

Principal: David Mills

**Spiral of Inquiry Planning Process
To Superintendent of Schools: Janet Meyer and School Trustees**

2020- 2021 School Year

Nechako Elementary School Mission Statement:

“Together We Succeed”

2020/2021 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Nechako School

School:

Our Mission Statement: "Together We Succeed"

Nechako Elementary School is located in Kitimat, British Columbia and offers Kindergarten to Grade Six programs. The projected population for 2020/2021 is 240 students. Currently, twenty-three percent of our student population is First Nations. Nechako is a welcoming, warm, friendly, energetic, and enthusiastic school and we pride ourselves on creating a positive learning environment. We pride ourselves on having a connectedness with our students.

There are 11 classroom divisions within the school supported by an experienced Physical Education Teacher, Librarian and a Resource Teacher. Nechako School also has a full-time LINK (Learning Includes Nutrition and Knowledge) worker who works with at-risk students and their families. This program is designed to promote social growth, self-esteem, and personal development while making connections with the community and families.

Our school counsellor also provides emotional, social, and behavioural report support for a number of students. Our First Nation Worker has been helping us build connections with the Haisla Village so that we can provide more cultural and language experiences for our First Nation Students.

There is a very active Parent Advisory Council which meets monthly with the Principal. Our PAC is big part of our school team and our relationship is a strong one.

Scanning:

Our Student Forum Survey's in 2019 (no survey's for 2020 because of Covid-19) revealed that some of our students struggle with social emotional challenges brought on by personal relationship and difficult home lives. Many of our Office Reflection Sheets and Behaviour Classroom Tracking Sheets exposed these challenges. Many of our students wrote that they had anxiety, stress and were exhausted. However, its important to recognize that this is a school wide project and its important to focus not only on student wellness, but also adult wellness in our school.

Students teachers, admin, and school staff have very difficult jobs; these jobs can consume us with anxiety, stress, exhaustion, and, as a result, sickness.

To combat this, we must be more appreciative of the efforts and qualities of others who help us in schools and beyond. So for all school stakeholders we must be more thankful for what we have and we must acknowledge the big and little things that go on in our building. The benefits of Gratitude in the work space are many including: increased job satisfaction, greater productivity and better physical and mental health. For those who need a little help making this shift, the secret to having a positive attitude is gratitude. Based on data up to March 17 our behaviour write ups were down by 25%. Were beginning the second year of our three-year plan.

Staff wanted to add a writing goal to this years Growth Plan

Focusing:

Inquiry Question one: Gratitude

How can the theme: An Attitude of Gratitude as a teaching tool help to enable students to demonstrate cooperation, kindness and caring; to take responsibility for themselves, and to contribute to the class and school community?

Inquiry question two: Writing:

With explicit instruction on vocabulary development, will the students' writing results in the area of details improve?

We feel this is an important focus for our learners because we believe that students, overall, do not have the vocabulary development necessary to be able to be successful writers. Our focus will be on instruction and consistency of language throughout the grade levels.

Developing a Hunch:

Inquiry Question 1: Gratitude

Although we assess and target students, our hunch is that, if we challenge staff and students to show more gratitude, not only to each other but in class and around the school, is that students and staff physical and mental health will increase over the course of the year. Our hope is that an Attitude of Gratitude here and there will create an on going positive culture regardless of the time of year. Also it will "Create opportunities for Learning and opportunities for Life".

Teachers and Staff will provide avenues for Gratitude by:

- Leading by Example
- Make it Specific

- Do It Daily
- Looking for Humility
- Recognise the Big and Small
- Not just recognizing, but thanking
- Taking time to reflect

Inquiry Question 2: Writing

In order for students to write with details, they need vocabulary. We developed this hunch because we believe students need to be given the tools – and we as Educators have this control. We can instruct vocabulary development. We also learned that there was not common language used between all grade levels. We believe this will make a difference over time.

Strategies: Triple Scoop words (from Adrienne Gear), expanding vocabulary (CAFÉ) AND “Show ,Don’t Tell” focus in writing.

Haisla Connection;

We have followed the districts’ long standing goal to improve school success for all Aboriginal students. To do this requires the inclusion of the voice of Aboriginal people across all areas of the curriculum. We continue to encourage gratitude for our First Nation People’s and their contributions to our school. They will be valued and celebrated at Nechako.

The First Nation peoples have a sophisticated and comprehensive connection to the environment. We want our children to learn and deepen their understanding and demonstrate their gratitude for First Nation connection to the natural world. With our Haisla partners we hope to continue to expand our knowledge of First Nation traditions and teach our children that we have a moral responsibility to care and respect the natural world.

For us to learn more about their ways of the First Nation have connected to the natural world, we’ll continue to engage and learn more about the land, plants, animals, seasons and cycles of nature that has been in there since the beginning of time.

There are opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of the Indigenous ways of knowing through celebrations, field studies, story-telling, art, and music. For example, this year students actively participated in shared cultural events with our Haisla partners by attending Haisla events in the Village. Furthermore, our First Nation Workers actively promote the First Nations culture throughout the school and play a prominent role in the delivery of the services.

We’ll continue to show our gratitude to our First Nation partners by recognizing the contributions and the time they give to our school both big and small.

Professional Learning

Inquiry Question 1: Gratitude

We will build in multiple opportunities for learning by providing professional and collaborative learning communities monthly, and at staff meetings.

Teachers will:

- Share lessons of gratitude with colleagues during their monthly collaboration times.
- We continue to start every staff meeting with SCC (Share, Care and Celebrate) and encourage each other to share something we are thankful for and/or proud of (we've have done this before in the staff room)
- Be involved with guest speakers and online tutorials

Inquiry Question 2: Writing

The professionals in our building need to learn explicit instruction practices in order to best guide the learners. Furthermore, they need to continue to use our school data to drive classroom instruction.

After much collaboration and discussion, we selected the following New Learning areas for Professional Learning:

Adrienne Gear resources

6 Traits of Writing – word choice

C.A.F.E. (Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency, Expanding Vocabulary)

The First People's Principles of Learning

The Principles of Learning

Taking Action

Inquiry Question 1: Gratitude

We'll challenge staff to show more gratitude not only to each other but also be more thankful for what we have at work and at home. Students and staff will be involved in the following school wide activities

- We'll share Good Things to Talk About “, that includes 10 (often more) positive things that we have observed with students have shared that we want our community to know about.
- Staff members anonymously write a note of gratitude to EVERY staff member that acknowledged something very personal that each person brings to our school.
- Gratitude photo wall run by the grade six classes.
- When students are sent to the office they will complete an entry in a gratitude journal.
- Each teacher will do a lesson on kindness and gratitude with there grade class then write wrote personal thank you notes to classmates and staff.
- Our students will write one thing they love about our school on a heart and these hearts will line our hallways.

Inquiry question 2: Writing

Teachers agreed that collaboration opportunities were beneficial and needed to continue. Action was taken to organize innovative collaboration ideas.

Teachers, Support Staff, Principal, are all involved in the Inquiry process. All stakeholders are beginning to understand the stages of the Spiral through informal and formal meetings at the school and District level. With this knowledge, these stakeholders are becoming more accountable to the process of Inquiry. The Spiral will keep moving.

School Wide Initiatives

Inquiry question 1: Gratitude

1. Create a Gratitude Jar

A gratitude jar is a great way for our shy students to be able to have a voice. As part of our morning routine, as soon as students walk into the door, we'll have them write down one thing that they are grateful for that day. Then, through the course of the week, the jar will be passed around the classroom and students take turns closing their eyes and picking random notes from the jar to read aloud.

2. Model What Gratitude Looks Like

Research shows that people are more likely to value gratitude when they can see it firsthand. The best way to do this is to model it. We'll let the students see how grateful our staff is to others and they will know that it is a meaningful practice to do. We'll also model books using the WITS resources and other books related to gratitude.

3. Implement a Gratitude Group

We're going to create Gratitude groups for students to get to know one another on a higher level. Our hope here is that it helps build a strong classroom community, and students will find that the more they get to know one another, the more they will appreciate each other. Each week, we'll change up the gratitude groups to include different students. When students are in the groups, they'll be encouraged to talk about what they are grateful for personally, as well as one thing they are grateful for, for each person in the group.

4. Show Gratitude to Others

There are many people right in our school that do so much for others. Each week, students choose one person that they are all collectively grateful for in the school. Then they'll do something nice for that person, like write a thank-you note, bake them food, or draw them a picture.

5 • Gratitude Journal

Have students keep their own gratitude journal. We'll challenge them to write down three things that they are grateful for each day. They can do this as part of our morning routine or as a quick activity for those fast finishers. Teachers can make it a little more

challenging for students, then ask them to expand upon what they are grateful for, and tell the teacher why they are grateful.

6. Learn Self-Gratitude

Self-gratitude is often the hardest to practice, but most of us learn at young age to think of others before ourselves. While putting others first is a great quality to have, it can also hinder you from being self-aware. Teach your students self-gratitude by having them think of a few things about themselves that they are grateful for. If they feel so inclined, allow them to share their thoughts with their classmates.

7. Form a Circle of Gratitude

During our Collaboration time students will gather in the gym and sit down in a circle on the floor and each student will say one thing they are grateful for. Once each participant has had a turn, then the teacher can invite them to say one thing they are grateful for about the person to their right, then their left.

8. Plan a Gratitude Party

At the end of your gratitude series of activities, teachers can plan a party to give thanks for all that they've accomplished. Then the class can invite all of the people that they've showed gratitude towards in the school, as well as the students' parents. Teaching students about gratitude, as well as having them partake in daily gratitude practices, can and will change their lives.

9. •Gratitude Wall

We' create a gratitude wall in the staff room to acknowledge the positives they see around the school.

10 • This fall were creating a gratitude Tree in the hall way and we'll keep adding to it all year. Students trace their hands and write one thing they are grateful for on each finger of the hand they traced. Then, the hand is pinned to a fake tree called the "Gratitude Tree."

Inquiry Question 2: Writing

We will build in multiple opportunities for learning by providing professional and collaborative learning communities on weekly, monthly, and at each reporting period. Adrienne Gear will be becoming to visit our community in April and she has a session scheduled for our school. We will continue to celebrate our successes and openly work

together at solving some of our challenges at our monthly staff meetings and staff collaboration sessions.

Checking

Inquiry Question 1: Gratitude

We will check daily, weekly, monthly, and at each reporting term. We'll use Office Referrals, teacher records (behavior anecdotal sheet and staff meetings as a means of collecting data. In the spring and fall we'll have gratitude surveys for the students. We know that when individuals are open and collaborative great discussions occur and a deeper understanding and accountability to the process evolves. When data is collected and discussed, adjustments will become apparent.

Inquiry Question 2: Writing:

We will have professional speakers and use exemplars and mentor texts to help students and staff identify good writing. We will use the knowledge from our FSA's, report a cards and class themes to help teachers and staff recognize detailed writing.

-Use school wide writes fall and spring with an additional assessment component which focuses on details to help assess success in this goal area.

School Principal Signature: *David Mills*