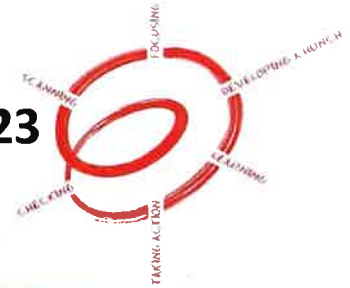




## School Growth Plan 2022 – 2023



SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT: “Success for All Learners”

### KITIMAT CITY HIGH MISSION STATEMENT:

“The comfortable, welcoming, inclusive, atmosphere at Kitimat City High will facilitate the celebration of learning, self-esteem, safety and empowerment of all.”

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## **SCHOOL PROFILE:**

Kitimat City High is an alternate school at which any student in the district is able to attend if they choose. Kitimat City High takes pride in our relationship-based program. We have caring adults who are well connected to our students. We stress the importance of the staff, students, family and community working together for the best interest of all our learners. Kitimat City High offers flexible programs that meet the diverse needs of all students, a supportive culture with clear and high expectations, and physical, emotional and social safety for all.

The alternative school is for adolescents who have experienced academic, behavioural, and/or social difficulties within the context of the traditional high school. We are able to explore options that are the best fit for our students. We have a highly dedicated staff who collaborate, problem solve and help create personalized programs to meet the needs of all our learners. We make every effort to provide educational opportunities that are cross-curricular, engaging, meaningful and connected with the students' interests and passions. Kitimat City High works closely with many community supports and partnerships on a daily basis in order to help students meet their needs. This year we were fortunate we had weekly support for our students from the two Mental Health Clinicians, and two support workers from Kermode in Terrace.

We offer several support programs such as Food Safe and Healthy Lifestyles through outside agencies. As well as our academics, we offer a variety elective, photography, robotics, textiles, foods and nutrition, fine arts, outdoor educational opportunities through our staff at Kitimat City High.

We are pleased that the Piping Industry College will be back at KCH to provide more opportunities for hands on learning with our youth in the Spring of 2023. The students will cover theory, hands on learning and experience in the areas of carpentry, iron working, pipefitting, and electrical.

The students in the Outdoor Education Program led by the school team continued to grow vegetables and haskap berry pushes, and gained more knowledge on how to take care of the two honeybee beehives. The students also beautified the school gardens with lovely annuals and perennials.

During the 2022-2023 school year, a Leadership program will be introduced to the school as students voiced they were wanting more leadership opportunities within the school and to build community connection.

We are also very excited to expand our Robotics program due to a generous grant through LNG Canada. We will be working closely with Krysta Peralto in developing a FIRST Robotics Team. Krysta is the Northwest representative of FIRST Robotics and she has agreed to be a mentor/coach for Terrace and Kitimat.

Our learners are referred from Mount Elizabeth Middle Secondary School, other alternate schools from different communities or they may be self-referred.

1. **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), English 10 Provincial Exam, 6-Year Completion)*
  - ⇒ *What have you learned from your students when gathering their answers to:*
    1. *What helps you to learn?*
    2. *What are barriers in our school to your learning?*
    3. *What do we need to do in our school to remove these barriers?*

4. *What is it adults do that shows they believe you will be a success?*  
⇒ *What are the opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing?*

Our evidence on what is going on with our learners is based on extensive quantitative and qualitative data. The team at Kitimat City High is continually scanning to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our learners. Our team members change the program style and teaching approach in order to meet all of our individual learners' needs. We accept students who have not felt successful in the traditional school setting, students who have medical issues, social emotional needs and have fallen behind both academically and/or students who would like to work on a self-paced academic program. We provide our new students with credit recovery in the courses that they did not complete. Credit recovery allows the student to be less frustrated so they can move forward and feel that their prior school work maintains value.

Despite the fact that our students have diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, they have a strong sense of school community. Our dedicated and passionate staff has assisted in fostering a positive school climate over the years. Our school creates a safe place for our students to feel secure in their cultural, personal, social and community identity. It is this dedication that has led to large strides in motivating students to reach their full potential. At school, negative behaviours are often the result of past trauma outside of the school. Trauma, combined with anxiety and depression, has posed its share of challenges as we work to meet our learners' needs.

The students continue to be able to "voice" their thoughts and opinions with their sponsors and staff members. They feel safe and trusted to make informed decisions about their courses and personal well being without judgement. Our students know that their opinions are valued. These conversations have led to changes in how and what we teach and what we can offer in terms of curriculum. In the fall of 2022, the staff at Kitimat City High will continue to listen to student "voice" so we can increase student engagement across all curricular areas. The students have confirmed that they learn better with experiential learning. They want to be actively involved in the experience and reflect on what they are doing, rather than reading about it in a text book. This is why our Gully Project, Skateboard Project, Trades Awareness Program, Honey Bees and Garden project have been successful over the past few years.

Our students are experiencing academic success. This year we had 20 students graduating with their fully accredited Dogwood. Thirteen students with a regular dogwood, and seven students with their adult dogwood. 75% of the Grad class are Indigenous. Our relationships with our students, parents/guardians and outside agencies are strong and enable us to work together to support our learners in their goal: receiving their Dogwood; crossing the stage with dignity, purpose and options.

We were very pleased with our students' achievement on the Grade 10 Literacy, Grade 10 Numeracy and Grade 12 Literacy assessments. It is noted that 53 students successfully wrote the Ministry assessments this year. Through the guidance of their highly respected and knowledgeable teachers, they have developed skills and strategies to help guide them through course with a more positive understanding and belief that they can be successful. Our school provides a safe and trusting environment that allows the students to realize that they are intelligent and capable of achieving great success.

We will continue to focus on our School Inquiry, "This is Our Home", which is a place for our students to develop safe and secure connections. With this inquiry, we hope to prepare our students to become

lifelong learners with a deep knowledge of what they learn, and to build on their social skills so that they learn with creativity, inquiry and collaboration in order to thrive.

56% percent of Kitimat City High's students are of Indigenous descent. We are living in an environment that is deeply steeped in Indigenous Culture. Focusing on Indigenous ways of knowing and Indigenous ways 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 BC First Peoples Studies 12, English First Peoples and our Outdoor Classroom Project. Almost all the courses offer First Nations assignment options. Students have access to a full-time First Nations Youth Support Worker and access to the First Nations Resource Centre located in KCH. All attempts are made to learn and celebrate Haisla Culture.

The Outdoor Education project has widened its collaborative group to include Northwest Trades & Employment Training Centre in Terrace, Farm to School BC, Rushing Rivers Apiaries, the Principal at the Gitga'at First Nations School in Hartley Bay, the whale observation stations on Finn Island in the local Douglas Channel, local community gardeners, and Green skills in the nearby town of Terrace who offer gardening workshops and advice on growing techniques. By working collaboratively with these partners, we continue to develop the scope of place-based experiences and authentic learning that can be offered. Furthermore, we have partnered with Nass Valley Medicines, a First Nations group who produce teas and oils from local traditional plants, to offer a program of workshops for our students focused on recognising, harvesting and using such plants. The intention is to develop students' sense of place and in so doing improve overall positive well being.



***Students spinning honey frames***



***Cottonwood Bud Harvest***

Kitimat City High strives for Cultural Competence ensuring we have an understanding of culture, traditions and family practices. Our First Nations Support Worker and all staff collaboratively continue to communicate and interact with all students of various cultural backgrounds. It is imperative that all students have a voice with regards to their cultural experiences. Discussions and check ins with students to

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

ensure that their cultural needs in their place of learning are met. Culture is embedded and tailored to meet the unique needs of our students and families. We are very fortunate that the Kitimat First Nations Resource Centre has moved into Kitimat City High. Jeannie Stepp, the First Nations Resource Coordinator and District Support Worker, is passionate about sharing her knowledge and is a welcome addition to our staff.

Our self-paced program allows for flexibility when students are participating in cultural events or other matters that take them away from school. We recognize that learning requires patience and time and that students learn in different ways and at different rates. We support the well-being of the family with our program and our regular communication with parents and care givers. We promote recognizing the consequences of one's actions through our contract system and conversations with sponsors and youth support workers.

Our students have a variety of learning styles, and we continue to strive to meet all of our learners' needs. Some students learn best by doing, others learn best by working independently. We recognize that each child is unique and learns differently. Many students like working with their peers in small groups, some enjoy working independently where it is quiet and they can listen to their devices to drown out noise. Our students enjoy the opportunity to be able to try new things and to be shown how to apply their knowledge.

2. **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 Aboriginal students.



*Gazebo Trail – Driftwood Gathering for Art Projects (Driftwood Rock Mandela and Driftwood Wind Chimes)*

Through the ongoing scanning, "Student Voice" discussions, and collaboration amongst the KCH team, our focus over the next few years will be to continue incorporating the initiative to increase student engagement across all curricular areas with a multi-disciplinary experiential learning approach. We have noticed an increase in student success with "hands on projects" as well as an increased self-confidence and pride in Haisla students when involved in Haisla cultural activities. "This is Our Home" project focuses on the community and seasonal rounds of the Haisla peoples of Kitamaat. With this in mind, we will continue

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to implement a school wide inquiry project that will increase the equity and quality for all of our learners based on the questions:

***Can we increase engagement levels for both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous alternate school students with a school wide inquiry project that includes multi-disciplinary, hands on and land-based approaches?***

- *How do we learn from our past experiences, assess our present practice, to prepare students for their future?*
- *How have Haisla culture and traditions shaped the community of Kitamaat and Kitimat, and how does that influence our learners?*
- *How can we create and foster positive relationships within our community?*
- *What aspects of Kitamaat and Kitimat do our students identify with as their home?*
- *How do stories shape us and our perceptions of home?*
- *How do our connections with the land affect our sense of place?*

*This inquiry question reflects all of the three Board Goals:*

- *Raise literacy and numeracy levels for all our learners.*
- *Graduation for every learner; crossing the stage with dignity, purpose and options.*
- *Enhance learner engagement, opportunities and choice through personalized learning.*

*It also covers all of the First Peoples Principles of Learning:*

- *Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors.*
- *Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational.*
- *Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.*
- *Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.*
- *Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.*
- *Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.*
- *Learning involves patience and time.*
- *Learning requires exploration of one's identity.*
- *Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.*

**3. 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)*

We are fortunate that the majority of our staff is returning. "This is Our Home" a school wide project will continue to incorporate each member of the staff as well as experts from the community. Potential Community Partners: Rio Tinto, Haisla Nation Council, Haisla Elders, Haisla Role Models, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Kitimat LNG, LNG Canada, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Kitimat Museum, Kitimat RCMP/Fire Department, District of Kitimat, Hatch Ltd., Kitimat Marine and Kitimat Search and Rescue, McElhanney, Kitimat Lodge, Gitga'at Cetacean, Rushing Rivers Apiaries, Farm to School, Safer Schools, Aspect Safety, Kitimat First Nations Resource Center and FIRST Robotics.

### **Curricular Areas:**

The staff will collaboratively plan interdisciplinary inquiries with the students to increase engagement and encourage deeper learning for all of our students. Some examples of interdisciplinary projects could be:

- Social Studies/Science/English/Photography/Art/ Haisla Language/Media Arts through creating calendars or posters including photographs taken around Kitimat which contain Haisla phrases that relate to the seasonal rounds
- Math/Science/Outdoor Education/Social Studies/English/Art through creating an outdoor classroom which encompasses beehive, outdoor garden and greenhouse.
- Art/Cultural Competencies/Song Creation which encompasses drum making, design, drumming and singing.
- Foods/Haisla and Tsimshian Culture/Science will harvest/gather plants, berries, and other edible foods from around the area using traditional Haisla methods of preservation, which will be used in the hosting of a traditional feast. We used Haisla words to create signage in our gully to identify plants, berries, etc.
- PE/Career Ed will inquire about sports as cultural events, culminating in the planning of a sporting event to bring people together. We utilize the gully trail system for outdoor PE activities.

These are examples of the possibilities; however, we plan to expand on these, keeping them flexible to allow for collaborative planning with students. This organic process which will help us create curriculum that will meet individual needs.

Our team envisions this initiative as something that will expand over time. In accordance with our school growth plan, this initiative will increase opportunities for our school to partner with the Haisla and our community as a whole. In the initial year it may be a series of student led mini inquiries that eventually lead to all curriculum being covered through larger student led inquiries. This idea focuses on making KCH a community of learners helping each other grow in the understanding of “Our Home”. This process is meant to be flexible allowing for self-reflection and revision as needed.



***Students setting up Coast Mountain Honey Display at Vitality***

4. **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?

The KCH team is very cohesive and works well together in order to meet and do the best for all our learners. We will be continuing a book club that meets periodically to discuss what we have read and share in discussion and collaborate on what direction we need to explore. We will be reading and discussing *“Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness, and Healing in a Toxic Culture”* by Gabor Mate.

Ideally we would like to explore and learn more about the Haisla Territory through the teachings of the Haisla people, and with visiting the traditional territory of which our school resides on. If that is not possible, our staff is also very interested in learning about Natural Medicines and First Nations communities in the North, so we can learn and pass on the knowledge to our students.

Our KCH team enjoyed working with Bryan Gidinski and the School District on enhancing SOGI Inclusive Education at Kitimat City High through a mentorship program. We learned how to best support our students and become better educated as our students express their identity and find their self-worth.

5. **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?*

The staff will continue to collaboratively plan interdisciplinary inquiries with the students to increase engagement and encourage deeper learning for all of our students. Our team envisions this initiative as something that will expand over time. In accordance with our school growth plan, this initiative will increase opportunities for our school to partner with the Haisla and our community as a whole. This idea focuses on making KCH a community of learners helping each other grow in the understanding of “Our Home.” This process is meant to be flexible, allowing for self-reflection and revision as needed.

We will communicate with parents through our website, contract signings, IEP and SLP meetings and parent-teacher interviews. On a more frequent basis, we will communicate through phone calls home by the sponsor. We regularly discuss parent feedback and suggestions and will continue to do so.

1. **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?*
  - ⇒ *How does your connection to place continue to help with mental health?*

For evidence we know that we are making a difference when we see the students engaged, collaborating and sharing their learning experiences and knowledge. In addition, at the end of the year we have all

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students write a reflection which provides feedback regarding what has engaged them and helped move them forward. This inquiry goes hand in hand with the new Ministry curriculum. Assessment will be done often with an inquiry of this nature. Ideas and events have to be discussed on an ongoing basis. Our data will continue to be both quantitative and qualitative.



*Zone 1 Robotics*



*Silver for completing Beach Rescue Challenge*

We will check in regularly during our Student-Based Team meetings at the end of each week during which we discuss student behaviours and issues. In addition, we will discuss the inquiry progress often in depth.

*Connections and relationships are powerful for all student success.*



*KCH Grad Class 2022*

**X** *Nancy Tormene*  
Nancy Tormene  
Principal - Kitimat City High

FINAL - SEPTEMBER 2011