



Coast Mountains Board of Education School District 82

# Skeena Middle School

## 2022/2023 Growth Plan



### MISSION STATEMENT

Our school community is dedicated to providing a supportive, caring environment focusing on student needs. We are committed to engaging students in meaningful learning as they become thoughtful and informed contributing members of both our school and community.

ENGAGE ~ EXCITE ~ EMPOWER

## School Context

Skeena Middle School is a dual track school (English and French Immersion) with over 60 staff members comprised of teachers, support staff and administration.

Our school population comes from a large catchment area encompassing several rural and urban neighborhoods. Our Indigenous students have a wide cultural representation including students from the local Kitsumkalum and Kitselas First Nations Bands with non-territorial Indigenous students represented by the Kermode Friendship Society. We have students from 7 connecting elementary schools (5 public and 2 private) attending Skeena. Each year one-third of our students are new to Skeena Middle School and one-third move on to Caledonia Secondary for their Grade 10, 11 and 12 years. Our current enrollment is 557 students with enrollment projections for the 2022/2023 school year showing we will have approximately 585 students.

In the 2021/2022 school year, the following facts were representative of our school:

- 46% of the population or 255 students are of Indigenous ancestry
- 16% of the population or 91 are students with identified special needs
- 9% of the population or 52 students are in the French Immersion program

## Daily Experiences for Learners

- Several staff members greet students at the front entrance upon arrival
- The school is open for students to enter beginning at approximately 7:45 AM each day
- A high number of our students are coming to school without breakfast, lunch, and/or a snack. Our food programs provide nutritional food to approximately 75-80 students
- The open-door policies of many of our classrooms before, during, and after school provides a means of support for students
- The academic support is provided by teachers and support staff in the mornings, at lunch, and/or after school
- Our Library was open before school, lunch break, and after school
- Our Gym is open before school and at the lunch break
- There is a strong connection between students and multiple adults in the building. This leads to students feeling successful, academically and emotionally
- Alternatives to out of school suspensions for behavioral challenges (e.g. detention, contact home, in-school suspensions, community service, counselor support, etc.)
- Many great outdoor adventures/learning experiences

## Programs

The school has a strong extra-curricular program with a focus on trying to offer a variety of opportunities for each child. It is our belief that a “connected” student will be a successful student and we strive to have a “niche” for all our students. This includes but is not limited to:

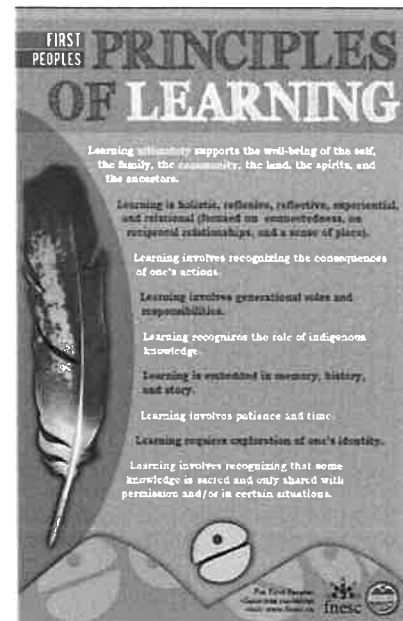
- A strong band program available to students in all grades
- A vibrant PRIDE Alliance program, sponsored by teachers who meet regularly with many students over lunch time on a regular basis
- A drumming group, sponsored by Ms. Dube and Mr. Peal, from Suwilaawks Community School, meets every Wednesday to practice Indigenous song and traditions
- A strong athletics program with a focus on participation and sportsmanship. Opportunities include traditional sports such as volleyball, basketball, and badminton
- Inquiry based learning and project-based learning are practiced here by many of our teachers with various levels of expertise. This is a student focused model where students are co-authors of their learning and have input into what and how they learn
- We have a strong commitment to the use of technology as a tool for instruction and learning. We have two full computer lab spaces, a class set of laptops, and a class set of iPads for student use. As well, we have Smart TVs in the majority of classroom spaces and multiple routers in the facility to improve wireless access for students and staff
- We are committed to structuring our time to allow staff and students to build and foster strong relationships – a ‘connectedness’ to one another and the school
- A variety of activities for students to be involved outside of instructional time – activities such as yearbook club, drama groups, our games club, a Green Team, and Indigenous cultural incentive programs such as beading and weaving.
- We are committed to enhancing our relationships with all families, and welcoming them back into our building
- We are committed to connecting our students to opportunities outside of the school, such as community volunteer opportunities
- “Student Success” support blocks
- Advisory times built into the schedule twice each week, providing opportunities for students to connect with other caring adults in the building

## Students

- Consistency of rules and expectations expected throughout the school supports them with modelling good choices
- Engagement is key to success
- Attendance is a barrier for many
- Many are struggling with mental illness, affecting many aspects of school life
- Show respect for cultural differences, sexual orientation, unique personal differences, etc.
- Maintaining appropriate levels of respect and socially acceptable behaviour has been a challenge since the disruption of programs
- Value the welcoming environment, food programs, etc.,
- Enjoy experiential learning opportunities
- Learning takes time, support, and patience

## Opportunities to Develop a Deeper Understanding of Indigenous Ways of Knowing

- Throughout the school year, there will be opportunities in classes and throughout the school to allow our students and staff to further develop our understanding of Indigenous culture and experiences
- Making learning meaningful by having First Nations Role Models visit classroom to share knowledge and provide unique learning opportunities, such as carving and drumming
- First Nations Support Workers are available in all classrooms every day to support students, as well as connect with families
- The Northwest Coast First Nations Exploratory is developed to help students answer questions such as: How does the history of the Tsimshian people affect my community, family, and myself? How will learning about First Nations culture help me better understand myself and the community?
- Classroom teachers continue the process of the Indigenization of the curriculum



## Our Focus (As highlighted by staff)

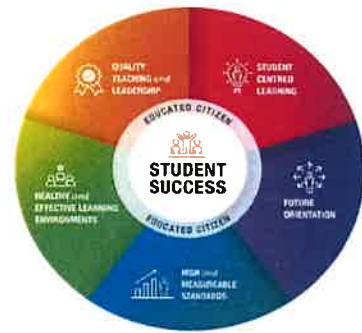
- Engagement – meaningful learning with a myriad of strategies in every classroom
- School Spirit – school dances, Grade 9 year end celebration, fun events, clubs, teams, etc.
- Attendance – offer support to families who are struggling with many complex behaviours
- Consistency – rules enforced throughout the school
- Consequences (Code of Conduct) – inform students of consequences for poor choices
- Student success – supports available, clear communication, opportunity for regulation
- Communication with staff – when students are at risk
- Relationship building with students, parents/guardians, and school community
- High expectations for all learners
- Enhancing our relationships with all families as we welcome them back into our building
- Continue to build a solid school community that is supported by community services (ie- The Foundry)
- Continue to build a culture of caring and compassion

## Our Inquiry Questions

- How will improving student engagement contribute to more academic success for all learners at SMS?
- How will the mental health of our school community improve as the strategies from **Classroom 180** are implemented throughout the building?

## Indicators of Success

- School based literacy and numeracy assessments will show an increased success rate
- Staff reflection will indicate growth in all areas
- Student self assessments, including the core competencies, will show a better understanding of self
- Parent voice
- Attendance data will show that students are attending more frequently
- Middle years Development Index results will indicate students are feeling better about themselves, their learning, and their sense of belonging
- Success metrics for all students, including those with unique needs, Indigenous ancestry, English Language Learners, and more



School Principal Signature: D Bragg-Houssell

School Vice-Principal Signature: Donna