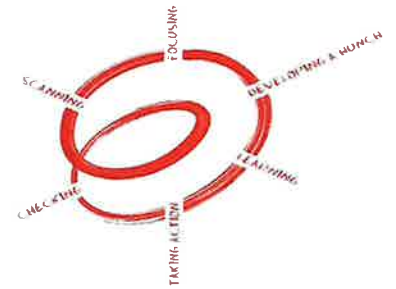




School Growth Plan 2022-2023

THORNHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Coast Mountains School District #82
3860 Paquette Avenue
Terrace, BC V8G 3S8



MISSION STATEMENT

Thornhill Primary is an inclusive school that provides innovative and quality practice to ignite and motivate all learners. Cultural components and Indigenous content consistently infuse the curriculum and individual programs.

BELIEF STATEMENT

At Thornhill Primary School we have the right to learn in safe, caring surroundings. We respect ourselves, others, our work, and our environment. Together we are the best we can be.





SCHOOL CONTEXT:

- Thornhill Primary's 178 students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 come from a vast geographical area: Lakelse Lake, Jackpine, Upper and Lower Thornhill, Queensway, Kitselas, (Gitaus and Old Remo), Gossen, Copper River Estates, Copper Mountain, and Kleanza.
 - Approximately 46% of our students are Indigenous, a large number of whom come from the Kitselas nation on whose unceded territory the school is located. Kitselas means 'People of the canyon' in Tsimshian Sm'algyax. Several other nations are represented at our school as well.
 - A number of students are serviced as ELL (English Language) Learners and others are Ministry designated with social/emotional, physical/health, and/or learning needs.
 - Many students, especially in kindergarten, work with the speech and language assistant, who is at our school several days a week. Students who require level intensive interventions work with the speech and language pathologist on a weekly basis.
 - A vibrant StrongStart Program operates within our school and makes use of the library , gym, assemblies, and special performances.
 - Our warm and welcoming staff is committed to maintaining a positive school environment. We have a strong connection with our learners, their families, our school community, and one another.
 - Our outside environment has 2 playground areas that we share with Thornhill Elementary and 2 baseball fields that the communities use for the season. These spaces are utilized by our learners during lunch, recess, for learning walks, and other activities.
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1. **Scanning:** What's going on for your learners? How do you know?

- Data from the Spring 2022 assessments (PM Benchmarks, CMSD Math assessment, School Wide Write, Student Self Assessment, and Kindergarten Screener) indicate that:

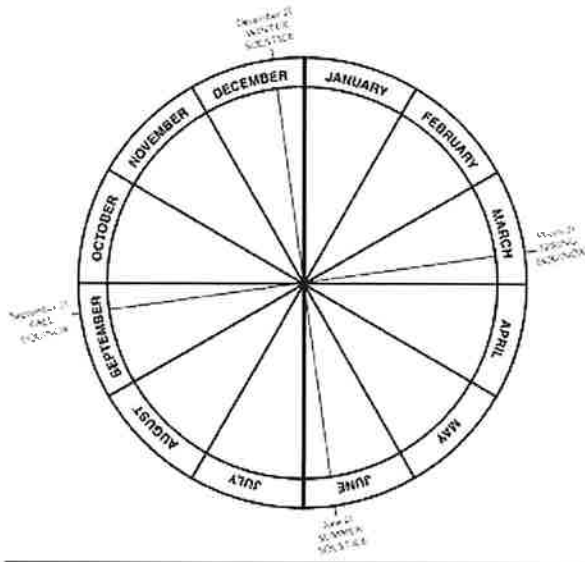
Adapted from Dr. Judy Halbert and Dr. Linda Kaser "Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality"

- Students have increased several reading levels over this school year. However, our goal is for the majority of our students to be reading within grade level expectations by the end of Grade 3.
 - Many students are performing within grade level in writing.
 - Many students are demonstrating a strong number sense with understanding of partitioning, compensation, representing and describing numbers, and patterning.
 - Many students are happy at school and feel they are successful in all areas.
 - Most kindergarten students are developing the skills needed for school life.
 - Our First Nations' Support Worker is aware and supportive of the needs of our Indigenous students and time is set in her schedule to work on culture/connection activities with small groups of students. She is also committed to working with classroom teachers to provide Indigenous Education for all our students, especially through the teaching of Seasonal Rounds.
 - Indigenous learners attend school regularly and are supported well in their learning by the school team.
 - Students like school and feel safe at Thornhill Primary. They have positive peer relationships and feel connected to two or more adults at school.
 - The 'Blitz' Program, which is an intervention program for students in grade 1-3, is highly successful. Students who are missing crucial skills in Literacy, attend the Blitz Program several times a week. We included some Math Blitz groups in the spring of 2022 and these proved to be beneficial.
 - In 2021-2022, the Sm'algyax Language teacher, Ms. Seymour, was successful in making connections with students and broadening the students' knowledge of Tsimshian language and culture.
 - The school counsellor works with individual and small groups of students who need social, emotional, and behavioural support.
 - Classroom resources and "individual book bins" support learners at all reading levels.
 - Our school library is filled with rich, engaging and culturally relevant literature. The library teacher supports all classes in building literacy skills.
 - Our Numeracy Program is rich with a hands-on approach to math instruction and math practice. Many teachers use the **Friends of 10 and Mathematical Thinking by Carol Fullerton**.
 - Opportunities to learn outside the school have included field trips to the adjacent forest, the elementary school, the fire hall, the NTEC building, as well as Kitselas Canyon.
 - Healthy food is available to all students on a daily basis (muffins, fruit, yogurt, milk, sandwiches) and we have a thriving lunch program.
 - Our supportive PAC is focussed on building a school environment that is welcoming, rich in resources, and committed to providing the best for all learners.
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INDIGENOUS Learning: for all learners

- Our First Nations' Support Worker, Mrs. Dowse, works in all classrooms in the school on a daily/weekly basis.
- Ms. Seymour, the school Language and Culture Teacher, was successful in broadening the students' knowledge of the Tsimshian Sm'algyax language, culture, identity and traditional territory.
- The **First Peoples Principals of Learning** are embedded in our practices. We believe that learning is grounded in place, should be experiential, takes patience and time, and

- Tsimshian Seasonal Rounds are taught through various sensory modes, tasting, (seaweed, berries, plants, smoked fish,) touching, (furs and other traditional seasonal hunted and harvested items), sharing oral stories, and many other seasonal offerings throughout the year by our FNSW.
 - An effort is being made to use Tsimshian Sm'alg yax at a school-wide level
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FOCUSSING: Our School, Our Learners, Their Successes and Challenges

GOAL 1: Increased ability in literacy.

Our focus will involve having teachers collaborate and share knowledge so that all students are being exposed to engaging and robust literacy experiences and practices. Classroom work will be enriched with small-group support from the teacher-librarian, resource teachers and Blitz groups.

INQUIRY QUESTION: Literacy

- How will supporting teacher collaboration time for literacy programs and practices reflect in students' engagement and ability across grade levels?

GOAL 2: Increased performance in Numeracy skills.

We will provide support to students who need it through Math Blitz groups. We will focus on activity-based learning and support teaching with differentiation in mind.

INQUIRY QUESTION: Numeracy

- How will having number talks, open-ended tasks, play-based practice, and differentiation in the classroom increase the mathematical understanding and ability of all learners?

GOAL 3: Integration of Tsimshian Sm'alg yax and Culture in daily activities

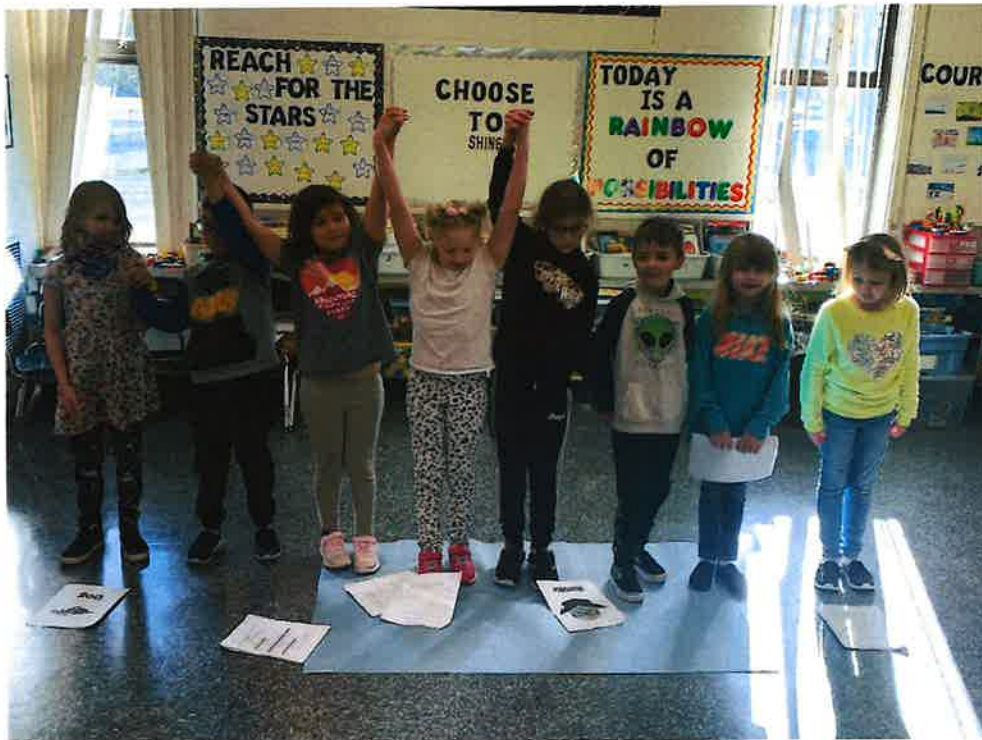
INQUIRY QUESTION: Indigenous Practices

- What effect will having Tsimshian Sm'alg yax and culture seen and heard throughout the school have on students being able to understand and use of it?

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

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

- “Every child can learn, just not on the same day or in the same way.”
 - Meeting the needs of students first (physical, emotional) and differentiating instruction are ways we can make our school more equitable
- Targeted instruction of literacy and numeracy skills and strategies supports all learners
- Using educational assistants and non-enrolling staff in a focussed, goal oriented fashion ensures success.
- Connection to and communication with parents is beneficial to all learners.
- Providing students with clear and concrete feedback is important for growth.
- Data on student achievement in reading comprehension and mathematical problem solving are areas of challenge for many students.
- When teachers share their knowledge, learning improves.
- A strong focus on the foundations of reading and math will enhance learning.
- Quality assessment is essential in that it lets us know what students’ strengths are, what areas can be improved, and what needs to be taught next.
- Use of technology supports diverse needs in classrooms.
- Learning is experiential. Students learn by doing.



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)*

- A lot of work has been done in the areas of literacy and numeracy; however, we have several new staff that are not familiar with the professional learning that has taken place.

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

- Literacy and numeracy assessment scores show that learning is not the same across grade levels.
- Some teachers are comfortable and knowledgeable enough to incorporate Indigenous culture and ways of learning into their classes. Some are not.
- The First Nations' Support Worker and District Language and Culture Teacher must spread their time amongst many classes. However, students need frequent exposure to language and regular integration of ideas/content.

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?

- As a staff, work needs to be done around the First People's Principle's of Learning. This can be done at early staff meetings.
- Staff need to learn about the Kitselas People and the land that our school resides on. Inviting members of the nation to speak at the school will help with this. This will involve building connections.
- Data from the spring assessments needs to be shared. What is improving? How can we support each other in our practice?
- Collaboration time will be offered so that colleagues can share, mentor, and inspire each others' practices in literacy.
- The work of Carol Fullerton will be continue to guide our numeracy teaching. This work needs to be shared amongst staff.
- Staff participate in professional development throughout the year. Encouraging this work to be on our goal areas is essential.

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**)

- ⇒ *What are the roles of Teachers, Support Staff, Principals and Vice-Principals in the inquiry?*
- ⇒ *How are you communicating this to parents and incorporating their feedback?*

- School Based Team will meet twice a month and clearly outline action plans (Student Learning Plan) and follow up for those students who are challenged with various aspects of their learning.
- Non-enrolling teachers, EAs, SLAs, and FNSW will continue to work with students on specific, targeted skills.
- Providing support in the classroom "push in" model, to allow students to receive consistent help that is closely connected to classroom learning.
- Provide a literacy rich environment by having lots of leveled books available and quality read aloud materials.
- Identify needs early and develop a plan to address the needs.
- Further collaboration between teachers. This will include teachers from Thornhill Primary collaborating with teachers from Thornhill Elementary to work towards common goals for our students.

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

- Having students participate in Math Talk and use of manipulatives to support learning.
- Less traditional problem solving and more improved number sense through the use of different methods of teaching.
- 'Blitz' Resource Support for students who are missing the phonological awareness/early literacy/basic numeracy skills.
- Sharing with parents through newsletters, Facebook page, and PAC meetings.

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?*

- Anecdotal notes and observations will show that students are more confident and ready to move to the next level.
- Report cards will show that students are progressing and responding well to interventions that are focussed on individual skill development.
- Regular assessment will show individual growth in literacy and numeracy skills.
- Data collected in the District Assessment Management System will be reviewed and shared.



School Principal Signature: *S. Mulvail*

