

# K-12 Mental Health & Well-being Plan

## Coast Mountains School District

### 2024-2027

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## SECTION 1: Background

Alignment with any Related District Policy & Strategic Plan: [Coast Mountains School District Strategic Plan](#)

### Goal: We Facilitate Well-Being Across Coast Mountains School District

- Continue to build a culture of care and a compassionate system
- Ensure all schools are safe and welcoming with a strong sense of belonging focusing on mental well-being
- Ensure social emotional learning and trauma informed practice is embedded within all schools

### Alignment with BC Ministry Policy:

In September 2020, the Ministry of Education and Child Care released the Mental Health in Schools (MHIS) Strategy<sup>1</sup> to provide a vision for embedding mental health and well-being into all aspects of the K-12 education system. The Strategy focuses on three main elements: Compassionate Systems Leadership, Capacity Building, and Mental Health in Classrooms. The MHIS strategy recognizes the critical role schools play in promoting positive mental health for British Columbians.

Creating and sustaining environments that support mental health and well-being are key to the work of BC school districts. We are all more successful when we learn and work in healthy and safe environments where well-being is embedded. While the primary focus for schools is mental health promotion, school staff provide initial support for students with significant mental health challenges, and for connecting them with further support when necessary. A district mental health plan helps to coordinate and communicate this important work.

*Every student in British Columbia deserves a safe, caring and healthy environment that helps them to learn, grow and thrive. (BC Mental Health in Schools Strategy)*

### A Two-Eyed Seeing approach to mental health and wellness<sup>2</sup>:

*Two-Eyed Seeing is an approach that brings together the strengths of both Indigenous and Western worldviews. Where Western conceptualizations often differentiate mental health from physical health, Indigenous perspectives view mental wellness as shaped through a balance of the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional aspects of life<sup>3</sup>. For example, [The](#)*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/erase/documents/mental-health-wellness/mhis-strategy.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Hatcher, A., Bartlett, C., Marshall, A., & Marshall, M. (2009). Two-eyed seeing in the classroom environment: Concepts, approaches, and challenges. *Canadian Journal of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education*, 9(3), 141-153.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1576093687903/1576093725971>

[First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness](#)<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 1) aims to create a shared understanding of a holistic vision of health and wellness. Districts can take a Two-Eyed Seeing approach that reflects and brings together the perspectives of local Indigenous communities, students and staff members with Western perspectives in their district’s Strategy and Action Plan.

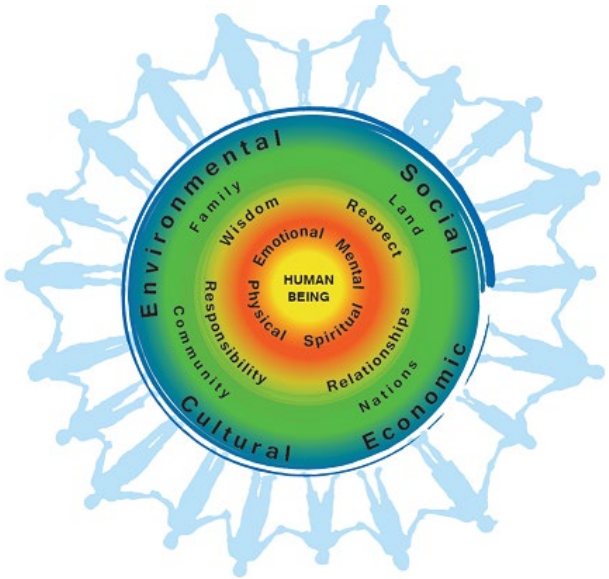


Figure 1: BC First Nations Health Authority’s First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness

Data Summary/Sources Used when Creating this Action Plan/Strategy:

- Adolescent Health Survey (AHS)
- Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ)
- Early Development Instrument (EDI)
- Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)
- Youth Development Instrument (YDI)
- Student Learning Survey (SLS)
- Student Voice Middle/Secondary School Sessions
- Attendance, Office Referral Data
- Staff Well-being Surveys
- District Goals Survey (sent to parents/caregivers, community partners)

Groups/People Involved in Creating this Plan/Strategy:

District Mental Health & Wellness Team Lead	Director of Inclusive Education
District Mental Health & Wellness Team Members	District Education Team and school counsellor
Others Consulted	DPAC, Principals and Vice Principals, School Staff, Students, Partners, Rights Holders, Parents & Caregivers

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fnha.ca/wellness/wellness-for-first-nations/first-nations-perspective-on-health-and-wellness>

## Opportunities for Alignment & Collaboration within the District

*An opportunity exists for future alignment and collaboration with other groups with similar interests both within Coast Mountains School District and across Northwest British Columbia, including:*

- Northern Health
- First Nations Health Authority
- Foundry
- Child Youth Mental Health
- Kermode Friendship Centre
- Children and Families
- Northwest Regional Hospital
- Northern Inter-Tribal Families Services
- And others who wish to be partners in this plan...

### Compassionate Systems Leadership

### Indigenous Education Initiatives/Plans

### School Improvement Plans: Individual Mental Health Plans for Each School

## Glossary of Mental Health Terms:

**Mental Health:** Includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being, affecting how we think, feel and act.

**Mental Health Literacy (MHL):** Developing an understanding of how to obtain and maintain good mental health. It also includes understanding about mental disorders, accessing help when needed, and decreasing stigma around the topic of mental illness.

**Social Emotional Learning (SEL):** A key aspect of the core competencies in BC's K-12 curriculum and includes the knowledge, skills and attitudes to:

- develop healthy identities
- manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals
- feel and show empathy for others
- establish and maintain supportive relationships
- make responsible and caring decisions

**Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE):** A collection of school-based, evidence informed, anxiety management and resilience building resources.

**Trauma Informed Practice:** A systemic approach that acknowledges the short- and long-term effects of trauma.

**Mental Health Disorder:** A mental disorder is diagnosed according to internationally accepted criteria; it requires evidence-based assessment and treatment from a health professional.

**Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL):** An approach that inspires transformation and instructional best practices that lead to student success. CSL is anchored in self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management and relationship skills.

**Student Voice:** Refers to the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of individual students and groups of students and to mental health and wellness supports that are based on student interests and needs and choices.

**British Columbia Children’s Hospital (BCCH):** A medical facility located in Vancouver British Columbia and an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

**Response to Intervention (RTI):** A three-leveled approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs.

**Digital Safety:** is the practice of protecting your personal information, data, and digital identity. (cyber-attacks, identity theft, online harassment, and privacy breaches. It involves preventing and minimizing harm in the online environment.

## SECTION 2: Our Vision/Guiding Statement for School Mental Health

*A clear and focused District Vision for Mental Health and Well-Being, that is created collaboratively and is aligned with district priorities and initiatives, is a key foundation for school mental health Strategy and Action Plan development. A shared vision embodies the district's essential values, guides toward our shared aspirations and helps align the work with a deeper sense of purpose.*

### Vision / Guiding Statement

We will facilitate well-being across Coast Mountains School District for all students, staff and then reaching out into the community.

## SECTION 3: Describing the Current Reality: Areas of Strength & Areas for Improvement

*Coast Mountains School District has identified both areas of strength and areas for improvement below based on the mapping activity using the self-reflection tool, a review of the district's data on student and staff mental health and well-being, and the engagement work conducted to date.*

<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Alignment of policies and initiatives</b>
	<b>Compassionate Systems Leadership is being embedded across the district</b>
	<b>Trauma Informed Practice has been a focus for many years</b>
	<b>Student voice opportunities are increasing across the district</b>
	<b>Health and well-being data is available and being used for planning</b>

<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	<b>More focused mental health and substance use literacy</b>
	<b>Be responsive to the mental health data: Review, share, plan, and measure</b>
	<b>Make data and response to data available to students</b>
	<b>Sharing of health and well-being information and learning with caregivers</b>
	<b>Digital safety</b>

## SECTION 4: Developing Priority Areas & Goals

*Priority areas have been identified through the analysis of the current reality and informed by:*

- *Areas of Strength and Areas for Improvement that emerged from the mapping activity using the self-reflection tool*
- *A review of the district's data on student and staff mental health and well-being*
- *Engagement with the school community*
- *Alignment with the district's strategic plan and vision for mental health*

## Brief Summary of How Priority Areas & Goals were Selected:

- District Scan of existing supports, through mapping session with BCCH over several months
- Consultation with DPAC, Principals and Vice Principals, School staff
- Consultation during middle and secondary school student voice sessions
- District wide engagement with survey (students, parents/caregivers, staff, community partners)
- Review of Consultation data by District Mental Health Team

## Priority Areas:

### Priority Area 1: Digital Safety

*This priority will support the district's understanding of digital safety and how this relates to other health areas. For example, improved digital safety will also support other related health topics as it is connected to things like bullying, sleep habits, sexual health.*

### Priority Area 2: Increase Mental Health Literacy Across the District

*This priority includes increasing the district's awareness of mental health literacy and its meaning, including reducing stigma, understanding mental health disorders, awareness of help-seeking behaviors, understanding stress, and developing coping mechanisms.*

### Priority Area 3: Building Relationships with Students, Staff, and Communities

*This priority focuses on developing trusting relationships through clear communications, deeper connections, and the sharing of resources to support youth.*

### Goals to Address the Priority:

Coast Mountains School District has developed clear measurable goals that address the Priority Areas that we will achieve over the 3-year period. Our goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound, Inclusive and Equitable (SMARTIE<sup>5</sup>).

#### Priority Area 1: Digital Safety

**Goal 1: Supporting Schools with the Updated/Revised Policy and Guidelines Around Student Use of Personal Digital Devices.**

**Goal 2: Provide Support Through In-service Training and Resources to Teacher Group(s) to Deliver Digital Safety to Students.**

**Goal 3: Supporting Parents and Caregivers with Clear Information on How to Manage Digital Safety in the Home.**

#### Priority Area 2: Increase Mental Health Literacy Across the District

**Goal 1: Supporting Mental Health Literacy (MHL) Across Transition Years (Grades 6/7, 9/10).**

**Goal 2: Promote Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE) K to 3.**

**Goal 3: Supporting Parents and Caregivers with Access to Mental Health Literacy (MHL) and Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE).**

#### Priority Area 3: Building Relationships with Students, Staff, and Communities

**Goal 1: Awareness: Develop a Journey Map Poster to Show Connects to Mental Health Services Within the School Community**

**Goal 2: Relationship: Student Leadership**

**Goal 3: Relationship: Find a Way to Share and Celebrate Mental Health and Well-being Work Happening Across the Community**

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<sup>5</sup> See CASEL's guide to developing SMARTIE goals for more information (<https://schoolguide.casel.org/resource/developing-smartie-goals-for-sel-ost/>)