



Kitwanga Elementary Growth Plan 2024-2025



Our Context & Our Learners

<https://bit.ly/KWESIP2024>

Our Learners

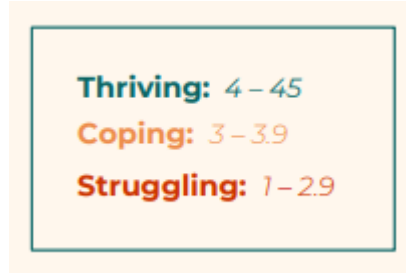
Students at Kitwanga Elementary enjoy strong relationships within their school community, they value the safe and trusting connections they have with their peers, our staff, and within their families and community. Our students are honest and communicate their needs openly. They have explained that they learn best by reading or when learning is supported with visual supports such as videos. In the past, students have also expressed a desire for a more immersive cultural experience, as well as outdoor, out-of-school excursions and community-building opportunities as a regular part of their learning experiences.

Our Focus

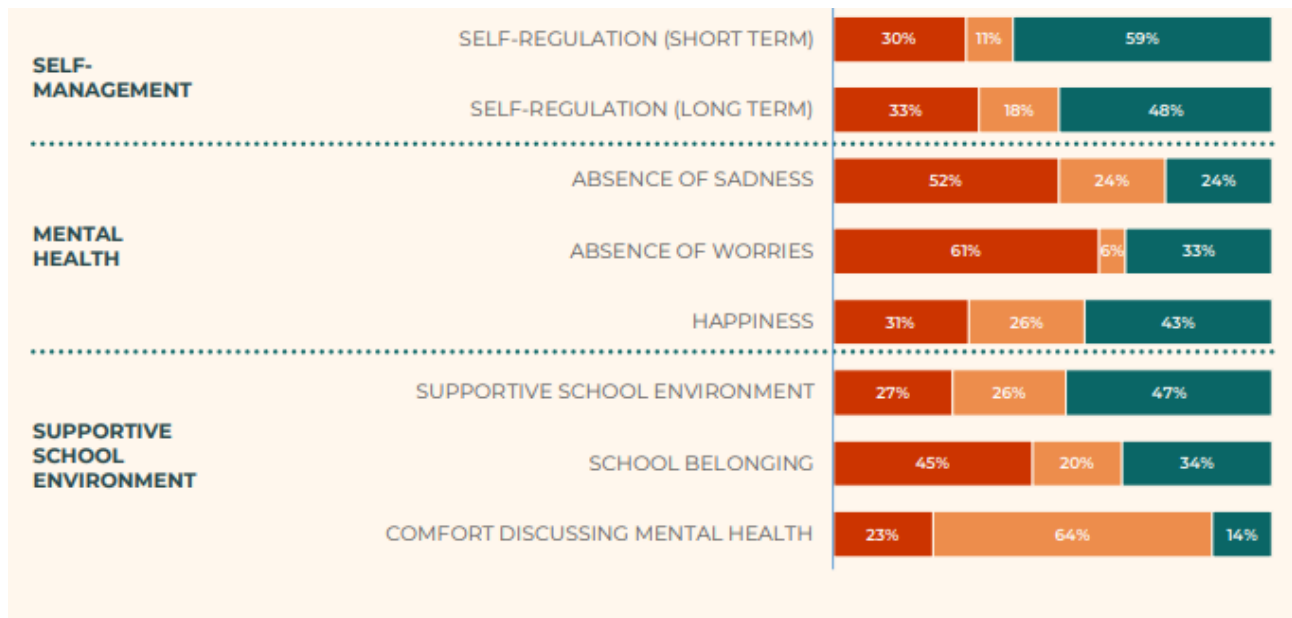
Goal #1 - Social Emotional Learning & Mental Health

Our focus is to help our learners develop, practice, and demonstrate their Social Emotional Learning skills in order to be regulated and ready for learning and actively contribute to a culture of caring throughout the school. According to the *Open Parachute Student Well-Being Report*, our students' biggest strengths are self-esteem, empathy, and friendship intimacy. However, the report highlighted that our students seek improvement in the areas of school belonging, absence of sadness, and absence of worries.

Our goal is to see a 15% increase in thriving students in the categories of self-management, mental health, and supportive school environment by June 2025. We will track progress through the Open Parachute Student Well-Being Report.



June 2024 Data:



Students' learning goals for 2024-2025:

- Understanding and interpreting feelings and emotions.
- Utilizing strategies to process and manage feelings.
- Understanding the feelings and emotions of others.
- Collaborating effectively with peers to work through low level conflicts.
- Developing resilience to cope and manage stressors.
- Understanding and applying a growth mindset to build a sense of hope and keep trying for their goals.
- Developing self-advocacy skills so students can resolve issues independently while also knowing when to ask for help.

Our next steps to work towards our goal include the following connections:

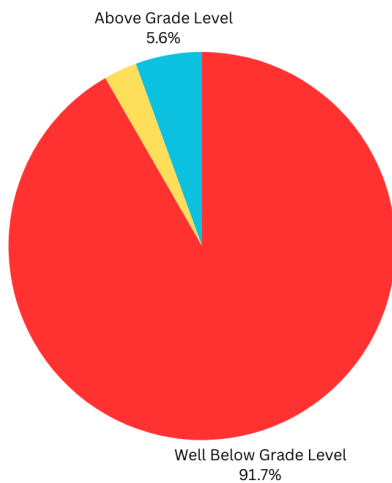
- Daily mindfulness:
 - Open Parachute Mental Health Units
 - Zones of Regulation (K-3)
 - Mind Up (4-7)
- Expectation of regular social-emotional learning in classes to meet the above learning goals.
- Gitxsan Virtue of the Month.
- Whole School Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports.
- Counselling:
 - School Counsellor
 - Gitxsan Child and Family Services Supports
 - Child and Youth Mental Health Supports
- Expand clubs and extracurricular opportunities for students.
- Provide learners with additional opportunities for ongoing input and involvement in school wide plans and activities – this could be done with the help of a student leadership group or student advisory group
- Reconnect with our families and local community by welcoming and inviting them to the school on a regular and ongoing basis

Goal #2 – Building Literacy Skills

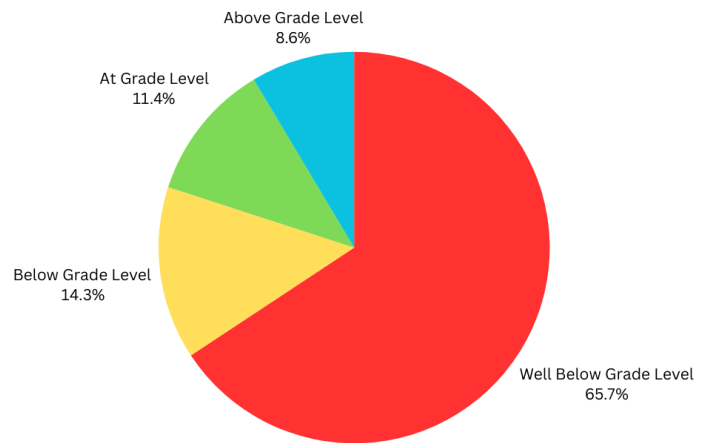
Our focus is to build strong phonological awareness, decoding skills, comprehension in order to build reading and writing confidence while helping students find joy in reading and writing. We aim to improve student phonological awareness, decoding skills, comprehension and reading confidence, with the goal of increasing the number of students in the green and blue zones to 50% by June 2025. We will track this progress through Acadience Assessments, PM Benchmarks, and School Wide Writes.

End of 2023-2024 School Year Data:

Primary Data



Intermediate Data



Our next steps to work towards our goal are:

- Primary
 - Literacy Centers.
 - Reading groups.
 - Culturally relevant decodable texts.
 - Weekly Library Times & Library Education.
 - UFLI Literacy Program in K-3.
 - UFLI as Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention.
 - Acadience reading assessments and benchmarking.
 - Small group supports with the Literacy Support Teacher.
- Intermediate:
 - Reading Buddies.
 - Weekly Library Times & Library Education.
 - Reading and Writing Power Programs.
 - 6-minute solutions.
 - Reading groups.
 - Culturally responsive novels.
 - Acadience assessments and benchmarking.
 - UFLI as Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention.
 - Small group supports with the Resource Teacher .

Goal #3 - Positive Cultural Identity and Experiences

Due to our unique location on traditional Gitksan Laxyip, our student makeup, and the fact that our Indigenous knowledge, culture and history has long been dismissed or silenced by colonial culture and institutions - we will maintain a focus on the incorporation of local Gitksan culture in all that we do, as authentically and meaningfully as possible. As well, we want to ensure our children have a myriad of opportunities to connect with their lands, people and culture. We aim to enhance learner engagement holistically by appealing to students' deep connections to their lands and culture, and their growing pride in their developing identities. Our students have expressed a desire for a more immersive cultural experience, as well as outdoor, out-of-school excursions and community-building opportunities as a regular part of their learning experiences.

Therefore, our goal is to have an immersive cultural experience each term that is connected to the Gitksan Seasonal rounds. These experiences could involve going out into community or inviting community into the school. We will measure our progress by reflecting on the experiences and seeking student feedback.

- Inviting Chiefs, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Local Leaders, Families to be part of learning.
- Collaborating with the District Indigenous Education Department.
- Excursions onto the land to discover plants, resources and spaces that resonate with significance for Gitksan people.
- Harvesting within our school garden on Gitksan Laxyip.
- Encouraging attendance to community events and gatherings.
- Incorporating opportunities for hands on traditional learning (smokehouse learning, moose meat processing, incorporation of traditional foods into the curriculum) where possible.
- Including cultural foods into our snack and lunch program.
- Creating after-school opportunities for students to explore their culture with the support of local leaders.



Figure from <https://climateinstitute.ca/publications/gitksan-rez-illience/>

As a school community, we are taking important steps to reconcile the history of Indigenous education within western institutions through our current actions; it is no small undertaking, and yet with small steps, we have begun to plant the seeds of a vastly different experience for our students. We understand the need for Indigenous cultures to be visible, to be authentically valued and for the biased teachings of the colonial past to be corrected. We acknowledge the need to focus on Truth and Reconciliation, decolonization and cultural redress. We are beginning by supporting the adults in our school as they continue to learn Indigenous values, language, history and knowledge of cultural significance in ways that speak to authenticity and respect.

The professionals in our building are strongly connected to our Gitxsan communities, some are of Gitxsan ancestry, and some have lived here so long that they have become a part of our fibres of existence. Many of our professionals have deeply rooted cultural knowledge and experience, others are new on their journeys of learning and understanding, and all have a genuine respect for the Gitxsan people, their history, language and culture. This learning journey requires respect for the individual process, and the space for choice, seeking out teachers and finding our way.



Making Fry Bread



Caring for the salmon in the salmon nursery



Making Soapberry Ice cream

School Principal Signature: _____