



## **Skeena Middle School**

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**Relationships - Respect - Honesty - Responsibility - Perseverance**

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### **Our Learners**

At Skeena Middle School, literacy and numeracy skills are fundamental to student learning and engagement across all curricular areas. Students use literacy and numeracy skills to seek out information, explore subjects in-depth and gain a deeper understanding of their own world and the world around them. At SMS, students are encouraged to think critically, analyze problems, and question as they progress through all of their courses. We seek to foster positive mindsets that enable students to persevere through challenging materials or problems. Students are taught that their abilities and experience expand through effort. Embracing a growth mindset requires believing in the ability for improvement through effort and adopting new strategies while recognizing that struggles are a natural part of learning. These beliefs motivate students to improve social and emotional skills, maintain motivation, set goals, and reflect on their progress. Consequently, students exhibit grit, optimism, and a confident approach to nurturing positive academic attitudes, leading to increased engagement with school. We seek to enhance the ability of our students to develop their interpersonal skills by putting away cell phones and other electronic devices while at school and meaningfully engage with adults and peers throughout the day. Our students actively embrace and engage with the First Peoples Principles of Learning by understanding that learning involves patience and time and that learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

### **Our Focus**

Our teachers and support staff at Skeena Middle School provide our students with a variety of learning opportunities and experiences that allow them to collaborate and connect with staff and peers. To fully engage in these learning opportunities and experiences across the curriculum, our students require literacy skills to make meaning of text and numeracy skills to apply math in a variety of situations.

Our learning goals as a school are to:

- Increase engagement to allow students to enhance their development of literacy and numeracy skills
- Improve interpersonal skills, improve individual mental health, and improve engagement by eliminating the use of personal electronic devices (e.g. cellphones)
- Embrace and engage with the First Peoples Principles of Learning by understanding that learning involves patience and time and that learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

## **Engagement**

We know that when students are connected to their school community, are actively engaged and take ownership of their learning, they are more likely to experience success. Students that are engaged and taking ownership for their learning will develop and improve their literacy and numeracy skills. We also know that learning does not just happen in the classroom. Extra-curricular activities such as team sports and clubs provide opportunities for collaboration, goal-setting and social engagement.

## **Interpersonal Skills**

Personal Electronic Devices, especially cell phones, are valuable and important communication devices in today's world. However, use of cell phones/electronics during the instructional day seriously impedes and distracts from the learning process. Research shows a significant correlation between excessive use of cell phones and poor mental health. As a school, we believe that taking a break from cell phone/electronic use during the day will help improve mental health and allow students to focus on their school day. Our goal is to create a more focused, respectful, and safe learning environment and school community by removing what we have found to be a source of distraction and disconnection between students and their learning, as well as in the development of interpersonal relationships.

## **First Peoples Principles of Learning**

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. We will embrace and engage with the First Peoples Principles of Learning by understanding that learning involves patience and time in all areas. We will continue to focus on developing our students' understanding of the curricular concepts rather than a simple completion of tasks. Also, we will continue to develop our understanding that learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions. The more engaged that our students are in their learning the greater the opportunity that their literacy and numeracy skills will improve.

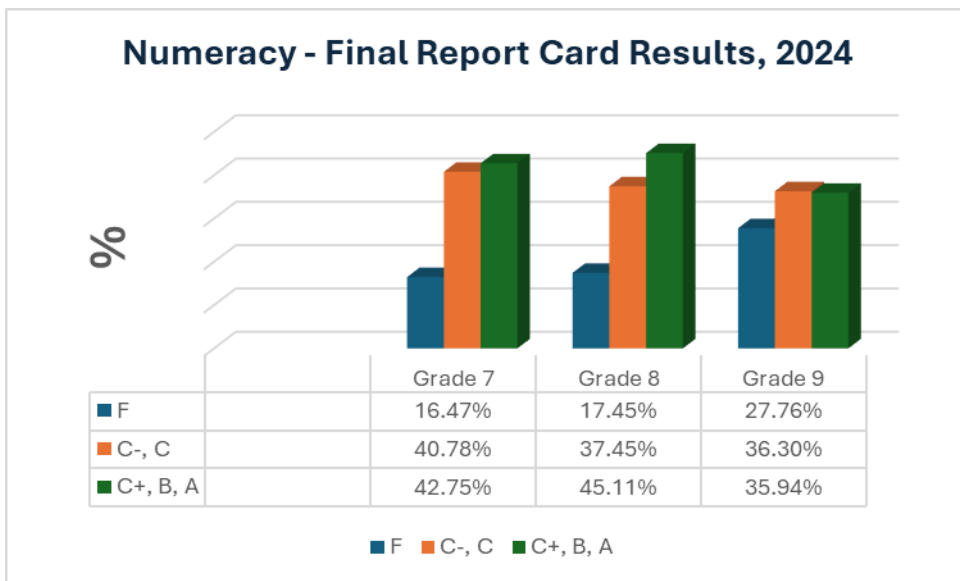
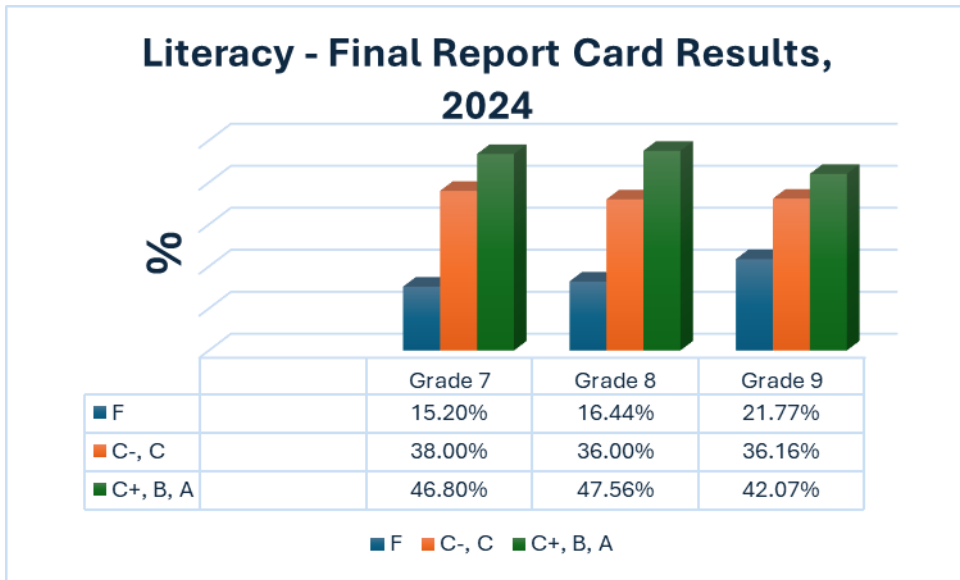
## **Our Next Steps**

Evidence of our students' learning strongly indicates the need to focus on increasing engagement in the areas of literacy and numeracy skills.

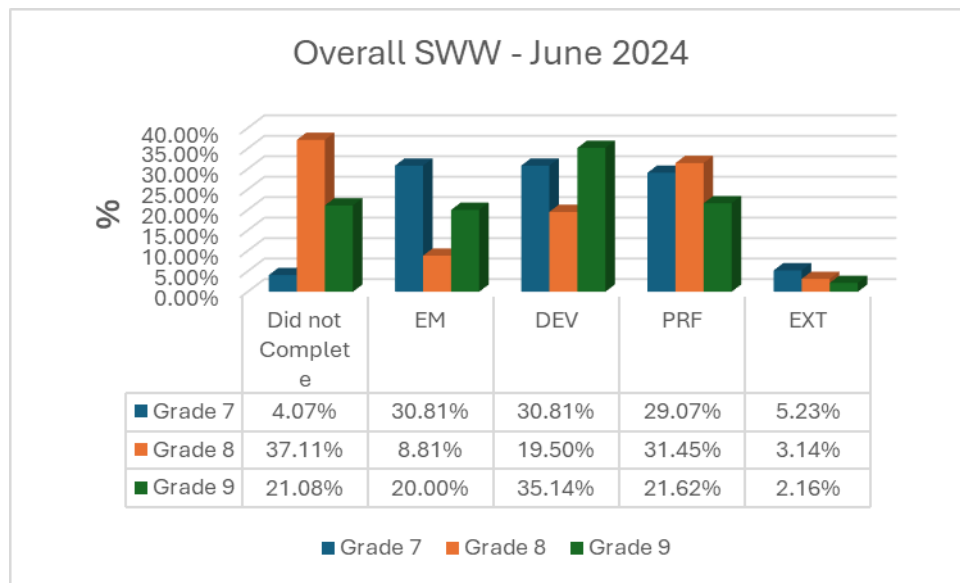
When asked on the Student Learning survey about literacy and numeracy our Grade 7 students indicated the following:

- I continue to get better at Math – 63% agreed or strongly agreed
- I continue to get better at Reading – 67% agreed or strongly agreed
- I continue to get better at Writing – 67% agreed or strongly agreed

Our Report Card marks in Literacy and Numeracy show the following



Our School-Wide Write overall results indicate the need to engage our students in the topic and the process.



While we see growth in all our students over the course of the year, we know that with more student engagement we will see improved academic development for our students.

Understanding that mental health has an impact on student learning and engagement, we feel that eliminating personal electronic devices (e.g. cellphones) from the school will allow students a greater focus on their academics. The scheduling of our Student Success classes will provide students in need of extra time and a “break” from class an opportunity to have this during the school day. This will provide our students an opportunity to understand that learning involves patience and time and that learning involves recognizing the consequences of one’s actions.