



**COAST MOUNTAINS BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT 82**

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Information Package

Hazelton French Immersion Program

**For: Students, Staff, Parents, Caregivers,
Hazelton School Community**

Date: April 17, 2026



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April 17, 2026

Hazelton French Immersion Program Review

Responses to Questions Raised at the March 30, 2026, Special Regular Board Meeting

To: Parents, Caregivers, Students, Staff, and Community Members

The Coast Mountains School District, Board of Education is committed to transparency, open communication, and supporting informed understanding of Board decisions.

Following the Special Regular Board Meeting held on March 30, 2026, a number of questions were raised by members of the public regarding the Hazelton French Immersion Program Review and the decision to relocate the Kindergarten to Grade 7 French Immersion program to New Hazelton Elementary, effective the 2026–2027 school year.

This document provides responses to those questions. Where appropriate, similar and overlapping questions have been consolidated for clarity while maintaining the intent and substance of the original inquiries.

The information included reflects the review process, the considerations that informed the Board's decision, and the steps being taken to support students and families through the transition.

We recognize the importance of this program to families and the broader community and are pleased to continue offering French Immersion programming in the Hazelton area.

Sincerely,

Tracey MacMillan, Superintendent of Schools
Coast Mountains School District



Hazelton French Immersion Program Review

Questions Raised at the March 30, 2026, Special Regular Board Meeting

The following questions were raised by members of the public during the Question Period at the March 30, 2026, Special Regular Board Meeting regarding the Hazelton French Immersion Program Review. Similar and overlapping questions have been consolidated and restated for clarity, while preserving the substance of the issues raised.

Decision Making Rationale

1. What data and rationale led the Board to determine that relocating K–7 French Immersion to New Hazelton Elementary (NHE) was the preferred option, and would the Board consider sharing the data and analysis that informed this decision to support public understanding of the decision?

Answer:

The Board's decision was informed by a comprehensive review process that began in September 2024 and extended over approximately 18 months.

As part of this process, a formal letter was sent to families on September 23, 2024, followed by additional correspondence on November 28, 2024, April 8, 2025, and November 3, 2025, to provide updates and invite participation in the review.

The District also held multiple community consultation meetings in the Hazelton area on December 4, 2024, January 9, 2025, February 10, 2025, December 2, 2025, and January 15, 2026, to gather input from families and community members.

In addition, student engagement was undertaken through interviews with French Immersion students and former students on February 13, 2025, and January 15, 2026, to better understand student experience and program retention.

This review process also included surveys, written correspondence, and presentations at public Board meetings, along with analysis of enrolment trends, student attrition, staffing considerations, financial implications, and long-term program sustainability.

The information gathered through this process, along with feedback from families and community members, informed the Board's decision to relocate the



Kindergarten to Grade 7 French Immersion program to New Hazelton Elementary in order to support stronger and more sustainable student cohorts, while continuing to provide access to French Immersion programming in the Hazelton area.

Reference Materials:

[Regular Board Package - February 25, 2026.pdf](#)

[Special Regular Board Package - March 30, 2026 1.pdf](#)

[CMSD82 | Coast Mountain School District No. 82](#)

2. How did the Board consider concerns that some demographic information may have been incomplete, including whether population data for Gitanmaax, Hagwilget, and the Kispiox area was fully reflected?

Answer: The Board's review considered a range of information, including enrolment trends, community feedback, and available demographic data. The demographic information referenced in the report reflects publicly available data sources, including regional population data used to understand broader patterns in the Hazelton area.

It is also important to note that students from communities such as Gitanmaax, Hagwilget, and Kispiox are already within the school catchment area and currently have the opportunity to enroll in the French Immersion program.

The Board's analysis focused primarily on actual enrolment and participation within the school District, which provided the most direct and reliable information for assessing program sustainability.

This information was considered alongside enrolment trends and program viability when the Board made its decision.

3. How did the Board conclude that it is not sustainable to operate English, Gitksan immersion, and French Immersion together at Majagaleehl Gali Aks (MGA)?

Answer: The Board's review considered a number of factors, including enrolment trends, staffing requirements, classroom space, and the ability to support strong learning environments for each program. While operating multiple language



programs within one school is possible, it becomes more challenging when enrolment in one or more programs is very small.

The report noted that Majagaleehl Gali Aks currently supports three distinct program strands—English, Gitxsan Immersion, and French Immersion. Each program has unique instructional and scheduling requirements. As enrolment in French Immersion declined, the two immersion programs were increasingly drawing from the same small group of potential students in the community, which made it more difficult for both programs to maintain strong cohort sizes.

Given that the Gitxsan Immersion program is delivered at Majagaleehl Gali Aks in close relationship with the local First Nations community and supports Indigenous language revitalization in partnership with the community, the Board also considered the importance of ensuring that each program has the conditions needed to thrive.

These factors were considered alongside current enrolment patterns and long-term program sustainability when the Board reviewed options for the future delivery of French Immersion programming.

4. What evidence was relied upon to support the view that French Immersion would be more sustainable if moved from MGA to NHE?

Answer: The Board's decision was informed by enrolment trends, cohort sizes, and the overall structure of programming within the Hazelton area. As outlined in the [February 25, 2026 Hazelton French Immersion Program Review Report](#), enrolment in the French Immersion program has declined over time, resulting in smaller and less sustainable student cohorts.

The review also identified that Majagaleehl Gali Aks currently supports three program strands—English, Gitxsan Immersion, and French Immersion—which draw from the same limited student population. This has contributed to increased pressure on enrolment across programs and challenges in maintaining viable cohort sizes.

Relocating the program to New Hazelton Elementary supports sustainability by allowing French Immersion to draw from a broader and more centralized student



population, rather than competing within a single site with multiple program offerings. This creates improved conditions for building stronger cohorts over time and maintaining program viability.

The [March 31, 2026, media release outlines](#) that the decision to relocate the program is intended to strengthen the program and maintain the integrity of the French Immersion learning experience, while continuing to provide access to French language learning for students in the Hazelton area.

5. Why was French Immersion selected for relocation rather than another program configuration, including alternatives discussed by the community?

Answer: The Board considered a range of options during the review; however, the BC School Act requires that students be entitled to an educational program in the English language. As a result, the Board must ensure that an English-language program remains available.

Under the *School Act*, school Districts are required to provide an educational program in the English language. Pursuant to section 5(1) of the School Act, RSBC 1996, c. 412 (Part 2 — Students and Parents, Division 1 — Students), “every student is entitled to receive an educational program that is provided in the English language”.

This legislative requirement was taken into account during the review. While additional language programs—such as French Immersion or Indigenous language programs—may be offered with approval, school Districts must still ensure that an English-language educational program is available to students.

For this reason, the Board did not consider relocating or removing the English program when reviewing options for the delivery of French Immersion programming.

Consideration of Public and Parent Input

6. How were parent presentations, consultation feedback, volunteer efforts, and community input reflected in the options presented to the Board and in the final decision?



Answer:

Parent presentations, consultation feedback, volunteer efforts, and community input were considered throughout the review process. As outlined in the [February 25, 2026, Hazelton French Immersion Program Review Report](#), the review included multiple community consultation sessions held in the Hazelton area on December 4, 2024, January 9, 2025, February 10, 2025, December 2, 2025, and January 15, 2026, along with letters to families dated September 23, 2024, November 28, 2024, April 8, 2025, and November 3, 2025 ([Hazelton French Immersion Consultation Sessions | Majagaleehi Gali Aks Elementary School](#)).

The review also included surveys distributed to families, student interviews, and direct engagement with students, staff, and parents.

In addition, the Board received formal presentations and correspondence from parents and community members over the course of the review, including presentations shared at public Board meetings. These presentations highlighted a range of perspectives, including the importance of French Immersion to families, concerns regarding enrolment and program sustainability, and a strong desire to maintain access to French language learning within the Hazelton area.

Community members also expressed a willingness to support the program through recruitment efforts, extracurricular activities, and ongoing engagement with the School District.

A consistent message expressed through this input was the importance of continuing French Immersion programming in Hazelton. This feedback directly informed the options presented to the Board.

As a result, the Board did not consider closing the French Immersion program. Instead, the focus of the review was on identifying a model that would allow the program to continue in a way that responds to enrolment trends and supports long-term sustainability.

The Board considered this input alongside enrolment data, operational considerations, and program requirements when making its final decision.



7. How did the Board consider concerns that moving the program may itself reduce enrolment and make future recruitment more difficult?

Answer: The Board recognizes that transportation and location are important considerations for families and may influence enrolment decisions.

Current enrolment information indicates that students attending the French Immersion program at Majagaleehi Gali Aks travel from surrounding communities and access the program through existing school bus routes. Based on current transportation data, 18 out of 28 students enrolled in the French Immersion Program at MGA already travel by bus to access the program. This includes routes such as:

- **Bus 21 – Two Mile**
- **Bus 24 – South Hazelton**
- **Bus 29 – Kispiox Valley**

This information was considered as part of the review of program accessibility and supports the understanding that many students are already travelling to attend French Immersion within the Hazelton area.

These factors were considered as part of the broader review of enrolment patterns and program accessibility. At the same time, the Board also reviewed long-term enrolment trends, which demonstrate a sustained decline in participation in the French Immersion program over several years.

The decision to relocate the Kindergarten to Grade 7 program to New Hazelton Elementary reflects an effort to support stronger and more sustainable student cohorts over time, while continuing to provide access to French Immersion programming within the Hazelton area.

8. How did the Board weigh the possible social, cultural, and geographic impacts of moving a longstanding program away from MGA?

Answer: The Board carefully considered the social and community impact of relocating the French Immersion program from Majagaleehi Gali Aks. This included recognizing the importance of the school within the community, as well as the connections that students and families have to the program and to the school environment.



The Board also considered feedback received throughout the review process, including input from parents, students, and community members who spoke to the value of the program and its role within the Hazelton area.

At the same time, the Board considered the importance of supporting strong and sustainable programming for students over the long term. This includes ensuring that programs are delivered in a way that supports viable cohort sizes and effective learning environments.

The decision to relocate the program reflects an effort to balance these considerations by maintaining access to French Immersion programming within the Hazelton area, while supporting conditions that may strengthen the program moving forward.

Space, Enrolment, and Logistics

9. What are the current enrolment numbers at NHE and at MGA, and how were those numbers considered in the transition plan?

Answer: Detailed enrolment figures were included in Board materials presented [on February 25, 2026](#), and form part of the public record. These figures were considered alongside enrolment projections and available space when planning for the transition of the program.

This planning includes a review of enrolment projections, classroom space, and program organization at New Hazelton Elementary.

As part of this process, school and District staff will work to ensure that appropriate learning environments are in place to support both English and French Immersion programming. This includes consideration of classroom configuration, staffing, and instructional needs.

The Board recognizes the importance of providing effective and supportive learning environments for all students and will continue to monitor enrolment and space requirements as part of ongoing operational planning.

10. Where would French Immersion classes be physically located at NHE, given concerns raised about space and classroom availability?



Answer: The specific classroom locations for the French Immersion program at New Hazelton Elementary have not yet been finalized. Classroom organization and space allocation will be determined through the District's regular school planning processes in alignment with enrolment projections and program needs for the 2026–2027 school year.

School and District staff will work collaboratively to identify appropriate learning spaces that support both French Immersion and English programming. This process includes consideration of instructional requirements, class configuration, and overall school organization.

11. How would class organization work at NHE, including class size, grouping, and overall logistics for French Immersion students?

Answer: Class organization for the French Immersion program at New Hazelton Elementary will be established through the District's regular school planning processes for the 2026–2027 school year. This planning is completed collaboratively by school administration and District staff, and includes consideration of enrolment projections, grade groupings, and instructional requirements.

As with all schools, class size and composition will be determined in accordance with District practices, applicable collective agreements, and Ministry requirements, while supporting effective learning environments for students.

School and District staff will organize classes in a manner that supports both French Immersion and English programming, taking into account student needs, available resources, and overall school organization.

Staffing and Continuity

12. How will staffing for the relocated elementary French Immersion program be handled, and what continuity can students and families expect?

Answer:

Class organization for the French Immersion program at New Hazelton Elementary will be established through the District's regular school planning processes for the 2026–2027 school year. This planning is completed



collaboratively by school administration and District staff, and includes consideration of enrolment projections, grade groupings, and instructional requirements.

As with all schools, class size and composition will be determined in accordance with District practices, applicable collective agreements, and Ministry requirements, while supporting effective learning environments for students.

School and District staff will organize classes in a manner that supports both French Immersion and English programming, taking into account student needs, available resources, and overall school organization.

To support continuity for students and families, the current French Immersion teachers will be moving with the program from Majagaleehl Gali Aks to New Hazelton Elementary. This has been completed through the District's staffing process in collaboration with the Teachers' Union, and they will continue to deliver the program in a manner consistent with current practice, helping to ensure familiarity and stability for students currently enrolled in the program.

13. Will current students be able to continue with the same teachers, or will a new staffing process be required?

Answer:

Class organization for the French Immersion program at New Hazelton Elementary will be established through the District's regular school planning processes for the 2026–2027 school year. This planning is completed collaboratively by school administration and District staff, and includes consideration of enrolment projections, grade groupings, and instructional requirements.

As with all schools, class size and composition will be determined in accordance with District practices, applicable collective agreements, and Ministry requirements, while supporting effective learning environments for students.

School and District staff will organize classes in a manner that supports both French Immersion and English programming, taking into account student needs, available resources, and overall school organization.



As referenced in the previous question, the current French Immersion teachers will be moving with the program from Majagaleehl Gali Aks to New Hazelton Elementary. This has been completed through the District's staffing process in collaboration with the Teachers' Union, helping to ensure familiarity and stability for students currently enrolled in the program.

Secondary Program and Online Delivery

14. For students moving beyond Grade 7, what will the secondary French Immersion pathway look like under Option 1?

Answer:

Information previously shared in the Board materials presented on [February 25, 2026](#), and reflected in the [March 31, 2026, media release](#), the secondary French Immersion program (Grades 9–12 for 2026-2027) will continue through online instruction.

This approach allows currently enrolled students to continue in the program and be supported through to graduation while maintaining access to French language learning opportunities within the Hazelton area. Students will also be supported with a French block each semester next year to provide additional in-school support and connection to their learning.

The continuation of the secondary program through an online model reflects the Board's decision to support students in completing their program while responding to current enrolment patterns and long-term sustainability considerations.

15. For current and future secondary students, what will the online French Immersion model look like in practice, including set-up, supervision, and ongoing support?

Answer:

Information previously outlined in the Board materials, secondary French Immersion programming will continue through an online learning model for students in Grades 9–12.



More detailed information about day-to-day scheduling and course organization will be shared by the school once timetables and course selections have been finalized.

This model is intended to support students in continuing their French Immersion studies while completing their secondary education. There will be a dedicated support block each semester to assist students in Grades 9–12 with their online courses and provide in-school support.

Online classes may be accessed through a range of provincial and District-supported programs, including:

- [Home - North Vancouver Online Learning](#) (Preferred option as many courses are offered)
- [Français langue seconde-immersion 12 | EBUS Academy](#)
- [école Virtuelle](#) (one parent needs to be francophone to access this program)

16. Will students in the online secondary pathway remain eligible to earn a Dual Dogwood?

Answer:

The [March 31, 2026 media release](#) confirms that students in the secondary French Immersion program will continue to be supported in working toward graduation, including those pursuing the Dual Dogwood Diploma.

French Requirements:

1. **French Immersion:** Requires specific credits in Français langue seconde-immersion (10-12), including at least 12 additional credits from courses taught in French. They must have French language arts 12 course.

17. Will online secondary students still be able to participate in French Immersion-related activities and events, including Concours and other shared program activities?

Students participating in online courses in French Immersion will be invited to participate in cultural events, Concours, and other opportunities to enhance their learning experience in French.



Registration, Transition, and Future

18. How will registration work for existing French Immersion students if the K–7 program is relocated to NHE?

Answer:

Students who are currently enrolled in the French Immersion program and intend to continue will have their registration automatically transferred from Majagaleehi Gali Aks Elementary (MGA) to New Hazelton Elementary (NHE). Families are not required to complete a new registration form for continuing students.

Students who are newly enrolling in the French Immersion program at NHE will follow the District’s regular registration procedures, including completion of applicable registration forms. Families can contact the school directly for more information, and registration forms and instructions are available on the District website (CMSD82 | Registration Applications) [CMSD82 | Coast Mountain School District No. 82](#).

Registration timelines and processes remain unchanged, and families will continue to follow the District’s regular school registration process, with information shared through the school as part of the usual registration cycle.

Families requiring bus transportation must complete the Student Transportation Application Form by no later than **May 31, 2026**. The form is available here: [2026 - 2027 Bus Application](#)

Additional information regarding transportation, including routes and eligibility, can be found on the District website: <https://www.cmsd.bc.ca/departments/transportation>

For questions related to transportation, families may contact Michelle Abercrombie, as noted on the application form.

19. If enrolment does not remain sufficient after the move, what would the Board consider as next steps for the elementary program?

Answer:

The Board’s decision reflects a commitment to supporting the continued delivery



of French Immersion programming in the Hazelton area in a manner that is responsive to current enrolment patterns and long-term sustainability.

As with all District programs, enrolment and program viability will continue to be monitored over time as part of the District's regular planning and review processes.

Should future considerations be required, any decisions would be made by the Board based on a range of factors, including enrolment trends, program sustainability, and the educational needs of students, and would follow established Board processes, including opportunities for information sharing and community input.

At this time, the focus is on supporting a successful transition of the program to New Hazelton Elementary and maintaining access to French Immersion programming for students in the Hazelton area.

20. Would the Board consider a phased transition model, where currently enrolled French Immersion students remain at MGA while new student intake transitions to New Hazelton Elementary?

Answer:

Information shared through the French Immersion Program Review reflects that a range of options and considerations were explored as part of the Board's decision-making process. This included reviewing different approaches to program delivery in response to enrolment trends, program sustainability, and operational considerations.

The Board's decision to relocate the Kindergarten to Grade 7 French Immersion program to New Hazelton Elementary reflects the outcome of this comprehensive review process and is intended to support the development of stronger and more sustainable student cohorts over time.

As this decision has now been made, planning is focused on supporting the implementation of the program at its new location and ensuring a smooth and well-supported transition for students and families.



21. If enrolment later increases, what would the process be to re-establish secondary French Immersion at Hazelton Secondary School (HSS)?

Answer:

The Board's decision reflects current enrolment patterns and the need to provide French Immersion programming in a manner that is sustainable over the long term.

As with all District programs, enrolment trends and program viability are reviewed on an ongoing basis as part of the District's regular planning processes.

Should enrolment patterns change in the future, any consideration of program expansion or re-establishment would be assessed by the Board based on available data, program sustainability, and the educational needs of students at that time.

Any such consideration would follow established Board processes, including review of relevant information and opportunities for input, as appropriate.

Program support, transparency, and follow-up

22. What is the District's plan to support, strengthen, and rebuild French Immersion enrolment moving forward?

Answer:

Information shared through the French Immersion Program Review and subsequent Board decision reflects a commitment to maintaining access to French Immersion programming in the Hazelton area in a manner that supports long-term sustainability.

As part of implementation planning, school and District staff will work collaboratively to support the continued delivery of the program at New Hazelton Elementary. This includes consideration of enrolment, program organization, and opportunities to support student engagement in French language learning.

A range of supports for French Immersion programming has already been established across the District. Appendix A of the [*Regular Board Package - February 25, 2026.pdf*](#) (*French Immersion Supports in Coast Mountains School District*) provides a comprehensive list of recent supports and initiatives that have



been implemented to strengthen French language learning.

The District also recognizes the important role that families, schools, and community partners play in supporting program awareness and participation. Ongoing communication and engagement will be an important part of supporting the program moving forward.

23. Will the financial implications of this decision be tracked and reported transparently over time?

Answer:

Financial considerations related to District programs are monitored and reviewed as part of the District's regular financial planning and reporting processes.

Information related to budget, expenditures, and program delivery is reported to the Board through established processes, including public Board meetings and financial reporting cycles.

As with all District initiatives, the Board will continue to consider financial information alongside enrolment, program sustainability, and student needs as part of its ongoing oversight and decision-making responsibilities.

Additional information regarding the District's financial statements and budget reporting is available on the District's website:

<https://cmsd.bc.ca/financial-statement-and-budget-information>

24. What is the expected timeline for responses to the questions raised at the meeting?

Answer:

The questions raised during [the March 30, 2026, Special Regular Board Meeting](#) have been compiled and reviewed, and responses are being provided through this document.

The District has worked to ensure that responses are accurate, complete, and aligned with the information presented through the [French Immersion Program Review](#).



The Board recognizes the importance of timely follow-up and appreciates the opportunity to respond to the questions raised.

25. Will there be further meetings, school communications, or parent follow-up opportunities regarding implementation of the decision?

Answer:

The District recognizes the importance of ongoing communication with students, families, and the broader school community as implementation planning progresses.

Information related to the transition of the French Immersion program will continue to be shared through school and District communication channels.

School and District staff will work with families to provide updates and respond to questions as part of the transition process.

Opportunities for communication and engagement will be supported as needed to ensure that families are informed and supported throughout implementation.

26. Will families and community members be able to access the relevant meeting recordings, prior presentations, and public board materials referenced during the discussion?

Answer:

Yes. Meeting recordings, Board packages, and supporting materials referenced as part of the French Immersion Program Review are available to the public.

These materials can be accessed through the District's website under **Board of Education – Public Meetings**, where Board agendas, packages, and meeting minutes are posted. Recordings of public Board meetings are also available through the District's YouTube channel, which is linked on this page.

For ease of reference:

- Board of Education – Public Meetings: <https://cmsd.bc.ca/board-of-education/public-meetings>
- District YouTube Channel: [CMSD82 Boardroom - YouTube](#)



Indigenous and community context

27. Were elders, knowledge keepers, and people carrying the history of MGA part of the information considered when assessing whether it was appropriate to move the program from MGA?

Answer:

As part of the French Immersion Program Review, the Board considered information gathered through community engagement, including community meetings held in the Hazelton area on December 4, 2024, January 9, 2025, February 10, 2025, December 2, 2025, and January 15, 2026, as well as written correspondence to families dated September 23, 2024, November 28, 2024, April 8, 2025, and November 3, 2025 ([Hazelton French Immersion Consultation Sessions | Majagaleehi Gali Aks Elementary School](#)).

The review also included surveys, student interviews, and input from families, staff, and community members.

This engagement provided a range of perspectives on the French Immersion program, its role within the community, and considerations related to enrolment and program sustainability.

The Board also considered the broader context of Majagaleehi Gali Aks Elementary as a community-based school within the traditional territory of the Gitksan Nation, including the relationships and history connected to the school.

The decision reflects consideration of the information available through the review process, alongside enrolment trends, program viability, and the educational needs of students.

The District remains committed to ongoing engagement and to working in partnership with Indigenous communities in support of student success.

28. How did the Board consider concerns that moving the program may affect Indigenous students, families, and enrolment in particular?

Answer:

The Board considered the potential impact of program changes on all students



and families, including Indigenous students and communities connected to Majagaleehl Gali Aks Elementary.

As part of the French Immersion Program Review, information was gathered through community engagement, input from families, and consideration of the role of the school within its local context. This included recognizing the importance of Majagaleehl Gali Aks as a community-based school within the local First Nations community and the relationships that exist between the school and the families it serves.

The Board also considered the structure of programming within the school, including the presence of Gitxsan Immersion, which supports Indigenous language revitalization in partnership with the community.

The decision reflects an effort to balance these considerations while supporting the long-term sustainability of French Immersion programming within the Hazelton area.

The District remains committed to working in partnership with Indigenous communities and to supporting all students and families through the transition.

29. How did the Board consider the significance of MGA as a public school within the local First Nations community when making the decision to relocate the French Immersion program?

Answer:

The Board recognizes the significance of Majagaleehl Gali Aks Elementary as a public school within the local First Nations Community and values the important role the school plays within the community it serves.

As part of the French Immersion Program Review, the Board considered a range of factors, including enrolment trends, program sustainability, and the overall structure of programming within the school. This included recognizing that Majagaleehl Gali Aks supports multiple program strands, including English programming, as well as Gitxsan Immersion delivered in partnership with the community and supporting Indigenous language revitalization.



Under the *School Act*, school Districts are required to ensure that students have access to an educational program in the English language. This legislative requirement was a consideration in reviewing program configuration options.

The presence of Gitksan Immersion at Majagaleehl Gali Aks, in close relationship with the local First Nations Community, was also an important contextual factor in understanding the role of the school and its programs within the community.

The Board's decision reflects an effort to support the long-term sustainability of French Immersion programming while continuing to recognize and respect the role of Majagaleehl Gali Aks within the broader educational and community context.

The District remains committed to working in partnership with local First Nations and communities in support of student success and educational opportunities.