

NECHAKO VALLEY SECONDARY SCHOOL



NVSS School Plan

To Enhance Student Learning

2023/2024

School Introduction and Overview

Nechako Valley Secondary School (NVSS) was established in 1955 and proudly serves grades 7 to 12 in the Vanderhoof area. Known as the "Geographical Centre of Beautiful British Columbia," we are part of School District No.91 - Nchako Lakes. We acknowledge that we live, work and play on the unceded Traditional Territory of the Saik'uz First Nation.

NVSS 2023/2024 Overview:

Principal: Ken Young	Vice-Principals: Erin Baker and Travis Himmelright
FTE: 590 students	22% Indigenous Students
Staff: 70 (Teaching and Non-Teaching)	Special Programs: Middle Years (MYNVSS), Valhalla off site, Thrive, Bridges

Our goals are based on the [SD91 Strategic Plan](#), particularly focusing on creating and enhancing student success as well as honouring diversity. Our goals also work in conjunction with the SD91 Board of Education Mission statement, including but not limited to the belief that:

- All individuals can learn;
- The success of learners is enhanced by a partnership of family, school and community;
- Relevant programs, services and teaching enhance learning;
- All individuals need to feel connected through a sense of belonging;
- Education is more than academics;
- Students are unique learners and their individual needs must be addressed.

NVSS Social Emotional Learning Plan

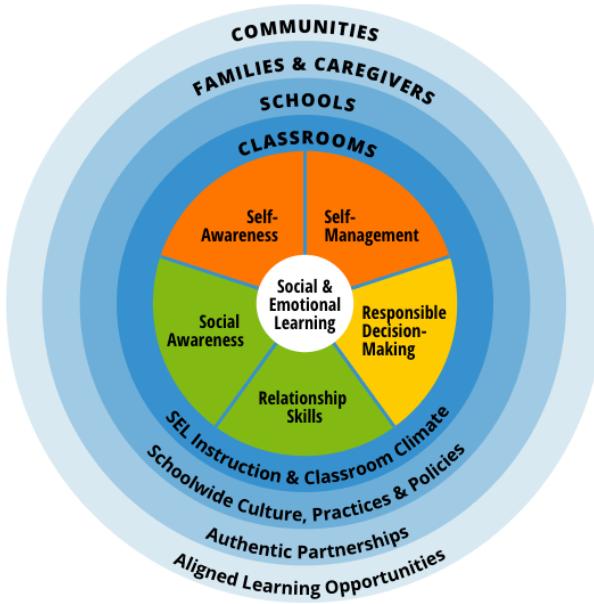
Introduction

Social Emotional Learning is anchored in the belief that students need to learn about their identity in the world, both as individuals and as members of their community and society. Personal and Social competencies encompass what students need to thrive as individuals, to understand and care about themselves and others, and to find and achieve their purposes in the world.

Definition

The BC Ministry of Education defines the personal and social core competency based on three subcategories:

- Personal Awareness and Responsibility involves understanding the connections between personal and social behaviour and well-being; it encourages people to make constructive and ethical decisions and act on them.
- Positive Personal and Cultural Identity involves the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the factors that contribute to a healthy sense of oneself; it includes knowledge of one's family background, heritage(s), language(s), beliefs, and perspectives in a pluralistic society.
- Social Awareness and Responsibility involves the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of connections among people, including between people and the natural environment. Social Awareness and Responsibility focuses on interacting with others and the natural world in respectful and caring ways.



Our Priority

Based on this definition, ***NVSS is committed to support learner and staff learning in regard to creating structures that focus on mental health and well-being.*** The challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic have amplified the need to focus on ways to increase well-being both individually and as a community. Connections and relationships are recognized as priorities.

Our Actions

NVSS aims to build a community of learners that honors diversity and encourages positive relationships.

We strive to recognize students as individuals and honour everyone's learning journey, acknowledging successes, promote self-awareness and provide support where needed. We value Indigenous ways of knowing and learning through outdoor learning in MYNVSS, cultural activities lead by the Indigenous Support workers and promoting hands-on, cross-curricular activities. All District Grade 8 students are enrolled in a locally developed course called "Honouring Diversity."

Resources

The following stakeholders in the NVSS school social emotional learning plan have been identified:

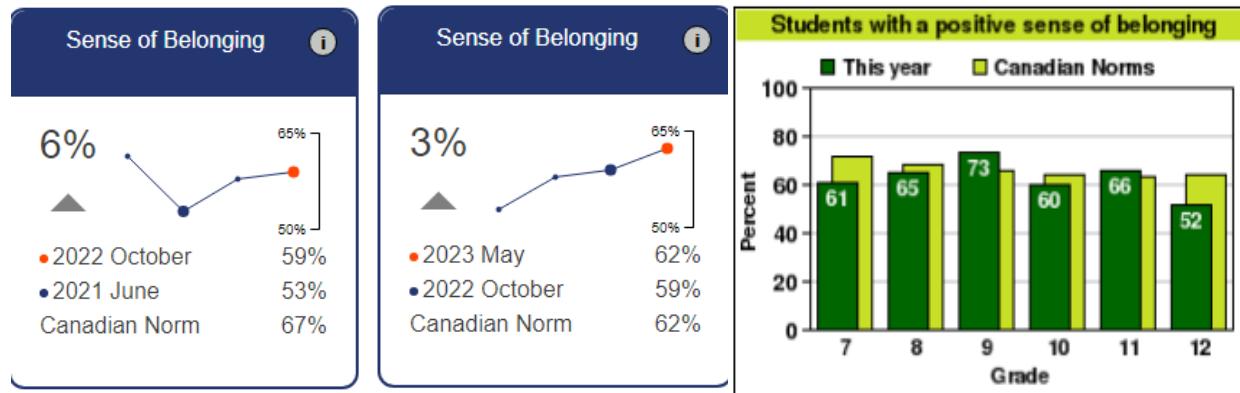
- Learners and Families/PAC
- Learning support workers (LSWs and PAAs) Teachers, Case Managers, Administration
- NVSS and SD 91 Counselling Services Team
- Professional development instructors
- Professional health services providers (Omineca Medical Clinic/Connexus staff)

1. Creating a Positive Sense of Belonging in 2023

Where Have We Been? – The OurSchool Survey results below show that there is a slight difference in how NVSS learners feel about belonging in comparison to the Canadian norm.

Students who feel accepted and valued by their peers and by others at their school:

- 62% of students in NVSS had a high sense of belonging; the Canadian norm for these grades is 62%.
- 59% of the girls and 70% of the boys in NVSS had a high sense of belonging. The Canadian norm for girls is 62% and for boys is 71%



Where Do We Want To Go? (GOAL)

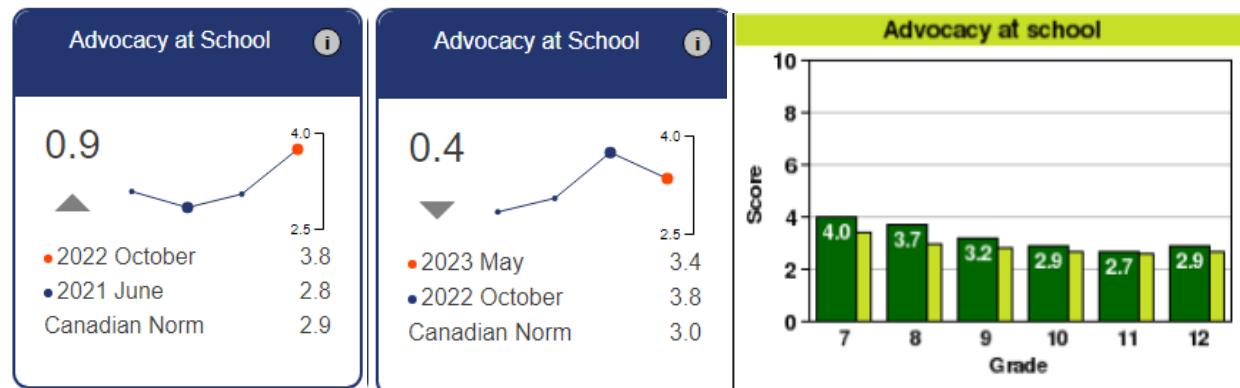
- Staff has identified a Goal of a 5% increase in Students with a positive sense of belonging, by the Fall of 2024. Using the survey results will help to identify areas of possible strengths and also areas to grow in during the entire school year.

2. Do Adults Care Think or Care about You at Your School?

Where Have We Been? The most recent OurSchool Survey shows students feel that they have an advocate in the school at a higher rate than the Canadian norm.

Advocacy at school Students who feel they have someone at school who consistently provides encouragement and can be turned to for advice:

- At NVSS in 2023, students rated advocacy at school 3.4 out of 10; the Canadian norm for these grades is 3.0.
- At NVSS, advocacy at school was rated 3.3 out of 10 by girls and 3.4 out of 10 by boys. The Canadian norm for girls is 2.7 and for boys is 3.1.



Where Do we Want to Go? (GOAL)

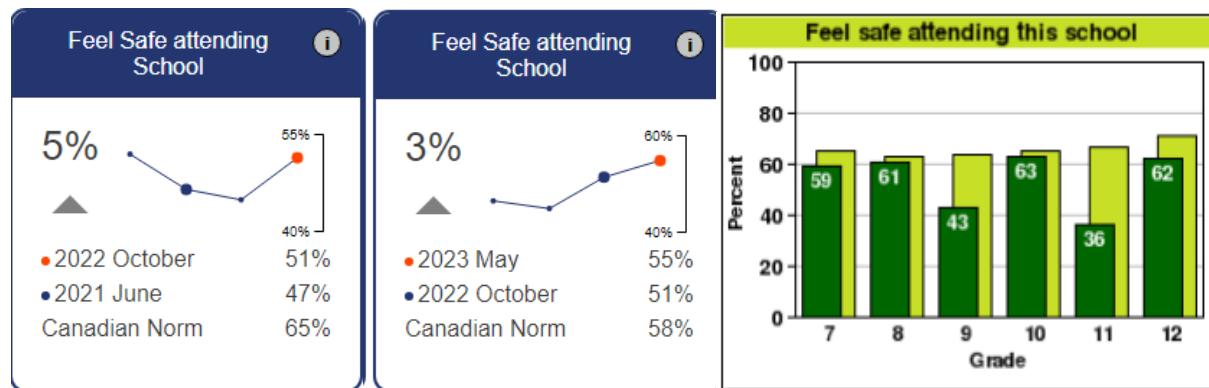
Staff and stakeholders will focus on a minimum of a 5 % increase in improvement in this area. This is currently not a negative for the school, but staff expressed that by improving in this area, it may also have a positive effect in other areas such as Belonging/Anxiety/Connections etc.

3. Do You Feel Safe At Your School?

Where Have We Been? Feeling Safe attending NVSS in 2023

Students who feel safe at school as well as going to and from school:

- 55% of students felt safe attending NVSS; the Canadian norm for these grades is 58%.
- 58% of the girls and 56% of the boys felt safe attending NVSS. The Canadian norm for girls is 64% and for boys is 67%



Where Do We Want to Go? (GOAL)

Students have identified in school surveys that the time between classes is where the majority of bullying and other issues (45%) happen. Staff and students will focus on how to improve supervision, education around bullying as well as other identified solutions to the problem.

We want to significantly improve in this area. A focus on grade 9s will be in place. **Our goal is to ensure that our student averages will be at least equal to those of the Canadian norm in all grades in terms of "Feeling Safe Attending NVSS".** Currently NVSS is only 3% below the Canadian norm (2023) and rising.

Evidence of Improvement – How will we ensure we are reaching our goals?

NVSS students will complete 2 school-wide surveys covering various aspects of social-emotional well-being and self-reflection every school year moving forward. Results will be reviewed annually and be used to monitor and guide the implementation of additional measures to the school social and emotional learning plan.

Ongoing collaboration with learners, staff, PAC, parents/guardians will be in place to ensure that growth in our SEL goals will take place. Continue to study the data gathered by surveys as well as student and parent input.

NVSS Literacy Plan

Introduction

Student ability in literacy is considered cross-curricular and applies to a variety of contexts and situations. Literacy skills include analyzing graphs or data commonly found in Social Studies or Science contexts, interpreting statistics presented in infographics and responding to a variety of written, visual and digital texts.

Definition

The BC Ministry of Education defines literacy as “the ability to critically analyze and make meaning from diverse texts and to communicate and express oneself in a variety of modes and for a variety of purposes in relevant contexts.”

Our Priority

Based on the definition above, NVSS is committed to:

- ***increasing the number of students who meet or exceed expectations on provincial and school-wide assessments.***
- ***NVSS also strives to close the equity gap for all grades and increase students' ability to use literacy skills to advocate in meaningful ways.***

Our Actions

NVSS staff are engaged in course development that meets diverse learner needs, utilizing professional development to support staff learning. In MYNVSS for example, teams of teachers are responsible for embedding literacy in all curricular areas. This is achieved through teacher-led course development supported by webinars.

Data collected is reviewed by staff periodically to adjust instructional strategies and plan interventions as needed. Additionally, teacher teams work with district support teachers and other schools in the marking of RAD and the collection, distribution, and use of data.

Resources

The following stakeholders in the NVSS school literacy plan have been identified:

- Learners and Families
- Administrators
- Teaching staff
- Learning support workers
- SD 91 Curriculum Services Team
- Professional development instructors

Resources also include physical resources, current technology, and literacy integration into learning activities as well as the physical surroundings of NVSS for place-based learning opportunities.

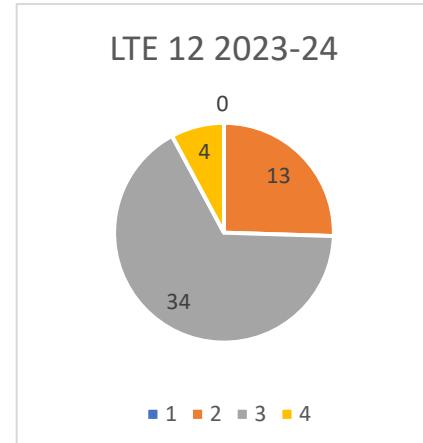
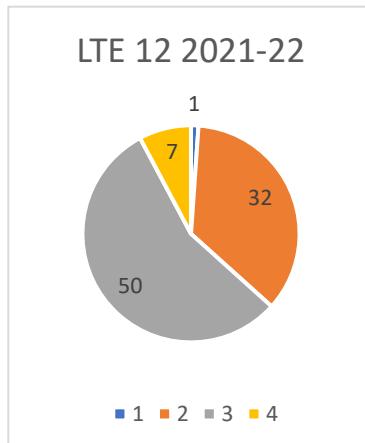
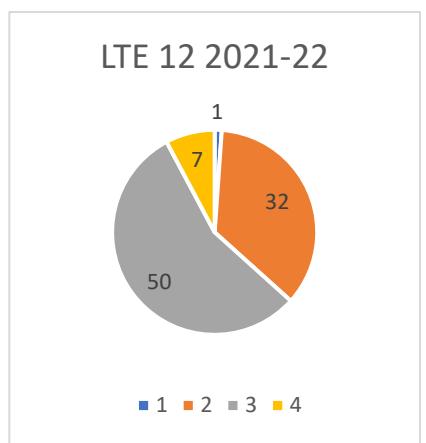
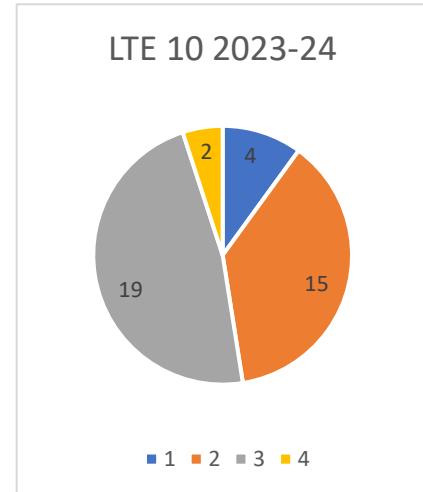
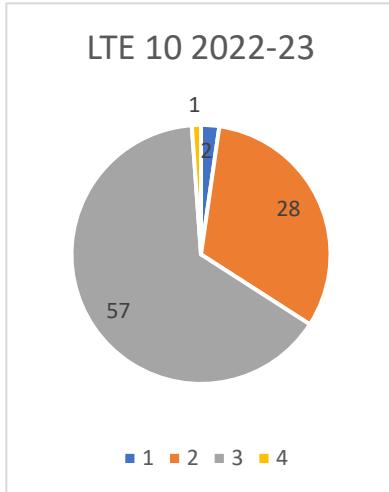
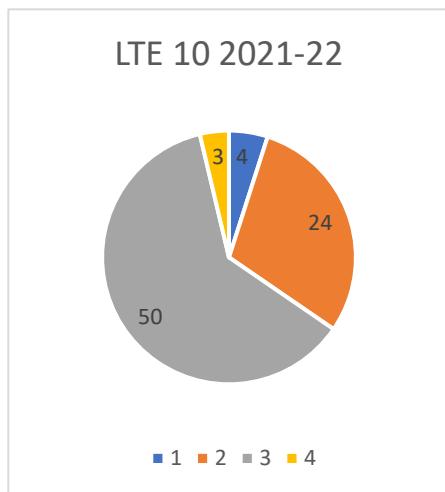
Evidence of Improvement

NVSS students will complete a district-wide assessment (RAD) in grades 7-9. All students will also write the Provincial Graduation Literacy Assessments in Grade 10 and 12. Results will be reviewed annually and be used to monitor and guide the implementation of additional measures to the school literacy plan.

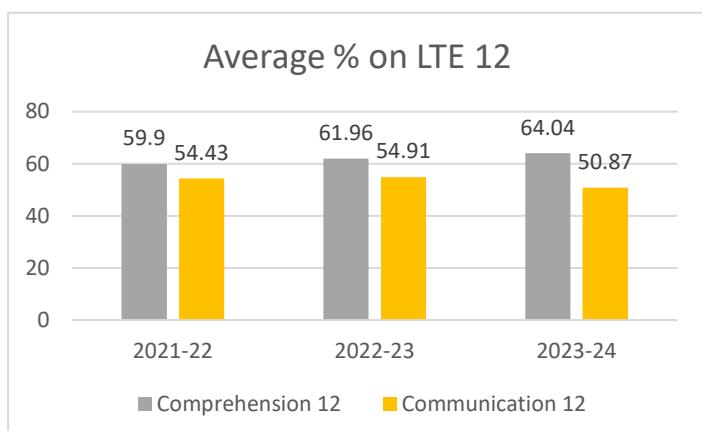
Results

The following charts highlight the Provincial Graduation Literacy exam results obtained by NVSS students. This data is considered part of a living documentation process and will be updated as more current data becomes available.

NVSS students in grades 7-9 also complete the RAD assessment that focuses on reading comprehension, decoding and fluency.



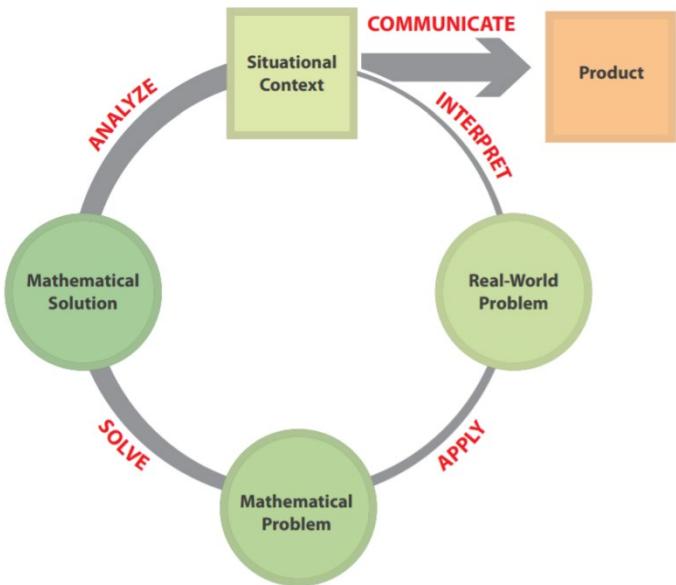
- Cross Curricular Reading Assessment Collaborative Marking
- Inquiry learning in the MYNVSS to help foster critical thinking and evaluation
- One-on-one intervention twice a week using *Words Their Way* for designated students
- Teacher-Librarian Team working in collaboration to create lesson plans for research skills, note-making, Literacy circles, etc.
- Reading incentive programs in the library
- Individual reading assessments using BRI, and DRA to identify levels and difficulties based on referrals.
- Professional Development Opportunity for Literacy teacher and middle years teachers working with Faye Brownie on teaching literacy strategies and student engagement.
- [Further Links and References Grade 10 Literacy Assessment Grade 12 Literacy Assessment B.C. Graduation Program Policy Guide](#)



NVSS Numeracy Plan

Introduction

Student ability in numeracy is developed throughout the curriculum and applies to a variety of contexts and situations. The processes used to solve a numeracy task can be summarized as shown.



Definition

The BC Ministry of Education defines numeracy as “the ability to interpret information within a given situation, apply mathematical understanding to solve an identified problem, and to analyze and communicate a solution.” Based on this definition, NVSS is committed to support student learning in regard to decision-making, flexibly using mathematical thinking, as well as interpreting and communicating successful strategies as part of the numeracy task solving process.

Our Priority

NVSS is committed to build and improve a culture of numeracy for all learners and staff. The intention is to make problem-solving processes embedded in curricular content more visible and empower learners to see the connections between mathematics and all aspects of daily living.

Our Actions

NVSS aims to build knowledge and capacity for enhanced understanding of the numeracy processes as outlined by the BC Ministry of Education. Teaching, learning and assessments, as well as targeted interventions are designed and reviewed to create a school community that recognizes numeracy as an important aspect of being educated citizens.

Resources

The following stakeholders in the NVSS school numeracy plan have been identified:

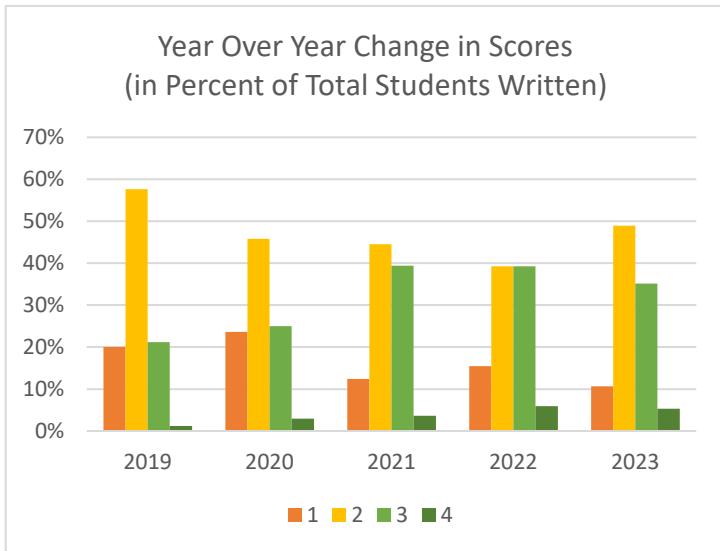
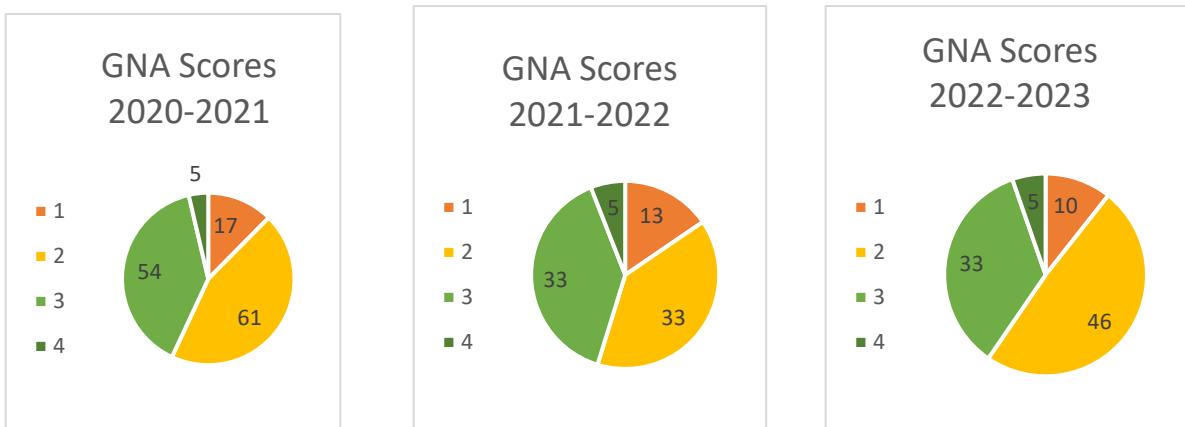
- Learners and Families
- Administrators
- Teaching staff
- Learning support workers
- SD 91 Curriculum Services Team
- Professional development instructors
- Resources also include physical resources and manipulatives, current technology, and its integration into learning activities as well as the physical surroundings of NVSS for place-based learning opportunities. NVSS found that the introduction of its Library Scientific Calculator Loan Program for the 21/22 school year provided equitable access to learning resources and so it has continued through 2023-24.

Evidence of Improvement
NVSS students will complete a district-wide number sense and problem-solving assessment in Grade 9. All students will also write the Provincial Graduation Numeracy Assessment in Grade 10, with the opportunity to re-write the assessment in the senior grades. Results will be reviewed annually and be used to monitor and guide the implementation of additional measures to the school numeracy plan.

Results

The following charts highlight the Provincial Graduation Numeracy (GNA) exam results obtained by NVSS students. This data is considered part of a living documentation process and will be updated as more current data becomes available.

NVSS GNA Results Year over Year Comparison:



The trends shown are positive in the following ways:

- The percentage of students scoring a 1 or 2 has decreased over the years.
- The percentage of students scoring a 3 or 4 has increased over the years.
- The graphs show that over time the majority of students are scoring a 2 or 3 with some students scoring a 1 or 4, which matches expectations for the entire student population.

Grade 9 students also write a district-wide Numbers Sense Assessment (SNAP) at the beginning and end of their math semester. This assessment is new to the district in 2021/22, replacing the DNA assessment. SNAP data collection is on-going. The district has implemented a new collection data portal and year over year comparisons are currently unavailable.

Further Links and References

- [Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment Specifications](#)
- [B.C. Graduation Program Policy Guide](#)

HONOURING DIVERSITY

A few examples of initiatives which align with the goals from the SD91 Strategic Plan:

NVSS staff is also committed to continue the work started prior to COVID-19 of growing a stronger connection with the neighbouring community of Saik'uz through community celebrations, ceremonies and simple social opportunities.

We are continuing in our practice of Honouring Diversity at NVSS by being fully engaged in the new District 91 Honouring Diversity Course for all Grade 8s. Staff have dedicated hours of extra time to plan and construct lessons based on the new curriculum.

Staff and students working to gather items for families (both in Saik'uz and Vanderhoof) to create hampers during the difficult times of the pandemic has had a positive impact and with the additional of partner funding, we are expanding into ongoing support for more families. More food and clothing is available to students in need than ever before.

Student and Staff Leadership in the school had a major hand in the creation of the Share the Love annual day in SD91. The logo and artwork for the event was designed by an NVSS student. The NVSS Queer Alliance and NVSS Student Voice reps were a strong voice in the sharing of ideas and planning in the past for the event and will continue to do so in the future.

Goal #1: In order to help further the work in Reconciliation and create a stronger connection with Saik'uz First Nation, NVSS has piloted an “Elder in Residence” position. Three days a week, Elder Maureen Thomas from the local First Nation – Saik'uz – is a new integral part of our school community. The Elder will mentor and assist students in their learning as well as sharing cultural learning opportunities. **Elder Thomas will continue in her work at the school through 2024.**

Goal#2: Work on a project began with the sister of a local man from Saik'uz, WW2 hero Dick Patrick, collaborating with students from NVSS to share his life story in the NVSS virtual Remembrance Day Assembly. Planning has previously begun to create a wall of recognition as well as a short documentary. A similar project involving another respected member of the Saik'uz First Nation – Dr. Mary John has also been proposed. Identified Completion date – Fall of 2024



ENHANCING CONNECTIONS

The Vanderhoof Thrift Store is a non-profit enterprise currently run by NVSS. It has completed its first year of operation under the direction of the school. This endeavour is allowing our students another opportunity to transition to the workforce. Students are able to gather an understanding of a retail business and how to work in such a setting, but also in a secure and supportive environment.

NVSS also continues to run a recycling station known as the NVSS Bottle Depot. This is another opportunity for our students to interface with the community as well as gaining funds to support extracurricular events and programs at the school.

Currently NVSS is collaborating with members of the community and landowners and SD91 on a plan to continue creating Outdoor Learning classrooms. We are looking to have classrooms associated with properties in the municipality and RDBN which will include ecosystems tied to wetlands, creeks, the Nechako River and the possibility of a small lake. These projects will connect our students to the land on which they live, learn and play. Students will be exposed to local knowledge from both members of Saik'uz as well as those from Forestry and Farm/Ranching communities.

We have also started our much discussed "Tiny Home" building option in Construction 11/12. These opportunities to engage beyond the classroom to plan and build structures for the

community will be an exciting opportunity to expand our community interaction. Local contractors have been consulted with as NVSS built an Outdoor Learning Spaces on the sports field.

The YELL (Entrepreneurship 12) program has completed 6 years at NVSS and is continuing in 2023-24. This program has connected students to many key components to understand the business world while students are still in high school. Business leaders and entrepreneurs have inspired students and mentored their progress. A strong community connection has been made through this option for students. JABC (another business-oriented option) is connected to our Grade 7 program. It culminates in a project where have the opportunity to market their wares.



Goal #1 – Ensure that a minimum of 10 students have received work experience at the Vanderhoof Thrift Store/Bottle Depot sites in 2023-24 This experience will be part of their Graduation Plan.

Goal#2 – Partnering with Community, Sponsors and SD91 to create a geothermal-based greenhouse on NVSS grounds. This greenhouse will help to supply the school food programs as well as other programs in the community. Excess fruits and vegetables will be dehydrated for storage and sharing with others in the community. Students will be involved in the planning, planting and harvesting.



ENGAGING OUR WORKFORCE

Courtyard/Pergola/SEL Space:

Goal: Students have proposed adding various greenery, structures and other items to the NVSS courtyard in order to create another inviting and peaceful space to both work and regenerate in.

How it will happen:

Collaboration with the EnviroVikes, Thrive (Inclusive Education Dept.), Administration, Applied Skills classes, **Maintenance and SD91 Careers.**

Completion Date:

The original target for the Pergola completion was June 1, 2023. It was hoped that it would be functional for Grad Ceremony Weekend, and that goal was met.

The target date for full completion of all structure and green space upgrades is Oct. 30, 2024.



CLE 10 Driving Initiative/Equity

Goal:

Help to build increasing opportunities for students to develop confidence as they begin the process of learning to drive. Students come from different circumstances and not all have equal access to adult mentorship or vehicles to assist in learning to drive. A driving simulator was suggested as a tool to help to lessen student anxiety and increase confidence in the process.

How it Will Happen:

Administration, **Technology Department, SD91 Careers**, Administration and CLE 10 classes will collaborate in the building of a simulator, pilot and then utilize in CLE 10.

Completion Date:

Full implementation in CLE 10 classes as a learning resource was targeted to begin in Sept. 2023 - but the target was moved to February 2024. This would allow teachers to work to complete learning guides etc. to complete the resources for the project.



Additional Resources:

For All (Whole School)	For Some (Opportunities for Student Engagement)	For Few (Supports and interventions)
Access to medical appointments and mental health counselling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote NVSS clinic days (2 per week) on announcements, physical signage and virtual communications 	Invitation to presentation by expert speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CLE 10 and PE 9 inclusive curriculum Mental Health/Sexual Health/SOGI learning opportunities and external presenters 	Referrals to in-school counselling services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SD 91 counsellors in the building on a regular basis Utilize SBT referral system to identify and follow up with concerns brought forward by staff Develop and monitor student safety plans
Foster student and staff mental health and wellness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote professional learning opportunities and district initiatives Intentionally develop and support positive relationships Mental Health Awareness program presented by counsellors 	Clubs and targeted support networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CARES leaders* Student Council* Student Voice* (district-level) NVSS Queer Alliance Club CREW* in MYNVSS program 	External Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC Employee and Family Assistance program (free confidential counselling) Community liaison with ConnexUs for student counselling Equine Therapy
Promote physical well-being and healthy habits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakfast Program (every day) Hot Lunch (every day) Hot breakfast (once a week) Physical activity as part of student programming 	Clubs and community involvement in organized physical activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of after-school sports clubs** Community bookings of facilities 	District Level Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech therapist sessions for identified students Deaf and Hard of Hearing accommodations Visually impaired accommodations
Practice self-reflection and advocacy for learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 annual School-wide surveys Learning celebrations in MYNVSS 	Include learner self-reflections and learner created content in communications with caregivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update report cards/interim reports Consult new ministry guidelines for reporting 	Provide targeted workshops and learning opportunities to enhance self-reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite/Provide expert presentations Promote learner input into school programming (Student Voice)
Accessibility		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender-neutral washrooms Morning announcements available in various visual and auditory mediums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wheel-chair accessible building Wheel-chair accessible water fountains Inclusive Education Program (Thrive) Installation of a new elevator to increase accessibility for all learners 	

* NVSS Specific Clubs, Acronyms and Programs:

- MYNVSS: Middle Years Program (grades 7 and 8) at NVSS
- Crew: Middle Years Morning Circle Check-in with Students
- Cares: Cares Leaders support younger peers by providing a person to talk to about problems or assisting with other school transition related issues.
- Sports Clubs/Athletic Programs: Basketball, Volleyball, Soccer, Curling, Badminton, Football, Swim Club at the Vanderhoof Aquatic Centre, Wrestling, Cross Country Running, Track and Field, Golf, Rugby, Ski, Mountain Biking, eSports
- Fine Arts Programs: Drama and Community Theatre Productions, Musicals, Band

For All (Whole School)	For Some (Classroom Instruction and Practice)	For Few (Supports and interventions)
School-wide Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RAD (Gr 7-9) - GLA (Gr 10 & Gr 12) 	Classroom Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formative and summative assessment - Shared rubrics for grades 9-12 ELA instruction - Self and peer assessment - Shared final assessment resources 	Individual assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (HIP/Basic Reading Inventory) or District Reading Assessment (DRA) on a case by case basis as identified in School-Based Teams meetings
Reading Materials		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Library accessible to students for loaning books (assigned and leisure reading) - Infusion of First People's practices and literature in all courses (7-12) - Assistive technology can be loaned through the library as needed (chrome books, reading pens) - Library challenges open to entry from all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Best practice approach to instruction based on current research - Flexible grouping and leveled texts to support student growth - Material read aloud option - Choice in reading selection - Use of hands-on activities and visuals to supplement reading - Digital literacy resources including audiobooks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LSWs provide one on one support and targeted interventions to identified students - Speech to text software available for identified students
Accommodations and Adaptations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student accommodations and learning plans are accessible in MyEd to all teachers for every class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to AMS allows teachers to view their class or individual student literacy data to inform instruction - Access to assisted technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer tutor coaching, support, and encouragement for targeted learners - LSW readers and scribes for identified learners

For All (Whole School)	For Some (Classroom Instruction and Practice)	For Few (Supports and interventions)
Highlight numeracy processes across content areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote numeracy-based resources in the library for “anytime” access 	Utilize professional learning opportunities and collaboration to create cross-curricular content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use collaboration to create school-wide content 	Encourage staff mentorship to create unified approach to numeracy instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilize NTU mentorship program - Organize peer/administrator observations
Increase student confidence in numeracy processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote positive dialogue about numeracy processes and math - Integrate culturally appropriate content 	Integrate problem-solving using numeracy processes throughout regular class instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote teacher dialogue about instructional strategies and opportunities to stimulate creative thinking 	Address math anxiety and provide targeted counselling/interventions to learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide resources to counsellors - Provide individualized student supports and programming
Highlight leadership in numeracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retain and promote math specialist teaching and support worker positions - Peer tutoring opportunities during class time/outside of class time 	Provide resources including manipulatives and learning experiences that enhance problem-solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include “take home” resources in newsletters, mailouts and online presence - Inventory resources available at NVSS 	Highlight student participation and achievements on a school and district wide level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote math contests problem-solving fairs within school/cross school
Practice self-reflection and advocacy for learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School-wide surveys - Make daylong student “pro d” day 	Include learner self-reflections and learner created content in communications with caregivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update report cards/interim reports - Consult new ministry guidelines for reporting 	Provide targeted workshops and learning opportunities to enhance self-reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite/Provide expert presentations - Promote learner input into school programming (Student Voice)