

NECHAKO VALLEY SECONDARY SCHOOL

NVSS



Viking

Nation



School Plan
to
Enhance Student Learning

2024/2025

The NVSS School Plan and further information can also be found on the [school website](#)

Acknowledgement



With gratitude, we acknowledge that NVSS resides on the unceded traditional territory of the Saik'uz First Nation. Twenty-two percent of our learners are Indigenous, bringing with them a rich and diverse culture.

Through conscious acts of reconciliation, we continue to grow in the Indigenous ways of knowing and being, living on and caring for these lands with enduring respect.

School Overview and Staffing

Located in the geographical centre of British Columbia, Nechako Valley Secondary School is the only secondary school in the Regional District of Vanderhoof. Part of Nechako Lakes School District No. 91, NVSS was established in 1955 and has a rich history in sports and fine arts as well as academic and vocational pursuits. The current enrolment of 584 students includes a unique Middle Years Program specific to grades 7-8 and Valhalla, an alternate program tailored to and focused on providing educational options and opportunities for those who need a more diverse structure and delivery to reach their educational goals. NVSS consists of 70 teaching, learning support, clerical and custodial staff under the guidance of the Principal, Mr. Ken Young, and Vice Principals Travis Himmelright and Stacey Soffel.

School Goals, Values and Beliefs

As a school we are committed to the goals of improving skills in literacy, numeracy and social and emotional learning. In alliance with the [SD91 Strategic Plan](#), NVSS continues to focus on honouring diversity and creating opportunities for student success through relevance, engagement and enhancing connections.

Literacy Goal

- To increase the number of learners who are proficient or extending on provincial and school-wide assessments. The intention is to increase students' ability to use literacy skills to advocate for themselves in meaningful ways.

Numeracy Goal

- 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.

Social Emotional Learning Goal

- To create structures that focus on mental health and well-being both individually and as a community. The intention is to encourage positive relationships and build a community of learners that honours, accepts and celebrates diversity.

<u>At NVSS We Value</u>	<u>At NVSS We Believe</u>
Kindness and compassion	All individuals can learn
Indigenous ways of knowing	Success of learners is enhanced by a partnership of family, school and community
Growth mindset	Relevant programs, services and teaching enhance learning
Honesty and courage	Education is more than academics
Connectedness and relationship	Students are unique learners, and their individual needs must be addressed

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 Actions

NVSS staff are engaged in course development that meets diverse learner needs, utilizing professional development to support staff learning. In the Middle Years 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. Peer tutor coaching support and encouragement for targeted learners is also a focus with flexible grouping and leveled texts to support student growth and independence.

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

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

- Learners and Families
- Teaching Staff and Administrators
- Learning support workers
- SD 91 Curriculum Services Team

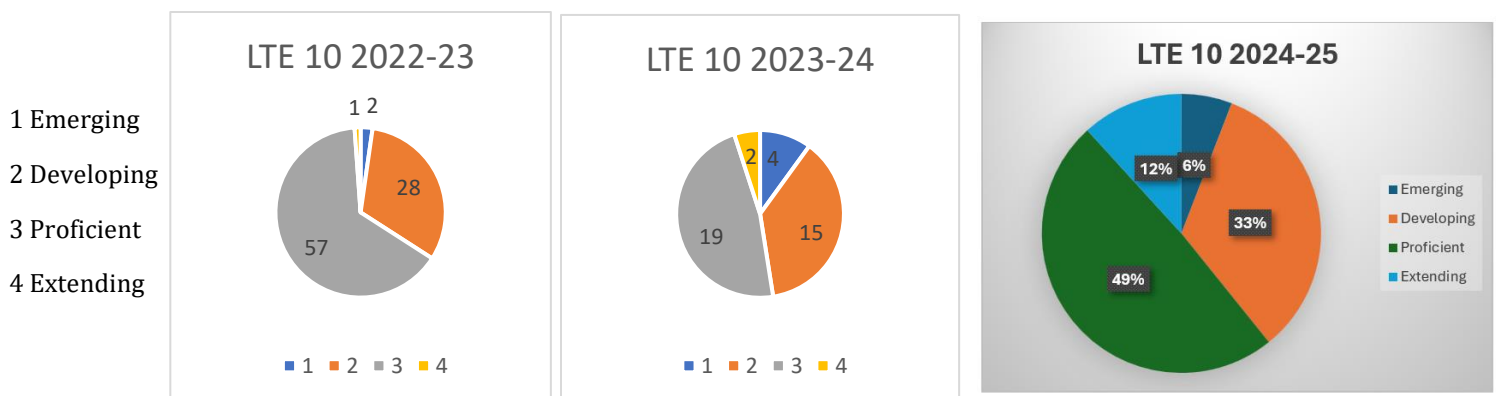
Evidence of Improvement

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

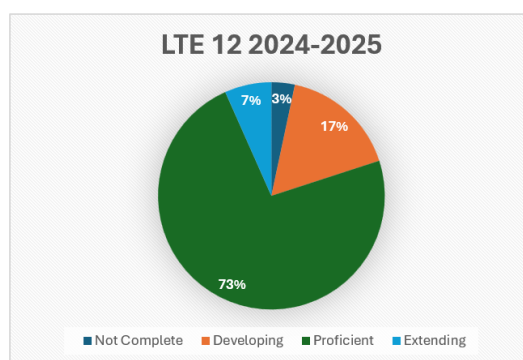
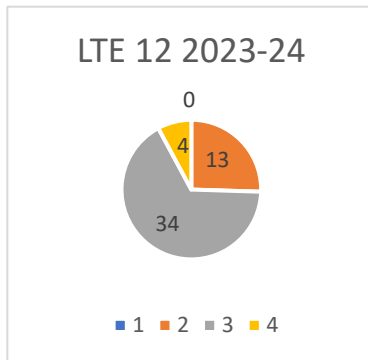
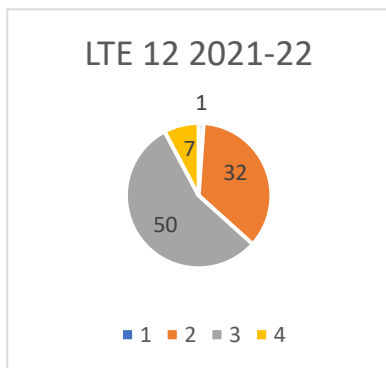
The following charts highlight the Provincial Graduation Literacy exam results obtained by NVSS students in grades 10 - 12. NVSS students in grades 7-9 complete the RAD assessment that focuses on reading comprehension, decoding and fluency. Grade 7 students also complete the FSA for Literacy and Numeracy.

Graduation Literacy Assessment Grade 10



Graduation Literacy Assessment Grade 12 (LTE 12)

- 1 Emerging
- 2 Developing
- 3 Proficient
- 4 Extending



On-going Literacy Support:

- 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
- Infusion of First People's practices and literature in all courses 1 – 12
- Assistive technology, speech to text software, laptops and reading pens loaned through the library
- Shared rubrics for grades 9 – 12 ELA instruction
- Self and peer assessment, formative, summative and shared final assessment resources
- Use of hands-on activities and visuals to supplement reading
- Digital literacy resources including audiobooks
- LSW support and one on one targeted interventions to identified students

NVSS Numeracy Plan

Introduction

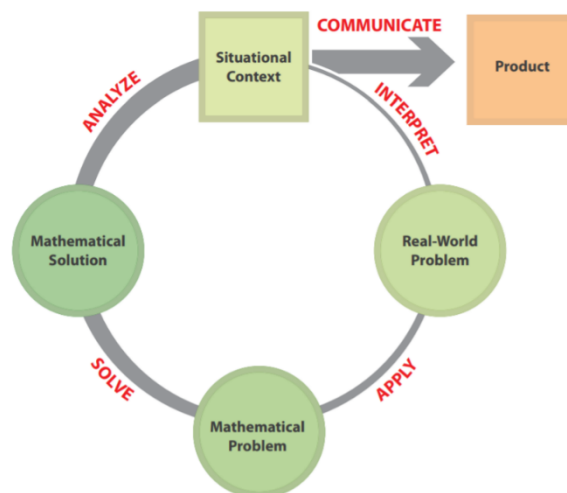
Student ability in numeracy is developed throughout the curriculum and applies to a variety of contexts and situations. The processes used to solve a numeracy task can be summarized as shown.

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 building 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
- Teaching Staff and Administrators
- Learning support workers
- SD 91 Curriculum Services Team

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 the Library Scientific Calculator Loan Program for the 21/22 school year provided equitable access to learning resources and it has continued through 2024-25.

On-going Numeracy Support:

- Use collaboration to create school-wide content
- Promote teacher dialogue about instructional strategies and opportunities to stimulate creative thinking
- Include “take home” resources in newsletters, mailouts and online presence
- Provide individualized student supports and programming
- Promote numeracy-based resources in the library for “anytime” access
- Retain and promote math specialist teaching and support worker positions
- Promote math contests problem-solving fairs within school/cross school
- Promote learner input into school programming (Student Voice)

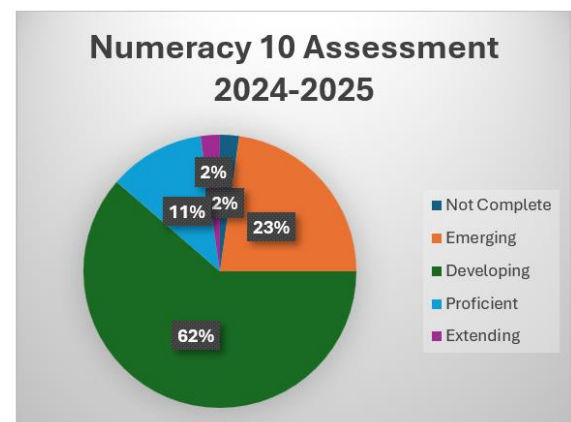
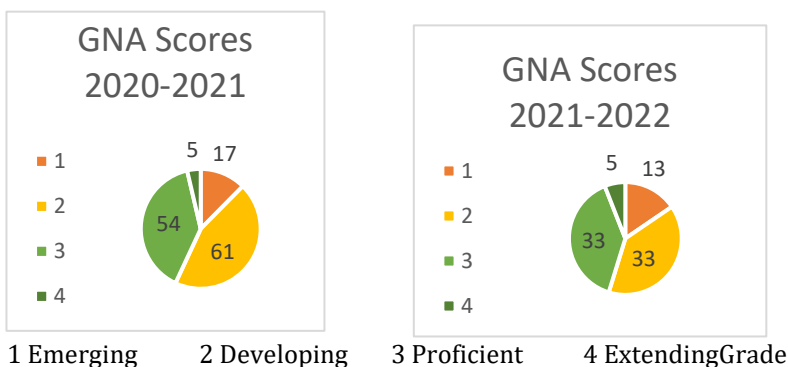
Evidence of Improvement

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:



9 students also write a district-wide Numbers Sense Assessment (SNAP) at the beginning and end of their math semester.

Further Links and References

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

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

NVSS continually supports learners and staff to create structures that focus on mental health and well-being. The shared vision is to find ways to increase well-being both individually and as a community. Connections and relationships are priorities.

Our Actions

NVSS strives to recognize students as individuals and honour everyone's learning journey, acknowledging successes, promoting self-awareness and providing support where needed. SD 91 counsellors are in the building on a regular basis and the School Based Team referral system helps to identify and follow up with concerns, support and interventions brought forward by staff. Case Managers are assigned to specific individuals with different learning needs for assistance within the classroom environment, in alternate locations when better suited to specific learners and as another avenue of communication between home and school.

Resources

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



- Learners and Families/PAC
- Learning support workers
- Teachers, Case Managers, and Administration
- NVSS and SD 91 Counselling Services Team
- Professional development instructors
- Professional health services providers (Omineca Clinic/Connexus)
- Community partners, RCMP, Youth Centre, CSFS and MCFD



On-going SEL Support:

- Access to medical appointments, mental health counselling and in-school counselling services
- Mental health, sexual health, SOGI learning opportunities and external presenters
- Variety of after school sports and clubs, CARES leaders, Student Council, Student Voice, Queer Alliance
- Promote professional learning opportunities and district initiatives including mental health awareness
- Promote physical well-being and healthy habits
- Breakfast and hot lunch programs
- Physical activity as part of student programming
- BC Employee and Family Assistance program (free confidential counselling)
- Gender-neutral washrooms
- Wheel-chair accessible building (water fountains and elevator)

Sports/Clubs/Fine Arts and Athletic Programs:

- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Soccer
- Curling
- Badminton



- Football
- Swim Club (Vanderhoof Aquatic Centre)
- Wrestling
- Cross Country Running, Track and Field,
- Golf

- Rugby
- Ski Club
- Mountain Biking
- eSports



- Drama
- Community Theatre
- Band
- Musicals

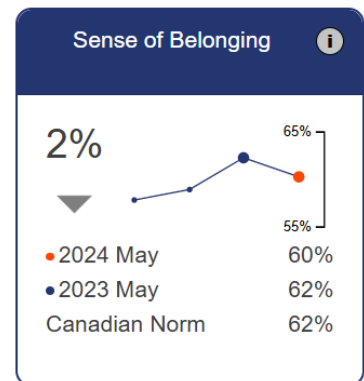
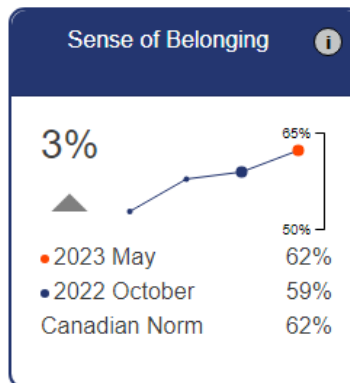
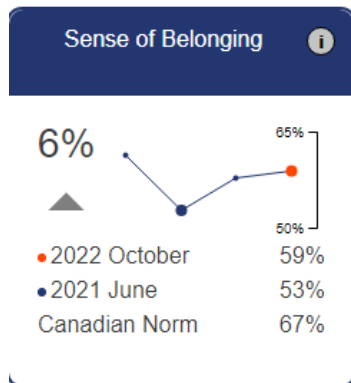
OurSchool Survey Results

Positive Sense of Belonging

The OurSchool Survey results indicate less of a difference between NVSS learners and the Canadian norm; however, the overall sense of belonging has decreased considerably from previous years.

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

- 59% of students in NVSS had a high sense of belonging; the Canadian norm for these grades is 67%.
- 55% of the girls and 67% of the boys at NVSS had a high sense of belonging. The Canadian norm for girls is 62% and for boys is 72%



Where Do We Want to Go?

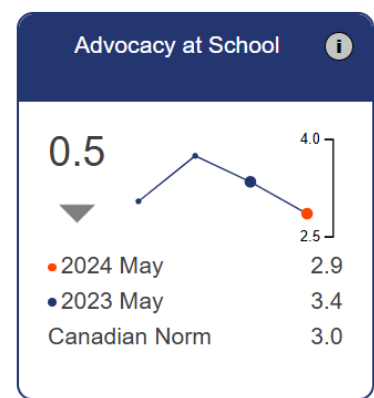
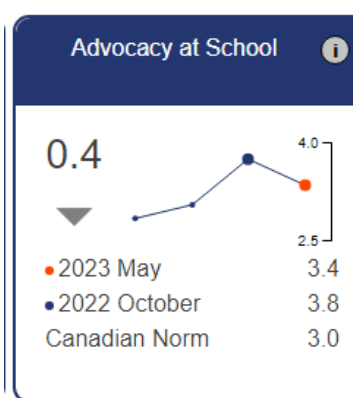
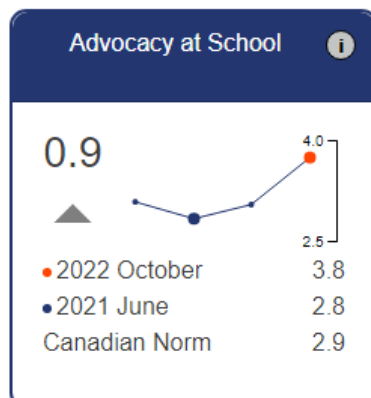
Staff has identified a Goal of a 5% increase in Students with a positive sense of belonging, by the Fall of 2024. Using the survey results will help to identify areas of possible strengths and areas to grow during the school year.

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

The OurSchool Survey results below show that 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, students rated advocacy at school 3.7 out of 10; the Canadian norm for these grades is 2.9.
- At NVSS, advocacy at school was rated 3.4 out of 10 by girls and 3.9 out of 10 by boys. The Canadian norm for girls is 2.7 and for boys is 3.1.



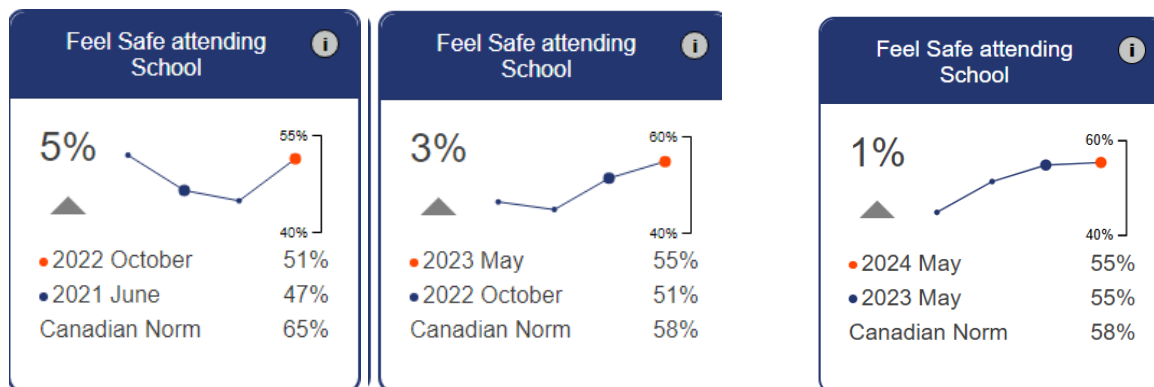
Where Do we Want to Go?

Staff and stakeholders will focus on a minimum 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.

Do You Feel Safe at Your School?

The OurSchool Survey results show that NVSS students are below the Canadian norm when it comes to feeling safe attending NVSS.

- 51% of students felt safe attending NVSS; the Canadian norm for these grades is 65%.
- 53% of the girls and 52% of the boys felt safe attending NVSS. The Canadian norm for girls is 64% and for boys is 67%



Students identified transition times between classes as the area 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".

Evidence of Improvement – How will we ensure we reach 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

NVSS Honouring Diversity

In alignment with the SD91 Strategic Plan, NVSS is committed to continuing the work of growing a stronger connection with the neighbouring community of Saik'uz through community celebrations, ceremonies and simple social opportunities. Collaboration activities between a dedicated group of educators, Administration and community partners is working toward a plan to support and provide a wrap around program for youth at risk.

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.

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.



To help further the work in Reconciliation and create a stronger connection with Saik'uz First Nation, NVSS piloted an "Elder in Residence" position during the 2023-2024 school year. Three days a week, Elder Maureen Thomas from the local First Nation Community of Saik'uz, became an integral part of our school community. Elder Thomas mentored and assisted students in their learning as well as sharing cultural learning opportunities. Elder Thomas will continue in her work at the school through 2024.

Work on a project for Remembrance Day 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. The 2024 Remembrance Day Assembly shared an in-person tribute to Dick Patrick with a student presentation that will be continued in subsequent years. A similar project involving another respected member of the Saik'uz First Nation – Dr. Mary John has also been proposed with a completion date of Fall 2024.

NVSS Enhancing Connections

NVSS is no longer operating the Vanderhoof Thrift Store as a non-profit enterprise; however, we do continue to run the NVSS Bottle Depot recycling station. This is an opportunity for students to interface with the community as well as gain funds to support extracurricular events and programs at the school.

Currently NVSS is collaborating with members of the community, landowners and SD 91 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.

NVSS began a "Tiny Home" building option in Construction 11/12 hoping to create opportunities to engage beyond the classroom and build structures for the community. Local contractors were consulted as NVSS built an Outdoor Learning Space on the sports field.

The YELL (Entrepreneurship 12) program has completed 7 years at NVSS and is continuing in 2024-2025. This program connects students to many key components to understand the business world while 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. In addition, JABC continues as a project in the Middle Years, culminating in a Community of Schools project where students could market their wares.