

# LDSS School Plan to Enhance Student Learning 2020 – 2021

Lakes District Secondary (LDSS) serves the fiercely resilient community and surrounding area of Burns Lake. We enroll 365 students in grades 8 – 12. It is our collective role to **improve the life chances of all learners**. We are responsible for creating student success. We believe that to graduate with dignity and options, all students need to feel safe and **connected** and need to develop **literacy** and **numeracy** skills. *This is even more important in this pandemic.*



Our students consistently transition to post secondary (35-40%), work (35-40%), and other (including sport, travel, upgrading, and unemployment). Our Indigenous students transition at the same rates. With nearly 50% of our students of Aboriginal ancestry, and 6 local First Nations, we work closely with our community partners. Our strong Learner Services department supports the 20% of students who meet criteria for a special education designation and 9 students in care. We pride ourselves on working collaboratively and creatively to support all learners to achieve their potential. This includes providing a full range of academic courses (including calculus and languages) as well as a broad range of electives (Fine Arts and Applied Skills) and life skills/work experience. *This year our offerings have been limited due to the pandemic.* The contributors to our plan have helped set goals in the areas of Social Emotional Learning, Literacy, and Numeracy consistent with the School District Strategic Plan.

## Creating Student Success:

### Part 1: Social Emotional Learning Focus

Our school is a safe place where our students feel connected. These are protective factors for young people. This is key to adolescent well being and has been negatively impacted by the events surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. We expected a need to pay even greater attention to learners SEL needs this coming year. Recent survey data corroborates that need.

#### Where have we come from:

We have been working for several years to learn about mental health as a staff and community. This is in part because of a lack of services available to us and a desire to understand what we could do to support youth, that at the same time would not make their situation worse. In other words, what is helpful help? We have focussed on direct teaching about mental health. What we see from the Student Learning Survey data is a decrease in the number of grade 10 students who report that school makes them anxious and an increase in the number of students who report that they are learning to take care of their mental health. We have also seen that the majority of students can name 2 or more adults who care about them.

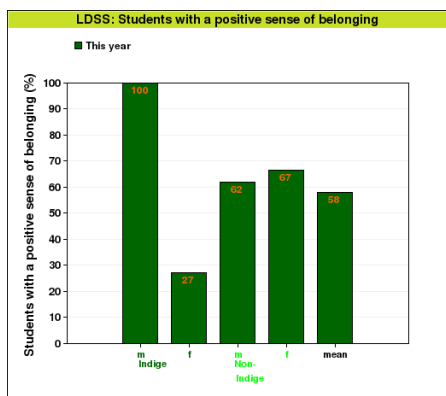
#### The Data (current reality):

Student Learning Survey Data – Grade 10 – January 2020 – Items we are following:  
(note this data is pre-pandemic)

- Approximately 15% of students report they never feel like school is a place they belong
- Most students feel welcome at school sometimes, many times, or all of the time
- 90% of students report feeling safe at school sometimes, many times, or all of the time
- 80% of students report very little teasing or bullying
- The majority of students still report school makes them stressed or anxious; we continue to dig deeper into this topic.

**7 % did not return to face to face in September (that number has grown to 21% since December)**

**Daily absence has ranged from 30 – 50 % all year with a gradual decline as local cases have increased.**



This graph is from the Learning Bar survey conducted in December 2020 with 65 students in grades 8 and 10. Observations include:

Only 58% of students indicate a positive sense of belonging

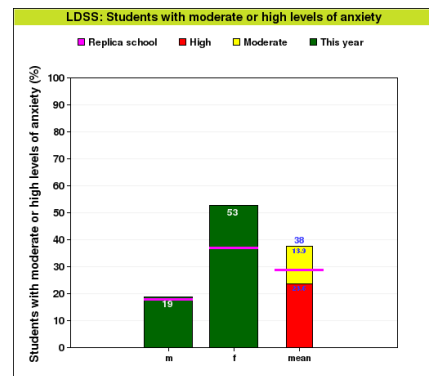
100% of indigenous boys report a positive sense of belonging while only 62% of non-indigenous boys do

Only 27% of indigenous girls report a positive sense of belonging while 67% of non-indigenous girls do

This is in keeping with district data on grade 9 girls

As we continue to dig deeper into student reports of school making them anxious, the Learning Bar survey data is being used. Observations and thoughts include:

- Our students report higher anxiety than students at a replica school
- Girls report significantly more anxiety than boys
- This data was collected at a high point in the pandemic



## **Goal: 80% of students in grades 8 – 10 will report that they are learning to take care of their mental health.**

See below for strategies to address this goal and the people responsible.

Increase counselling time to provide direct teaching of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the vocabulary related to mental health and well-being</li> <li>• the signs and symptoms of stress and anxiety</li> </ul>	Counsellor Admin
Teach strategies to promote mental health and well-being	Teachers HSC
Teach the relationship between physical health and mental health and well-being	PE Dept.
Survey students to better understand what they mean when they report high levels of anxiety	Admin
Present at PAC meeting about anxiety and strategies	ON HOLD Admin Counsellor
Use literature, articles, and current events for discussion and learning	Teachers
Use COVID-19 related experiences, articles, and current events as examples and learning activities	Teachers Counsellors
Seek speakers from the community to present on related topics	ON HOLD Counsellor Admin
Middle Years collaboration monthly to explore specific social emotional learning strategies to support the transition of young adolescents from elementary to secondary school	Gr. 8 teachers Librarian
Staff development built into staff meeting agenda (for example, teach anxiety reducing strategies to staff so they can use them in the classroom)	Admin Counsellor
Support staff to attend professional development activities related to mental health	ON HOLD Admin
Provide space and coordination for outside agency counsellors and doctors to meet with students	Counsellors LIMITED

**Measures:**

- Semester end surveys at conclusion of PE and Health courses for grades 8 - 10
- Student learning survey grade 10 data from question:
  - At school, I am learning to take care of my mental health
- Learning bar survey (first implemented in December 2020) will form a baseline and will be continued

**COVID Related Initiatives and Focus Areas:**

- Assign one staff member to each non-attender specifically for Social Emotional check ins. Follow up with referral to services as needed, including counselling, food security, and personal safety. This group includes those with very sporadic attendance, remote learners, and those who moved to home schooling or EBUS.
- Adjustments and enhancements to our food programs have included making our breakfast program mobile so that we go to students and include SEL check ins on a daily basis.
- We adjusted some of our staffing so we could serve our students in 10 – 12 who were requesting remote learning. We are looking at expanding that to 8 and 9 in semester two.

**Part 2: Numeracy**

To achieve a Dogwood a student must complete a Math 11 course. A student who graduates with an Evergreen Certificate needs sufficient Numeracy skills to engage in life as independently as possible.

**Where have we come from:** We began a focus on improving problem solving skills, confidence, and risk taking in all areas of mathematics, several years ago. Through this lens we continue to bore down and refine our focus and strategies. Our DNA data from the previous year showed nearly 80% of students not meeting expectations. Teacher observation during the sitting of the DNA assessment and the marking of same is that the vast majority of students continue to leave whole sections blank and don't attempt a solution. One hypothesis was that our students lack confidence in thinking mathematically and risk taking as it relates to the subject. The disruption in learning due to covid-19 have exacerbated this problem

**The Data (current reality):**

Due to the **pandemic**, we only have anecdotal evidence that our strategies are beginning to work. The Spring DNA was not administered.

**Numeracy DNA Data – September 2020 – Grade 9**

Score 0-4	Number	Data & Chance	Patterns & Relations	Computation	Shape & Space
0 or DNW	19	39	11	19	21
1	31	13	21	30	25
2	2	7	15	3	8
3	3	0	9	1	1
4	0	2	0	2	1

**Notes/Comments:**

- 8 students did not write (6 due to extended absence; 2 due to IEPs)
- The vast majority of students did not attempt questions or scored 0-1
- Patterns and Relations is a relative strength
- Other than computation, questions are literacy based and anecdotal reports indicate that students had extreme difficulty understanding what the question was asking
- Many students' scores dropped dramatically from grade 6, some examples from the number concepts questions are from: 65 - 0, 54 - 5, 41 - 10, 55 - 3, 57 - 0

**Goal:** To increase the number of students, in grade 8, who will confidently attempt a problem to 70%. *While this remains the goal, the pandemic has impacted our implementation of strategies.*

*See further on for covid related initiatives.*

See below for strategies to address this goal (*that have mostly been deferred to next year*).

Develop or select a pre and post problem solving assessment task (collab time)	HOLD	Math 8 teachers
Develop or select a problem solving rubric (collab time)	HOLD	Math 8 teachers
Teach the problem solving rubric to all grade 8 students	HOLD	Math 8 teachers
Group mark the assessment (collab time)	HOLD	Math 8 teachers Mr. Little LSWs
Direct teach problem solving strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sketch a diagram</li> <li>What is the question</li> <li>Highlight relevant information</li> </ul>		Math 8 teachers Mr. Little LSWs/HSC
Run Math 8 linear to allow for time to develop concepts and intervention to take place	HOLD	Admin
Start each class with a problem		Math 8 teachers
Provide intervention using an RTI model		Math 8 teachers Mr. Little LSWs/HSC
Numeracy goal as a standing item on staff meeting agenda		Admin
<i>Additional initiatives from current year follow the Literacy goal</i>		

#### **Measures:**

- Pre and post assessment data
- Anecdotal observations
- Artifacts (assessments, rubric)

**Success Story:** Although many of our initiatives are on hold, one of our Math 9 teachers used her anecdotal observations during the writing of the DNA to develop a daily problem solving strategy. To start each class students were given a problem and went through the same steps: highlight the vocabulary, draw out the problem, attempt a solution. The problem was then done together. At semester end, 6 problems were selected by the teacher and all students were able to complete at least 3 of the 6, with many students scoring 90-100%.

### **Part 3: Literacy**

To achieve a Dogwood a student must complete English 12 as well as required courses that rely on reading comprehension and effective writing skills. A student who graduates with an Evergreen Certificate needs sufficient literacy skills to follow their chosen path.

#### **Where have we come from:**

We have been working for several years at strengthening these skills in the junior grades. We continue to refine our interventions and strengthen our classroom practice. Recent successes include integrating English 8 and Socials 8 into a Humanities course, providing supplemental skills instruction at the grade 8 and 9 level, and collaborating with our teacher librarian through Social Studies units in other grades. What we have seen through consistent focus on these initiatives is significant progress towards our goals and now an opportunity to focus on increasing the percentage of students fully meeting or exceeding. Because research skills are required for most academic courses leading to graduation, we are focused on main idea and detail.

**The Data (current reality):**

	Target Main Idea	Results Fall 2020 Main Idea	Target Details	Results Fall 2020 Details
Grade 8	40 % Fully meeting 20% Exceeding	23% Fully Meeting 5% Exceeding	40% Fully Meeting 20% Exceeding	25% Fully Meeting 4% Exceeding
Grade 9	40% Fully Meeting 20% Exceeding	56% Fully Meeting 19% Exceeding	40% Fully Meeting 20% Exceeding	37% Fully Meeting 19% Exceeding

**Goal: Increase the percentage of students in grade 8 and 9 who score in the Exceeding category to 20% and in the Fully Meeting category to 40% on the Spring RAD in the areas of main idea and detail.**

Strategies to address this goal are shown below:

Direct teaching in English and Humanities classes	Teachers
Small group instruction (intervention groups and skills 8/9)	Mr. Little LSWs/HSC
Additional instruction in Social Studies classes at grade 9 level	Ms. Isaak
Co-teaching of research skills with Teacher Librarian	Teachers Ms. Isaak
Additional literacy skills instruction to grade 8s and 9s working below grade level	Mr. Little
Provision of a 0.5 intervention teacher working with small groups and individuals	Admin
Development of grade 8 and 9 scope and sequence (research skills)	Humanities department
Development of common assessments	Teachers of Humanities 8/9
Literacy goal as a standing item on staff meeting agenda (progress report, status report, success stories)	Admin

**Measures:**

- Fall and Spring RAD scores
- Anecdotal evidence from teachers
- Artifacts (scope and sequence, common assessments, research projects)

**COVID Related Literacy and Numeracy Initiatives and Focus Areas:**

- *All Math and English courses scheduled for semester one:*
  - *To address learning loss and gaps*
  - *To allow for extension of course into semester 2 if needed*
- *Staffing adjusted for semester 2 for the continuation of the following courses:*
  - *Humanities 8; English 10, 11, 12*
  - *Math 8 and 9*
  - *Workplace Math 10 and 11*
- *Learning Commons highly involved in these interventions*
- *Skilled CUPE staff selected to work with these groups*



## Honoring Diversity, Engaging our Workforce, and Enhancing Connections:

At LDSS we have a strong tradition of doing things that honor diversity, engage our workforce, and enhance connections. Please see examples in the diagram below.

### Outdoor Learning:

The requirement for learning cohorts brought on by the pandemic created an opportunity for our school community to work together in a way that honors diversity, engages our workforce, and enhances connections. Grade 8 students and teachers were a distinct cohort which allowed for full and half day outings to be possible without impacting other classes. Additional staffing was assigned to provide a coordinator who is also an outdoor instructor and mini bus driver. Activities throughout the fall and winter included:

- Mountain biking
- Canoeing
- Orienteering
- Hiking
- Flower arrangements for Thanksgiving
- Donaldson Landing (war canoe, traditional practices, residential schools)
- Ice fishing
- Outdoor cooking, safety, and survival skills

Community members engaged include: Bryanne White (local flower shop), Rachelle VanZanten and Chris Paulson (Spirit North), Jordan Williams (LBN), Ron and Mary West (Donaldson Landing). At least 15 staff were involved directly involved in one or more activity and many were able to share their passions with students. These activities are now expanding into other grades making use of the equipment purchased.

*“I got to know how kind the teachers really are. Since I’m not an outdoor person so they made me feel comfortable. I thought it was fun and I got to know my classmates better.” Female student*

*“My favorite memory of the outdoor education was going canoeing. It was a great day for such an action. And let me do something I wouldn’t be able to do in my normal life. I hope it is something other classes get to experience.” –Tucker, student*



*“My favorite memory would have to be the couple mountain biking trips we did. I love mountain biking, but this was so much fun...biking with all these people. It made me feel closer to my classmates because of the groups we were put into—I felt a lot closer to all of them after that –Oliver, student.*