

South Canoe Elementary School Learning Plan 2025-2026



School Context:



OUTDOOR LEARNING IN SD 83

SOUTH CANOE

The Vision

Our aim is to develop a school that engages students with local ecosystems. The focus of learning is on inquiry, experience and reflection while teaching the full BC curriculum through nature's lens

The Mission Statement

To implement a program that inspires a cultural shift that embraces, protects and connects meaningfully with the natural world.

Philosophy

The three pillars our philosophy is built on.

- Connections to the Outdoors
 Community supported and place-based education
- 3) Experiential Education

Outdoor Learning Vs Outdoor Education Outdoor Learning- Learning from and with the surrounding

natural ecosystems.

Outdoor Education- Adventure driven experiences.

Outdoor Education- Adventure driven experiences

Current Outdoor Learning in SD83 -7 professional development days per year, already offered

for over 100 teachers.

-7 'Outdoor Awesome' events featuring whole-school-based outdoor learning stations for 14 elementary schools.

-Many individual educators around the district having their

Research

Over 500 peer-reviewed articles exist, exploring a range of topics. These topics include the positive impacts of time speni in nature regarding: ADHD, Autism, executive functioning, academic performance, obesity, myopia, depression anger, socialization, creativity, critical thinking, resiliency, sleep, improved engagement/behaviour in school, increased focus, impulse control, reduced stress, cooperative play, and irritability, among many others.

Academics

-Boost performance in reading, writing, math, science and social studies. -Enhances creativity and critical thinking -Decreases ADHD symptoms.

Well-being

Increased physical activity.
 Reduces stress, anger and aggression
 Improves healthy relationships.

A Day at South Canoe

Balance of academics/outdoor/socialemotional. In September of 2018, South Canoe School re-opened its doors and began a new history as an Outdoor Learning Program in School District 83. South Canoe is nestled in a rural community within the Salmon Arm city limits. The school site is on 5.1 acres of land adjacent to private properties and includes 2 sports fields, a school garden and forested space. Currently, we have 7 divisions (K-8) with approximately 149 students. South Canoe is a 'school of choice' with no bussing provided and many families choose to drive to our location from all across the North Okanagan. Families seem to chose South Canoe for two predominant reasons: 1) because they value

the concept of outdoor learning and nature-based education, and/or 2) because they have found more traditional learning environments have not met the needs of their child(ren).

The surrounding rural area has many hobby farms and is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Klahani Park is a short 200-metre walk to the east and includes a forested area, playground, a ball field and sport courts. South Canoe is on the edge of 2 different biogeoclimatic zones – the Interior Douglas Fir and Interior Cedar Hemlock zones. Wildlife thrive in these zones, with several interesting songbird, mammal, and amphibian species. The plant and animal communities of South Canoe provide opportunity to ask questions, design experiments, and learn about local ecological systems. Generous and supportive neighbours allow classes permission to visit their private properties to do pond studies, observe creeks/watersheds and participate in gardening and harvesting.

The student population of South Canoe is approximately 20% of Aboriginal Ancestry. Approximately 13% of the total student population has an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Currently we have 5 Certified Education Assistants (CEAs) who support teachers and monitor

safety during outdoor learning and off-site experiences. Parent volunteers play a key role in supporting school initiatives and a bi-weekly hot lunch program is provided to our school. Two years ago, a daily breakfast program was added to support student health needs.

Report to the North Okanagan-Shuswap School District No. 83 Board of Trustees

A proposal for an Outdoor Learning School at South Canoe Centre



Prepared by the SD83 Outdoor Learning Committee

December 19, 2017

Our Vision: Preparing students to become educated citizens who contribute to a dynamic, sustainable, and diverse world.

Our Mission: Empowering students to become confident, curious, and caring individuals who thrive in their learning, relationships, and community.

Strategic Priority: Intellectual Development

- In the School Learning Plan, the Intellectual Development goals must be connected to the School District No. 83 Strategic Priority goal Each student will develop their literacy skills, numeracy skills, and competencies to become their most capable self.
- Goals must be specific, measurable, achievable, informed by and supported by data.
- Potential data sources may include FSA results, PM Benchmarks, SNACC results, School-wide writes, SD No. 73 Non-Fiction Writing Assessments...

Literacy Goal:

Reading and writing are inextricably linked – they are the breathing in and breathing out of literacy. As we continue the work of literacy instruction in both indoor and outdoor settings, we aim to have at least **70% of our grade 4s and grade 7s achieving "ON TRACK"** evaluation through annual provincial standardized assessment (FSA) in the area of literacy. This assessment quantifies both reading and writing skills. This is the 3rd of three years in which we aim to achieve this goal.

Numeracy Goal:

Our numeracy goal at South Canoe is to ensure all learners participate in meaningful and fun math activities, so that self-concept, confidence, and engagement in daily lessons result in at least 60% of our grade 4s and grade 7s achieve "ON TRACK" in their numeracy evaluation through annual provincial standardized assessment (FSAs). This assessment reflects the collective effort of teachers and staff, as students develop confidence and skill in the areas of problem solving, key numeracy strategies, and critical thinking. This is the 3rd of three years in which we aim to achieve this goal.

Strategies and Actions:

Action Items to Achieve Our Literacy Goal:

- Provide release time for primary and intermediate teacher teams to collaborate on instructional strategies, examine resources and share best practices.
- Explore the use of an intermediate reading assessment tools such as the NFRA (non-fiction reading assessment) from Kamloops.
- Commit to integration of literacy into out outdoor learning instruction through relevant Pro-D and school-wide learning activities outdoors.
- Encourage teachers to attend the Adrienne Gear professional development session on Writing on April 20th
- Ensure 90-120 minutes a day of literacy instruction.
- Prioritize CEA support for literacy blocks.

Strategies and Actions:

Action Items to Achieve Our Numeracy Goal:

- Last year we used SLP budget (based on feedback from teachers about what resources they needed to support improved numeracy in our school) to purchase two each of the Math Makes Sense textbooks. This was the recommended resource that best aligns with BC curriculum.
- Re-commit to engaging students in 60 minutes per day of numeracy instruction
- Encourage teacher engagement in professional learning around numeracy topics and inter-staff sharing of highly effective instructional strategies.

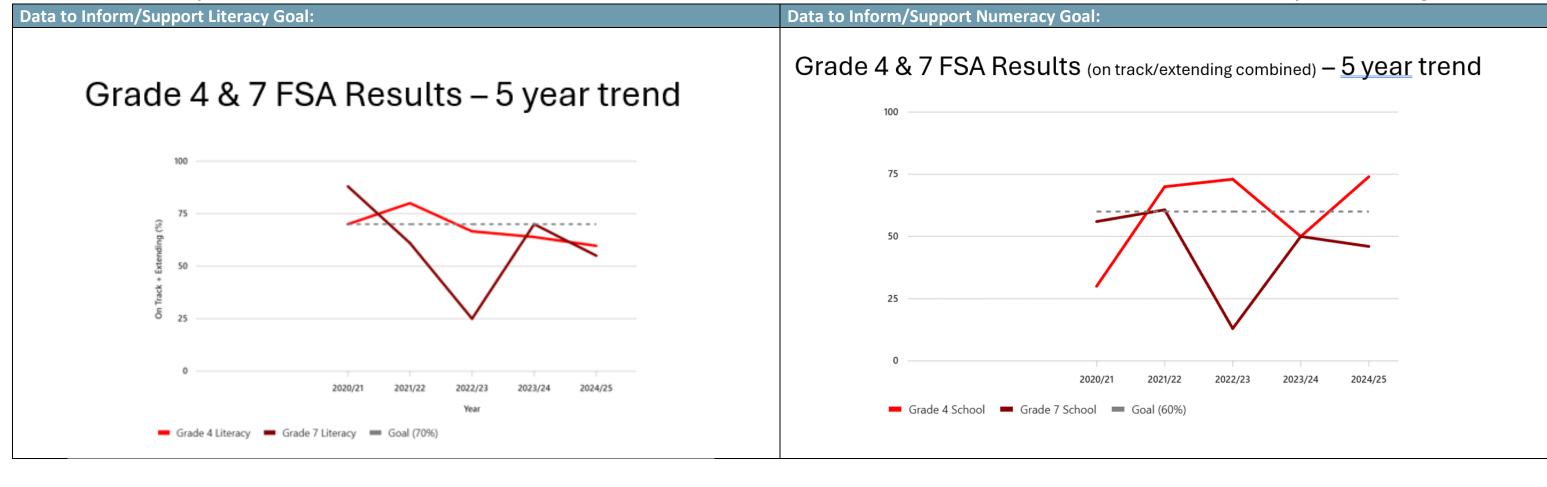
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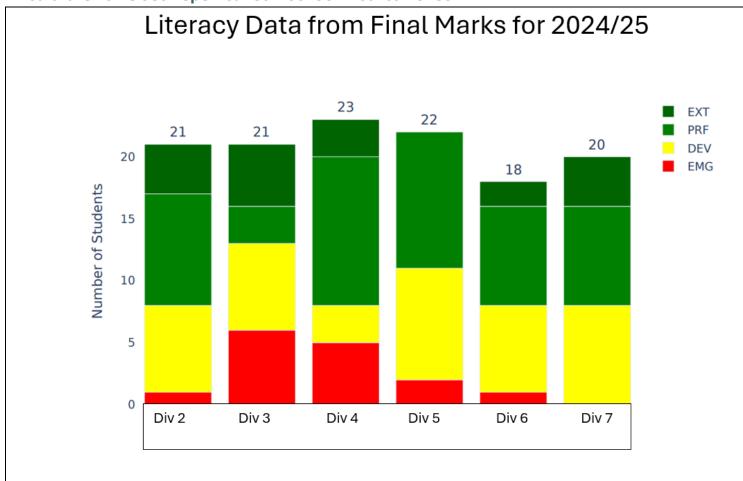
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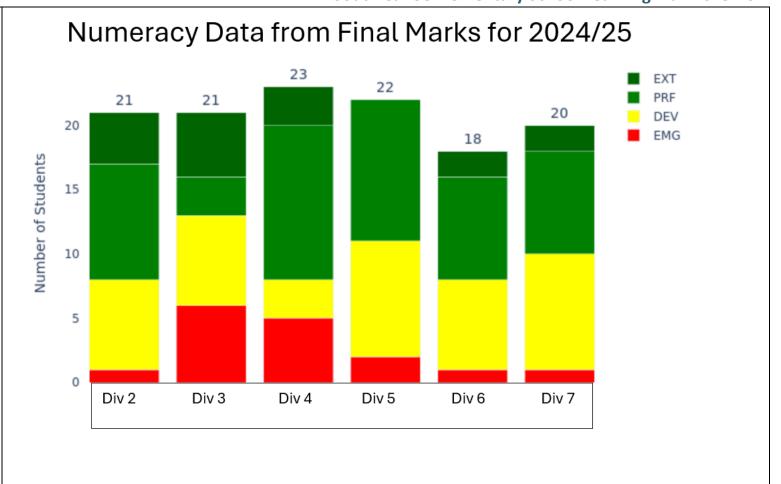
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	Using SLP budget this year, purchase the supplies necessary to construct portable chalkboards to use as vertical spaces for classes to engage in numeracy instruction outdoors. While we did not have any teachers sign up for the "Math Tasks for Thinking Classrooms" series, Sandra will complete it and therefore the school will get a copy of Peter Liljedah's book. Having this resource and the chalk boards invites staff and students to collaborate in math tasks that can de-mystify some critical numeracy topics. Examine SNACC data by grade and explore strategies to address lagging skills areas of note prior to the spring SNACCs. Commit to having all students re-assessed with SNACC by April 30th Ongoing – provide weekly reminders to use numeracy resources from the district channel Teachers can use collaboration time to align curriculum and instruction (particularly for "spill grades") and collaborate on effective numeracy instruction techniques/strategies during monthly primary and intermediate collaboration time. Review the Ministry's new K-12 Learning Progressions as part of ongoing numeracy conversations Comprehensive Math Program A comprehensive math program has five major building blocks: a) Problem Solving (daily and weekly) b) Curricular and core concept work c) Concept work: main lesson (Daily) d) Number routines e) Fluency practice			

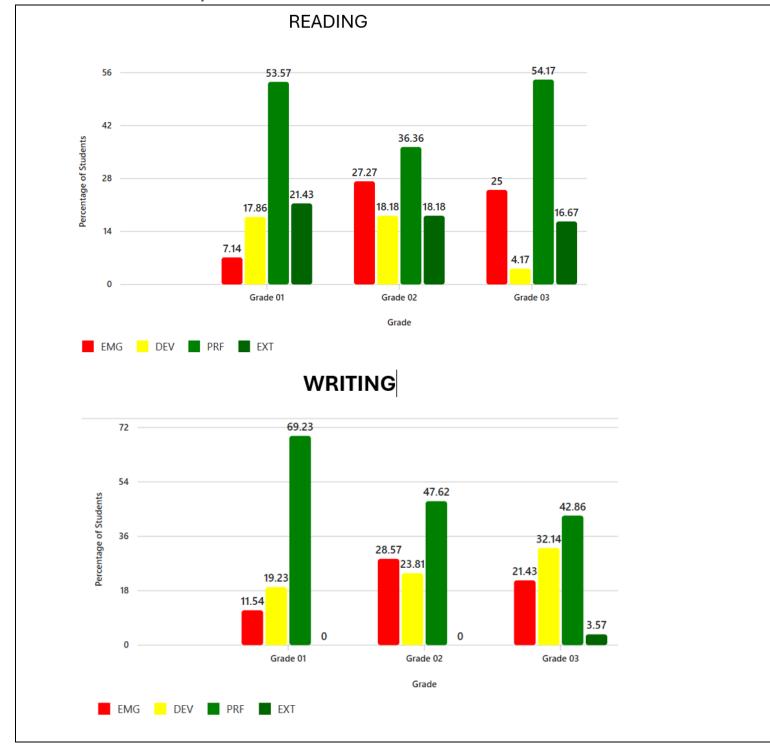
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SNACC Data (fall 2025) showing areas of focus

Grade 3 – Subtraction



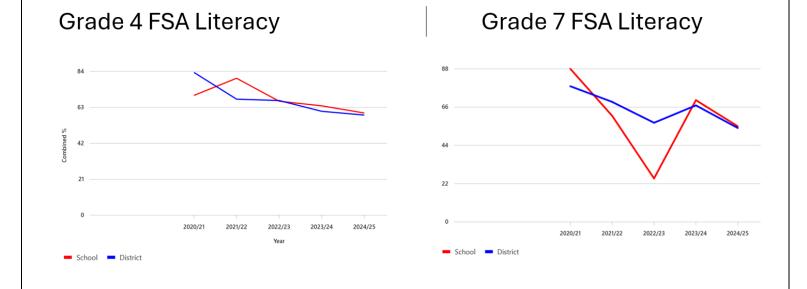
Grade 4 – Addition & Subtraction



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It is also important to compare our results with a meaningful/relevant benchmark. Here is the comparison to literacy results (FSA data) from our district over the past 5 years:

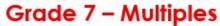


Grade 5 – Proportional Reasoning & Multiplication











Grade 8 - Integers



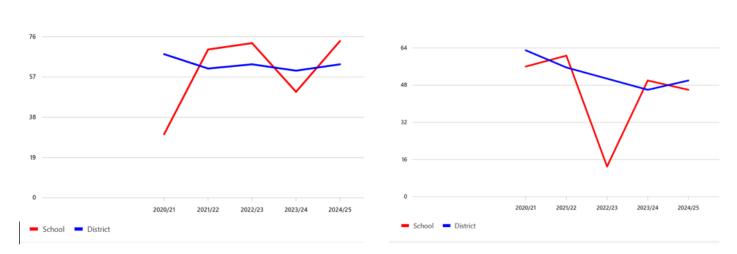
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Grade 7 FSA Numeracy



Data Analysis/Narrative:

FSA Data (trends over time)

FSA results reflect an overall impression of our school's performance in literacy when tracked over time. We have chosen a realistic and attainable goal of having at least 70% of our students to be "ON TRACK" in literacy by the end of this school year (2025/26). Staff discussions reflect a concern about cohorts of students who may struggle with literacy, however, if we look back three years to 2022/23, our then grade 4s achieved 66.6% "on track/extending". Given that, and with an ongoing emphasis on high impact literacy instruction, we hope our efforts will result in success.

Literacy Results on Final Written Learning Updates (2024/25)

Over the course of last year, we held three optional staff meetings to examine and discuss our School Learning Plan and what data sets we would use to evaluate and monitor our impact on students. Teachers expressed the desire to use 'report card marks' and as such, we have added literacy data here. The proficiencies reflect that our primary students seem to need the most support and are challenged by literacy tasks. A deeper dive into the data shows that they are stronger in reading than writing. Writing has been, and will continue to be an area of focus for teachers.

Comparison between the Outdoor Learning Program and District Literacy Results

Data Analysis/Narrative:

Provincial and locally generated data tell the same story for South Canoe regarding our current numeracy outcomes: our school needs to do more to support our students in the area of numeracy. Currently we are seeing student achievement on the FSA below where we want it for our students to have success as they move beyond our school and into high school. Data from our locally developed 'SNACC' assessment reflects this as well.

Our grade 4 FSA results over time are stronger than our grade 7 results. It should be highlighted that our numeracy goal is lower than our literacy goal (we are working toward having 60% of our students ontrack/extending. The work we are doing with primary classes and K-3 numeracy is supporting this, however, we are finding it challenging to get our grade 7 students to have the skills/knowledge to achieve it.

The 'Final Marks' for numeracy on last year's written learning updates reflect the opposite and this might be accounted for by considering that students without IEPs and identified learning disabilities are being supported with accommodations in the upper grades but not yet in the primary divisions.

SNACC data from this fall has highlighted some deep gaps in grade 3 subtraction, grade 4 addition and subtraction, proportional reasoning & multiplication for grade 5s, grade 6 area & perimeter, grade 7 multiples (with other priority areas)

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As we enter year 8 as an Outdoor Learning Program, it is important to reflect on our work and examine our results. On December 19th,2017, the proposal for the conversion of SCA into an Outdoor Learning Program was made to the board and with that, a journey took flight. In the 8 years the school has been opened, we have grown and changed. I am pleased to report that we are close to our stated objective of providing students with an awesome experience, a strong connection to nature and an academic program that allows them to meet or exceed district achievement levels.

Specific factors that influence the data we see emerging from our work includes: the stability since opening in 2018, ongoing recovery from Covid pandemic impact, increased school attendance (see belonging data section for attendance), increased emphasis on developing effective instructional practices that merge best practices in literacy and outdoor learning environments, and new approaches to literacy instruction and support using district supported resources such as UFLI and Heggerty, and the support and efforts of our Literacy Support Teacher (LST) and the model of early intervention that supports our most struggling students in grades K-2).

PM Benchmarks have been used over the past number of years to track student achievement as readers, however, with the introduction of UFLI as a phonics-based literacy instruction tool, and as we move away from levelled readers and 3-cue instructional techniques, this data becomes problematic in the short term.

and grade 8 integers (with other priority areas). As these are 'critical concepts', it will be important to solidify student understanding as this year unfolds and we are hopeful that spring SNACC data will reflect our efforts.

As a program of choice, our aim is to provide rich academic learning in addition to a wonderful outdoor learning experience for students. As we compare the numeracy results of our students to the wider district (conventional learning) it is heartening to see that, aside from a couple of unexplained dips, we are on par with the outcome of other schools in our district.

Strategic Priority: Human and Social Development

- In the School Learning Plan, the **Human and Social Development** goals must be connected to the School District No. 83 Strategic Priority goal *Each student will feel welcome, safe, and connected to peers and adults in their schools.*
- Goals must be focused on measuring a sense of belonging.
- Potential data sources may include the School District No. 83 EDI Environmental Scan, the Student Learning Survey, and student focus groups.

Strategic Priority: Organizational Development

- In the School Learning Plan, the **Developing a Culture of Well-Being** goal must be connected to the School District No. 83 Strategic Priority goal *Each student will feel socially, emotionally, and mentally supported within their schools and the district.*
- The goal must be focused on STUDENT well-being.
- Potential data sources may include the School District No. 83 EDI Environmental Scan, the Student Learning Survey, and student focus groups.

Sense of Belonging Goal:

A sense of belonging allows one to feel connected and at ease in themselves and their environment. A sense of belonging is what helps a student to thrive in their learning and enjoy coming to school everyday. School belonging – difficult to quantify, but immeasurably important. "If children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, learn to trust, share their feelings, and grow." – Alfie Kohn

Goal: **90% of students** at South Canoe will articulate a sense of belonging (connection to adults, peers and programming) as measured by teacher rating and the Student Learning Survey.

Student Well-Being Goal:

Our goal for student well-being is to have the necessary supports in place (Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3) so that **all students** can productively and with joy engage in learning with their peers in classrooms, outdoors, and on the playground.

Well-being is understood as a balanced state of being that provides a foundation for resilience, health, and purpose in life. Students who are healthy, safe, rested and cared for are ready to learn. Acknowledging health as a precondition for learning locates well-being as an important component of the universal scope of practice at South Canoe.

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Strategies and Actions:

Strategies to promote belonging at SCA:

- Continue to make time weekly for meaningful morning circle (whole school gatherings)
- Continue to streamline outdoor experiential learning opportunities both off site and on site, enabling authentic and meaningful experiences and team building
- Continue to make meaningful connections to local environmental groups and Indigenous Knowledge Keepers to further develop student connection to the land and traditional cultural practices of the Secwepemc people.
- Participation in the Moose Hide Walk, Orange Shirt Day and other important days that relate to Truth and Reconciliation.
- Provide opportunities for clubs to be run at school for students to develop interests and relationships with peers and adults (mt. biking, crocheting club, D&D, leadership, chess...)
- Provide team sports (volleyball, basketball, rugby, track & field, cross-country running).
- Engage with support staff, teachers and parents to consider best practices for outdoor learning, specifically related to differentiated learning and inclusion.

*with strong results in "belonging" as identified by the data, it may be time to increase this goal!

Strategies and Actions:

A number of families have expressed that it is challenging to get their child to come to school. It is sometimes difficult to separate actual physical symptoms from worries/anxiety related to coming. Staff works very hard to provide a variety of supports to assist with helping kids feel happy and connected at school:

- -team sports
- -soft starts
- -school trips (day trips and overnights)
- -leadership opportunities
- -differentiated learning

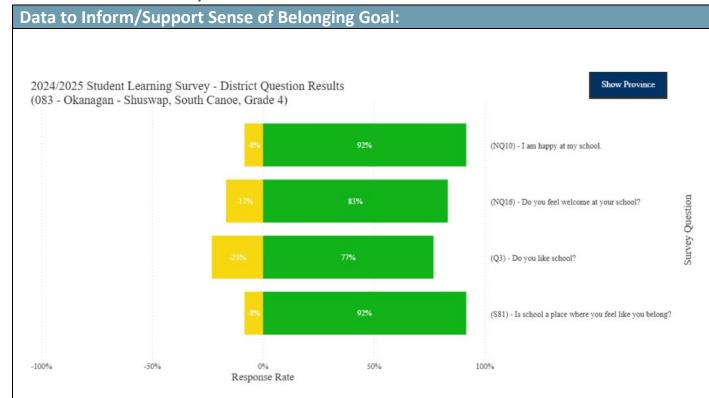
In addition to absenteeism, student conflict and behavior challenges can also be a sign that students are not well (socially and/or mentally). We have had some concerning challenges with student conflict, physical aggression, damaging property and expression of unhappiness. Finding positive outlets for students and ensuring that each student has connection and a means to contribute to our school community is part of the ongoing work we are doing to enhance student wellness.

With our breakfast program, we are endeavoring to ensure students are starting their day with a healthy breakfast. We hope this makes a morning routine easier for families and encourages an on time arrival. A new process for providing universally accessible access (stigma-free) to additional lunch options in each class through lunch baskets is being trialed.

Having acquired the program "Second Step" 2 years ago as part of our SLP, we are now in the second year of implementation at the grade 1, 3, & 5 levels. Second Step is an evidence-based program that provides a foundation for a positive, inclusive culture through developing social-emotional competencies and includes perspective-taking, understanding and resolving conflicts and positive relationship building skills.

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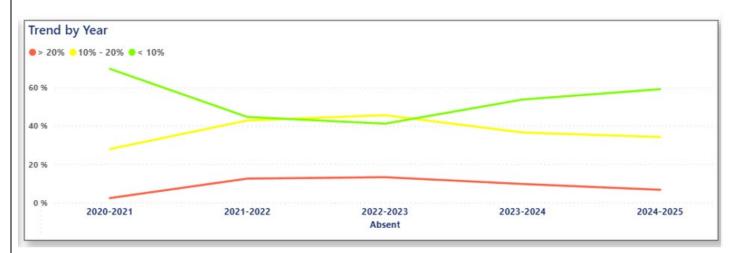
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*The teachers have not yet completed rating their students on 'belonging' this year. Sandra will add this data as soon as it is available.

Data to Inform/Support Student Well-Being Goal:

Attendance



Significant Absences of Note (2024/25)

Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
34	31.5	32.5	42	56.5	32	34.5	44
31		21.5	36.5	31.5	34	57.5	30
		25	33.5	46.5	23	22	24
		26	24.5	22.5		29	
		28.5	31	20.5		32.5	
		31.5	30	21.5		41	
		24	33	24			
				46			
				39.5			

*The teachers have not yet completed rating their students on 'well-being' this year. Sandra will add this data as soon as it is available.

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Data Analysis/Narrative:

The School Learning Survey provides evidence of success in the area of belonging for South Canoe School. As a school of choice, our school begins with the intention of attracting students and families who want to be engaged with our community of outdoor learners. With our school enrollment at an all time high, it could be argued that simply wanting to be here demonstrates that our students and their families want to belong as part of our South Canoe family.

While students self-report a high degree of belonging, we do see students who might appear unhappy or disconnected at school. As an action item this year, we will have each staff member select a student who just needs a little boost/connection and make them their "secret student" to check in on, celebrate and notice throughout the year. The "secret student" program is aimed to help ensure that our most likely to slip through the cracks get the attention and support they need.

The new school logo and name provides a strong sense of connection to place, purpose and identity. We are proud to be 'Trailblazers' and it is evident in all of the activities, events and initiatives we take part in that South Canoe draws kids and families into a tight bond.



Data Analysis/Narrative:

Physical and mental health challenges can lead to absenteeism for students. As we emerged from the pandemic, student attendance remained a challenge over time. In addition, the perception of some families, that our outdoor program is not fully rigorous and/or that attendance might be less important is a factor in our student attendance. On a positive note, overall attendance is trending in the right direction. Despite this, we have a number of students who find it challenging to get to school or whose families plan absences for trips, "rest days", or otherwise.

By examining individual student absence records, we can flesh out which kids are missing because of holidays, which kids are experiencing anxiety/social-emotional challenges, home life challenges, or disengagement from our programming. Our Class Review process will allow our School Based Team to look thoughtfully at what each individual students/family needs to support improved attendance.

The information from our teacher rated 'well being' survey will also be used to engage in these Class Review meetings and they will help us prioritize supports and interventions for kids who are struggling with well-being.

(gym wall mural)

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Strategic Priority: Career Development

- In the School Learning Plan, the Human and Social Development goals must be connected to the School District No. 83 Strategic Priority goal Each student will develop the skills and competencies to be successful in a career pathway of their choice.
- In the elementary/middle years, schools should be implementing strategies to help student learn about potential career pathways and providing opportunities for career exploration.

Strategies and Opportunities for Career Development:

At South Canoe, ongoing connections to local people and businesses through our regular "off-site" experiences provides students with many authentic opportunities to better understand a variety of careers, particularly those that related to the outdoors, parks, agriculture, gardening, conservation, science, wildlife biology, food sustainability and more. Our incredible staff works hard to keep key connections with local "experts" up and to coordinate visits and learning experiences so that kids get to interact with members of our community in a variety of roles.

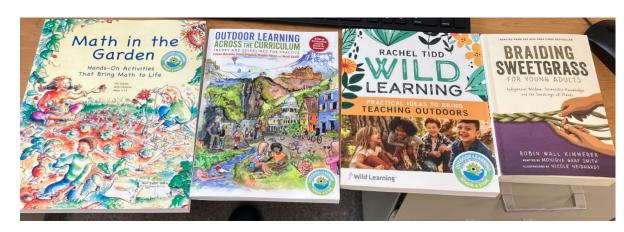
In addition to paid employment/careers, our school proudly supports volunteerism and community support through collaborations and events that are free, open to all and serve to improve the community as a whole. We want our students to learn to be part of the working world and also part of the unpaid labour force that supports the many important initiatives that make communities like Salmon Arm strong.

Resources and Professional Learning

Identify specific learning, resources, or initiatives at the school and/or district level that will build staff capacity to work toward school goals.

In order to put this learning plan into action, we have, or will be looking to secure the following resources:

-Four new Outdoor Learning Resources Sandra purchased at the Outdoor Learning Leadership Conference in Banff.



-Consider purchasing Adrienne Gear's "Powerful Understanding" book (discuss at staff meeting)

-Move ahead with purchase and construction of vertical math surfaces (see the "vision" below)

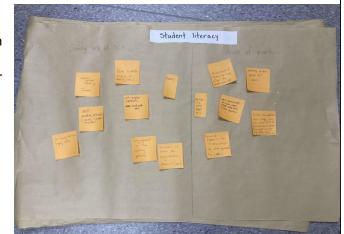
School Learning Plan Consultation Process

Please describe the consultative process with rights holders and stakeholders in the development of this School Learning Plan.

This learning plan was developed in consultation with staff **beginning in February 2024** when the key pillars of this learning plan were shared with staff and a rational for why our school will be aligning with both our district's strategic plan and the goals of the Ministry. From here, individuals were given an opportunity to contribute to each pillar with comments about what is "going well at SCA" and what "areas of growth" do we yet have.

In reviewing these contributions, proposed goals were drafted by the principal and shared with staff for feedback at the March 2024 staff meeting.

At the March PAC meeting, parents were made aware of the new school learning plan and invited to attend an additional meeting in early April to explore the draft goals and provide input/feedback.

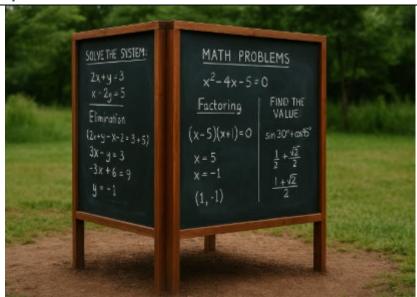


Following these meetings, the final draft plan was shared again with staff and additional contributions were requested. Feedback taken from this consultation included combining 'on track' and 'extending' markers from the FSA data analysis process.

The plan was then completed on April 10th and submitted to the Board.

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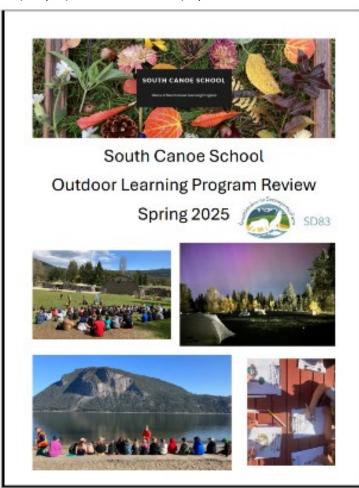


-Swings! (belonging) Our PAC is highly supportive of this addition to SCA and we have already earmarked/raised about one half of the necessary cost of this project.

Last year, staff discussed the direction of our School Learning Plan, the data being selected and the strategies in place. Staff suggestions to insert more focussed outdoor learning language and direction in the SLP were then added into this current draft of the plan. The staff was next invited to work on the SLP goals and strategies three additional times in 2024/25. The result of these discussions was that staff wanted our SLP to be 1)easy, 2)reliable data and 3)replicable data

Staff then spent time at the June staff meeting reviewing practices that contribute to enhancing our school based on feedback from the recent Outdoor Program Review Process (survey to all staff and families, with significant student feedback gathered. We will continue to target our professional learning, resource acquisition and planning to support improving in all our stated goal areas and seek to complete the 10 recommendations from the review.

For this 25/26 year, the staff meeting agenda now holds a dedicated space (first up!) to discuss SLP progress and strategies each month.



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