![School District 8 Kootenay Lake logo]

EDUCATION PARTNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AGENDA
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2025
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
In person: School Board Office, 811 Stanley Street, Nelson BC
Via video conference: Zoom - Webinar ID: 657 3277 9733 – Password: 495118

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Territory**

   We acknowledge, respect and honour the First Nations in whose traditional territories the Kootenay Lake School District operates and all Aboriginal people residing within the boundaries of School District No. 8.

3. **Receiving Presentations/Delegations** - Nil

4. **Changes or Omissions to Minutes** (p. 2)   App. 4

5. **New or Ongoing Business**

   A. Caring and Inclusive Learning Communities, Connected Learning,
       and Online Learning Implementation (p. 4)   App. 5A

6. **Comments or Questions from the Public Regarding Items in this Agenda**

7. **Meeting Schedule & Reminders**

   The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for May 13, 2025.

8. **Adjournment**

EDUCATION PARTNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024

Board:	S. Nazaroff, Committee Chair
	D. Lang, Chair
	M. J. Blackmore
	S. Chew *(via video conference)*
	K. Etheridge *(via video conference)*
	A. Gribbin *(via video conference)*
	M. Shunter *(via video conference)*
	L. Trenaman
Partners	N. Graves, KLPVPA
	D. Leeming, KLTF
	N. Nazaroff, DPAC
	R. Rivera, DPAC
	T. Stokes, DPAC
District Staff:	T. Smillie, Superintendent
	C. MacArthur, Secretary-Treasurer
	J. Brooks, District Numeracy Teacher Coordinator
	C. Kerr, Director of Operations
	D. Holitzki, Assistant Superintendent
	T. Malloff, District Principal
	C. Makeiv, District Literacy Teacher Coordinator
	M. Mobbs, District Literacy Teacher Coordinator
	C. Singh, Director of Human Resources
	S. Bruskowski, Executive Assistant
Regrets:	J. Bremner, Vice Chair
	B. Eaton, Director of Instruction – Innovative Learning
	L. Carriere, Director of Aboriginal Education

1. **Call to Order**
   The meeting was called to order at 2:30 PM.
2. **Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Territory**
   Committee Chair Nazaroff invited everyone to a short round of introductions.
3. **Receiving Presentations/Delegations** - Nil
4. **Changes or Omissions to Minutes** – Nil
5. **New or Ongoing Business**
   A. Literacy and Numeracy Continuous Learning Engagement
      Superintendent Smillie outlined how the Literacy and Numeracy Continuous Learning report aligns with the school learning plans and the Strategic Plan. The effectiveness of

the Strategic Plan is monitored through the cycle of learning reports throughout the school year.

District Principal Malloff presented the annual school learning cycle as well as the SD8 K-12 Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Inventory that is used at schools throughout the district. These provide data that is utilized for the school learning cycle. In her presentation, District Principal Malloff shared outcomes, findings, and voices on the process and outlined how professional learning events are aligned with the findings in the data.

In breakout sessions, attendees were assigned to one of four groups to receive presentations on and have discussions on various programs and assessments including the FSA, SNAP, ALP/ENP, and ELP. The presentations can be viewed using the links below:

- Winlaw ENP Story
- Winlaw ENP Story 2
- Winlaw ELP Story
- Redfish UFLI Success Story
- Redfish UFLI Story
- JVH UFLI Story
- JVH UFLI Success Story
- Slocan Math Fairs June 2024
- WEG SNAP
- School Planning Process Highlights
- Erickson Lit Demo Class Fall 2024

After this breakout session, the group reconvened to share their feedback and observations.

6. **Comments or Questions from the Public Regarding Items in this Agenda**

7. **Meeting Schedule & Reminders**

   The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for March 11, 2025.

8. **Adjournment**

   The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Committee Chair	Secretary-Treasurer

**School District 8
Kootenay Lake**

CARING AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITIES

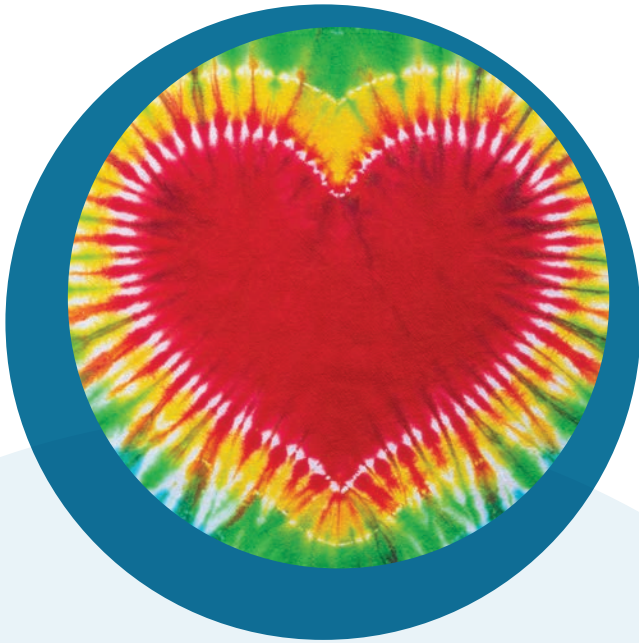## CONTINUOUS LEARNING REPORT 2024–2025

MARCH 11, 2025

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge, respect and honour the First Nations in whose traditional territories the Kootenay Lake School District operates and all Aboriginal people residing within the boundaries of School District No. 8.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Goals of K-12 Education

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (SD8) supports all learners with continuous improvement in their learning so that each learner may graduate with purpose and options for their future. This aligns with the B.C. mandate for public education outlined in the Statement of Education Policy Order, the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Policy, and the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

> *"The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy."*

> B.C. Statement of Education Policy Order Mission Statement

To support government to achieve their mission, school districts in B.C. are tasked with educating each child so they can become "the Educated Citizen." This is a child who throughout their schooling demonstrates intellectual development — literacy and numeracy — human and social development, and career development.

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning policy requires that boards of education will set, create and maintain a strategic plan that articulates the vision, mission, and values of the school district and identifies priorities that guide the district towards its short and long-term goals.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act represents the province's reconciliation framework and the commitments that Board of Education must support in furthering reconciliation.

Aligning to Our Strategic Plan

The values embedded in the strategic plan include placing learners at the center, building communities of caring and connection, ensuring equity for diverse learners and respect for cultural identity, and fostering lifelong learning and caring for the future. Our mission is to inspire and support each learner to thrive in a caring learning environment.

Specifically, the focus is on the following goal and objectives in relation to a caring and inclusive learning culture.

Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture: We promote physical and mental well-being through social-emotional learning to foster compassionate learners.

- Create welcoming, engaging and accessible learning spaces.
- Promote and deepen mental and physical health and well-being.
- Enhance the social-emotional skills and capacity of learners.
- Ensure that every student feels they are safe at school and that they belong.

This report outlines the caring and inclusive learning culture action plan, including the process for monitoring for continuous improvement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Three-Year Action Plan (2024-2027)

Outlined in this Continuous Learning Report are actions that serve as strategies for continuous improvement. The items in our action plan will be given high priority for the 2024–2027 school years. SD8 continually monitors these priorities to ensure continuous improvement for all learners – Indigenous learners, learners with diverse abilities, children and youth in care, and English language learners.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Caring and Inclusive Learning Cultures

> *"We aim to promote physical and mental well-being through social-emotional learning and to foster compassionate learners."*

GOALS:

1. Support K-12 school teams in creating welcoming, engaging and accessible learning environments.	
Monitoring	**Action Items**
• Student achievement with a focus on priority learners • School academic review meetings (Primary Success, Grad Reviews) • Student Learning Surveys • Adolescent Health Survey data • Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data • Grade to grade transitions rates • School-based team data • Student anecdotes • Compassionate Systems Leadership participation rates for school and district leaders • Implementation progress for Accessibility Plan	• Primary success meetings held twice per year with each elementary school • Graduation review meetings held three times per year with each secondary school • Analyze available student data for trends in belonging, safety, connection to adults, and feeling welcomed at school • Implement practices to ensure that every student feels safe, welcomed, has a sense of belonging and that there are at least two adults with whom they connect • Continue with transition meetings and events for students transitioning into schools and between schools (eg: Welcome to Kindergarten events and inter-school transition meetings) • Update accessibility action plan, including timelines and identification of responsibility • Continue to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Parachute, and Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs in schools • Continue to promote and implement SOGI events and activities in schools • Increase SOGI allyship in schools • Ensure that students understand how to use the erase tool to report incidents of bullying, violence, and harassment • Train staff in Inclusive Design and Document Design through provincial outreach programs • Ensure that schools implement practices so that every student feels safe, welcomed, a sense of belonging and that there are at least two adults with whom they can connect • Ongoing participation in Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL) as well as participation in local, regional and provincial CSL networks

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Promote and deepen mental and physical health and well-being for students in SD8.

Monitoring	Action Items
- Student achievement with a focus on priority learners - School academic review meetings (Primary Success, Grad Reviews) - Student Learning Surveys - Adolescent Health Survey data - Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data - Grade to grade transition rates - School-based team data - Student anecdotes - Number of students accessing resources in schools: clinical counselling, art therapy, Foundry Virtual, PEACE program, etc.) - Number of students accessing food equity programs in schools - Number of students accessing After School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) - Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL) implementation for school and district leaders	- Ensure that students have the support they need to thrive by implementing the Mental Health in Schools (MHiS) strategy, focusing on prevention and reducing stigma - Mental Health and Addictions Coordinator position supporting implementation of physical and mental health programs in SD8 - Continue to expand Open Parachute Program implementation in schools - Continue to provide information to schools and parents about the Foundry Virtual services - Continue to support schools to liaise with agencies such as Child Youth Mental Health (CYMH), Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Ktunaxa Kinbasket for wraparound student supports - Provide access for schools to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) interventions including workshops, training, specific work with school staffs, and one-to-one coaching by CTR staff with SD8 staff - Implementation of EASE (Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators) in district, and sharing EASE At Home program with families via newsletter - Promote the implementation by teachers of the K-12 physical and health education curriculum across the district - Facilitate efficient and barrier-free access for students to physical and health services through increased collaboration with partner agencies and community organizations - Ensure implementation of Child Centre for Protection's Kids in the Know sexual health education program to support teachers in delivering sexual health curriculum K-12 - Continue implementation of CIRCLES sexual health education program for students with disabilities and diverse needs - Continue to present at parent engagement nights on topics of mental health, student safety, and social emotional learning - Provide workshops for staff and students on the Mental Health in Schools Strategy, trauma-informed practices, and SEL - Ensure each school fully uses its food equity funds and student family affordability funds to support vulnerable students - Continue to learn from Interior Health's Health Promoting Schools (HPS) network, and ensure that HPS information and resources are provided to staff, students, and parents throughout the district - Continue to provide the After School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) in rural schools - Continue to provide funding for the HUB program at Kootenay River Secondary School in Creston through a contract with Valley Community Services for a social worker

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3. Enhance the social-emotional skills and capacities of learners.	
Monitoring	**Action Items**
• Student achievement with a focus on priority learners • School academic review meetings (Primary Success, Grad Reviews) • Student Learning Surveys • Adolescent Health Survey data • Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data • Grade to grade transition rates • Student anecdotes • Participation by teachers in Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs • Number of staff trained in using the FAIRS program • Compassionate Systems Leadership participation by teachers and district leaders • Participation rate by students in district-offered programs: Open Parachute, PreVenture, Complex Trauma Resources and Foundry • Participation rate by staff for district-offered professional learning workshops (eg: Crisis Prevention Institute, Complex Trauma Resources, Open Parachute, PreVenture)	• Continue to train schools staff in use of effective social emotional learning (SEL) strategies to promote implementation of SEL in classrooms throughout SD8 • Continue to implement executive function strategies, EASE, and the MindUp program at elementary schools • Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools • Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and information to support SEL in classrooms • Continue to provide information for staff to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Parachute, and Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs in schools • Ensure that inclusion support teachers and teacher counsellors are trained in positive behaviour programs, executive functioning, social emotional learning, compassionate systems leadership, and programs such as Open Parachute and PEACEful schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4. Ensure that every student feels they are safe at school and that they belong.

Monitoring	Action Items
- Student Learning Surveys - Principal and staff reporting in MyEdBC - Anecdotes from students and staff - Adolescent Health Survey data - Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data - Grade to grade transition rates	- Implement practices to ensure that every student feels safe, welcomed, a sense of belonging and that there are at least two adults with whom they connect. - Ensure that students understand how to use the erase tool to report incidents of bullying, violence, and harassment - Ensure that student plans are in place and that a point person is identified at each school for children/youth in care (CYIC), with consistent tracking through school-based team and district-based team reporting - Updated school-based team and district-based team procedures and recording mechanisms to provide consistency, detailed information gathering, and effective implementation of interventions to promote students' feelings of safety and belonging in schools - Continue to update Inclusive Education Department procedures to ensure effectiveness, and that school staff are aware of and following procedures - Ensure that staff understand and are following the School Safety Manual and the Critical Incidence Response Manual to promote student and staff safety - Increase number of staff who have taken the Behavioural Digital Threat Assessment (BDTA) courses from Safer Schools Together (SST) - Continue to train staff in crisis prevention and verbal de-escalation strategies using the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) methods - Primary success reviews twice a year to ensure wraparound support for students at schools - Grad reviews three times per year to ensure that students are on track for graduation - Continue to train schools staff in use of effective social emotional learning (SEL) strategies to promote implementation of SEL in classrooms throughout SD8 - Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools - Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and information to support SEL in classrooms - Continue to provide information for staff to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Parachute, Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs, and the Behaviour Code in schools - Ensure that inclusion support teachers and teacher counsellors are trained in positive behaviour programs, executive functioning, social emotional learning, compassionate systems leadership, and programs such as Open Parachute and PEACEful schools

5. Develop communities of practice to support the strategic plan goals and action plan objectives with a focus on priority learners.

Monitoring	Action Items
• Student achievement with a focus on priority learners • Student Learning Surveys • Feedback from school staff and district staff about the communities of practice	• Institute Communities of Practice for inclusion support teachers (ISTs), principals, and teacher counsellors to ensure that staff learn about how to develop and sustain caring and inclusive learning cultures in schools throughout the district • Ensure that inclusion support teachers and teacher counsellors are trained in positive behaviour programs, executive functioning, social emotional learning, compassionate systems leadership, and programs such as Open Parachute and PEACEful schools • Continue to train schools staff in use of effective social emotional learning (SEL) strategies to promote implementation of SEL in classrooms throughout SD8 • Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools • Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and information to support SEL in classrooms • Continue to provide information for staff to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Parachute, Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs, and the Behaviour Code in schools • Ensure that data from Student Learning Surveys is analyzed and reviewed at the school and district level, to ensure school learning plans and the district action plan reflect what the data show regarding caring and inclusive learning cultures in SD8

6. Ensure that learners have access to information and resources in schools and in communities.

Monitoring	Action Items
• Community Resources Brochure updates • Data from the HUB at KRSS • Student Learning Survey data • Adolescent Health Survey data • Foundry participation rates	• Update the SD8 Community Resources Brochure on the SD8 website • Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools • Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and information to support SEL in classrooms • Continue to learn from Interior Health's Health Promoting Schools (HPS) network, and ensure that HPS information and resources are provided to staff, students, and parents throughout the district • Ensure that information is available in schools and shared digitally for 2S&LGBTQ+ students, staff, families and allies • Continue to promote and implement SOGI events and activities in schools • Ensure that students understand how to use the erase tool to report incidents of bullying, violence, and harassment • Continue to present at parent engagement nights on topics of mental health, student safety, and social emotional learning • Facilitate efficient and barrier-free access for students to physical and health services through increased collaboration with partner agencies and community organizations • Continue to support schools to liaise with agencies such as Child Youth Mental Health (CYMH), Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Ktunaxa Kinbasket for wraparound student supports

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The action plan is developed on the following premises:

- Students are at the centre of our individual and collective work in SD8, particularly priority learners: Indigenous learners, learners with disabilities and diverse abilities, children and youth in care, and English language learners.
- SD8 is committed to its strategic priorities and to measuring and reporting on performance in key areas—evidence is robust, timely, and meaningful.
- SD8 collaborates with community, regional, and provincial partners.
- SD8 maintains a sustained focus on a cycle of continuous improvement.
- The action plan is aligned with the goals and mandate of the <u>Ministry of Education and Child Care.</u>

A Focus on Student Success

SD8 continues to look for ways to build on strengths and celebrate learner success. By referring to data that informs decision-making, planning and practices, and by working with education partners, the district can make a difference for all SD8 learners. The annual Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture Continuous Learning Report supports the district's mission and vision:

MISSION	VISION
We inspire and support each learner to thrive in a caring learning environment.	Our learners grow as global citizens in an innovative and inclusive community.

This report outlines how SD8 supports learner success in creating caring and inclusive learning cultures.

INTRODUCTION

Background - Caring and Inclusive Learning Cultures

SD8 is a learning organization committed to continuously reviewing, refining, and reflecting upon its practice to support the best possible outcomes for learners. Ensuring that children and youth have inclusive and caring learning environments is central to learners' experiences and engagement, and foundational for improving achievement. A review of human and social development data highlights areas of learner well-being, engagement, and school connectedness.

All learners have the right to equitable access and inclusive participation in quality education. The district and its staff value diversity and respond to the human/social, cultural and educational needs of learners in SD8 schools and communities. The district's mission of inspiring and supporting each learner to thrive in caring learning environments demonstrates its commitment to the creation of inclusive and caring learning communities where all learners may achieve educational excellence and accomplish their goals.

SD8 is committed to inclusive and caring learning environments where all learners are meaningfully included and embraced as part of the school's learning community. SD8 embraces the philosophy that diversity is the norm, not the exception, and staff celebrate the gifts and talents that all learners possess. Throughout the district, learners are included and taught in regular classrooms and participate in typical class activities with peers of their age to the greatest extent possible. Inclusive and caring learning environments provide opportunities for all learners to experience success, and where curriculum is planned, developed and implemented with the aim of teaching to the diverse learning needs of all the learners in a class.

SD8 provides programs and services within neighbourhood schools based on tiers of support including universal supports (for all), targeted supports (for some) and essential supports (for a few) in order to meet the needs of individual learners.

As specified in the Statement of Education Policy Order, the purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

To achieve this purpose, we have a collective mandate to develop the "educated citizen", which includes intellectual, human and social and career development. Specifically in this continuous learning report, human and social development promotes in students a sense of self-worth and belonging, an understanding of the importance of physical health and well-being, and acceptance and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others.

The personal and social competency in the BC curriculum is the set of abilities that relate to students' identity in the world, both as individuals and as members of their community and society. This competency encompasses 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.

INTRODUCTION

FACETS OF THE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL COMPETENCY IN B.C. CURRICULUM

Self-regulating

Students who are personally aware and responsible take ownership of their choices and actions. They set goals, monitor progress, and understand their emotions, using that understanding to regulate actions and reactions. They are aware that learning involves patience and time. They can persevere in difficult situations and understand how their actions affect themselves and others.

Well-being

Students who are personally aware and responsible recognize the factors that affect their holistic wellness and take increasing responsibility for caring for themselves. They keep themselves healthy and stay active, manage stress, and express a sense of personal well-being. They make choices that contribute to their safety in their communities, including their online communities and use of social media. They recognize their personal responsibility for their happiness and have strategies that help them find peace in challenging situations.

Identifying personal strengths and abilities

Students acknowledge their strengths and abilities, and they intentionally consider these as assets, helping them in all aspects of their lives. Students understand that they are unique and are a part of larger, and often multiple, communities. They explain how they are using their strengths and abilities in their families, their relationships, and their communities.

Building relationships

Students build and maintain diverse, positive peer and intergenerational relationships. They are aware and respectful of others' needs and feelings and share their own in appropriate ways. They adjust their words and actions to care for their relationships.

Contributing to community and caring for the environment

Students develop awareness of and take responsibility for their social, physical, and natural environments by working independently and collaboratively for the benefit of others, communities, and the environment. They are aware of the impact of their decisions, actions, and footprint. They advocate for and act to bring about positive change.

Resolving problems

Students identify and develop an appreciation for different perspectives on issues. They show empathy, disagree respectfully, and create space for others to use their voices. They generate, use, and evaluate strategies to resolve problems.

Valuing diversity

Students value diversity, defend human rights, advocate for issues, and interact ethically with others. They are inclusive in their language and behaviour and recognize that everyone has something to contribute. Their approach to inclusive relationships exemplifies commitment to developing positive communities.

INTRODUCTION

Social Emotional Learning Wheel

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. Strong social emotional learning contributes to students' feelings of belonging and that they have adults who care about them at school. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

Source: casel.org

The data and school planning cycle illustrates how schools collect, plan, review, learn and adjust their school action plans on a continual basis to ensure that strategic priorities are monitored.

INTRODUCTION

DATA AND SCHOOL PLANNING

Data & Evidence Collection
Fall, Winter, Spring

Data Analysis
Planning Day, Staff Meetings. Communities of Practice

Action Planning
School Planning Day, School-Based PROD days, Staff Meetings

Professional Learning
Professional Development Days, Staff Meetings, Communities of Practice

Monitor, Review & Adjust
Planning Day, Staff Meetings, School-Based PROD Days

The Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture Continuous Learning Report reviews student social emotional learning trends through provincial, district, and school-based data and provides a description of supports, resources and goals to improve outcomes in this area.

By continually focusing on improving results and striving for equity for all learners, the Ministry of Education and Child Care places student success and well-being at the center of its mandate. As specified in the "Statement of Education Policy Order," the Ministry's mandate is to develop the "Educated Citizen," which is defined as the intellectual, human, social, and career development of students.

The Ministry's ultimate goal is that children achieve their individual potential and become independent adults who have a lifelong appreciation for learning, a curiosity about the world around them, and a capacity for creative thought and expression through compassionate and empathetic worldviews.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SD8's existing and emerging areas of need are identified through an analysis of evidence in provincial assessments, the district's Enhancing Student Learning Report, ongoing district continuous learning reports, district-level questionnaires (such as the Adolescent Health Survey and the Youth Development Instrument), and school learning plans.

SD8 endeavours to improve student physical and mental well-being through inclusive and caring learning environments. SD8's work in creating inclusive and caring learning communities is connected both to the district's 2024-2029 strategic plan, and the goals and objectives of the Ministry of Education and Child Care's Ministry Service Plan 2022-2025.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care aims for the education system to provide inclusive and responsive learning environments: those that recognize the value of diversity and provide equity of access, opportunity, and outcomes for all learners, from early years to graduation.

The Caring And Inclusive Learning Culture Continuous Learning Report connects to the following SD8 strategic priorities:

SD8 Strategic Priority: Promote physical and mental well-being

> Corresponding Ministry of Education and Child Care goal 1: all students become educated citizens and objective 1.1: support learner-centered learning and improve equity of outcomes.

High-functioning education systems engage and motivate every learner to develop the set of competencies necessary for independence and lifelong learning. Mental health and well-being impacts how learners think, feel and act. It also affects learner resilience to stress, relationships with others, and is deeply influenced by the school environment.

SD8 Strategic Priority: Promote social-emotional learning to foster compassionate learners

> Corresponding Ministry of Education and Child Care goal 2: learning environments foster healthy and effective learning and objective 2.2: support learner and staff well-being

This priority connects to the SD8 Enhancing Student Learning Report goal 2: *support healthy and effective learning communities;* and enhancing student learning report educational outcome 3: *students will feel welcome, safe and connected.*

For learners to be able to develop and learn, they must feel physically and emotionally safe. The district believes in an approach where staff ensure that learners are engaged, feel a sense of belonging, and understand the importance education has in their lives. Learners also need to know that adults genuinely care about their well-being. Research shows that one caring adult can make a significant difference in a learner's life and improve that learner's outcomes. Supporting healthy and effective learning environments is of paramount importance.

The values embedded in the strategic plan include placing learners at the centre, building communities of caring and connection, ensuring equity for diverse learners and respect for cultural identity, and fostering lifelong learning and caring for the future. Our mission is to inspire and support each learner to thrive in a caring learning environment.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SD8 focuses on the following goals specifically related to caring and inclusive learning cultures:

Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture

- Create welcoming, engaging and accessible learning spaces.
- Promote and deepen mental and physical health and well-being.
- Enhance the social-emotional skills and capacity of learners.
- Ensure that every student feels they are safe at school and that they belong.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Results of Previous Year's Action Plan (2023-2024)

Below are the outcomes achieved in the district with regard to caring and inclusive learning cultures in 2023-2024, including monitoring strategies and outcomes.

Strategic priority: Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture

ASPECTS

1. Create welcoming, engaging and accessible learning spaces.	
Monitoring	**Outcomes**
- Student Learning Surveys - Enhancing Student Learning Report - School learning plans - Grad Reviews and Primary Success Meetings - Student anecdotal data - Aboriginal How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report - Health Promoting Schools Report - Early Development Instrument (EDI) - Youth Development Instrument (YDI) - Adolescent Health Survey - Accessibility plan comments - School-based team and District-based team data	- Increase in grad review meetings to include July and focus on wraparound actions in schools to support students. - Updated Primary Success Meeting format to ensure focus on priority learners and strategies to support belonging and connection. - Updated procedures in Inclusive Education to ensure clarity in expectations with regard to creating welcoming, engaging and accessible learning spaces. - Reviewed school learning plans to ensure that each school has a social emotional learning goal and related objectives. - District Learning Leadership Team (DLLT) and School Leaders reviewed data in EDI, YDI, Adolescent Health Survey, How Are We Doing report, regarding student belonging, safety, and connection to school to review actions. - Review of erase reports — ongoing. - Updated Critical Incident Response manual. - Increased staff numbers that have taken the Behavioural Digital Threat Assessment courses and non-violent crisis intervention training to support school safety. - Development of updated Positive Behaviour Plans (FAIRS plans). - Updated school-based team and district-based team procedures to ensure increased information sharing and action to promote student belonging and safety. - Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL) implementation and expansion for school and district leaders and teachers — involvement in Strengthening Early Years into Kindergarten Transitions projects in Creston schools and at Salmo Elementary; participation in district CSL network, regional CSL network, and provincial CSL training and networking. - Capacity building for educators in using PEACEful Schools and other strategies from Complex Trauma Resources. - Social emotional learning workshops for teachers to ensure learning environments are conducive to learning. - Conducted accessibility scan of all schools and worksites in the district and created accessibility committee with broad representation (in addition to accessibility working group). - Improved Welcome to Kindergarten events with consistency throughout the district for families and children in May/June each year. - Increased before and after school child care spaces and continuation of Seamless Day program at Winlaw Elementary to support student transitions and continuity of care.

2. Promote and deepen mental and physical health and well-being.	
Monitoring	**Outcomes**
• Student Learning Surveys • Enhancing Student Learning Report • School learning plans • Report cards • Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) • Aboriginal How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report • Early Development Instrument (EDI) • Youth Development Instrument (YDI) • School-based team and District-based team data	• Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL) implementation and expansion for school and district leaders and teachers — involvement in Strengthening Early Years into Kindergarten Transitions projects in Creston and at Salmo Elementary; participation in district CSL network, regional CSL network, and provincial CSL training and networking. • Promotion of the Mental Health in Schools Strategy throughout the district (MHiS) through the Mental Health and Addictions Coordinator. • Increase in mental health literacy for staff due to attendance at webinars and implementation of the MHiS in the district. • Further training and implementation of the mental health curriculum and SEL in classrooms throughout the district. • Complex Trauma Resources interventions including workshops, training, specific work with school staffs, and one-to-one coaching by CTR staff with SD8 staff. • Implementation of EASE (Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators) in district, as well as EASE at home shared with parents. • District-wide purchase and implementation of Child Centre for Protection's Kids in the Know sexual health education program. • Purchase and implementation of CIRCLES sexual health education program for students with disabilities and diverse needs. • Parent engagement nights topics in mental well-being, student safety, ADHD, and social emotional learning. • After School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) in Brent Kennedy, Crawford Bay, J.V. Humphries (JVH), and WE Graham (WEG) schools. • HUB at Kootenay River Secondary (KRSS) — contract with Valley Community Services for social worker at KRSS. • Contracts with local agencies to provide on-site mental health support including: art therapy, counselling, and mental health referrals (LV Rogers, KRSS, Trafalgar, Mt. Sentinel, Blewett). • Implementation of Open Parachute mental well-being program at 8 schools: Adam Robertson Elementary, Blewett, Canyon Lister, Crawford Bay, Redfish, Rosemont, Salmo Elementary, and WE Graham. • Planning and implementation of community medical services in schools through Interior Health and regional doctors' association, at JV Humphries and LV Rogers. • Promotion of nutritious eating literacy for students and parents through the Food Equity Advisor. • Provision of food equity supports through Feeding Futures program and Student Family Affordability Fund. • Attendance at Interior Health's Health Promoting Schools (HPS) meetings and workshops, ensuring that HPS information and resources are provided to staff and students throughout the district (for nutrition, physical health and mental health). • In progress: updating of Sexual Orientation / Gender Identity response procedures. • In progress: working with agencies in West Kootenay to bring Foundry to the West Kootenays.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

3. Enhance the social-emotional skills and capacities of learners..

Monitoring	Outcomes
- Student Learning Surveys - Enhancing Student Learning Report - School learning plans - Report cards - Student anecdotal data - Aboriginal How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report - Early Development Instrument (EDI) - Youth Development Instrument (YDI) - Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) - School-based team and District-based team data - Primary Success Meeting data	- Compassionate Systems Leadership training and network involvement for all school leaders and teachers involved in SEY2KT (Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten Transition) activities (Creston elementary schools and Salmo Elementary). - District Learning Leadership Team (DLLT) and School Leaders review data in EDI, YDI, Adolescent Health Survey, HAWD, regarding student belonging, safety, and connection to school to plan for implementation of SEL strategies. - Sharing of information from the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) to build staff capacity to implement SEL strategies in schools. - Continue to train school staff, including inclusion support teachers and teacher counsellors in social emotional learning (SEL) to promote implementation of SEL in classrooms throughout the district. - Continue to implement executive function strategies, EASE, MindUp program in elementary schools, Open Parachute program at all schools, mental health literacy, Complex Trauma Resources (eg: PEACEful schools).

4. Ensure that every student feels they are safe at school and that they belong.

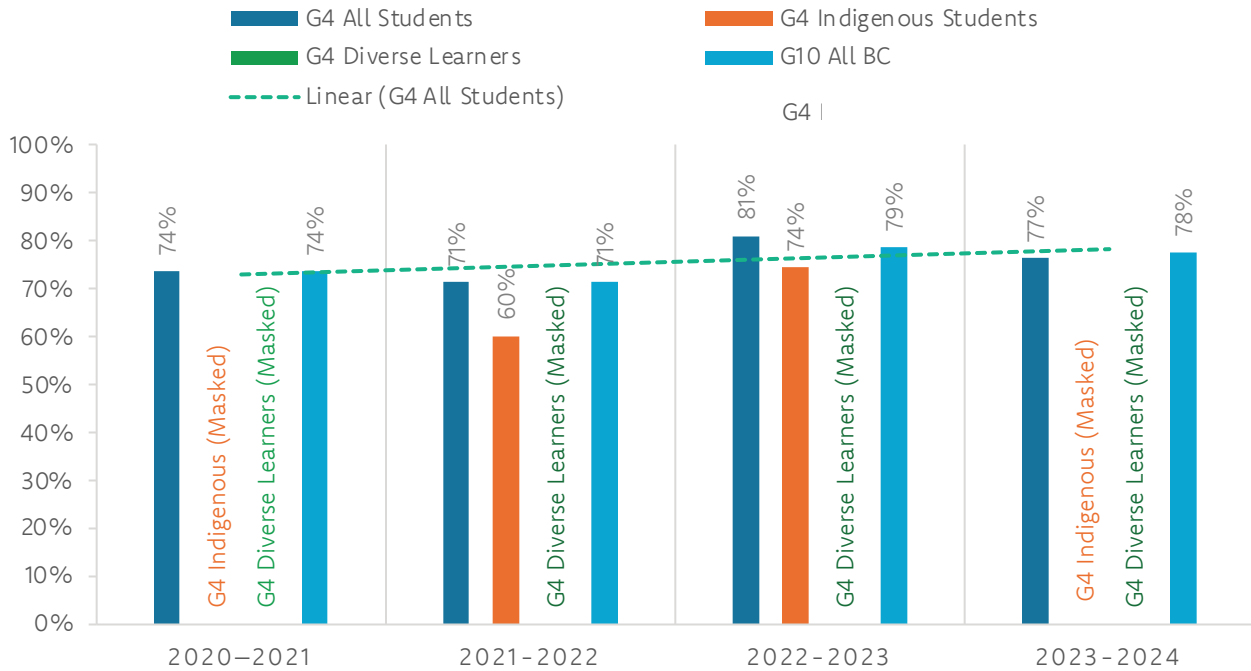| Monitoring	Outcomes
- Student Learning Surveys - Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) - Enhancing Student Learning Report - School learning plans - Report cards - Student anecdotal data - Aboriginal How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report - Early Development Instrument (EDI) - Youth Development Instrument (YDI) - School-based team and District-based team data - Primary Success meetings - Graduation Review meetings - Erase reports and Worrisome Online Behaviour in Schools (WOBS) reports	- School-based teams and district-based team wraparound supports for schools and students to ensure students feel they are safe, and they belong. - Primary success reviews twice a year to ensure wraparound support is provided at schools. - Grad reviews three times a year to ensure students are on track for graduation. - Ensure that students know how to report bullying and violence, including using the erase reporting tool. - Student learning plans in place for children and youth in care, with direct connection by school-based team and review by district-based team. - Transition to Adulthood sessions for learners and parents to support youth with disabilities prepare for adulthood. - Updated inclusive education procedures and Critical Incidence Response Manual to ensure procedures are consistent, understood, and implemented. - Capacity building for staff in threat assessment from Safer Schools Together: Behavioural Digital Threat Assessment Management (BDTAM). - Continue to train staff in crisis prevention and verbal de-escalation using Crisis Prevention Institute. - Continue to train staff using Positive Behaviour Interventions and Support (PBIS). - Continue to incorporate Complex Trauma Resources' PEACEful schools into elementary schools. - Introduction of the Behaviour Code (Jessica Minahan) and FAIRS plans in elementary schools to support PBIS.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Student Learning Survey (SLS) Data 2020-2024

The student learning survey (SLS) is an annual survey administered to B.C. public schools for student in grades 4, 7, 10 and 12. It is the only source of province-wide information on student experiences in the school environment. Data obtained from the survey provides valuable insights and informs policies, programs and decisions made at districts, schools, the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Ministry of Health and the Representative for Children and Youth in improving students' intellectual, human and social and career development.

The survey includes approximately 50 questions. The four questions chosen for this report provide a good representative cross section for human and social development including belonging, connection, safety, and engagement for learners: *Do you feel welcome at your school? Do you feel safe at school? Is school a place where you feel like you belong? How many adults do you think care about you at your school?*

Do You Feel Welcome at Your School?

G4: Do You Feel Welcome at Your School?

Legend:
- G4 All Students
- G4 Indigenous Students
- G4 Diverse Learners
- G10 All BC
- Linear (G4 All Students)

Year	G4 All Students	G4 Indigenous	G4 Diverse Learners	G10 All BC
2020–2021	74%	(Masked)	(Masked)	74%
2021-2022	71%	60%	(Masked)	71%
2022-2023	81%	74%	(Masked)	79%
2023-2024	77%	(Masked)	(Masked)	78%

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

G7: Do You Feel Welcome at Your School?
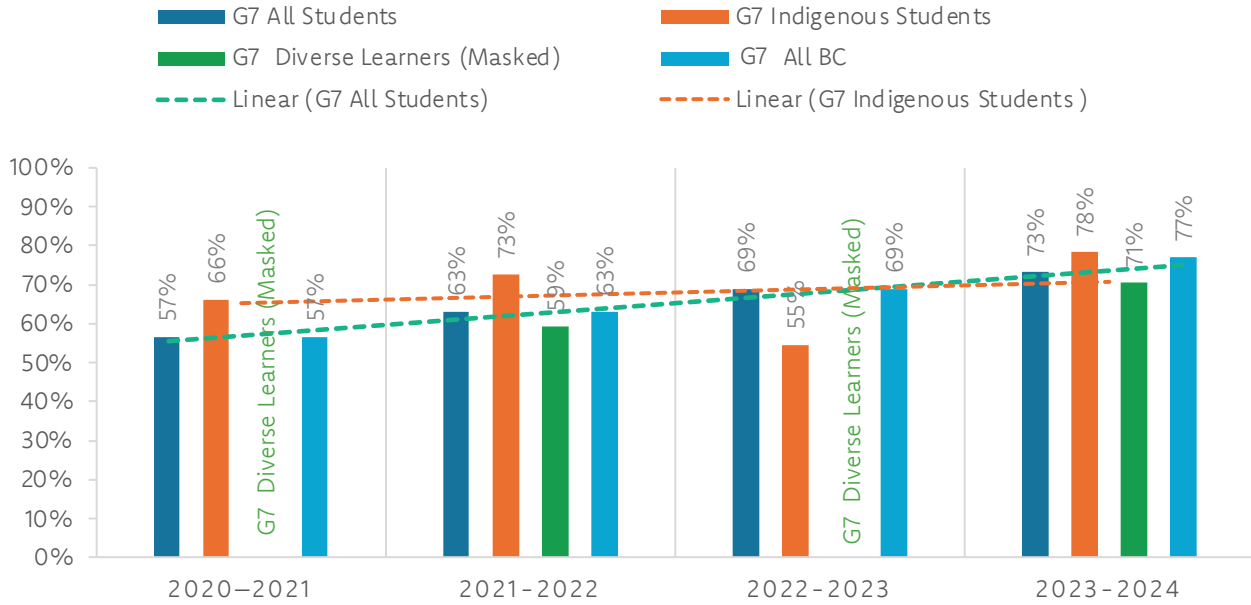
G10: Do You Feel Welcome at Your School?
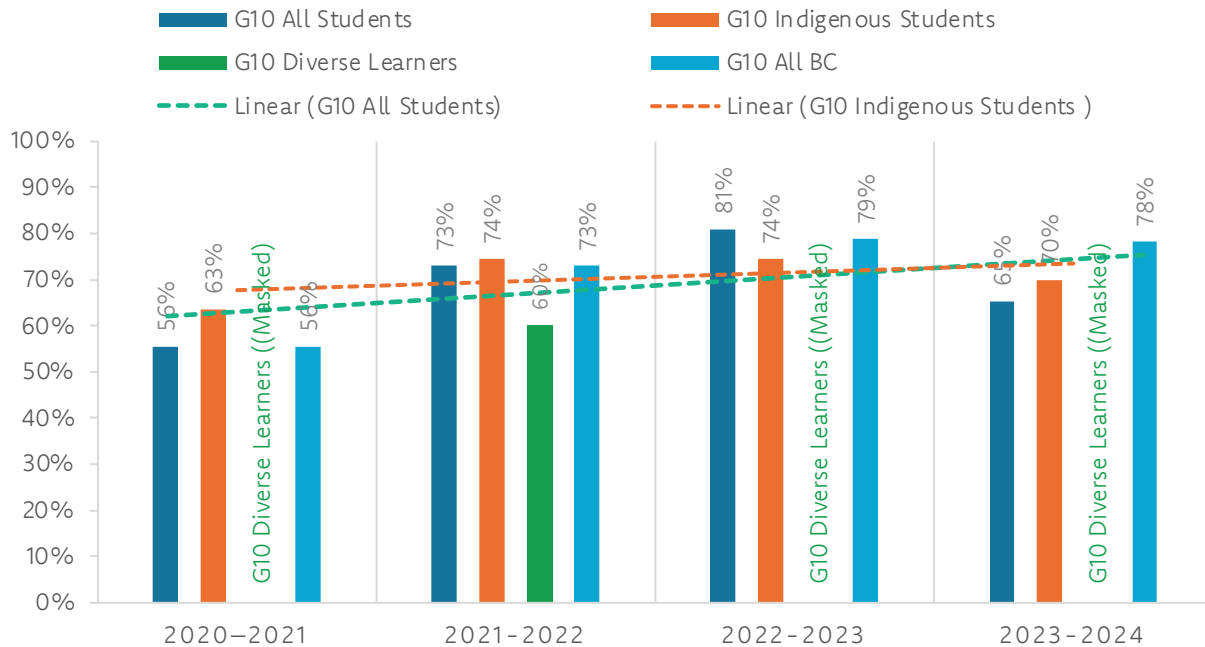
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Do You Feel Welcome at Your School?
Analysis and Interpretation

Trends in the Data

Overall, the four-year data for the question, *Do you feel welcome at school*? indicates an upward trend, with both the All Students group and the Indigenous Students group showing steady upward growth. In comparison to the province as a whole, we have generally demonstrated similar patterns of notable growth over the last four years with a general pattern of scores ranging in the towards 60% and moving into scores towards the 80% range.

For the All Students group in grade 4, we see an overall steady pattern across the four years of data, but not with a significant upward trend with results increasing only 3% difference from 2020-2021 to 2023-2024. SD8's results are on par with B.C. as a whole for grade 4 students.

Overall, the scores for the grade 7 group range about 10% lower than the grade 4 group over the last four years, but the grade 7 data also show a notable positive increase in results, moving steadily up from 57% in 2020-2021 to 73% in 2023-24. It is interesting to note that this pattern is seen in B.C. as a whole for grade 7 students.

Both the Indigenous grade 7 and grade 10 groups show a notable higher outcome than the All Students group in three out of four years. While Indigenous learners overall do not represent a clear upward trajectory, 23% more grade 7 Indigenous learners report they feel welcome in 2023-2024 compared to 2022-2023.

Missing or Masked Data

The Diverse Learner subgroup results were small enough either overall or in two of the three data sets that this data has been masked and is not available. The Indigenous Student subgroup data is also masked in grade 4 in both 2020-2021 and again in 2023-2024. The one consecutive data set we do have for diverse learner students shows an 11% increase in feeling welcome for grade 7 students between 2021-2022.

For Indigenous learners, the grade 4 group showed a significant increase from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023, but limited data means that a trajectory cannot be shown.

The enrolment of students identified as those with disabilities or diverse learning needs remained below 20 students in each grade level, and while this is potentially positive in terms of indicating there is a low number of students who require designations for learning needs, it does preclude gathering and accurately analyzing the data for this key group.

Inequities of Learning Outcomes Illustrated by Data

Feeling welcome at school is a key indicator of a positive and inclusive school climate. We recognize too that those students who are least likely to feel welcome are those that we need to focus our support efforts on.

In terms of trends, the four-year data indicate a general holding pattern. The average positive score for the All Students Group over the past four years is 68%, with the provincial average for that same time being 70%. This indicates the district, while not significantly off track in terms of ensuring we provide a welcoming environment, still has over 1000 students who report not feeling welcome at school.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

While there were some promising increases (e.g., an increase for grade 10 students from 56% to 73% from the 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 school years, and a subsequent increase to 81% in 2022-2023), we see those scores fall back to 65% in 2023-2024. Further investigation is required to determine the cause of a 16% decline in one year.
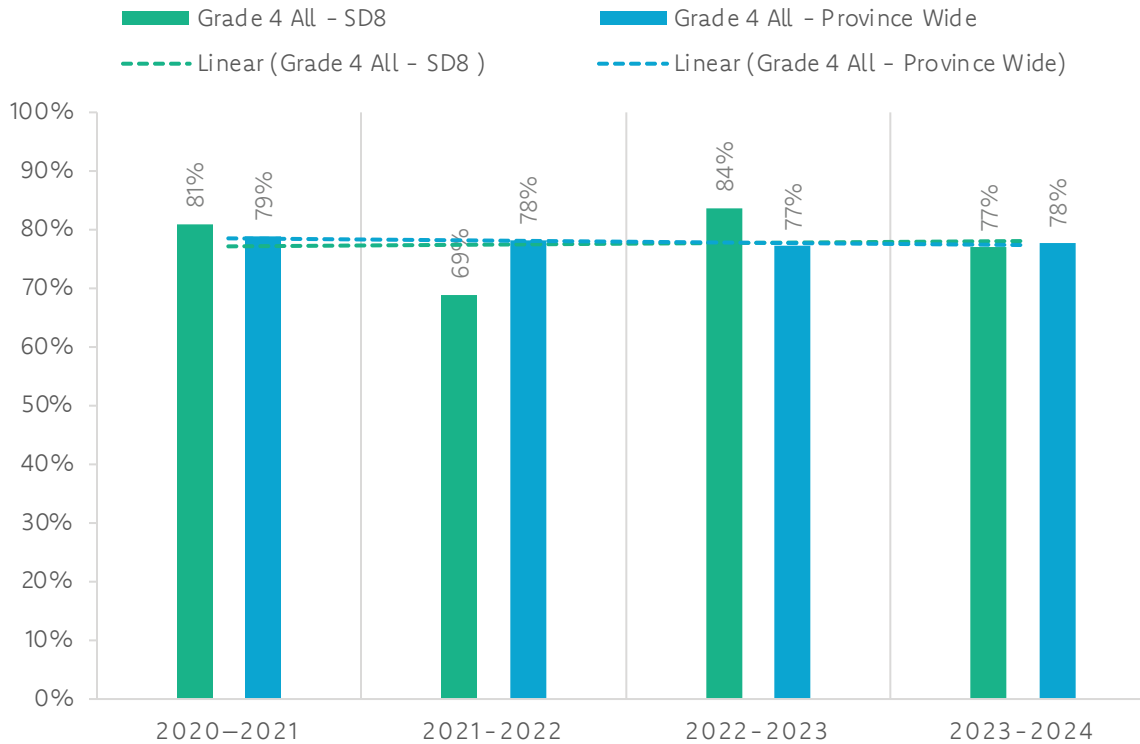
While the overall trends do not represent a clear upward trajectory with respect to equity, it is positive to see outcomes for Indigenous students holding within a range of approximately 10% over time. It is also a positive indicator that out of the ten instances where we have Indigenous learner data matched against the data of all students, six of those data pairs show higher rates for Indigenous learners than all students.

Stories Revealed about Approaches to Supporting Teaching and Learning

Overall, data indicate we need to ensure implementation of key processes that support a welcoming learning environment, including ensuring staff understand the use of trauma-informed practices and include the teaching of social-emotional learning in all classrooms. Data also point to the increased need to implement tracking systems such as those used by each school's school-based team and by the district-based team to ensure every learner in SD8 feels they are welcomed at school.

Do You Feel Safe at School?
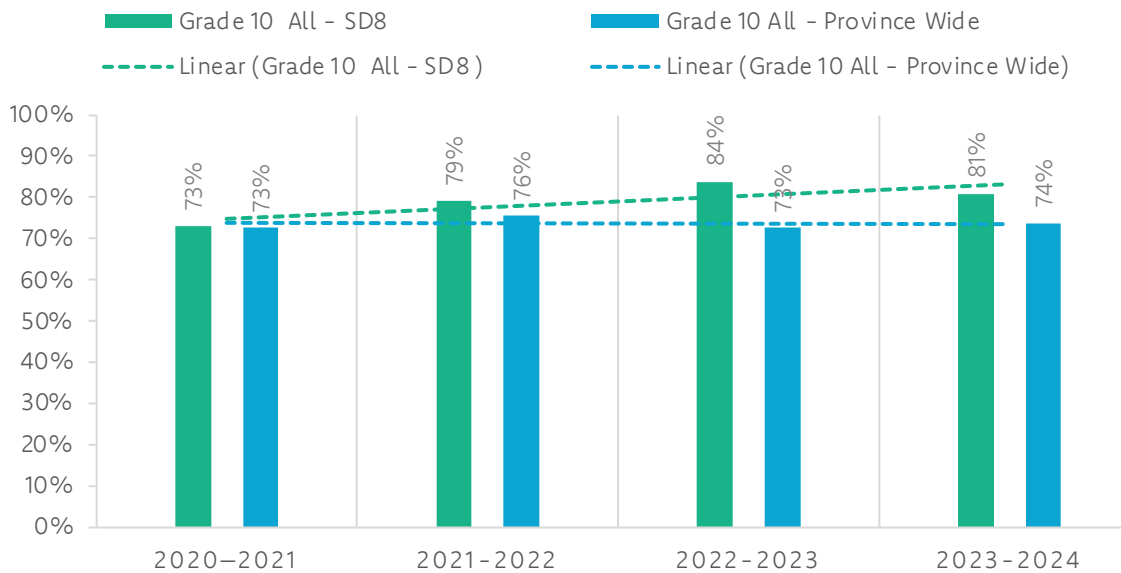
G4: Do You Feel Safe at School?

Legend:
- Grade 4 All – SD8
- Grade 4 All – Province Wide
- Linear (Grade 4 All – SD8)
- Linear (Grade 4 All – Province Wide)

School Year	Grade 4 All – SD8	Grade 4 All – Province Wide
2020-2021	81%	79%
2021-2022	69%	78%
2022-2023	84%	77%
2023-2024	77%	78%

G7: Do You Feel Safe at School?

Legend:
- Grade 7 All – SD8
- Grade 7 All – Province Wide
- Linear (Grade 7 All – SD8)
- Linear (Grade 7 All – Province Wide)

	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
Grade 7 All – SD8	65%	73%	74%	73%
Grade 7 All – Province Wide	70%	76%	74%	75%

G10: Do You Feel Safe at School?

Legend:
- Grade 10 All – SD8
- Grade 10 All – Province Wide
- Linear (Grade 10 All – SD8)
- Linear (Grade 10 All – Province Wide)

	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024
Grade 10 All – SD8	73%	79%	84%	81%
Grade 10 All – Province Wide	73%	76%	73%	74%

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Do You Feel Safe at School?
Analysis and Interpretation

Trends in the Data

The question, *Do you feel safe at school* is reported only via the All Students category. A valuable reference point then is a comparison to the scores for this question provincewide.

At the grade 4 level, students at SD8 have dipped up and down as much as 12% over the past four years but landed in 2023-2024 within a few percentage points of 2020-2021 results. This trend matches closely with that of the province.

At the grade 7 level, both SD8 and the province have trended generally upward, and the gains the district made starting in 2021-2022 have held steady over the last three years into 2023-2024.

At the grade 10 level, SD8 has trended 5-10% better than the province over each of the last two years (2022-2023 and 2023-2024).

Missing or Masked Data

In this category, the data for both Indigenous students and students with diverse learning needs are masked; therefore, it is not represented in this section. This gap in data makes it challenging to represent the full story of students' feelings of safety in SD8.

Inequities of Learning Outcomes Illustrated by Data

In general, the data for both SD8 and the province indicate that there are persistent gaps in ensuring all students report feeling safe. While it is encouraging to see that SD8 is holding steady with the province overall, and has made some valuable gains, over 20% of our student population in grades 4, 7, and 10 report they do not feel safe at school.

Stories Revealed about Approaches to Supporting Teaching and Learning

The data in this section indicate the need to increase implementation of strategies to promote safety in schools including updates to positive behavior planning procedures and targeted training for principals and teachers in responding to complex behavior.

We also need to ensure that students know how to use the *erase* tool, especially students vulnerable to discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation and/or race. The planned implementation of response plans to address discrimination against vulnerable students this year will be a positive step forward in supporting students' feelings of safety.
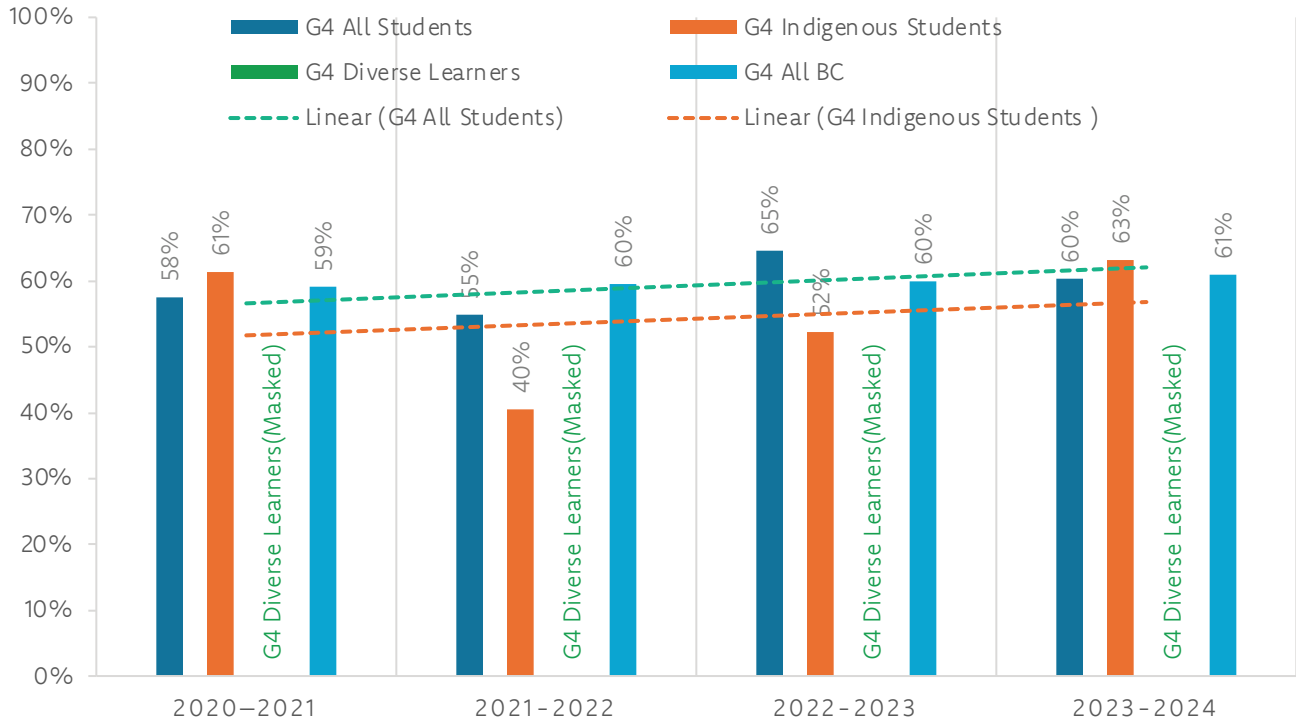
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

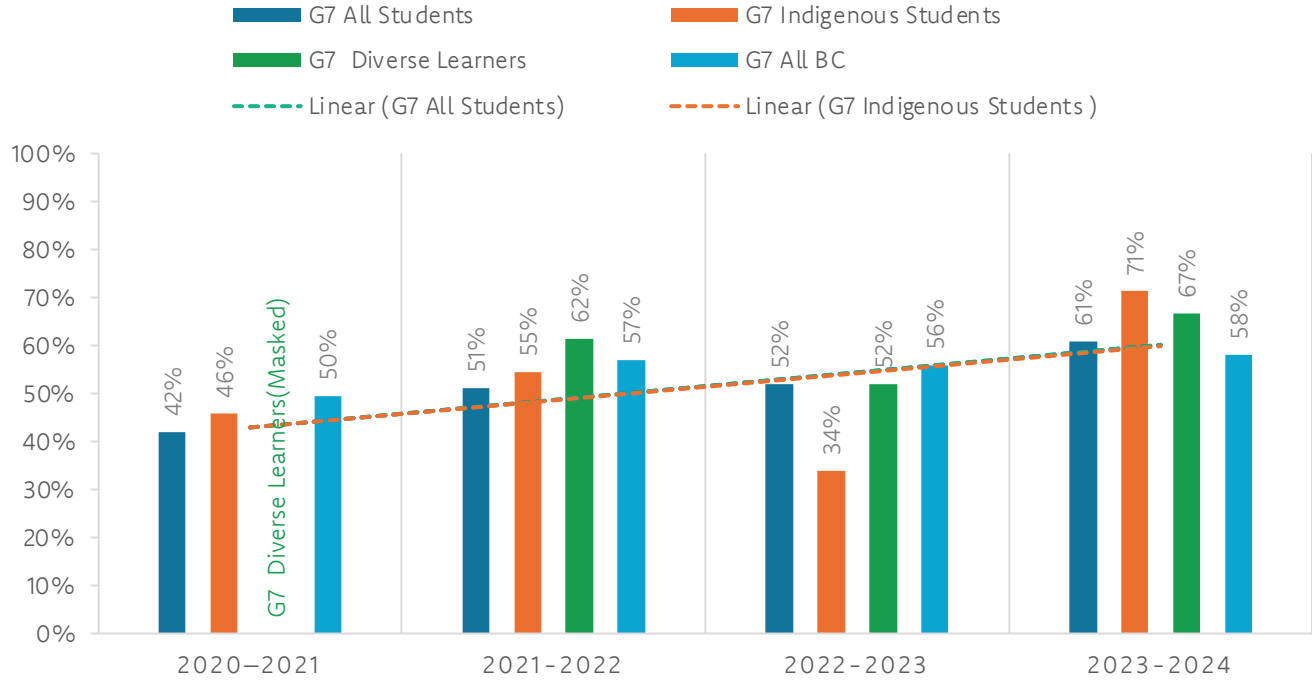Is School a Place Where You Feel Like You Belong?

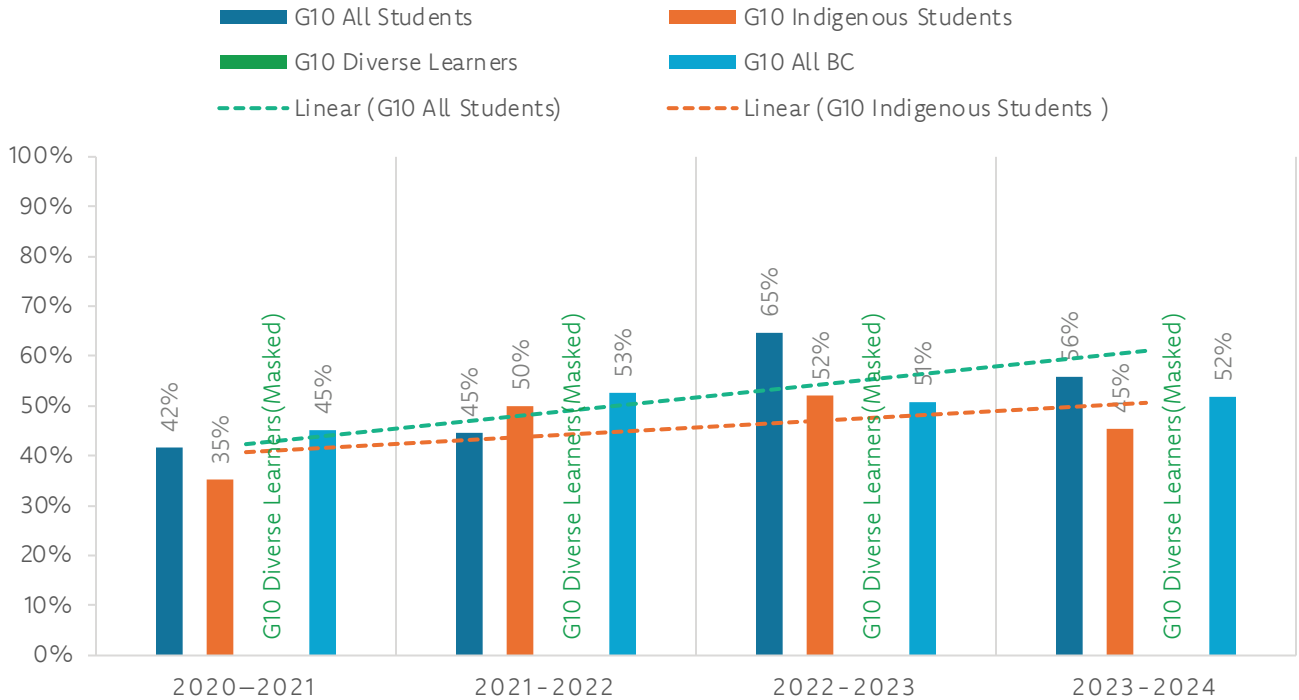## G4: Is School a Place Where You Feel Like You Belong?

Legend:
- G4 All Students
- G4 Indigenous Students
- G4 Diverse Learners
- G4 All BC
- Linear (G4 All Students)
- Linear (G4 Indigenous Students)

Year	G4 All Students	G4 Indigenous Students	G4 Diverse Learners	G4 All BC
2020–2021	58%	61%	(Masked)	59%
2021-2022	55%	40%	(Masked)	60%
2022-2023	65%	52%	(Masked)	60%
2023-2024	60%	63%	(Masked)	61%

Education Partner Advisory Committee   March 11, 2025   Caring and Inclusive Learning Communities Continuous Learning Report 2024-2025   16   Page 29 of 123

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

G7: Is School a Place Where You Feel Like You Belong?

Legend:
- G7 All Students (dark blue)
- G7 Indigenous Students (orange)
- G7 Diverse Learners (green)
- G7 All BC (light blue)
- Linear (G7 All Students) (green dashed)
- Linear (G7 Indigenous Students) (orange dashed)

Year	G7 All Students	G7 Indigenous Students	G7 Diverse Learners	G7 All BC
2020–2021	42%	46%	Masked	50%
2021–2022	51%	55%	62%	57%
2022–2023	52%	34%	52%	56%
2023–2024	61%	71%	67%	58%

G10: Is School a Place Where You Feel Like You Belong?

Legend:
- G10 All Students (dark blue)
- G10 Indigenous Students (orange)
- G10 Diverse Learners (green)
- G10 All BC (light blue)
- Linear (G10 All Students) (green dashed)
- Linear (G10 Indigenous Students) (orange dashed)

Year	G10 All Students	G10 Indigenous Students	G10 Diverse Learners	G10 All BC
2020–2021	42%	35%	Masked	45%
2021–2022	45%	50%	Masked	53%
2022–2023	65%	52%	Masked	51%
2023–2024	56%	45%	Masked	52%

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Is School a Place Where You Feel Like You Belong?
Analysis and Interpretation

Trends in the Data

As in other data sets, we are able to see patterns for both the All Students group and the Indigenous Students subgroup, but the Diverse Learner subgroup lacked sufficient overall numbers which resulted in masked or partial data sets.

Overall the results for the question Is *school a place where you feel like you belong?* has lower outcomes than other questions surveyed re: belong, safety and connection.

Grade 4 students, for example, both at SD8 and the province as a whole don't break 65% across the four years, and it is notable that SD8 scores are relatively consistent with the province as a whole.

At the grade 7 level for All Students, we do see a steady climb in students' sense of belonging, with significant and steady growth from 41% in 2020-2021 to 61% in 2023-2024. Again, this data matches very closely to the province as a whole, with SD8 outperforming the province's overall result in 2023-2024.

The same notable growth is seen at the grade 10 level for All Students, with a climb from 42% in 2020-2021 up to 65% percent in 2022-2023, though we do see a notable drop down to 56% in 2023-2024. This decline in feelings of belonging at the grade 10 level requires follow up to understand the cause.

Indigenous Students data reveal both highlights and gaps. Grade 4 students show an 11% increase in feelings of belonging in 2023-2024 compared to 2022-2023. Grade 7 Indigenous students show a 37% increase from 2022-2023 to 2023-2024—a substantial gain. However, in 2023-2024, grade 10 students declined 7% from the previous school year with a concerning 45% of Indigenous students in grade 10 reporting they feel they belong in schools in SD8 in 2023-2024.

Missing or Masked Data

As in other data sets, the district's Diverse Learner outcomes were largely masked to low numbers, which restricts the district in doing a fuller analysis of its efforts to provide inclusive and welcoming learning environments. The one data set that is present for diverse learners is for the grade 7 group from 2021 through 2024, which shows some overall growth from 62% to 67%.

Inequities of Learning Outcomes Illustrated by Data

School belonging is an essential measure of our work to create caring and inclusive learning environments. A sense of belonging is an essential human need, especially for children and youth, and acutely so for traditionally underrepresented groups such as Indigenous students and diverse learners.

Stories Revealed about Approaches to Supporting Teaching and Learning

As in other questions, the lack of data for diverse learners does affect our ability to paint a clear portrait of student belonging at school. Some of the data for the All Student and Indigenous groups provide evidence of promising practices in schools, with increases in students reporting they feel they belong. However, some data show that we need to provide increased monitoring (such as through the school-based teams and district-based team), as well as more fully implementing programs and strategies already available in the district (such as SEL and Open Parachute).

How Many Adults do You Think Care About You at Your School?

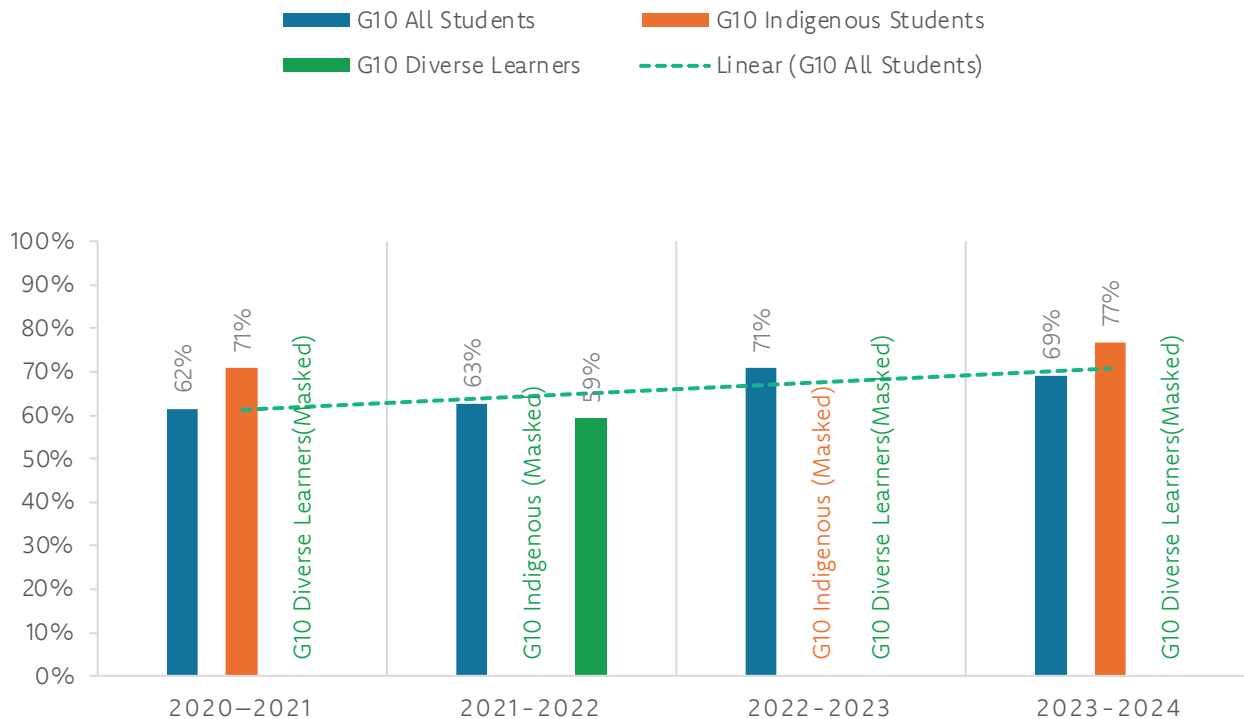### G4:How Many Adults do You Think Care About You at Your School?

Legend:
- G4 All BC Students
- G4 Indigenous Students
- G4 Diverse Learners
- Linear (G4 All BC Students)

2020–2021
- G4 All BC Students: 64%
- G4 Indigenous Students: 57%
- G4 Diverse Learners (Masked)

2021–2022
- G4 All BC Students: 65%
- G4 Indigenous Students: 70%
- G4 Diverse Learners (Masked)

2022–2023
- G4 All BC Students: 71%
- G4 Indigenous Students (Masked)
- G4 Diverse Learners (Masked)

2023–2024
- G4 All BC Students: 58%
- G4 Indigenous Students: 73%
- G4 Diverse Learners Masked

G7: How Many Adults do You Think Care About You at Your School?

Legend:
- G7 All Students (blue)
- G7 Indigenous Students (orange)
- G7 Diverse Learners (green)
- Linear (G7 All Students)
- Linear (G7 Indigenous Students)

Year	G7 All Students	G7 Indigenous Students	G7 Diverse Learners
2020–2021	66%	80%	Masked
2021–2022	47%	58%	Masked
2022–2023	56%	59%	62%
2023–2024	52%	54%	57%

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

G10:How Many Adults do You Think Care About You at Your School?

Legend:
- G10 All Students
- G10 Indigenous Students
- G10 Diverse Learners
- Linear (G10 All Students)

Chart data:

Year	G10 All Students	G10 Indigenous Students	G10 Diverse Learners
2020–2021	62%	71%	G10 Diverse Learners(Masked)
2021-2022	63%	G10 Indigenous (Masked)	59%
2022-2023	71%	G10 Indigenous (Masked)	G10 Diverse Learners(Masked)
2023-2024	69%	77%	G10 Diverse Learners(Masked)

How Many Adults do You Think Care About You at Your School? Analysis and Interpretation

Trends in the Data

The goal for this question is to determine how many students report having two or more adults they believe care about them.   We know that the number of adults that students feel connected to has implications for school climate, student well-being, and is a significant protective factor for students with adverse childhood experiences.

The overall drop from grade 4 to grade 7, both for SD8 and the province, is important to note. The move from the elementary model where connection is generally emphasized over content towards middle school, where academics tends to become more central under the premise of preparing students for high school.

The fact that Indigenous Students outperform All Students may indicate the value and benefit of the work of the Aboriginal Education Team and increasing awareness within school teams of the need to ensure connected supports for Indigenous students. Indigenous Students outperform the All Student group consistently in grade 4, 7, and 10, and land notably higher than the provincial average – with the 2023-2024 outcomes being 12% higher.

For the All Students group in grade 4, we see steady performance over time in the 67% to 73% range, which tracks closely with the average for the province as a whole.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a questionnaire completed by kindergarten teachers for the students in their classrooms during each February of the school year. Data collected using the EDI measures the rate of the developmental vulnerability of kindergarten children at the population level. Children are considered vulnerable on the EDI if, without additional support and care, they are more likely to experience future challenges in their school years and beyond. The five scales of the EDI are: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge. For each of the five scales of the EDI, the proportion of children vulnerable are reported as vulnerability rates. SD8 has participated in each of the 8 waves of EDI.

Provincially, in Wave 8, 32.9% (approximately 13,500) of kindergarten children were vulnerable on one or more areas critical to their healthy development. Wave 8 is the fifth provincial EDI data collection in a row where provincially more than 30% of children were vulnerable.

Scales of the EDI	Description
Physical Health & Well-being	Children's gross and fine motor skills, physical independence and readiness for the school day.
Social Competence	Children's overall social competencies, capacity for respect and responsibility, approaches to learning, and readiness to explore new things.
Emotional Maturity	Children's prosocial and helping behaviuors, as well as hyperactivity and inattention, aggressive, anxious and fearful behaviours.
Language & Cognitive Development	Children's basic and advanced literacy skills, numeracy skills, interest in math and reading, and memory.
Communication Skills & General Knowledge	Children's English language skills and general knowledge.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Early Development Instrument (EDI)

Social Competence

Children's overall social competencies, capacity for respect and responsibility, approaches to learning, and readiness to explore new things.

- Overall Social Competence
- Approaches to Learning
- Readiness to Explore New Things
- Respect & Responsibility

Vulnerable on the Social Competence Scale

Legend: Low in BC, All Districts, SD8, High in BC

Wave 6: 3%, 16%, 15%, 27%
Wave 7: 5%, 16%, 10%, 24%
Wave 8: 8%, 16%, 14%, 34%

Emotional Maturity

Children's prosocial and helping behaviuors, as well as hyperactivity and inattention, aggressive, anxious and fearful behaviours.
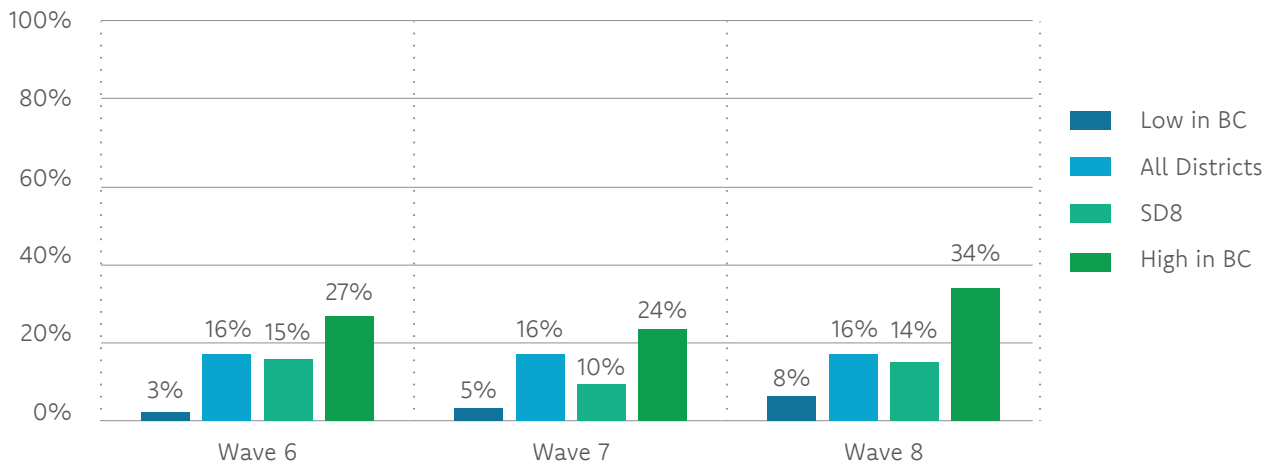
- Aggressive Behaviour
- Anxious & Fearful Behaviour
- Hyperactive & Inattentive Behaviour
- Prosocial & Helping Behaviour

Vulnerable on the Emotional Maturity Scale

Legend: Low in BC, All Districts, SD8, High in BC

Wave 6: 6%, 16%, 19%, 26%
Wave 7: 7%, 18%, 14%, 28%
Wave 8: 11%, 18%, 16%, 42%
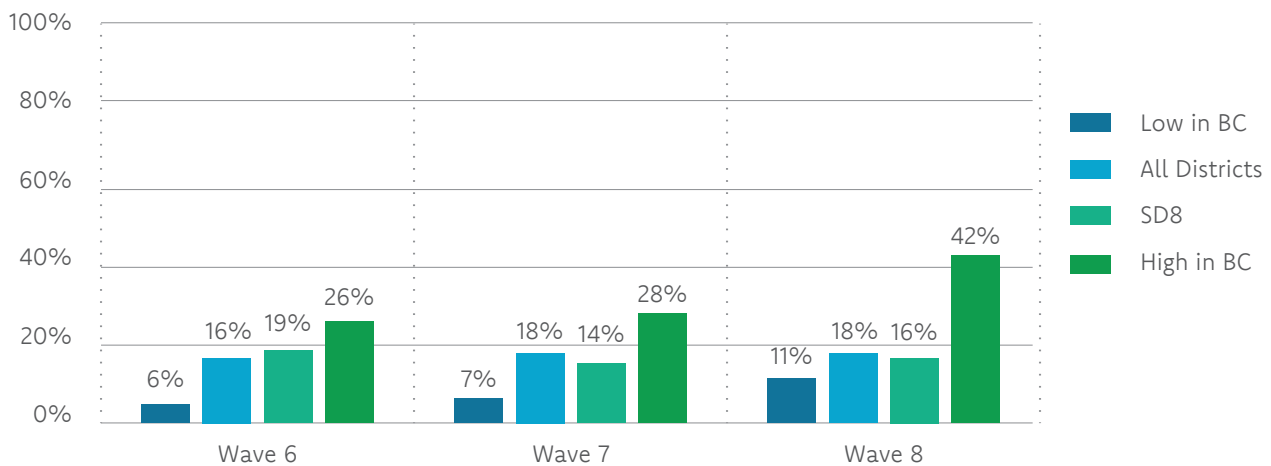
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

Physical Health & Well-being

Children's gross and fine motor skills, physical independence and readiness for the school day.

Vulnerable on the Physical Health & Well-being Scale

Legend:
- Low in BC
- All Districts
- SD8
- High in BC

	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8
Low in BC	5%	5%	8%
All Districts	15%	15%	15%
SD8	17%	13%	14%
High in BC	32%	30%	48%
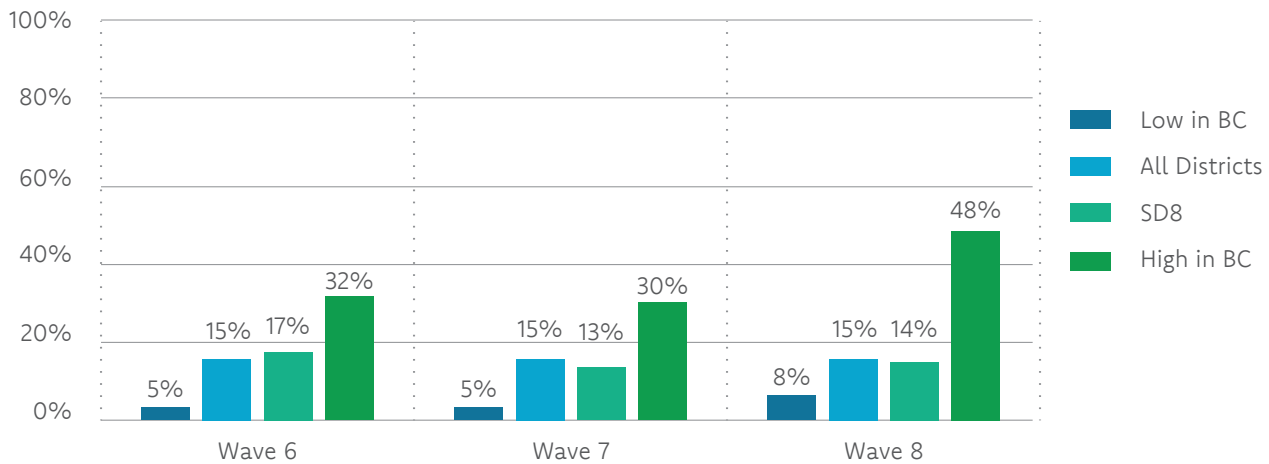
OVERALL EDI SCORES, WAVES 6, 7, AND 8: PROVINCE AND SD8

32.2% or 13,918 kindergarten children in All School Districts (BC) were vulnerable on the One or More scales scale of the EDI in Wave 6

34.7% or 109 kindergarten children in Kootenay Lake were vulnerable on the One or More scales scale of the EDI in Wave 6

33.4% or 14,468 kindergarten children in All School Districts (BC) were vulnerable on the One or More scales scale of the EDI in Wave 7

28.2% or 78 kindergarten children in Kootenay Lake were vulnerable on the One or More scales scale of the EDI in Wave 7

32.9% or 13,535 kindergarten children in All School Districts (BC) were vulnerable on the One or More scales scale of the EDI in Wave 8

29.0% or 153 kindergarten children in Kootenay Lake were vulnerable on the One or More scales scale of the EDI in Wave 8

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Development Instrument (EDI) - Analysis and Interpretation

Trends Emerging from Data Analysis

In SD8, 14% of children were vulnerable in Wave 8 in the area of social competence, compared with 16% overall vulnerable for social competence in the province. SD8's outcomes fall closer to the average for all districts than they do the high or low ranges in the province, but trend lower in vulnerability overall.

SD8's level of vulnerability in social competence has trended downwards over the last three waves of data, with a notable increase from Wave 7 to Wave 8 from 10% to 15%.

SD8 reports less vulnerability in social competence than more than half of the province's school districts, with the range of vulnerability across the province from 8.3% to 34% vulnerable in social competence.

Over time, the vulnerability of kindergarten children in SD8 has increased in social competence, as reported by kindergarten teachers, from 9.5% vulnerable in Wave 7 to 13.9% in Wave 8. However, it must be noted that the participation rate in Wave 7 was significantly lower than that in Wave 8, which may have impacted results.

In SD8, 16% of children were vulnerable in Wave 8 in the area of emotional maturity compared with 18% overall vulnerable for social competence in the province. SD8's outcomes fall closer to the average for all districts than they do the high or low ranges in the province. SD8's level of vulnerability in emotional maturity has trended downwards over the last three waves of data, with a small increase from Wave 7 to Wave 8 from 14% to 16%.

In the area of physical health and well-being, SD8 again reports less vulnerability for its kindergarten children (13.9%) than the province reports (14.7%). Once again, however, the vulnerability level has risen between Wave 7 (12.7%) to Wave 8, with fewer participants in the Wave 7 EDI than in Wave 8. In physical health and well-being, SD8 is again in the lower half of the province with regard to vulnerability, consistent with its overall vulnerability scores.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)

The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) is a self-report questionnaire created by UBC HELP that asks children in Grades 4 through 8 about their thoughts, feelings and experiences in school and in the community. It is a unique and comprehensive questionnaire that helps us gain a deeper understanding of their social and emotional competence, mental and physical health, and well-being, as well as the assets in their lives, including connectedness to adults and peers, nutrition and sleep experiences, school experiences and use of time after school.

In BC, over 75% of public-school districts have participated in the MDI, as well as a number of independent and First Nations schools. SD8 participates in the MDI every 3 years with the most recent assessment being in 2023-2024 and the one prior being in 2020-2021.

THE ASSETS INDEX

ADULT RELATIONSHIPS
Adults at School
Adults in the Neighbourhood
Adults at Home

PEER RELATIONSHIPS
Peer Belonging
Friendship Intimacy

NUTRITION AND SLEEP
Eating Breakfast
Meals with Adults at Home
Frequency of Good Sleep

OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
Organized Activities
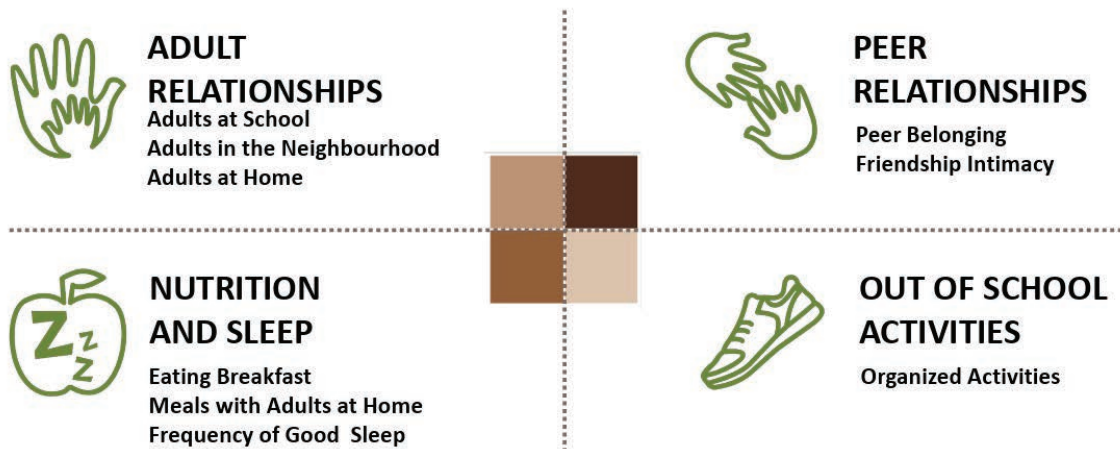
Source: Middle Years Index

The MDI is the second of three questionnaire SD8 uses to gather data on student physical and social-emotional health over time.

Early Development Instrument — MID-KINDERGARTEN — EDI — BIRTH / CHILDHOOD

Middle Years Development Instrument — GRADES 4-8 — MDI

Youth Development Instrument — GRADES 10-12 — YDI — YOUTH / YOUNG ADULT
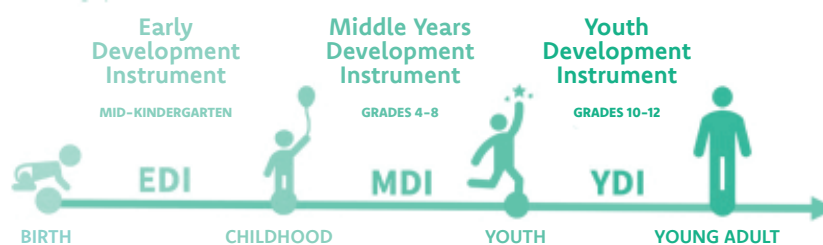
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)

The survey questions align with the BC Ministry of Education's K-12 curriculum which includes a focus on promoting children's personal and social competencies. The MDI includes questions related to five areas of children's lives and experiences:

Social & Emotional Development: Children respond to questions about their current social and emotional functioning in these areas: optimism, self-esteem, happiness, self-regulation, sadness and worries.

Physical Health & Well-being: Children evaluate their own physical well-being in the areas of overall health including active transportation, nutrition and sleeping habits.

Connectedness to Peers and Adults: Children are asked about their experiences of support and connection with the adults in their schools and neighbourhoods, with their parents or guardians at home, and with their peers.

School Experiences: Children are asked about their school experiences in four areas: academic self-concept, school climate, school belonging, and experiences with peer victimization.

Use of Out-of-School Time: Children are asked about the time they spend engaged in organized activities such as sports, music and art, as well as the time they spend watching TV, doing homework and playing video games.

CONNECTION TO ADULTS AT SCHOOL

Research shows that higher levels of adult support at school is linked to higher optimism, an important indicator of mental health (Oberle et al., 2018). On the MDI, children are asked to rate the following statements re: connections to adults at school.

At my school there is an adult who:

- really cares about me
- believes I will be a success
- listens to me when I have something to say

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)

GRADE 4: 2023–2024

MIDI Connections to Adults in School
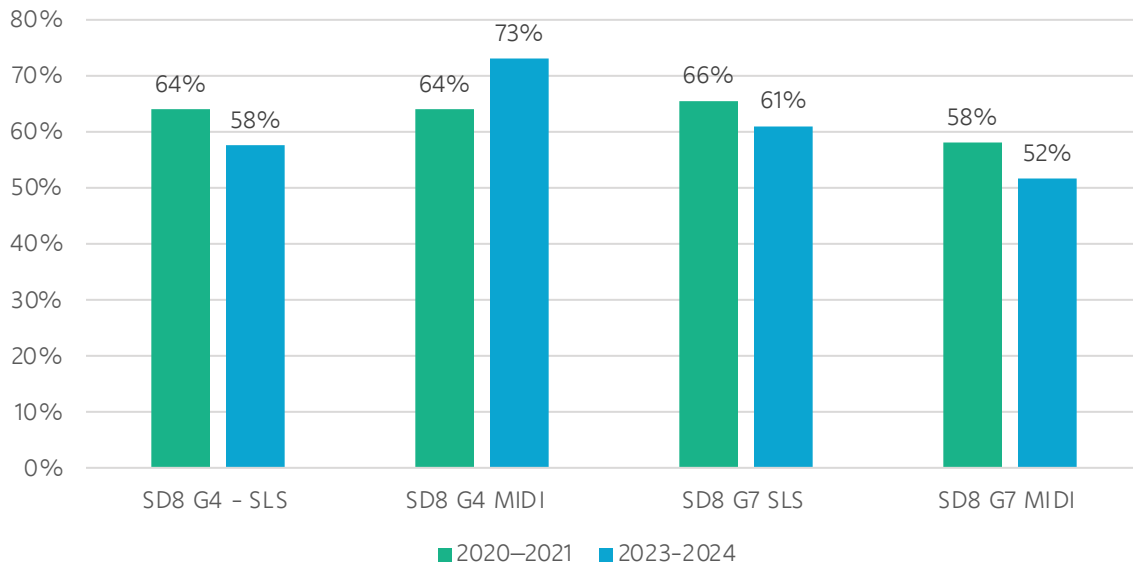
Analysis and Interpretation

The data for the MDI Connections to Adults data set show that grade 4 students increased by 11% between 2020-2021 and 2023-2024, while grade 7 students decreased 4% in that same time. The province overall had a similar pattern with the grade 4 group increasing, albeit by only two percentage points, while the grade 7 group dropped by 5%.

In 2023-2024 in SD8, on the MDI, only 52% of grade 7 students reported having at least one adult at school that cared for them. This is 21% less than the scores reported in grade 4 for the same year. These results are concerning and require both further analysis, and also further work with schools at the grade 7 level to ensure that students feel they have at least one adult who cares about them at school.

Trends in the Data

Given there are only two data points for this measure over the last four years, there aren't significant trends to note, but it is worth noting that it is difficult to see correlation between MDI and the SLS in terms of capturing students' sense of adult connection in grade 4. For example, for grade 4, the SLS shows a 6% decrease from 2020-2024, while the MDI shows a 7% increase for the same period. For grade 7 students, the patterns are more aligned with both surveys demonstrating a 5-6% decrease in results from 2020-2024.

Missing or Masked Data

The MDI data does not disaggregate by Indigenous or diverse learner; therefore, there are no masked data.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)

Inequities of Learning Outcomes Illustrated by Data

Since the MDI data does not disaggregate by Indigenous or diverse learner, there aren't data sets to use to identify inequities through that lens, but we know that overall trends in data related to being vulnerable to stress and disconnection at school will often be magnified by students who have experienced trauma and marginalization. Nevertheless, the work done in schools to ensure there are supports in place for Indigenous and diverse learners will no doubt help to limit the effects of disconnection at school for Indigenous learners and those with diverse abilities.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SCHOOL BELONGING

Children's sense of safety and belonging at school has been shown to foster school success in many ways. When children have positive experiences at school, they are more likely to feel they belong within their school, feel more motivated and engaged in class, and achieve higher academic performance (Wang & Degol, 2016). The MDI asks children about a range of school experiences, including school climate and school belonging.

School climate is the overall tone of the school environment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other. Children's comfort in their learning environment affects their motivation, enjoyment of school, ability to pay attention in class and academic achievement (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018).

On the MDI, children are asked to rate the following statements re: school climate:

- Teachers and students treat each other with respect in this school.
- People care about each other in this school.
- Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends.

School belonging is the degree to which children feel connected and valued at their school. Feelings of school belonging are associated with more positive views of learning, better academic motivation and competence, higher self-esteem, and greater happiness (Allen et al., 2018).

On the MDI, children are asked to rate the following statements re: school belonging:

- I feel like I belong in this school.
- I feel like I am important to this school.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI)

GRADE 4 2023–2024:

School Climate

The overall tone of the school enviroment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other; e.g., *People care about each other in this school.*

High	28%
Medium	30%
Low	42%

School Belonging

School belonging is the degree to which children feel connected and valued at their school; e.g., *I feel like I am important to this school.*

High	43%
Medium	26%
Low	30%
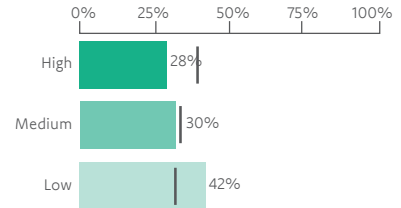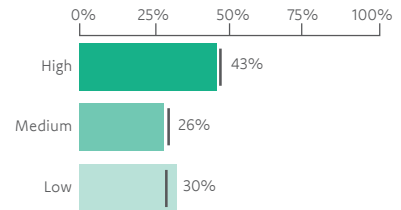
GRADE 7 2023–2024:

School Climate

The overall tone of the school enviroment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other; e.g., *People care about each other in this school.*

High	65%
Medium	25%
Low	10%

School Belonging

School belonging is the degree to which children feel connected and valued at their school; e.g., *I feel like I am important to this school.*

High	68%
Medium	18%
Low	14%
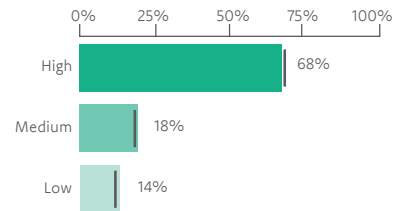
Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) - Analysis and Interpretation

Trends Emerging in the Data

For the grade 4 group, the number of students who gave a high response to the question regarding whether people care about each other in their school was 29%, which was below the province wide range. More notably though is the number of 42% of students reporting that they do not agree with that statement, and the fact that number is well above the provincial level for that same group of students.

In contrast, the grade 7 group have a high level of positive response re: school climate and and only 10% of students reported they felt strongly in disagreement with the statement, *People care about each other in this school.*

When it comes to school belonging, the grade 7 group again reported much higher positive answers than the grade 4 group. This result appears to contradict the results about how many adults students feel connected with at school; however, this may correlate with peer connections rather than adult connections. Further work in this area is required to better understand the data and to plan interventions to support students feel greater connections.

Missing or Masked Data

The MIDI data does not disaggregate by Indigenous or diverse learner, so there is no masked data.

Trends in the Data

The overall trend is one of increase in positive assessments of school climate and belonging from grade 4 to grade 7, which is worthwhile to put in the context of the data from the SLS (below). The results in grade 4 and grade 7 in the SLS in 2023–2024 were significantly lower than those reported for the same aspect in the MDI.

2023–2024 G4 and G7 Belonging
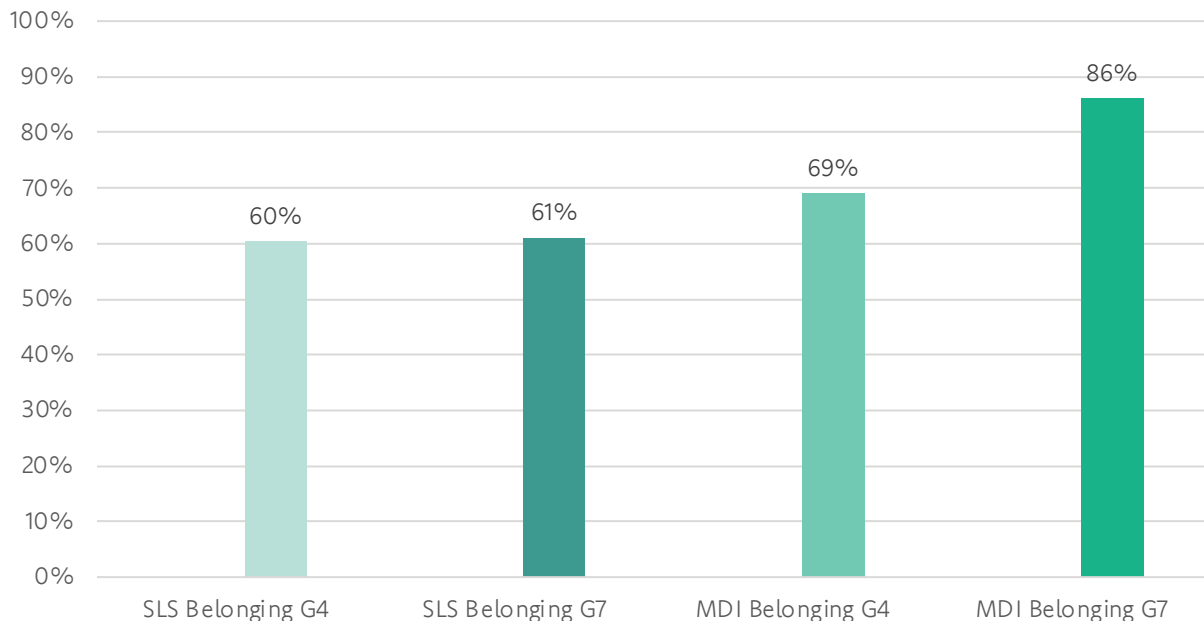
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Youth Development Index(YDI)

The YDI is an annual online self-reported questionnaire that aims to gather population-level youth developmental data on health, well-being, and experiences that may contribute to health and well-being. It is not an individual assessment or diagnostic tool.

The EDI is the third of three questionnaire SD8 uses to gather data on student physical and social-emotional health over time.
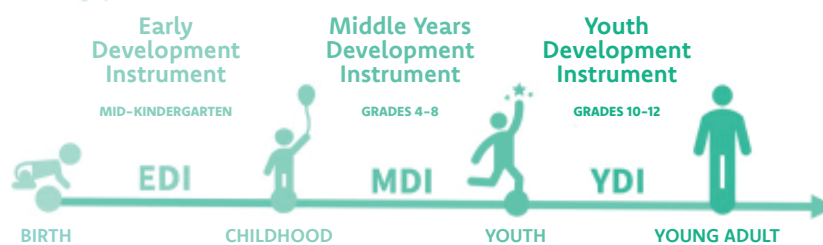
The YDI consists of five dimensions related to positive youth development:

- Social and Emotional Development
- Social Well-being
- Learning Environment and Engagement
- Physical and Mental Well-being
- Navigating the World

The YDI is completed by secondary students across the province from January-March of the academic school year. The data represented in this report are from the 2023-2024 school year.
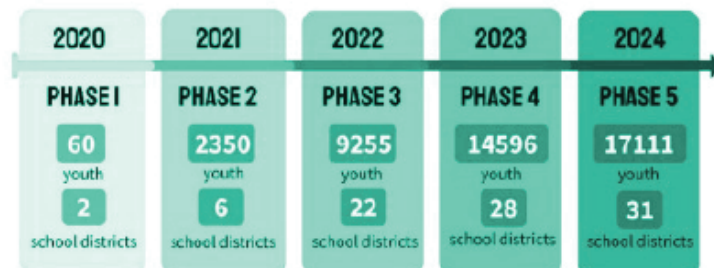
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Youth Development Index(YDI)

Peers

Peer Belonging

Youth's level of agreement with statements about their sense of belonging to a social group; e.g., *I feel part of a group of friends that do things together.*

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
High			51%		
Medium	27%				
Low	22%				
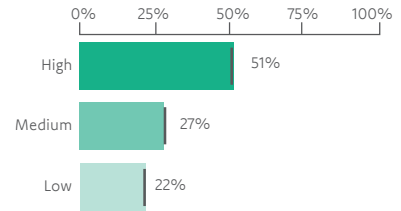
School Climate

School Safety

Youth's level of agreement with the statement, *I feel safe at my school.*

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
High				66%	
Medium	23%				
Low	11%				
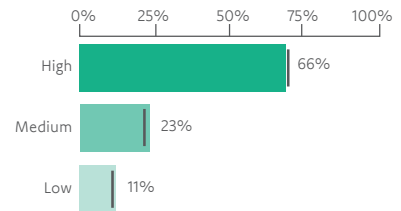
School Environment*

Youth's level of agreement with statements about the social atmosphere of the school, including the relationships and interactions between and amongst students and staff; e.g., *Teachers and students treat each other with respect in this school.*

*called School Climate on the MDI

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
High	26%				
Medium	38%				
Low	36%				
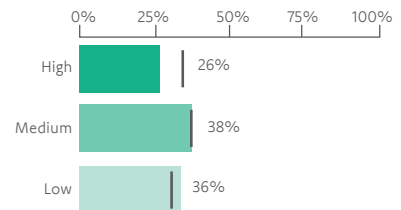
Washroom Safety

Percentage of youth who feel safe using their school's washrooms.

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Yes		48%			
No	28%				
I don't know	23%				
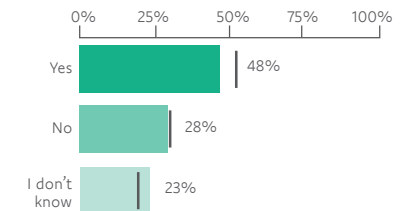
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Youth Development Index(YDI) - Analysis and Interpretation

Across the three areas of Peer Belonging, Loneliness, and Community Involvement, the data indicate some patterns that line up with other data points collected on similar topics via the SLS and create a broader picture of the well-being of our high school aged students.

2023-2024 High School Connection and Belonging
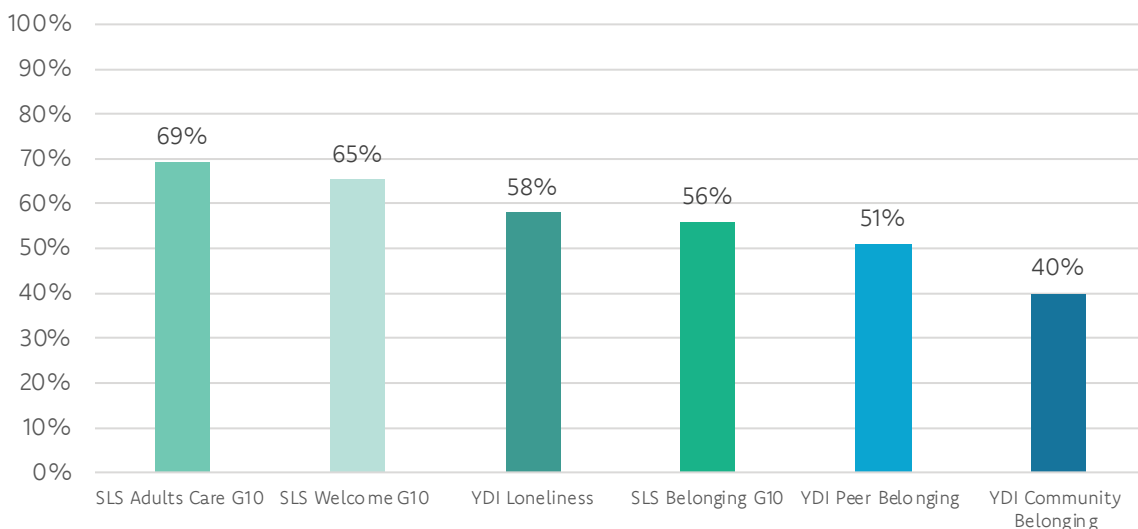
Data Trends

Overall the level of connectedness with adults, peers, and the community for secondary students as reported in the YDI are not strong. Overall, approximately half of high school students identify as being disconnected, lonely, or unwelcome across their experiences in school and the community. The results reported in the YDI are lower than those reported in the SLS, which once again indicates that further analysis is required and greater implementation of strategies in schools to increase students' feelings of belonging, connection with adults, and community belonging are required.

2023 Adolescent Health Survey (McCreary Health Centre Society)

The BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS) is a province-wide survey administered every five years to youth in Grade 7 to 12 since 1992. To date in BC, almost 200,000 student surveys have been completed since the inception of the health survey. The survey gives an evidence base of youth health trends, emerging issues, and risk and protective factors for healthy development. The confidential survey was last administered in 2023 to SD8 students in grades 7-12, in 30 randomly chosen classes throughout the district.

The BC AHS covers factors that promote healthy development and behaviours that may compromise health. Question topics include physical and mental health; school, family, community and peer connectedness; substance use; injuries; extracurricular activities; violence and discrimination; and technology use. New questions added in 2023 include questions about discrimination, social media use, the impact of COVID-19, vaping, and sources of information about mental health and sexual health.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Youth Development Index(YDI) - Analysis and Interpretation
SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Students were asked how much they agreed with a series of statements about their school experience.

Students' feelings about their school experience	Disagreed/ Strongly disagreed	Neither agreed nor disagreed	Agreed/ Strongly agreed
Felt like a part of their school	17%	34%	48%
Happy to be at school	30%	29%	42%
Felt school staff treated them fairly	13%	28%	59%
Felt school staff expected them to do well	8%	24%	68%
Felt safe at school	12%	29%	59%
Felt teachers cared about them	12%	31%	57%
Felt other school staff cared about them	15%	40%	45%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

School Safety

Students generally felt safe at school and getting to and from school. However, they were more likely to feel safe in supervised locations such as classrooms and libraries, than in less supervised spaces.

How often students felt safe	Never/ rarely	Sometimes	Usually/ always
Classrooms	9%	10%	81%
Washrooms	17%	16%	67%
Changing rooms	19%	12%	68%
Hallways and stairwells	10%	11%	79%
Library	7%	6%	87%
Cafeteria	10%	12%	78%
Outside on school grounds	7%	13%	80%
Getting to and from school	7%	11%	82%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Youth Development Index(YDI) - Analysis and Interpretation

Physical Health and Well-Being

Students were asked to rate their physical health. Most students rated their health as good or excellent.

POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
7%	24%	46%	24%

Mental Health and Well-Being

Students were asked to rate their mental health. Most students rated their mental health as good or excellent.

POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
16%	28%	35%	21%

Quality of Life (Subjective Well-Being)

How much students ...			
	Disagreed/ Strongly disagreed	Neither agreed nor disagreed	Agreed/ Strongly agreed
Felt their life was going well	12%	26%	62%
Wished they had a different life	57%	25%	18%
Felt they had a good life	6%	20%	74%
Had what they wanted in life	17%	31%	52%
Felt life was going just right	22%	33%	46%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Youth Development Index(YDI) - Analysis and Interpretation

Trends Emerging from Data Analysis

Most students surveyed indicated that they feel safe in all areas of their school, feel that their life is going well and that they have what they want in life, that school staff treat them fairly, and that teachers care for them.

Seventy percent (70%) of students surveyed reported that their physical health was good or excellent, and 56% of students surveyed reported that their mental health was good or excellent.

The Adolescent Health Survey also reported that students who completed the questionnaire reported better health and well-being when they also reported the following:

- Participated in regular physical activity
- Got at least 8 hours of sleep
- Had access to nutritious, healthy meals
- Had supportive adults in their school, family, and community
- Felt connected to school
- Had supportive friends
- Could access the services they needed
- Felt hopeful for the future

Stories Revealed About Approaches to Supporting Teaching and Learning

Students in grades 7-12 who attended the SD8 Student Symposium in February 2023 were asked how to create more inclusive learning environments. Some of the student anecdotal data collected is reproduced below:

- Encourage people to learn and discover new perspectives and try to view the world from those positions
- Connect schools and classrooms more
- Provide safe space for students with resources and advertise these spaces
- Stomp out stigma around needing help such as counsellors or therapy
- Make reporting tools more accessible
- Inclusion taught from a young age
- More inclusive activities
- Provide more accessibility
- Build a more accepting environment
- Be accepting and help everyone understand the issues at hand

NEUROLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL DIVERSITIES

SD8 promotes a diversity approach to education, recognizing that physical abilities and neurological differences amongst learners constitute natural variations amongst individuals. SD8 focuses on learner strengths as unique learning abilities rather than disabilities.
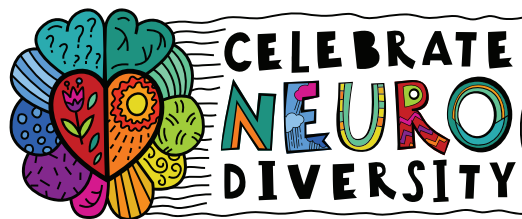
Specialized Supplemental Resources

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlines the goals and objectives for children and youth with designated diverse needs, as well as identifying the universal and essential supports that are beneficial for learning. The availability of supplemental resources varies depending on the educational needs of each student. Students who require additional services will mostly receive these within their classroom environment to ensure that they are able to learn alongside their peers from their classroom teacher. A small percentage of students may receive some services outside of the classroom in small groups or perhaps in one-on-one settings—this is typically for therapies such as physiotherapy or occupational therapy.

In addition to classroom teachers, the implementation of specific strategies to support neurological and physical diversities is assisted by specialized itinerants comprised of inclusion support teachers, education assistants, the district psychologist, occupational therapist and physiotherapist services, deaf and hard of hearing teacher, hearing resource teacher, vision resource teacher, speech language pathologists, speech language pathology assistant, mental health and addictions coordinator, manager of safe schools, hospital homebound teacher, English language learner teacher, and services for learners requiring assistive and augmentative technology.

Assistive and Augmentative Technology

The district recognizes the importance of providing diverse learners with technological support to assist in accessing, developing, and showcasing their learning. Learners are supported with both hardware support (machines, devices) and software support (learner accommodation software programs).

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teacher and Hearing Resource Teacher

The deaf and hard of hearing teacher provides services to learners who may be experiencing difficulty in school because of hearing impairment or loss. Any learner at any grade level who has significant hearing impairment or loss that results in substantial educational difficulties is eligible for direct service. Consultative services may include providing information to learners, parents and classroom teachers or managing auditory equipment.

The SD8 hearing resource teacher performs kindergarten hearing screening for incoming kindergarten students to assess their baseline hearing after school entry, provides consultative services for learners, parents and classroom teachers, manages auditory equipment, and provides direct services to students to support their classroom experience.

District Inclusion Support Teacher Coordinator

In addition to supporting schools with strategies to meet the learning needs of students, the district inclusion support teacher coordinator also arranges learner transition processes (into kindergarten, from elementary to middle or secondary school, and after graduation/completion) and coordinates provincial outreach programs funded by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. The provincial outreach programs help meet the educational needs of learners with complex needs in school districts. SD8 accesses these programs for consultations, resources and in-service in the areas of inclusion, autism, special education technology, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, deaf and hard of hearing students, early intervention and other specific learning needs.

NEUROLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL DIVERSITIES

District Psychologist

The district psychologist is responsible for providing psycho-educational services for learners from their entrance to kindergarten to their transition out of grade 12. The district psychologist is active participants in SD8's consultation process and is also involved in determining whether learners are placed, based on appropriate documentation and assessment, in a Ministry of Education and Child Care special needs designation.

The district psychologist is expertly trained and experienced and is able to perform psycho-educational and other assessments. The district psychologist ensures that learners who might qualify for services through Community Living BC have an updated psycho-educational assessment prior to their graduation.

Education Assistants (EAs)/Youth and Family Workers (YFWs)

EAs and YFWs work in the support of students primarily in the classroom setting, under the direction of the classroom teacher and Inclusion Support Teacher to:

- Support students in becoming independent learners by implementing strategies in the classroom as directed by the classroom teacher;
- Implement universal and/or essential supports developed by the classroom teacher, and/or IST (as outlined in the Individual Education Plan (IEP));
- Prepare materials for specific children, where appropriate, such as picture exchange communication systems or countdown strips; and,
- Document observed behaviours and/or demonstrations of a child's learning for review as part of the IEP planning process.

English Language Learner (ELL) Teachers

ELL learners are supported to learn English while being immersed during classroom-based instruction. ELL teachers are specialized resource teachers who assess and evaluate ELL learners to determine their level of language proficiency in oral language, reading and writing. The ELL teacher consults and communicates with school Inclusion Support Teachers (ISTs), classroom teachers, teacher counsellors, inclusive education staff, principals, and parents to prepare and successfully implement the Annual Instructional Plan (AIP) for ELL learners.

The ELL teacher provides resources and support for English language learners as well as inclusive education services that support learners to achieve cultural and linguistic competency and proficiency. The ELL teacher supports learners in acquiring strong foundational skills and core competencies, personalized learning experiences and an appreciation for vast cultural worldviews and perspectives.

Hospital Homebound Teacher

Hospital homebound services may be provided for learners who are at home or in hospital for an extended time due to physical or mental illness, an accident, or (in some cases) a refusal to attend school. Hospital homebound services are temporary and not considered an educational program; however, most referrals require additional support to transition learners back into classrooms. Transition planning support includes consultation with school staff, parents, the learners themselves, community agency representatives, and school district staff (where appropriate) to identify and address specific concerns.

NEUROLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL DIVERSITIES

Inclusion Support Teachers

Inclusion support teachers build the capacity of schools to respond positively, and with a variety of strategies to meet the learning needs of students. These teachers are responsible for supporting schools in developing and implementing Competency-Based Individual Education Plans (CBIEPs), providing staff with strategies to support student success, coordinating professional learning opportunities, building capacity of staff to effectively support students with diverse needs, supporting positive behaviour intervention and support (i.e., PBIS) and consulting on social-emotional and behaviour programs in the classroom.

Manager of Safe Schools

The manager of safe schools (MSS) is responsible for coordinating Safe Schools supports and services for students and staff. The MSS provides a variety of training — threat risk assessment, verbal intervention, lockdowns, hold and secure, parent engagement nights, professional learning workshops, etc. The MSS works with school staff to coordinate and approve student safety plans, and coordinates with schools in violence/threat reports.

Mental Health and Addictions Coordinator

This position works as a liaison between the district and families to provide service to children, youth and families. This clinician consults with staff, provides resources for learners who are at risk of developing a mental health disorder and/or showing mild and/or early signs whose functioning is impacted in home, school and social settings. The Mental Health and Addictions Coordinator supports school teams with social emotional learning, trauma-focused schools implementation, mental wellness activities, and provides resources for students who have or are at risk for addictions. The coordinator provides information at parent engagement nights, school-based teams, the district-based team, and in schools. The coordinator is also a member of the Health Promoting Schools provincial and regional team, supports both physical and mental health in schools, and is a key member of the district Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT).

Occupational Therapists (OTs)

Occupational therapists provide services to students with orthopedic, neurological, muscular, spinal, joint or sensory dysfunction as well as those with cognitive and complex neuro-divergent conditions. The occupational therapists work primarily with students in grades K-7 and with students with complex neurological and/or muscular dysfunction.

Physiotherapist (PT)

The physiotherapist supports students in K-12 who have significant physical or sensory-motor limitations that impact their activity and participation in school. Delivery is a mix of consultation, assessment, and therapy.

NEUROLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL DIVERSITIES

Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Speech and Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA)

Speech and language pathologists support learners with a range of communication challenges and disorders, from simple developmental to complex communication disorders that are often associated with other physical differences or neurodevelopmental disorders. SLPs work with families, teachers, and education assistants to provide strategies and programs for learners whose communication impacts their academic and social learning.

Augmentative communication supports are provided and supported by SLPs for learners with physical or neurodevelopmental disorders that limit their ability to communicate verbally. In SD8, SLPs perform a screening for kindergarten students, in order to assess their baseline speech and language proficiency.

SLPs are supported by a trained and experienced speech language pathology assistant (SLPA) to assist in the implementation of programs.

Vision Resource Teacher

The vision resource teacher provides wide ranging services that include direct instruction, teaching to the expanded core curriculum for learners with visual impairments, provision of resources from the Provincial Resource Centre for the Visually Impaired, ensuring accessibility to print material by way of transcription and conversion using alternative formats such as braille and large print, supporting assistive technology needs for access, arranging orientation and mobility training and liaising with families and outside agencies. The vision teacher may also provide students with instruction and guided practice in orientation and mobility for students.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE

Who are children and youth in care?

Children and youth in care can be at any age (up to 19 years) and from any ethnic or socio- economic background. They may come into care with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) or with a Delegated Aboriginal Agency (DAA) for many different reasons and under different legal statuses. The legal status of a child or youth and the legal rights of the parent(s) differ according to the type of care agreement or custody order.

For example:

- Special needs agreements and voluntary care agreements provide for day-to-day care of the child or youth with caregiver(s) and allow the parent(s) to retain control over the child/youth's personal information and decision-making regarding the child/youth's health care.
- Custody orders (Interim, Temporary or Continuing) allow the director under the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA) to exercise guardianship responsibilities such as consenting to health care and making necessary decisions about the child/youth's education. When a child or youth is in care under a CFCSA custody order, the director delegates the authority to make decisions pertaining to the health care and education of the child/youth to the child welfare worker, while the caregiver(s) are authorized to provide day-to-day care for the child/youth.

The authority to make decisions on a child/youth's daily activities and needs depends on the type of care or custody agreement that is in place. In some cases, the child/youth's caregiver(s) are able to make some decisions; however, depending on the child/youth's legal status, either the parent(s) or the child welfare worker can be the legal guardian and therefore the decision-maker for the child/youth.

Every child and youth in care in SD8 has a student learning plan, an assigned staff member (teacher, counsellor, inclusion support teacher or the principal) who works to ensure that the student is supported in school and is connected to district staff who can provide information and access to community support.

The district works closely with the local designated Indigenous authority, Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services, and collaborates with the authority to provide care and services for Indigenous students in care. The district continues to work with the Ministry of Education and Child Care to improve engagement with Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Child Youth Mental Health (CYMH) to share information in order to work collaboratively to support children and youth in care.

In addition, the district's mental health and addictions coordinator supports schools in the district in providing supports and access to community services for children and youth in care.

SUPPORTED TRANSITIONS

Effective transition planning is important and can impact learners' experiences of connectedness and belonging. Comprehensive transition planning that reflects a learner's strengths provides the foundation for successful transitional experiences. By developing individualized learner transition needs, equity and resiliency can be fostered in all learners and in their educational programming.

Transition planning is the preparation, implementation and evaluation required to enable students to make major transitions during their lives — from home or pre-school to school; from class to class; from school to school; from school district to school district; and from school to post-secondary, community or work situations. As children into and through the K-12 education system, there are several transitions to navigate.

Early Years

Early years kindergarten planning for learners with diverse learning abilities takes place each spring. The purpose of this plan is to effectively transition children into kindergarten by collaboratively sharing information between families, community agencies and district employees.

Kindergarten Transition

Children in SD8 who are supported through the Creston Early Learning Program (CELP), are invited to a joint Kindergarten transition meeting with CELP and SD8. The Creston inclusion support teacher and other Inclusive Education staff help manage the transition to school for kindergarten students in Creston already identified with diverse learning needs, in conjunction with a child's school staff.

If a child is identified with diverse learning needs in other areas of the district, the connected inclusion support teacher and other Inclusive Education staff help manage the transition to school for kindergarten students, in conjunction with a child's school staff.

Parents/guardians of incoming kindergarten students are encouraged to register their child as soon as registration opens in the new year of the year child turns five years old and encouraged to attend kindergarten orientation events in the school that are held each spring for children attending kindergarten in the fall.

Transitioning from One Grade to the Next

Each spring, schools begin reviewing their projected enrolment for the following September. Before the end of the school year, plans are already underway for the placement of students with diverse needs in classrooms.

The school principal works closely with a child's Inclusion Support Teacher, teacher counsellor, and classroom teacher(s) to determine which classroom will best suit the learning needs of children for the following school year. The exact classroom placement is finalized during the first weeks of school in September.

SUPPORTED TRANSITIONS

Changing Schools within SD8

If a child is moving to the next level of school within SD8 (e.g., middle school or high school), transition planning is initiated by staff in the early spring or sometimes earlier if a child has complex needs.

Transition planning typically involves a child's inclusion support teacher (IST), classroom teacher, and teacher counsellor meeting with the receiving school's IST, classroom teacher, and teacher counsellor – along with the district's IST for the school(s) and possibly other members of the district's Inclusive Education team. Meetings include parents to share a child's IEP and to discuss the specific learning needs for transitions.

Arrangements are often made for a child to visit the receiving school in the spring and to meet the new Principal and school staff.

As with all transition planning, school staff work closely to determine which classroom will best suit the learning needs of children the following school year.

Transitioning from grade 12 to the community (post-secondary or work)

Transitioning into adulthood requires coordination and planning. It is important that parents/guardians prepare for this transition well before their child turns 19 years of age. In some cases, there are arrangements that need to be made with Community Living BC (CLBC) and other agencies to ensure that a smooth transition takes place. It is recommended that this planning begins when a learner turns 16 years of age (at the end of grade 10 or into grade 11).

School staff can assist with transition by including specific goals within the learner's competency-based IEP. Parent information meetings at secondary schools where individuals from community-based agencies (such as CLBC, Selkirk College, College of the Rockies, WorkBC, etc.) answer questions and provide information related to this important time to promote a smooth transition.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Mental well-being, or positive mental health, involves the capacity to think, feel and act in ways that improve our ability to enjoy life and deal with its challenges. Schools play an important role in supporting students to build the skills and knowledge that contribute to their overall well-being.

The Mental Health in Schools Strategy focuses on three main elements — Compassionate Systems Leadership, Capacity Building, and Mental Health in the Classroom — which build upon a foundation of social emotional learning that has developed in BC over the past decade.

A pathway to Hope   *erase* Strategy

MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Compassionate Systems Leadership | Capacity Building | Mental Health in the Classroom

SD8 works to ensure that learners have the support they need to thrive. By focusing on priority needs such as prevention, promoting mental well-being, and reducing the stigma that is often associated with mental illness and addictions, learners are learning how to recognize mental wellness. They are also learning when to seek help from others, how to access support and how to proactively and confidently address issues.

Fostering social emotional learning is a key competency for success at school and in life. Social and emotional learning is a set of specific skills that help learners set goals, manage their behaviour, build relationships and process or remember information. These skills impact a person's mental well-being and are connected to educational success and employment. School leaders have identified the need for more teacher professional development in social-emotional learning.

SD8 fosters physical and mental health and well-being through a variety of programs, approaches, practices, training and strategies, summarized as follows:

- SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING is a set of specific skills that help individuals set goals, manage behaviour, build relationships, and process and remember information.
- MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY is the knowledge and understanding of how to develop and maintain mental well-being; identify risk factors and signs of mental health challenges; access help when needed; and reduce stigma around the topic of mental health.
- TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE promotes inclusive and compassionate learning environments; understanding coping strategies; supporting independence; and addressing students' need to minimize additional stress or trauma.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Implementing the Mental Health in Schools Strategy

The district's focal areas to implement the Ministry's Mental Health in Schools (MHiS) Strategy are: Compassionate Systems leadership training for staff, implementation of social emotional learning strategies, and increasing mental health literacy for staff. These aspects are critical foundation and prevention elements that promote mental health and well-being and thereby work to prevent mental health challenges.
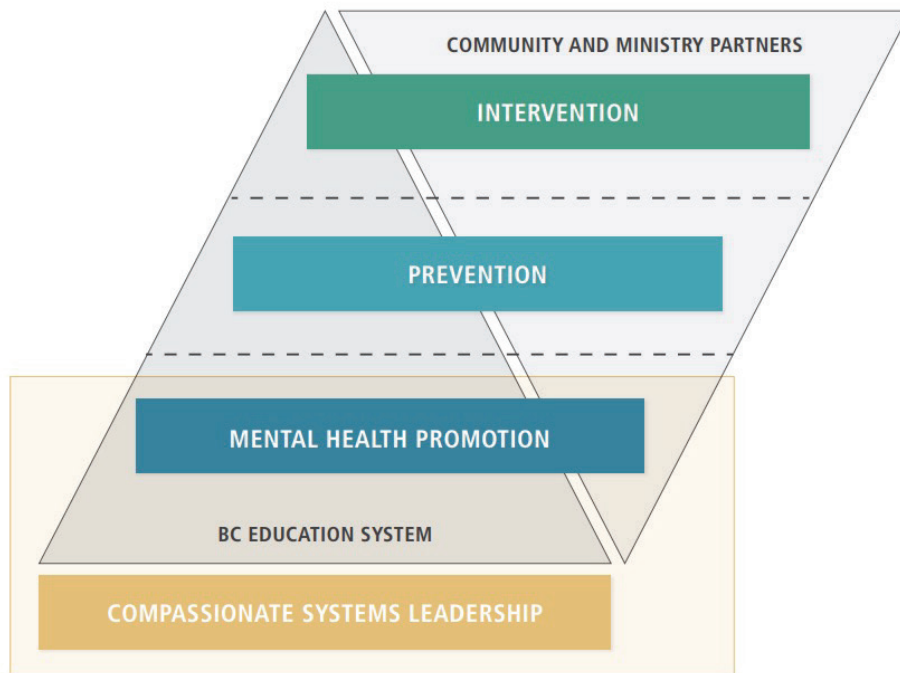
Source: BC's Mental Health in Schools Strategy

COMPASSIONATE SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP

To support student well-being and resiliency, adults must have the tools and practices to support their own well-being. Compassionate systems leadership has three core elements to support systems change:

1. Internal work – includes self-reflection and practice

2. Relationship work – authentic connections where space is created to be truly present

3. System work – connections between self, others and the broader system

Compassionate systems leadership in education is an approach that inspires transformation and instructional best practices that lead to student success. It is anchored in self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management and relationship skills.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY
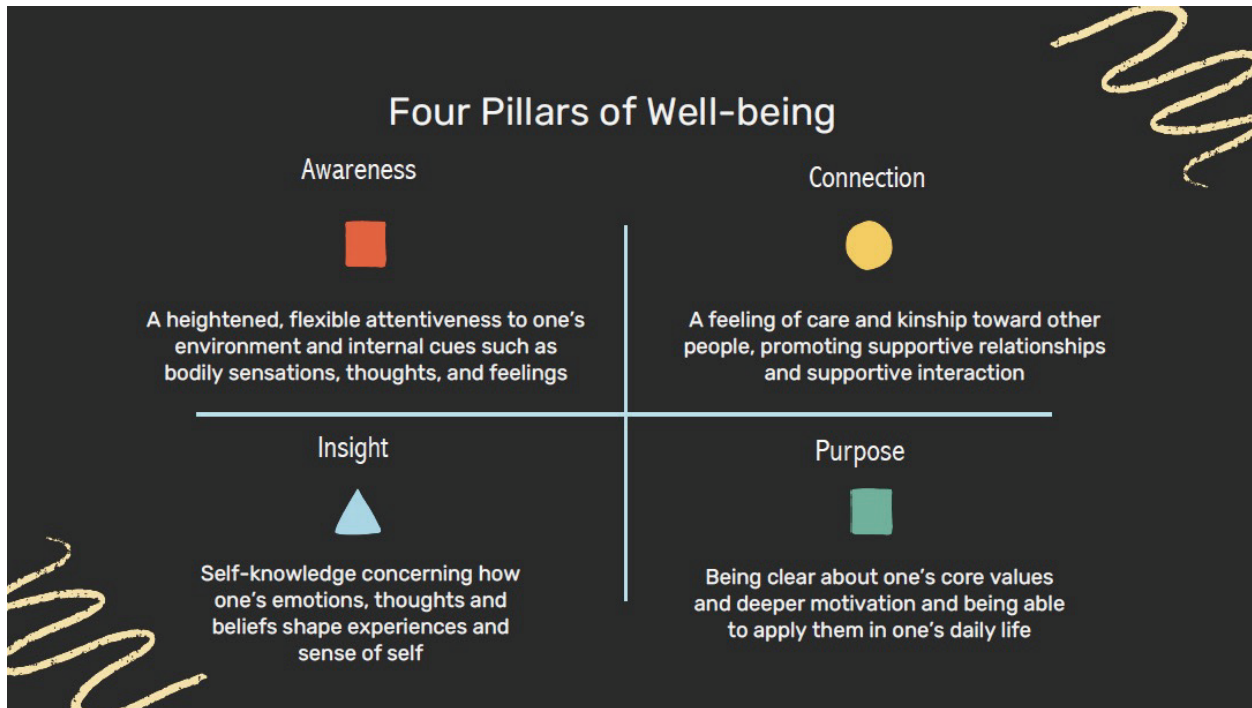
Source: Kootenay Boundary Compassionate Systems Network Team

MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION

Social Emotional Learning

The district fosters social emotional learning for families with programming that includes parent engagement sessions:

- School district and community agency partners collaborate to support family and learner well-being through both in-school and community programming.

- The mental health and addictions coordinator and the manager of safe schools regularly host family information nights and attend school PAC and DPAC meetings throughout the year to provide information and support engagement.

- The district works collaboratively with organizations such as Foundry, to spread information and encourage the use of important, free, and easily accessible organizations.

- The district facilitates connection and collaboration with local agencies, such as the Ministry for Children and Family Development, Child Youth Mental Health, Nelson Community Services, Kootenay Art Therapy Institute and others to provide appropriate supports for learners.

- The district connects with agencies and families to secure support and services in person and virtually such as: Foundry, the PEACE program, COINS, Community Living BC, Children's Help Line, community services agencies, BC Children's Hospital, and others.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

GROUNDING AND CHECK IN – WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Practice of self-reflection
- Facilitates emotional settling and regulation
- Supports the creation of a generative & compassionate social field
- Increases readiness to be together & builds community

Source: UBC HELP - BC Compassionate Systems Network

Mental Health Literacy

Mental health literacy is the knowledge and understanding of how to develop and maintain mental well-being, identify risk factors and signs of mental health challenges, and access help when needed. An important aspect to mental health literacy education is the elimination of the stigma of mental health illness and the empowering of learner self-efficacy in managing mental health. Over the past four years, a significant amount of effort in this area has been on providing information and support for all students in classrooms, in conjunction with classroom teachers, to demonstrate the need for mental wellness for all students.

Schools play an important role in supporting the development and maintenance of well-being for children and youth. Mental Health Literacy is focused on addressing learner mental health by helping educators create emotionally healthy learning environments, promoting early identification of learners who may be struggling with mental health issues, reducing the stigma of mental health and providing support for access to specialized supports.

The UBC courses: Mental Health Literacy and Teach Mental Health Literacy are available to all teachers. Over the past several years, approximately 100 staff in the district have taken these courses.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

PREVENTION

Self-Regulation

Most Inclusion support staff in schools and many education assistants have received several training sessions in executive function strategies from expert Sarah Ward, Jessica Minihan, and others. These strategies assist learners with self-regulation, identifying "first/then," and help learners to navigate the classroom environment more effectively.

Social Thinking

Led in part by district occupational therapists and speech language pathologists, some elementary schools are implementing programs such the Incredible Flexible You to promote self-regulation, social thinking and related social skills, which in turn promote belonging and connectedness.

District schools continue to increase their knowledge and understanding of creating predictable, calm learning environments and using trauma-informed practices, guided by Dr. Chuck Geddes and Angela Murphy at Complex Trauma Resources (CTR).

Programs in SD8 to support the implementation of the Mental Health in Schools Strategy

Open Parachute: The district has a site license for all teachers to implement Open Parachute in their classrooms. Students learn about physical and mental health and well-being, the signs and symptoms of mental illness, how to reduce stigma, strategies for maintaining positive mental health, and how to access suitable resources to address mental health concerns.

The K-12 programs are designed by a team of clinical psychologists, educators and filmmakers, to teach mental health skills to all students in a way that is engaging and relatable, while being easy for educators to facilitate. Every lesson features an authentic peer voice, role modeling, and self-reflection.

Through Open Parachute, significant gains in teacher capacity to support students in the classroom are seen. For example:

- Increased teacher confidence in managing mental health concerns in the classroom

- Increased teacher confidence in providing support to students who are struggling emotionally in class

- Increased teacher confidence in effectively guiding their students toward solving their own challenges (e.g., peer challenges, school stress)

Lessons are run by teachers in a classroom setting. Teachers have flexibility with which topics they want to deliver across the year. Schools and teachers have autonomy to decide which lessons are most useful in their context.

Source: Open Parachute

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Canyon Lister Elementary School Open Parachute Feedback

Open Parachute has fostered a more caring and inclusive environment by normalizing discussions about mental health and encouraging empathy among students. The program's real-life stories help students feel connected to the learning, they see themselves in these examples.

There are several activities that the students enjoy and find valuable, depending on the class culture as well as the grade level but some of the favorite activities are: peer-led discussions, interactive activities, mindfulness exercises, role-playing scenarios, and group projects. Additionally, teachers appreciate the ready-made, user-friendly lessons, which make it easier to implement the program effectively in their classrooms.

Students' understanding of social-emotional learning and mental health have grown. They have become more aware of their emotions and are learning practical strategies to manage stress and build resilience. Additionally, incorporating Open Parachute as whole-class lessons has been a valuable complement to our efforts in supporting individual student needs. Our inclusion support teacher frequently uses the 'Little Spot' book series with individuals and small groups, and we find that the Open Parachute whole-class lessons integrate seamlessly with this approach.

Open Parachute helps learners succeed by equipping them with essential mental health skills, improving their emotional well-being, and enhancing their ability to cope with challenges both in school and in life. Additionally, having teachers in multiple classes utilizing the same platform creates consistency among students and staff, providing a common language and approach to problem-solving.

As a staff, we are keen to continue using Open Parachute in the future and increase the frequency of its use. We are also interested in tracking trends in both MDI (Middle Years Development Instrument) and SLS (Student Learning Survey) data to monitor its impact in those areas.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Crawford Bay Elementary–Secondary Open Parachute Feedback

We use Open Parachute in our elementary classes. Our students say they are excited to participate because they like the ideas and examples, the child/peer voice and that everyone is learning the same things. School is such a busy and complex social place, and that comes with frequent social-emotional tests, and this program has been a wonderful way where we have shared language through our school.

*Working with Open Parachute resources has brought our team to the book Finding the Words: Empowering Struggling Students through Guided Conversations, where we are able to bring Open Parachute approaches to our older students. The power of shared learning and language truly makes **the work more effective, especially in a time where we see more students** struggling with lack of resilience and wellness.*

*The bottom line, any evidenced-based program that has consistency, **practical processes to build effective tools for self-reflection and ways to gauge student growth is a win.** And the students love it.*

Salmo Elementary School Open Parachute Feedback

I like the videos most of all. The students can connect with the children in the video and this prompts conversations into their own experiences and feelings. Watching another child speak to an adult bridges the class to keep discussions going in a safe environment.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Redfish Elementary Open Parachute Feedback

'engaging program'

'has started some good conversations'

'solid resources to support HEALTH curriculum'

'kids realize through the program that they are not alone in their struggles'

'building common and cohesive language'

'the modelling activities, video clips, pair-share activities, etc. are valuable'

'covers themes/issues/topics that are relevant to students'

'encourages students to take ownership of their challenges'

'building resilience and life skills'

'helps kids know that they are not alone'

'helps kids connect with real-life struggles in their own lives, homes, etc.'

'program has an integral relationship with school conversations'

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE) helps educators teach learners in elementary grades strategies to address the thoughts, feelings and behaviours associated with anxiety, while also supporting social and emotional learning and mental health literacy of educators through a professional development course. All schools in the district have access to the EASE program.

In addition, **EASE at Home** is a free program available for parents. This program helps parents learn strategies to help decrease anxiety and "big worries" in their children at home.

Source: Healthy Minds BC

MindUp: teaches the skills and knowledge children need to regulate their stress and emotions, form positive relationships, and act with kindness and compassion. MindUp has been adopted in some SD8 elementary schools.

Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS): PBIS is a multi-tiered framework for learning to support clear and consistent expectations across the school community. PBIS emphasizes five inter-related elements with equity at the centre: equity, data, systems, practices, and outcomes. Inclusion support teachers in schools support the effective implementation of PBIS in elementary schools.
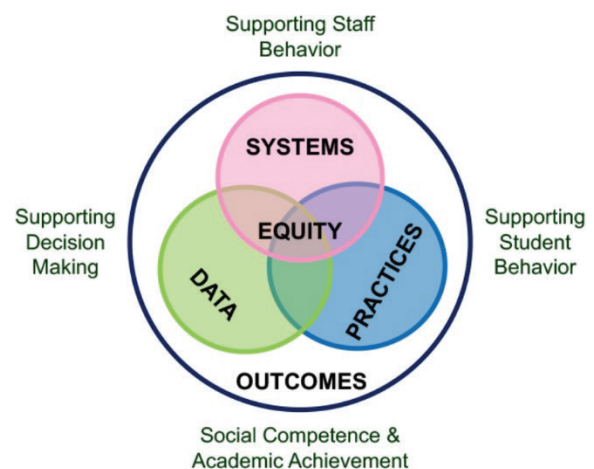

Source: What is PBIS

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

PBIS uses a multi-tiered system to determine support and resources for students. It is a framework to provide academic and behavioral support for all students based on their individual needs. Because different students have different strengths and needs, tailored levels of support are more likely to help them succeed in school. *Multi-tiered* generally refers to three tiers that correspond to different intensities of the support:
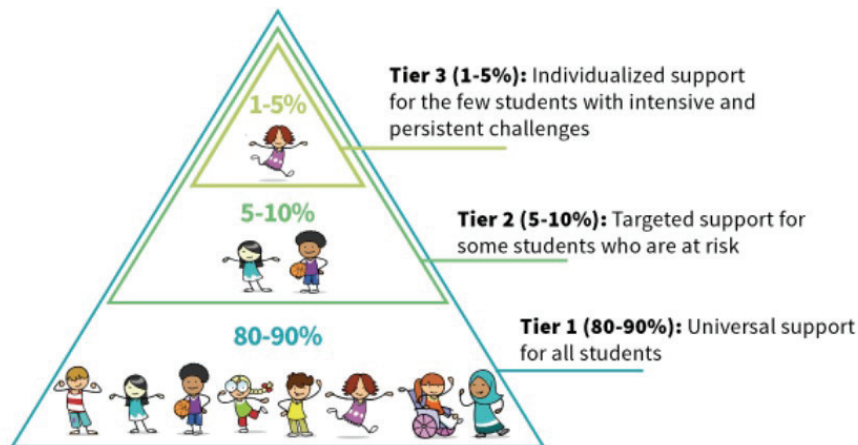
Source: Student Behavior Blog

Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP): promotes the provision of inclusive and compassionate learning environments, understanding coping strategies, supporting independence and helping to minimize additional stress or trauma by addressing individual learner needs. The significance of addressing trauma through research-based pedagogies is critical for ensuring that the most vulnerable learners are successful in school.

The district once again has contracted Dr. Chuck Geddes and Angela Murphy of Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) to provide training, consultation and resources to staff throughout the district. Dr. Geddes also provides engagement sessions for parents and community members to provide caregivers with an understanding of trauma and tools that can be used to support family members who have experienced trauma. Over the past several years, over 600 SD8 staff have been trained in this area, and many staff have undertaken multiple training opportunities.

Additionally, Complex Trauma Resource's expert Angela Murphy continues to provide ongoing consultations to several elementary schools in SD8, in order to build capacity and understanding of trauma-informed practices with staff, to help students connect and form relationships at school in order that have the best opportunities for success at school.

SD8 strives to provide optimal environments for learning by fostering school connectedness and promoting belonging and connection in schools so that learners feel they belong, are welcomed by staff, and can therefore thrive.

IMPLEMENTATION OF B.C. MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS STRATEGY

Crawford Bay Elementary Secondary – Complex Trauma Resources Feedback

Having the opportunity to work directly with Angela Murphy through Complex Trauma Resources has given our school the gift of being able to apply Trauma-informed Practices in a deep and highly individualized way. Last year our staff took a course with Complex Trauma Resources where we have applied that mindset and specific strategies in classes, small groups, and throughout our school.

To be able to link Complex Trauma Resources work with the approach in the book The Behavior Code: a Practical Guide to Understanding and Teaching the Most Challenging Students and the FAIR behavioural intervention plan, has set the grounds for deeper and more effective ways to wrap around a child through the lens of inclusion. When we as a staff see the effects of consistent and dogged commitment to these practices, the ripple effects are felt by students and families.

INTERVENTION

SD8 provides support in some schools with mental health intervention, through contracts with local agencies for clinical counselling services and/or art therapy. In Creston, the district secures Valley Community Services to provide counselling services at the HUB in KRSS. In Nelson, the district secures Nelson Community Services, the Kootenay Art Therapy Institute, and Child Youth Mental Health to provide clinical counselling and/or art therapy at LVR and Trafalgar. The district continues to provide access to virtual support for counselling and group workshops for students through the Foundry in all areas of the district.

LV Rogers Secondary Feedback

Having access to these services such as art therapy and the PEACE program from Nelson Community Services, along with other support through the school and external agencies, allows us to have more solutions-based conversations with students about mental health and social-emotional learning. Offering an "open studio" at lunch has been an important bridge and connection to the counsellor and the individual service. Also, the counsellor is able to determine the best fit for particular students and connect some to further outside agency support.

SCHOOL SAFETY

SD8 supports comprehensive training for employees to support the principles of a safe and caring school environment. This training is coordinated and overseen by the manager of safe schools.

SD8 has a critical role in educating youth, in partnership with parents, about healthy boundaries and relationships. SD8 strives to be a strong voice for positive change in its learners' lives by addressing issues, such as sexual misconduct and violence, that continue to plague communities and disproportionately impact the lives of girls and Aboriginal youth. The focus on safety and healthy relationships is central to providing programs and services to learners.

A comprehensive response to threatening or worrisome behaviours also supports the perception of safety by learners. The threat risk assessment and worrisome behaviour procedures are used to assist in creating and maintaining an environment where learners, staff members, parents and others feel safe when there is a threat of violence. The threat assessment protocol may be used in situations where there is a threat of violence by or toward members of the school community. If the school-based threat assessment team identifies indicators that a learner may be on a pathway toward violence, the team can intervene to decrease the risk of violence, prevent injury and assist the learner in accessing needed support.

In 2024, the district updated its procedures regarding student safety in schools. These are available on the school district's website. This work has had a positive effect of streamlining procedures and creating consistency throughout the district, making it easier for staff to ensure that they are following correct procedures with regard to student and staff safety.

Since May 2023, over 50 school and district staff have had updated training from Safer Schools Together in threat assessment recognition and protocols, building staff capacity to keep children and staff safe and to appropriately respond to threats of violence in schools.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care's comprehensive Expect Respect and a Safe Education (*erase*) strategy aims to ensure that every student in BC feels safe, accepted and respected regardless of their race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. The strategy encourages personalizing services and supports for students to help prevent, identify and stop harmful behaviours—whether online, at school or in the community. Multidisciplinary training is currently provided to enhance school culture and climate, assess for violence potential, promote positive mental health and well-being, and develop intervention plans for students experiencing vulnerability. The erase strategy also provides guidance for promoting timely and necessary sharing of information to assess worrisome or threatening behaviour and identify appropriate interventions.

Source: erase

SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION AND INCLUSIVE SEXUAL HEALTH

SD8 continues to support the physical and health education curricular competencies of social and community health and mental well-being through providing materials in all schools for classroom teachers to deliver the sexual health education curriculum K-12. The district has secured a site license with the National Child Centre for Protection's Kids in the Know program to ensure that schools throughout the district have free access to comprehensive, scientifically-sound and curriculum-connected sexual health resources.

Inclusive sexual health provides children and youth with disabilities comprehensive and accurate sexual health information that is appropriate for a student's age, cognitive development and cultural context. Professional development focuses on developing teachers' confidence, knowledge-base and competence so that they can deliver inclusive and shame-free lessons. The district uses the CIRCLEs program to support this work.

Source: Kids in the Know

TARGETED MINISTRY FUNDED PROGRAMS

- **CommunityLINK** (Learning Includes Nutrition and Knowledge) funding is designed to support the academic achievement and social functioning of vulnerable students. Examples of services include academic support and access to clinical counseling.

  In SD8, LINK funding provides targeted supports offered by a contracted Child and Youth Mental Health clinician in Creston, through the HUB at Kootenay River Secondary School, and other contracted services in other areas of the district such as art therapy at L.V. Rogers Secondary School and Trafalgar Middle School.

- **Feeding Futures** funding provides significant support for learners who are vulnerable to food insecurity. Funding is provided to every school in the district, for the purchase of food for students and a staff person to coordinate food distribution. The Feeding Futures program addresses the immediate need of feeding students and builds on the progress made with the Student and Family Affordability Fund to help reduce the challenges of rising food costs for families who need it most.

In addition, Indigenous learners may access additional equity-based food supports.

Approximately 20% of students in SD8 are supported through Feeding Futures.

Source: BC Government News Release

TARGETED MINISTRY FUNDED PROGRAMS

Trafalgar Middle School Feedback on Feeding Futures

> *Feeding Futures and the Student Family Affordability Fund has helped learners focus on learning because they aren't worried about how to access food and or being hungry. Students know where they can access food and we know that they are provided with healthy choices. At Trafalgar we see the knowledge and experience of good nutritional habits transferring to daily life because students ask for healthy choices. When kids are offered healthy food choices they crave wholesome and healthy food that makes their body feel good. We like to call it, Food for Thought!*

- The After-School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI)'s objective is to enhance children's well–being through creative arts, sport, and physical activity. In SD8, the ASSAI program is available in elementary schools in 3 rural areas. The program is currently active in Crawford Bay Elementary Secondary School and Brent Kennedy Elementary School, with robust after school sports programs. Over the past year, approximately 80 students have utilized ASSAI programs.

Crawford Bay Elementary Secondary ASSAI Feedback

> *Having barrier free, non-competitive, skill-building cross-grade after-school programs has been enormously appreciated by students and families. ASSAI has brought a lively and inclusive range of great programs and some wonderful resources to our school. There is very little for children to do after school in our rural area and spread out catchment. We have been able to ask our students what they would love to learn more about, and tailor our after-school offerings to student interest, which helps kids feel connected and heard. We have been able to connect with the community with golf and curling, we have been able to connect with our local theatre group to build connections and we are just having fun with kids!*
>
> *Being able to hear what students want to learn more about, having a healthy snack for all, and being able to have the resources to make it work well has been an important part of building school culture. School is hard work, and being able to learn and explore together in multiage groups is a boost for our learners, and their families.*

TARGETED MINISTRY FUNDED PROGRAMS

Brent Kennedy Elementary School ASSAI Feedback

> *Students now have meaningful learning that happens after the school day, which increases their sense of belonging at school and overall connectedness. Students have made new friends with peers as a result of buddy and group work during the ASSAI program. All the group/creative activities have been beneficial as well as the sports games because students are working as a multi grade team.*
>
> *The ASSAI program has offered so much stability and consistency for students. The overall feeling in the school has been much improved because of the ASSAI program. This is a result of the connections and relationships that students have built through the sports and art activities offered.*

ACCESSIBILITY

In the 2024–2025 school year, the work of the Accessibility Working Group continues and has expanded to include the input of the broader Accessibility Committee.   The Accessibility Working Group met three times in the Fall of 2024 to review the Accessibility Scan data, review examples of accessibility plans from other districts, and to refine the district's plans.

The Accessibility Committee, which includes the Accessibility Working Group and representatives from the Board of Education, CUPE, KLTF, DPAC and principals, met in October to build a shared understanding of accessibility and provide input on district goals. From the collaborative sessions key areas of focus emerged that will inform SD8's work moving forward.

These areas of focus are:

- Accessibility for students, staff, families, and community members for events and field trips
- Safety for students through updated emergency evacuation plans
- Accessible documents, communication, and websites
- Physical accessibility in key areas such as parking, entrances, and bathrooms
- Creating accessibility procedures in SD8
- Learning opportunities for students and staff about accessibility

The Accessibility Working Group will continue to provide feedback and the lens of lived experiences on the developing work, including SD8's Accessibility Plan.
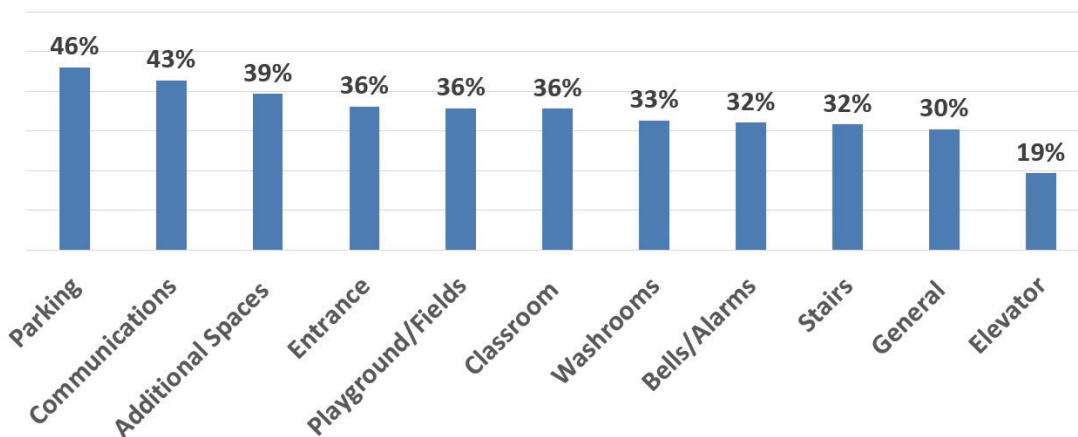
The above graph shows the percentage of schools, by category, as reported by principals in 2024, with accessible access or spaces.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT

Ongoing Staff Professional Learning

- Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL)
- Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE)
- Counsellors receive training in mental health curriculum and Mental Health in Schools Strategy
- Staff training in threat risk assessment from Safer Schools Together
- Staff training in crisis prevention and intervention (CPI)
- University of British Columbia Mental Health Literacy course
- FAIRS program training from Inclusive Education
- PEACEful Schools Program and other programs offered through Complex Trauma Resources (CTR)

Programming for Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP)

- Trauma-informed professional development workshop for school administrators, teachers and education assistants
- Mental health clinicians offer professional development sessions to staff
- Ministry of Education and Child Care trauma-informed webinars made available to staff

Programming for Drug and Alcohol Education

Educators

- Programming for drugand alcohol education for educators includes professional learning sessions with the mental health and addictions coordinator, Interior Health, and Health Promoting Schools presenters.

Learners

- District-wide vaping education curriculum has been developed for grade 6-10 learners
- Mental Health and Addictions coordinator works with staff in presenting information and supports for learners with addictions
- District-Based Team (DBT) meets regularly and supports learners referred with drug and/or alcohol addictions—providing resources, support, and referral assistance for outside agency intervention
- Training and support from Interior Health—Health Promoting Schools
- Training and support provided by mental health and addictions coordinator and manager of safe schools

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT

Family Engagement Presentations

- Parent engagement sessions each year on vaping, substance misuse and mental health
- Parent sessions/training on trauma-informed practices
- Parent sessions/training on addictions, including digital addictions
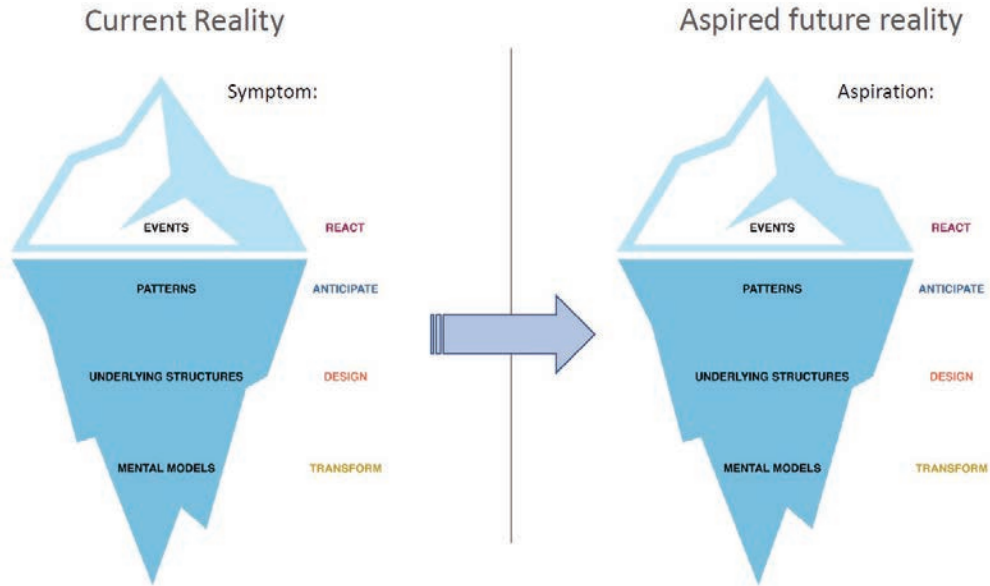
Source: UBC HELP – BC Compassionate Systems Network

CONCLUSION

SD8 fosters learner belonging, safety and engagement by creating caring and inclusive learning communities. School and district staff are important in the achievement of the district and ministry goals to increase school connectedness and learner belonging. By developing learners' physical and mental well-being, and through intentional social emotional learning in classroom throughout the district, SD8 learners are supported in achieving success.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture

> *"We aim to promote physical and mental well-being through social-emotional learning and to foster compassionate learners."*

Three-Year Action Plan (2024-2027)

GOALS:

1. Support K-12 school teams in creating welcoming, engaging and accessible learning environments.	
Monitoring	**Action Items**
• Student achievement with a focus on priority learners • School academic review meetings (Primary Success, Grad Reviews) • Student Learning Surveys • Adolescent Health Survey data • Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data • Grade to grade transitions rates • School-based team data • Student anecdotes • Compassionate Systems Leadership participation rates for school and district leaders • Implementation progress for Accessibility Plan	• Primary success meetings held twice per year with each elementary school • Graduation review meetings held three times per year with each secondary school • Analyze available student data for trends in belonging, safety, connection to adults, and feeling welcomed at school • Implement practices to ensure that every student feels safe, welcomed, has a sense of be-longing and that there are at least two adults with whom they connect • Continue with transition meetings and events for students transitioning into schools and be-tween schools (eg: Welcome to Kindergarten events and inter-school transition meetings) • Update accessibility action plan, including timelines and identification of responsibility • Continue to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Para-chute, and Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs in schools • Continue to promote and implement SOGI events and activities in schools • Increase SOGI allyship in schools • Ensure that students understand how to use the erase tool to re-port incidents of bullying, violence, and harassment • Train staff in Inclusive Design and Document Design through provincial outreach programs • Ensure that schools implement practices so that every student feels safe, welcomed, a sense of belonging and that there are at least two adults with whom they can connect • Ongoing participation in Com-passionate Systems Leadership (CSL) as well as participation in local, regional and provincial CSL networks.

CONCLUSION

2. Promote and deepen mental and physical health and well-being for students in SD8.	
Monitoring	**Action Items**
• Student achievement with a focus on priority learners • School academic review meetings (Primary Success, Grad Reviews) • Student Learning Surveys • Adolescent Health Survey data • Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data • Grade to grade transition rates • School-based team data • Student anecdotes • Number of students accessing resources in schools: clinical counselling, art therapy, Foundry Virtual, PEACE program, etc.) • Number of students accessing food equity programs in schools • Number of students accessing After School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) • Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL) implementation for school and district leaders	• Ensure that students have the support they need to thrive by implementing the Mental Health in Schools (MHiS) strategy, focusing on prevention and reducing stigma • Mental Health and Addictions Coordinator position supporting implementation of physical and mental health programs in SD8 • Continue to expand Open Para-chute Program implementation in schools • Continue to provide information to schools and parents about the Foundry Virtual services • Continue to support schools to liaise with agencies such as Child Youth Mental Health (CYMH), Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Ktunaxa Kinbasket for wraparound student support • Provide access for schools to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) interventions including workshops, training, specific work with school staff, and one-to-one coaching by CTR staff with SD8 staff • Implementation of EASE (Every-day Anxiety Strategies for Educators) in district, and sharing EASE At Home program with families via newsletter • Promote the implementation by teachers of the K-12 physical and health education curriculum across the district • Facilitate efficient and barrier-free access for students to physical and health services through increased collaboration with partner agencies and community organizations • Ensure implementation of Child Centre for Protection's Kids in the Know sexual health education program to support teachers in delivering sexual health curriculum K-12 • Continue implementation of CIRCLES sexual health education program for students with disabilities and diverse needs • Continue to present at parent engagement nights on topics of mental health, student safety, and social emotional learning • Provide workshops for staff and students on the Mental Health in Schools Strategy, trauma-informed practices, and SEL • Ensure each school fully uses its food equity funds and student family affordability funds to support vulnerable students • Continue to learn from Interior Health's Health Promoting Schools (HPS) network, and en-sure that HPS information and resources are provided to staff, students, and parents through-out the district • Continue to provide the After School Sports and Arts Initiative (ASSAI) in rural schools • Continue to provide funding for the HUB program at Kootenay River Secondary School in Creston through a contract with Valley Community Services for a social worker.

CONCLUSION

3. Enhance the social-emotional skills and capacities of learners.	
Monitoring	**Action Items**
- Student achievement with a focus on priority learners - School academic review meetings (Primary Success, Grad Reviews) - Student Learning Surveys - Adolescent Health Survey data - Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data - Grade to grade transition rates - Student anecdotes - Participation by teachers in Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs - Number of staff trained in using the FAIRS program - Compassionate Systems Leadership participation by teachers and district leaders - Participation rate by students in district-offered programs: Open Parachute, PreVenture, Complex Trauma Resources and Foundry - Participation rate by staff for district-offered professional learning workshops (eg: Crisis Prevention Institute, Complex Trauma Resources, Open Parachute, PreVenture)	- Continue to train schools staff in use of effective social emotional learning (SEL) strategies to promote implementation of SEL in classrooms throughout SD8 - Continue to implement executive function strategies, EASE, and the MindUp program at elementary schools - Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools - Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and information to support SEL in classrooms - Continue to provide information for staff to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Parachute, and Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs in schools - Ensure that inclusion support teachers and teacher counsellors are trained in positive behaviour programs, executive functioning, social emotional learning, compassionate systems leadership, and programs such as Open Parachute and PEACEful schools.

CONCLUSION

4. Ensure that every student feels they are safe at school and that they belong.

Monitoring	Action Items
erase reporting - Student Learning Surveys - Principal and staff reporting in MyEdBC - Anecdotes from students and staff - Adolescent Health Survey data - Early Development Index (EDI), Middle Years Development Index (MDI), and Youth Development Index (YDI) data - Grade to grade transition rates	- Implement practices to ensure that every student feels safe, welcomed, a sense of belonging and that there are at least two adults with whom they connect. - Ensure that students understand how to use the erase tool to re-port incidents of bullying, violence, and harassment - Ensure that student plans are in place and that a point person is identified at each school for children/youth in care (CYIC), with consistent tracking through school-based team and district-based team reporting - Updated school-based team and district-based team procedures and recording mechanisms to provide consistency, detailed in-formation gathering, and effective implementation of interventions to promote students' feelings of safety and belonging in schools - Continue to update Inclusive Education Department procedures to ensure effectiveness, and that school staff are aware of and following procedures - Ensure that staff understand and are following the School Safety Manual and the Critical Incidence Response Manual to pro-mote student and staff safety - Increase number of staff who have taken the Behavioural Digital Threat Assessment (BDTA) courses from Safer Schools To-gether (SST) - Continue to train staff in crisis prevention and verbal deescalation strategies using the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) methods - Primary success reviews twice a year to ensure wraparound sup-port for students at schools - Grad reviews three times per year to ensure that students are on track for graduation - Continue to train schools staff in use of effective social emotional learning (SEL) strategies to pro-mote implementation of SEL in classrooms throughout SD8 - Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools - Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and in-formation to support SEL in class-rooms - Continue to provide information for staff to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Para-chute, Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs, and the Behaviour Code in schools - Ensure that inclusion support teachers and teacher counsellors are trained in positive behaviour programs, executive functioning, social emotional learning, com-passionate systems leadership, and programs such as Open Para-chute and PEACEful schools

CONCLUSION

5. Develop communities of practice to support the strategic plan goals and action plan objectives with a focus on priority learners.

Monitoring	Action Items
• Student achievement with a focus on priority learners • Student Learning Surveys • Feedback from school staff and district staff about the communities of practice	• Institute Communities of Practice for inclusion support teachers (ISTs), principals, and teacher counsellors to ensure that staff learn about how to develop and sustain caring and inclusive learning cultures in schools throughout the district • Ensure that inclusion support teachers and teacher counsellors are trained in positive behaviour programs, executive functioning, social emotional learning, com-passionate systems leadership, and programs such as Open Para-chute and PEACEful schools • Continue to train schools staff in use of effective social emotional learning (SEL) strategies to pro-mote implementation of SEL in classrooms throughout SD8 • Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools • Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and in-formation to support SEL in class-rooms • Continue to provide information for staff to support the implementation of programs such as PEACEful schools, Open Para-chute, Positive Behaviour in Schools (PBIS) programs, and the Behaviour Code in schools • Ensure that data from Student Learning Surveys is analyzed and reviewed at the school and dis-trict level, to ensure school learning plans and the district action plan reflect what the data show regarding caring and inclusive learning cultures in SD8

6. Ensure that learners have access to information and resources in schools and in communities.

Monitoring	Action Items
• Community Resources Brochure updates • Data from the HUB at KRSS • Student Learning Survey data • Adolescent Health Survey data • Foundry participation rates	• Update the SD8 Community Resources Brochure on the SD8 website • Ensure that the Open Parachute program is available at all schools • Ensure that staff throughout SD8 have access to Complex Trauma Resources (CTR) courses and information to support SEL in classrooms • Continue to learn from Interior Health's Health Promoting Schools (HPS) network, and ensure that HPS information and resources are provided to staff, students, and parents throughout the district • Ensure that information is available in schools and shared digitally for 2S&LGBTQ+ students, staff, families and allies • Continue to promote and implement SOGI events and activities in schools • Ensure that students understand how to use the erase tool to report incidents of bullying, violence, and harassment • Continue to present at parent engagement nights on topics of mental health, student safety, and social emotional learning • Facilitate efficient and barrier-free access for students to physical and health services through increased collaboration with partner agencies and community organizations • Continue to support schools to liaise with agencies such as Child Youth Mental Health (CYMH), Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Ktunaxa Kinbasket for wraparound student supports.

GRATITUDE

SD8 recognizes that partnerships are a key component in promoting learner success. Working with various agencies and community organizations promotes caring and inclusive learning cultures in SD8 schools, and supports the strategic priorities of the Board of Education in the 2024–2029 Strategic Plan and the service goals of the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

SD8 thanks the following agencies and community partners for supporting SD8 learners:

BC Children's Hospital

BC Provincial Outreach Programs

Child Youth Mental Health

Canadian Centre for Child Protection

Circle of Indigenous Nations Society (COINS)

College of the Rockies

Community Living BC

Compassionate Systems Leadership Network

Complex Trauma Resources

Crisis Prevention Institute

Feed BC

Foundry BC

Healthy Schools BC

Interior Health

Kootenay Art Therapy Institute

Kootenay Kids Society

Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society

McCreary Society

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Ministry of Education and Child Care

Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport

Nelson Community Services

Nelson Hospice Society

North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society

Open Parachute

Safer Schools Together

Selkirk College

UBC HELP

West Kootenay Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR)

Valley Community Services

WE Graham Community Services

School District 8 Kootenay Lake

CONNECTED LEARNERS
CONTINUOUS LEARNING REPORT
2024–2025

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge, respect and honour the First Nations in whose traditional territories the Kootenay Lake School District operates and all Aboriginal people residing within the boundaries of School District No. 8.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Goals of K-12 Education

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (SD8) supports all learners with continuous improvement in their learning so that each learner may graduate with purpose and options for their future. This aligns with the B.C. mandate for public education outlined in the Statement of **Education Policy Order**, **the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Policy**, and **the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act**.

> *"The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy."*

B.C. Statement of Education Policy Order Mission Statement

To support government to achieve their mission, school districts in B.C. are tasked with educating each child so they can become "the Educated Citizen." This is a child who throughout their schooling demonstrates intellectual development — literacy and numeracy — human and social development, and career development.

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning policy requires that boards of education will set, create and maintain a strategic plan that articulates the vision, mission, and values of the school district and identifies priorities that guide the district towards its short and long-term goals.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act represents the province's reconciliation framework and the commitments that Board of Education must support in furthering reconciliation.

Aligning to Our Strategic Plan

The values embedded in the strategic plan include placing learners at the centre, building communities of caring and connection, ensuring equity for diverse learners, respecting cultural identity, and fostering lifelong learning and caring for the future.

Connected learners are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills and actively participate in their own learning. By fostering autonomy and self-direction, they are empowered to take ownership of their education and pursue their passions. Moreover, a focus on building knowledge, curiosity, and awareness of local and global priorities helps students develop a broader perspective and become informed global citizens.

The Connected Learners Continuous Learning report demonstrates how SD8 is inspiring learners to become curious, critical, and creative stewards of the natural world and the local and global community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Action Plan

This report outlines strategies and actions for continuous improvement. Our action plan is a top priority in the 2024-2025 school year. SD8 continually monitors priorities to ensure continuous improvement for all learners, especially Indigenous learners, learners with diverse abilities, children and youth in care, and English language learners.

The following SD8 goals and corresponding actions address the strategic priority of Connected Learners in 2024-2025.

CONNECTED LEARNERS GOALS	ACTION ITEMS
1 **Build knowledge, curiosity, and awareness about local and global priorities.**	◆ Develop a climate action and sustainability action plan to respond to climate change. ◆ Work with Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) and Kootenay Boundary Environmental Education (KBEE) programs to foster environmental awareness and stewardship among students. ◆ Deliver place-based, inquiry-based educational content that builds knowledge and curiosity about environmental and global issues.
2 **Promote collaborative partnerships with local and broader community.**	◆ Continue collaboration with the Selkirk Concert Society to provide workshops and concerts that connect students with local and national artists. ◆ Strengthen ties with organizations such as ArtStarts, Rotary, and UNESCO to provide diverse learning opportunities that extend beyond the school walls.
3 **Increase opportunities for students to have a voice, to engage and to explore their interests.**	◆ Support student-led initiatives such as District Student Voice Council, school green teams, the annual Student Leadership Conference and student trustees to ensure students are engaged and their interests represented. ◆ Encourage student participation in fine arts programs, music, drama festivals, athletics and outdoor education programs to foster self-expression and exploration of interests.
4 **Prepare students to safely and responsibly navigate the digital world.**	◆ Establish an artificial intelligence (AI) framework with guiding principles and core values including a resource web page and engagement opportunities. ◆ Implement digital literacy and citizenship programs to educate students about navigating the digital world safely and ethically. ◆ Provide educators with professional development opportunities to integrate educational technology into the classroom effectively and responsibly.

A Focus on Student Success

SD8 continues to look for ways to improve learners' strengths and celebrate their successes. By using data to inform decision-making, planning and practices, and by working with education partners, SD8 can make a positive difference for all learners.

The annual Connected Learners Continuous Learning Report supports the district's mission and vision:

MISSION

We inspire and support each learner to thrive in a caring learning environment.

VISION

Our learners grow as global citizens in an innovative and inclusive community.

This report outlines how SD8 supports learner success by inspiring learners to become curious, critical, and creative stewards of the natural world and the local and global community.

INTRODUCTION

Connected Learners

This report closely aligns with the Board of Education's Strategic Plan 2024–2029. The report reflects SD8's commitment to fostering continuous improvement in learning, ensuring each learner graduates with purpose and options for their future. This aligns with British Columbia's broader educational mandates, focusing on developing each child into an "Educated Citizen" with a foundation in intellectual, human and social, and career development.

SD8's strategic plan envisions supporting and inspiring each learner in a caring environment, with the goal of growing learners into global citizens in an innovative and inclusive community. The values highlighted in the strategic plan, such as placing learners at the centre, building communities of caring and connection, ensuring equity for diverse learners, and fostering lifelong learning and care for the future, are echoed in this report.

Specifically, the report demonstrates how SD8 is connecting learners with the world around them both inside and outside the school settings. It emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills, autonomy, self-direction, and a broader perspective on local and global priorities, aligning with the strategic priorities of the district. These priorities include fostering lifelong learners, connected learners, a caring and inclusive learning culture, cultural and identity development, and career development, all aimed at sustaining each student's success.

SD8 is a hub of diverse learning opportunities for students, as highlighted by the following examples:

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education is a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to learning that focuses on understanding the environment, ecosystems, and human impact. It encompasses a wide range of subjects, including science, social studies, and sustainability practices. The goal is to instill in students a sense of environmental stewardship, critical thinking about ecological issues, and the knowledge and skills needed for informed, sustainable decisions. Through classroom instruction, field trips, and hands-on projects, students become environmentally literate citizens, aware of and actively contributing to the well-being of the planet.

Organizations and programs like CBEEN, KBEE, Take Me Outside and Wildsight support many of our schools. SD8 is committed to environmental education by offering diverse programs that range from interactive classroom lessons to immersive field experiences, fostering a generation of ecologically conscious and responsible individuals.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Outdoor education has a strong presence in SD8. It is an experiential learning approach that takes place in natural settings outside the traditional classroom. It emphasizes hands-on, immersive experiences in the outdoors, fostering personal and social development, teamwork, and an appreciation for nature. Activities such as camping, hiking, biking and team-building exercises help students gain valuable life skills, environmental awareness, and a sense of connection to the natural world. By prioritizing personal growth and teamwork, outdoor education contributes to the development of well-rounded individuals who are deeply connected to the natural environment.

INTRODUCTION

ATHLETICS

School athletics play a vital role in the overall educational experience, fostering physical health, teamwork, and school spirit among students. Governed by the British Columbia School Sports (BCSS), a wide range of sports are offered across various seasons, including basketball, volleyball, soccer, track and field, and many others. BCSS ensures equitable participation, promoting inclusivity across gender, skill levels, and backgrounds, including special attention to Indigenous learners and those with diverse abilities. Emphasis on athletics in schools not only enhances physical fitness among students but also contributes to the development of their leadership skills and community engagement.

FINE ARTS

SD8 offers a diverse range of fine arts programs, encompassing music, drama/theatre, studio arts, and dance. These programs area available both as part of the curriculum and as extracurricular activities for elementary and secondary students. The programs are varied, including integrated fine arts in the curriculum and flexible, stand-alone programs.

STUDENT VOICE

Student voice refers to the active and meaningful expression of students' perspectives, opinions, ideas, and experiences in matters that affect their education and school environment. It involves providing opportunities for students to share their insights on various aspects of their learning, school policies, and broader educational decision-making processes. Encouraging student voice fosters a sense of ownership, empowerment, and collaboration, contributing to a more inclusive and student-centred educational experience. School districts that actively engage student voices often report higher levels of student satisfaction and engagement.

Initiatives Promoting Student Voice and Agency:

- Student Leadership Conference: an annual event designed to bring together students for a day of learning, inspiration, and empowerment.

- District Student Voice Council: provide advice on Improving the student experience by initiating opportunities to gather and review data from students in each of our school communities.

- School Student Council: an elected body of students that works with school administrators to represent the interests and concerns of the student body.

- Student Trustees: students selected to represent their peers to the SD8 Board of Education, providing input to district-wide decisions affecting the student experience.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our Action Plan aligns closely with the strategic priority of creating "Connected Learners." Goals and action are designed to address diverse learner needs and foster an inclusive, engaging, and forward-looking educational environment.

Strategic Alignment Highlights:

Build knowledge, curiosity, and awareness about local and global priorities. This goal aligns with the priority to integrate global issues into local learning contexts, fostering a well-rounded worldview among students.

Promote collaborative partnerships with local and broader community. This goal emphasizes the importance of community partnerships, reflecting our strategic priority to extend learning beyond the classroom.

Increase opportunities for students to have a voice, to engage and to explore their interests. This goal emphasizes student-centered learning, where every student feels heard and empowered.

Prepare students to safely and responsibly navigate the digital world. This goal aligns with our priority to prepare students for the challenges of the digital age, ensuring they are safe, responsible, and adept in digital environments.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Data Analysis

In SD8 we collect and analyze different levels of data including provincial surveys, assessments, instruments and the voice of students.

STUDENT LEARNING SURVEY (SLS)

The Student Learning Survey is an annual province-wide census of students in grades 4, 7, 10, and 12, along with their parents, guardians/caregivers, staff and school principals/vice-principals. It has been conducted in B.C. public schools every year since 2001. The SLS collects data on student experiences in schools and classrooms, serving as the only province-wide source of information on students' learning experiences from the perspectives of students, parents/caregivers, school administrators, and staff. This data provides valuable insights into key areas that support students' growth toward becoming educated citizens.

The SLS provides an invaluable source of data on the experiences of students, parents and guardians/caregivers, principals/vice-principals, and school staff in the B.C. K-12 education system. Survey participants are asked about the B.C. K-12 education system's contributions towards the intellectual, human, social, and career development of students. Because the SLS gathers data that is directly from students, the survey helps the Ministry of Education and Child Care to gauge the effectiveness of its eight evidence-based policy practices to support students and improve education outcomes. Over the years, the SLS has provided vital information for policy decisions within the ministry, as well as for initiatives such as the Healthy Schools' BC program in the Ministry of Health, advocacy work for at-risk youth by the Representative for Children and Youth, and student health monitoring at the provincial and regional level by the BC Centre for Disease Control.

The following SLS questions relate to the strategic priority of Connected Learners:

- Learning opportunities outside of school
- Learning about human impact on the environment
- Participation in activities outside of school hours

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Learning Opportunities Outside of School

At school, are you told about possible learning experiences in your community?
Or do you have opportunities to learn in places outside of school?

Legend: Positive (green), Neutral (light blue), Negative (dark blue)
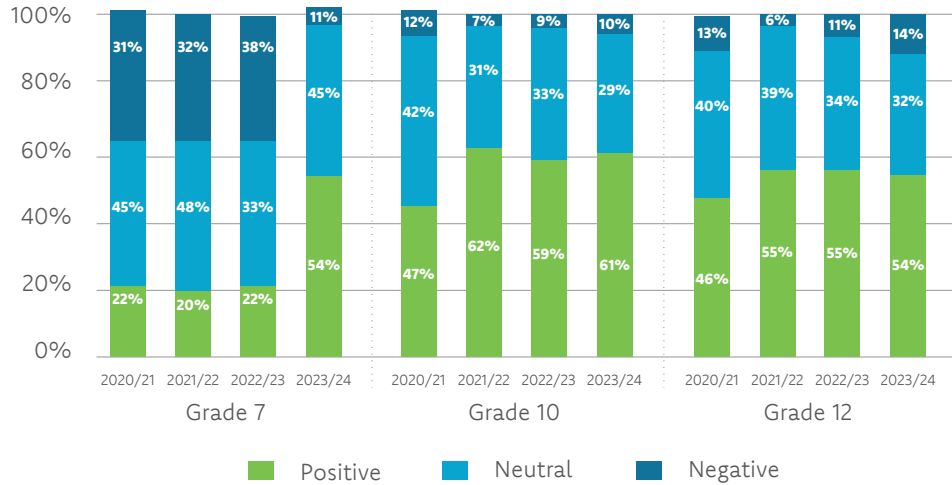
Grade 7:

In 2020-2021	22% Positive	45% Neutral	34% Negative
In 2021-2022	20% **Positive**	48% Neutral	32% Negative
In 2022-2023	28% Positive	33% Neutral	38% Negative
In 2023-2024	54% Positive	37% Neutral	11% Negative

Grade 10:

In 2020-2021	47% Positive	42% Neutral	12% Negative
In 2021-2022	62% Positive	31% Neutral	7% Negative
In 2022-2023	59% Positive	32% Neutral	9% Negative
In 2023-2024	61% Positive	29% Neutral	10% Negative

Grade 12:

In 2020-2021	46% Positive	40% Neutral	13% Negative
In 2021-2022	55% Positive	39% Neutral	6% Negative
In 2022-2023	55% Positive	34% Neutral	11% Negative
In 2023-2024	54% Positive	32% Neutral	14% Negative

The data reveals distinct trends across Grades 7, 10, and 12 over the four years. For Grade 7, there has been a

dramatic increase in positive responses, rising from 22% in 2020-2021 to 54% in 2023-2024, accompanied by a substantial decline in negative responses from 34% to 11%, and a moderate decrease in neutral responses. Grade 10 shows a consistently high percentage of positive responses, peaking at 62% in 2021-2022 and stabilizing around 59-61% in subsequent years, with negative responses remaining low (7-12%) and a slight decline in neutral responses. In Grade 12, positive responses increased between 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, reaching 55%, before stabilizing at 54% in 2023-2024. However, negative responses fluctuated, rising slightly to 14% in 2023-2024, while neutral responses showed a gradual decline. Overall, Grade 7 demonstrates the most notable improvement in positive sentiment, while Grades 10 and 12 exhibit more stable trends. These trends suggest consistent satisfaction in Grades 10 and 12, with a noticeable improvement in Grade 7, highlighting the importance of checking and improving learning opportunities linked to the community.

Learning About Human Impact on the Environment

At school, are you learning about how people change the world around us?
How human activity affects our enviroment?
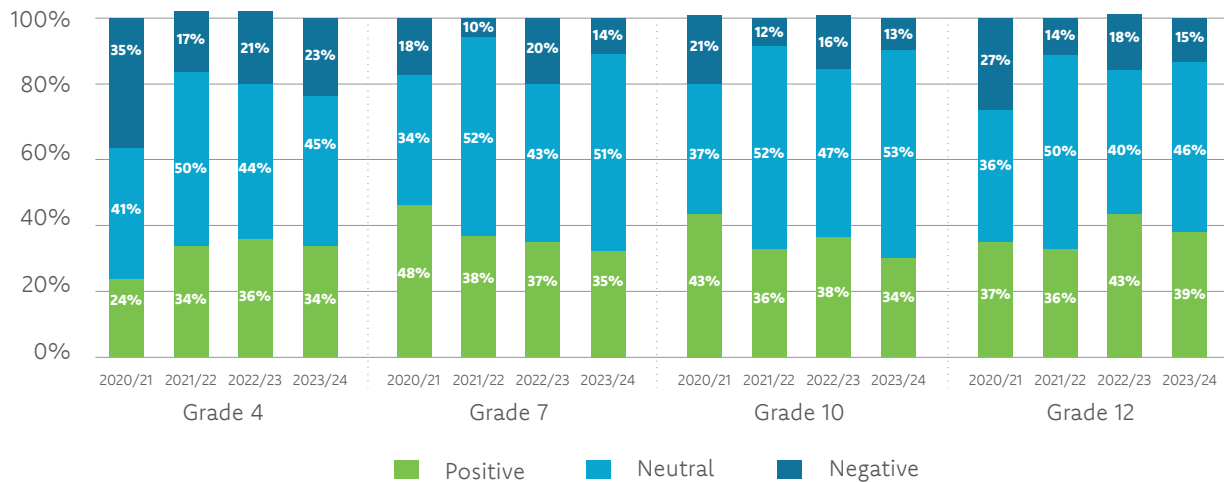
Grade 4:

In 2020-2021	24% Positive	41% Neutral	35% Negative
In 2021-2022	34% Positive	50% Neutral	17% Negative
In 2022-2023	36% Positive	44% Neutral	21% Negative
In 2023-2024	34% Positive	43% Neutral	23% Negative

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Grade 7:

In 2020-2021	48% Positive	34% Neutral	18% Negative
In 2021-2022	38% Positive	52% Neutral	10% Negative
In 2022-2023	37% Positive	43% Neutral	20% Negative
In 2023-2024	35% Positive	51% Neutral	14% Negative

Grade 10:

In 2020-2021	43% Positive	37% Neutral	21% Negative
In 2021-2022	36% Positive	52% Neutral	12% Negative
In 2022-2023	38% Positive	47% Neutral	16% Negative
In 2023-2024	34% Positive	53% Neutral	13% Negative

Grade 12:

In 2020-2021	37% Positive	36% Neutral	27% Negative
In 2021-2022	36% Positive	50% Neutral	14% Negative
In 2022-2023	43% Positive	40% Neutral	18% Negative
In 2023-2024	39% Positive	46% Neutral	15% Negative

The data on learning about the human impact on the environment shows varied engagement across grades, with differing trends in positive, neutral, and negative responses. Grade 4 demonstrates a modest improvement in positive responses, increasing from 24% in 2020-2021 to a peak of 36% in 2022-2023 before slightly declining to 34% in 2023-2024. Negative responses decreased steadily from 35% to 23% over the same period, suggesting some growth in awareness among younger students, although neutrality remains relatively high. Grade 7 shows an inconsistent pattern, with positive responses declining from 48% in 2020-2021 to 35% in 2023-2024. Neutral responses increased to 51% in 2023-2024, highlighting a potential need to reinvigorate engagement at this stage, as negative responses remain low but stable. Grade 10 also displays fluctuating engagement, with positive responses peaking at 43% in 2020-2021 but falling to 34% in 2023-2024. Neutral responses have steadily risen to 53% in 2023-2024, reflecting a growing sense of ambivalence in this grade. Grade 12 presents a more encouraging trajectory, with positive responses increasing from 36% in 2021-2022 to 43% in 2022-2023 before slightly declining to 39% in 2023-2024. Negative responses have decreased consistently, while neutral responses remain significant, indicating room for deeper engagement in senior grades. Overall, the trends suggest the need for targeted strategies to sustain and enhance learning outcomes across grades, particularly for Grades 7 and 10, where engagement appears to waver the most.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Participation in Activities Outside of School Hours

Do you go to any clubs, dances, sports or music classes outside of school?
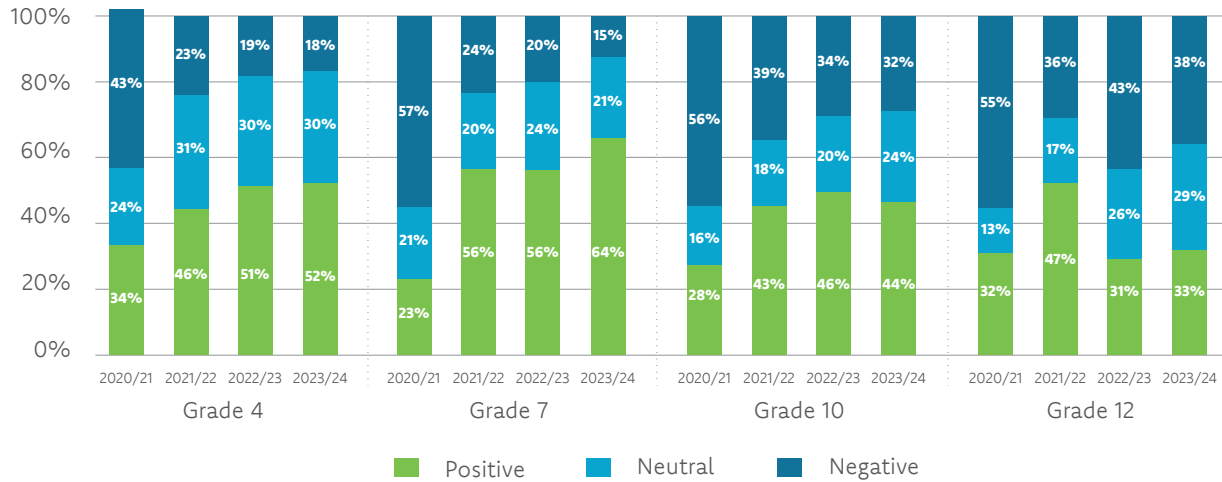
Grade 4:

In 2020-2021	34% Positive	24% Neutral	43% Negative
In 2021-2022	46% Positive	31% Neutral	23% Negative
In 2022-2023	51% Positive	30% Neutral	19% Negative
In 2023-2024	52% Positive	30% Neutral	18% Negative

Grade 7:

In 2020-2021	23% Positive	21% Neutral	57% Negative
In 2021-2022	56% Positive	20% Neutral	24% Negative
In 2022-2023	56% Positive	24% Neutral	20% Negative
In 2023-2024	64% Positive	21% Neutral	15% Negative

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Grade 10:

In 2020-2021	28% Positive	16% Neutral	56% Negative
In 2021-2022	43% Positive	18% Neutral	39% Negative
In 2022-2023	46% Positive	20% Neutral	34% Negative
In 2023-2024	44% Positive	24% Neutral	32% Negative

Grade 12:

In 2020-2021	32% Positive	13% Neutral	55% Negative
In 2021-2022	47% Positive	17% Neutral	36% Negative
In 2022-2023	31% Positive	26% Neutral	43% Negative
In 2023-2024	33% Positive	29% Neutral	38% Negative

The data illustrates varying levels of student participation in activities outside of school hours across different grades. Grade 4 shows a steady increase in positive participation rates, rising from 34% in 2020-2021 to 52% in 2023-2024, with a corresponding decline in negative responses from 43% to 18%. This suggests growing engagement in extracurricular activities among younger students. Grade 7 displays a remarkable improvement, with positive responses increasing sharply from 23% in 2020-2021 to 64% in 2023-2024, and negative responses dropping from 57% to 15%, indicating a significant uptake in participation during early adolescence. While increases in participation in activities outside of school are to be expected post-pandemic, grade 10 reveals a more gradual upward trend, with positive participation rising from 28% in 2020-2021 to 44% in 2023-2024, but negative responses remain relatively high, underscoring a potential need to foster greater engagement at this stage. Grade 12 presents mixed results, with positive participation peaking at 47% in 2021-2022 before declining to 33% in 2023-2024, and neutral responses increasing over time, suggesting a shift towards ambivalence or reduced involvement as students approach graduation. These findings emphasize the importance of sustained support and accessible opportunities for extracurricular participation, particularly for older students, to maintain their engagement and connection to broader learning environments.

2023-2024 Youth Developmental Instrument (YDI)

The Youth Development Instrument is an assessment tool completed by youth in grades 10 to 12, typically administered between January and April. Designed to explore the environments, experiences, health, and well-being of British Columbia's youth, it provides valuable insights into their perspectives as they navigate late adolescence and transition into young adulthood. Since its development in 2020, the YDI has served as a critical resource for decision-makers and service providers, offering data-driven insights to inform strategies that enhance youth well-being. In the 2023-2024 academic year, the YDI was implemented across BC school districts and independent schools in all five health authorities.
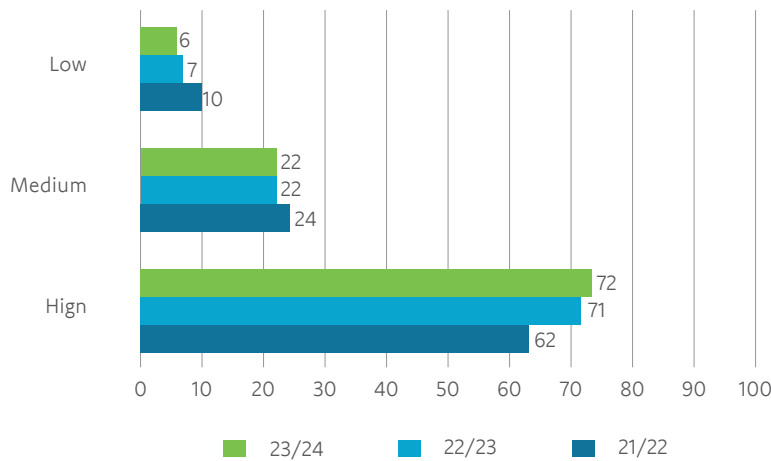
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

CLIMATE CONCERN

The question asked of students measures their level of agreement with the following statement about the severity of climate change:

| *"Regarding climate change, I feel that the threat should be taken more seriously."*

See the 2021-2022 to 2023-2024 comparison below:

Climate Concerns

In 2021-2022	62% High	22% Medium	10% Low
In 2022-2023	71% High	22% Medium	7% Low
In 2023-2024	72% High	22% Medium	6% Low

The findings highlight a growing sense of urgency among youth regarding environmental challenges, emphasizing the timeliness of a new SD8 climate action and sustainability plan now in development. The district developed Draft Policy 173 – Climate Action and Sustainability in fall 2024, and it is now out for field testing, which is the 30 day period in which the public can provide final feedback on the policy before it is adopted as final by the Board of Education in early 2025. The policy, once adopted, will guide the climate action and sustainability plan as it is developed.

Programs and partnerships with environmental organizations, such as the Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) and Kootenay Boundary Environmental Education (KBEE) also play a crucial role in fostering student engagement with climate and environmental solutions and provide opportunities to take action to address climate and sustainability issues.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Continuous Improvement to Support Response to Trends

The following examples of programs and experiences demonstrate how SD8 provides opportunities for students to learn and connect.

Build Knowledge, Curiosity and Awareness about Local and Global Priorities.

Climate Action and Sustainability Plan

A climate action and sustainability plan is already taking shape in SD8, with staff, education partners and the Board of Education building on foundational work initiated in October 2025 and set to be finalized by March 2025. The SD8 Education, Awareness and Action Working Group is actively identifying specific actions to better integrate environmental sustainability and climate action into our core educational programming. Actions identified at this stage align with the plan's categories and objectives:

- ◆ Assess current sustainability-related courses and initiatives
- ◆ Identify opportunities and partnerships
- ◆ Foster conversations and learning
- ◆ Promote environmental literacy
- ◆ Encourage project-based student engagement
- ◆ Honour Indigenous knowledge and practices

These education and awareness actions correspond to a set of operational actions. Together, actions will be refined and prioritized to address both immediate and long-term sustainability goals and timelines, and key milestones and deadlines established. Actions will be feasible and achievable so that SD8 can demonstrate that we are addressing climate change and becoming more sustainable as an organization.

Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) and the Kootenay Boundary Environmental Education (KBEE)

CBEEN and the KBEE collectively offer a robust and comprehensive approach to environmental education, characterized by regional focus, experiential learning, curriculum integration, development of critical thinking, community engagement, and alignment with global sustainability goals. This approach develops connected learners who are knowledgeable, curious, and actively engaged in environmental issues both locally and globally.

SD8 schools are participating in the Take Me Outside for Learning School Challenge with the support of KBEE. This initiative encourages teachers to commit to taking their learning outside on a weekly basis throughout the school year. By fostering outdoor, experiential, place-based, and place-conscious learning, this program enhances students' understanding of their local environment and empowers them to take thoughtful action. This school year, SD8 achieved the highest level of student participation in the initiative in the Kootenay-Boundary region.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Wildsight

Wildsight Creston Valley engages and inspires the local community. Wildsight's Eco Stewards program empowers students to connect with their local environment and take meaningful action through hands-on projects. **Recently, grade 6/7 students from Creston's Adam Robertson Elementary focused their efforts on Western Painted Turtles.** Under the guidance of the Wildsight educator, the students explored local ecosystems and their interconnectedness before visiting the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area (CVWMA) to install basking logs for the turtles as part of their Eco Stewards project. With support from Wildsight Creston Valley and CVWMA staff, the students also learned about monitoring tools used for wildlife conservation, including song recorders for detecting invasive bullfrogs and equipment for studying the endangered northern leopard frog. The basking logs, donated by a Wildsight Creston director, are already being used by the turtles as species-specific habitat. This initiative builds on Wildsight Creston Valley's ongoing efforts to restore turtle habitat and to reduce mortality by updating fencing to prevent turtles from crossing roads.

Environmental Education Leadership Clinic

The annual Environmental Education Leadership Clinic was held from April 14th to 16th, 2024, at Nipika Mountain Resort, bringing together 40 educators from the Columbia Basin and across British Columbia. Representatives from SD8 and eight local chapters of the Environmental Educators' Provincial Specialist Association (EEPSA) collaborated with non-profit organizations—including CBEEN, KBEE, Wildsight, Take Me Outside, Classrooms to Communities, and the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation. Together, they strategized on enhancing outdoor and environmental learning in their respective regions.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Promote Collaborative Partnerships with the Local and Broader Community.

ART STARTS

Community and provincial programs provide opportunities for students to expand the role of fine arts in education to activate learning and nurture creativity in students. ArtStarts in Schools, established in 1996, is a charitable organization in British Columbia dedicated to enriching the educational experiences of young people through the integration of arts. It serves as a vital link between educators, artists, families, and communities, underscoring the importance of art in both education and everyday life. Each year, ArtStarts provides a remarkable number of over 640,000 unique arts experiences, reaching students in urban, rural, and remote areas across the province. The organization's initiatives are multifaceted, including arranging artistic performances in schools, hosting an annual showcase conference for young audience presenters, offering artist residencies, and providing grants to schools and districts. Additionally, ArtStarts focuses on professional development for artists and teachers, organizes gallery exhibitions showcasing young people's art, and offers free programming for families. Catering to students from kindergarten to Grade 12 in both public and private schools, ArtStarts plays a crucial role in activating learning and fostering creativity among young people in British Columbia, making arts an essential and vibrant part of their educational journey.

In the 2024-2025 school year ArtStarts if offering the following opportunities:

Program or Opportunity	Description	Schools
D.O. Gibson	Mental Health, Anti- Bullying	Canyon Lister Elementary, Redfish Elementary, L.V. Rogers Secondary, Kootenay River Secondary, Homelinks, W.E. Graham Elementary/Secondary, Mount Sentinel Secondary
SQx Dance Company	2SLGBTQIA+, Anti-Bullying, Climate Change and/or Environmentalism	Canyon Lister Elementary, W.E. Graham Elementary/Secondary, Winlaw Elementary
RupLoops	Mental Health, Anti-Bullying, Climate Change and/or Environmentalism	Canyon Lister Elementary, Redfish Elementary, Wildflower, Kootenay River Secondary, South Nelson Elementary, Hume Elementary
FloWarrior	Mental Health, Anti-Bullying	Crawford Bay Elementary/Secondary, Canyon Lister Elementary, Redfish Elementary, Wildflower, W.E. Graham Elementary/Secondary, Winlaw Elementary, Salmo Elementary, Mount Sentinel Secondary
Quinn Beasley	Mental Health, Anti-Bullying	Crawford Bay Elementary/Secondary, Canyon Lister Elementary, Wildflower, L.V. Rogers Secondary, Homelinks, W.E. Graham Elementary/Secondary, Blewett Elementary, Salmo Elementary, South Nelson Elementary, Mount Sentinel Secondary, Hume Elementary
Jess Dance	First Nations, Inuit, and/or Metis Art, LGBTQ2SIA+, Anti-Bullying	Crawford Bay Elementary/Secondary, Canyon Lister Elementary, Redfish Elementary, Wildflower, W.E. Graham Elementary/Secondary, Winlaw Elementary, DESK, Salmo Elementary, South Nelson Elementary, Hume Elementary

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

SELKIRK CONCERT SOCIETY

Selkirk Concert Society offers a series of educational and cultural events focused on music and performance, aimed at engaging students in the arts. Various artists and musicians will be participating in these events, including Itamar Erez Jazz Quartet, 88 Strings World Music performance, Judy Brown, Mike Fahie, Sapphire Guthrie, and others.

The events are spread across several months, each featuring different artists and activities. These include guitar, violin, dance, keyboard, and vocal workshops, as well as special events like a band camp, singer/songwriter concerts, and a composition and music video making session. The workshops and concerts are scheduled to take place in various schools including Trafalgar, L.V. Rogers Secondary, Wildflower Nelson, J.V. Humphries and Mt. Sentinel Secondary.

The Selkirk Concert Society's initiative offer a rich and diverse program, providing students with opportunities to learn from and interact with accomplished musicians and artists. This enhances their educational experience by exposing them to various aspects of music and performance arts.

In the 2024–2025 school year Selkirk Concert Society opportunities and participating schools include the following:

Musician	Workshop	Date	Schools
Itamar Erez Jazz Quartet	Concert	September 2024	Trafalgar
88 Strings World Music	Performance	October 2024	L.V. Rogers Secondary
Sapphire Guthrie	Guitar/Singer Songwriter workshop	October 2024	L.V. Rogers Secondary
Mike Fahie	Trombone Workshop	November 2024	L.V. Rogers Secondary
Storm Mountain concert–Jeff Faragher, cello, Martine den Bok, viola, Sue Gould, piano	Performance	January 2025	Wildflower Nelson
Johanna Perron and Natasha Jaffe cello	Concert	March 2025	Wildflower Nelson
Judy Brown–singer/songwriter	Songwriting	TBA	J.V. Humphries Elementary/Secondary
Mike Rudd–guitar	Workshop	TBA	Mount Sentinel Secondary
Emma Rush–guitar	Concert	TBA	South Nelson Elementary
Kootenay Musical Theatre Society presentation by composer Doug Jamieson	Presentation	TBA	Salmo Secondary

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Increase opportunities for students to have a voice to engage and to explore their interests.

STUDENT TRUSTEES

Student trustees in SD8 play a vital role representing the diverse voices of the student population on the Board of Education. Candidates are selected through a comprehensive process involving the submission of an application, interviews, and final selection each June. Applicants must demonstrate leadership potential, include a reference letter, a resume, and a written response to a provided question. The selected trustees participate in an orientation covering the district's strategic plan, governance, and board policies, ensuring they understand their responsibilities. Their role includes attending meetings, adhering to board procedures and ethical guidelines, and maintaining active engagement throughout the year to amplify student perspectives.

For the 2024-2025 school year, the following Student Trustees represent their respective schools:

1. Mischa Gretchen — Mt. Sentinel Secondary

2. Rebecca Metcalf — Mt. Sentinel Secondary

3. Thea Solarik — L.V. Rogers Secondary

4. Emma Lecompte — Kootenay River Secondary

5. Bo Ashe — Kootenay River Secondary

6. Daisy Lamoureux — J.V. Humphries Elementary/Secondary

7. Emerson Zuk — J.V. Humphries Elementary/Secondary

8. Edwin Ludwar — Salmo Secondary

STUDENT VOICE COUNCIL

The District Student Voice Council provides students in grades 8, 9, 11, and 12 an opportunity to share their ideas and contribute to improving schools. The council meets three times throughout the year to plan, share ideas and learn about opportunities for students across the district. Insights from council meetings guide efforts to improve learning and create a more supportive school environment. The council also selects themes for the annual Student Leadership Conference.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2024

On November 5, 2024, the SD8 Student Leadership Conference brought Grades 8-12 together at Mount Sentinel Secondary to explore the theme of "Future Readiness in a Changing World." Highlights included an inspiring AI keynote, a "future-ready" trade show, and a dynamic KIVA panel featuring recent SD8 graduates and current students.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

PERFORMING AND FINE ARTS

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the SD8 Performing and Fine Arts Survey demonstrates the vibrant role of arts education across schools within the district. While some schools focus on foundational arts education embedded in the curriculum, others take pride in extracurricular and community-focused projects.

MUSIC PROGRAMS

Music continues to be a cornerstone of artistic expression in SD8. Many schools host activities such as seasonal concerts and performances for significant events, fostering students' musical skills and appreciation.

DRAMA AND THEATRE

Drama programs offer creative platforms through classroom lessons, theatrical performances, and extracurricular drama clubs. These initiatives support students in developing confidence, acting, and stagecraft skills.

FINE ARTS

Visual arts programs vary widely, including individual and group projects, classroom-based initiatives, and community engagement through artistic displays. Schools also engage students with unique projects, from pottery and photography to more specialized endeavors like fundraising through art.

In the 2024-2025 school year these are example of performing and fine art opportunities at schools in SD8:

School	Fine Arts Opportunities
Erickson Elementary	Winter concert.
Redfish Elementary	Winter concert, spring concert, drama production, arts education in classrooms.
Winlaw Elementary	Winter concert, song writing, music videos for ArtStarts project
Wildflower	Music, drama at classroom level, class play annually, singing and fine arts in classroom.
Mt. Sentinel Secondary	Fine arts winter night program, drama programs, cross curricular art projects, year-end Academy and Media Arts Film Showcase.
South Nelson Elementary	Winter concert, Shayna Jones performance.
Adam Robertson Elementary	Primary Holiday Concert, Intermediate Holiday Coffee House. Remembrance Day performance, fine arts program that includes music, art and drama.
Crawford Bay Elementary/ Secondary	After school singing ASSAI program, music classes, drumming, singing, Christmas concert, school play at local theatre, Indigenous-focused large art piece being planned
L.V. Rogers Secondary	Winter performance, spring performance, Shakespeare Festival, Dance performances including a trip to Vancouver to perform, Visual Arts projects ongoing.
Salmo Elementary	Christmas concert, Remembrance Day presentation, holiday art displays.
Hume Elementary	Winter concert, drama at the classroom level, fine arts in the classroom, stop motion animation video creation.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Prepare students to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.

In alignment with SD8's 2024–2029 Strategic Plan, the district is developing an action plan that outlines a comprehensive approach to integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into our educational framework. By establishing core values and guiding principles, developing dedicated online AI resources, and engaging families through informative sessions, SD8 aims to equip our students, educators, and community with the necessary tools and understanding to effectively engage with AI technologies, ensuring their ethical use and fostering a culture of innovation and inclusivity.

The British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care offers comprehensive resources to support the ethical, responsible and safe integration of AI in K–12 education. These materials assist school boards, educators, and parents in formulating local policies, teaching AI concepts, and fostering digital literacy skills among students. AI tools used in K-12 education need to emphasize a human-centred approach and ensure AI serves as a complementary tool that enhances learning experiences, while maintaining the essential role of human interaction in education.

The first step of the action plan is to develop core values and guiding principles that align with SD8's strategic goals. Inclusivity, accountability, excellence, authenticity, innovation, engagement and well-being including protection of privacy are integral to the plan. These values and principles will guide the ethical and effective use of AI within the district, ensuring that AI tools provide equal learning opportunities for all students. Additionally, when AI is used, its use needs to be transparent and result in high-quality, reliable information. The action plan will also support meaningful and relevant learning experiences, encourage creativity and exploration of new AI technologies, foster community involvement and collaboration, and promote well-being and positive impact through AI.

As part of our action plan, we will create a dedicated web presence to serve as a one-stop resource for students, staff, and parents. SD8 will provide online access to AI-related curriculum materials, training programs, helpful links, and community engagement opportunities as well as locally developed resources including videos from educational events and curated links to support learning, innovation, and understanding in the field of AI. Regular updates will ensure that online content remains current with the latest AI developments, educational tools, and best practices, supporting ongoing learning and engagement.

Additionally, we will organize family engagement sessions to explore and understand the role of AI in education. These informative workshops will discuss AI applications, benefits, and challenges, providing guidance on supporting students' responsible use of technology. Topics will include digital citizenship, data privacy, and ethical considerations in AI, ensuring that families are well-informed and can actively participate in their children's digital education.

This comprehensive approach will ensure that students, parents, and educators are all involved in creating a digitally safe and aware school community and students are equipped to navigate the complexities of the digital world on their journey to becoming responsible, informed digital citizens.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Additional Professional Learning, Resources and Initiatives

- On January 20, 2025, the District Professional Development Day, themed *Future Ready*, will focus on the skills and mindsets necessary for navigating complexity and imagining new possibilities. The keynote speaker, Will Richardson, will emphasize these essential skills and mindsets, inspiring staff to explore strategies that prepare students for the future. The day aims to ensure participants leave with actionable ideas and a sense of optimism.

- Safer Schools Together Behavioural and Digital Threat Assessment (BDTA) Toolkit: This toolkit enhances school safety by equipping educators and administrators with tools to proactively identify and address potential threats. It focuses on early intervention through behavioural and digital data analysis, allowing for timely support for at-risk students.

- Parent Engagement Nights (Sexting, Video Games, Social Media): These sessions educate parents about the challenges and risks associated with digital activities like sexting, video gaming, and social media use. They promote awareness and understanding, enabling parents to guide and support their children in navigating these digital spaces safely and responsibly.

- Digital M.E.: This document provides guidelines for students to understand and manage their digital presence effectively, including strategies for maintaining privacy, understanding digital footprints, and engaging in positive online behaviours.

These professional learning opportunities, resources and initiatives collectively contribute to a holistic approach to digital safety and literacy, address immediate concerns and foster long-term responsible digital citizenship among students.

Action Plan Moving Forward

The Connected Learners Action Plan for 2024—2025 builds on the successes of 2023-2024, reflecting SD8's commitment to fostering an inclusive, innovative, and student-centered educational environment. The plan aligns closely with the district's strategic goals and prioritizes the needs of Indigenous learners, students with diverse abilities, children and youth in care, and English language learners.

SD8 continues to focus on enhancing learning opportunities through experiential and inquiry-based education and emphasizing environmental and technological literacy. Initiatives such as partnerships with organizations like CBEEN, KBEE, and Wildsight provide hands-on, place-based learning experiences, while the development of an AI framework and comprehensive digital literacy programs equips students to navigate the complexities of the digital world responsibly.

Collaboration remains a cornerstone of the action plan. We continue to strengthen ties to community and cultural organizations like ArtStarts and the Selkirk Concert Society. These partnerships provide students with rich opportunities to engage in the arts, sustainability, and leadership, extending learning beyond the classroom. Another priority is to amplify student voice through programs such as the District Student Voice Council, Student Trustees, and the Student Leadership Conference so we ensure that diverse perspectives influence decision-making and drive innovation within the district.

To support the plan's goals, professional development for educators will focus on equipping them to integrate sustainability, arts, and technology into their teaching practices while meeting the diverse needs of their students. Initiatives like the 2025 District Professional Development Day will highlight skills and mindsets necessary for preparing students for a rapidly changing world. Equity and inclusion remain at the forefront of the district's efforts. Culturally responsive programming and Indigenous education foster a learning environment that celebrates diversity and supports all learners.

CONCLUSION

The 2024—2025 Connected Learners Continuous Learning Report highlights SD8's dedication to cultivating an inclusive, innovative, and student–centered educational environment. By prioritizing experiential learning, environmental stewardship, digital literacy, and cultural engagement, the district creates equitable opportunities for all learners. This includes Indigenous students, children and youth in care, English language learners, and students with diverse abilities.

SD8 continues to adapt and innovate in response to the evolving needs of its diverse student population through strategic partnerships, enhanced student voice initiatives, and targeted professional development for educators. These efforts align with the district's vision of nurturing global citizens who thrive as curious, critical, and creative contributors to society.

As SD8 progresses into the 2024—2025 school year, this report reflects the district's commitment to continuous improvement and to inspiring and supporting learners to thrive in a caring and inclusive learning environment. Together, with the support of families, educators, and community partners, SD8 will continue to empower learners to achieve their fullest potential and contribute meaningfully to their communities and the world around them.

GRATITUDE

ArtStarts

Columbia Basin Enviromental Education Network(CBEEN)

First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)

Kootenay Boundary Environmental Education(KBEE)

Safer Schools Together

Selkirk Concert Society

Rotary Club of Creston Valley

Rotary Club of Nelson

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Wildsight

School District 8
Kootenay Lake

ONLINE LEARNING CONTINUOUS LEARNING REPORT
2024–2025

JANUARY 14, 2025

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge, respect and honour the First Nations in whose traditional territories the Kootenay Lake School District operates and all Aboriginal people residing within the boundaries of School District No. 8.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Goals of K-12 Education

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (SD8) supports all learners with continuous improvement in their learning so that each learner may graduate with purpose and options for their future. This aligns with the B.C. mandate for public education outlined in the Statement of Education Policy Order, the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Policy, and the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

> *"The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy."*

> B.C. Statement of Education Policy Order Mission Statement

To support government to achieve their mission, school districts in B.C. are tasked with educating each child so they can become "the Educated Citizen." This is a child who throughout their schooling demonstrates intellectual development — literacy and numeracy — human and social development, and career development.

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning policy requires that boards of education will set, create and maintain a strategic plan that articulates the vision, mission, and values of the school district and identifies priorities that guide the district towards its short and long-term goals.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act represents the province's reconciliation framework and the commitments that Board of Education must support in furthering reconciliation.

Aligning to Our Strategic Plan

The SD8's strategic plan has clearly outlined its mission, vision, values, and priorities. This is used to guide the ongoing development of the online learning provided within the district.

The SD8, Kootenay Lake's Elev8 program, is still in the infancy stages of being a designated Provincial Online Learning School (POLS). As we enter the second year of operation as a POLS, the strength of the program and its growth is expected as we aligned and are influenced by the SD8's strategic plan. Learners in this program will be developed as lifelong learners connected to others in a caring and inclusive learning environment. They will be prepared for post-graduation as culturally- and identity- sensitive individuals ready to pursue a career achieving these priorities differently from traditional bricks and mortar schools.

This Online Continuous Learning Report shows how online learning is utilized to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Action Plan

Outlined in this Online Continuous Learning Report are actions that serve as strategies for continuous improvement. The items in our action plan will be given high priority for the 2024-2025 school year. SD8 continually monitors these priorities to ensure continuous improvement for all learners - Indigenous learners, learners with diverse abilities, children and youth in care, and English language learners.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the online learning is divided into two distinct parts in the district, Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks, the priorities within the action plan may look different within each program.

1. **Ensure all course offerings are robust, relevant, and beneficial to students.**
   Strategic Priorities: Lifelong Learners, Connected Learners, Cultural and Identity Development, Career Development.

2. **Expand course choices to make SD8 programs more diverse and attractive.**
   Strategic Priorities: Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture, Cultural and Identity Development.

3. **Provide a welcoming and inclusive learning experience for all.**
   Strategic Priorities: Lifelong learners, Connected Learners, Cultural and Identity Development, Career Development.

4. **Develop clear vision for each program, Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks.**
   Strategic Priorities: Lifelong learners, Connected Learners, Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture, Cultural and Identity Development, Career Development.

5. **Increase the public awareness of the Elev8 program and what it offers around the province.**
   Strategic Priorities: Connected Learners.

A Focus on Student Success

SD8 continues to look for ways to build on strengths and celebrate learner success. By referring to data that informs decision-making, planning and practices, and by working with education partners, the district can make a difference for all SD8 learners. The annual Online Continuous Learning Report supports the district's mission and vision:

MISSION	VISION
We inspire and support each learner to thrive in a caring learning environment.	Our learners grow as global citizens in an innovative and inclusive community.

This report outlines how SD8 supports learner success in the online learning programs.

INTRODUCTION

SD8 online learning has two distinct programs within it, Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks. Each has its own unique approach to student services and delivery methods.

Background

DESK

Elev8 DESK, originally known as the "Correspondence School of the Kootenays", has been involved in provincial learning programs since the 1970s. In the 1990s, it was reconfigured to be "The Distance Education School of the Kootenays", or DESK. Operating under this name until 2019, the district undertook a redesign and rebranding of the program, leading to its current iteration as Elev8. Elev8 was established to manage, operate, and continue to develop the district's two distinct and unique distributed learning programs: the online program formally known as DESK, and the district's "blended-learning" Homelinks programs.

In 2023, SD8 entered into a three-year agreement with the Ministry of Education and Child Care. Through this agreement, Elev8 was designated a Provincial Online Learning School (POLS), encompassing both Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks. This designation allows Elev8 to enrol students from across the province.

HOMELINKS

The Homelinks program has been in operation since the early 1990's. It has been implemented in several communities, including Creston, Nelson, Kaslo and the Slocan Valley, with Creston being the largest and longest running location. What distinguishes the Homelinks program from the DESK program is its unique "blended-learning" model, which incorporates both at-home, face-to-face, and classroom learning on a weekly basis. Students in this program can attend school for a maximum of 49% of the regular school week for face-to-face support, with the expectation that most of their learning and work is completed at home. Parental involvement is crucial in the blended-learning model, including participation in the design and implementation of each Individual Learning Plan.

PROVINCIAL ONLINE LEARNING SCHOOL (POLS)

Provincial requirements to maintain a POLS designation include the following:

- use of a provincially supported Learning Management System (LMS);
- assurance of support for Indigenous online learners; and
- assurance of support for diverse online learners.

A limited number of POLS were created provincially. Being a designated POLS enables growth in online education opportunities within Elev8.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (SD8) endeavors to improve student learning through interest-based, competency-based, flexible and innovative approaches. Online learning is a key platform used to achieve this. Each of the five strategic priorities is achieved within the unique programing that online learning provides. Aspects of online learning that fit into each of the priorities are the following:

LIFELONG LEARNING

Unique course offerings.

Flexible scheduling.

Interest-based course material.

Multiple ways of demonstrating learning.

CONNECTED LEARNING

Digital citizenship.

Electronically connected to local and global communities.

CARING AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING CULTURE

Self-paced learning.

The teaching and use of accessibility tools.

CULTURAL AND IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

BC First Peoples 12, English First Peoples 12 and Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12 courses are offered.

Safe learning environment.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Variety of course selections of interest to students.

Career-Life-Education, Career-Life-Connections courses offered.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Graduation Numbers

Graduation data represents the number of students who graduate from the identified program each year. In the Elev8 programs, grades 10-12 students are often cross enrolled with a different school of record; therefore, very few students are officially graduating from these programs. Graduating students from Elev8 are often adults, having previously faced challenges in traditional school models.

GRADUATING STUDENTS

	2019 Adult	2019 Regular	2020 Adult	2020 Regular	2021 Adult	2021 Regular	2022 Adult	2022 Regular	2023 Adult	2023 Regular
Homelinks	0	9	4	2	0	15	2	9	0	4
DESK	5	2	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	3

Graduation Assessments

Most of Elev8's grades 10-12 students are cross-enrolled with other schools which serve as their school of record. This results in the appearance of a low number of participants from our programs taking these assessments because they are recorded in their school of record.

NUMERACY 10 ASSESSMENT (PROFICIENT OR EXTENDING)

	Elev8 Homelinks		Elev8 DESK	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
2020-2021	5/30	17%	6/14	43%
2021-2022	10/26	38%	4/9	44%
2022-2023	7/18	39%	4/5	80%
2023-2024	6/15	40%	3/3	100%

LITERACY 10 ASSESSMENT (PROFICIENT OR EXTENDING)

	Elev8 Homelinks		Elev8 DESK	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
2020-2021	25/38	66%	8/10	80%
2021-2022	21/26	81%	5/5	100%
2022-2023	14/19	74%	4/6	67%
2023-2024	11/15	73%	4/5	80%

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

LITERACY 12 ASSESSMENT (PROFICIENT OR EXTENDING)

	Elev8 Homelinks		Elev8 DESK	
	Number of Students	Percentage	Number of Students	Percentage
2021–2022	7/10	70%	5/5	100%
2022–2023	2/3	67%	4/5	80%
2023–2024	6/7	86%	4/6	67%

Foundation Skills Assessments (FSA)

Online learning students do most of their learning at home. However, the Homelinks program does offer a chance for some in-person learning. This setup greatly affects how students and families interact with assessments like the Foundation Skills Assessments (FSA). Despite the promotion and opportunity for students and families to participate in the FSA, the engagement has been minimal.

Other Provincial Assessment Tools (Student Learning Survey, EDI, MDI, YDI)

Students engaged in online learning predominantly study in their home environment. Both DESK and Homelinks are categorized as non-attending programs. Assessments considered non-mandatory by many families create challenges for collecting data. Families involved in online learning generally perceive these assessment tools as non-essential and tend to decline the school's invitations to participate.

FUNDING MODEL FOR ONLINE LEARNING

Online Learning Programs receive funding from the Ministry of Education and Child Care at four different times during the year: September, February, May and July, to accommodate continuous enrolment.

While funding levels are consistent through all grades at $7200.00 per FTE, there are differences in how this funding is calculated, depending on the grade levels. It is also important to note, a standard school is funded at $8915.00 per FTE.

Kindergarten to Grade 7

Students in kindergarten to grade 7 are funded on a "per program" basis. The district must demonstrate active involvement in the K to 7 program to claim funding for the student. If a student joins the K-7 program after the initial September funding count, they are then funded at half the original funding level, or $3600.00. If the student enrols following the February funding count, they are then funded through the May count, at a third of the original funding level, $2400.00. Provincial funding in February or May only occurs if the student is enroling from outside of SD8.

Grades 8 and 9

Students in grades 8 and 9 are funded on a combination of program and course-based models. They are funded at 0.25 FTE per course until they are enrolled in 4 courses. Students with four or more courses are funded at 1.0 FTE. The same funding reductions that apply to K to 7 programs for the February and May count also occur. Students must be enrolled from out of district to be funded in either the February or May count.

Grades 10 to 12 and Adults

Students in grades 10 to 12, as well as adults, are funded strictly based on course enrollment, with each course being the equivalent to 0.125 FTE. This funding model applies to all three funding periods.
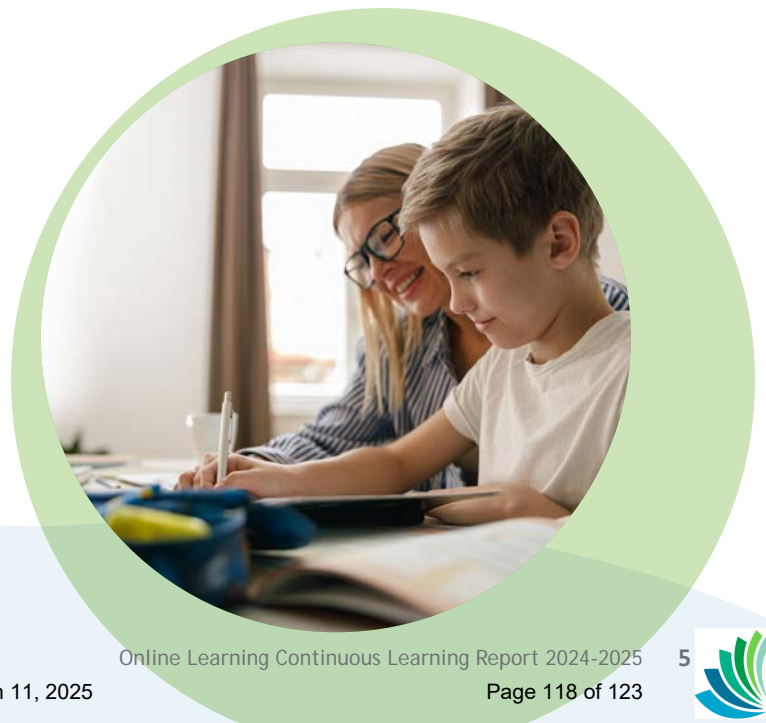
ENROLMENT

In the current 2024–25 school year, the September enrolment was 270.0625 FTE, with the February and May 2025 1701 count still to come. Previously, the February and May 2023–2024 school year had a total of 95.125 FTE added to its initial 280.3125 September FTE count. This enrolment can be broken down with 139.25 FTE at Elev8 DESK, and 130.8125 FTE at Elev8 Homelinks. This September 2024 count is an increase of approximately 10% FTE at Elev8 DESK and a decrease of 15% FTE at Elev8 Homelinks from last year.

Since being designated a Provincial Online School (POLS), the Elev8 DESK program has seen an increase in enrolment each year. The number of current active learners in courses in grades 10–12 is approximately 50% higher than at the same time last year.

Elev8 DESK

The Elev8 DESK K–7 program consists solely of 1.0 FTE learners. The majority of grade 8 and 9 learners are 1.0 FTE, with a small number of cross-enrolled students. The majority of the learners are from within SD8 boundaries, but since the creating of the POLS designation the number of students from outside our boundaries has been increasing. Notably, applications are received throughout the year as learners look for a change in their learning circumstances. This is especially seen in the middle school years. The end of year enrolments in these grades typically end up being higher than the September count. Learners are choosing Elev8 DESK K–9 because of the opportunity to be flexible on the time, location, and pace that learning can take place, which can be adapted to meet each family's lifestyle. Some learners seek an alternate learning experience from the traditional setting.

Learners from all over the province are part of our Elev8 DESK grades 10–12 program. Some of the learners are continuing with their online learning, as they had been previously enrolled in an online grade 9 program; however, most of our learners in grades 10–12 are not enrolled at 1.0 FTE with Elev8 DESK. Most grade 10–12 learners are only taking a few courses at Elev8 DESK and are cross enrolled with another provincial school. They choose to supplement their learning with courses not offered or not fitting into their timetable at their school of record. Elev8 DESK diverse course selection options encourages more enrolment in our program. Currently Elev8 DESK grades 10–12 has almost 200 more active learners in courses than last year at this same time.

As a result of Elev8 DESK grades 10–12 being a continuous enrolling program, learners can begin their course at any time of the year and pace it to finish it at any time within a year. This results in teaching and learning occurring all year, including throughout the summer.

Elev8 Homelinks

Learners often choose Homelinks for its flexibility and connections to home. As Elev8 Homelinks is a blended program. Families often choose it for the flexibility it offers and the opportunity for family involvement in the learner's experience. All k–9 learners in Elev8 Homelinks are 1.0 FTE. In contrast, grade 10–12 learners may be 1.0 FTE, but are often cross enrolled with the local secondary school.

Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities

Both Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks offer services to students who have been identified as having diverse needs. Elev8 DESK provides supports for eight students with diverse needs, while Homelinks provides support for a total of 16 students. This support looks different for each student and for each location, but includes adapted programming, access to an Inclusive Support Teacher, and access to district itinerant staff, such as Speech and Language Support or Occupational Therapy. The Homelinks program also provides education assistant support during the blended learning component of the program.

ENROLMENT

Indigenous Students

This year, as in past years, the Elev8 Homelinks program has provided support of Indigenous students, delivered by the school's Indigenous Academic Success Teacher. This program has supported the 27 self-identified Indigenous learners facilitated by the blended-learning model within Elev8 Homelinks. This teacher monitors the progress of students, connects with families, and offers opportunities for students to participate in connection building group activities and individualized academic support sessions.

The Elev8 DESK program, dedicated to online learning, reaches out annually to all self-identified Indigenous learners' families to query whether any Indigenous programming and supports are desired. Elev8 DESK is working with the SD8 Indigenous Education department this year to look for ways to connect digitally and support Indigenous learners within this program, which includes support of an Indigenous Academic Success Teacher, monitoring of academic progress and engagement, and team academic reviews for primary and grade 12 students three times per year.

Course Offerings

The Elev8 Homelinks program offers a wide range of courses for students to choose from. All the courses necessary for a complete and comprehensive year in grades K-9 are provided. Through the partnership between the school and home, these learners are exposed to a well-rounded educational experience. Currently, there are a total of 35 different courses offered to grade 10-12 learners, and these courses provide the necessary variety to meet graduation requirements. When necessary, partnership between the local secondary school (Kootenay River Secondary School) and Elev8 Homelinks enables students to cross-enrol to meet individual needs and wants in course selection.

In the Elev8 DESK program, K-9 learners are fully immersed in a comprehensive program that meets all their learning needs for a complete set of studies for the year. Currently there are 92 FTE in grades K-9.

At the 10-12 grade level, 37 courses are offered. This variety enables students to choose courses to meet their graduation requirements. Most learners in the Elev8 DESK work on one or two courses at a time, while cross-enrolled at various secondary schools throughout the province. Only 136 of the current 504 learners in grades 10-12 have Elev8 DESK as their school of record. Adult learners finishing up their programs or taking additional courses make up 94 of the 136 Elev8 DESK learners. The 358 cross-enrolled learners come from all over the province, including other SD8 schools.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Provincial Online Learning Schools (POLS)

Looking towards the future, a key aspect is the Ministry of Education and Child Care's revision of the On-line Learning (previously referred to as Distributed Learning) Policy and Guidelines. Within those changes the MoECC has created clear and concise guidelines for future online learning programs within the province, both public and private. In July 2023, Elev8 DESK and Homelinks were, together under the school name "Elev8", designated one of the twenty-one public Provincial Online Learning Schools (POLS) that can offer program-ming to students throughout British Columbia.

The three-year action plan for online learning focuses on the five priorities in the table below:

	Online Action Item	Strategic Priority
1	Ensure all course offerings are robust, relevant, and beneficial to students.	- Lifelong learners - Connected Learners - Cultural and Identity Development - Career Development
2	Expand course choices to make SD8 online programs more diverse and attractive.	- Lifelong learners - Connected Learners - Cultural and Identity Development - Career Development
3	Provide a welcoming and inclusive learning experience for all.	- Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture - Cultural and Identity Development
4	Develop clear vision for each program (Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks).	- Lifelong learners - Connected Learners - Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture - Cultural and Identity Development - Career Development
5	Increase public awareness of the Elev8 program and what it offers around the province.	Connected learners

1. Ensure all course offerings are robust, relevant, and beneficial to students. This will be done by doing a scan of the current course offerings. The scan will be used to do the following:

   - Try to identify the reasons for the levels of enrolments in individual courses.
   - Determine if the course material being offered is currently relevant to what our learners are looking for.
   - Determine if the presentation method chosen is attractive to learners.
   - Ensure teaching resources are appropriate to the number of learners in the program.

2. Expand course choices to make SD8 programs more diverse and attractive. To attract new learners, we will add new course offerings, diversifying our range. Decisions on new courses will consider learner inquiries, societal needs and learner interest. Potential areas for expansion include second language courses and high interest elective courses. This approach will involve prioritizing time and resources within the program to maximize efficiency.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

3. Provide a welcoming and inclusive learning experience for all. SD8's strategic plan for education encompasses an inclusive mission, vision, and values which guides Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks. Both programs are committed to meeting the needs of all learners by incorporating inclusive teaching practices. Access to assistive technologies and support are provided to learners with diverse abilities as needed.

4. Develop a clear vision for each program, Elev8 DESK and Elev8 Homelinks. As both programs fall under the Provincial Online School, as of September 2023, the uniqueness and identity of each needs to be explored and defined. By outlining student services, programming and methodologies for each, we aim to achieve increased efficiencies and enhanced learner experiences.

5. Increase public awareness of the Elev8 program and its offerings. We plan to undertake a public awareness campaign to draw positive attention to Elev8's offerings, aiming to increase enrolment. This campaign will employ advertising, social media, word of mouth and other channels to spotlight the strengths of our program.

CONCLUSION

SD8 is committed to providing inclusive, caring, and quality learning opportunities for all learners, preparing them for lifelong learning and career opportunities. With the new designation of being a Provincial Online School, new possibilities await. Developing, expanding and analyzing Elev8 aligns with the 2024–2029 SD8 Strategic Plan to encourage lifelong learners that are ready for life post-graduation.

SD8 strives to be the first choice for online learners around the province, offering quality, inclusivity and diversity in its programming.