

Central Coast School District 49



Nusatsum Elementary School Framework Plan to Enhance Student Learning June 2024



SD49 Mission

Working together to create a safe, welcoming environment that prepares each learner for their full potential.

Nusatsum Elementary School (NES) is located on the unceded and traditional territory of the Nuxalk Nation. The school sits on the traditional territory of the Andy family. Nestled in a valley between steep mountains including Mount Nusatsum, the school educates students in grade five through seven. The focus of the school is meeting the needs of individual learners with strong academics, and differentiated programs to build success for all learners. At the heart of the school is a strong sense of community, which is developed through whole school events, projects, outings and extra-curricular activities.

The NES school population is 43 students with 53% of its students identifying as First Nations. There is a teacher for each grade 5, 6, and 7 as well as a part-time Nuxalk teacher, resource/LART teacher and part-time librarian/support teacher. NES is now in its sixth year of operation after being reopened as it had been closed for many years.

The Parent Advisory Council has been active in providing advice, suggestions, and support throughout the year. The group was instrumental in providing sports equipment for the gym, reading materials for students and sharing ideas for a school-based chef to prepare healthy meals for students.

The school structure is set up so that students receive their Math and English Language Arts courses in the morning with

their homeroom teachers and the afternoons are rotations with classes in Nuxalk/French, Physical Education and Project-based learning. The rationale for the rotations in the afternoon is to allow students to work with different specialty teachers and to prepare students for high school where they move to different specialty teachers throughout the day. Music classes are offered three times a week, including concert band.

High quality, essential educational programming is provided with a variety of supports for students within their regular program so that all students succeed. This includes Cultural Enrichment with the Home School Coordinator, Sessions with the Youth Care Worker, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language, Counselling, Resource and LART, Math Intervention, Guided Reading.

To improve Indigenous student achievement and success as well as to promote cultural understanding amongst the student population, cultural learning experiences are woven throughout the year with opportunities to learn and participate with the Nuxalk community. When students enter the school, a Nuxalk greeting sign and a glass display with cultural artefacts welcome Nuxalk students and visitors. The whole school took part in the Sputc ceremony, Truth and Reconciliation learning, Orange Shirt Day Assembly, Remembrance Day Assembly with Indigenous Veterans, Red Dress Day and Winter and Spring Concerts featuring Headdress song and dance and other songs in Nuxalk. Students learned from Nuxalk Guardians on school trips and engaged in soccer, basketball and track and field events with

Acwsalta School. Every Child Matters, Anti-bullying and kindness themes were emphasized in classrooms and with posters throughout the hall.



Goal 1: To foster a sense of belonging and a strong sense of school community with growth in school spirit.

A strong sense of community is fostered at NES through monthly whole school events and outings. Outdoor events include trips to Walker Island Park with nature walks, team-building events and co-operative games. On a hike on the Burnt Bridge Trail and a trip to the Fisheries Pool, students learned about bear research and safety and the importance of

stewardship with the Nuxalk Guardians. The school aim is to leave every site better than when we arrived. Outdoor sporting events included several cross-country ski and skating outings. The outings provide mixed-grade groupings with support staff and teachers in an interactive and play-based way. Anecdotal data from students revealed a positive attitude towards the outings and students reported enjoying spending time with their school mates in outdoor learning. These whole school outings contributed towards a greater sense of belonging during and after the events.



For Earth Day, students participated in a clean-up of Fish Creek lead by a resident biologist, teaching students the value of environmental stewardship. Students learned about the management and sustainability of the local fish stocks with a school visit to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Fish

Hatchery. The Terry Fox Run encouraged students to run or walk for cancer research and to take part in a greater humanitarian cause. On these outings, students are learning the lessons and values around team building, inclusion, collaboration, organization, commitment and responsibility.

In March, the school hired a chef to prepare healthy meals each day and hot meals twice a week. When students ate together for a hot meal as a school in mixed groupings with staff, a sense of community and belonging was fostered. In a similar way, the Winter Luncheon which invited the community into the school to share a meal with students and staff, built a sense of the larger community between school and home. The Nuxalk law of sharing a meal together is a way to unite people together through the positive experience of eating as a group.

Staff were involved in ongoing professional development in areas which boosted support for students. This included ways of integrating Indigenous education into the curriculum which will assist teachers to add more Indigenous ways of knowing, being and learning and so all students can learn in accordance with Nuxalk cultural ways and Nuxalk students can see themselves reflected in the curriculum.

Other professional development sessions included self-regulation, trauma-informed practice, autism support (POPARD) and executive functioning which helped staff to better support students throughout the day. The extra training helped staff to be more consistent with students and helped

them to feel safer and secure. The HSC and YCW were very involved with supporting students personally and culturally throughout the day and made connections with homes for certain students.

Extra-curricular activities include Events Club, Makers Space with science exploration, arts and crafts, Harry Potter Readings and lunchtime sports such as basketball, dodge ball, soccer and alley ball. After school sports include Track and Field and Bike Club. The After School Program is offered twice a week with sports games in the gym, board games, outdoor play and a healthy snack. Music enrichment opportunities include participation in seasonal concerts, Arts Fest and watching visiting musical performances. These extracurricular activities helped to develop a sense of belonging.

The First People's Principals of Learning are integrated into the curriculum, including Nuxalk storytelling in science and social studies and community and land-based learning. Classes participated in land-based learning activities in the Four Mile community with Nuxalk educators to teach stewardship of the earth with harvesting a variety of local plants (nettle, Devil's club, fiddleheads) and learning about local land-based traditions (net mending, salmon cleaning and cooking, sweat and dip near the petroglyphs). A monthly focus on Core Competencies from the BC Curriculum is linked with Indigenous values such as respect for self and others and social responsibility. The Nuxalk laws are posted in every classroom

and are referred to for fostering respect and a positive school climate.

According to the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) project, “belonging is a fundamental need for everyone. Feeling a sense of connectedness to family, peers, school and community is one of the most important assets for a child’s well-being, health, and success in life. Research shows that children with positive peer relationships feel better about themselves, experience greater mental health, are more prosocial and perform better academically. ”

“A single caring adult...can positively influence a child’s life and promote resilience (MDI).”

The 2024 results related to a strong sense (“high”) of school belonging (i.e., “I feel like I am important to this school”) is broken down by grade and the data on the number of important adults at school is broken down by grade.

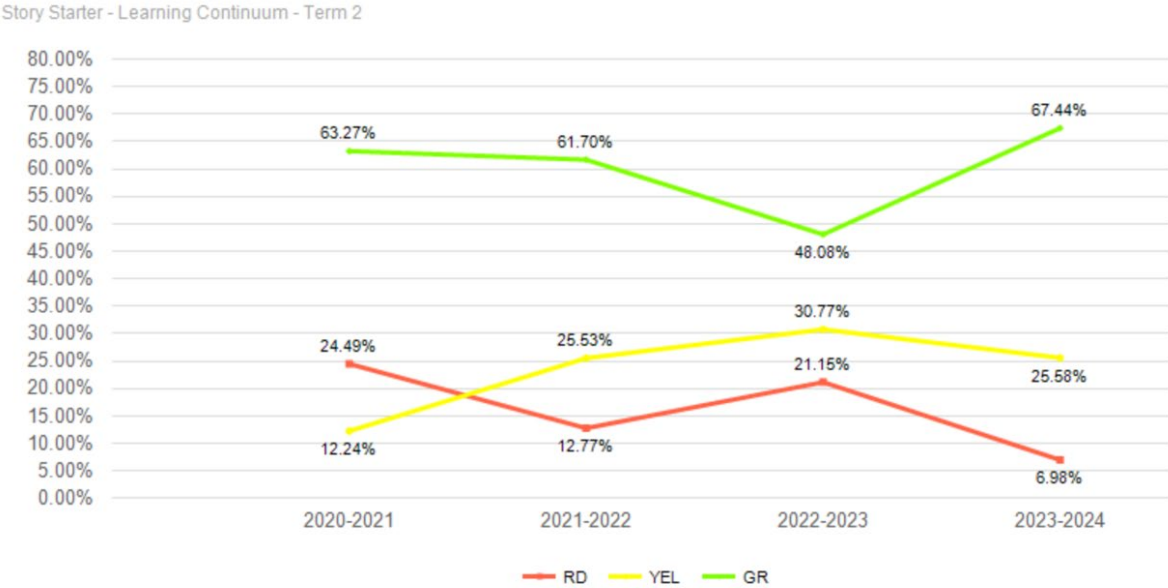
Figure 1.0: Student sense of belonging by grade

	Gr. 5	Gr. 6	Gr. 7
High sense of school belonging	47%	33%	46%

High number of important adults at school	40%	57%	50%
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In the following graphic, shows the attendance of students. The colors are as follows, green means 10 or less days missed at school and red means 16 or more days absent.

Figure 2.0 Attendance of NES students year by year



Looking at the attendance records above, student attendance has improved compared to the last school year. More students are now in the “green” zone with 10 or less days missed at school and less students are in the “red” zone with 16 or more days absent.

In the future, it would be helpful to find out why the students in the “red” with 16 or more missed days were absent with a

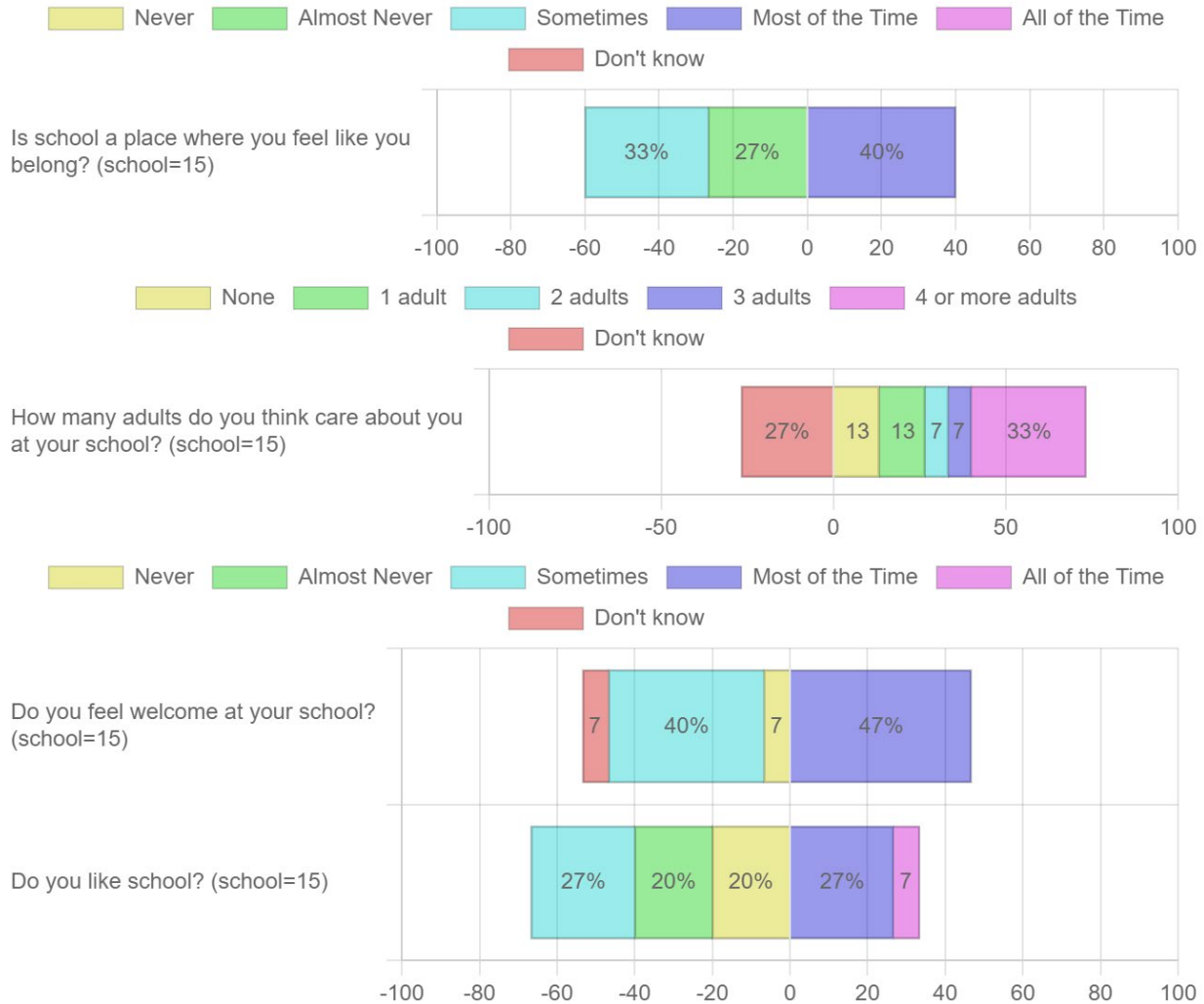
purpose to find out what could support students to have a better attendance.

This year's Grade 7 Student Learning Survey (SLS) results revealed the following information related to students' sense of belonging.

The Student Learning Survey (SLS) is an annual survey given to B.C. Public Schools for students in grades 4, 7, 10, and 12. Data obtained from the survey provides valuable insights into our students' experiences and feelings about school.

Many questions provide valuable information on how our students are doing. The answers to the following questions were looked at in percentages for the Gr. 7 students:

Figure 3.0 Student Learning Survey questions and answers



Results:

Is school a place where you feel like you belong? 40% said most of the time.

How many adults do you think care about you at your school?
3+ adults was 40%

Do you feel welcome at your school? 47% said most of the time.

Do you like school? 34% said most or all the time.

Areas to focus on next year are making more students feel like they belong and are welcome at school, letting more students know that adults care about them, and helping more students to like school based on the results of the SLS.

Goal 1: To improve problem solving in Math by improving fluency, enjoyment and practicing critical thinking.

In math this year, teachers noted a slight improvement of all students in math, with a few students making significant gains, based on the Story Starters data.

The Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA) results for grade 7 math reflect math learning in grades 5, 6 and 7.

According to the results, 83% of the NES students are emerging in math, 8% are on track and 8% are extending. This indicates a need for more support in math.

Figure 4.0 NES scores in Numeracy on the FSA in 2023-2024 school year

Assessment Results 2023/2024

Foundation Skills Assessment

Score	1-EMG		2-ON		3-EXT	
Category	%	#	%	#	%	#
⊖ FSA - Grade 7						
Literacy	38%	5	62%	8		
Numeracy	83%	10	8%	1	8%	1

The math is scheduled for the first block of the day, for 90 minutes daily. School outings usually take place after the math block. Students engaged in math minute, fluency brainteasers and skills development in areas such as multiplication and division. IXL diagnostic tests are used at the start and end of the year to identify students' abilities in relation to grade level expectations. This provided teachers with areas of strength, stretches and growth.

This year, project-based learning for all grades integrated math skills, fluency and enjoyment through various activities. This learning included planning and designing unique projects such as Amusement Parks, Road Trips and Mini golf. Grade 7 Entrepreneurship Show Case integrated math with charts of how to make a profit, expenses and revenue. Students shared their learning orally with parents, students and staff. These projects were displayed for student and parent viewing and provided real world applications of math skills.

This year, Math Intervention was offered for the first time. Through push-in and pull-out support, the librarian/support teacher worked with students identified by teachers as needing additional support. After determining the areas of focus, the librarian/support teacher worked individually or in small groups with students to strengthen math skills and develop math fluency several times a week. Math support was also provided by the resource/LART teacher in small groups as part of the weekly support schedule.



Next school year (2024-2025)

NES will keep the same math goal but add “with more independence and a sense of accountability for own learning” so that it will be, “To improve problem solving in Math by

improving fluency, enjoyment and practicing critical thinking.” Activities to develop this goal include math board games, card games, projects with math components, fluency with operations, and Esty-Mysteries estimation activities. The district is currently evaluating other math learning materials and assessment tools and will purchase more hands-on math manipulatives. NES will build on the same sense of belonging goal and take it to the next step next year. This goal will be, “To foster student independence ownership of one’s learning, personal awareness and accountability. Name yourself your highest name.” Staff will find ways to measure an improvement in the sense of belonging from the beginning of the year to the end of the year, such as doing pre and post year surveys and making sure adults do regular check-ins about the issues mentioned with students in a scheduled and deliberate way. After checking in, it would be important to find ways to support the students who do not feel like they are taking ownership of learning, personal awareness and accountability. Other ways to develop and measure this goal are to do student reflections, goal setting, Get Ready, Do, Done strategy, lunch and/or recess options for completing work, and put up “Name yourself your highest name” posters around the school.