



SCHOOL PLAN 2016-2017

Agnes L. Mathers Elementary Secondary School

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Agnes L. Mathers Elementary Secondary School Goals:

#1 To integrate outdoor education into as many educational opportunities as possible throughout the school year with an increased focus on integrating the math and science curriculum.

#2 To increase community and global social responsibility.

#3 To continue to help at-risk students reconnect with and become successful in their education.

School Planning Council

Leighann Rodger, Principal

Sandra Larose, Parent

Kim Forbes, Parent

School Community and Background

Agnes L. Mathers Elementary Secondary School has served Sandspit for over 40 years. The school is located in a community of approximately 250 people. All of the elementary students live in the village of Sandspit and most live within walking or biking distance to the school. The population of Sandspit has been dwindling and, as a result, the school population has declined. This school year has experienced an upward trend of four new students who have enrolled in the school since September. There is an expectation of 4 kindergarten students in September 2016. There are currently 35 students in the elementary grades and a total of 56 students registered in e-school. The e-school component of the school consists of 29 adult students and 24 elementary and high school students enrolled in a range of courses, as well as 3 students who are cross enrolled with Gidgalang Kuuyas Naay Secondary School and Brooks High School in Powell River. These students live in all of the communities on the island. This school year has seen the success of an application that has been made to the BC Ministry of Finance for a new and smaller building to replace the existing structure. Construction will start this summer and the current gym, mezzanine, and art room area will remain on site.

The current staffing structure at ALM is based on the following table:

Position	Staffing Level
Kindergarten-Grade 3 Teacher	0.8 FTE
Grade 4-7 teacher	1.0 FTE
Eschool teachers	0.9 FTE (0.7 South End, 0.2 North End)
Principal	0.8 FTE
School Administrative Assistant	30 hours/week
First Nations Resource Worker	5 hours/week
Library Clerk	5 hours/week
Education Assistant	25 hours/week

Custodian	Contract
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During the 2015/2016 school year the staff participated in several different professional development in-services at ALM and other schools within the district:

- District Wide Ministry Day at Queen Charlotte Secondary School
- MyEdBC training and in-services
- First Aid
- Changing Results for Young Readers inquiry based reading and writing workshops held throughout the school year
- Early Learning Forum
- UBC Rural Innovation
- Farm to School Local Food Initiative
- Provincial Outreach Program for Early Intervention
- Friends for Life anti-anxiety workshop
- Curriculum Implementation days

As well, during the 2015/2016 school year, the staff and students have participated in many innovative initiatives:

- Changing Results for Young Readers- an initiative for elementary teachers
- Salmonids in the Classroom (including insects and microscopes)
- PALS
- DASH BC inquiry questions
- numerous field trips such as skiing in Terrace, Mount Moresby Adventure Camp, seaweed gathering, surfing, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, RCMP station tour, community clean-ups, mushroom picking, swim camp in Prince Rupert, hiking up Sleeping Beauty, fishing, bike hikes,
- Yoga provided by Sun Studio
- Paddle making with Tyler Crosby
- Haida blanket making with Joan Moody
- Healthy Snack program funded by Gwaii Trust
- Winter Concert and Garden Party
- Video presentation by the Council of the Haida Nation
- Presentations by the local fire department
- Participation in all of the school district sponsored sports
- Bike Repsych and a bike rodeo
- Christmas tree decorating at the airport
- Science Alive visit
- Science World visit
- Welcome to Kindergarten
- Flintknapping and archery
- Jewelry making at GKNSS
- Haida drawing at GKNSS
- Haida designs for silk screening

- Student participation in StoryMakers Club
- Musical instrument repair with a community volunteer
- Numerous visits from the RCMP discussing safety
- Ready Set Learn
- Jingle Bell Run
- Terry Fox Run
- Milk Run
- ArtStarts performances
- Shelter building at the beach
- Magic show presentation
- Family dinner
- Shake Out Earthquake Drill
- Community Remembrance Day Presentation
- Breakfast with Santa
- Skype with H. R. Macmillan Space Centre
- Clay projects with local artists
- Health Fair at GKNSS
- Self-regulation games afternoon
- Kindergarten dental screening
- Aboriginal Day
- Waffle breakfast
- Body image and sexual health presentations
- Visiting coach for rugby
- Pen pals with students in Nebraska
- Cultural capsule exchange with a school in Calgary
- Fundraising for a school in Africa in partnership with a community member
- School wide art projects (some of which included inviting community members to share an art form with the students)

For the 2016/2017 school year, the staff will be participating in the annual district day professional development, the annual Ministry day, the curriculum implementation days, and the Early Learning Forum. The teachers have expressed an interest in inquiry based and self-directed professional development opportunities that allow specific focus and relevancy.

Goal #1

To integrate outdoor education into as many educational opportunities as possible throughout the school year with an increased focus in the areas of science, social studies, and math.

This year we will continue to focus on incorporating as many outdoor education opportunities as possible into the classroom learning environment with a close connection to math, social studies, and science. Currently, teachers participate in and organize numerous outdoors activities and utilize nature within the school curriculum. We have continued to increase the number of field trips this school year and have enjoyed a variety of local experiences including many trips to the beach and the forest, surfing, stand up paddle boarding, hiking the Dover Trail and learning about local plants, collecting seaweed, visiting the RCMP station, observing salmon spawning on the Dover Trail, archery, spending a day at Aliford Bay with an invited school, and mushroom picking. There are many chances for students to participate in a variety of outdoors activities relating to all aspects of the school curriculum. Science, mathematics, physical education, Language Arts, and French, etc. can provide an expansive curriculum through outdoor activities. We will continue to more closely tie in the science, social studies, and math curriculum during the 2016/2017 school year. We have started on this process during the 2015/2016 school year and have seen a marked increase in the connections between the school curriculum and our outdoor education activities. The implementation of the update Ministry of Education curriculum will allow for increased creativity and imagination in the ways in which teachers will connect local experiences with school-based curriculum.

Based on feedback from parents, students, and staff, we have experienced a successful year with outdoor education activities in the 2015/2016 school year and we are looking forward to increasing our commitment to outdoor education and local experiences in the upcoming year. We have participated in approximately two large- scale field trips per month (surfing, hiking, etc.) and approximately four-five smaller scale field trips per month (beach clean-ups, bike hikes). At this point, the students are participating in at least one field trip per week. Some of these field trips involve the entire student population and some are age dependent. In the next school year, we will continue to track the number of field trips in which students participate and increase the ways in which the math and science curriculum can be connected to these field trips. We will also continue to ask for student feedback regarding their learning and interest level in the activities. It will be important for parents to share their knowledge and participate in field trips and outings. The number of volunteers that we had for this year's field trips is hugely appreciated and it is clear that the involvement of parents and community members is vital to the success of the outdoor education program. The contributions of parents and community members are exemplified in such things as transportation, food provision, and chaperoning. Travel and time will be monitored for logistical implementations and teacher input will be vitally important. The reduced Kwuna schedule has impacted our ability to easily participate in field trips and we have had to creatively surmount some of these challenges. We have extensively utilized parent volunteers to drive students to and from field trips. We have also provided opportunities for the older students to ride their bikes to and from field trips. We are very

appreciative of the time and energy committed by community volunteers. There is a possibility that the community of Sandspit may be developing a local bus schedule that would allow us the opportunity to hire a bus when needed. Many people in the community have significant knowledge that can be shared with the students, and their feedback will be an important part of measuring the success of this goal. Teachers will be encouraged to share their experiences to measure the level of success.

Strategies to implement this goal will be varied:

- Professional development opportunities for staff, with a focus on outdoor education
- provision of planning time for teachers to organize and orchestrate field trips
- allocation of financial resources to support field trips, if necessary
- grant writing to secure additional funding for field trips
- discussion of upcoming field trips at PAC meetings
- inviting numerous community members to participate and share expertise during the field trips
- meet as a School Planning Council each term throughout the school year to track the progress of this goal

Goal #2

To increase community and global social responsibility.

This year we will continue to encourage students to become increasingly aware of their role in both the local and global community. We would like to see students contributing to social responsibility initiatives on Haida Gwaii as well as developing an interest and awareness of causes and concerns in other areas of the world. Students will be further introduced to topics such as the need for clean water, pollution, environmental awareness, local food initiatives, and the unique qualities of isolated communities through an age appropriate and curriculum- based approach. We have started to increase the students' awareness of global issues; however, we recognize the importance of growing and developing this goal and balancing global awareness with students' feelings of personal safety and security. This year, we have had the opportunity to become involved in a variety of global initiatives such as writing pen pal letters to students at a First Nations school in Calgary through a cultural capsule exchange, helping a community member raise money and contribute items for students in Africa, growing and eating local foods as available, sharing pen pal letters with a class in Nebraska and encouraging our students to become increasingly aware of the environment and our impacts upon the environment. The school counselor has worked with individual students to develop resiliency and self-regulation skills. Following attendance at the Truth and Reconciliation event in Vancouver in September, 2013, our intermediate teacher has been steadily increasing classroom content related to residential schools and their impact on society. Recognition of Orange Shirt Day has provided an opportunity to introduce primary students to the history of residential schools in Canada. This is a long-term goal for our school and is being built upon each year as student and staff knowledge bases increase.

We will continue to investigate a variety of means to implement this goal. With input from community members and parents, we will increase the development of social awareness within the students of ALM. Possible activities and programs for increasing awareness of social responsibility include things such as beach clean- ups, forest clean- ups and brushing, increasing recycling opportunities, and increasing local food development and gardening. We will continue the development of our pen pal program in the upcoming school year.

We will measure the success of this goal through a variety of tracking systems. We will record the number of initiatives undertaken that support social responsibility. Students and teachers will be asked for their feedback regarding the programs. Community members and parents will be encouraged to participate and share their skills and interests with the students.

Strategies to implement this goal will be varied:

-allocate financial resources to provide support for these initiatives

-meet as a School Planning Council each term throughout the school year to track the progress of this goal

- work closely with the ALM PAC to develop and orchestrate fundraising events and activities
- develop age appropriate lessons concerning family, classmates, friends, local and global social awareness
- ask knowledgeable members of the community to assist with and offer expertise in the classrooms
- schedule early in the school year to ensure socially responsible events are planned accordingly
- use of the Aboriginal Role Model program and invitations to Elders
- investigate various international programs that focus on the roles of students and schools in making positive global changes

Goal #3

To continue to help at-risk students reconnect with and become successful in their education.

Eschool has grown and developed throughout this past school year. There are various reasons why students may choose to participate in the eschool program and students may or may not be enrolled on a full time basis, dependent on personal circumstances. Increasing numbers of students are achieving success and are completing courses. The eschool teachers work closely in an inter-agency model with Ministry of Children and Families Development, the correctional system, Haida Child and Family Services, Mental Health services, etc. when necessary. We would like to see increased opportunities for eschool students to become involved in the school and local communities while gaining valuable skills. We have been able to increase the in-school visits from the eschool students through a variety of transportation means. We have several eschool students working directly in the building with the eschool teacher. Several eschool students have volunteered to help the younger students during field trips and were a hugely appreciated asset during our kayaking day and as volunteers at the Mount Moresby Adventure Camp. We have several eschool students working with local business people who provide employment opportunities for the students. We will continue to focus on encouraging students to enroll in the program, as appropriate, and focus on the successes of these students. An additional focus will be on the development of the work experience program as we help students achieve gainful employment. There is a possibility that eschool will be determined to be a distributed learning model following an application to the Ministry of Education in May, 2016.

In order to accomplish this goal, we will incorporate as many strategies as possible to provide numerous learning environments and support for students. Partnering with community groups will be essential to providing opportunities for the eschool students. Options such as working with local businesses and tradespeople will provide the chance for eschool students to gain valuable skills. By fostering these connections, we hope to encourage our students to make connections within the communities that may result in employment opportunities, increased independence, and self-confidence.

It will be extremely important to track the progress of the eschool students as programming for these students needs to build upon the students' successes. Contact between eschool staff and students will be recorded. Academic progress will be followed closely for the students. We will closely monitor the number of courses in which eschool students enroll to ensure students are working at a comfortable and attainable level. Course completion and graduation rates will be monitored. The eschool teacher and school principal will follow up with each student to ensure progress is being maintained and the course load is appropriate. The feedback from eschool students will be essential in tracking the success of the program.

Strategies to implement this goal will be varied:

- draw on the skills and resources within the community ie. diversified work experience, physical education opportunities
- implement an online strategy for helping students with school work ie. a platform such as Google Docs
- meet as a School Planning Council each term throughout the school year to track the progress of this goal
- continue to provide telephone and email assistance for eschool students during the hours of 9am-3pm
- continue to provide use of school district computers and internet connections
- implement various means of transportation for students to travel to appropriate educational locations
- discussion with Literacy Haida Gwaii regarding the availability of tutors
- partnering with additional community agencies such as Northwest Community College, Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society, Hecate Strait Employment, Haida Gwaii Recreation Commission, the Band Councils, etc. to provide training and education opportunities

Conclusion

It is expected that the school plan will change and develop throughout the school year dependent on arising opportunities and school strengths. We have chosen to build upon existing goals in order to expand upon our current successes and incorporate additional curriculum connectedness. We feel that we are more deeply delving into these goals as the years progress and we are interested in improving upon these consistent goals. The goals of the school plan will continue to be posted in the school to allow a clear and concise representation of the focus and values of Agnes L. Mathers School. Through focusing on ways in which we can help each student become successful, and educating staff, students, and the community, we will be able to implement the goals of the school plan.