



ALM School Plan 2015-2016



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

Claire Gauthier, Parent

School Community and Background

Agnes L. Mathers Elementary 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 three new students who have enrolled in the school since September. There is an expectation of 2 kindergarten students in September 2015. There are currently 33 students in the elementary grades and a total of 51 students registered in e-school. The e-school component of the school consists of 28 adult students and 22 elementary and high school students enrolled in a range of courses, as well as 1 student who is cross enrolled with Queen Charlotte Secondary School. These students live in all of the communities on the island. An application has been made to the BC Ministry of Finance for a new and smaller building to replace the existing structure (the current gymnasium will remain attached to any future structure).

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

Position	Staffing Level
Kindergarten-Grade 3 Teacher	0.9 FTE
Grade 4-7 teacher	0.9 FTE
Eschool teachers	1.1 FTE
Principal	0.8 FTE
School Administrative Assistant	30 hours/week
First Nations Resource Worker	5 hours/week
Library Clerk	5 hours/week
Education Assistants	25 hours/week

During the 2014/2015 school year the staff participated in several different professional development in-services at ALM and other schools within the district:

- Teacher Collaboration Program
- District Wide Ministry Day at Queen Charlotte Secondary School
- First Aid
- Changing Results for Young Readers inquiry based reading and writing workshops held throughout the school year
- Early Learning Forum
- UBC Rural Innovation

As well, during the 2014/2015 school year, the staff and students have participated in many innovative initiatives:

- Changing Results for Young Readers- an initiative for primary teachers
- Salmonids in the Classroom (including insects and microscopes)
- PALS
- numerous field trips such as skiing in Terrace, Copper Bay, Grey Bay, Mount Moresby Adventure Camp, seaweed gathering, surfing, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, RCMP boat tour, community clean-ups, and Skedans
- Yoga provided by Sun Studio
- Paddle making with Tyler Crosby
- Pyjama Day
- Healthy Snack program funded by Gwaii Trust
- Winter Concert and Garden Party
- Participation in all of the school district sponsored sports
- Bike Repsych
- Harlem Globetrotters presentation
- Christmas tree decorating at the airport
- Science Alive visit
- Welcome to Kindergarten
- Ready Set Learn
- Pole Raising at QCSS
- Terry Fox Run
- Milk Run
- ArtStarts performances
- Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up
- Author Presentation (Frank B. Edwards)
- Shake Out Earthquake Drill
- Community Remembrance Day Presentation
- Breakfast with Santa
- Skype with H. R. Macmillan Space Centre
- First Aid training for grades 3 and 4

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 a RCMP boat, observing salmon spawning on the Dover Trail, traveling to Skedans, spending a day at Aliford Bay with an invited school, and visiting the Kay Centre. 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 are planning to more closely tie in the science, social studies, and math curriculum during the 2015/2016 school year.

Based on feedback from parents, students, and staff, we have experienced a successful year with outdoor education activities in the 2014/2015 school year and we are looking forward to increasing our commitment to outdoor education 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 was hugely appreciated and it is clear that the involvement of parents and community members is vital to the success of the outdoor education program. 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. 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.

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 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. 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, and encouraging our students to become increasingly aware of the environment and our impacts upon the environment. The school counselor has worked with our female student population during a bi-weekly girls' group to develop social and friendship 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.

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. There are many choices for pen pals or twin school projects that would allow our students the chance to develop their knowledge of other communities within Canada, including remote and isolated communities that may share some of the challenges and strengths of Haida Gwaii. As well, the opportunity for connecting with schools around the world will be investigated.

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.

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.

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.

School Planning Council

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