



Gina 'waadluxan gud ad kwaagid | Ginn 'wáadluwan gud .ahl kwáagildang

Everything Depends on Everything Else

HAWAA GWAI TRUST

SD50's food programs and student travel opportunities have benefitted immensely from our long-standing partnership with Gwaii Trust. Gwaii Trust provides a variety of grants to Haida Gwaii communities and organizations, and our students have benefitted from these grant opportunities. As expected of a large funding organization, our teachers/coaches had to be aware of grant timelines and application processes to access travel subsidy funds. As much as the funds were appreciated, there were times when a teacher was not aware of the opportunity or the deadline and so missed out on the funding. We also heard from teachers that it took time to get the applications ready and, in some cases, the same person was preparing applications several times a year.

Following an examination of historical funding levels to SD50 by **Carla Lutner**, Gwaii Trust's Chief Operations Officer, the **Board of Gwaii Trust** recently approved annual guaranteed funding to the school district of \$120 000 in 2023 to support student travel. This streamlined funding approach will allow students to benefit from travel



subsidies from Gwaii Trust without having sponsor teachers submit an application. Thank you to Carla and the Gwaii Trust Board for your forward thinking on supporting our students.

CONNECTING WITH COAST MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

I recently had the pleasure of connecting with **Dr. Laurie Waye**, President & CEO of Coast Mountain College, and **Heather Bastin**, Executive Director of External Relations, to discuss potential opportunities to partner that would increase opportunities for SD50 students. Many school districts across the province offer students dual credit programs, which was a key focus of our conversation. I appreciated Laurie and Heather's time with me, and I look forward to sharing potential partnerships and learning opportunities that could be offered to SD50 students.



MASSET SCHOOLS PROJECT UPDATE

The [Nov. 24th, 2022 update](#) on the Masset Schools Project has just been released. Parents are encouraged to visit the [SD50 Masset Schools Project page](#) to read the monthly updates, look at building drawings and read through minutes from the many Masset School meetings that have taken place.





VISIT TO BELLA BELLA

From November 8-12, **Gudangaay Tlaats'gaay Naay** coaches **Cal Westbrook**, **Katie Willmot**, and **Kieran Wake**, and staff members **Jaskwaan Bedard** and **Candace Weir** travelled with GTN junior boys and girls basketball teams and a small group of Tahayghen students to Waglisa Bella Bella.

In addition to playing basketball, our students participated in a two-day potlatch held by the family of Frank and Kathy Brown of the house of láłíyasila of the Haítzaqv Nation. Our students were allowed to share Haida culture at 2:30 am on the second night of the potlatch, and it was shared repeatedly that our students represented our schools and community extremely well.

Our students played basketball and participated in the momentous cultural event with respect and attention, showcasing our commitment to basketball and cultural teachings to our neighbouring Nation. A big haw'aa to coaches Cal, Katie, and Kieran, and to **Candace** and **Christian** of the Tluu Xaadaa Naay dance group, who included our students in the cultural sharing. We are grateful to our tremendous hosts who graciously supported this opportunity for our students.

EMBRACE UNIQUE CULTURE & TERRITORY



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*Thank you to **Jaskwaan Bedard** for sharing this contribution on behalf of Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay School.*

LEARNING ABOUT TUNA



Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay was very happy to host **Billy Yovanovich**, **Elizabeth Moore**, and **Tammi Ryland** on November 21 for an opportunity to learn about locally-caught tuna! Students learned how to cut and process tuna, and we are lucky to have a few cases of jars for our food program! Haw'aa.

PRACTICING HAIDA LANGUAGE

Agnes L. Mathers Elementary has been having weekly Xaayda Kil language lessons, which include drumming and singing with the students. Drumming and singing provide an excellent opportunity to discuss Haida protocols, learn songs, and find students' voices. The focus of language learning is to normalize it in everyday interactions. Language topics include but are not limited to; *time of the year, numbers, colours, foods, basic greetings and feelings, what is happening in the student's lives, and most importantly, giving the students an entirely different language perspective.* In the intermediate classroom, students have to ask to go to the bathroom and get a drink of water in Xaayda Kil. It is photocopied and taped to every student's desk so they can practice until they have memorized it.

BRING ON THE RAIN

Port Clements Elementary students have spent time enjoying and exploring the outdoors, which is made easier with the school's complete set of rain gear, including boots.





MULTI-AGE CLASSROOM STRENGTHS

At **Port Clements Elementary**, intermediate students frequently work with younger learners to help reinforce foundational skills or to join them for a fun activity. Here is a photo of an older students playing a Keva Block challenge with younger students. There is so much more to this picture in describing the strengths of small, multi-age schools. Multi-grade small schools, like Port Clements and **Agnes L. Mathers**, although small in size and sometimes challenging, also provide students with many opportunities to flourish.

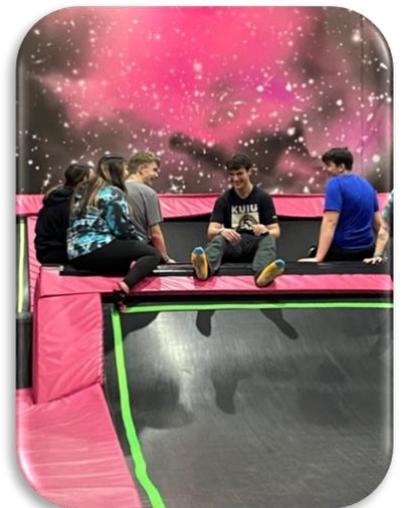
Leadership, mentorship, community contribution, individualized learning and strong relationships are key strengths of the culture of these schools and are most often built into the day-to-day school culture. Hawaa to our educators at these small schools for helping create these school cultures of caring!

POST-SECONDARY TOURS

Thanks to travel subsidies from **Gwaii Trust**, secondary students from **Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay** and **Gidgalang Kuuyas Naay** will be visiting several post-secondary schools. The GKN Grade 12 class has recently completed their University Tour, which they would have normally done in grade 11 if not for the pandemic restrictions. Destinations on this year's tour included the [University of Victoria](#), [Vancouver Island University](#), and [Camosun College](#). In addition to learning more about each of these schools, students also enjoyed some fun.

It takes a team to make trips like this happen, so a huge thank you to this year's chaperones, **Debi Laughlin**, **Colin Greenough**, and **Jenna Perry**, for their commitment and dedication to creating this opportunity for our students.

Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay students depart for their post-secondary tour in January, so I look forward to sharing more about their trip in the February report.





STUDENT WELL BEING

COOP GIFT CARDS

Families of **Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay** students have started to receive \$100 Coop Gift Cards with their children's first term report cards. These were made possible by the Family and Affordability Funds provided by the Ministry of Education and Child Care this school year.



GUD GAA IIS AT AGNES L. MATHERS

Our students continue to work on introducing themselves in our weekly Gud gaa iis – school-wide gathering in a talking circle format. Our primary students are learning to share where, and in which Indigenous territory they were born. Our intermediate students practice their land acknowledgements while also sharing family origins. These exercises help us to understand the diversity amongst us while also acknowledging the importance of Indigenous presence.



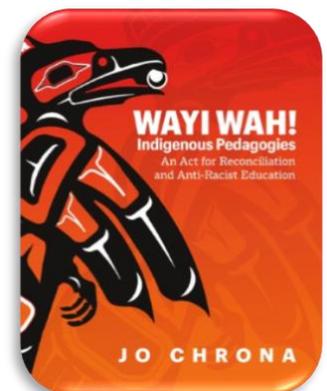
BREAKFAST & LUNCH IN OUR SCHOOLS

Much to the joy of **Sk'aadgaa Naay** students and their families, the hot lunch program has started with currently three lunches per week being served. Meanwhile, at **Port Clements Elementary**, students have enjoyed hot cooked meals twice a week, with a special 'breakfast for lunch' being served on their recent Pyjama Day!

LEARNING TOGETHER

Behn Cochrane, principal of **Tahayghen Elementary**, wanted to thank the Tahayghen staff for the rich discussion specific to learning more about decolonizing and indigenizing education at their most recent staff meeting. Staff discussed BC author, **Jo Chrona's**, latest book, Wayi Wah, and Potlatch as Pedagogy by Dr. Sara Davidson, a book that Indigenous Resource Worker **Candace Weir** has been using with Tahayghen intermediate students.

Tahayghen Elementary is also happy to welcome Haida Language Teacher **Adeana Young**, who is sharing ideas about increasing the use of Haida names and phrases throughout the school.





DECEMBER IN OUR SCHOOLS

Agnes L. Mathers Elementary

- We will be enjoying holiday events within our community; the Festival of Trees/Decorating Event at the Community Hall on December 2nd; our Winter Concert on December 13th; Tree Decorating at the Airport on December 14th; and of course, Breakfast with Santa, the date of which is TBA.

Gidgalang Kuuyas Naay Secondary

- Our Hamper Drive begins Dec. 1st and will run to December 15th. It is a friendly competition in our school's tradition. The grade that brings in the most donations lines up first at the feast. But the real goal is to help fill the local food bank and contribute to the local community hamper program. Each item counts as one, and every dollar donated counts as one.
- December 15th is our annual feast day. Each grade will be assigned a dish to bring in "potluck" style. Those letters will go out shortly.
- Our talent show will start after the feast on the 15th between 1 – 1:30 pm. Just a reminder that please do not bring cell phones to this show as our performers are very often more comfortable if they know that no one is taking video.

Gudangaay Tlaats'gaa Naay Secondary

- As we wind down these last few weeks of school before the Winter Break, students will be focused on their courses and finishing assignments.
- Winter Sports season is in full effect with Boys Basketball (Jr. and Sr.), Girls Basketball (Jr.), and Wrestling practices happening regularly throughout the month.
- GTN will be hosting all students at our Winter Brunch on the morning of December 15, and spending the afternoon engaged in a Winter-themed COAST Day, also known as COAST-Mas. This is an indoor COAST Day with the staff planning opportunities for students to relax, connect, and create handmade holiday gifts.
- GTN will also spend some time acquainting students with online mental-health support services, such as Foundry, that are accessible over the break.

Port Clements Elementary

- Parent-teacher interviews are scheduled for Dec. 6th, and parents are reminded that school will only be in the morning that day.
- We have a Gingerbread House contest on Dec. 12th and a school holiday lunch on Wednesday, Dec. 14th.
- On Dec. 15th from 6:30 – 8 pm, we will have an evening of Christmas Craft Making and Caroling.

Sk'aadgaa Naay Elementary

- Report cards are going home on Wednesday, December 7, and parent-teacher conferences are happening on Thursday, December 8.
- We will be having a turkey lunch on Tuesday, December 13. Our food coordinator and community volunteers will make a turkey with all the fixings for everyone at the school. There will also be vegetarian options.
- The Sk'aadgaa Naay Elementary School Winter Concert will take place on Wednesday, December 14 at 7 pm. We will be collecting items for the Food Bank that evening. All our classes will perform a song or a skit for the concert.



School District No. 50

Haida Gwaii

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD
Regular Meeting of Dec. 6th, 2022

Tahayghen Elementary

- Besides our Sangga. ad “Winter” celebration on the evening of December 14, we will be partnering with our student leadership club to host a breakfast with Santa and enjoy pyjama and movie day on December 15th