
Johnson Elementary School

School Growth Plan

2017 - 2018

Last Updated: June 2, 2017



PART 1: Context, Priorities, Response to School Review, Recommendations, Processes and Connections

Context:

Johnson Elementary School currently has 136 students enrolled and 19 positions (8.5 classroom teachers, 1 Kaska Language Teacher, 1.0 Reading Recovery Teacher, the equivalent of 1.5 full-time Learning Assistant Teachers, .5 Learning Together Centre teacher, .25 Counsellor, 6.0 Educational Assistants, and .75 Administrator). The student population is approximately 75% First Nations.

During the 2014-2015 school year, a handbook was reinstated and changes were made in the Special Education procedures to keep pace with changes instituted by Student Support Services handbook and protocols.

Students are generally courteous but need consistent supervision especially on the playground. Staff works hard to create a positive atmosphere through respectful interactions, expansive displays of student work and bulletin boards with themes, sports, special activities and clear expectations. The JES Cares motto has been used as the scaffolding for “filling our buckets” with random acts of kindness that not only ripples out in the school but into the community as well. The theme of *generosity* has been threaded throughout the year with fundraising for Jump Rope for Heart, for Cystic Fibrosis research, the Terry Fox Run for cancer research, etc. Relatively large amounts of money have been raised for these causes. A student council was formed to encourage student representation, strong leadership and readiness for high school.

We, as a staff, have been focusing on three aspects of literacy – being able to extrapolate knowledge, make inferences, and synthesize the knowledge. Secondly, writing as much as possible to enable our students to develop writing skills and abilities appropriate to their developmental levels. Lastly, we are ensuring that assessment strategies reflect assessments “of”, “as”, and “for” learning utilizing the Yukon Foundation Skills

Assessment (FAS), District Assessment of Reading Team (DART), School Wide Writes (SWW) and Reading Running Records. We will diligently utilize these assessments to guide instruction.

To actualize this plan, the team members will meet formally with students, staff, parents, School Council and the First Nations. The school growth team members include:

- Liard First Nations Chief and Council
- School Council Members – Shawna Boone, Tiffany Lund, Shannon Bergeron, Meaghen Kimmit, Scott Allen, Jennifer Anderson, Steven Peterson and Fannie Vance
- Director of Education, L.F.N. – TBA
- JES Staff – Ralph Pilz, Caolainn Finan, Lauren Murphy, Leah-Rose Traverse and Karalee Smith.

Priorities:

Johnson Elementary School strives to be a safe, caring, respectful and culturally inclusive environment. We will be focussed on successful implementation of a Balanced Literacy Approach school-wide and Positive Behavioural Intervention Strategies as a framework to weave Restorative Practices and Second Step Program Strategies into our school discipline policy. Our extra-curricular program will continue to provide opportunities for students in fine arts, athletics and club activities to enhance student and parent engagement in school.

As part of the curriculum redesign implementation key areas for focus this coming year will center on Formative Assessment and Yukon and Yukon First Nations Context. The Formative Assessment area will focus on descriptive feedback, strength, improvement next step and self- assessment. The Yukon and Yukon First Nations area will focus on enhancing awareness of the Cultural Inclusion Standards and Integrating First Nation perspectives into the curriculum and school program where possible. Both areas will also require teachers to understand and utilize the Yukon Education Communicating Student Learning Handbook on assessment, evaluation and reporting which can be found on the Yukon Department of Education Website.

Response to School Review Recommendations:

With Watson Lake Secondary School moving into Blended Learning, we looked at the strategies we could attain to engage students in their learning. iPads for the higher intermediate grades continue to be used as a learning tool to ready our students for the Blended Learning Program at Watson Lake Secondary School.

Johnson Elementary School is also working with the Watson Lake Secondary School to help our Grade 7 student's transition to the high school more successfully by providing them opportunities to participate in cultural activities, practical and applied arts activities and physical education activities throughout the school year. At the end of the school year we will culminate our transition strategy by providing our Grade 7 students a one week orientation involving our staff along with the Watson Lake Secondary School Staff. This year we would also like to involve the parents more in this plan.

Processes and Connections:

The whole staff is focussed on the following literacy goal of: "Differentiating daily reading and writing school-wide to accommodate the varying ability levels of all students." Our focus will have students read, synthesize and write coherently. Reporting School Wide Writes, DART and Reading Running Record results as well as looking at Foundation Skills Assessment results and writing samples will continue to provide the assessment "of," "as", and "for" learning measurement tools. Lastly, Restorative Practices will be woven into the Positive Behaviour Intervention Strategies (PBIS) Framework once it is properly implemented after the Department of Education in-services this coming school year.

PART 2: Focus

Progress and Evidence:

Looking Back at 2016-2017:

What do we know about the students at the school?

- Many students enter the school in Kindergarten with very low oral language skills (eg. expressive and receptive) and don't have essential "ready to learn" behaviours (eg. don't attend to the teacher, can't focus). These deficits are often remediated by Grade 3.
- Many students have strong "hands on" skills.
- Some students come from single parent families.
- There is a wide range of ability in language and readiness skills.
- Some students have been or continue to be in traumatic situations that affect their learning.
- Some students struggle more than others to self-regulate so that they can be calm and focused in class.

What progress did the school make in achieving the targets set last year?

Goal: To create the conditions needed to enhance learning and ensure that each student can do his or her personal best.

Objective: To increase student reading and writing for all students across the curriculum, which also promotes success in other areas of curriculum.

- During the 2016/2017 school year, significant improvement was noted on the Early Years Evaluation (EYE-TA) Assessment administered in November as an assessment for learning and then again in May as an assessment for and of learning. The results denoted significant growth from the beginning of the school

year to the end of the school year. Beginning of the year indicated 25% of the Kindergarten students were at an appropriate developmental level. At the end of the school year, the number improved to 67%.

- The School Wide Writes (SWW) assessments indicated a 1% decrease from 94% in Spring 2016 to 93% in Spring 2017(for grade 2's through to grade 7's except those on IEP's and STLP's) for the number of students performing at acceptable levels for their particular grade in writing on the B.C. Performance Standards of meaning, style, form and conventions.
- The District Assessment of Reading Team (DART) assessments indicated a 1% increase from 94% in Spring 2016 to 95% in Spring 2017(for grade 2's through to grade 7's except those on IEP's and STLP's) for the number of students performing at acceptable levels for their particular grade in reading on the B.C. Performance Standards of strategies, comprehension and analysis.
- Reading Recovery has assisted many students to attain and improve reading skills as has time with Learning Assistant Teachers and Educational Assistants.
- Following new procedures instituted by Student Support Services and a thorough file review lead by our Learning Assistants, the number of legitimate IEPs has been reduced from 45 to 17. Some other students are on Student Learning Plans and bi-monthly or monthly School Based Team meetings focus on the progress these students have made.
- SMART goals for IEP's were emphasized to help focus efforts on specific skills that needed remediation.

Objective: By creating an atmosphere of success, belonging, engagement and attachment and by using behaviour management strategies (eg. self-regulation) and the PBIS Framework to weave in Restorative Practices and Second Step Program Strategies children will learn to control their behaviour, will improve their literacy skills and will improve attendance.

- In the morning, prior to instructional time students were able to go to the Breakfast Program in the Foods Room; to play in the gym; or to informally visit with fellow students or teachers. For the most part, there were few behaviour issues during this time period.
- As the year progressed, the frequency and intensity of behavioural conflicts has decreased at the office.

- JES CARES assemblies helped to focus students on the acts of kindness and generosity at school along with the “ripple effects” of reaching out into the community where both gestures became the “bucket fillers.”
- Attendance, or lack of it, remains an issue for some families or individuals. Phone calls, letters and face-to-face communications seemed to have helped somewhat. The chronic non-attenders are scattered throughout the grades. Still searching for “buy in” from students and parents with this issue.

What new strategies did you use this year?

- Monthly In-service lead by Department of Education Primary and Intermediate Language Arts consultants to integrate the components of Balanced Literacy and assessment “of”, “as”, and “for” strategies school-wide. (i.e. scoring monthly writing samples utilizing the B.C. Performance Standards Rubric, literacy circles and special projects and presentation rubrics created by the students and teacher).
- Focus: Improve Writing – Teachers have been writing daily, or as much as possible, focusing on the writing process while weaving in the traits of writing. (i.e. ideas, organization, sentence fluency, word choice, voice and conventions). Through assessment “of”, “as”, and “for” strategies, daily writing, common language and time, our students will grow into good writers with skills and abilities appropriate to their development levels.
- Teachers have been using Reading Power strategies to fine tune the structure of literacy circles to allow the students to become more engaged in the reading, thinking and discussion of books and novels.
- Primary and Intermediate Team meetings happen monthly and students are moved if their abilities warrant. Focus on the student’s ability and appropriate grouping allows for teachers to differentiate instruction. These meetings this coming year will also focus more on Formative Assessment and Yukon and Yukon First Nations content and context.
- SMART goals for Student Learning Plans and IEPs will continue to focus instruction for these students.
- When examining the DART, SWW results and Reading Running Records, we can see that most students improved a little or a lot (more than one area/level of improvement on the B.C. Performance Standards marking rubrics and Reading Running Records).

What practices already in place have been effective?

- Consistent, repetitive practice helped students focus on the content and not the task itself.
- Guided use of graphic organizers provided a structured way to think about text.
- Focussed interventions used to develop sight word vocabulary.
- Collegial sharing of approaches, problem-solving and flexibility have been very productive.
- Community lunches, assemblies and special events have opened the doors of the school to parents and community members who seem happy to be here.
- PM Benchmarks – Reading assessment “of,” “as” and “for” learning strategies (i.e. reading running records and levelled text books have been effective in determining reading levels and improving reading skills).
- Learning is a process and students need to become problem solvers and critical thinkers as they learn to read (assessment “as” learning). As students become more proficient, they will become more able critical thinkers as we consistently teach the reading instructional strategies and they self- assess how they are doing while using these reading strategies as follows:
 - Monitoring or noticing
 - Re-reading or meta-cognitive skills of:
 - does it make sense?
 - does it sound right? or
 - does it look like that? and
 - Checking:
 - with letters
 - with pictures/meaning
 - with language and
 - with knowing

Looking Forward

Goals and objectives identified represent the highest priorities for improvement at the school. It is strongly recommended to limit the focus to one or two specific goals.

Rationale for goals and objectives:

Goal: To enhance each student's academic learning so that he/she can achieve his/her personal best.

Objective(s) to support the goal: How can we focus on Literacy Skills (primarily reading and writing) for all students across the curriculum?

Target(s):

- By June 2018, 80% of primary students will be reading at the grade level recommendations in the PM Benchmarks. By June 2018, 95% of intermediate students (except those on IEP's and STLP's) will be reading at the grade level recommendations in the PM Benchmarks. A monthly school report collating all the results (while disaggregating those on IEP's and STLP's from those at grade level) will be utilized for summative and formative growth comparison purposes.
- By June 2018, 90% or more of our students (except those on IEP's and STLP's for grades 2's through to grade 7's) will be performing at acceptable levels on the District Assessment of Reading Team (DART) B.C. Performance Standards of strategies, comprehension and analysis for their particular grade level in reading.
- By June 2018, 90% or more of our students (except those on IEP's and STLP's for grades 2's through to grade 7's) will be performing at acceptable levels on the School Wide Writes (SWW) B.C. Performance Standards of meaning, style, form and conventions for their particular grade level in writing.
- By June 2018, the number of Kindergarten students at appropriate developmental levels will increase 50% for the Early Years Evaluation-Teacher Assessment. By June 2018, the number of kindergarten students

demonstrating an understanding of basic concepts required to perform at his or her developmental level will increase by 10% on the Boehm3: Test of Basic Skills.

PART 3: Actions

Goal: To enhance each student’s academic learning so that he/she can achieve his/her personal best.

Objective(s) to support the goal: How can we focus on Literacy Skills (primarily reading and writing) for all students across the curriculum?

Actions: Strategies/Interventions	Evidence to Track Progress	Person(s) Responsible
<p>Strategy 1 – Technology:</p> <p>Staff focus on integration of technology in classrooms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-on-1 in-service with iPads, Promethean and Epsom projectors, hand held devices and computers provided by Dept. of Education (Mike Snider –periodic visits to JES). • Staff is at different stages in their abilities and comfort with using technology. Professional Development sessions provided by Department of Education will also be accessed. • Student enthusiasm to use technology for academic learning will be fostered. 	<p>Teachers will become more comfortable and more able to integrate technology seamlessly into lesson delivery and student work.</p> <p>Teachers will seek professional development in the field of technology and demonstrate proficiency once in- serviced.</p>	<p>All staff</p>

<p>Strategy 2 – A Balanced Literacy Approach:</p> <p>Balanced Literacy is an instructional approach for Language Arts that we are implementing school-wide. It is being systematically mandated by the Yukon Department of Education with the goal of establishing competent and literate learners. Teachers will strategically differentiate literacy strategies to meet individual student needs in reading, writing, listening and speaking utilizing SWW, DARTS, and Reading Running Records to assess and guide instruction.</p> <p>Strategy 3 – Professional Development:</p> <p>Department allotted professional development days and Primary and Intermediate team meetings will study, discuss and then apply the Balanced Literacy components in the classroom. Guided Reading and analysis will be the initial area of focus. All students will be assessed / levelled to ensure differentiated instruction that is geared to the ability level of each student. Daily writing school-wide will focus on the following six writing traits teachers were in-serviced in. They are as follows: Ideas, Organization, Sentence Fluency, Word Choice, Voice and Conventions. Writing</p>	<p>Each day, Grade 1 to Grade 7 teachers instruct 120 minutes of the following Balanced Literacy components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Aloud/ Modeled Reading 2. Shared Reading 3. Guided Reading and Analysis 4. Independent Reading 5. Word Study and Vocabulary 6. Shared Modelled Writing 7. Guided Writing & Independent Writing/Conferencing as evidenced in Year, Unit and Daily Lesson Plans. <p>Teachers with EA's, Learning Assistant Teachers, Reading Recovery Teacher and the Principal will review assessment for learning data to guide instruction in reading and writing at School Based Team Meetings.</p>	<p>All teachers, Educational Assistants, Learning Assistant Teacher, Reading Recovery Teacher, Principal, Superintendents, Department of Education Consultants and LFN Director of Education.</p> <p>All teachers, Educational Assistants, Learning Assistant Teacher, Reading Recovery Teacher, Principal, Superintendents,</p>
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<p>samples will be assessed on the B.C. Performance Standards Rubric monthly for formative and summative growth purposes.</p> <p>Strategy 4 – Curriculum Focus:</p> <p>The Balanced Literacy Approach conforms to the new curriculum currently being developed and soon to be implemented in B.C. and the Yukon.</p> <p>Strategy 5 – Assessment “of”, “as”, and “for” Learning Reporting:</p> <p>Areas of strengths and weaknesses will be identified by the B.C. Performance Standard Rubrics for the DART, SWW and FSA Assessments. Reading Running Records will also be utilized as an assessment for learning strategy.</p> <p>Reporting to the Department of Education and parents will require new procedures and formats.</p>	<p>At staff meetings, all staff will discuss implications of the new curriculum as it pertains to teaching methodologies, strategies, the seven commitments to assessment and reporting.</p> <p>Charting the results of the assessments and running records will guide instruction and discussions in the Primary and Intermediate team meetings.</p> <p>This will require support from the Department of Education Consultant staff along with JES staff.</p>	<p>Department of Education Consultant Staff and LFN Director of Education.</p> <p>All teachers, Educational Assistants, Learning Assistant Teacher, Reading Recovery Teacher, Principal, Superintendents, Department of Education Consultant Staff and LFN Director of Education.</p> <p>All teachers, Educational Assistants, Learning Assistant Teacher, Reading Recovery Teacher, Principal, Superintendents, Department of Education Consultant Staff and LFN Director of Education.</p>
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<p>Strategy 6 – First Nation Cultural Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renew attempts to create a Courtyard Culture Camp to be used throughout the year as a place to learn from First Nations Elders and Leaders. • Encourage local First Nation language and culture integration into curriculum and school program where possible. • Develop instructional resources in accordance with First Nation traditional and contemporary ways of knowledge. • Develop Elder Program for JES 	<p>Staff will supervise maintenance and use of the Courtyard, etc. and create a schedule for its use.</p> <p>Purchase instructional resource materials and library books that reflect First Nations content.</p> <p>Incorporate Grade 4/5 First Nation Social Studies modules (unit and lesson plans) for language, clans, citizenship and governance.</p> <p>Seek direction from School Council, local community members and elders of the Liard First Nations to help define the programs.</p>	<p>Administrator and all staff members.</p> <p>Administrator, all staff members, LFN Director of Education and FNPP.</p> <p>Administrator, all staff, Dept. of Ed. First Nations Program and Partnership Consultants and LFN Director of Education.</p> <p>Administrator, all staff, Dept. of Ed. First Nations Program and Partnership Consultants and LFN Director of Education and Elders.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Elder and Local Artisans will be brought in to teach Kaska cultural sewing, drum making and carving projects. Kaska storytelling and “Ways of Knowing” will also be provided by the “Elder in Our School Program.” • Traditional Community Meal to celebrate “Cultural Week”, staff, School Council Members and Liard First Nations Community together. • Continue to partner with LAWS and WLSS to sponsor a formal cultural clothing regalia and traditional meal for Grade 7 students moving to high school and the Grade 12 students 	<p>Ongoing participation in the cultural activities will be tracked and discussed for potential future cultural activities and events.</p> <p>Traditional Menu with events and activities will be shared with the School Council, Staff and Liard First Nations Community.</p> <p>Traditional Menu with events and activities will be shared with the School Council, Staff and Liard First Nations Community.</p>	<p>Administrator, all staff, Department of Education, First Nations Program and Partnership Consultants, LFN Director of Education, Elders and the Liard First Nations Community.</p> <p>Administrator, all staff, Department of Education, First Nations Program and Partnership Consultants, LFN Director of Education, Elders and the Liard First Nations Community.</p> <p>School staff, Liard First Nations and Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society.</p>
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<p>graduating. During the ceremony, open to the public, a traditional meal will be provided while the students showcase the beautiful apparel (shawls, vests and dresses) they made under the teaching and direction of our elders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kaska Nation has always been strong in their traditional drumming and songs. Kaska Elders and members will work alongside the students to teach them the entire process of making traditional Kaska drums and using them to sing their songs. They also have hand games that they use their songs and drums for. The Kaska instructors will set up specific times to work with the students teaching them traditional games and songs along with the drumming techniques. 	<p>Student completion of Kaska drums then learning how to use them to successfully play traditional hand games and Kaska songs.</p>	<p>School staff, Liard First Nations and Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society.</p>
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PART 4: Monitoring and Adjusting the Plan

Dates for monitoring progress:

1. Baseline data will be collected and reviewed – September and October, 2017 – DART and SWW dates set by Department of Education for fall entry into the AMS Portal. Also, 2017-2018 results are on the Data Portal.
2. Ongoing for 2017/2018 – Department of Education In-Service on “A Balanced Literacy Approach” Kindergarten to Grade 7 led by the Primary Consultant and Intermediate Consultant.
3. Ongoing for 2017/2018 – focus on student progress using rubrics and samples of student writing. Adjust instructional practices to remediate before second round of SWW.
4. Ongoing for 2017/2018 – all students will be assessed/levelled in reading to ensure differentiated instruction that is geared to the ability level of each student.
5. By June 2018 – review data collected from DART and SWW then disseminate to staff and students. The data will be used to inform instruction to provide intervention strategies for improvement.
6. By October 2018 – final summary of evidence of progress in literacy skills for accountability purposes.
7. School Growth Planning Team: November 2017, February 2018 & May 2018.
8. Report School Growth Process to staff: Periodic Staff Meetings
9. Report School Growth Process to School Council: Periodic Council meetings
10. Report School Growth Process to L.F.N.: Periodic Band Meetings

Communications Plan:

- Newsletters – at least monthly, can report goals, strategies and basic information (Administrator)
- Family Literacy Day
- Education Week

- School Council Meeting
- Interagency Meetings
- Chamber of Commerce Meetings
- Mayor and Council Meetings
- Staff should be able to input and access the Data Portal to view standardized results (Teachers and Administrator)
- Parent-Teacher Interviews – at least one per term (Teachers)
- Department of Education – staff directly delivering Technology and Performance support should be consulted throughout the year for assistance and advice as well as for sharing results (Administrator, Teachers and Department of Education Consultants).
- Open door policy – community feedback is always welcomed to enhance the community/school philosophy.

Date and description of adjustments made to the plan:

(To be completed during the 2017-2018 school year)

June 4, 2018 updated the plan and made the following adjustments:

- Embedded the AFL plan more specifically in the School Growth Plan as per Department of Education pressure and support.
- Updated the growth plan where possible but more updated data results are required to set SMART goals for the upcoming 2017/18 school year.