

WEST SECHELT ELEMENTARY: School Growth Plan – 2023/2024



We acknowledge with respect the unceded and traditional lands and waters of the *shíshálh* Nation where we gather, learn, and collaborate with one another. West Sechelt Elementary School is proud to be the centre for learning within the West Sechelt community located on the unceded territory of the *shíshálh* (Sechelt) Nation.

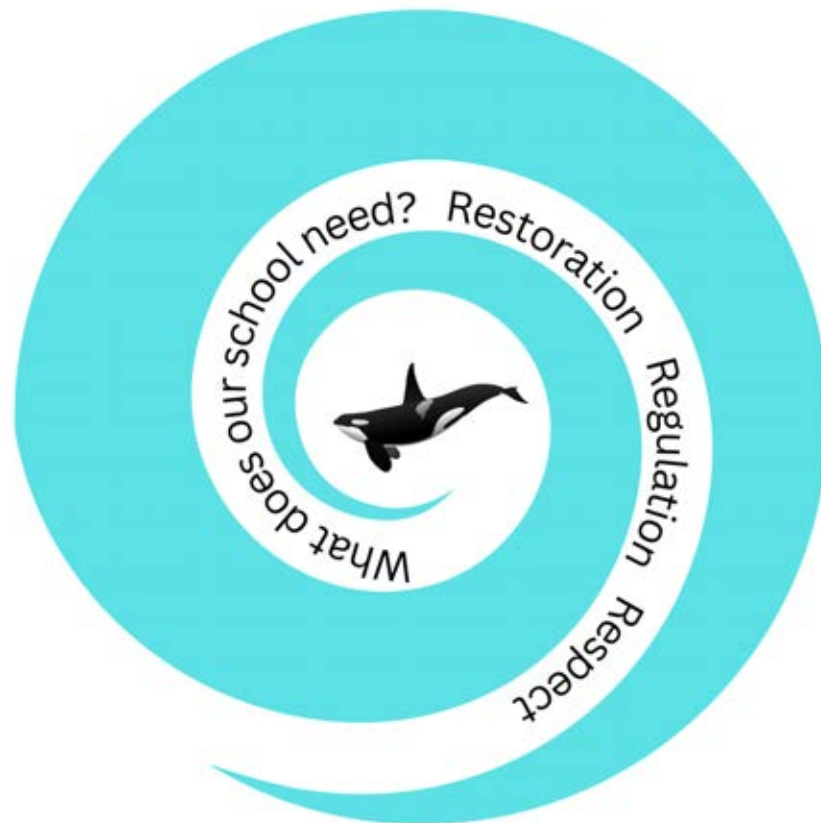
We are a vibrant learning community which offers unique learning opportunities for our students. We are, simply put, better in a pod.

Our school has excellent education learning programs as well as many nature learning spaces for our classes to explore and learn about our natural surroundings.

West Sechelt Elementary is lucky to have access to our own school garden on Mason Road. Use of this plot of land that was donated by a generous neighbour, John Bell. Many classes visit the farm to learn about gardening and growing their own food. To date, students have planted and enjoyed: apples, strawberries, kale, carrots, snap peas, radishes, lettuce, herbs, potatoes, spinach, broccoli, squash, and zucchini. We have also donated some of that bounty to our local food bank! This is a wonderful way for students to learn about where their food comes from, how to grow for and – most importantly – how to share it.

West Sechelt has 267 students this school year. 58 with ministry designations and 42 of our students identify as Indigenous. 267 students are awesome.

Our biggest needs: RESTORATION, REGULATION, and RESPECT



In 2022, recognized that we have three major areas of need in our school. These three areas continue to be needs in our school.

Restore: The Covid-19 Pandemic and beautiful construction of the new expansion led many in our community to feeling disconnected. Our need to restore our community is a large one. We feel that this coming back together was important to build community.

Regulate: A significant amount of anecdotal evidence from all stakeholder groups has led our school staff to further require the need to have regulation strategies maintained in our classrooms and play-spaces. Over the last few years, digital devices have become a large source of distraction for our learners at school and in their homes. We have a rise in concerning behaviours over the last few years and believe that as childhood changes so to should we. Staff are committed to learning about best practices to teach self-regulation as well as celebrate our successes. We have seen a significant impact on the wellness and mental health of all community members. We hope to address the needs of individuals and allow community to have an open dialogue about what it means to be “flourishing”.

Respect: The staff at West Sechelt have highlighted this as one of the biggest areas of need at our school. At West Sechelt we want our students to be respectful of all individuals within the school and outside in the community. We want our students to feel respected as well by all adults that they meet. We will model manners, polite behaviour, and gratitude. We will be respectful to ourselves and those around us; respectful of plants, animals and the environment, respectful to the equipment, buildings and grounds provided for us.

The Plan to address our areas of need (what we want to grow)

Our biggest wondering: **How do we create a school where every individual feels safe and valued while joyfully learning?**

Our question focuses on the Personal and Social Core Competency and is aligned with the SD46 Strategic Plan goals: 1a) Our students’ voice will be respectfully heard and acted upon; 1f) Our students will develop and apply social and emotional skills to successfully live, work, and play together; and 2a) Our staff will be a healthy and inspired team.

We are always looking to create a culture of care and shared social responsibility. We will do this in the following ways:

- encourage and enhance practices that support cultural, social-emotional, physical and mental wellbeing.
- provide ways for students to give feedback in authentic, non-confrontational ways (using Safir’s Street Data as an entry point)
- support our students in seeing the connection between how they are feeling and the choices they make with regard to keeping themselves safe, happy and healthy
- work towards building positive awareness and responsibility and assist them in making connections and forging relationships, if we focus on self-regulation and well-being

- equip students with strategies to handle difficult times or challenging tasks.

Last year we started to introduce common language, strategies and programs, school-wide. In the fall of 2022, our full team was trained in Restitution and uses restorative questions in daily problem solving. This is the same practice used in our principal's office when there are office referrals. We continue to use restorative questions this school year.

In the winter of 2023 we introduced a rewritten Code of Conduct that is child and user friendly. Students, staff, and parents were given the opportunity to assist in writing of the new CoC.

Restore - Actions:

- Students have been sorted into teams (aka: spirit squads) and spend the first week with multi-age groupings and teachers who are not their homeroom teachers. Our squads continue to work together throughout the year – enriching the daily lives of the individuals who play and work here.
- We have an eager and keen parent group who plan and host community events.
- The classes are working cooperatively together

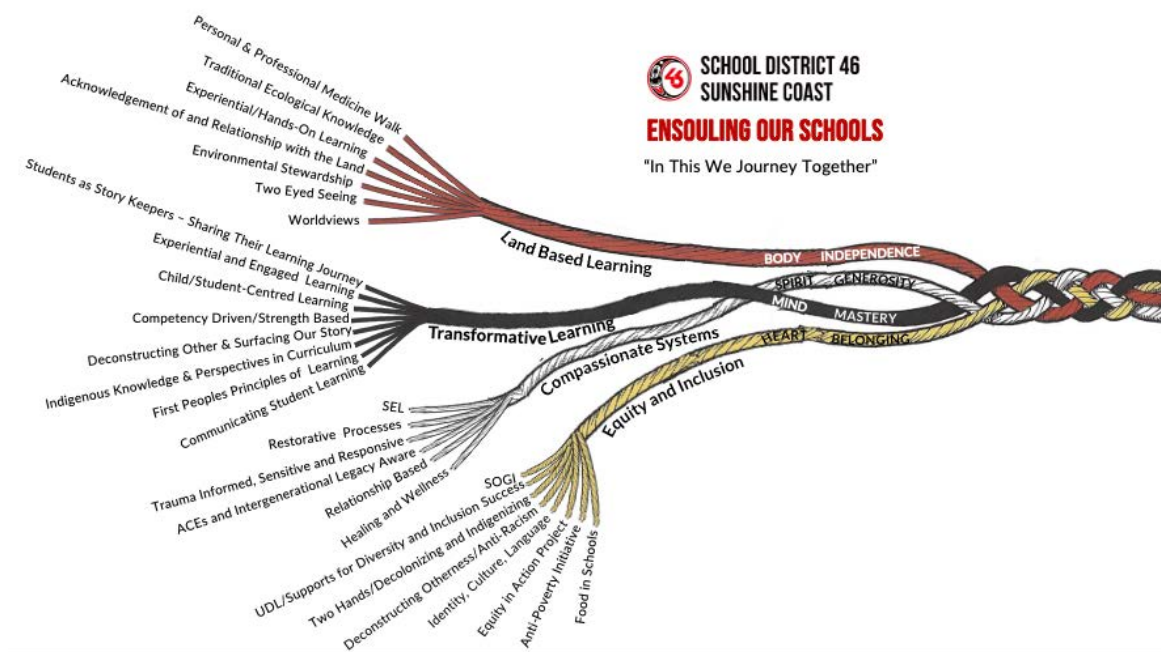
Regulate – Actions:

- All staff received Restitution training with Rebecca Gray (from the Real Restitution group)
- Children and adults are familiar with the restorative questions
- Counselling team is teaching zones of regulation in classrooms
- Children are given calm down strategies with principal post escalation

Respect – Actions:

- Code of Conduct is used daily as a reminder in classrooms and common areas
- Families are communicated with regarding concerning behaviour and informed of any sort discipline
- We attempt to be kind and clear when dealing with discipline matters
- We model how to be respectful by respecting students

SCHOOL GROWTH PLAN FOR WEST SECHLT ELEMENTARY



Through the four strands of the braid, we learn together as a school community.

Land based learning – our school farm is a short walk up Mason Road. There we have multiple projects occurring with children in grades 1 through 5. We are a short walk to the beach and many classes use it weekly for learning. Several parks in our area also lend themselves to our nature-based learning projects and lessons. Finally, we have a gated nature area behind our school where teachers take their students regularly.

Transformative Learning – All students have a story and through their stories we allow our decisions to be made and our curriculum to emerge. Our students learn about local Indigenous peoples and the work that we do is rooted in First Peoples Principles of Learning. Our Individual Education Plans are strength and competency based. Many of our teachers share students' progress through spaces (online portfolios)

Compassionate systems – Our classrooms use Zones of Regulation. Our staff began training in Restitution in the fall of 2022 and we use restorative practices to dispute conflicts. We are trauma sensitive in our approaches to students and one another. Our commitment to our relationships is shown in the work that we do every day.

Equity and Inclusion – We use Universal Design for Learning when planning and teaching. Our community benefits from breakfast and lunch programs. We have a collaborative approach to learning in our school and use our School Based Team as a launch pad for learner success. All

children and adults are celebrated at West Sechelt regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity.

DEMOGRAPHICS

West Sechelt Elementary is the hub of the community for the neighbourhood. Nestled in a community that is close knit and caring we aim to reflect the wider community.

West Sechelt has 267 students this school year (23/24) in 12 classrooms. 47 with ministry designations and have Individual Education Plans that are rooted in strengths and competency based. 42 of our students identify as Indigenous. 267 students are awesome.

VISION

Our community members will be joyfully engaged in learning while feeling valued and safe

VALUES

Our staff has worked on our what our core values are as a staff (see attachment). Our Code of Conduct has 4 key words: Safe, Respect, Responsible, and Kind. This year we have, as a community, focused on respect (for others, property, and selves).

CURIOUS EVIDENCE/DATA

We are curious about our hunch: achievement in literacy rises when children are joyfully learning in a safe environment. We will use our restore, regulate, and respect action items to anchor us.

We will track student achievement in literacy by looking at the FSAs, Literacy assessments (PM benchmarks and the DART), and classroom-based assessments.

We will look at our MDI results and street data to see if our students are feeling valued and safe at school.

Foundation Skills Assessments – 88% of students participated in these assessments. Some did not due to extenuating circumstances or lengthy absences.

Grade 4 Literacy Results from October 2022 FSAs

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Emerging – 4% | Ontrack - 85% | Extending – 11% |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|

Our Gr. 4 Indigenous students that were “on track” with this assessment – 100%

Grade 7 Literacy Results from October 2022 FSAs

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Emerging – 13% | Ontrack - 82% | Extending – 5% |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|

West Sechelt has 267 students this school year. 47 with ministry designations and 42 of our students identify as Indigenous. 267 students are awesome.

Grade 4 Literacy Results from October 2023 FSAs

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Emerging – 20% | Ontrack - 68% | Extending – 12% |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|

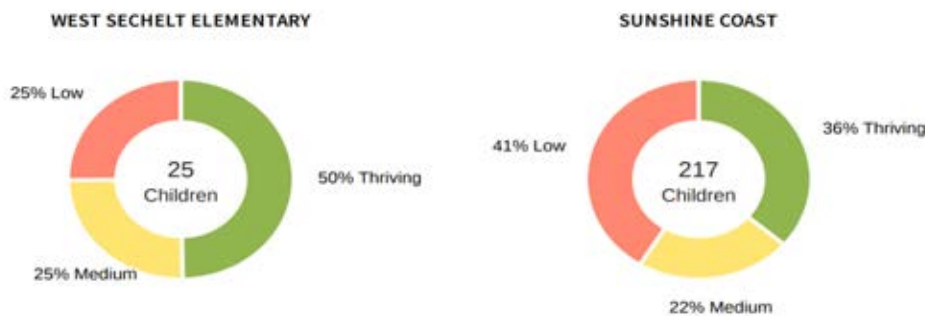
Our Gr. 4 Indigenous students that were “on track” with this assessment – 100%

Grade 7 Literacy Results from October 2023 FSAs

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Emerging – 6% | Ontrack - 91% | Extending – 3% |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|

Our Gr. 7 Indigenous students that were “on track” with this assessment – 100%

In 2022, 50% of our grade 5 students reported that they are thriving



Unfortunately, in 2022, 42% of our gr. 5 students report that they do not have an important adult at school. With the data we received in 2023, this has not changed.



NEXT STEPS

Each fall we will review our needs. We determined the 3 biggest areas were restore, respect, and regulate. Through these 3 areas of need we will anchor our work in student achievement by focusing and honing our practice on literacy. Our goal is to have children (and adults) joyfully learning while feeling safe and respected.

In the fall of 2023, we implemented targeted reading instruction with a .8 reading teacher. Our primary teachers are focusing on the science of reading as well as finding joy through literacy.

Our staff will recommit to primary-intermediate teams to plan, collaborate and make action plans to determine term/year goals. Each team will meet three times a year during the school day.

We will continue our work on building community and healthy relationships in our school to ensure students feel there is a safe, important adult in their school to whom they feel a sense of connectedness. Supportive relationships with adults at school are critical to students' sense of belonging. We want our students to feel that sense of belonging in order to learn at their best individual capacities.

Attachment 1: In the fall of 2022, our staff determined these to be our values to work towards. They are posted throughout the school and shared with our parent partners in communications.

OUR SHARED VALUES

These are the collective values of the adults
who work, play, learn, and collaborate here

joy inclusion curiosity safety
uniqueness authenticity respect
belonging fairness collaboration
advocacy discipline stewardship
growth humour accountability
connection relationships diversity
community heritage optimism
kindness teamwork compassion



West Sechelt: better in a pod

Attachment 2:

Street Data - Questions to students

1. Is school a safe place for all?
2. In what ways do you feel supported at school?
3. In what ways do you feel your identity is accepted here at school?
4. What do you need from the adults in the school to create a more comfortable school for you?
5. Do you have a student voice at school?

Sample from a small group that was interviewed together in the fall of 2023 .

1. Is school a safe place for all?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Yes, but it depends on some things – sometimes the older kids who think they have all the power. It's not all older kids.
 - c. If it was just teachers it would be safe but some kids are quite awful with no adult knowing or caring
 - d. Last year there was a group of kids that were so mean to everyone. The counsellor and the principal were really helpful.
2. In what ways do you feel supported at school?
 - a. If you need help with math, you get help with it
 - b. You can get help when you need it
 - c. The counsellor and principals are the people I go to for support
 - d. When adult figures are supportive (like, having a Pride club)
3. In what ways do you feel your identity is accepted here at school?
 - a. Having a pride club, Indigenous team with MJ
 - b. Knowing that the adults have our back
 - c. If you're not supported by the adults you wouldn't know about it because the other adults will protect you. When a student transitioned here last year there was some adults who didn't accept it. The other other adults supported them and we saw how the supportive adults protected the student.
 - d. Kids are generally supportive of one another.
4. What do you need from the adults at WS to create a more comfortable school for you?
 - a. Sometimes just stop and listen to what the kids are trying to say. Example, trying to explain. Just pause and listen to me, please!
 - b. Sometimes the adults can see the whole side, but they're not fully listening. They just hear something happened. They make assumptions.
 - c. Understand more (diversity, inclusive, acceptance) about how kids are now. It's a different time.
 - d. The adults need to ask us what need and actually need
5. Do you have a student voice at school?
 - a. It depends. I feel like we have a voice in assemblies.
 - b. It really depends on the adults and who is listening
 - c. I can usually tell when an adult is not fully listening to me – at home too.

- d. Most of the time. I know which adult will listen to me.

Is there a way to have student input into decisions?

Suggestion box – ideas – kids are too nervous to approach the adults sometimes. A box where we could write about something that needs to change to make the school more comfortable and safe. Not like asking for a pool but something that Ms. Cowan or other adults could fix.

Extras:

The kids are supportive of other kids because the adults might have forgotten even though they were once kids. We can tell when an adult hasn't forgotten what it's like to be a kid.

The teachers – we will tell them about something and sometimes it's only what they want to hear that ends up coming out of it.

Attachment 3: Restorative questions for solving conflicts

RESTORATIVE QUESTIONS
When things go wrong...

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
5. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

When someone has been harmed...

1. What did you think when you realized what had happened?
2. What impact has this incident had on you and others?
3. What has been the hardest thing for you?
4. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

West Sechelt: better in a pod

Data Curiosities...

- On the MDI, our students report that 55% spend more than 7 (or more) days a week in organized activities. This same group of kids report that they don't read for fun.
- How can we increase the number of students feeling that they have supportive adults at school?