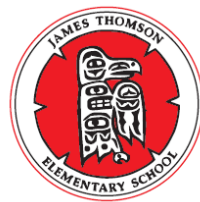




School District 47 (Powell River)

James Thomson Elementary

2016-2017



School Improvement Plan



Introduction (Context)

James Thomson Elementary School has a current school population of 271 students in eleven divisions (September 2016 demographic data). The school is the most northern elementary school in the Powell River School District and serves children from the communities of Wildwood, Tla'amin and Lund , as well as many from throughout Powell River in the French Immersion Program. The following demographic statistics are based on the most recent demographic context published by the Ministry of Education:

48.6% of all students are female

51.4% of all students are male

28.1% of all students are Aboriginal*

14.8% of all students are on Individual Education Plans

*Of our 130 students in our English stream divisions, 53% are Aboriginal. We are fortunate to provide many opportunities for our students to engage with our local first nation, Tla'amin. All students, Kindergarten to grade 4 receive cultural classes once a week. Kla ah men language is then provided as a second language class for grades 5-7, the alternative being French. Legacy projects are in their sixth year, intending to increase a First Nation presence throughout at the school and at our many celebrations. Following the current Aboriginal Education Agreement, we hope to create a more inclusive school system and community



School Profile (Unique Characteristics and School Strengths)

- ❖ James Thomson educators and staff are dedicated to ensuring all students succeed in all areas of the curriculum. We serve a diverse community with unique challenges.
- ❖ The staff of James Thomson work hard to incorporate First Nations content into many curricular areas, and we are fortunate to draw upon the knowledge of several members of the Tla'amin Community.
- ❖ All students, Kindergarten to grade 4 receive cultural classes once a week. Kla ah men language is then provided as a second language class for grades 5-7, the alternative being French. Legacy projects are in their sixth year, intending to increase a First Nation presence throughout at the school and at our many celebrations. Following the current Aboriginal Education Agreement, we hope to create a more inclusive school system and community.
- ❖ Another unique cultural feature is the early French Immersion Program, currently in its seventh year. Our French Immersion is a unique nature-based French Immersion program that strives to draw out a child's inherent curiosity for learning by providing engaging teaching methods that nurture awareness of and respect for self, others and the environment.
- ❖ Our school is evolving into an "Eco school". We believe providing outdoor learning opportunities will enhance children's learning and school experiences, as well as develop a lifelong connection to their space and place in nature. High quality learning does not always need to happen within the walls of a classroom. The same opportunities for understanding and mastery can take place in a natural setting. This will help serve those students with anxiety, and attention difficulties as well as help in bringing their learning to an experiential level.
- ❖ The PAC is eagerly involved in coordinating large school events and hosting a variety of fundraisers to help provide additional resources and experiences for the students. These include Farm to School meals and education, a school garden, creating/enhancing the outdoor learning spaces,



Statement of Belief (Mission Statement)

Our mission at James Thomson Elementary is to guide our students' learning to achieve their personal best, academically and socially. We aim to do this through:

Academic programming: Our teachers are dedicated in engaging students in relevant, high level learning to achieve their individual potential for academic successes.

Cultural awareness: We are a trilingual school and provide many opportunities for all students to participate in and be exposed to the language and culture of Coast Salish and French.

Eco Stewardship: We provide many outdoor and nature based learning opportunities to enhance our student's learning, as well as develop a lifelong connection to their space and place in nature.



Goal 1 – Educational Excellence (English Track)

Action Item 1

To improve student achievement in reading.

We are currently in our sixth year of a professional learning pilot. Each class is divided into reading groups based on their reading level at the start of the year. Each teacher then works with a small group, focusing on the students' needs to continue to progress as a reader. Groups are re-evaluated each term and restructured based on growth and obstacles. This format has been proven to be very successful for our students. We plan on now building on the literacy skills of our students through the Joyful Literacy Program, incorporating literacy games and centres during this targeted literacy time.

- Professional development centred on Joyful Literacy best practice
- Collaborating with colleagues to share resources
- Scheduling approximately 2 hours daily focussed on literacy.
- Reviewing and using Performance Standards in reading

Indicators of Success

- ✓ FSA results for grades 4 and 7 over time
- ✓ Evaluating tools such as Benchmarks and Gates



Goal 2 – Educational Excellence (French Track)

Action Item 1

To improve student achievement in writing.

We are in our seventh year of early French immersion, finally offering grades K-7. The focus has been language acquisition, mainly oral, and this will remain the main goal of kindergarten through grade 2. Following that, we have created a dynamic reading program, using GB+ as our main evaluating tool, similar to Benchmarks. To continue our students' success and getting them prepared for high school, we feel we need to turn our attention to writing. Our goal for each immersion student is bilingual success; we need to develop their writing skills more explicitly.

- Research and collaborate on successful French immersion writing programs and tools.
- Using standard writing portfolios through each grade
- Using school wide writes to assess and guide instruction
- Reviewing and using Achieving Excellence in Writing

Indicators of Success

- ✓ Evaluations based on grade level French Immersion standards



Goal 3 – School Based

Action Item 1

Improve delivery of personalized learning, using technology.

Although we are fortunate to have the opportunity for smaller group instruction, many of our students still need targeted instruction to help them reach grade level. For this, we have begun using apps and websites set up to address specific learning needs, allowing the teacher to work one to one with many students throughout the day. This also aids the teacher in planning lessons based on the results gathered from these sessions. We strive to have students at or exceeding grade level at the end of grade 3. We aim to:

- Provide fair access and availability of devices (laptops and ipads)
- Ensure adequate infrastructure is in place (logging on, wifi, tech support)
- Provide Mathletics, Reading Plus, IXL, Tumble Books, Abacadabra (English and French available), all also available for home log in and access.

Indicators of Success

- ✓ Increased engagement in class and small group instruction
- ✓ FSA results for grades 4 and 7 over time
- ✓ With reading: Bench mark results, primary, and Gates MacGinitie tests, intermediate
- ✓ District math tests



Summary

James Thomson elementary is an active school with many different aspects and needs. Each factor has specific learning necessities that we are trying to meet, and at the same time, provide an enriching learning experience for all students.

- We are working hard to ensure our First Nations students have a strong foundation to be successful through their high school years. Personalized Learning programming and small group, targeted instruction has proven successful. We also strive to honor First Nations culture throughout the school and in our lessons.
- Academic intervention is ongoing and expanding. We are fortunate to receive extra teaching support through the district to aid in reaching our lower students. Their continued growth and success is evident in their test scores, as well as in the decreased playground and classroom behavior incidents.
- Our first French Immersion cohort will be reaching Brooks High School next year, we are striving to build our program to inspire their continued learning in French and avoid attrition.
- Eco education has become a focus for many classes. The target going into this next school year is one outside/site based learning day each week for 6 of our 11 divisions. Nature enhanced learning continues in the classrooms.

Our staff are excited to attend Professional Development sessions to expand their knowledge and skills in all of these areas.

