



Nathan Barton Elementary School

Learning Improvement Plan 2026-27

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SCHOOL VISION, MISSION and VALUES

VISION

We will become a vibrant learning community rooted in the spirit of Say't Kilim Goot, where students, staff, parents, caregivers, elders, and knowledge keepers come together in shared responsibility, cultural understanding, and mutual respect to create a nurturing and inclusive environment for all.

MISSION

At Nathan Barton Elementary, we are committed to delivering a learning experience that strengthens Nisga'a identity and fosters academic success. Grounded in the wisdom of Nisga'a language, culture, and land, we empower students through traditional practices and ancestral knowledge woven into everyday learning. We cultivate deep respect for our territory, stories, and community.

VALUES

When **culture** is brought to life in the classroom, learners see themselves reflected in their education. This deepens their sense of identity, belonging, and pride. By embedding Nisga'a language, stories, and seasonal teachings into daily learning, students are more engaged, confident, and connected to their community, which strengthens both academic and personal growth.

VALUES

When **curiosity** is nurtured, learners become active participants in their own learning. By exploring traditional knowledge, asking questions about their world, and engaging in inquiry rooted in Nisga'a ways of knowing, students develop critical thinking skills and a lifelong love of learning. This empowers them to make meaningful connections between their culture and their academic journey.

Learners and Community Context

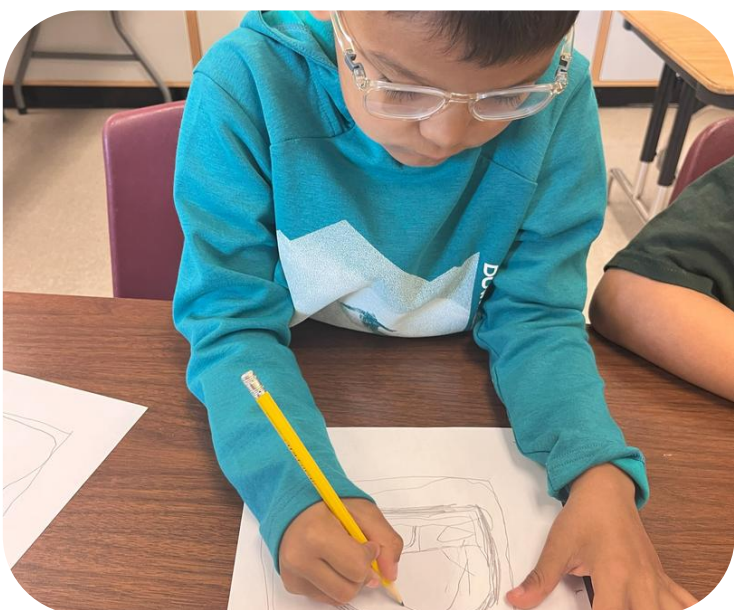
Nathan Barton Elementary School is located in the Nisga’a village of Gingolx and serves thirty-five students from Kindergarten to Grade Seven. All learners are Nisga’a and bring with them a deep connection to their land, language, and community. These students are culturally rooted and thrive when learning reflects their identity, values, and lived experiences. They demonstrate strong engagement in hands-on, experiential learning that includes storytelling, drumming, singing, and seasonal activities guided by the Nisga’a harvest calendar.

NBES learners benefit from a close-knit school environment where relationships are central to learning. Many students require additional support in literacy and numeracy, but they show resilience, creativity, and a strong desire to learn when instruction is culturally responsive and personalized. Social and emotional learning is also a key focus, as students continue to develop self-regulation, confidence, and leadership through programs such as the Zones of Regulation and the Seven Habits of Healthy Learners.

The school is supported by a dedicated team that includes a principal who also serves as the Learning Support Teacher, a vice principal who leads Inclusive Education, classroom teachers, a Nisga’a Language and Culture teacher, educational assistants, and district staff. Together, they work to create a safe, inclusive, and culturally rich learning environment where every student is seen, heard, and supported to thrive.

What We Know

Strengths and Accomplishments



Nathan Barton Elementary School has made significant strides in embedding Nisga’a culture into everyday learning. Students actively participate in land-based education guided by the Nisga’a traditional harvest calendar, where they explore seasonal cycles, food preservation methods, and the life cycles of animals harvested in their territory. These experiences deepen their understanding of cultural practices and foster a strong connection to the land. Learners also engage in weekly drumming, singing, and dancing, which not only celebrate Nisga’a traditions but also build confidence, rhythm, and community spirit. The school has embraced district-wide cultural sharing days, allowing students to showcase their learning and connect with peers across the valley. Additionally, “Fun Friday” activities have become a vibrant part of the school culture, blending art, storytelling, and cultural expression to create joyful and meaningful learning experiences. These accomplishments reflect the school’s commitment to nurturing identity, engagement, and holistic development through culturally responsive education.

Challenges To Overcome



Nathan Barton Elementary continues to focus on improving foundational literacy and numeracy skills across all grade levels. Many learners require targeted support to build reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence in mathematical reasoning. Addressing these academic gaps is essential to ensuring long-term success and equitable outcomes for all students.

In addition, the school is working to strengthen emotional regulation and social relationships among learners. Strategies such as yoga, the Zones of Regulation, and the 7 Habits of Healthy Learners are being implemented to help students develop self-awareness, resilience, and positive interpersonal skills.

Embedding these approaches into daily routines will support a more focused, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. The challenge lies in integrating academic and social-emotional learning in a way that is culturally responsive and sustainable within the small-school context.

With Purpose & Intention

Leading For Learning

Leadership begins with clarity of purpose. By aligning school-level planning with the district's strategic vision, leaders ensure that every decision, initiative, and learning experience is rooted in shared values and community commitments. This coherence strengthens trust, empowers staff, and keeps learners at the heart of every action.

Planning For Impact

School impact plans are not simply accountability or operational tools, they are roadmaps for transformation. When grounded in the district's strategic priorities, these plans become vehicles for equity, cultural integrity, and learner success. They help schools move from intention to measurable outcomes, ensuring that efforts are focused, inclusive, and responsive to local context.

Building A Culture Of Learning

Strategic alignment fosters a culture where learning is continuous for learners, educators, and leaders. It encourages reflection, collaboration, and innovation, while honoring the wisdom of the Nisga'a Peoples. By leading for learning and planning for impact, school teams contribute to a district-wide movement that grows every learner in mind, heart, body, and spirit.



Learning Priority One

Goal Culture and Language

To strengthen student identity, belonging, and academic engagement by embedding Nisga'a language, seasonal teachings, cultural practices, and Indigenous ways of knowing into daily learning across all subject areas.

Rationale

Nathan Barton Elementary School recognizes that Nisga'a language and culture are foundational to student identity, well-being, and success. When students see their language, culture, traditions, and lived experiences reflected in their learning, they are more engaged and connected to their school community. Through ongoing collaboration between classroom teachers, support staff, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and the Nisga'a Language and Culture program, students will have meaningful opportunities to learn, practice, and celebrate Nisga'a language and culture every day. This work supports cultural pride, strengthens relationships, and promotes holistic student growth through Indigenous pedagogies and culturally responsive practices.

Targets

- By June 2027, teachers and staff will continue to work collaboratively to embed Nisga'a language and culture into all mainstream classrooms. Classrooms will build upon existing Nisga'a language visuals and cultural resources, updating displays monthly to reflect seasonal teachings and the Nisga'a harvest calendar. Connections will be intentionally incorporated into literacy, numeracy, science, arts, and other curricular areas.
- By June 2027, all students will participate confidently and respectfully in weekly Nisga'a language and cultural learning opportunities, including classroom activities, cultural events, seasonal teachings, and community-based learning experiences.
- By June 2027, all students will demonstrate growth in their use and understanding of Nisga'a language and cultural protocols through daily practices such as morning and afternoon greetings, daily questions, food blessings, sharing circles, and participation in culturally respectful routines and protocols.

Measuring Our Success

We will measure student growth and engagement through:

- Student self-assessments using BC Curriculum Core Competency "I Can" statements.
- Regular student self-reflections using a common school-wide reflection format.
- Classroom observations and participation data.
- Student participation during sharing circles, cultural activities, and school events.
- Teacher planning documents demonstrating integration of Nisga'a language and culture across curricular areas.
- Family and caregiver feedback through written reflections, surveys, and informal conversations regarding their children's growth, participation, and cultural engagement.
- Evidence of increased student confidence in using Nisga'a language and participating in cultural activities.

Key Strategies & Actions

- Use weekly collaborative planning time to intentionally incorporate Nisga'a language, culture, and seasonal teachings into classroom learning across all subject areas.
- Utilize the Nisga'a Language and Culture Educational Assistant to support all classrooms by integrating Nisga'a language and cultural knowledge into literacy, numeracy, science, arts, and experiential learning opportunities.
- Continue to build partnerships with Nisga'a Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community members, and cultural experts to support authentic learning experiences.
- Provide ongoing professional learning opportunities for staff focused on Indigenous pedagogies, Nisga'a ways of knowing, and culturally responsive teaching practices.
- Create learning environments that include visual representations of Nisga'a language, seasonal teachings, cultural protocols, and the Nisga'a harvest calendar to promote daily exposure and understanding.
- Engage students in regular sharing circles, reflections, and discussions that support cultural identity, belonging, and connections to community.
- Incorporate daily Nisga'a language routines, including greetings, questions, blessings, and common classroom vocabulary to increase student confidence and language use.



Learning Priority Two

Goal Empowered and Inspired Learners

To improve oral and written literacy skills by integrating Nisga'a language, storytelling, oral traditions, experiential learning, and culturally responsive teaching practices into daily instruction.

Rationale

Embedding traditional Nisga'a practices into literacy instruction supports student engagement, cultural identity, and language development. Drumming, singing, and storytelling provide rich opportunities for students to build vocabulary, comprehension, and expressive language skills in both oral and written forms.

Targets

- By June 2027, all classrooms will provide regular opportunities for students to develop oral language skills through storytelling, sharing circles, presentations, discussions, drumming, singing, and other culturally responsive learning experiences.
- By June 2027, all students will demonstrate growth in written literacy through meaningful writing opportunities connected to Nisga'a language, cultural teachings, seasonal learning, community experiences, and personal reflection.
- By June 2027, students will increase their confidence as learners and communicators by participating in authentic learning experiences that encourage them to share their ideas, stories, knowledge, and cultural understandings with others..

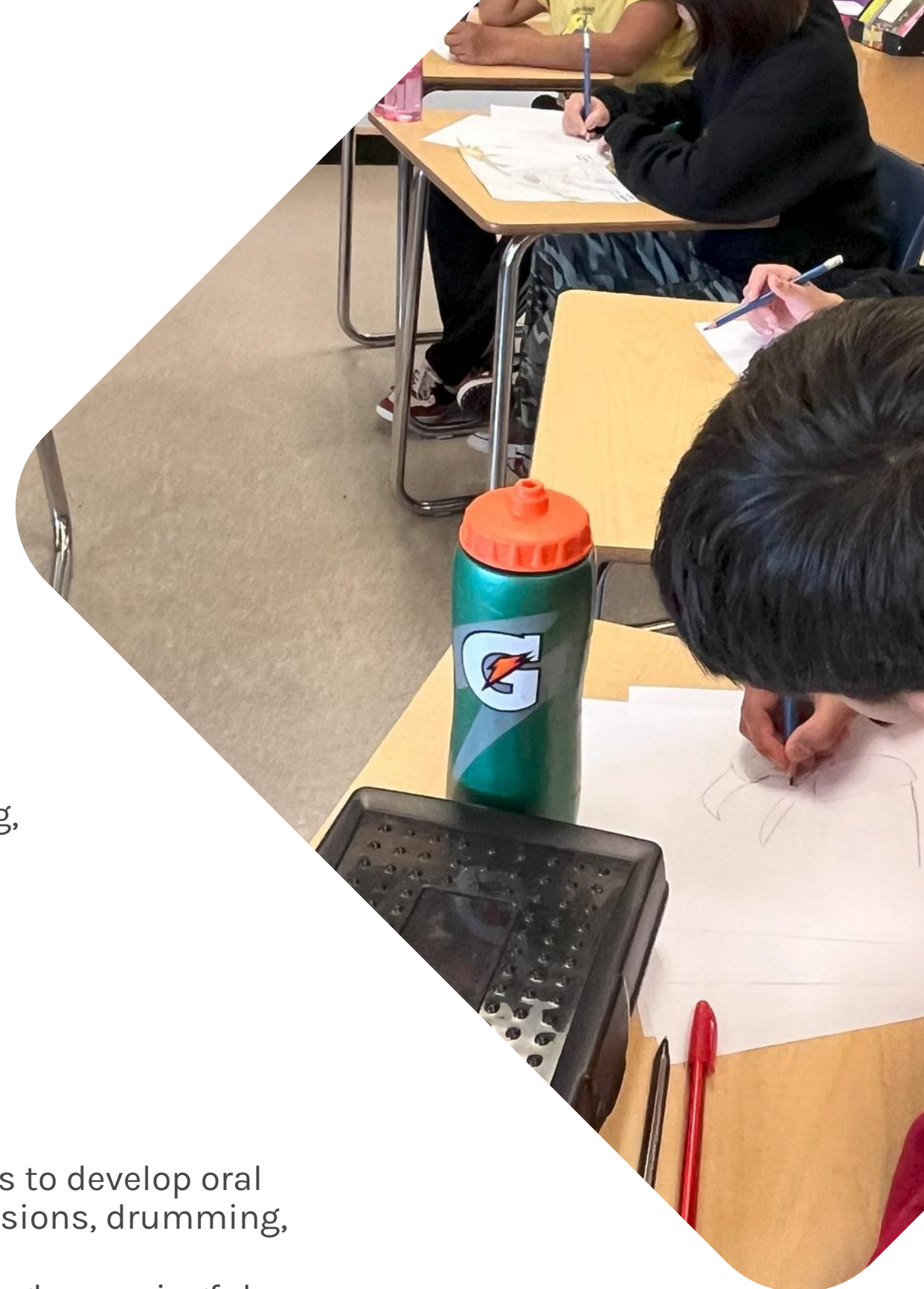
Measuring Our Success

We will measure student growth through:

- BC Literacy Assessment data and classroom-based literacy assessments.
- Student writing samples collected throughout the year.
- Oral language observations, presentations, storytelling, and sharing circle participation.
- Student self-assessments using BC Core Competency "I Can" statements.
- School-wide reflection activities using a common reflection format.
- Teacher anecdotal observations and classroom evidence of student engagement and participation.
- Student surveys demonstrating increased confidence in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
- Family and community feedback regarding student engagement, confidence, and communication skills.

Key Strategies & Actions

- Utilize weekly collaborative planning time to intentionally incorporate oral language development, storytelling, and writing opportunities across all curricular areas.
- Integrate Nisga'a stories, local knowledge, seasonal teachings, oral traditions, and cultural experiences into literacy instruction.
- Provide students with regular opportunities for sharing circles, partner discussions, presentations, and storytelling to strengthen communication skills.
- Use experiential and place-based learning opportunities as prompts for oral and written literacy activities.
- Incorporate drumming, singing, storytelling, and cultural activities to support vocabulary development, comprehension, and expressive language skills.
- Engage Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community members, and cultural educators in literacy and storytelling experiences whenever possible.
- Support students in making connections between their learning, their community, their culture, and their own personal experiences.
- Create classroom environments that celebrate student voice and provide multiple opportunities for students to communicate their learning in oral, written, artistic, and cultural ways.



Learning Priority Three

Goal Empowered and Inspired Learners

To improve student attendance and punctuality by fostering a culture of responsibility, belonging, engagement, and shared accountability between students, families, and the school community, supporting students in becoming responsible Nisga'a lifelong learners.

Rationale

At Nathan Barton Elementary School, we recognize that regular attendance is essential for academic growth, cultural learning, relationship building, and student well-being. When students attend school consistently, they are better able to participate in meaningful learning experiences, develop strong connections with peers and staff, and engage in Nisga'a language, culture, and community-based learning opportunities.

Attendance is a shared responsibility between students, families, school staff, and the wider community. By working together to create welcoming learning environments, strengthen home-school connections, and foster a sense of belonging, we support students in developing the responsibility, commitment, and habits necessary to become successful and lifelong Nisga'a learners.

Targets

- By June 2027, students will demonstrate increased responsibility for attending school regularly and arriving on time, as evidenced through student goal-setting, self-reflections, and attendance records.
- By June 2027, students will demonstrate a stronger sense of belonging and connection to school through active participation in classroom learning, cultural activities, school events, and community experiences.
- By June 2027, students will develop an understanding of the importance of attendance and punctuality as part of being responsible learners and contributing members of the school community.
- By June 2027, families, students, and staff will work collaboratively to support regular attendance and address barriers that may impact student participation and engagement.

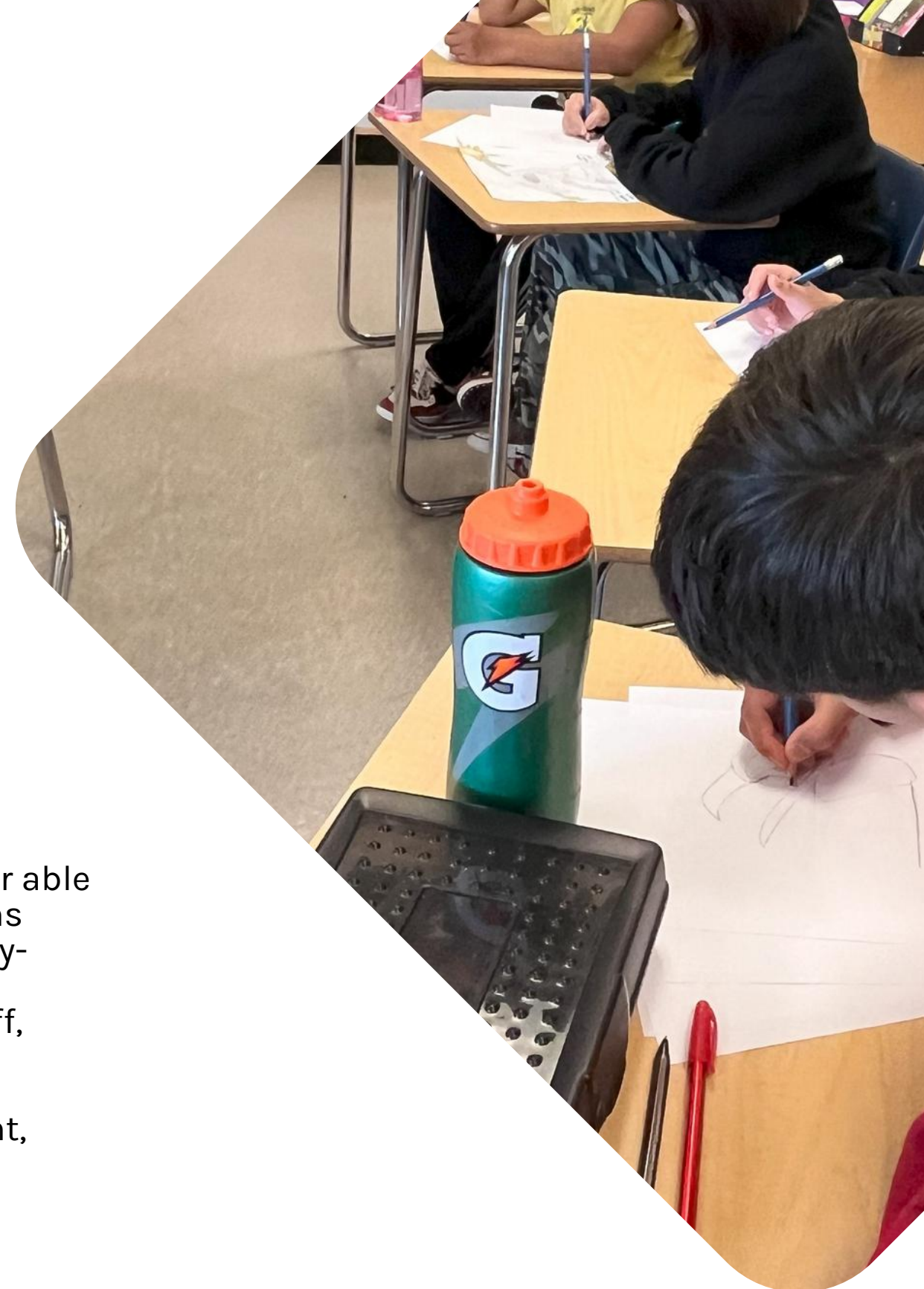
Measuring Our Success

We will measure success through:

- Student attendance and punctuality data.
- Student self-reflections and goal-setting activities.
- BC Core Competency self-assessments related to Personal and Social Responsibility.
- Increased participation in classroom learning, cultural activities, and school events.
- Teacher observations of student engagement, responsibility, and sense of belonging.
- Family feedback gathered through surveys, conversations, and meetings.
- Evidence of positive relationships between home and school that support regular attendance.

Key Strategies & Actions

- Foster welcoming, inclusive, and culturally responsive learning environments where students feel valued, connected, and excited to attend school.
- Build strong relationships with students and families through ongoing communication and positive outreach.
- Collaboratively support students and families in identifying and addressing barriers that may affect attendance.
- Incorporate Nisga'a language, culture, seasonal teachings, and experiential learning opportunities that increase student engagement and connection to school.
- Support students in setting personal attendance, punctuality, and learning goals and reflecting on their progress throughout the year.
- Celebrate student growth, improvement, responsibility, and commitment to learning through classroom and school-wide recognition.
- Provide opportunities for students to develop leadership, responsibility, and a sense of contribution within the school community.
- Review attendance data regularly to identify trends and provide timely support for students and families when needed.
- Work collaboratively with community partners and support agencies to promote student well-being and success.



Learning Priority Four

Goal Empowered and Inspired Learners

To strengthen students' mathematical understanding, confidence, and problem-solving skills by connecting mathematics to their daily lives, experiences, community, and the world around them, while supporting the development of critical and creative thinking aligned with the BC Curriculum.

Rationale

At Nathan Barton Elementary School, we believe students learn mathematics best when they can see its relevance and purpose in their everyday lives. By connecting mathematical concepts to real-world experiences, community activities, seasonal learning, and culturally relevant contexts, students develop a deeper understanding of mathematical thinking and problem-solving. Through hands-on, experiential, and place-based learning opportunities, students will build confidence in using mathematics to make sense of their world. By encouraging students to explore, reason, communicate, and apply mathematical concepts in meaningful ways, we support them in becoming capable, responsible, and lifelong learners who can use mathematics in their daily lives.

Targets

- By June 2027, students will demonstrate increased confidence in communicating their mathematical thinking through discussions, explanations, reflections, and problem-solving activities.
- By June 2027, students will regularly apply mathematical concepts to real-life situations, including experiences within their homes, school, community, and cultural learning opportunities.
- By June 2027, students will demonstrate growth in their ability to solve problems using multiple strategies and explain their thinking using mathematical language.
- By June 2027, students will make meaningful connections between mathematics and their daily experiences through hands-on, experiential, and place-based learning activities.

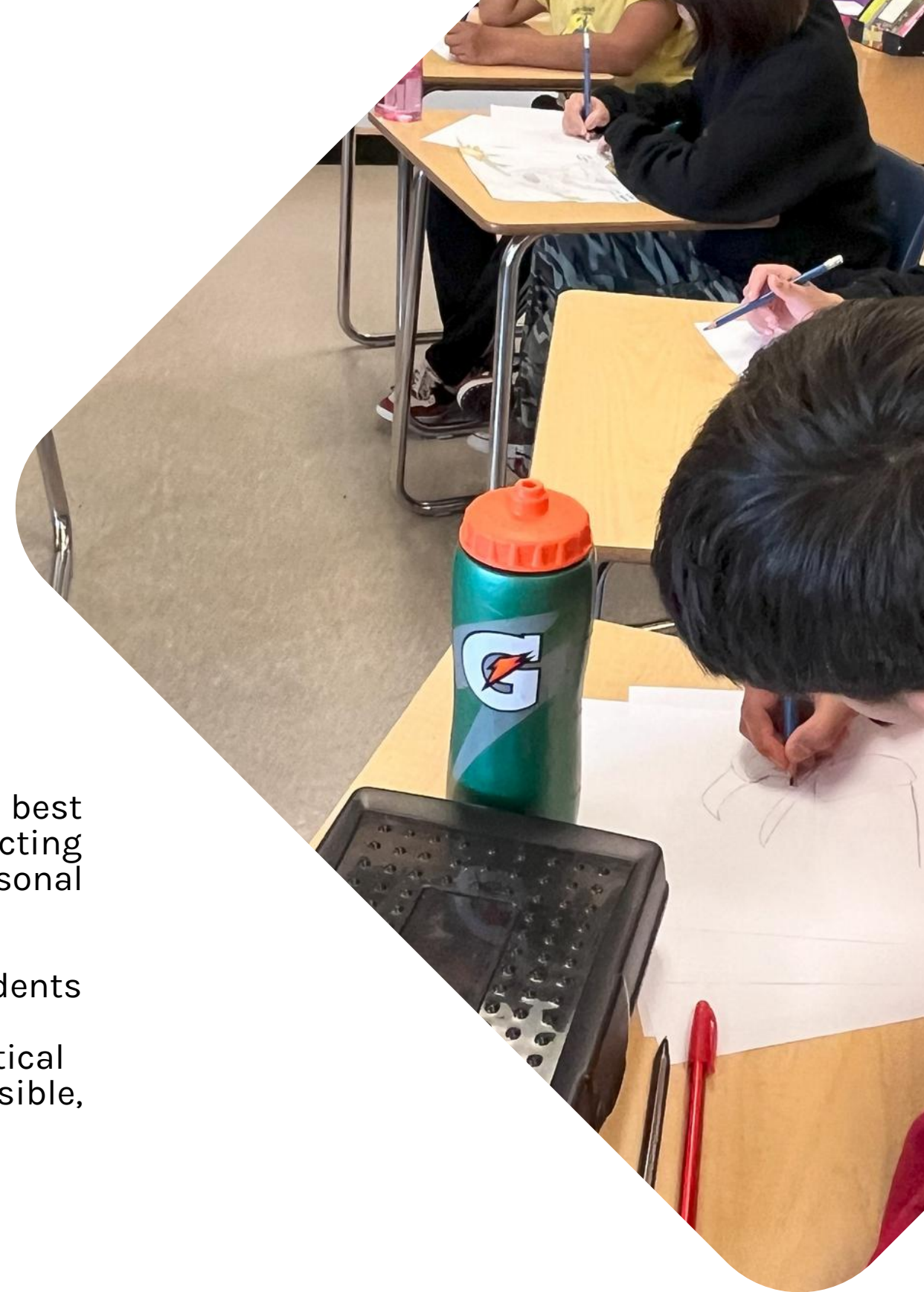
Measuring Our Success

We will measure success through:

- BC Curricular Competency self-assessments using "I Can" statements.
- Student math reflections and learning journals.
- Classroom observations and teacher anecdotal records.
- Student participation in math discussions, number talks, and problem-solving tasks.
- Samples of student work demonstrating mathematical thinking and real-world connections.
- School and classroom-based assessments.
- Student ability to explain and justify their strategies and solutions.
- Family feedback regarding students' use of mathematics in everyday situations.

Key Strategies & Actions

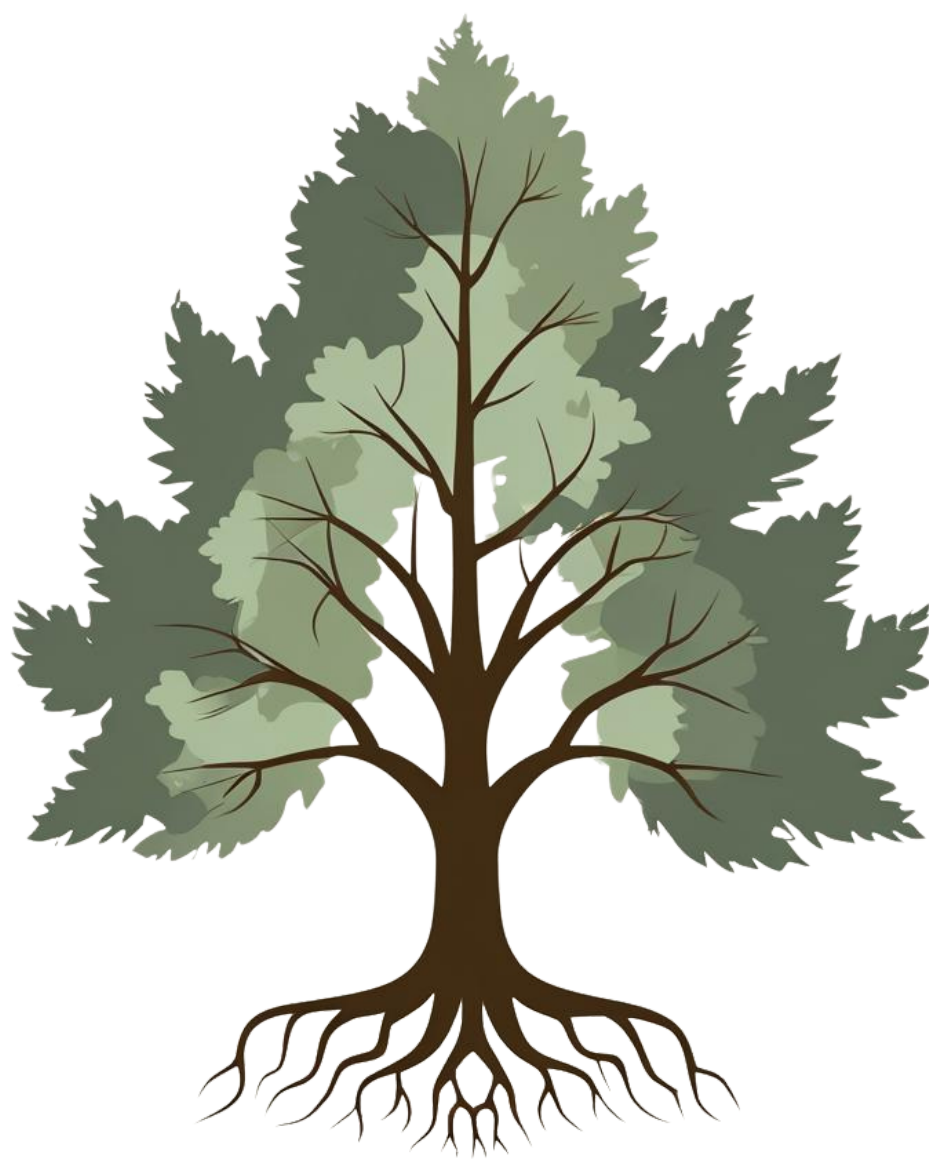
- Incorporate daily number talks and math discussions that encourage students to explain and justify their thinking.
- Connect mathematical concepts to real-life situations that are relevant to students, families, community experiences, and seasonal activities.
- Use hands-on materials, manipulatives, visual models, and experiential learning opportunities to support conceptual understanding.
- Integrate mathematics across curricular areas, including science, arts, physical education, outdoor learning, and Nisga'a language and culture.
- Provide opportunities for students to solve authentic problems related to their school, community, and environment.
- Encourage students to use multiple strategies and approaches when solving mathematical problems.
- Support students in reflecting on their learning and identifying strategies that help them become successful mathematicians.
- Use local and culturally meaningful contexts to explore concepts such as measurement, patterns, data collection, estimation, financial literacy, and spatial reasoning.
- Engage families by sharing simple ways mathematics can be explored and practiced at home and in the community.





Summary

Nathan Barton Elementary School's learning improvement plan is aligned with the Nisga'a School District's priorities of language, culture, and collaboration. Rooted in the principle of *Sayt Kilim Goot*, the school strives to foster a culturally rich learning environment where students engage in land-based education, traditional drumming, singing, and dance, and language-infused curriculum. Strategic goals focus on increasing student engagement through Nisga'a language and cultural practices, and empowering student voice and leadership through traditional song and dance. These initiatives are supported by collaborative planning among educators, Nisga'a knowledge holders, and school and district leadership, ensuring that ancestral knowledge and community partnerships are central to student success and identity development.



Rooted in Culture.
Grounded In Community.
Growing Every Learner.