



Nathan Barton Elementary School

Learning Improvement Plan 2025-26

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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, and cultural practices into daily learning across all subject areas.

Rationale

Nathan Barton Elementary School recognizes the importance of embedding Nisga'a language and culture into daily learning to support student identity, engagement, and academic success. Many learners thrive when their cultural knowledge and lived experiences are reflected in the classroom. Increasing opportunities to learn through Nisga'a language, stories, and seasonal practices helps students feel connected to their community and proud of who they are. This approach strengthens relationships, improves learning outcomes, and supports the holistic development of each student.

Targets

- **By June 2026**, 100 percent of classrooms will include Nisga'a language visuals and cultural references that are updated monthly to reflect seasonal teachings and harvest calendar themes.
- **By June 2026**, at least 90 percent of students will participate weekly in Nisga'a language and culture activities integrated into core subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science, and art.
- **By June 2026**, 80 percent of students will demonstrate growth in cultural understanding and identity through weekly reflections, sharing circles, and feedback surveys.

Measuring Our Success

- Increased student participation in sharing circles, with learners making meaningful connections between their learning and Nisga'a culture.
- Weekly student reflections show growth in cultural understanding and personal identity.
- A noticeable reduction in classroom disruptions, indicating improved engagement and sense of belonging.
- Student surveys reflect a stronger connection to Nisga'a language and culture and increased pride in their identity.
- Teacher planning documents and classroom observations show consistent integration of Nisga'a language and cultural content across subjects.

Key Strategies & Actions

- Teachers will align lesson plans with monthly themes from Nisga'a language and culture classes, using the traditional harvest calendar as a guide for seasonal learning.
- Weekly collaborative planning time will be scheduled for classroom teachers and the Nisga'a Language and Culture teacher to ensure consistent integration across subjects.
- Staff will receive support and professional learning focused on Indigenous pedagogies, with an emphasis on Nisga'a approaches to teaching and learning.
- Students will participate in regular sharing circles to reflect on their learning and make connections to culture and identity.
- Classroom environments will include visual representations of Nisga'a language and seasonal teachings to reinforce daily exposure and understanding.



Learning Priority Two

Goal Empowered and Inspired Learners

To improve oral and written literacy skills by integrating Nisga’a drumming, singing, and storytelling into weekly language arts 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 26:

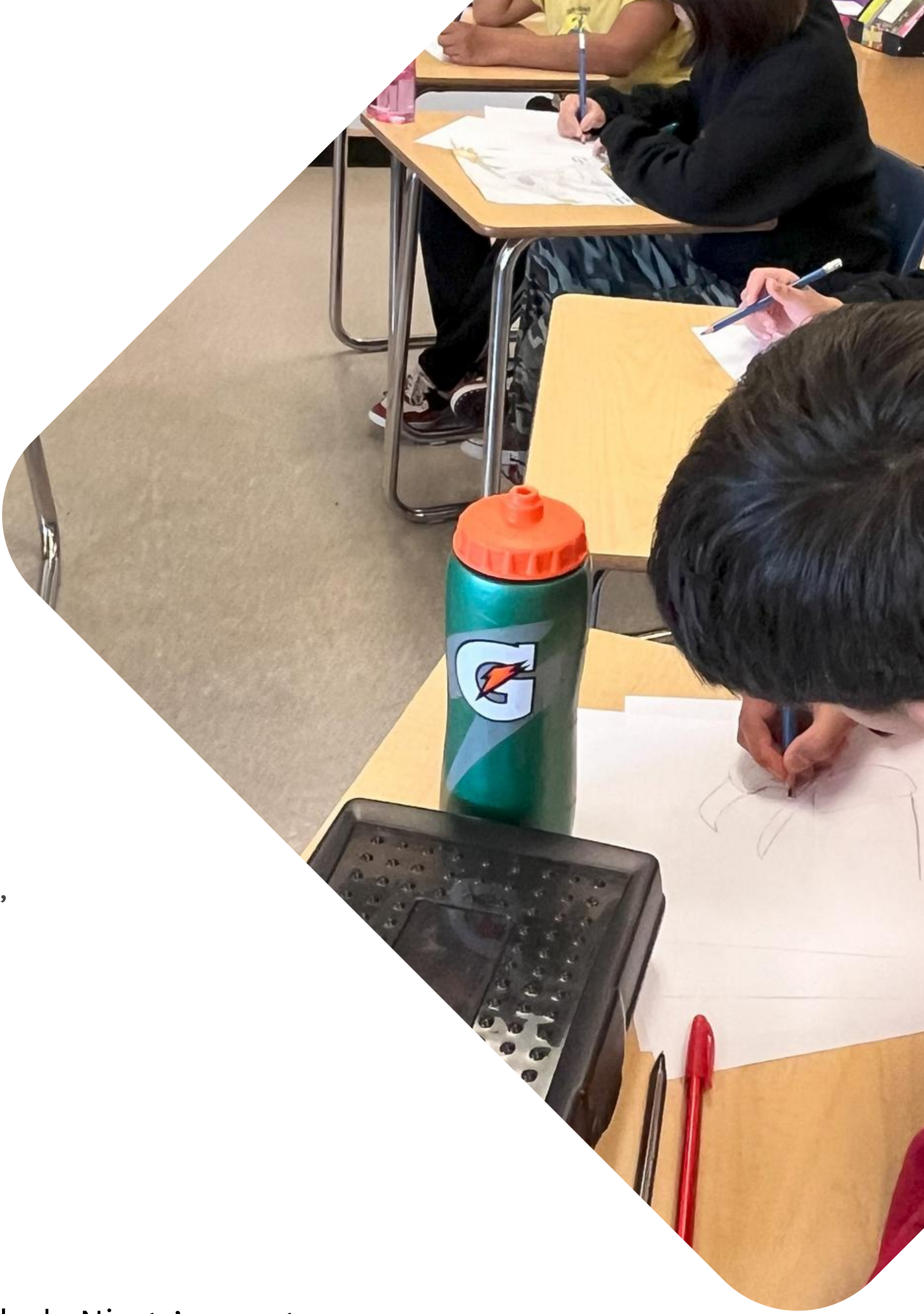
- 100 percent of students will participate weekly in literacy activities that include Nisga’a songs, stories, or drumming.
- At least 85 percent of students will demonstrate growth in oral language fluency and written expression through storytelling, journaling, and performance reflections.
- At least 75 percent of students will meet grade-level expectations in literacy as measured by classroom assessments and district benchmarks.

Measuring Our Success

- Student writing samples show increased use of descriptive language and cultural vocabulary.
- Oral storytelling and performance reflections demonstrate improved fluency and confidence.
- Literacy assessment data shows year-over-year growth in reading and writing achievement.
- Student engagement increases during culturally integrated literacy blocks.

Key Strategies & Actions

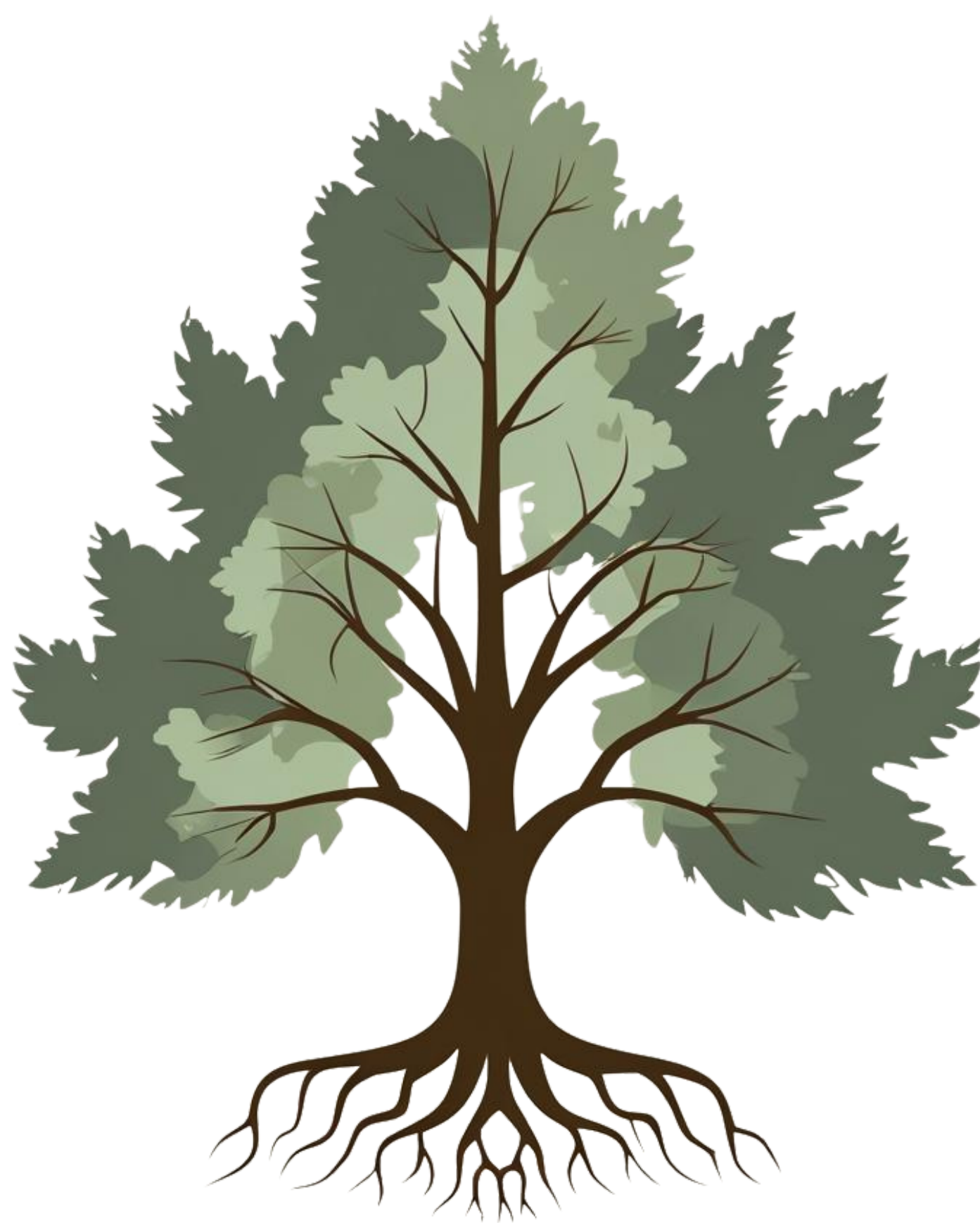
- *Integrate Nisga’a songs and stories into weekly writing and oral language lessons.*
- *Use drumming and singing as prompts for student journaling and storytelling.*
- *Collaborate with Nisga’a Language and Culture teacher to co-plan literacy units that reflect seasonal themes and traditional knowledge.*
- *Provide professional learning for staff on culturally responsive literacy instruction.*





Summary

Nathan Barton Elementary School's action 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.