



South Canoe Elementary

School Learning Plan 2024-25



School Context:

(Describe your school, population, geographic location. Community, demographics, and unique needs.)

In September of 2018, South Canoe School re-opened its doors and began a new history as an Outdoor Learning Program in School District 83. South Canoe is nestled in a rural community within the Salmon Arm city limits. The school site is on 5.1 acres of land adjacent to private properties and includes 2 sports fields, a school garden and forested space. Currently, we have 7 divisions (K-8) with approximately 145 students. South Canoe is a 'school of choice' with no bussing provided and many families choose to drive to our location from all across the North Okanagan. Families seem to chose South Canoe for two predominant reasons: 1) because they value the concept of outdoor learning and nature-based education, and/or 2) because they have found more traditional learning environments have not met the needs of their child(ren).

The surrounding rural area has many hobby farms and is within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Klahani Park is a short 200-metre walk to the east and includes a forested area, playground, a ball field and sport courts. South Canoe is on the edge of 2 different biogeoclimatic zones – the Interior Douglas Fir and Interior Cedar Hemlock zones. Wildlife thrive in these zones, with several interesting songbird, mammal, and amphibian species. The plant and animal communities of South Canoe provide opportunity to ask questions, design experiments, and learn about local ecological systems. Generous and supportive neighbours allow classes permission to visit their private properties to do pond studies, observe creeks/watersheds and participate in gardening and harvesting.

The student population of South Canoe is approximately 20% of Aboriginal Ancestry. Approximately 20% of the total student population has an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Currently we have 7 Certified Education Assistants (CEAs) who support teachers and monitor safety during outdoor learning and off-site experiences. Parent volunteers play a key role in supporting school initiatives and a weekly hot lunch program is provided to our school. Last year, a daily breakfast program was added to support student health needs.

The South Canoe Outdoor Learning Program was born from the dedication and passion of numerous educators and citizens who endeavored to bring a place-based, experiential outdoor model of a school to the North Okanagan. This model of education is not without its challenges, and while the work may be difficult and require creativity and problem-solving, it is ultimately very rewarding to be part of this innovative and promising approach to teaching/learning. In our seventh year, South Canoe proudly reflects on the growth and accomplishments of its short history and looks out ahead at the prospect of becoming one of British Columbia's premier Outdoor Learning Programs.

Vision: Preparing students to become educated citizens who contribute to a dynamic, sustainable, and diverse world.

Mission: Empowering students to become confident, curious, and caring individuals who thrive in their learning, relationships, and community.

Values: Belonging, Respect, Empathy, Equity, Perseverance, Reconciliation

Strategic Priority: Intellectual Development

Each student will develop their literacy skills, numeracy skills, and competencies to become their most capable self.

Specific Literacy Goal:	Specific Numeracy Goal:																		
Reading and writing are inextricably linked – they are the breathing in and breathing out of literacy. As we continue the work of literacy instruction in both indoor and outdoor settings, we aim to have at least 70% of our grade 4s and grade 7s achieving “ON TRACK” evaluation through annual provincial standardized assessment (FSA) in the area of literacy. This assessment quantifies both reading and writing skills. This is the 2nd of three years in which we aim to achieve this goal.	Our numeracy goal at South Canoe is to ensure all learners participate in meaningful and fun math activities, so that self-concept, confidence, and engagement in daily lessons result in at least 60% of our grade 4s and grade 7s achieve “ON TRACK” in their numeracy evaluation through annual provincial standardized assessment (FSAs). This assessment reflects the collective effort of teachers and staff, as students develop confidence and skill in the areas of problem solving, key numeracy strategies, and critical thinking. This is the 2nd of three years in which we aim to achieve this goal.																		
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Data Analysis/Narrative: In 2022, the province of BC updated the FSA to reflect a combination of reading and writing achievement under the umbrella of 'literacy'. The tracking of literacy growth will be comparable using this new data set and can support conversations around instruction, professional development, and school improvement. The data presented above reflects an overall improvement in literacy skills for our grade 4s and grade 7s. While that is encouraging, we feel a realistic goal is for at least 70% of our students to be "ON TRACK" in literacy by the 2025/26 school year. A number of factors are expected to influence a positive improvement in literacy achievement in the coming years as we look ahead. Key factors include: school stability since opening in 2018, ongoing recovery from Covid pandemic impact, increased school attendance, increased emphasis on developing effective instructional practices that merge best practices in literacy and outdoor learning environments, and new approaches to literacy instruction and support using district supported resources such as UFLI and Heggerty, PM Benchmarks have been used over the past number of years to track student achievement as readers, however, with the introduction of UFLI as a phonics-based literacy instruction tool, and as we move away from levelled readers and 3-cue instructional techniques, this data becomes problematic in the short term. This year we have begun the work of completing school-wide writes as a primary team and an intermediate team. At our November professional development day teachers from the primary and intermediate team examined the SD23 writing continuum and looked at our own students' writing samples from a fall school-wide write. Action Items to Achieve Our Literacy Goal: - School-Based Pro-D session focused on writing (assessment & resources) - Continue to examine/use the SD23 writing continuum - Provide release time for intermediate teachers to examine the SD73 NRFA (nonfiction reading assessment tool – grades 4 to 9) to expand the literacy resource access for teachers across upper grades. - Commit to integration of literacy into out outdoor learning instruction through relevant Pro-D and school-wide learning activities outdoors. - Find ways to provide release time for teachers to collaborate on effective literacy instruction and assessment practices. - Ensure 90-120 minutes a day of literacy instruction. - Prioritize CEA support for literacy blocks.	Data Analysis/Narrative: Provincial and locally generated data tell the same story for South Canoe regarding our current numeracy outcomes: our school needs to do more to support our students in the area of numeracy. Currently we are seeing student achievement on the FSA below where we want it for our students to have success as they move beyond our school and into high school. Data from our locally developed 'SNACC' assessment reflects this as well. Action Items to Achieve Our Literacy Goal: - Poll teachers to determine what numeracy resources might be lacking at South Canoe and use SLP budget to obtain any resources that might be lacking. - Re-commit to engaging students in 60 minutes per day of numeracy instruction - Encourage teacher engagement in professional learning around numeracy topics and inter-staff sharing of highly effective instructional strategies. - Commit to having all students re-assessed with SNACC by April 30th - Invite district numeracy support teacher (Doug Smith) to help review SNACC results and plan accordingly. - Ongoing – provide weekly reminders to use numeracy resources from the district channel - Commit to engaging in instruction using the district's Comprehensive Numeracy Framework's five major building blocks: <u>Comprehensive Math Program</u> A comprehensive math program has five major building blocks: a) Problem Solving (daily and weekly) b) Curricular and core concept work c) Concept work: main lesson (Daily) d) Number routines e) Fluency practice - Review the Ministry's new K-12 Learning Progressions as part of ongoing numeracy conversations
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Strategic Priority: Human and Social Development	Strategic Priority: Developing a Culture of Well-Being
Sense of Belonging Goal:	Student Well-Being Goal:
A sense of belonging allows one to feel connected and at ease in themselves and their environment. A sense of belonging is what helps a student to thrive in their learning and enjoy coming to school everyday. School belonging – difficult to quantify, but immeasurably important. <i>“If children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, learn to trust, share their feelings, and grow.” – Alfie Kohn</i> Goal: 90% of students at South Canoe will articulate a sense of belonging (connection to adults, peers and programming) as measured by focus groups and the Student Learning Survey. The School Learning Survey provides evidence of success in the area of belonging for South Canoe School. As a school of choice, our school begins with the intention of attracting students and families who want to be engaged with our community of outdoor learners. With our school enrollment at an all time high, it could be argued that simply wanting to be here demonstrates that our students and their families want to belong as part of our South Canoe family. To date, data collection on belonging has been limited to the SLS results from 2020 but already we see clear evidence that students feel they belong here at SCA. School pride is expressed by students, staff and parents. Our new logo is about to be launched and that process has been important to re-invest in examining who we are and how we are all connected. Our school is currently made up of 20% Aboriginal Ancestry students and we know the impact of culture on belonging and connection is significant. We will continue with our TRC Ally participation and internal staff professional development around Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being with an emphasis on weaving Indigenous	Our goal for student well-being is to have the necessary supports in place (Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3) so that all students can productively and with joy engage in learning with their peers in classrooms, outdoors, and on the playground. Well-being is understood as a balanced state of being that provides a foundation for resilience, health, and purpose in life. Students who are healthy, safe, rested and cared for are ready to learn. Acknowledging health as a precondition for learning locates well-being as an important component of the universal scope of practice at South Canoe. Physical and mental health challenges can lead to absenteeism for students. As we emerged from the pandemic, student attendance remained a challenge over time. In addition, the perception of some families, that our outdoor program is not fully rigorous and/or that attendance might be less important is a factor in our student attendance. A number of families have expressed that it is challenging to get their child to come to school. It is sometimes difficult to separate actual physical symptoms from worries/anxiety related to coming. Staff works very hard to provide a variety of supports to assist with helping kids feel happy and connected at school: -team sports -soft starts -school trips (day trips and overnights) -leadership opportunities -differentiated learning -Behaviour Code learning series staff participation (2023/24)

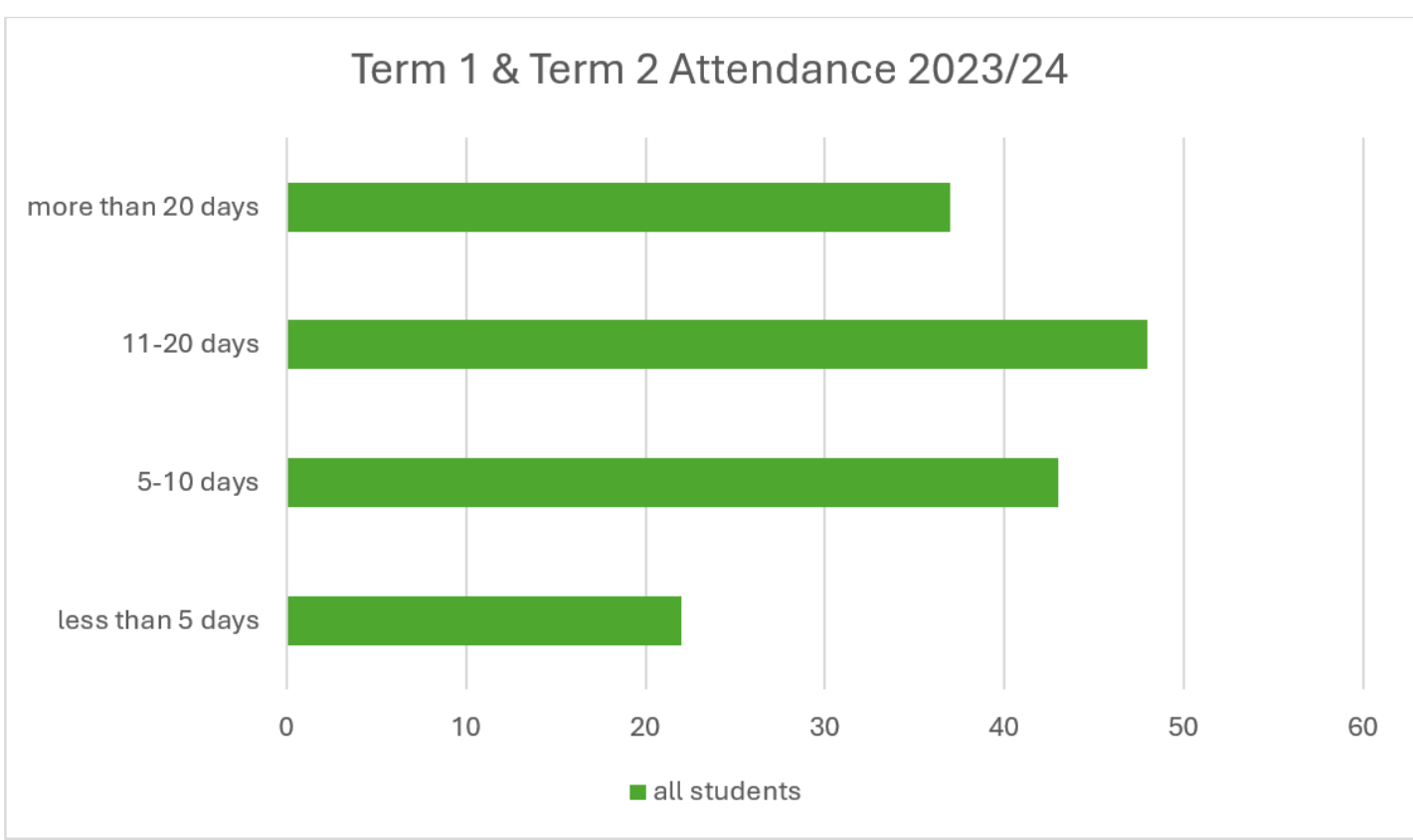
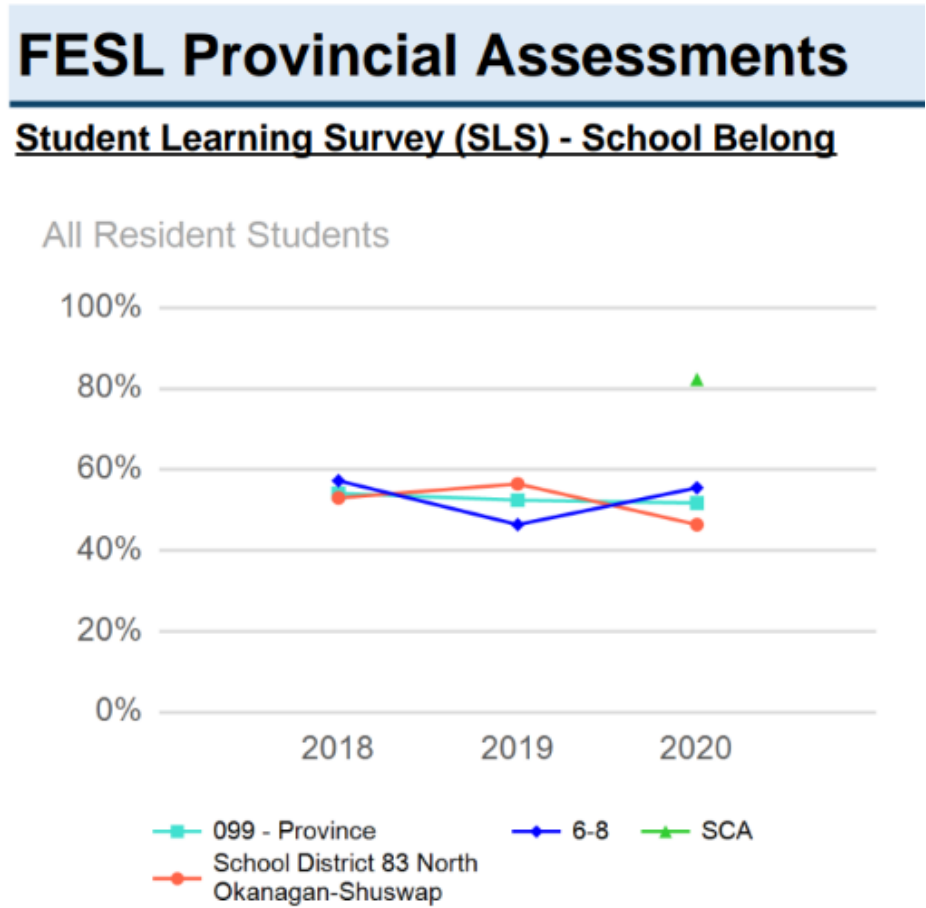
learning throughout all instruction and experiences. The return of our IEW allows additional supports (cultural and academic) to be put in place for our Indigenous students.

Looking ahead, we will examine the results from the 2024 School Learning Survey and focus groups to be run by Sandra in December and May.

In addition to absenteeism, student conflict and behavior challenges can also be a sign that students are not well (socially and/or mentally). We have had some concerning challenges with student conflict, physical aggression, damaging property and expression of unhappiness. Finding positive outlets for students and ensuring that each student has connection and a means to contribute to our school community is part of the ongoing work we are doing to enhance student wellness.

Data to Inform/Support Sense of Belonging Goal:

Data to Inform/Support Student Well-Being Goal:



Data Analysis/Narrative:	Data Analysis/Narrative:
Strategies to promote belonging at SCA: - Continue to make time weekly for meaningful morning circle (whole school gatherings) - Complete school logo (process begun in 2023 – student engagement) and make “swag” available to families. - Continue to streamline outdoor experiential learning opportunities both off site and on site, enabling authentic and meaningful experiences and team building - Develop year-long planning map to identify and prioritize most impactful school-wide events that we want to devote time and energy to, especially those that take place outdoors. - Continue to make meaningful connections to local environmental groups and Indigenous Knowledge Keepers to further develop student connection to the land and traditional cultural practices of the Secwepemc people. - Participation in the Moose Hide Walk, Orange Shirt Day and other important days that relate to Truth and Reconciliation. - Engage staff in ongoing professional learning through the book, The Behavior Code, and consider the needs of all our priority learners (neurodiverse, children in care and Indigenous students). - Engage with support staff, teachers and parents to consider best practices with use of ‘breaks’ for learners but avoid removing students from the learning environment whenever possible. - Re-commit to seasonal family group activities to ensure multi-grade experiences are provided for students. - Provide opportunities for clubs to be run at school for students to develop interests and relationships with peers and adults (mt. biking, crocheting club, D&D, leadership, chess...) - Provide team sports (volleyball, basketball, rugby, track & field, cross-country running). - Engage with support staff, teachers and parents to consider best practices for outdoor learning, specifically related to differentiated learning and inclusion.	Through conversations with families, we seek to support increased attendance and on time arrivals. We know this leads to stronger outcomes for students and attendance matters. With our new breakfast program, we are endeavoring to ensure students are starting their day with a healthy breakfast. We hope this makes a morning routine easier for families and encourages an on time arrival. A new process for providing universally accessible access (stigma-free) to additional lunch options in each class through lunch baskets is being trialed. Through school-based pro-d days we will be exploring our new Student Health Guidelines and curriculum connections through PHE learning. An increased emphasis on this knowledge and understanding about screen time, sleep, nutrition, screen time, and other key health factors will be an important part of our school initiative to support student wellness. Having acquired the program “Second Step” last year as part of our SLP, we are now in the first year of implementation at the grade 1, 3, & 5 levels. Second Step is an evidence-based program that provides a foundation for a positive, inclusive culture through developing social-emotional competencies and includes perspective-taking, understanding and resolving conflicts and positive relationship building skills. 

Strategic Priority: Career Development

Each student will develop the skills and competencies to be successful in a career pathway of their choice.

Strategies and Opportunities for Career Development:

At South Canoe, ongoing connections to local people and businesses through our regular “off-site” experiences provides students with many authentic opportunities to better understand a variety of careers, particularly those that related to the outdoors, parks, agriculture, gardening, conservation, science, wildlife biology, food sustainability and more. Our incredible staff works hard to keep key connections with local “experts” up and to coordinate visits and learning experiences so that kids get to interact with members of our community in a variety of roles.

In addition to paid employment/careers, our school proudly supports volunteerism and community support through collaborations and events that are free, open to all and serve to improve the community as a whole. We want our students to learn to be part of the working world and also part of the unpaid labour force that supports the many important initiatives that make communities like Salmon Arm strong.

For 2024/25, we will promote Career Week with staff with the aim that this remains an ongoing area of learning for students and is interwoven into many elements of the learning we do at South Canoe.

Resources and Professional Learning

Identify specific learning, resources, or initiatives at the school and/or district level that will build staff capacity to work toward school goals.

In order to put this learning plan into action, we will be looking to secure the following resources:

- Second Step (SEL) kit for elementary (done 2023/24)
- Ongoing use of “Feeding Futures” funding for breakfast/lunch programs
- Time to inventory and enhance our current math resource room so that all areas of the math curriculum can be taught with quality and effective materials/resources
- Consider purchasing Adrienne Gear’s “Powerful Understanding” book

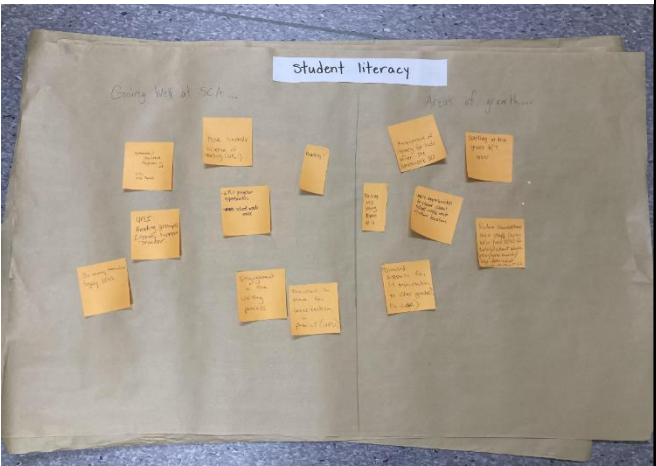
School Learning Plan Consultation Process

Please describe the consultative process with rights holders and stakeholders in the development of this School Learning Plan.

This learning plan was developed in consultation with staff **beginning in February 2024** when the key pillars of this learning plan were shared with staff and a rationale for why our school will be aligning with both our district’s strategic plan and the goals of the Ministry. From here, in 2023/24, individuals were given an opportunity to contribute to each pillar with comments about what is “going well at SCA” and what “areas of growth” do we yet have.

In reviewing these contributions, proposed goals were drafted by the principal and shared with staff for feedback at the March 2024 staff meeting.

At the March PAC meeting, parents were made aware of the new school learning plan and invited to attend an additional meeting in early April to explore the draft goals and provide input/feedback.



	Following these meetings, the final draft plan was shared again with staff and additional contributions were requested. Feedback taken from this consultation included combining 'on track' and 'extending' markers from the FSA data analysis process. The plan was completed on April 10th and submitted to the Board. This year, staff discussed the direction of our School Learning Plan, the data being selected and the strategies in place. Staff suggestions to insert more focussed outdoor learning language and direction in the SLP were then added into this current draft of the plan. The staff will be invited to work on the SLP goals and strategies at least two additional times this year (winter and spring).
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Updated: November 2024