

Strategic Priorities - Connected Learners

Background Information to Question 1: Student Success

Mandate of the B.C. School System

To enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

The Educated Citizen

School districts must assist in the development of citizens who are:

- thoughtful, able to learn and to think critically, and who can communicate information from a broad knowledge base;
- creative, flexible, self-motivated and who have a positive self-image;
- capable of making independent decisions;
- skilled and who can contribute to society generally, including the world of work;
- productive, who gain satisfaction through achievement and who strive for physical well-being;
- cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences;
- aware of the rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world.

Prime Goal of Public Education

- Intellectual Development
- Human and Social Development
- Career Development

Reconciliation Framework for Public Education

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act) establishes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) as the Province's framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. This framework outlines the commitment for provincial government and public education on reconciliation.

Strategic Priorities - Connected Learners

Responses to Question 1: Student Success

The District's role is to ensure that students have the ability to think and learn, foster a lifelong appreciation of learning, a curiosity about the world and the capacity for creative thought and expressions.

How could SD8 foster this?

1. Environmental education starts at home.
2. SD8 could foster this by having support staff in each classroom, as well as having smaller class sizes. I could also benefit the student to have learning time take place in nature.
3. more learning on the Land and ease of ability to do this--less roadblocks around permissions and waivers. Way too over the top, created by those who will NOT be implementing them on the ground with students/families.
4. Organize student exchanges to travel to and study in different parts of Canada and the world. Organize a district wide Science Fair where the students conduct experiments and research projects on topics of interest.
5. Create more opportunities for students to experience real life experiences. We used to give each student a work experience in their senior years.
6. More hands on/exploratory options at the elementary level (Specialized Art (digital, visual, music, dance, drama) classes, woodworking/shop, Makerspace etc.)
7. Engage in grade level curriculum and inquiry topics that foster creative topics based on current level and interest
8. Hands on experiences in the community
9. Having more over night trips for high school students.
10. By having more exposure to the larger world, bringing in cultural performances, have travel opportunities, and bring in guest speakers.
11. -I think there is some great engagement with the school connecting/building with community and outdoor spaces. Making these connections can be helpful.
12. -many kids are exposed and interacting with media from all over the world...important to stay up to date with the platforms they are using - potential to integrate learning opportunities, rather than separating the two. (E.g., TikTok is one of the fastest mediums for sharing news/current events. Are important that kids are aware of how they can interpret/learn from the short videos on TikTok - how to get additional resources etc.).my daughter knew before me that Russia had invaded Ukraine- I got up in the morning and she asked if WW3 was starting... def opportunity to learn.
13. Provide more opportunities for field trips to explore local life farms, businesses, local places of interest

14. Provide working technology to the school so students can research things without glitches
15. Reduce the amount of courses taught so there is time to go deeper into the fundamental courses
16. Have an improved reading program. Too many older students still are very poor readers. Should have allowed the public to come in and buddy read.
17. More support staff for students who are struggling.
18. More outdoor time.
19. More learning around student areas of interest.
20. More education for teachers for children who have learning barriers.
21. Smaller classes, more supports for students in the classroom like EAs, outdoor learning. Fieldtrips
22. Engage students with out of class learning opportunities in the Community. Streamline fieldtrip forms for outings (one form for all outings for the year). They create too much extra work for teachers, and I am hearing that as a result, there are less fieldtrips for the students. The forms this year are ridiculous and time consuming for both parents and teachers!
23. Drama Lessons, Outdoor field trips, celebration of learning
24. Ensure adequate staffing levels for teachers/EA's esp. in rural areas. Be creative in how these objectives are met- can rural schools share staff? Support a robust hiring and recruiting strategy, support people willing to do the training with mentorship and working while completing training. In rural areas this is crucial. Exposing children to enrichment opportunities which will bring the outside world to the somewhat insular West Kootenay region. We really are not very diverse here!
25. Having courses that provide more hands-on experience with more outdoor activities, i.e., gardening, cleaning up streams, forests. More variety with hands on learning.
26. Offer more open theory discussions in class, learning through community connected ideas
27. Fund classrooms directly, provide more resources to teachers, remove barriers to doing things like going outside on trips, and activities of actual merit (which have some inherent risks).
28. Reduce the amount of required paperwork to allow students to go to the park across the street.
29. Variety of teaching methods, clubs, actively listening to students' thoughts on what they are interested in learning, more "real world". skills learning, increased staff enthusiasm, incorporating tech apps into learning, and workshops the kids can sign up for according to interests. Personally, my child feels that her classes need more control in the classroom, and that work could be more challenging.
30. Allow student-led discovery projects - like ancestry, or snail life cycles, etc., in at least one subject every term.

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31. Make sure critical thinking is part of the curriculum, outdoor learning is especially important, gear courses to potential employment etc.
 32. Removing barriers to learning outside of the classroom.
 33. First, thank you for doing this process.
 34. It needs a culture where appreciation, curiosity, creativity and capacity support is what admin, staff and students feel, breathe, embody. How does leadership walk the talk? Try Theory U from MIT! Or Liberating structures.
 35. By seeing it through an Indigenous lens, open to various forms of learning and without white supremacy culture (my daughter is learning about those now, check it out board!) And read Hospicing modernity if you dare.
<https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/>
 36. Systems thinking - a student is a product of its environment.
 37. - More EAs
 38. - More outside time, even just in the school yard makes a big difference, tons of research on nature's benefits for learning. Please lobby CBT to take back their outdoor learning funding.
 39. - I would cut in tech funding
 40. Engage students in inquiry-based, multi-age, hands-on, community-integrated learning. Focus on activities that will engender a sense of purpose and belonging by seeking developmentally appropriate opportunities for students to make purposeful contributions to their communities. Bring role models of all ages into the classroom to expose students to what curiosity and lifelong learning look like lived. Ensure that the educational experience offered in the district is geared towards the demands of daily living that students will face now and into the future - from practical knowledge and skills such as those for eating well, to the ethical foundation and experience for addressing personal and collective challenges such as climate change.
 41. Ensure kids are learning at grade level so they are successful. Age-appropriate projects dealing with real life stuff. How should Nelson's green spaces develop? Cooking. How does the food grow that you put in any food dish you make? What does it take to grow it-water, fertilizer, workers? Doing taxes. Real life math. Saving money. Getting a job. Writing resume. Fixing a vehicle. Building things. Computer literacy. Pick a foreign country and every kid in class write a blurb about a type of food, community problem, sights you could see, topography, currency value in relation to ours and so on and read to class. What do we do about homelessness? How do you get into university? Clean up community. Do real things to learn grade level skills.
 42. By focusing on ideas rather than ideology. Allowing disagreement with accepted narratives. Concentrate learning objectives on skills that will be valuable in the rapidly evolving job market.
 43. Place based learning - field trips, outdoor classrooms, start to offer trades in earlier grades to attract all learners.
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44. Bring back a music program at all schools. Make learning fun via better funding for extra curricular ideas, trips, events.
45. More funding for Frontline staff and less restrictions and roadblocks to outdoor/recreational/experiential learning
46. Supporting teachers and E.A.s who are already doing this amazing work in the classroom. Create more community connections and partnerships with Kootenai Art Institute, Oxygen Center, the Nelson Museum, KAST, etc.
47. By implementing a multilevel grad program. Current courses and expectations are being watered down in order to inflate false "grad" rates at the high school level and everybody knows it! How about everybody grads, but with different levels of certification? Expand the avenues for success in academic as well as non-academic areas. Encourage presentation of student achievement in both the school and community frequently (as in every day.) Support non-academic interests and paths more vigorously: band, arts, music, speech arts, drama, speech arts, athletics, journalism, interest clubs (chess, music, and woodworking clubs, bands, skateboarding). Greatly expand and support with time and money the pursuits and non-academic pursuits of students. Teachers have to commit to extracurricular support of their students as part of the job. The district must create an environment where teachers feel the desire and obligation to commit themselves to much more than academic instruction,
48. - more EAs in the classroom, and EAs that are actually qualified to teach academic subjects (we only have 2 at our school and neither one of them are capable of doing 10-12 math or science)
49. - provide teachers with more easy-to-use classroom resources. I teach science and we almost never have math/science pro-D opportunities and the ones that we do have aren't very useful. I went to one a few years ago which was interesting, but the guy told us to stop doing math notes, but we weren't provided with any resources on what to do instead or how to implement that.
50. - give time during the school day for club activities - not all students have the resources to stay late after school to participate in extra curricular activities that strengthen their connection with others and demonstrate how learning can happen in many areas outside of the classroom.
51. share about lifelong learning & cultivating an ability to be nimble & have the capacity to shift and change as life and the world shift, the role of self education and community education
52. There's a lot of outdoor time, hands on time, that I think cultivates creativity and curiosity.
53. Add the concept of Wonder, at all levels. Use age-level examples of what is good, beautiful and true in our world

54. Critical thinking has been shown as integral for succeeding as an adult. If this can be demonstrated and encouraged from early years through to graduation on a very regular basis, I think that would be excellent. Supporting teachers with lesson ideas around critical thinking might be necessary. If we all learned to question the world in a healthy way and to respect other perspectives the world would be a much better place.
55. Learning about past history is important to tie things together, however learning about more recent history helps the children understand the world they are living in today. History should be paired together as a past experience, what we learned from it and tie it back into current history and affairs that directly affect them today. They will be more engaged.
56. SD8 does foster students' abilities to think and learn - extending that creativity to extra curricular areas will expand that ability and support curiosity of the student's world. More time outside the classroom, appreciating how the natural environment supports and fosters learning, and appreciation is vital.
57. Provide more experiences for experiential learning where they are required to think critically. This would include programs such as ATLAS, and other outdoor programs.
58. Provide teachers support and opportunities to give students a variety of ways to engage in learning (beyond sitting at desks, which does not work for all students).
59. More hands-on, experiential and cultural content in the curriculum, fostered by more field trips, bringing outside educators/facilitators for specific projects, more performances/presentations brought to the schools, etc... Since Covid, it seems that nearly all non-core curriculum activities and projects have been cancelled.
60. By facilitating critical thinking and the feeling of achievement and self-fulfillment that comes from doing something that challenges you, either individually or as a group.
61. Adding music to the curriculum and a focus on the arts.... throughout the grade levels. Encourage a focus on process, collaboration and making mistakes rather than a product to be assigned a letter grade. Invite community experts, partners onto the school.
62. Offer more opportunities for travel, outdoor learning, cultural experiences, and swim programs
63. Students do not know what they don't know. They need strong numeracy and literacy skills to understand the world. The district is simply unable to measure whether or not what they are doing will "foster a lifelong appreciation of learning or a curiosity about the world." This is a ridiculous goal because it can't be measured, however, literacy and numeracy can be measured, and we know these will help children succeed.
64. Board members must go into schools and speak with students, EAs and teachers. It is disgraceful how they are shut out of senior admin meetings and prevented from interacting with schools.
65. Encourage students to practice critical thinking rather than just going with the status quo. This approach should be included in any discussion of history, current events, politics, social justice initiatives, etc. Disagreements and diversity of

opinion should be welcomed in education, whether said opinions align with current policies and initiatives or not.

66. Listen to their teachers and make decisions collaboratively

67. I would like to see more integrated curriculum development. Project-based learning that spans multiple subjects, involves critical thinking and exploration, that is open-ended and has student-led cumulative assessments. Cross-curricular planning amongst staff is integral to a dynamic learning environment. Ensuring that students feel their learning is relevant to their lives and their futures is essential for secondary student "buy in".

68. Ask the kids. This is a modern world and I know my kids are far more advanced in technology than I was at their age. They have ideas and plans and are the more positive participants in school communities than anyone else.

69. Continue with field trips and outside the classroom learning

70. To increase students' ownership of their curriculum and community, devote 30-50% of the school week to community engaging project-based learning. Decrease the curriculum load.

71. Diverse learning materials, great professional development, and support for teachers & staff, more money for field trips, guests and artists in schools, creative curriculum development, community partnerships.

72. More outings

73. More outside the classroom experiences

74. Support educators to provide broad & diverse range of learning environments, activities, strategies & structures to implement new curriculum. provide appropriate ProD, communities of practice, collaboration time along with increased structural flexibility

75. Adopt the Democratic School Education method
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RhUx1pArrO4>. To move away from the continual growth economic concept that is impacting the Earth's ecosystem negatively, a new mindset must be developed. Education for Sustainable Development, a path to change the mindset, can be achieved through a learning program, such as Democratic School Education.

76. Climate Action Courses in our schools to empower our students and reduce their anxiety about climate change

77. Take advantage of the skills and knowledge in our communities - people are hugely educated and experienced and we need to share that.

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79. Re-introduce extensive recycling and re-use systems in all SD 8 schools. This idea should not really need explanation...as a community member, I was shocked to learn that schools in the Nelson area had "thrown up their hands" and said "recycling is too hard"! If contamination was an issue, what steps were taken to address this

issue? Schools are by definition places of learning...and teaching... What are we teaching the young generation when we don't even attempt to solve one of our biggest problems (over-consumption and garbage production) at the local level?

80. Install "no idling" signs outside all SD 8 schools and publicize this initiative so that all parents and care givers dropping off or picking up students are aware and follow this request. Schools in other districts have had this type of messaging in place for years - i.e., Calgary.
81. Teach indigenous world view. Project based learning and get students outside to have meaningful interactions with nature as their teacher! Through indigenous world view, a culture of care and community includes caring for the land and water we depend on for life. Through our schools, children should develop a working knowledge of the lands, waters, plants and animals of the Kootenays as well as the indigenous teachings of how to live in harmony with this land. Elder society teachings bring elders and knowledge keepers into learning circles so children can learn and be inspired by those who are masters. When we support children to engage as protectors of the circle of life, we support them to deal with feelings of helplessness at the condition of the world and remind them that we all have a roll and part to play in healing our society from our colonial history and trauma.
82. Make learning experiences as authentic as possible. Outdoor classrooms, field trips, projects focused on real world problems, and academics.
83. Engage students outside of the classroom: community, outdoor learning fieldtrips. Streamline forms (once a year) currently required for fieldtrips. Teachers should be teaching, not filling out so many forms for each trip.
84. Fieldtrips, Outdoor Learning Engagement. Streamline the paperwork process to support Teachers getting students outside learning and exploring the vast opportunities our area has.
85. Reduce barriers to students learning outdoors and in the community by increasing funding for support staff and resources to do so.
86. Solve real projects their communities are facing in team or ind. followed up by group discussions on suggested solutions. Community spaces,
87. More recycling in the schools, with (paid or volunteer) monitors to help make it effective. Especially food wrappers, and food waste. Students learn when they are active participants and can learn to separate their waste materials. Contests to design signage etc. can be fun!
88. We need to prepare our students for the multi-crisis they will live with: Climate Breakdown, Biodiversity Loss, Environmental Degradation. Prepare for the future to come.
89. These are the skills, abilities and qualities needed to tackle our current and future challenges: www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org. SD8 to adopt the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) framework for all its work; faculty, staff and students alike!
90. Teach cross-curricular project-based units based on real-world issues (e.g., climate change) to allow students to make learning connections.
91. Recycling and reduction of garbage... It is crazy that nothing is happening right now. Kids need to see that the schools are doing their part.

92. "Fiscal literacy. I feel more needs to be done to help educate all students on money matters. The interest structure, balloon mortgages, interest rates, inflation and taxes. Far too many people are in the dark on these matters, and it effect the quality of life of everyone. Please find a way to help the students out where it really matters.
93. 2, I would also like to see an extensive course in a few grades say grade 6 and again in grade 10 on government management. I've learned that the majority of people really don't understand the difference between federal, provincial and municipal governments and what their rolls are and how they affect our well being and taxation amounts. We need to do a far better job in teaching the younger generations coming up as they will have difficulty and even great frustration in government management going forward. As it is often the case in our municipal areas the majority don't or won't vote. This is going to be a recipe for much strife going forward if changes are not made in education. "
94. Use Reconciliation process to transform knowledge conformity (industrial age) to knowledge diversity through indigenous learning protocol. Make schooling a democratic process grooming students to operate in a democratic (based on Indigenous ideals) environment. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are based on a holistic set of social values based on those manifested through "traditional Knowledge" (indigenous nature-based wisdom-systems thinking approach). Adopt policies that mandate over half of the schooling activities towards place-based learning. This is achieved by connecting students with nature (biomimicry education), professionals and elders (in a two-way learning environment) through engaging students in community building and conservation projects. Give ownership to students to co-design a curriculum that fuels their passion for learning. Get rid of "graveyard seating" in classrooms (indigenous teaching is face-to-face or in circle seated arrangements-each person has equal opportunity to communicate without a power leverage).
95. Teach students how to learn, instead of telling them what to learn. The learner should take on the ownership of development of a curriculum that is driven by curiosity. To condition an individual to engage in a democratic society, they must be raised and taught in a democratic environment.
96. Climate Action Courses in our schools to empower our students and reduce their anxiety about climate change. To move away from the continual growth economic concept that is impacting the Earth's ecosystem negatively, a new mindset must be developed. Education for Sustainable Development, a path to change the mindset, can be achieved through a learning program, such as Democratic School Education.
97. Adopt the Democratic School Education method
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RhUx1pArrO4>. It's so important to engage in dialogue that includes the voices of all students. Open, respectful and inquisitive discussions are healthy and helpful.
98. More outside the classroom experiences. provide appropriate ProD, communities of practice, collaboration time along with increased structural flexibility.
99. "Please lobby CBT to take back their outdoor learning funding. CBT has been funding lots of amazing projects but recently cut that stream substantially. The award-winning Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network CBEEN has enables

hundreds of classes to go on free or affordable fieldtrips with knowledgeable educators but that is now threatened.

100. Strengthen what works. Wildflower school, Atlas program (how it was). Which leaders are really appreciated - support them. There are many more examples of what works, is innovative and engaging. Which there was a comment function here.
101. ""Climate Change Emergency Strategy. 'As I asked the board 3 years ago, get an environmental plan and climate change strategy.
102. Declare climate change emergency as other districts have.
103. Make an inventory of current climate impact: transportation, heating, electricity, stuff (paper, furniture, materials), food
104. Make a plan for how to reduce the impact [of climate change]
105. - Set goals and budget for climate change in education and how to support teachers, including support for school gardens, outdoor learning (love of nature and impact on mental health), and provide climate anxiety/grief work for staff and kids
106. Engage students! This base might already be covered. If not, it feels critical that SD8 students are given a seat at the table. The outcomes of this process will most directly affect them. Meaningfully engaging them is an opportunity to affirm the strategic goals outlined here. Doing so would also be a chance for them to practice active citizenship, empowered personhood, and involvement in decision-making that impacts their daily lives. Decades of experience around the world affirms children's ability to contribute to this kind of planning. Experience also demonstrates that making planning exercises accessible to the youngest among us has the added benefit of helping to ensure inclusivity for all. My son is a kindergarten student and I know that he would have a lot to contribute, if engaged with respect and compassion!
107. More structure in classrooms would be helpful. Before entering workforce, people are expected to understand structure and accountability. Example: eat during lunch breaks, not during class. Attend class regularly. Do not leave the classroom. The district should implement structure, raise expectations, and hold students accountable.
108. "Ensure we are in compliance with class sizes. Have supports for designated students. Provide access to place based and hands on learning. Allows teachers to book activities for outdoor education. Education with outside partners provides real life learning opportunities. Mostly focus on smaller class sizes.
109. "Staffing is key. Recent Board Policies around field trips and travel are making it more difficult for teachers to provide opportunities to learn outside the classroom.
110. "Land-Based Education: There was consensus that there needed to be more land-based education offered to students. In addition, the SD#8 should understand that schedules with land-based learning must be flexible enough to take into account seasonal variations. i.e., Berries are ripe when they are ripe ... not necessarily on the second week of September. "