

Strategic Priorities - Empowered Lifelong Learners

Background Information to Question 2: Teaching and Learning

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 - Empowered Lifelong Learners

Responses to Question 2: Teaching and Learning

The District's role is to ensure that students develop a sense of self-worth and personal initiative, that they value and honour diversity, as well the significance of physical well-being, and are leaving school prepared for their future.

How could SD8 foster this?

1. Well, I notice that students need an area that they feel at home in. e.g. shops, sports, theater, outdoor, music, science. these are very important. we need to keep supporting these programs
2. More access to and variety of groups and clubs and them resources to run them
3. Provide leadership opportunities, support (not just say yes, provide opportunities and financial support) collaboration between teachers and students.
4. Support all students to be successful by having smaller class sizes and more EA's, more options for secondary students to pursue interests (even in smaller schools). Person initiative development needs more funding for choice projects, busing subsidies.
5. More support for students, all students, so more small group lessons can be offered.
6. Class management of whole groups is not helping anyone learn. More behaviour support is needed. more support for teachers and students is needed.
7. Allow for greater risks outdoors.
8. Create relevant, real life resources that we (teachers) can teach students to really make it feel like students have something important to work towards
9. Having a specific class which students join based on their needs or feelings. Most students do not grow as much as they could because others in their class hold them back in a variety of ways. The gap in student maturity and values is too large to accomplish this in a meaningful way for individuals.
10. Providing opportunities for them to be involved in the school community, and for their voices and perspectives to be heard. Clubs, teams etc.
11. Bring in people with careers and have career days where kids can ask questions about their future.
12. The curriculum, especially 6-12, must include well developed lessons on SEL skills and equity/anti-racism. These topics can't be left up to teachers to teach or not teach.
13. SD8 could prioritize the arts in school more. Students build empathy, confidence and connection to on another through the arts. For example, music is a universal language that all cultures use. We can value diversity through arts appreciation.

14. When teachers teach their students about a certain subjects like math or science or a project that won't benefit us in the future. so what i recommend is teaching our students about things such as, how to do stocks, how to have positive income per year or learn about income, or how to use simple and compound interest. Of course, you can have some side projects like how to make power with some wires and parts and a light bulb. or basic cooking skills or have a good mental health state and how to budget. and a lot about online businesses on what you can learn to trust and use.

15. Promoting school sports

16. Focus on individual qualities, similarities and differences between people, families, cultures. As a whole, we focus on kindness and lead with the motto that differences make the world a better place.

17. Consistency and continuity in schools at all levels

18. Giving students more responsibility and ability to act as a person in the more senior grades instead of telling them what to do.

19. Lots of discussion

20. Lots of listening

21. I think the schools and teachers are doing well. Supporting each individual student is important...and having some flexibility as kids navigate adolescence, etc.

22. Have standard expectations for lates or absences and hold families accountable

23. Allow time to teach physical well being during the timetable

24. Take a strengths-based approach to teaching, discipline, and feedback. In order to foster self-worth, diversity, and well-being you need to understand the mechanics of vulnerability, courage and shame. The only way students will learn this is if it's modelled by the adults around them.

25. Restore the ATLAS program with backcountry safety and avalanche training. This program was amazing for developing leadership and risk management. It was the shining star of LVR and the engagement with community was amazing. It truly reflected the values of our community. Deeply disappointed with the changes.

26. More staff to be able to connect with the kids and explore what really works for them and their learning and implementation styles and skills. More counselors to ensure kids are getting the credits they need and the encouragement and support to explore post secondary options.

27. Teach reading, writing and arithmetic.

28. Children are learning men can babies and in other countries they actually learn math and real science. So many children just look at their phones all day and don't get any learning done
29. More hands-on activities especially featuring stem activities - giant building blocks to study math concepts and physics. Simple chemistry or geology experiments. Teachers having adequate support and financial resources to fund these activities. More diverse reading materials, both available in the library and as curricular materials.
30. Clubs, extra curricular activities. Smaller classes more continuity if teachers and principals from year to year at the same school.
31. Hire more EA support for kids and teachers! Support connection and relationship building with teachers-students-families at elementary-middle school levels. Again, get out into the real world (community engagement, fieldtrips, outdoor learning. Make it easier for teachers (less paperwork) to accomplish this. Less administration pushed onto teachers. Administrators should be listening and learning from teachers.
32. DRAMA Lessons!!! More support, way more support for special needs children! Honor diversity and send special need kids home on a regular basis??? what???
33. The arts! Bring music programs back.
34. Physical well being: Invest in spaces that allow students to take part in structured physical learning activities more regularly. Sports fields at all of the Nelson schools often look more like mud pits. Recognize that physical well being can not be separated from emotional, spiritual, and mental well being.
35. Allow students to develop competence by having them allowed to actually engage in difficult, challenging activities. This would require more funding directly to classrooms, teachers, and removing barriers to activities of actual merit (camping, hiking, extended excursions).
36. Continue the personalized projects and inquiry initiatives with collaborative projects that foster the values of diversity.
37. same as above, as well as more teachers involved in clubs, being real & honest about struggles, sharing sessions, and assignments that reflect self worth, teaching students about owning their power, what they can control, and being honesty about addictions & social media (and education that actually pertains to kids). Finding guest speakers to achieve this; lived experience-addictions, gay/transgender, social media influencers, successful graduates, and local business folks. Yoga and meditation sessions at school.
38. Again, do not sacrifice learning the basics in reading, written communication skills and mathematics skills in an effort to be holistic. Problem solving skills and self confidence cannot be given; they must be fostered but not by reducing the time spent and the importance stressed on the basics. I see a big drop in these skills and a big reduction in expectations of students in these basics in schools today compared to when I taught.

39. Allow the student council to actually have a level of influence at the schools, relax paperwork required for small events, etc to happen, as full school engagement helps encourage diversity. Have fun days that are whole grade/school that are actually fun. Stop creating restrictive policies with no enforcement/focusing on 'creating inclusivity' when data shows that the types of policies you keep making, in fact, do the opposite. Actually listen to student complaints of racism and bullying, and be transparent about what happens in those cases where multiple complaints are made.

40. Let them be in charge of their education to some degree

41. SD8 should help the kids to get technology in their hands for education. This will help them when they get out of school. It is a shame that you cancelled that program this year after running it for only one year here. A lot of families out here can't afford computers for their children for home use, yet the schools ask the kids to do work on computers without providing them.

42. Again, the key to intervene in a system is becoming the system and embody the values. Now many parents, student and staff perceive SD8 as a stagnant bureaucratic, colonial fossil. It is not in the logo, slogan but in what you do, dear management. Thank you I know we are all part of limiting modernism...

43. I imagine more self-organized leadership, more imagination, more ease and trust. Deep listening to what works already - Wildflower school as an innovative unit before the new curriculum they did that stuff. Schools with outdoor learning as priorities. All caring hardworking staff. student initiatives. PAC and DPAC. Staff wanting to reduce racism.

44. Promote embodied learning and teach secular practices for mindfulness in all aspects of life. Emphasize relational intelligence and create conditions for students and staff and community to form lasting bonds. Bolster staff ranks with outside adult supports in order to ensure that each child is seen and valued and supported through their learning journeys. Engage students in actively shaping their own learning journeys and reflecting on the personal development that will lead them to their evolving learning goals.

45. Rewarding self-starters encourages initiative but finding creative ways to encourage those who aren't naturally motivated would be even more meaningful. I think the school district is doing a great job in honouring diversity, but I find the significance of emphasis on physical health varies greatly between individual teachers, never mind schools within the district. Alignment on curriculum and what students are expected to have learned in any given grade across the district could help with students finishing the school year ready for the next.

46. As above, provide sufficient support for neurodivergent students so that they are able to experience safety, regulation, and self-worth at school. Recognize that learning and success look different to everyone.

-
47. -Flexible curriculum that highlights strengths and allows students to pursue individual interests. My child appreciates the "fish on a bicycle" comparison - math and science may be the bicycle to her fish (causing intense anxiety), but she can learn languages, create detailed drawings and sculptures, and write 100-page treatises about subjects she is interested in.
48. -Hybrid learning models combining reduced in-class time with online learning - a classroom setting doesn't work well for everyone.
49. -Quiet spaces for sensory breaks - not just an empty broom closet somewhere. Comfortable spaces with soundproofing and facilities that make students feel like they are important and worthy of accommodations.
50. Have more schools adopt multi-grade classrooms. Family and community are strong outcomes from such programs.
51. Do a few other things in gym like different dance or karate or gymnastics or hiking. That show you can do other things for your physical well being other than typical sports.
52. And/or talk about healthy foods and choices using a balanced diet, which you can still have sometimes foods but not all the time.
53. Reduce barriers for students to learn in the outdoors and community settings.
54. Students who spend their day screaming and running around the halls because of lack of support probably feel pretty low self worth. Diversity then becomes something to be managed. Support the students through proper and timely testing.
55. These are family and cultural issues, not a priority in the school. Our kids need SD8 help so they can read and write. They practice social respect for others by their student social interactions. They do not need us to point out the differences between them.
56. Reduce barriers to students learning outdoors and in the community settings.
57. Support students' mental health through school counsellors, rather than sending students elsewhere for counselling. They just end up on long waiting lists and don't get the support they need.
58. Hold students accountable. Help them be successful in their own ways via more support staff!
59. Removing the funding for technology did a great disservice to students. How are we to prepare them for the future with old and tired computers. Rural students do not have the same access to technology and it's embarrassing how little this is valued.
60. This could be done by leaving the classroom more often. There is so much to see, do and learn outside the classroom that can help prepare kids for the variety that life beyond school has.
61. More access to technology- students need to be able to access and learn how to use technology at school so that they are able to adapt and engage in a technology-forward world.
-

62. - District wide training on transgender folx and issues like bringing in Percy Lezard as a keynote speaker for ProD

63. - Shortened wait time for assessment by OT, Psychologist, and Speech Therapist. Students are being left behind due to these wait times! There are students who wait for these tests for months or years who could bring in funding, or benefit from these supports much earlier! As well, increased funding to support non-funded students i.e., purchasing lexia for students with dyslexia. More rural/ smaller schools are being forgotten with the current way this is run.

64. The adults (teachers and support staff) are the role models for the bulk of our children's days, so it is important to have adults that are regulated and supported by administration. Professional development is important for all staff, teachers and all support staff. All adults interacting with students benefit from personal growth and development. A next step would be to share Professional Development learnings with students. An idea would be to have teacher/support staff share their synthesized learning with their classroom. This would bring a level of transparency to how teachers/support staff are also still learners and encourage a sense of agency among the students.

65. Again, I feel students need a few choices. It is great we have Homelinks and online options. I would like to see some sort of a Pathways program offered through KRSS and a music program for all schools.

66. I think valuing and honouring diversity needs to start from home, we need to educate the parents.

67. We need to address bullying and anxiety in our schools. It is rampant and not getting better. What we are doing right now isn't working. There is too much cell phone use; this contributes to the problems and hurts the students' self worth.

68. - stop pressuring teachers into pushing students through that don't meet the graduation requirements. This teaches students that they can put in little to no effort and still make it through - not at all a mentality for motivation and future success.

69. - give teachers more time and resources to plan out well thought out lessons surrounding these more delicate subjects - I often have to cut corners and sacrifice what would feel more genuine as a learning approach due to time and resource constraints.

70. Early focus on self-regulation and emotional development

71. Less focus on gender expression, sexual identity, and the pressure to explore those

72. More focus on personal interests. Inquiry based projects that allow students to pursue passions

73. This is a very broad question that covers many different aspects of learning.

74. I think this starts with a good relationship between the student and teacher and children feeling safe and supported at school. Children naturally want to learn about their world and are all engaged learners as babies and toddlers. I think the school's job is to foster this through elementary school and allow their natural curiosity to flourish. Too much memorizing and testing in elementary school can get in the way.

75. In regards to physical well-being I am happy to see that my elementary age kids have gym every day. I think they should get outside as much as possible and enjoy all that our area has to offer. I would like to see kids skiing, swimming, hiking etc. through the school.

76. Give the students the chance to fail, hold them back a year if they didn't do the work for their grade.

77. -support school sports by accommodating teachers and community members to coach by providing time off for teachers to go to games, having adequate time for athletic directors to manage all the teams. There is a gap in support here and teachers are asked to take on too much without adequate compensation. This is resulting in below bar sports programs.

78. -specialized physical education teachers from grade 6-12 to most effectively implement physical education and mental health curriculum and promote physical well-being.

79. Get rid of the no child left behind rule and implement a proper grading system (from a-f like they used to) How is a child supposed to prepare for life in the real world when they leave school if they can just float through to grade 10.

80. Confidence in self is key for self-worth and initiative. I think that peers play a huge role in generating or undermining the confidence of a child. I believe modern school systems are already encouraging effort over results and other confidence boosting things. The SD cannot impact home life, where a lot of confidence-building background takes place.

81. Preparation for the future: I think schools should teach practical applications of knowledge. E.g., mathematics: how to do your taxes, how to make and stick to a budget, considerations around investing vs simple saving (eg teaching compound interest). For the economy to flourish and thus their future to flourish these things should be integral. Also, current affairs, politics, understanding our governments and how they function, where to find information to allow for an informed vote, etc. this may be covered now but it certainly wasn't when I was in school. If your parents didn't understand it and/or talk about it (mine didn't) then you were left to flounder until you figured it out the hard way. I don't think that the school system set me up for success there. I can recall learning of Shinto religion and the reproductive cycle of fungi, what the 'umbilical cord' of a chicken egg is called (a chalaza) and how to read liquid measures at the meniscus. I thought critically and made poignant arguments in essays. More to the point, I did well in math and social studies/history. I can still solve for 'x' and recall a lot of what I learned about democracy vs autocracy and the wars. But if a little practical financial and political information have been instilled, I would have not only been a successful scholar but a successful societal contributor.

82. Cooking, physical education and health should be more closely related. Teaching them how to make smores in the oven is not setting them in the right course for the future. Teach them where the food comes from, how to prepare basic healthy meals and what a healthy diet does for you body and wellbeing.

83. Better understanding of mental wellness and anxiety, Neurodivergence in teachers and support staff.

84. More student input to activities.

85. Practical life skills education, internet safety, cultural education that speaks to the reality of colonization and genocide in Canada and locally

86. We need to present real-life problems such as knowing how to do basic math on interest rates and how credit is to be used and know when not to use it. How to create a budget and plan ahead so young people are actually prepared for life. This should not be an option, as it is right now, this should be basic math skills for all to learn. They need to demonstrate how credit cards, loans and mortgages work, focus more on how life works and what options are available outside of school, i.e., trades, Police, army etc., other options outside of college and university. From speaking to former students in the Nelson area, the only way they knew about these other options was through friends or family, not the school. Everything is geared towards going to college and university, which may not be the right choice for some students.

87. Drop the Career Life Presentation that Grade 12s have to do. It's a waste of time. I can not believe this is a main factor for people to be able to get their high school diploma.

88. We need to stop presenting the idea that you can identify as a cat, or it or whatever flavor of the day is. It is absurd. A potential employer takes one look at these people and sends them on their way. Yes, it is active discrimination. But, unspoken, unless we have thought police now as well?

89. Sexual identification should not be a topic at school. From what I see, people who feel that they are a girl, when they have a penis, need some counseling and/or therapy. Again, from speaking to former students, we cannot change our whole education and language to accommodate the ever-changing whims of a hormonal teenager. They are going to be hit hard in the real world and it won't be tolerated. Yes, all the corporations of the world may say they are accommodating blah, blah, blah, but it is all a wash to keep everyone placated in order to buy their products and services. We are all very deluded if we really believe any of that crap.

90. To be gay is one thing, to identify as a cat/girl/boy nonbinary etc is a cop out of dealing with the actual problems that may be going on in that person's life. They are seeking attention and they need help, not a pronoun.

91. This fashion right now of changing the English language that has been developed over hundreds of years is another absurdity and needs to stop. It needs to stop where it started. In schools, colleges and universities. Teachers need to stick with the subject matter and not be allowed to express their opinion on current events. This is very important. It is up to the parent to educate them on the current events of the world and what is right and wrong.

92. Not by following the current curriculum: e.g., Match 11: 1 textbook; half the exercises done in school half at home; regular tests every week. how inspiring is this, you think? Is this the right way to engage? to prepare for your student's future?
93. physical well being - everybody is afraid to use the washrooms; many students never (!) use the washrooms at school (LVR); never! what does this tell you about the culture there?
94. I think students are feeling respected - that is good; but do they feel empowered
95. hard to answer in a survey, really.
96. Better preparation for what the kids will be facing online. Even from an early age, there should be conversations about online etiquette, boundaries, education.
97. Implement the teaching of communication and conflict resolution skills. Use Restorative Justice practices and philosophy as a response to breaks in relationships in the school. Focus on children's passions and unique gifts and contributions to their classroom.
98. Older students can pick their own passions to do leadership projects on.
99. Value a diversity of learning styles and cater to those learning styles.
100. Tone down the incredible workload of teacher's and principals so they can be relaxed and present to the students on their care.
101. We know through research that a child starts to develop racial bias (as well as other biases) as early as their infancy. SD8 could support Community Services Organizations to offer Early Years Programs within the schools that model inclusion and honour diversity is a way to ensure children have influences from early on that foster inclusion and honour diversity. Early Years Programs also integrate gross motor development, food security and honouring the child and family as a whole, which will have an impact on the child's trajectory.
102. Ensure that students have met certain standards before passing them on. It's hard to adapt for who simply don't show up.
103. What data are we using to understand whether or not this is achievable. We need to impart knowledge to our students and that comes from a strong curriculum with high expectations. Focus on what can be measured.
104. Proving real life experiences. Connecting with children deeper on individual basis.
105. Fostering needs when it comes to meal/eating times. Instruction time vs. Break time should follow children's leads more instead of Administration making that choice.
106. Provide opportunities for learning outside of the classroom.

-
107. In conversations with my students, they shared that their self worth increases when they have struggled with learning and then mastered a concept.
108. Continue with capstone projects where students' passions can direct learning. Make learning relevant to the real world. Bring in people from the community. Let children lead and come up with ideas to pursue. Create a community feel within the school environment where every child feels known and accepted.
109. Having more sports teams at the elementary level could enhance student's engagement in physical activity.
110. I was confused in the public engagement document -- there didn't seem to be a question about students experiencing discrimination based on race (just gender). Is the school district looking at racism in its student surveys? It should. I do see my child's school valuing diversity and celebrating students. I don't think physical well-being is emphasized enough though; gym was just cancelled for a vast swath of last year. Some of the things that we need most as humans through our lives (movement, music) seem to be lost from schools.
111. Teaching literacy using scientifically based practices like the science of reading/ phonics. This will allow all students to have an easier time learning to read, and thus have greater success and joy in school.
112. Engage the students and create a post grad plan to support them. Involve and invite post grad institutions (universities, colleges and trades) into the schools to say this is who we are, this is what we do, and this is what we can teach you. More than a single day. Make it a week, it would be a good investment. Get the kids excited about their future and give them the options that are out there.
113. Foster cooperative play, encourage assignment completion allowing for diversity of subjects communication with the whole families
114. SD8 can support students best by teaching them the best, most up-to-date science-backed methods of reading, writing, math and research skills. Some of our students are feeling left behind because of the rather archaic methods we still hold to.
115. Implement Montessori type teaching and programming.
116. More counsellors are needed to support students and this need has been there for many years but even more now. Students need to have more support available to help them determine their strengths and interests to decide on career paths. More options for activities at lunch hours could be helpful, they could use the gym or attend wellness related sessions that students could lead, give options to students to develop their leadership skills but having them create opportunities for student learning.
117. Have teachers trained on taking a coaching approach with students, listening skills and asking powerful questions- let the students problem solve and come up with solutions in a supported environment.
-

118. Teachers need to be better at supporting students to get out of their comfort zones like presenting in front of their peers. Many adults aren't comfortable with public speaking why is there such a push in classes now for student to do this? If this is a requirement teachers need training on to better support students in taking baby steps - not criticizing a student in front of their class on how they presented- if reading off their notes is what the student needs - then let them.

119. More basic communication skills training could be helpful for students and teachers. Starting at a young age. Communication can build trust which can help reduce anxiety in students.

120. By supporting music education. Music room is one place where non athletes and other students that struggle to find they're place in the school.

121. Training & support for teachers in this very white-majority district to meaningfully teach and engage with anti-racism, and to bravely acknowledge and confront racism and other forms of discrimination in their schools.

122. Regular, integrated emphasis on diversity, inclusion, fairness, justice, and anti-oppression, with teachers focusing on classroom and student safety, especially for the most marginalized.

123. Diverse offerings for physical and mental health, that takes into account different abilities, interests, and ways of learning.

124. More funding for EAs and support staff!!

125. Better mental and physical wellness supports for SD8 employees!

126. More money for arts and sports in schools!

127. More outings and engaging in the community

128. By removing the increasing number of barriers being put in place to students having positive learning experiences outside of the classroom. The new policies around outdoor ed, field trips, and other activities are serving to prevent students from having great educational experiences that "develop a sense of self-worth and personal initiative" by filling them with so much red tape that they become impossible to accomplish. The very best ways for students to develop these crucial life skills are through experiences such as outdoor ed. If we never give students a chance to face challenges, overcome them, and build resiliency, how can we expect them to develop their self-worth? We need to decrease barriers to these types of experiences, not increase them. The district needs to worry far less about their own potential liability and far more about the life and educational experiences of the actual students in their care.

129. Keep kids engaged so they don't fall behind

130. Less movies and more teaching Napoleon Dynamite was bad enough to watch at home now to be watching it at school is unacceptable. school should be used for teaching not movies

-
131. Reading Instruction that reaches all learners. As was clearly outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Inquiry Report "Right to Read" last year, reading instruction is predominantly taught in a way that is not inclusive to all learners.

The BC curriculum and 99.9% of teachers are stuck to this notion that "whole language" or "balanced literacy" is the way to teach reading. When in fact, for several decades now there has been sufficient evidence that actually structured literacy or "science of reading" based instruction methods can reach all learners while whole language/balanced literacy only reaches about 50-60% of learners.

Stop telling kids to guess. Stop telling parents if they just read to their kids more they will learn to read. You are perpetuating trauma to these parents and students.

132. Preparation and examples of what upper grade learning looks like in younger grades.

133. Preparation for high school from middle school: timetable management, finding classes, mixing with new groups

134. Investigate why elem. students have lower student satisfaction & wellness than prov average while academic results (FSA) have been improving. Determine and address causes.