



“Bringing Learning to Life”

Alert Bay Elementary School

SCHOOL PLAN

2024-2025



Submitted: September 9, 2024

Principal: Roberta Harris

Introduction – School Context

The village of Alert Bay is a small community situated on Cormorant Island located off the northeast tip of Vancouver Island. We live in the traditional territory of the Kwakwaka'wakw people. We are surrounded by water and nature and connected to our surroundings through our culture.

Enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year is approximately 35 students from kindergarten to grade 7. There are two multi-grade classrooms consisting of grades K-3 and 4-7. Each classroom has a wide range of abilities, with teachers and staff who are dedicated to meeting each child's needs.

Strategies include differentiated instruction, inclusive educational support, assistive technology and focusing on honoring the goals of SD 85's Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement. We strive to hire local employees that are connected to, and part of the community. These measures ensure that relationships and trust are built upon year after year.

Under the leadership of Jill Cook, District Principal of Learning and Childcare, our school now hosts the Strong Start Program. Children aged 0-5 come and participate in play-based learning activities. Our K- 7 students have the opportunity to interact with families and enhance their leadership skills by offering to share their knowledge in various ways.

Approximately 90% of our students are of Indigenous ancestry, with the majority coming from local Nations and areas.

Our cultural program consists of learning the history, protocols, language, dances, stories and songs of the Kwak'wala speaking people and surrounding areas. We also learn about each other's culture as it is important to know who we are and where we come from.

School Mission Statement

Maya'xala (Respect)
Respect for Ourselves
Respect for Others
Respect for Our Environment

Our school operates under the Kwak'wala word Maya'xala, which means respect. We believe in respecting each other in all aspects of our education and take special care to work as a community to ensure that each and every person in our school feels respected and cared for.

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School Context

Our school, Alert Bay Elementary, is located on Cormorant Island in the community of Alert Bay which is accessible by ferry from Port McNeill.

Enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year is approximately 35 students from K-7. The majority of our students are of Aboriginal ancestry. We have two classes with teachers for K-3 and 4-7.

We are staffed at 3.00 FTE for the 2024-2025 school year. We also have an administrative assistant, a full-time education assistant and an education assistant/child-youth care worker. We employ a part-time Indigenous education assistant and a full-time cultural teacher.

The school has on-site leadership with a principal who also teaches the English Language Learning program, library and is responsible for the Learning Assistance program.

Summary of Student Body Assets

The students have many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. This is evident in our Cultural Celebration, Salmon Feast, Christmas Concert, Remembrance Day Ceremony, Missoula Theatre production and other significant endeavors that focus on leaving a positive impact or legacy at our school.

Educators and parents agree that students genuinely care for each other, respect the individual learning plans of students, and strive to positively represent their school and community with integrity and respect.

Our school practices self-regulation based on previous school inquiries. Self-regulated learning is a process that assists students in managing their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions in order to successfully navigate their learning experiences.

Student safety and well-being are our top priorities.

Summary of Student Body Needs:

The needs of our students vary greatly. We are a small school with two 4-grade splits: K-3 & 4-7. We strive to meet all students' needs in a holistic way. For counseling services our school has an SD 85 counsellor and a 'Namgis Counsellor available.

We have other partnerships which include: Kwakwalatsi Child and Family Services who offer a wide range of supports, and MCFD, Children and Youth Mental Health support

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workers who help connect families with services and supports they might need.

Academically, we are creative based on the variety of student needs. As a school we have been focusing on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) activities and project-based learning.

Students learn at different levels and rates. To accommodate all students we focus on a common goal or outcome and students learn from where they are at. We use inquiry to guide our teaching and allow students to learn based on questions or interests they have.

Although the Covid 19 pandemic is behind us, the consequences are still in effect. There has been a gap in learning that will take time and patience to alleviate. Basic reading, writing and math skills are very low. It is important to focus on these skills and identify the gaps that are hindering student success.

Attendance is an issue for some students and mental health plays an enormous part in their ability to come to school. We maintain open communication with families and provide them with, and/or help to find the supports they need.

Our school has recently been focusing on writing as our inquiry. While continuing to focus on writing we would like to enhance our inquiry based on Adrienne Gear's concept of *"Powerful Thinking: Engaging Readers, Building Knowledge, and Nudging Learning in Elementary Classrooms"* (2024)

Adrienne Gear, an educator herself, understands the changing classroom. She sees the big picture and knows that as educators "we want a class of kids who care about themselves, each other, and the world, who are motivated and engaged in their learning, and who see themselves as successful" (p. 10).

With a continued focus on professional learning, teachers will share learning intentions with students, share or co-construct rubrics with success criteria, use descriptive feedback and engage students in peer and self-assessment of their learning and thinking.

School approach to Indigenous Education and Reconciliation

Our school has a strong cultural program which includes a fall feast that is held in November and a cultural celebration in June. We practice protocols that are expected in our culture which include integrity, appreciation of wisdom that is passed down from generation to generation and respect for our knowledge keepers and our elders.

We follow the district's Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement and keep the goals in mind when planning school events and activities. We are mindful of the importance of

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meeting these goals and aspire to create a sense of belonging for all students, enhance academic achievement, integrate Indigenous content, participate in events that promote language revitalization and work together to nurture and support a holistic view of health and wellness.

Teachers integrate Indigenous content throughout the year across all subject areas and we learn the songs, dances, history and protocols of the Kwakwaka'wakw people on a daily basis.

Section 1 – Student Achievement Profile

PM Benchmarks:

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Primary: K-3: Proficient/ Exceeding	Masked	50%	36%	38%

DMA - Diagnostic Math Assessment

Percentage of students scoring 60% and above

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Grade 3	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Intermediate Grade 4-7	16%	17%	42%	31%

School Wide Write: # of students at the proficient level:

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	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Primary K-3 Proficient	44%	46%	N/A	30%
Intermediate 4-7 Proficient	22%	35%	33%	40%

DART - District Assessment of Reading & Thinking
Percentage of students proficient

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Primary (Grade 3)	Masked	Masked	Masked	Masked
Intermediate (Grade 4-7)	16%	17%	77% 66%	63% 55%

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FSA: Fall 2024: Grade 4			
	Emerging	On-Track	Extending
Literacy	Masked	Masked	Masked
Numeracy	Masked	Masked	Masked

FSA: Fall Grade 7			
	Emerging	On-Track	Extending
Literacy	Masked	Masked	Masked
Math:	Masked	Masked	Masked

Section 2 – School Goals

Briefly describe the school’s 3 goals for the year based on the broader areas identified in the Ministry’s [Policy for Student Success: The Educated Citizen](#).

Goal 1 - Intellectual Development

<p>Goal: To identify gaps in learning and plan interventions to enhance basic math and computation skills</p>
<p>Rationale: (the why to support this as a school goal)</p> <p>Basic computation scores decreased between Fall and Spring indicating a need for improvement and intervention across all grades.</p>

Action Plan: (specific actions, structures or resources that are needed or that you plan to do to work on this goal)

- identify the gaps in basic skills through assessment
- use assessment data to plan level-based instruction
- school wide focus on enhancing basic skills
- provide more flexibility and choice about how students learn
- Use the Math Assessment Supplement to scan for gaps in math skills:
https://intensiveintervention.org/sites/default/files/Math-Assessment-Supplement_508.pdf (class-wide assessment to identify gaps/needs)
- Plan school-wide opportunities for enhancing basic computation skills in math: multi-age grouping based on skills/needs – would you consider multiage groupings instead of assessment based groupings?

Evidence/Data: (how will you measure progress toward this goal)

- ongoing weekly assessment using NLPS LEARNS math assessment and teaching tools: Retrieved from <https://nlpslearns.sd68.bc.ca/instruction-assessment/numeracy/numeracy-assessment/> (using what instrument or assessment tool and how often?)
- increase in proficiency of basic computation skills: adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing with daily practice and skill building

Goal 2 - Human and Social Development

Goal:

To be a more inclusive school ensuring all participants feel safe and respected.

“Inclusive education is based on the values of equality, social justice and the acceptance of diversity and equal opportunities in education. It involves all pupils, including pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs or disabilities (SEN or SEN(D)) students, as well as disadvantaged pupils from vulnerable social groups (refugees, Roma and etc.)” Retrieved from:
https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/fr/pub/teacher_academy/catalogue/detail.cfm?id=84086

Rationale: (the why to support this goal)

To be aware of misinterpretations and lack of knowledge around the topic of equality and the right for all cultures and diverse groups to be recognized, respected and represented. The need for this goal derives from office referrals and parent feedback based on misunderstandings between students and inappropriate comments/humor from students.

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What data lead you to this goal? Examples could be: Student feedback, Student Learning Survey, School Survey, Parent comments, Office referrals or other data

Action Plan: (specific actions, structures or resources needed)

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the ERASE website and resources available via email, staff meetings and recommending resources on the SD 85 website – how will you do this?
- Plan for presentations that teach inclusion, understanding and respect with our school district counsellor in collaboration with ‘Nāmgis school counsellor
- Have regular meetings that discuss/plan for school inclusion using Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation by Shane Safir and Jamila Dugan
- Discuss areas of further discussion: based on discourse from previous meetings
- Create cultural class lessons that cover a wider variety of Nations and cultural practices
- Promote knowledge of the shared responsibility of ensuring everyone feels comfortable and cared for at school via self-assessment/reflection journals
- Promote an understanding of the BC Human Rights Code, BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,
- Host a whole school “Heritage Night” where students and staff can share who they are and where they come from

Evidence/Data: (how will you measure success)

A change in the school atmosphere, a change in behaviours, a decrease in report/referral forms, self-assessment and reflection journals

Refer back to the tools you originally used to identify the problem and see if they or new tools should be considered to measure success

Goal 3 - Career Development

Goal:

To foster skills necessary to present ourselves in a positive way.
To become more knowledgeable about how integrity is needed to be successful at school.

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Rationale: (the why, include evidence analyzed to support this goal)

Based on our experience in previous years and from information collected from report/referral forms we feel it is important for students to be aware of how to conduct ourselves and understand the consequences of negative behavior vs. positive behavior using the sisiutl as a metaphor for balance, choice and values

Action Plan: (specific actions, structures or resources needed)

In order for students to fully understand the necessity of the preparation steps to career development and preparation, they should adopt qualities that show integrity in the classroom setting. These skills can be applied in all other aspects of their lives.

Our school code of conduct focuses on the idea of Maya'xala, respecting ourselves, respecting others and respecting our environment. Practicing integrity in all areas of our lives involves being honest, honorable, authentic, responsible and courageous to stand up for what we believe in.

Specific teachings include:

Learning and implementing the 10 Kwakwaka'wakw teachings translated by William Wasden Jr. as told to him by his Nan, Margaret Hunt (Putsa)

Integrity: learn together what it means to have integrity: student posters, role play,

What specific things will you do as a school, to achieve the goal- for example, will you continue holding up students who demonstrate Maya'xala; host a Maya'xala contest?, bring in an elder to foster and encourage this, host an elders lunch or gathering, support something local or international?

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/8-pathways-creating-culture-integrity-marilyn-price-mitchell>

Evidence/Data:

- **Reduction in report/referral forms**
- **Reduction in referrals to the office**
- **Increase in self-confidence/selflessness**
-
- **Student self assessment might be something on how they have demonstrated Maya'xala or how their class has.**

Section 3 – Professional Inquiry (expansion of one of the above school goals, based on the Spirals of Inquiry).

School Inquiry Project Application (2024-2025)

School: Alert Bay Elementary School

School Team: Sheila Bragan, Jennifer Rowell, Roberta Harris, Ernest Alfred, Steven Wong, Anne Dalton, Susan Dalton, TBA

1. Scanning:

Based on recent assessment data students' academic skills have gaps in basic skills especially in the area of reading, writing, comprehension and inferring.

For the last three years our inquiry has been focused on writing. We would like to take a broader focus for this years' inquiry as skills are lacking in all areas of literacy.

Scanning the 3 big picture questions:

1. What is going on for our learners?

We have 2 multi-grade classrooms with a variety of levels in reading, writing, comprehension and inferring. Students are not confident in their skills and teachers are struggling to meet all students' needs.

2. How do we know?

Based on our School Wide Write, District Assessment of Reading and Thinking, previous years' inquiries and performance in the classroom, we realize that students view literacy as a chore.

We witness behaviors that are barriers to learning. Students have difficulty sharing their learning in written and oral form which causes frustration and exasperation. Students "shut down" and appear unwilling to try, even with adaptations - provided.

Students require specific instruction based on where they are at in their learning. We will assess students, determine their level of learning and provide interventions to enhance their skills in reading, writing, comprehension and inferring.

3. Why does it matter?

Literacy is based on skills that are built on as they are learned. Learning is progressive. Before we can teach students to effectively read and write they must be able to "understand, critically analyze, and create a variety of communication forms, including oral, written, visual, digital, and multimedia, to accomplish one's goals" Retrieved from:

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/learning-pathways/k-12-learning-progressions>

2. Focusing: (Adrienne Gear’s “Powerful Thinking” (2024)

Strategies we will focus on include: (p. 13)

Student-Centered Classroom: students, not the teacher, placed at the centre of instruction

Reflective Habits of Mind: providing time and space for students to process and reflect on their learning

Individual Needs and Interests: rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Preparing Students for Successful Adult life (how so?- becoming confident readers?). by becoming confident readers, knowing how to advocate for themselves and by practising integrity

3. Developing a Hunch:

As we focus on assessing and identifying skills we will aspire to learn how to teach “powerful thinking” in a way that “captures a student’s attention, invites curiosity, builds knowledge, and stretches thinking” (Gear, A., p. 11).

It is our hunch, that by engaging learners in the “thinking about the reading process, alongside developing student centered lessons in literary”, students’ confidence in seeing themselves as readers will increase.

4. Professional Learning:

- Adrienne Gear Webinars: <https://webinars.adriennegear.com/>
- Bi-weekly professional learning group: Each participant will share a teaching/learning experience based on what we have learned in the webinars and from the text: *Powerful Thinking, Engaging Readers, Building Knowledge and Nudging Learning in Elementary Classrooms* (2024)
- Check-in during bi-weekly meetings: How are we doing?

5. Taking Action:

- Learning how to conduct an inquiry: What does an inquiry mean to you?
- What type of inquiry are we going to conduct? Personal/group?
- School Wide Reading: Practice: Making Connections, Visualizing, Asking Questions, Inferring, and Transforming
- Explore “What does thinking look like?” (Lesson, p. 35). Students “think about thinking.” This is an opportunity to introduce “the language of thinking that will be key in developing strong communication skills” (Gear, A., p. 35).

6. Checking:

Checking for results: Are students more engaged? How will we know?

Strategies include: (Gear, A., 2024, p. 23)

- Use and practice the language of thinking: Anchor Chart: Thinking Prompts
- Integrate “thinking” language into both literacy and content lessons
- Encourage students to use “thinking” language when talking about their thinking
- Assess progress/engagement

School Principal Signature

Staff Rep Signature

Date of Signatures: mm/dd/yr

Adapted from Dr. Judy Halbert and Dr. Linda Kaser “Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality”

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Section 4 – Focus on Learning

Summary of Priorities based on selected data						
1. Student Learning	Target	Interventions/Actions	2. Professional Learning/Supports	Monitoring Plan	3. Roles and Responsibilities	4. Resources
Grade K-7 focus on improving literacy/reading with a focus on comprehension, reading strategies, fluency and enjoyment	All	<p>Staff will PM Benchmark any student in their class who they have questions about on the Fall EPRA/DART assessment.</p> <p>Staff will research ways to help students improve fluency, comprehension, and strategies, and will modify instruction accordingly.</p> <p>Staff will coordinate other supports for vulnerable readers, including literacy support from Support teachers or EAs, One to One Readers, home reading programs, and peer reading coaches.</p>	<p>Staff may need to know how to conduct a PM Benchmark or other reading assessment.</p> <p>Staff will work with LART teacher or other staff member to develop instructional plan to improve reading fluency and comprehension.</p> <p>Staff will reassess students at least twice through the year to determine student progress.</p> <p>Use of teacher librarian to select new and engaging “just right” books to increase student interest in reading.</p>	<p>P or VP will monitor staff progress in assessing reading and also what changes staff will make to reading instruction through the year</p> <p>Teachers will monitor student progress through the year using PM Benchmarks or other assessment tools</p>	<p>LARTs will either give or arrange for tutorial for new staff on conducting PM Benchmarks.</p> <p>P/VP will help coordinate time for teachers to meet regarding improving reading instruction in fluency and comprehension.</p>	<p>PM Benchmarks. “Just right” reading books for students’ home reading programs.</p> <p>Levelled reading materials to be purchased for reading groups in classes.</p>
Grade 8-12 School Connectedness	All	<p>Review Student Satisfaction survey results related to school connectedness and Indigenous Survey results, including if students can name two adults in the building that care about them.</p>	<p>Staff will revisit the importance of school connectedness to graduation rates (and self-esteem, and other successes in school and life).</p>	<p>School connectedness will be a standing item at staff meetings so that we can monitor the clubs, share information about successes and challenges, and monitor at risk students more closely</p>	<p>FNSW, CYCW to report back to staff on students of concern.</p> <p>Provision of time and space for clubs to run, and possibly materials for clubs.</p>	<p>Survey Analysis</p>

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