



Gitwinksihlkw Elementary School

Learning Improvement Plan 2025-26

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SCHOOL VISION, MISSION and VALUES



VISION

We will become a school where we meet every learner where they are and guide them toward growth, academically, socially, and emotionally; to ensure they thrive with confidence and a strong sense of belonging.



MISSION

At GES, we commit to creating a safe, inclusive, and inspiring environment where every learner is known, supported, and challenged. Through meaningful relationships and engaging learning experiences, we nurture curiosity, compassion, and capability in all students as they grow into contributing members of their community.



VALUES

At GES, our daily practice is guided by the Eight Keys of Excellence, which shape a school culture rooted in integrity, perseverance, and purposeful living. These keys reflect the district's value of **culture** by uplifting Nisga'a ways of knowing, being, and doing, fostering a sense of responsibility, adaptability, and belonging among students and staff.



VALUES

We value our strong **connection** with the Gitwinksihlkw community, where local voices, culture, and traditions are honored and reflected in learning. This partnership helps students grow in identity and responsibility, deepening their understanding of their role in community life.

Learners and Community Context

Gitwinksihlkw is one of four Nisga’a villages located in the Nass River Valley . With a population of approximately 200, the community is shaped by its volcanic landscape and rich cultural heritage, the community is deeply connected to the land and its traditions.

Gitwinksihlkw Elementary School serves 22 students in a small, supportive learning environment. The school is staffed by two classroom teachers, two education assistants, shared district specialists, and school leadership. Students learn in multi-age groupings, with Kindergarten to Grade 3 and Grades 4 to 7 combined. This structure encourages collaboration, peer mentorship, and strong relationships across grade levels.

Learners participate weekly in Nisga’a Language and Culture classes and engage in both classroom-based and land-based learning experiences. The school promotes student well-being through a daily breakfast program and a focus on social-emotional development.

As a central part of the Gitwinksihlkw community, the school fosters learning that values cultural identity, community connection, and holistic growth alongside academic achievement.

What We Know

Strengths and Accomplishments



Learners at Gitwinksihlkw Elementary demonstrated growth and achievement across academic, cultural, and creative domains. Through targeted literacy instruction and ongoing assessment, every student advanced in their reading and writing skills. Their musical talents shone in seasonal performances featuring brass, piano, strings, and choir. With guidance from Elders, students deepened their cultural knowledge through land-based learning by harvesting Indian tea, weaving cedar, and exploring traditional practices. They proudly hosted a Learning Feast, celebrating community and ancestral wisdom. Throughout the year, students strengthened their identity through Nisga’a Language and Culture classes and participated in vibrant cultural events like Hoobiye and Cultural Sharing Days. In partnership with Spirit North, learners built confidence and teamwork through year-round outdoor sports, showcasing their resilience and joy in learning.

Challenges To Overcome



While students at Gitwinksihlkw Elementary show strong cultural engagement and growing pride in their identity, some continue to face challenges in meeting grade-level expectations in literacy and numeracy. Targeted support is needed to strengthen foundational skills and sustain academic progress. The school is working to expand its network of supports to better address the diverse academic, social, and emotional needs of learners. There is also a continued commitment to deepen opportunities for land-based learning and cultural engagement. Overcoming these challenges will require ongoing collaboration with families, Elders, and district partners to ensure every learner thrives; academically, socially, and culturally.

With Purpose & Intention

Leading For Learning

Leadership begins with clarity of purpose. By aligning school-level planning with the district's strategic vision, leaders ensure that every decision, initiative, and learning experience is rooted in shared values and community commitments. This coherence strengthens trust, empowers staff, and keeps learners at the heart of every action.

Planning For Impact

School impact plans are not simply accountability or operational tools, they are roadmaps for transformation. When grounded in the district's strategic priorities, these plans become vehicles for equity, cultural integrity, and learner success. They help schools move from intention to measurable outcomes, ensuring that efforts are focused, inclusive, and responsive to local context.

Building A Culture Of Learning

Strategic alignment fosters a culture where learning is continuous for learners, educators, and leaders. It encourages reflection, collaboration, and innovation, while honoring the wisdom of the Nisga'a Peoples. By leading for learning and planning for impact, school teams contribute to a district-wide movement that grows every learner in mind, heart, body, and spirit.



Learning Priority One

Goal Culture and Language

To intentionally embed Nisga'a language, stories, and cultural practices into daily instruction across all subject areas, fostering identity, belonging, and holistic development for every learner.

Rationale

Embedding Nisga'a language and culture into everyday learning affirms student identity, strengthens community connection, and supports academic and social-emotional success. This work reflects the district's commitment to equity, and culturally grounded education.

Target

By June 2026, all classrooms will demonstrate consistent integration of Nisga'a language and cultural practices through weekly instructional activities, visual displays, and community-led learning experiences.

Measuring Our Success

- **Instructional Planning:** Teacher planning documents and reflections show weekly integration of Nisga'a language and culture.
- **Learning Environments:** Classroom environments include Nisga'a language in visuals, routines, and student work.
- **Student Voice:** Student surveys and reflections indicate increased cultural pride, engagement, and understanding.
- **Instructional Practice:** Evidence of co-teaching or collaboration with Elders and Knowledge Keepers in classroom activities.

Key Strategies & Actions



Professional Learning

Provide ongoing workshops and mentorship with fluent speakers and cultural knowledge holders to support staff confidence in integrating daily Nisga'a language into all areas of the curriculum.



Land Based Learning & Curriculum Development

Co-develop experiences with Elders that embed Nisga'a cultural teachings into outdoor, seasonal, and place-based learning.



Community Engagement

Host seasonal cultural events and family learning nights to strengthen school-community connections. Strengthen ongoing relationships with community mentors to co-lead language, song, dance, and traditional practices in classrooms.



Student Leadership

Empower students to lead cultural activities, language sharing, and storytelling within the school.



Learning Priority Two

Goal Empowered and Inspired Learners

To improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy by implementing evidence-based instructional practices, culturally responsive teaching, and targeted supports and ensure all learners experience growth, confidence, and engagement in their learning.

Rationale

Literacy and numeracy are the foundation of academic success and lifelong learning. When students feel culturally affirmed, supported, and inspired, they are more engaged and motivated to meet these foundational outcomes. Building strong skills in reading, writing, and mathematics prepares learners to explore future opportunities with confidence.

Targets

- **By June 2026**, 75% of students in Grades 4–7 will be *Meeting Expectations* or *On Track* in literacy and numeracy on the Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA).
- **By June 2026**, 90% of students in Grades K–7 will demonstrate measurable growth in literacy and numeracy, as assessed through Fountas & Pinnell, Joyful Literacy, and SNAP tools.
- **By November 2025**, all Grade 4 and Grade 7 students will complete the FSA with confidence, supported by targeted instruction and practice aligned to assessment expectations.
- **By June 2026**, 90% of students in Grades K–7 will show measurable improvement in classroom-based literacy and numeracy assessments, reflecting growth in foundational skills.

Measuring Our Success

- **Assessment Data:** Student progress in literacy and numeracy will be tracked using FSA results, Fountas & Pinnell benchmarks, Joyful Literacy tracking sheets, and SNAP assessments.
- **Instructional Planning:** Teacher long-range plans and unit designs will reflect culturally responsive and inclusive practices, integrating Nisga’a content and land-based learning.
- **Instructional Practice:** Monthly staff meeting strategies (October 2025–June 2026) will be visibly implemented in classroom instruction, with evidence collected through walkthroughs, peer observations, and planning artifacts.
- **Student Voice:** Student surveys will show increased confidence, engagement, and enjoyment in literacy and numeracy learning, with results informing ongoing instructional adjustments.

Key Strategies & Actions



Targeted Support & Direct Instruction

Provide small-group and one-on-one interventions using culturally relevant texts and hands-on numeracy strategies. Strengthen core literacy and numeracy teaching through explicit, systematic instruction tailored to student needs.



Intentional Use of Technology

Use digital tools purposefully to enhance instruction, practice foundational skills, and provide individualized learning opportunities.



Culturally Responsive Curriculum

Integrate Nisga’a stories, oral traditions, and examples from the land to strengthen identity and engagement in literacy and numeracy learning.



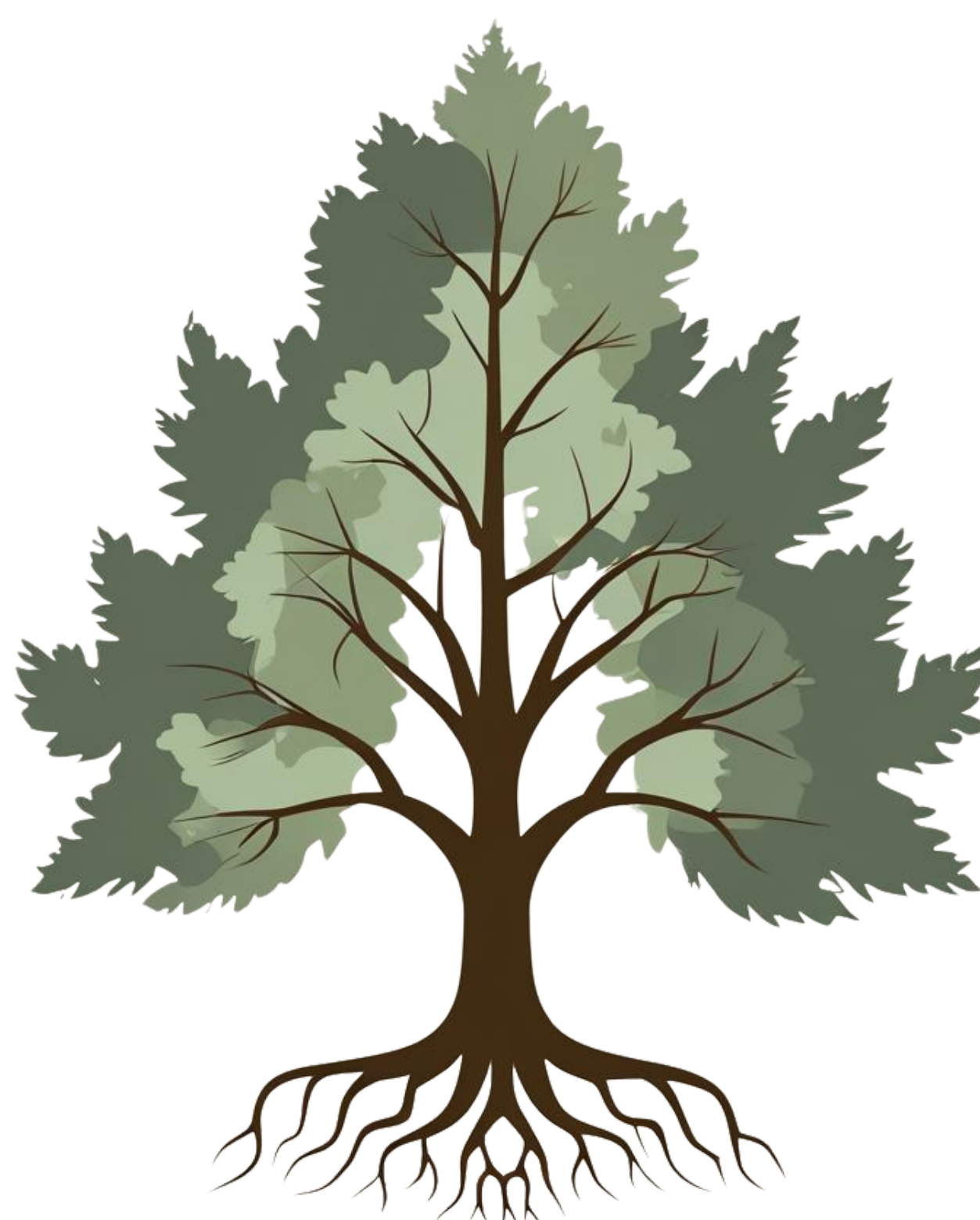


Summary

This Learning Impact Plan reflects Gitwinksihlkw Elementary's commitment to nurturing confident, capable learners who are deeply connected to their culture, community, and identity. Guided by the vision and values of our school and rooted in the strategic direction of Nisg a'a School District, we are focused on embedding Nisg a'a language and culture across learning, strengthening literacy and numeracy foundations, and fostering well-being and belonging for every child.

Our priorities emphasize both academic success and cultural identity, recognizing that learners thrive when they are affirmed, challenged, and supported. Through direct instruction, intentional use of technology, and land-based cultural learning, we are equipping students with the skills, confidence, and pride needed for future opportunities.

This plan is aligned with district strategic priorities, ensuring coherence between school goals and system transformation. By drawing on the strengths of Elders, families, and community partners, and by investing in responsive, inclusive teaching practices, Gitwinksihlkw Elementary is building a sustainable foundation for growth. Guided by Sayt K'ilim Goot, we believe every learner is capable, valued, and deserving of success—academically, socially, and culturally.



Rooted in Culture.
Grounded In Community.
Growing Every Learner.