

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake)

School Learning Plan 2024-2025

District Context

Mission: *We inspire and support each learner to thrive in a caring learning environment.*

Vision: *Our learners grow as global citizens in an innovative and inclusive community.*

Values: *Our values help shape the culture of our schools and workplaces. By upholding these beliefs and attitudes, we can build learning communities that will lead to the fulfilment of our mission.*

Date: May 30, 2025

School: Mount Sentinel Elementary Secondary School

**** In progress. Finalized by June 30, 2025**

Vision

Our vision for learning is to create a school culture where every student feels valued, connected, and supported. We nurture thoughtful, community-minded individuals who grow through inclusive, innovative practices and contribute meaningfully to the world around them.

School Profile

Mount Sentinel is located at the southern end of the valley and the beautiful Slocan River. With a projected enrolment of 285 students from grade 7 to 12 at Mt. Sentinel and 15 students grade 10 – 12 at Sequoia, in 2025 - 26. The catchment area of the school extends for 65 kilometers along Highway 6 from South Slocan, north, to the village of Slocan. Mt. Sentinel is considered the graduating school for students who may transition from one of our three family of schools. The majority of our learners transition from elementary school in Grade 6 to start high school in our Middle Years Program. Another important transition time for students in the is when they leave W.E. Grahm at the end of their Grade 8 year or the Valhalla Wilderness program at the end of Grade 10.

We also welcome students from the Nelson to Castlegar corridor and students who live outside of our District catchment from the communities of the Playmor Junction, Pass Creek, Shoreacres, Glade, and Thrums. The registration of these students provides a new opportunity for families who are looking for a school that provides a welcoming, student centered learning environment that is closer to home than their own District catchment school.

We are in year four of our redesigned Middle Years Program recognizing the importance of supporting our youngest learners transitioning from elementary school to a high school setting. Our program redesign had many celebrations in year one, experienced some shifting sands with significant staffing changes in year two and three, and we are at that time of year that we are reflecting on our learning to continue building the program around the needs of our students.

As a small rural high school, we creatively offer a full grad program and with specialty programs of choice like our Film Academy, Sequoia Alternate Program, and a new mini-academy style course – ORCA, where outdoor education meets the culinary arts. At Mt. Sentinel we strive to "Give our Best" in all that we do. We are proud of our learners, our staff and the community that we create at Mt. Sentinel. We have much to celebrate, we have focus areas for growth and we are excited to focus on our next steps as we continue to work on our school learning plan.

Consultation Process

Staff

The learning and work of the school plan is embedded in our shared professional learning and time in our monthly staff meetings. Teachers who hold positions on the Leadership Team (Positions of Special Responsibility) work collaboratively with the school Principal and Vice Principal to lead this learning and work. The staff engage in

Students

Students are actively included in our school planning process. They provide valuable feedback via ministry and school-developed surveys, ensuring their voices are heard in decision-making. Student trustees, student council, and our student voice group play pivotal roles in offering leadership and mentorship. These groups support initiatives and activities that align with our school goals and district vision and mission. Their involvement ensures that student perspectives are integral to our planning and implementation processes. By engaging students in this way, we foster a collaborative and inclusive school environment and culture.

Parents

Parents are actively included in our school planning process through several key opportunities. They provide feedback via ministry and school-developed surveys, ensuring their perspectives are considered in decision-making. At our monthly Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings, the Principal presents a report that includes updates on learning initiatives aligned with the district's

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strategic priorities. This report helps parents understand the five district priorities and how our school-specific goals align with the district's strategic plan. By keeping parents informed and involved, we ensure transparency and foster a collaborative environment. This ongoing engagement helps us better support our students' educational experiences.

Indigenous Representation

Indigenous representation is a vital part of our school planning process, with our Indigenous Academic Success Teacher playing a key role as a staff member. They provide leadership in Indigenizing our curriculum, ensuring it includes Indigenous perspectives and knowledge. Working alongside classroom teachers, they support Indigenous learners in meeting their academic goals. They also help us track data and monitor student success, ensuring targeted support where needed. Additionally, they align our efforts with district goals for Indigenous learners and education. Our next step involves inviting Indigenous stakeholders from our community to help us answer crucial questions: What's going on for our learners? How do we know? Why does this matter? This collaboration will further enrich our understanding and support of Indigenous students.

Coherence and Alignment

Ministry of Education Policy for Student Success
School District No.8 Framework for Enhancing Student Learning
BC Tripartite Education Agreement

Literacy	
Goal Statement	Improve literacy proficiency for all learners.
Where We Are At	
Literacy Data (Include provincial, district, and school level data as available). Please ensure priority learners are included as a focus.	
Analysis (What objective trends do we see based on the data?). Ensure priority learners are included as a focus.	
We've observed significant year-over-year growth in our students' literacy skills. In 2023-24 in both Literacy 12 and Literacy 10 the majority of our learners are demonstrating proficiency with 96% and 95% of our students demonstrating proficiency or developing in Literacy 12 and Literacy 10 respectively.	
Please include evidence of a focus on priority learners.	
Rationale (What is going on for our learners? How do we know? Why does it matter?). Please ensure priority learners are included as a focus.	
Continuous tracking and assessment have allowed us to identify areas of improvement and success. This growth demonstrates the effectiveness of our focused literacy initiatives and the hard work of our students and educators. This year, we introduced several new initiatives to further enhance our literacy program:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-over-Year Tracking Sheet: This tool helps us systematically track student progress over time. • Assessment administration Strategies : We implemented new strategies for administering assessments to improve reliability and validity. • Response Exemplars Pre-Assessment: Providing students with examples of high-quality responses before the assessment to set clear expectations. 	

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- Student Feedback Form after Assessment: Collecting student feedback post-assessment to gain insights into their experiences and areas for improvement.

Our literacy snapshot data collection has evolved significantly over the past five years. We remain committed to preparing our students for success through targeted literacy initiatives and continuous improvement.

Target (Specific and measurable statement of the desired improvement).

By the end of the academic year, 95% of students in Grade 7 to 12 will achieve proficiency or developing as measured by the combined school developed literacy assessment tool and the graduation and FSA assessment data. This target will be assessed using the updated year-over-year tracking sheet and will include the successful implementation of our new assessment administration strategies, response exemplars pre-assessment, and student feedback form post-assessment.

What We're Doing

Embedding Strategic Priorities (How we're making connections and providing opportunities)

At Mt. Sentinel we have had a multi-year literacy focus. This is year 5 of our commitment to working with our school developed assessment tool that now includes an opportunity for student self-reflection and feedback about their learning.

Our initial focus was on preparing students for the Grade 10 and 12 Provincial Literacy Assessments. We aimed to build skills in visual communication, particularly in decoding and constructing infographics. This foundation is crucial for helping students navigate and interpret complex visual data, a key skill for both the literacy and numeracy provincial assessments. As we progressed, we expanded our focus to include several key areas:

- Reading Comprehension: Enhancing students' ability to understand and interpret written text.
- Writing Structure: Teaching students how to organize their writing effectively.
- Use of Evidence: Encouraging students to support their arguments and ideas with appropriate evidence.

These expanded focus areas aim to build a more comprehensive literacy skill set.

Where We Are Going (Equity-Focused Action Plan)

Professional Learning (Describe the professional learning that will support meeting the target)

Continued work with staff to utilize exemplars of proficiency levels in all curricular areas. We are striving to develop assessment rubrics that can be used to assess literacy across the curriculum.

Student Learning (What student learning strategies will support meeting the target?)

- Direct teaching of how to answer written responses questions that demonstrate their understanding of the text or multiple texts
- Use of posters in all classrooms to have visual cues to help develop skills
- Provide exemplars to enable students to understand success criteria

Theory of Action (What is our hypothesis given the action plan for staff and student learning?)

With a school wide, cross curricular focus on literacy and related self-reflection, students will demonstrate increased proficiency on the related assessments.

Numeracy

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Goal Statement

Improve numeracy proficiency for all learners.

Where We Are At

Numeracy Data (Include provincial, district, and school level data as available). Please ensure priority learners are included as a focus.

Numeracy 10	2020 - 2021				
n = 56	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending	
total	16	35	4	1	
%	29%	63%	7%	2%	

Numeracy 10	2021 - 2022				
n = 46	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending	NC
total	6	24	11	1	4
%	13%	52%	24%	2%	9%

Numeracy 10	2022 - 2023				
n = 41	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending	NC
total	6	22	9	3	1
%	15%	54%	22%	7%	2%

Is your literacy improving?

	Count	Percent	Valid Percent	
At No Time	3	6%	6%	-
Few Times	1	2%	2%	-
Sometimes	12	24%	25%	-
Many Times	18	36%	38%	-
All of the Time	11	22%	23%	-
Don't know	2	4%	4%	-
No Answer	3	6%	0%	-
Total	50	100%	94%	-

Is your numeracy improving?

	Count	Percent	Valid Percent	
At No Time	5	10%	10%	-
Few Times	8	16%	17%	-
Sometimes	14	28%	29%	-
Many Times	9	18%	19%	-
All of the Time	7	14%	14%	-
Don't know	4	8%	8%	-
No Answer	3	6%	0%	-
Total	50	100%	94%	-

We are working to develop an in-house Student Learning Survey to find out how our kids feel about math, and their past experiences with math. Students in Grade 7 to 10 will complete the survey at the beginning and end of year to gauge how our learners are evolving in their mindset towards math throughout the year. Our hunch is that as students gain confidence in themselves as learners, we will see an increase in their willingness to explore, make mistakes, ask questions, and this will in turn enable them to gain fluency in their numeracy skills.

Analysis (What objective trends do we see based on the data?). Please ensure priority learners are included as a focus.

We noticed in our student learning survey data a markable difference in our learners' beliefs about their learning in literacy compared to numeracy. Students in grade 7, 10 and 12 noted that they didn't

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believe their numeracy skills were improving to the same degree as their literacy skills were improving. Based on FSA and Numeracy assessment data and the street data generated from classroom based formative and summative assessments, students are generally less confident and proficient in their numeracy skills.

Please include evidence of a focus on priority learners.

Rationale (What is going on for our learners? How do we know? Why does it matter?)

The strategies we are seeking to target are primarily steered at increasing active engagement and shifting mindsets. The thought is that if we give students tasks that promote reasoning, communicating/representing, and connecting/reflecting skills they will see math as relevant and useful. Putting the focus on the process of learning allows students to make connections to life beyond math class in terms of why math class is relevant.

Target (Specific and measurable statement of the desired improvement)

Shifting attitudes and mindsets in students Math/Numeracy learning by exploring teaching routines that increase relevancy and engagement. A part of this involves finding joy in teaching and learning math and making connections and seeing math in the world outside the classroom. By working with other schools, we hope to build cohesion and coherence between the Middle/Secondary teachers of the Slocan Valley Family of Schools.

What We're Doing

Embedding Strategic Priorities (How we're making connections and providing opportunities)

By focusing on increasing engagement and shifting mindsets in math learning, Mt. Sentinel can contribute to the district's goals of preparing students for success in school, career, and life.

Lifelong Learners:

- Shifting attitudes and mindsets in students' math learning by exploring teaching routines that increase relevancy and engagement promotes a growth mindset and a love for learning, essential qualities of lifelong learners.
- By encouraging students to find joy in teaching and learning math and making connections to the world outside the classroom, the plan fosters a lifelong appreciation for mathematics and a curiosity to explore its applications in various contexts.

Connected Learners:

- Collaborating with other schools to build cohesion and coherence between middle/secondary teachers within the Slocan Valley Family of Schools fosters a sense of connection and shared purpose among educators, creating a supportive network for professional growth and student success.
- By promoting dialogue, communication, and reasoning through instructional routines like problem-based learning and number talks, the plan encourages collaboration and shared learning experiences among students, further strengthening connections within the learning community.

Caring and Inclusive Learning Culture:

- Focusing on increasing engagement and shifting mindsets in math learning demonstrates a commitment to creating a caring and inclusive learning culture where all students feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.
- By addressing students' beliefs about their numeracy skills and providing opportunities for them to develop confidence and proficiency in mathematics, the plan promotes equity and inclusivity in education, ensuring that all students have access to high-quality learning experiences.

Culture and Identity Development:

- Encouraging students to see math in the world outside the classroom and making connections to their daily lives promotes cultural awareness and identity development, allowing students to recognize the relevance and importance of mathematics in various cultural contexts.
- By fostering a positive attitude towards math and promoting a growth mindset, the plan supports students' cultural identity development by empowering them to see themselves as capable learners and contributors to their communities.

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Career Development:

- Developing students' numeracy skills and promoting critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving abilities through math learning prepares them for future career pathways and success in a rapidly changing world.
- By focusing on teaching routines that increase relevancy and engagement in math learning, the plan equips students with essential skills and competencies that are in high demand in the workforce, ensuring their readiness for future career opportunities.

Where We Are Going (Equity-Focused Action Plan)

Professional Learning (Describe the professional learning that will support meeting the target)

Instructional Routines: Learn about, and collaborate on how to implement instructional routines that foster dialogue/communication, reasoning, explaining and seeing different strategies. Examples of this are problem-based learning, number talks/strings.

Math Fairs: Learn about, and how to implement a project-based activity in a math classroom (Math Fair), with the purpose of attempting to pilot a math fair in our schools near the end of the school year this year.

Trying to develop more fluency in running more active, and exploratory approaches to learning will hopefully help us to utilize these strategies with increased efficacy. There are a lot of benefits to engaging students in a variety of different types of learning in math, but increasing the level of group work, autonomy in students and therefore complexity creates new challenges in the classroom that need to be attended to carefully. We all feel that we will benefit from doing more of this learning in a professional development context.

Student Learning (What student learning strategies will support meeting the target?)

Problem-Based Learning (PBL): Encourage students to engage in problem-solving activities that require critical thinking, reasoning, and application of math concepts to real-world scenarios. PBL tasks should be designed to promote active engagement and foster a deeper understanding of math concepts by encouraging students to explore multiple solution pathways and communicate their reasoning. **Collaborative Group Work:** Assign students to small groups to work on math tasks collaboratively. This strategy promotes communication and teamwork while allowing students to learn from one another and share different problem-solving strategies. Collaborative group work also fosters a sense of community and support among students, which can positively impact their attitudes towards math learning.

Real-World Connections: Integrate real-world examples and applications of math concepts into instruction to help students see the relevance and importance of math in everyday life. Encourage students to explore how math is used in various fields such as science, engineering, finance, and technology. This approach helps students develop a deeper appreciation for math and enhances their motivation to learn.

Hands-On Activities: Incorporate hands-on activities and manipulatives to make math learning more tangible and interactive. Hands-on experiences help students visualize abstract math concepts and deepen their understanding through kinesthetic learning. By engaging students in hands-on activities, teachers can promote active learning and create memorable learning experiences that enhance student engagement and enthusiasm for math. (Eg Math Learning Fair)

Metacognitive Strategies: Teach students metacognitive strategies such as goal setting, self-monitoring, and reflection to help them develop a growth mindset and take ownership of their learning. Encourage students to set specific learning goals, monitor their progress, and reflect on their learning experiences. By fostering metacognitive skills, teachers can empower students to become active and independent learners who are motivated to continually improve their math skills.

Theory of Action (What is our hypothesis given the action plan for staff and student learning?)

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If Mt. Sentinel implements targeted teaching strategies aimed at increasing active engagement and shifting mindsets in math learning, including tasks that promote reasoning, communication, and relevance, and collaborate with other schools to build cohesion and coherence in math instruction, then students' attitudes and beliefs about their numeracy skills will improve, leading to increased confidence, proficiency, and engagement in math learning.

School Determined

Goal Statement

To foster a supportive and mentally healthy school environment by reducing student stress and anxiety through targeted mental health education, increased access to coping strategies, and strengthened communication between students, staff, and families. By June 2026, the school aims to increase the percentage of students who report feeling equipped to manage stress and therefore decreasing absenteeism due to anxiety by 25% through the implementation of targeted mental health supports, and proactive, trauma-informed teaching strategies across all grade levels

Where We Are At

Data (Include provincial, district, and school level data as available). Include priority learners.

Student Surveys Reviewed: MDI and Student Learning Survey Grade 7, 10, 11, 12

The Student Learning Survey asked students: *"Does school make you feel stressed or anxious?"*

Grade 7:

- 26% of students responded "Most of the Time" (7%) or "All of the Time" (19%). 30% responded "Sometimes"

Grade 10:

- More than half (52%) of the Grade 10 students surveyed responded either "Most of the Time" (21%) or "All of the Time" (31%).
- A further 21% reported feeling this way "Sometimes".

Grade 11:

- A significant portion (38%) of Grade 11 students responded "Most of the Time" (14%) or "All of the Time" (24%), based on the categories listed in the source.

The Student Learning Survey asked students: *"When I am stressed, there are things I can do to feel better."*

Grade 7: 76% ("Sometimes" 24%, "Most of the Time" 26%, "All of the Time" 26%)

Grade 10: 70% responded "Sometimes" (36%), "Most of the Time" (21%), or "All of the Time" (13%)

Grade 11: 82% ("Sometimes" 31%, "Most of the Time" 34%, "All of the Time" 17%)

Grade 12: 89% ("Sometimes" 32%, "Most of the Time" 38%, "All of the Time" 19%)

Perceptions of learning mental health skills vary by grade.

Grade 7: 33% agreed or strongly agreed.

Grade 10: 33% agreed or strongly agreed that they are learning how to care for their mental health.

Grade 11: 30% agreed or strongly agreed.

Grade 12: 38% agreed or strongly agreed.

MDI Report (Grade 7):

- Highlights that "Absence of Worries" measures the beginning symptoms of anxiety. At Mount Sentinel Secondary, 41% of Grade 7 students are in the Low category for "Absence of Worries," meaning they report worrying a lot.
- The report also notes that awareness of climate change can cause mental health impacts such as feeling worried and powerless.

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Overall, the Grade 7 MDI data shows that 53% of students are in the Low Well-being category, which includes measures related to social and emotional development and physical health. This suggests that many students are struggling with their overall mental and physical health, which could be linked to anxiety.

Parent Survey:

- When parents were asked "Does school make your child feel stressed or anxious?", 50% responded "Yes".
- Regarding learning about mental health care, only 26% of parents reported that their child is learning how to care for their mental health (anxiety or stress management, etc.), while 36% said "No" and 36% said "Don't know".

Analysis (What objective trends do we see based on the data?). Include priority learners.

The data from both student and parent surveys, as well as the Grade 7 MDI report, consistently indicate that a significant percentage of students at Mount Sentinel Secondary experience stress or anxiety related to school. Specifically:

- Student self-reports show a substantial portion, ranging from 26% (G7) to 52% (G10) of students reporting feeling stressed or anxious due to school most or all of the time.
- The G7 MDI shows 41% of students report worrying a lot.
- Parents report that 50% of their children feel stressed or anxious due to school.
- Student and parent perceptions of whether the school teaches skills for caring for mental health are mixed.

While many students feel they can cope, the high percentage reporting stress/anxiety indicates a significant issue. Significant percentages across grades disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed with learning mental health care skills.

Please include evidence of a focus on priority learners.

The student surveys for Grades 7, 10, 11, 12, and 7 all ask students if they are of Indigenous ancestry. Parents were also asked this question, with 12% reporting the child they were answering about identifies as Indigenous. This identifies Indigenous students as a significant part of the school population across these grades.

The Grade 7 MDI report highlights that for children, connectedness to land, language, and culture can play an important role in encouraging a strong and healthy sense of identity. Given that a significant percentage of students across multiple grades report feeling stressed or anxious due to school, supporting a strong identity and connectedness for Indigenous students could be seen as a way to promote their overall well-being, which might indirectly help mitigate anxiety.

Rationale (What is going on for our learners? How do we know? Why does it matter?)

What is going on for our learners?

- Students experiencing anxiety are missing school, falling behind academically, and becoming increasingly disconnected from peers and adults.

How do we know?

- Attendance tracking, staff anecdotal reports, parent input, and student self-report data all identify anxiety as a barrier to engagement.

Why does it matter?

- Regular attendance is essential to student success. Chronic absenteeism driven by anxiety has long-term academic, social, and emotional impacts. By intervening early and comprehensively, we can support wellness and create school as a safe, predictable space.

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Target (Specific and measurable statement of the desired improvement)
Reduce chronic absenteeism (20+ days) linked to anxiety by 25% by June 2026 as measured by attendance records, school-based team referrals, and student self-report data.
What We're Doing
Embedding Strategic Priorities (How we're making connections and providing opportunities)
<p>Lifelong Learners: Providing mental health literacy to help students understand and manage anxiety supports self-awareness and resilience.</p> <p>Connected Learners: Emphasizing strong student-teacher relationships and mentorship fosters belonging and trust.</p> <p>Caring & Inclusive Culture: Creating calmer, predictable environments support students who experience anxiety.</p> <p>Culture & Identity: Acknowledging and validating diverse student experiences of anxiety strengthens identity safety.</p> <p>Career Development: Regular attendance improves students' readiness for post-secondary learning and work.</p>
Where We Are Going (Equity-Focused Action Plan)
Professional Learning (Describe the professional learning that will support meeting the target)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-staff training on trauma-informed practices and recognizing anxiety in school-aged youth. Specific sessions on anxiety-sensitive instruction and classroom regulation strategies. Continued collaboration with district and community mental health professionals to build staff confidence in supporting students with anxiety.
Student Learning (What student learning strategies will support meeting the target?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of consistent routines and visual schedules in classrooms. Expansion of accessible wellness spaces (e.g., calm spaces, sensory-friendly rooms). Small group sessions on coping strategies, test anxiety, and managing transitions. Peer-led wellness projects and student voice sessions around stressors at school.
Theory of Action (What is our hypothesis given the action plan for staff and student learning?)
If Mt. Sentinel staff engage in trauma-informed professional learning and implement consistent, anxiety-reducing strategies while providing proactive support through a tiered model, then students will feel safer, more supported, and more capable of attending school consistently, resulting in improved attendance and engagement.