



Fernie Secondary School (FSS)

Growth Plan 2023-2026



We see our school growth plan as a 3-year living document that will be updated and revised as we progress in our learning and implementation stages and consider emerging priorities.

Where We Are

This year Fernie Secondary School (FSS) staff are excited to continue the Restorative Practice work that was an identified priority and goal in our 2023-26 growth plan. Additionally, FSS staff have identified a new academic priority, literacy, and are set to embark on the first year with a goal focused on this priority.

Staff felt like our previous numeracy goal was no longer a priority and collectively decided to turn our focus to literacy. Specifically, staff wanted to give our students assistive technology strategies that will help them break through the learning barriers and increase their success in literacy. Assistive technology tools cater to individual needs thereby supporting diverse learning styles and abilities. It provides all learners equitable access to education materials leading to improved engagement and academic performance.

The human and social development goal stemmed from a school planning session that was facilitated by District Vice Principal, Jaslene Atwal in June 2023. During this session staff collectively identified *goals, dreams, and magic*. One overarching theme that stemmed from this session was the need for a more consistent and effective approach to student discipline. Specifically, chronic student absenteeism was identified as a major concern. Staff agreed that they wanted to learn more about and implement restorative practices to shape a new approach to student discipline. Our restorative practice goal aligns with the trauma informed approach of Reframing Behaviour; this is training that all FSS staff will be receiving.

School Context

- Fernie Secondary School has a student population of approximately 541 students and is the only public secondary school in the town of Fernie.
- Grades 11 & 12 students from Jaffray Elementary Junior Secondary school typically come to FSS for grades 11 & 12.
- We have an increasing demand for out of catchment students (from Jaffray, Sparwood, & Elkford) to attend our school.
- Of the 541 students in our school, 83 have Indigenous ancestry, 11 are English language learners, and 93 have an Individual Education Plan and receive supports through our Learning Services department.
- Our school continues to grow in population every year.
- FSS offers a French Immersion program for students in Grades 7-12. Currently 159 students are in our French Immersion program.
- The classes at FSS have students with a variety of academic, social-emotional and behaviour supports/needs.

Our Strengths and Challenges

- Our students and staff value inclusion and want to grow a stronger sense of community empowering all stakeholders: students, staff, parents and community partners.
- Many students are involved in extra-curricular activities such as drama club, glee club, jazz club, rainbow club, student council, and a variety of school sports (volleyball, soccer, basketball, swimming, badminton, running, golf).
- Our school has an active breakfast program that serves breakfast and snacks to students in need.
- Supports to our students are available from 2 Administrators, 33 Teachers, 3 Student Services Teachers, 1.25 fulltime Counsellors (filled by 2 staff), 1 Indigenous Education Support Worker, 7 Education Assistants, 2 Youth Care Workers, 2 School Stenographers, 1 Cooks Assistant and 4 Custodians
- Staff want to evaluate our approach to behavioral issues to ensure it aligns with creating safe and connected environments.
- We continue to add to our technology resources (iPads, interactive boards, student laptops) to accommodate the integration of technology in our classrooms.
- Students and staff see technology as tool in education.
- We are concerned with the outcome of unsafe behaviours and use of impolite/disrespectful language during instructional and non-instructional times (lunch, before and after school).
- Some students struggle with peaceful conflict resolution and impulse control.
- Students are working on taking responsibility: for their belongings, actions, and their learning.
- Some students struggle with keeping a positive attitude toward learning, staying calm, alert, and focused during lessons.
- Growing anxiety is seen among some students.
- Bullying behaviours exist in our school.

Engagement Process

- As a staff we will focus on our School Growth Plan goals during staff meetings, department head meetings, teacher release time and collaboration opportunities, at School Based Team meetings and during Pro-D opportunities.
 - Use of TEAMS to share files.
- Collaborative and professional conversations that occur daily in our staffroom and among staff and during staff-initiated planning meetings also provide invaluable communication and sharing opportunities.
- Our School Growth Plan is shared with our parents and community via a range of means and media (PAC meetings, school website, monthly newsletters, and open houses).
- We will organize workshops and events to engage parents and the local community in restorative practices and assistive technology use in education.
- We will strive to develop partnerships with Indigenous organizations and community leaders for guidance and support.
- Students will be engaged through the leadership of the student council.

GOAL #1- Literacy: To improve our students' literacy skills by fostering their assistive technology skills. If we improve our students' access and competence with assistive technology, then we will see an improvement in our students' confidence and capacity in Literacy. Students will improve their opportunities for success in all classes.

Strategies:

- Provide direct instruction to students on the use of assistive technology including:
 - C-Pen (real aloud pen stored in APEX room for use)
 - Microsoft Word speech- text and text-speech
 - [Diffit](#) (AI for modifying learning materials)
 - [Kurzweil 3000](#) (offers learners multisensory approaches to read, comprehend, synthesize, apply, and demonstrate their knowledge)
 - Microsoft Edge read-aloud a webpage feature
 - Google Translate
- Provide staff with training in assistive technology use in the classroom.
 - Learning Services teachers presented to FSS teachers on the Sept 25th Professional Development Day.
- Provide equitable access to assistive technology to support learning in all classrooms.
 - Classroom assigned laptops and/or iPads
 - Purchase more student laptops for student use in support areas such as the APEX classroom, in support classes, in the Indigenous Education Room and Youth Care.
 - In 2023-24 we used the Student and Family Affordability fund to purchase 4 student laptops that can be signed up by students who do not have access to one at home.
- Promote responsible student use of technology for learning and digital citizenship.

Student Performance and Data Analysis

- We expect to see improved results in the Literacy 10 and 12 Grad Assessments during successive years.
- We expect to see an improvement in school level report card marks in English Language Arts courses and in all courses in general.

Goal # 2- Human and Social Development: To implement restorative practices that are culturally responsive and tailored to the needs of Indigenous students, diverse learners, students at risk and children and youth in care. The measurable outcome of achieving this goal is a reduction in office referrals, disciplinary actions, and suspensions. The anticipated intangible result is a more positive and inclusive school culture with improved student behaviours. With restorative justice, students will learn about the impact of their actions, reflect upon their membership in the FSS community and learn how to take responsibility and repair the harm that was caused.

Strategies

- We will continue with our Restorative Justice Training. Last year teaching and support staff participated in two professional development sessions facilitated by Doug and Debbie McPhee of the [Cranbrook and District Restorative Justice Society](#)
- Provide staff with trauma informed training thru the Reframing Behaviour by the [Crisis Prevention Institute](#).
- Create a staff committee to plan and implement professional development around restorative justice practices.
- Incorporate culturally sensitive and awareness training into professional development.
- Create restorative spaces within the school for dialogue and conflict resolution.
- Implement mentorship programs for at-risk students.
- Look for ways to support 2SLGTBQ students who struggle at FSS.
- Collaborate with community organizations to provide additional resources for students.
 - In September the Rock-Solid program was provided to all grade 7 students. This event was facilitated by counselling staff from the East Kootenay Addiction Services, Child and Youth Mental Health and the Columbia Basin Family Resource Society
- Develop and implement an attendance policy that is based on restorative justice principles.
- Collect Data from the Youth Development Instrument to inform our growth plan.

Student Outcomes, Data Analysis

As we are in our second year with a focus on restorative practice, we expect to see a decrease in the frequency of office referrals for behaviours and of student conduct reports. We will continue to track these. (see appendix A).

The Middle Years Development Instrument provides us with valuable information on how our Grade 8's self-report about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in school. There are areas of the assessment that we would expect to see improvement in because of successfully implementing a restorative justice approach to school discipline. These areas are School Climate, Responsible Decision Making, Self-Awareness, Empathy, and Victimization and School Bullying (see appendix B)

Appendix A

DATA from Office Referrals/Student Conduct Reports

We plan to use our 2022-23 and 2023-24 date as baseline data. 2023-24 was our first-year learning about restorative practice, we expect the impact of our learning and implementation to reflect in the date collected in the following years.

Type of Referral	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Substance Use	6	3	
Physical Aggression	7	20	
Technology Misuse	2	8	
Defiance	7	8	
Offensive Language	7	28	
Weapon		0	
Truancy	8	4	
Bullying	2	11	
Vandalism		1	
Admin Concern	15	12	
TOTAL	54	95	

Appendix B:

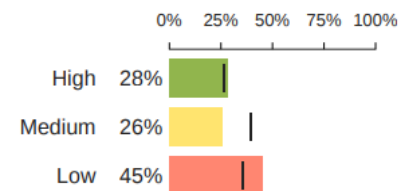
DATA from the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) 2022/2023, 2023/24

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2022-23

SCHOOL CLIMATE

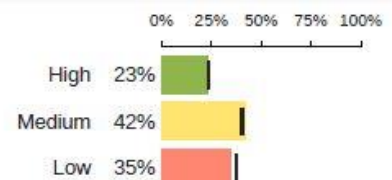
The overall tone of the school environment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other. e.g., "People care about each other in this school."



2023-24

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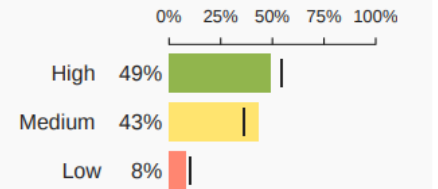


We see a trend in a greater percentage of students in 2023-24 (%65) who report a medium or high rating for school climate than we saw in 2022-23 (%54).

2022-23

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

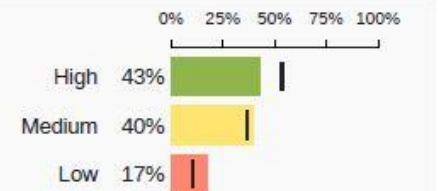
Responsible decision-making is about understanding the consequences of one's actions and making good choices about personal behaviour. e.g., "When I make a decision, I think about what might happen afterward."



2023-24

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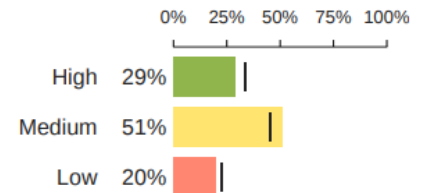


We need to ask why we see a decrease in responsible decision making.

2022-23

SELF-AWARENESS

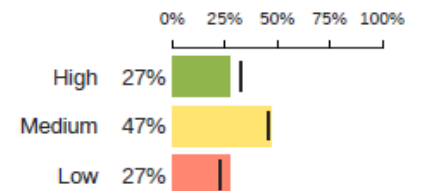
Self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's emotions and thoughts while understanding their influence on behaviour. e.g., "When I'm upset, I notice how I am feeling before I take action."



2023-24

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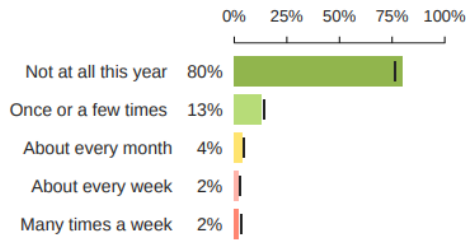
Less students reported medium or high levels of self awareness in 2023-24 than in 2022-23

2022-23

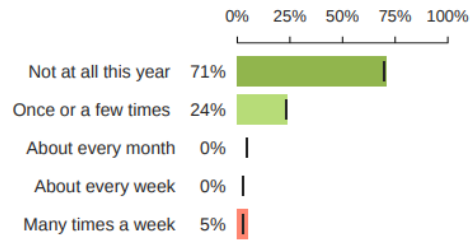
VICTIMIZATION AND BULLYING AT SCHOOL

Children are asked: "During this school year, how often have you been bullied by other students in the following ways?":

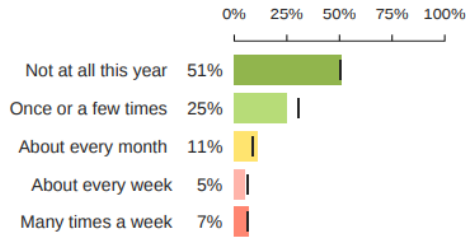
CYBER



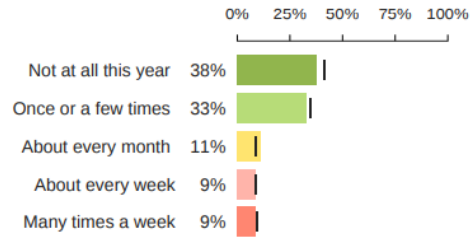
PHYSICAL



SOCIAL



VERBAL

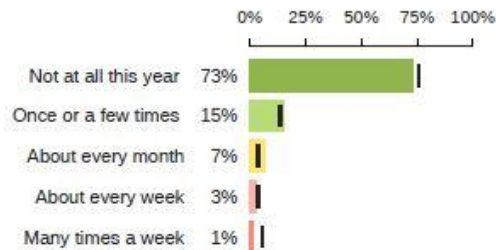


2023-24

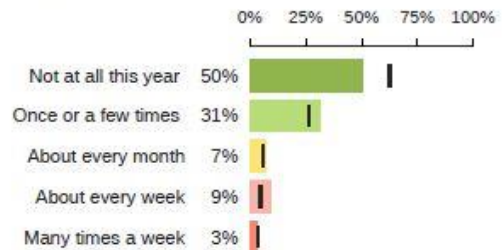
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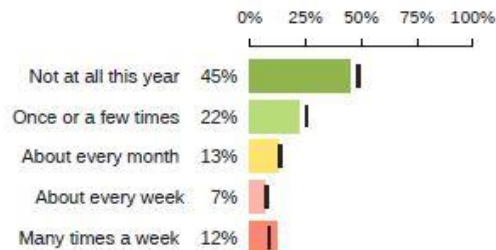
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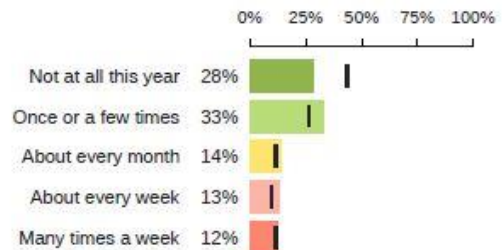
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