



# Framework for Enhancing Student Learning School Plan



Alex Aitken Elementary  
2021-2022

## Our Story

Alex Aitken Elementary is located on the traditional lands of the Quw'utsun people in a tranquil rural setting within the Cowichan Valley. Alex Aitken has a population of 215 students from K-7. Our school is currently organized in 10 divisions; the majority being combined grade level classes. Our school hosts a before and after school program, operated by Just4Kids. A significant proportion of our students are from families of middle and high income.

Strengths of Alex Aitken school include:

- a strong sense of school community
- well established traditions
- positive connections to our local community
- high levels of student social responsibility
- holistic support of children
- staff collegiality
- a variety of curricular and extracurricular activities
- an active and supportive parent community.

Alex Aitken students have traditionally demonstrated high levels of achievement in all areas. Our students demonstrate high levels of social responsibility and participate willingly in all areas of school life. Past learning frameworks have focused on self-regulation, social responsibility, numeracy and literacy.

## Our Learners

Strengths and Stretches:

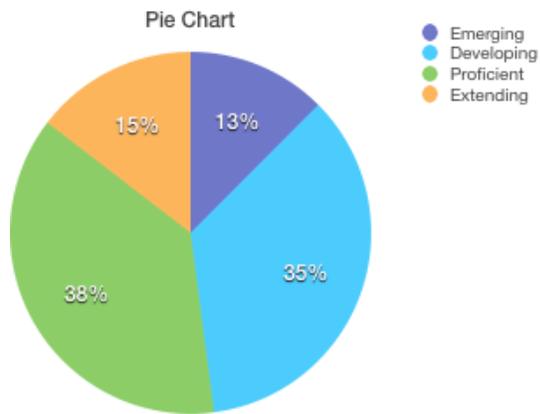
Students at Alex Aitken have a strong sense of connectedness within our learning community. Participation and engagement in classroom activities is high and students have a desire to succeed and do their best. Student Learning Survey data shows that students feel safe and supported by many staff members. Students regularly show empathy, kindness and support for one another.

Our students have traditionally demonstrated high levels of achievement. However, recent data (DWW, DART, ESS, PM Benchmarks, Report Cards) indicates that students are in need of focused literacy support with the 5 critical reading components (fluency, phonics, phonological awareness, text

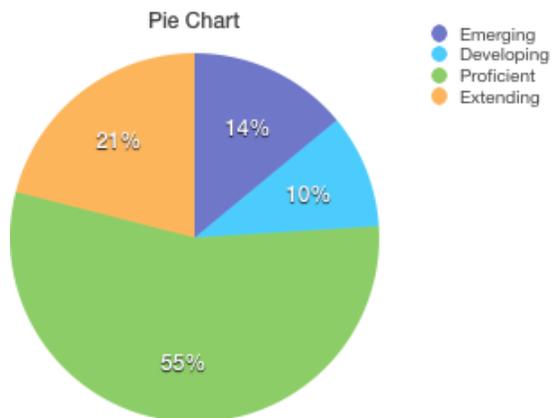
comprehension, vocabulary). Report card data suggests that the greatest need for targeted support is at the primary level.

## Report Card Data

### Primary Literacy Data – Term 1 Reporting



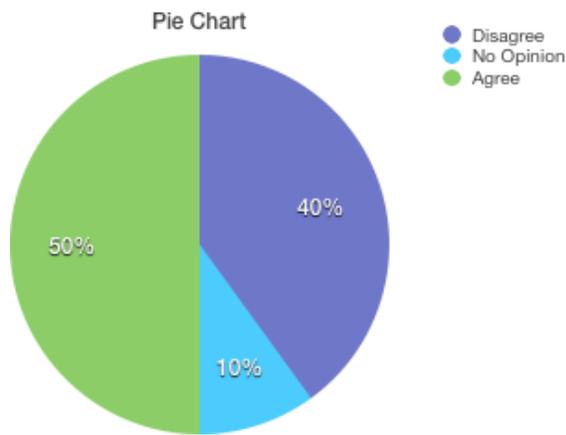
### Intermediate Literacy Data – Term 1 Reporting



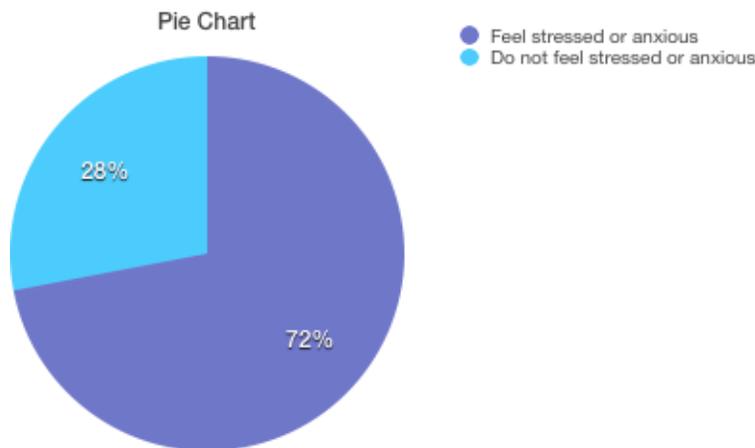
In addition, staff have identified a trend of increasing student social-emotional struggles and decreasing ability to self-regulate. Our teachers have anecdotally noted increased anxiety and self-regulatory struggles in our students and a need for more social emotional learning and strategies. Student Learning Survey data indicates a need to support the social emotional needs of our students.

### Student Learning Survey Data

Percentage of students who feel they are learning how to care for their mental health.



Percentage of Students who feel school makes them feel stressed or anxious.



## Our Goals

In the Spring of 2021 staff identified two focus areas that would enhance student learning:

1. Supporting the social-emotional needs/health of students and their ability to self-regulate.

Actions:

- Provide opportunities for staff to take part in self-regulation professional development (lectures and discussions on self-regulation, brain development, childhood trauma and complex behaviour).
- Implementing school wide self-regulation activities and strategies for all students with a focus on trauma informed practice.
- Zones of regulation training for all staff and implementation of common language and approaches.
- CALM and EASE training for all staff and the implementation of student anxiety strategies.

Measures:

- Social responsibility data.
- Office referral data.
- Attendance and report card data.
- Student Learning Survey.
- Student attendance data.
- School Based Team referral data.
- Counsellor data.
- Antidotal data from teachers regarding student engagement and participation.

2. Improve the literacy skills of students (particularly at the primary level) by focusing on the five critical reading components (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension).

Actions:

- Provide collaboration and learning time for staff that focusses on developing/enhancing student literacy. This includes the use of PLC time, NID and Pro-D day opportunities.

- Utilization of district sessions and resources that aim at “Supporting the Independent Reader”. This includes focused strategies that staff can use to develop the 5 critical reading components.
- Targeted support through Learning Assistance, ELL and SLP.
- Reading assessments at every grade level 2 times per year.
- Writing assessments at every grade level 2 times per year.
- Utilize class reviews to identify areas that need specific literacy support.
- Implementation of classroom strategies focused on student improvement in the 5 components of reading.

Measures:

- District reading and writing assessments (DART, DWW, ESS, FSA).
- Report card data.
- Decreased referral to SBT and school base support services.
- PM Benchmarks.
- Performance Standard assessment.
- Kilpatrick/Heggerty data.

**Our story is beyond . . .**

One of the foundational pillars of Alex Aitken Elementary is the inter-related connection to self, others, community and the environment. Outdoor learning opportunities, provide an excellent insight into how these are valued at Alex Aitken. A great example is our school/community garden. Each division at Alex Aitken has a garden plot that is cultivated by students. In this area, students can be found working and learning together. Students participate in hands-on cross-curricular learning where they learn how to nurture a garden from inception to harvest. Along the way, older students mentor younger students and community partners provide guidance, knowledge and stories. Students share the joy of harvest with other students, with their families and with our community. The Alex Aitken garden is a wonderful metaphor for how our entire learning community (students, staff, families and local community) supports one another on the educational growth of our students.