



TOMAHAWK SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2023 - 2024

Celebrating the Rural Advantage!



May 2023

Welcome to Tomahawk School! Rich in history, this small rural school has been a part of Parkland School Division for many years, but has been operating as a local school for over 75 years. Over the years, the size and enrollment numbers have increased and decreased but the school has remained the heart of the small hamlet of Tomahawk.

Presently Tomahawk School has an enrollment of 100 students from Kindergarten to Grade 9. Additionally, the Preschool has 7 students attending. The staff of twelve includes the Principal, 5 teachers, 3 Educational Assistants, secretary, librarian and our custodian. The school shares our library with the public system to provide library access for the community.

Our school is surrounded by towering evergreen trees that frame our back playground. Over the years, these majestic trees have put down deep roots to support their growth upward. In that same way, Tomahawk School is focused on providing a strong foundation for our students to allow each student to grow and flourish.

Thank you for taking the time to read the story of Tomahawk School for 2023/ 2024. It is a great read!

Sincerely, *Fran Bell*
Principal



Tomahawk School

2023/2024 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Principal: Fran Bell

Our students possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

Area in Focus:	Students demonstrate Success and Well-Being
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Our Vision:

Our students possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

Our Mission:

We assure supportive learning environments, meaningful experiences and healthy relationships that create opportunities to develop resilience, to gain diversity in perspectives and to achieve enduring success.

Development Plan Participants:

Tomahawk School Principal
Tomahawk School Staff (Certificated and non-certificated)
School Counselor
School Council
Tomahawk School Students

Defining the Desired State: (Where do we want to be?)

Tomahawk School is focused on our ***Students demonstrating Success and Well-being***. This focus includes four areas: *Academic* (literacy and numeracy), *Personal Resilience*, *Leadership*, and *Learning in Nature*.

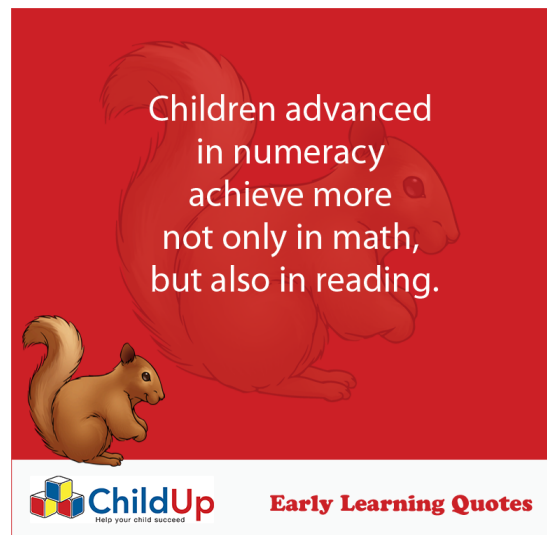
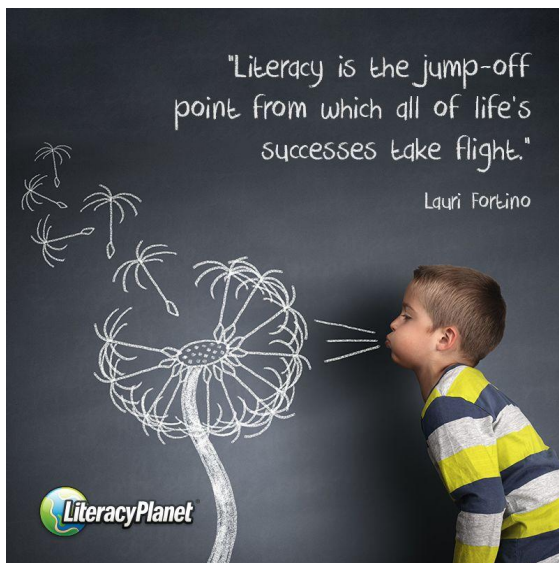
ACADEMICS: LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Our goal is to have all of our students achieve at least one year's growth in one year's time. Last year, we had identified that more than 50% of our students were below their expected level, so literacy and numeracy interventions were put into place. Specific assessments for each grade level are completed in early Fall, and again at the end of year, to consistently measure growth. The great news is that our interventions are making a difference! Our students are making gains in literacy, numeracy and personal resilience!

Our Literacy lead worked with teachers to ensure that small-group differentiated learning in literacy and numeracy is a foundational way of learning at Tomahawk School in Grades 1-5. Through the whole group use of the Words Their Way (WTW) Spelling Inventory, Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessments (F&P), Math Intervention Programming Instrument (MIPI), as well as more targeted Tier 2 assessments such as the QPAS, LeNS, and the Numeracy Interview; instruction and student groupings are linked to the needs identified in these assessments to ensure gaps in student understanding are targeted and supported.

Academic support as needed by identified students is provided by classroom teachers, Educational Assistants, and intervention programs for both literacy and numeracy. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are provided when needed to document key strategies used to support student success.

One additional note is the importance of also supporting our gifted and talented learners with challenge and extension opportunities. Presently we offer a reading challenge, and a Book Battle, but we continue to build appropriate opportunities to provide growth for all students.



PERSONAL RESILIENCE

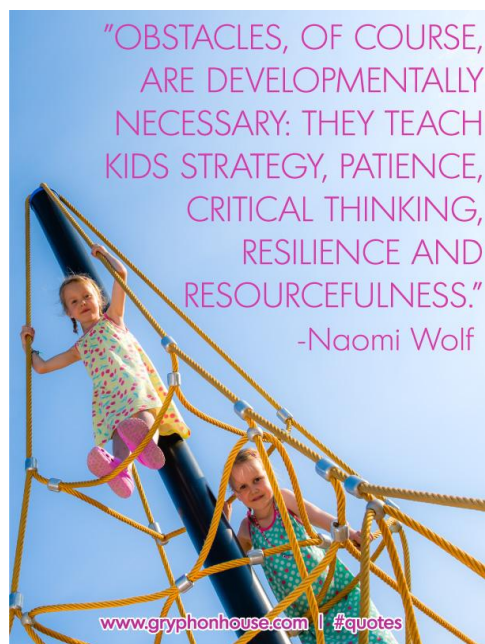
Our goal is to ensure that all students are receiving appropriate support to build resilience. Each child is unique, and so is their journey to cultivating personal resiliency. As well, resiliency looks different at each grade level, but it is an important foundation for life. Mental health supports are presented and discussed regularly in all classrooms, at an age-appropriate level. Presenters are invited to speak with students on key issues such as nutrition and body image; bullying and cyberbullying; strategies for mental health wellness; and additional relevant topics.

“When students believe they are worthy and capable of overcoming challenges, they become resilient.” (<https://positivepsychology.com/teaching-resilience>)

A school counselor is available one day a week to support students both individually and in appropriate groupings. The school counselor communicates with student families as needed to ensure that supports being provided are effective. Teachers and parents can refer a student to the counselor.

School staff is continuing to use a Collaborative Response Model to ensure staff is working collaboratively and effectively to support student wellness. As well, all students have daily access to healthy snacks and lunch items to ensure physical readiness for learning and to support student health and wellness.

Relationships: All students benefit from building friendships, and by feeling safe and welcome at school. Our small class sizes allow our students to build meaningful relationships. Our small size allows staff to work closely with all students to ensure students feel safe, welcome, heard and valued. Each student is unique and we strive to support each student.



LEADERSHIP

Our goal is that every student is able to grow and flourish as a student leader. We recognize that resilience is a foundational characteristic of successful students. Students are supported within the classroom and in the larger school community to have a positive self-image and to develop problem-solving skills.

School Culture: All students are encouraged to exhibit leadership through a school program emphasizing key attributes: Leadership, Empathy, Appreciation, Determination, Effort, Respect and Service = LEADERS! Each attribute is highlighted monthly and students are recognized for outstanding leadership at monthly assemblies.

Student Leadership: Students from Grade 6-9 are invited to participate as members of our Student Leadership group. These students help plan, promote, and administer various events throughout the school year to promote school spirit, create a joyful atmosphere for all, and build leadership skills.

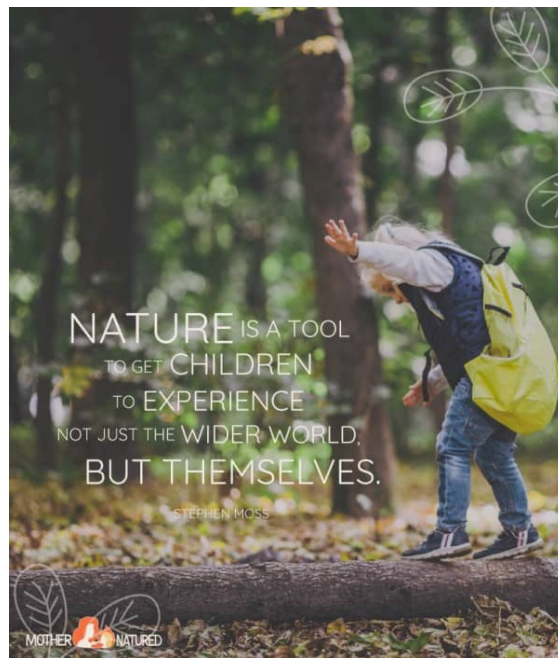
School Sports Teams: Students from Grade 4-9 are encouraged to be involved in our school sports teams. Participating on a sports team builds teamwork, a positive self-image, and promotes the ability to overcome challenges with resilience and positive growth. Parents and staff assist in coaching. As well, a new school Logo was developed to use for our sports teams and for our new school Logo - the **Tomahawk Timberwolves**. New uniforms were purchased to highlight the new logo and teams participate in all PSD Divisional sporting events.



LEARNING IN NATURE

Taking learning outside has numerous benefits, including physical exercise and an appreciation for outdoor play, but certainly teamwork, problem-solving, and positive self-worth are noted as being tied to outdoor learning opportunities. Tomahawk School has a lovely expanse of ten acres to allow our students to play and learn outdoors throughout all seasons. Students who struggle academically can often excel when provided with opportunities to learn in nature, and thus personal success is experienced.

All students from Grade 1-6 take learning outside at a minimum one day a month, with specific learning activities completed outside, such as PE, Art, Science, and even some Math! Field trips provide outdoor learning, both off site and on site at the school. As well, additional opportunity is provided through an additional program, My Path Outdoor Pursuits. My Path is a partnership between Tomahawk School, Entwistle School and Connections for Learning. At a nominal fee of \$100 per month, students from Grade 1-6 can join the program to experience unique outdoor activities every Friday. Students may be on a farm, go golfing, learn environmental education, swimming, gymnastics, or numerous other opportunities.



Identifying Potential Roadblocks and Barriers

Time

- Time is provided to complete required assessments for students to properly determine areas of strength and areas that need targeted support. Professional development time will be provided during our PD days at school, as well, time will be provided to staff who wish to attend PD to support their learning in literacy, numeracy, and student mental health and wellness. We are continually building our capacity as educators.

Resources

- Changing practices, learning new resources, and understanding the research behind the changes requires significant support. It is essential that when teachers need support, the support is provided. Our school division provides training for changes in the curriculum and at the school level we are implementing the Collaborative Response Model to support staff collaboration. These requirements are constantly reviewed to ensure needed solutions are implemented.
- Professional development also comes at a cost from substitute coverage for PD during the day to the cost of the PD itself. Physical resources to support the interventions in the classrooms and the materials required are very costly. As a staff we have worked together to ensure time and resources at school are used productively.
- Our school counselor is shared between three rural schools, however, to their credit, Parkland School Division has invested heavily in assisting all schools, including Tomahawk School, to have consistent access to a professional counselor.
- It is important that our students have opportunities to learn in a variety of contexts. Although school fees are charged to cover many opportunities, often, a portion of fees are not paid by parents, thus lowering our school budget. Bussing costs are extremely high due to the distance, therefore our School Council works diligently to raise funds to offset the cost of field trip transportation, which is an essential support.

Organizational Culture

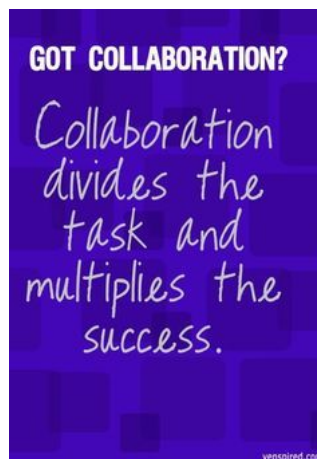
- Change is hard work, however, this work is achievable when taken in small bites, and ensuring the end goal is clear. Every staff member is working to build their confidence in how best to support student success. As a school we are embracing the work that needs to be done, we are learning to collaborate, we are analyzing our data to ensure

we achieve the desired results, and we are using all the support provided to provide maximum success for our students.

- The support of PSD Division Student Services staff has been and will continue to be essential in continuing on our journey. We continue to identify areas of concern and recognize that we are ultimately responsible to ensure we use our professional knowledge to work toward solving the problems, and that includes collaborating with those who are more skilled/trained in these areas.

Context

- We have allocated 20 minutes per day for our literacy interventions in Grades 1-5, and 20 minutes three-four times a week for Grades 6-9. If students have significant absences, they will be behind the intervention group. As a result, the intervention will not be as effective for those students. Teachers can work to catch students up, however, the best solution is for students to attend regularly.
- We do specialized intervention work at school, to ensure that parents and children have the time needed to be together at home, with only regular homework, if required.
- The years of pandemic continue to impact the learning of our students, as many experienced a learning loss that is still being addressed.
- Tomahawk School has maintained a population of approximately 100 students over the past four years, however, the school population is not growing. The hamlet of Tomahawk, and the surrounding towns, are experiencing economic struggles and thus fewer families are relocating to our catchment area. The school works hard to advertise and attract new students.



Identifying Strategies, Timelines, and Expected Measures

Identified Strategy	Grade	Expected Outcome	Assessment Tool and Timeline
LITERACY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intensive Phonological Awareness (IPA) small group intervention & Decodable Text intervention ● LLI Literacy Intervention in small groups ● Small group support in the classroom 	1-3	% of students that will be at grade level in phonemic awareness: Grade 1 - More than 50% Grade 2 - More than 50% Grade 3- More than 50%	Provincial Assessments- Phonics: LeNS / CC3/ QPAS WTW Spelling: F & P Reading: HLAT Writing
	4-9	% of students that will be at grade level in reading level Gr 4-6 - 65% Gr 7-9 75%	WTW Spelling F & P Reading RCAT Reading HLAT Writing
	1-5	Students receive targeted support	Data from above assessments
NUMERACY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Targeted small group intervention in Math based on Numeracy Interview results ● Whole class differentiation in numeracy 	1-3	% of students not requiring attention in numeracy: Grade 1: 70% Grade 2: 70% Grade 3: 70%	Alberta Education Numeracy Assessment Numeracy Interview
	4-6	Grade 4: 65% Grade 5: 60% Grade 6: 60%	MIPI Math Assessment
PERSONAL RESILIENCE and LEADERSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Recognition Assemblies monthly promoting LEADERS characteristics 	K-9	Increase in monthly LEADERS slips recognizing students Data obtained from all	Sept - June 2024 Survey: June 2023

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Survey 	1-9	students on their sense of personal resilience	
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Professional Development Planning

Anticipated Focus	Summary Plan	Timeline
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Collaboration to share best practices in Literacy • Literacy Leads updating staff on best practices • Assessment data reviewed • Goals clearly noted 	<i>Sept - June PD Days will have time allocated for learning literacy and numeracy strategies</i>
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff collaboration to share best practices in Numeracy • Numeracy Lead updating staff on best practices • Assessment data reviewed 	<i>October - June</i>
Collaborative Response	Monthly training for admin and lead teacher with Jigsaw Learning Time at each staff meeting will be allocated to sharing this work with staff	<i>September - June</i>
Student Resilience And Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations by School Counselor to staff on various key issues relevant to our school population • School Wellness Lead updating on best practices 	<i>October- June</i>

Identifying Required Resources

Literacy

Intensive Phonological Awareness Kit (IPA)	Kit provided from PSD	Grades 1-6
Decodable Texts	Literacy Resource at Tomahawk School	Grades 1-6
Haggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum	Purchased by Tomahawk School Dec/ 21	Grades 1-4
Leveled Literacy Intervention LLI (Orange/ Blue/ Red/ Green)	Literacy Resource at Tomahawk School	Grades 1-9
LLI Phonics/ Spelling/ Vocabulary Kits per grade	Kits purchased by Tomahawk School (Friends of	Grade 1-6

	Tomahawk)	
Alberta Education Assessments	Provided from AB Ed	Grades 1-3
Writing Assessment	HLAT provided by PSD	Grades 1-9

Numeracy

MIPI (Math Assessment Tool)	Provided by PSD	Grade 1-9
Numeracy Progression Assessment Interview	Provided by PSD and given by Numeracy Lead	Grades 1-3
Alberta Education Numeracy Assessments	Provided by AB Ed	Grades 1-3

Defining the End (How will we know this is working?)

Assessment Data

- Percentage of students achieving at or above grade level in literacy and numeracy would improve
- Teachers use the data to group and plan for students in literacy and numeracy

Collaboration

- Collaborative time will become a time when teachers come together to discuss student work, create a plan to target needs, and then discuss how the plan worked based on student results. Collaborative time will follow the Collaborative Response (CR) Model.

Resources

- Resources used in literacy and numeracy are chosen because of the research supporting them
- Continuity of resources used throughout grade levels
- Interventions are supported in sound research

Teaching Practices

- Small group differentiated instruction in literacy and numeracy in Grades 1-5 and moving upward
- Teachers plans respond to the needs of the learners
- Teachers understand the continuum of learning of both literacy and numeracy - students would be instructed where they are at, not where the curriculum says they should be at.

Student Success and Well-Being

- Survey data gathered annually shows improvement in student resilience
- Active Student Leadership group is visible in the school
- Students have access to counseling supports on a regular basis (minimum weekly)
- Student support is visible in classrooms as needed

Thought Exchange

- Parents express high satisfaction with student success and well being at Tomahawk School

STUDENT SUCCESS and WELL BEING is the primary focus of Tomahawk School. In every aspect, the staff of Tomahawk School is committed to supporting our students. It is our sincere desire to see each and every one of our students flourish academically, develop personal resilience, and experience overall success. Thank you to all stakeholders for your support ... students, parents, staff, school council, and Parkland School Division. Tomahawk School promotes the **rural advantage** for the rural school is the heartbeat of the community.

Sincerely,

Fran Bell Principal of Tomahawk School 2023/ 2024