

Neilson Grove News



Term 3 News

I hope you all had a wonderful Spring Break! We're all set and looking forward to this third and final term of the school year.

In this newsletter you will find lots of information about things that will be happening at Neilson Grove, District events, and details about where we're at with our School Goal.

Here are a few quick, details: The Track & Field season begins for students in Grades 4-7 in this third term. Also, the Neilson Grove Spring Fair, which is a great community-building event, will be happening in May. There is one more annual survey for grades 4 & 7 students that the Ministry of Education asks us to complete, that also invites parents to complete their own survey. We hope that you can find some time to take part in this survey to have your voice be heard and to help the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders understand your perspective as parents.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 27-School Reopens

April 3- TFN Treaty Day

April 14- Hot Lunch

April 18-PAC Meeting

April 20-Ramadan Ends

April 28-Hot Lunch

May 9-SD Track Meet

May 11-Spring Fair

May 12-Hot Lunch

May 16-PAC AGM

May 18-District Track Meet

May 19-No School

May 22-Victoria Day, No School

May 24-Gr. 6 Immunizations & **Class Photo Day**

May 26-Hot Lunch

June 7-Band Concert

June 16-Sports Day

June 27-Gr.7 Assembly & Celebration

June 29-Last Day, Dismissal at 10:30

Track & Field

This term all students in grades 4 to 7 will have an opportunity to try many different track & field events as we practice and get ready to participate in the Regional Track Meet on May 9th, at DSS. (For the majority of events, the top four competitors are invited to the District Track meet at SDSS on May 18th.) It will be "all hands on deck" as staff introduce and practice various events with our intermediate students. Students will have a chance to try out long jump, shot-put, softball throw, relay, shuttle, and individual running races.



Please watch for information coming home soon with practice times and consent forms. We hope that we can have as many of our intermediate students as possible participate. Maybe your child might find a lifelong passion for track!

Student Satisfaction Survey



Every year, the Ministry of Education puts out a 'Satisfaction' survey for students in grades 4, 7, 10 and 12, as well as for parents and staff. For students, it's another opportunity to share their thoughts about their school experience, much like the MDI (Middle Years Development Index) survey that was completed in January.

The data from this survey is used by many different stakeholders "for planning, research, and advocacy work for youth", as well as by schools as information that can help us focus

school goals on what a specific community seems to need.

Our grade 4s and 7s will be participating in this survey in April. Families, if you follow [this link](#), you can also complete a survey to have your voice heard. The survey takes about 30 minutes to complete, requires no login (see the image below, "Direct Access" on the right) and is available in many different languages.

NG's Spring Fair

There is so much to celebrate this year, especially the feeling that we are on the other side of the pandemic. Here is another great event that we're able to bring back this year and we're so excited for it! On May 11th, our amazing PAC will be putting on a spring fair. There will be fun games, great food, and so many things for families to enjoy! We'll also do the official unveiling of our school mural, giving students and families an opportunity to say thank you to local Delta Artist and NG Parent, Garry Brookes, who has created the original painting of our mascot, the Griffin.



School Goal, a.k.a. Framework for Enhancing Student Learning

We are excited about plans for trying to help all of our students become resilient students who can work through challenges with their learning, have strategies to cope when learning is hard, and feel good about taking risks to learn the hard stuff. This term will mark the

beginning of likely (though possibly longer) a three year plan to build resilience in our students, which is a core value in our District Vision 2030.



After looking at the 2021 MDI survey results for our area, the EDI (Early Development Instrument survey for Kindergarten student, 2019) (both for Ladner Rural), as well as doing a school wide survey, and digging into the things we were seeing in our classrooms, we honed in on four elements that we think will help to build the kind of environment where children will thrive.

- Connections with adults at school
- Feeling safe
- Feeling belonging
- Having at least one trusted friend at school

We believe we're in a good place with these four elements, based on what we see, though we can see from the MDI and our school survey that there's room to improve. (see p.4 for some stats from these surveys.)



“Belonging is a fundamental need of people of all ages. Feeling a sense of connectedness in one’s family, peer group, school, and community is one of the most important assets for a child’s well-being, health and success in life.” (Masten 2018; Thomson et.al., 2018)

(From the MDI Companion Guide, 2021, p.17)

To help create a positive school environment, we'll be working on three concepts that we think will have a positive impact on our students, how they approach, maintain focus on, and develop plans for their learning.

Growth Mindset is a concept that psychologist, [Carol Dweck](#) (explains [Growth Mindset](#)) identified in her book, [Mindset](#). It basically means that some children, who are presented with something challenging to learn, see the challenge as an opportunity to grow. The opposite, a fixed mindset, is when children see intelligence and ability as fixed and that no amount of effort on their part can change things for them.

Maintaining focus when learning is challenging, especially for students with a fixed mindset, and can be uncomfortable. Teaching them to recognise the signals and develop/ use **coping strategies** to push through those hard moments in their learning, will be critical to helping students see the power and control they can have over their learning.

Coping Strategies



Lastly, students who **Persevere/Persist** in the face of challenges in their learning not only feel more positive about themselves, they further reinforce a growth mindset.



SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Children’s sense of safety and belonging at school has been shown to foster their school success in many ways. When children have positive experiences at school, they are more likely to feel they belong within their school, feel more motivated and engaged, and have higher academic achievement (Wang & Degol, 2016). Children who feel a sense of connection and belonging to school are also less likely to engage in high-risk behaviours (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Understanding children’s school experiences improves the ability to both create and cultivate school environments that are safe, caring, and supportive.

Detailed information on the MDI survey questions and response scales for School Experiences are available in the [Discover MDI Field Guide](https://www.discovermdi.ca/school-experiences/) (<https://www.discovermdi.ca/school-experiences/>).

Connection with Adults at School



MDI

- **Grade 7s-** 64% of Ladner/Rural Students felt, “there is an adult who believes I will be a success.”
- **Grade 4s-** 68% of Ladner/Rural Students felt, “there is an adult who believes I will be a success.”

School

- **Intermediate Students-** 69% were able to name at least two adults and 77% were able to name one
- **Primary Students-** 75% were able to name at least two adults and 86% were able to name one

Peer Connections



MDI

- **Grade 7s & 4s-** 70% feel they “have a friend (they) can tell anything to.”

School

- **Intermediate Students-** 93% say they “have at least one friend they can talk to if something is bothering them.”
- **Primary Students-** 84% say they “have at least one friend they can talk to if something is bothering them.”

Last Thoughts on Our Goal

We’re starting with these goals because we think it will be most impactful for the students at this moment in time in their learning journey. We know we can learn from Indigenous culture and communities, especially around creating an inclusive school community where the adults come alongside students to guide them in their learning journey. (Dr. Brokenleg on [The Circle of Courage](#))

The pandemic has had a huge impact on students’ well-being and we’re looking to do everything we can to try to build a positive learning community. We would love to hear your thoughts on where we’re going or any feedback, thoughts, whether that’s something to celebrate or constructive feedback.

Belonging

MDI

- **Grade 7s-** 50% of Ladner/Rural Students, “feel like (they are) important to this school.”
- **Grade 4s-** 70% of Ladner/Rural Students, “feel like (they are) important to this school.”

School

- **Intermediate Students-** 43% of our students surveyed said that “when (they are) with kids (their) age, (they) feel they belong.”
- **Primary Students-** 81% of out students surveyed said that “when (they are) with kids (their) age, (they) feel they belong.”



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Children’s perception of kindness within a school is a consistent indicator of a positive school climate. Students who see kind behaviours in students, teachers and staff also describe their school environments as being safe and encouraging places to learn. As children transition from Grade 4 to Grade 8, perceptions of kindness in schools decrease (Binfet, Gademmann & Schonert-Reich, 2016).

Feelings of belonging are associated with lower emotional distress, the reduction of negative behaviours (such as bullying and mental health issues) and are associated to rates of higher resilience later in life (van Harmelen et al., 2016).