

2026-27 SCHOOL FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING

School: John Barsby Community Secondary

Principal: Stephen Epp

Our Story/Our Learners

John Barsby Community Secondary is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. As a school community, we are committed to advancing Truth and Reconciliation by strengthening relationships with the Snuneymuxw people and embedding Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into our learning environments. We recognize the importance of land, language, culture, and relationship in supporting student success and belonging.

Barsby is deeply connected to the Harewood community, a neighbourhood with long-standing relationships and strong intergenerational ties. Our school benefits from committed community partnerships and proximity to important local spaces such as the Chase River, Colliery Dam, and Vancouver Island University, which provide opportunities for place-based and experiential learning.

We are proud to be a generational school, where many staff have long-standing relationships with students and their families. This continuity creates a strong foundation of trust, care, and understanding, as staff hold the stories and experiences of the community across generations. Staff commitment is a significant strength at Barsby, with many choosing to remain at the school because of their dedication to supporting students and families. Barsby also has an active, engaged, and highly supportive Parent Advisory Council which contributes to a strong sense of community and shared responsibility for student success.

Students at Barsby demonstrate strong pride in their school, particularly through the success of our athletic programs. As a learning community, we are intentionally building on this strength to expand opportunities for engagement, identity, and achievement across all areas of school life, including academics, arts, and cultural learning.

Creating a strong sense of belonging remains a key focus. Staff work intentionally to build welcoming, inclusive environments by strengthening relationships with students. This includes being present in hallways, greeting students, and creating classroom spaces where all learners feel valued and supported. This work is grounded in a commitment to equity, ensuring that Indigenous learners, students with IEPs, and children and youth in care feel a strong sense of connection, support, and success within the school.

Students have access to a wide range of extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities, including the Photography Club, Study Hall, hul'q'umi'num language learning, Drama Club, Computers Club, Dungeons & Dragons, School of Rock, Robotics, Weightlifting, Student Council, BC Youth Parliament, Community Club, GSA, Magic Club, Carving Club, and Art Club. These opportunities support student engagement, creativity, and connection to school.

At Barsby, we value and honour Indigenous ways of knowing and being, with a particular emphasis on local Coast Salish and Snuneymuxw culture. Students have opportunities to engage in drumming, singing, hul'q'umi'num language learning, and cultural practices that strengthen identity and understanding. The school proudly hosts the NLPS Lahal (Bone Game) tournament, bringing students together in friendship, cultural learning, and community connection. Participation in Indigenous Games further supports physical, cultural, and relational learning, providing meaningful opportunities for Indigenous students and the broader school community to connect with local culture.

These experiences reflect our commitment to the Syeyutsus Reconciliation Framework and to creating a learning environment where all students experience belonging, connection, and success through meaningful engagement with Snuneymuxw knowledge, land, and community.

Data to Support Goal #1:

Student learning survey data indicates that a large proportion of students report limited participation in Indigenous-focused activities at school. Across grades, approximately 85% of students report “never,” “almost never,” or only “sometimes” participating, with only 15% reporting participation “most or all of the time.”

While most students report being taught about Indigenous Peoples in Canada at least “sometimes,” fewer report consistent or embedded experiential learning opportunities connected to local context, including Snuneymuxw knowledge and community voice.

Additionally, access to Indigenous Knowledge Keepers is inconsistent, with only about half of students reporting having experienced learning with a Knowledge Keeper, indicating that relational and community-connected learning is not yet guaranteed for all learners.

Many students experience Indigenous learning primarily through classroom content rather than through relational, cultural, and experiential opportunities. Engagement with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and community-based learning varies significantly across grades, courses, and classrooms.

This limits students' depth of understanding of Indigenous perspectives and reduces opportunities to build meaningful cultural awareness and connection. For Indigenous learners, students with IEPs, and children and youth in care, inconsistent access may negatively impact their sense of belonging, representation, and engagement in learning.

John Barsby has 27% Indigenous Population; it is important for our Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to participate in cultural activities and learn from Indigenous knowledge keepers.

Authentic engagement with Indigenous perspectives and communities is central to Truth and Reconciliation and aligns with district priorities related to equity and belonging. Increasing experiential and relational Indigenous learning opportunities supports all students in developing cultural understanding while strengthening identity, belonging, and success for Indigenous learners. Research and practice show that direct engagement with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, land-based learning, and community connections deepens learning and increases engagement, particularly for students who may otherwise be less connected to school.

School-based actions that may positively affect this trend:

- Increase access to Indigenous knowledge keepers and elders within the John Barsby School Community
- Expand meaningful, experiential, and land-based learning opportunities
- Embed Indigenous perspectives consistently across subject areas
- Increase student participation in Indigenous cultural events and activities
- Increase the amount of visual Indigenous representation with the school

Data to Support Goal #2:

Attendance data indicates that many Grade 8 and 9 students are experiencing significant absences, with averages of approximately 34.6 days (Grade 8) and 37.7 days (Grade 9) missed per student (of which grade 8 students have an average of 21 days of unexcused absences and grade 9 students have an average of 24 days of unexcused absences). A substantial number of students are missing more than 20 days, with a smaller group experiencing chronic and extreme absenteeism.

Staff observations indicate that some students demonstrate inconsistent engagement, limited connection to adults, and variable participation in school life, particularly in the transition into Grade 8.

Student voice suggests that while many students feel connected, there remains a group who report lower levels of belonging, fewer meaningful relationships, and limited engagement in school activities.

These patterns suggest that not all students are experiencing a strong sense of connection and belonging at school. This can impact student well-being, engagement, and participation in learning. This is particularly true for priority populations, who are over-represented amongst those not feeling a strong sense of connection.

Students who feel less connected to adults, peers, or school experiences are more likely to disengage from school life and learning opportunities. This impact is particularly significant for priority learners, including Indigenous students, students with diverse abilities, and children and youth in care.

A strong sense of connection and belonging is foundational to student wellness, engagement, and success. When students feel known, valued, and supported within their school community, they are more likely to attend, participate, and achieve.

John Barsby has many strengths that support belonging, including strong staff relationships with students, a wide range of extracurricular opportunities, programs of choice, and a strong sense of community. Staff are committed to connecting with students and creating welcoming environments. However, not all students are experiencing this connection consistently. Mental health challenges, technology use, and disengagement are impacting some students' ability to

connect meaningfully with school. These challenges are particularly evident during the transition into Grade 8 and in the early secondary years.

Focusing on connection and belonging, particularly for Grade 8 and 9 students, will strengthen engagement and support improved outcomes for all learners, especially our priority populations. This aligns with district priorities related to student wellness, equity, and inclusion.

School-based actions that may positively affect this trend:

- Build a consistent, school-wide focus on connection and belonging across classrooms and programs
- Ensure every student has a meaningful connection with at least one adult in the building
- Expand and promote inclusive extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities to engage a wider range of students
- Strengthen student voice opportunities to inform school programming and engagement
- Refine and strengthen existing support programs to better meet the needs of disconnected learners
- Develop targeted connection and engagement supports for students experiencing disengagement or mental health challenges

Data to Support Goal #3:

Based on the Grade 8 Literacy Screener Data we have found:

- Of 120 students assessed, 57 students (47.5%) are performing below the Average range in reading fluency, including 15 students in the Very Low–Extremely Low range.
- Disaggregated analysis indicates that Indigenous learners and students with designations are overrepresented among students not yet meeting expectations, with a significantly higher proportion performing well below grade level.

Students with lower reading fluency may experience barriers in accessing grade-level curriculum across subject areas, impacting confidence, engagement, and achievement. These barriers are not experienced equally and disproportionately affect priority learners, including Indigenous students and students with diverse abilities, reinforcing inequitable outcomes.

Literacy is foundational to success in all subject areas and to long-term graduation outcomes. When students cannot access text fluently, they are less able to participate fully in learning and are more likely to disengage over time. Low literacy severely impacts a person's quality of life by creating life-long barriers to employment, justice, healthcare access, and financial stability.

Improving reading fluency is not just a skill-based priority but commitment, to equally ensuring that students who have experienced systemic barriers receive the targeted support needed to access learning, build confidence, and experience success.

Focusing on Grade 8 provides a critical opportunity to intervene early in secondary school, supporting a stronger trajectory of engagement, achievement, wellness, and belonging for priority learners

School-based actions that may positively affect this trend:

- Embed consistent, school-wide structured literacy and fluency practices across subject areas
- Provide targeted small-group intervention for students below grade-level expectations
- Prioritize support for priority learners
- Use culturally responsive and relevant texts that reflect student identity and local context
- Regularly monitor literacy data and adjust supports, with a focus on priority learners

School Goal #1

Board Goal:

Truth and Reconciliation

Board Objective:

Create and share district-wide, Syeyutsus Principles of Teaching & Learning.

Focused Improvement Goal:

By June 2027, John Barsby Community School will increase equitable access to meaningful Indigenous learning experiences so that all students, particularly those who have historically had less access, experience a stronger sense of belonging, cultural understanding, and connection to Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing.

This goal supports the NLPS Strategic Plan commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by strengthening relationships with the Snuneymuxw First Nation, increasing meaningful engagement with Indigenous perspectives, and improving outcomes and belonging for Indigenous learners and priority populations.

Implementation Plan:

School-based Action	Strategy Type
Increase access to Knowledge Keeper and Elders in the John Barsby Community/ Strengthen partnerships with Snuneymuxw Elders and community members.	Universal
Provide structured and guaranteed opportunities for all students to engage in land-based and experiential learning connected to Snuneymuxw territory.	Universal
Develop small-group or cohort-based opportunities for deeper relational, land-based, and culturally grounded learning.	Targeted
Provide targeted, identity-affirming cultural programming and leadership opportunities for Indigenous learners.	Targeted

Goal Tracking:

Metric	Monitoring Checkpoints
% of students reporting learning with an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper on student learning survey	Spring Student Learning Survey (April 2027)
Number of Indigenous cultural and experiential learning opportunities offered	October 2026, May 2027
Student voice data and staff observations related to belonging, cultural awareness, and engagement	October 2026, May 2027

Ongoing Engagement:

Partners:

- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Indigenous Education Department
- Knowledge Keepers and Elders
- School staff
- Students and families

Method of Engagement:

- Ongoing collaboration and co-planning with Indigenous partners
- Student voice sessions and feedback opportunities (with attention to priority groups)
- Staff collaboration through PLCs and professional learning
- Community and family engagement events

Key Insights and Feedback:

- Increased understanding of how to embed Indigenous perspectives authentically
- Expanded and more equitable access to Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and cultural learning
- Improved student engagement and participation in Indigenous learning
- Strengthened sense of belonging and cultural connection, particularly for Indigenous learners and priority populations

School Goal #2

Board Goal:

Student and Employee Wellness

Board Objective:

Increase the number of students who feel welcome, safe and have a sense of belonging in their school.

Focused Improvement Goal:

By June 2027, John Barsby Community School will increase students' sense of connection and belonging, particularly for Grade 8 and 9 learners, by ensuring every student experiences meaningful relationships, cultural safety, and engagement in school life. Success will be demonstrated by measurable improvements in student-reported belonging, connection to adults and peers, and engagement in school, with attendance serving as one indicator of increased connection. This goal supports the NLPS Strategic Plan by prioritizing student wellness through connection and belonging. It aligns with district commitments to equity and inclusion by ensuring all students (particularly Indigenous learners, students with diverse abilities, and children and youth in care) experience meaningful relationships, engagement, and a sense of belonging within the school community.

Implementation Plan:

School-based Action	Strategy Type
Strengthen school-wide focus on connection and belonging through consistent staff practices (greeting, presence, relationship-building).	Universal
Identify students with low connection/engagement and implement connection mapping.	Targeted
Refine and strengthen support programs (e.g., flexible pathways, wellness supports) to better engage students.	Targeted
Increase student voice opportunities to co-create clubs, activities, and learning experiences.	Universal

Goal Tracking:

Metric	Monitoring Checkpoints
Number of students identified for targeted connection support and receiving regular check-ins.	October 2026, January 2027, May 2027
Student voice data related to engagement and connection.	October 2026, May 2027
Percent of students reporting a sense of belonging at school on Student Learning Survey	Student Learning Survey (Spring 2027)

Ongoing Engagement:

Partners:

- Students
- Staff
- Families
- Indigenous Education Department
- Community supports (as needed)

Method of Engagement:

- Student voice surveys and focus groups (with attention to priority learners)
- Staff collaboration through PLCs and professional learning
- Family communication and engagement opportunities
- Ongoing collaboration with Indigenous Education and support staff

Key Insights and Feedback:

- Increased understanding of strategies that strengthen student connection and belonging
- Improved ability to identify and support students who are not yet connected
- Increased student engagement in school activities and learning
- Strengthened sense of belonging, particularly for Indigenous students, students with diverse abilities, and children and youth in care

School Goal #3

Board Goal:

Student Success

Board Objective:

Increase literacy success rates for all

Focused Improvement Goal:

By June 2027, John Barsby Community School will increase the number of Grade 8 students meeting the expected range in reading fluency by ensuring that:

- Students currently below expectations demonstrate measurable growth in reading fluency (e.g., increased words correct per minute and/or movement between proficiency levels)
- Students with the most significant needs show accelerated progress through targeted and intensive support

This goal supports the NLPS Strategic Plan by improving equitable access to learning and reducing disparities in outcomes for priority learners. It aligns with district commitments to equity, inclusion, and student success by ensuring that all students, particularly Indigenous learners and students with diverse abilities, have the skills and support needed to fully engage in learning.

Implementation Plan:

School-based Action	Strategy Type
Universal reading screening – using the DIBELS MAZE and Acadience ORF.	Universal
Provide small-group intervention as appropriate using screening data and PRESS.	Targeted
Invite consistent morphology instruction practices across all content area grade 8 and 9 classrooms.	Universal
Regularly review literacy data (including disaggregated data) to adjust supports in SBT.	Universal grade 8 and 9 Screening data

Goal Tracking:

Metric	Monitoring Checkpoints
Universal grade 8 and 9 Screening data	Fall 2026, Spring 2027
Learning updates/reporting data	Nov 2026, Apr 2027
Evidence of student growth – Reading Intervention progress monitoring and universal screening data	Winter 2026, Spring 2027

Ongoing Engagement:

Partners:

- Students
- Staff
- Families
- Indigenous Education Department
- Learning Support staff

Method of Engagement:

- Ongoing staff collaboration through PLCs and data review cycles
- Student reflection on literacy growth
- Communication with families regarding student progress
- Collaboration with Indigenous Education to strengthen culturally responsive practice

Key Insights and Feedback:

- Increased understanding of effective literacy strategies that support diverse learners
- Improved ability to respond to student needs through targeted instruction
- Increased student confidence and engagement in reading
- Reduction of disparities in literacy outcomes for priority learners