



From the office of the Superintendent of Schools
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 92 (NISGA'A)

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February 22, 2018

Dear Parents, Students and Staff

For the last 10 years our students have not been successfully graduating at a rate that we can be proud of. We have tried a number of interventions that have proved unsuccessful, and so we need to keep trying. Finding ways that engage students in meaningful opportunities so that they want to attend school regularly and be successful is the challenge of any school district, and certainly for us.

To that end, the Board of Trustees is looking at changes for the next school year. These include changes to grade configuration at each school, and a change to the school calendar for some students.

The Board wishes to hear your feedback on the following ideas

1. Elementary schools move to a Kindergarten to Grade 8 configuration

This could allow the following ideas to be developed:

- Longer focus on literary/Numeracy skills
- Middle years exploratory electives to be offered
- Increase enrolment of small schools (two schools have less than 50 students)
- Reduce travel for Grade 8 students from Gingolx, Laxgalts'ap, and Gitwinksihlkw
- Middle years instructional time would increase for grade 6-8 students
- We can consider adding Strong starts to Elementary schools to connect students and families earlier

2. Secondary students (Grades 9-12) move to a longer six-hour day, but a four-day school week, with day five being optional if they need extra support:

- 4 Days a week when it would naturally be a five-day week. If a statutory holiday or Pro-d day, students still go to school for four days that week not 3
- 5th day optional attendance for academic support
- Implement a self-paced model of learning at Grade 10-12 for students whose attendance is getting in the way of success
- Longer periods support developing an inquiry/project based or place-based approach to learning
- Many Fridays could be open at NESS for grades 6-8 Exploratories, Distance Learning support, Athletic travel, Adult learning
- Reduce student residence time for Gingolx students
- Requires a longer day to meet instructional time

- Work Experience Opportunities for students could potentially grow
- Possible opportunities with Northwest Community College or Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute could be created (e.g. Early Childhood Education)
- Community opportunities cultural and otherwise could be created for secondary students
- All day field trips can be developed without loss of other instructional time-in fact entire courses could be offered on Fridays-Saturdays

We need to find ways to improve attendance. Our secondary students miss on average 30 percent of their classes. Increasing the importance of each day, and creating more interesting classroom environments may help. Ultimately though it is up to families and their students to encourage attendance.

Attached are the possible school calendars for next year for elementary and secondary students. **Please provide your feedback to the Board by March 23rd 2018.**

Feedback can be sent to Sharlene Grandison sgrandison@nisgaa.bc.ca.

Respectfully,
On behalf of the Board of Trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Rhodes', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Rhodes
Superintendent

Encl. (2)