

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING

INFORMATION SHEET

DATE: November 3, 2021  
TO: Education Committee  
FROM: Tim Davie, Deputy Superintendent  
Department of Learning Services  
SUBJECT: Inclusive Education: School Start-Up 2021

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**Board of Education Strategic Plan – Board Goals & Objectives**

***Continuous improvement of instruction and assessment***

- Build system capacity with respect to supportive post-pandemic instructional approaches
- Advancing supports to School Based teams through Inclusion Support Coordinators K-12

***Safe, caring and healthy learning and working environment that is inclusive of the diversity of our entire learning community.***

- Increasing awareness and capacity in mental health and wellness
- Increase employee engagement
- Improve opportunities for early intervention and learning

**Background**

This has been a very different start for us. School teams are reporting a significant increase in the complexity of our learners from previous years. There are a number of factors that are impacting schools at this time. Many families with complex learners have struggled to access resources, supports and interventions throughout the pandemic. There is a high level of expectation that school-based supports will help to fill the gap. We are also observing that the general sense of “pandemic fatigue” that is impacting our broader community is also impacting our schools. We returned to school this fall with an increase in pandemic restrictions from June, and navigating the school day continues to feel very different from before. The continuum of need in many of our classrooms is quite broad, due to the diversity in the experiences for learners who were at-home learners over the past year and a half. We are providing more support for social-emotional and mental health needs than has been required in previous school years.

There are some other factors which have contributed to the complexities in several schools:

- Many schools have experienced a significant increase in the number of students with complex needs/designations at their site
- While overall ELL numbers are down, we are starting to receive more New Canadian families once again and our ELL teams are supporting an increasing number of very beginning English speakers. This has shifted the overall complexity of their caseloads.
- We are aware that our current kindergarten and grade one learners have had a very atypical preschool experience. Schools are working tirelessly to support students who are experiencing high levels of dysregulation, and we have a larger number of students who elope from classrooms and school property than is typically seen.
- We have welcomed a number of students with very significant health needs. Nursing Support Services has been providing ongoing training for school staff, but they have limited resources, and it is taking time for them to provide training across the system.

### **Inclusion Support**

The Inclusion Support Team consists of four coordinators and two education assistants.

The Team began planning for our new complex students in June. This included our incoming kindergarten students, students who were new to the district, and students who were known to us, but had moved to new schools. In June, the team attended a number of meetings with school teams and gathered Transition Profiles.

This information was used to set up a schedule for a school scan in September. For the first several weeks of school, the team visited schools to assist with initial data collection and program planning, and to help school teams develop supportive plans and programming for students.

Inclusion Support provides three types of support:

- Support for students with complex learning needs
- Support for students with complex behaviours
- Capacity building and resource development for school teams.

Between September 7 and October 29, 2021, Inclusion Support Team members observed 120 students. Eighty-five of these students are currently part of their ongoing caseload.