



# **Niton Central School**

*Small Schools Can Make A Big Difference!*

Annual Education Results Report  
2020 – 2021  
School Continuous Improvement Plan  
2021 – 2024

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### **Vision**

Our school division endeavours to provide each student with the opportunity to fulfill their potential and pursue their dreams.

### **Mission**

We nurture each student's education and well-being within an inclusive rural learning community.

### **Priorities**

Student Learning · Teaching & Leadership Excellence · Community Engagement

### **Core Values**

Integrity · Trust · Honesty · Mutual Respect · Courage · Commitment

### **Beliefs and Values**

- The parent is the primary advocate of the child.
- Every individual has the right to a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and inclusive learning environment.
- Rural communities contribute to the success of all our students.
- All students develop a passion for life-long learning, innovation and excellence.
- Learning is a shared responsibility between students, parents, schools and communities.
- Learners are well prepared for active citizenship.

## Public Assurance

The planning and reporting processes that school authorities use reflect the guiding principles, domains, and enabling processes outlined in the Assurance Framework. Effective planning and results reporting occur in a continuous improvement cycle and are integral to school authority accountability and assurance. The planning and reporting cycle (see graphic below) involves:

- Developing/updating plans based on results, contextual information and provincial direction,
- Incorporating stakeholder input based on engagement activities at various points throughout the process, as appropriate,
- Preparing budgets that allocate or re-direct resources to achieve priorities and meet responsibilities,
- Implementing research and practice-informed strategies to maintain or improve performance within and across domains and focused on student growth and achievement,
- Monitoring implementation and adjusting efforts as needed
- Measuring, analyzing and reporting results,
- Using results to identify areas for improvement and to develop strategies and targets for the next plan (i.e. evidence-informed decision making), and
- Communicating and engaging with stakeholders about school authority plans and results.

Grande Yellowhead School Division recognizes its responsibility to keep stakeholders informed about accomplishments and work toward the plan priorities. The Division and its schools will keep its school communities and the public informed of progress throughout the year on strategies identified in each school's ***School Continuous Improvement Plan***.



## School Profile:



Hanna Herald.<https://www.hannaherald.com>. FILE PHOTO

### **Vision**

Niton Central School endeavours to be a high-performing rural school with student academic, socio-emotional and physical development as its core focus.

### **Mission**

Students will be engaged thinkers and creative innovators with ethical, global perspectives, well-prepared for the opportunities and challenges of our changing world.

### **Motto**

Small Schools Can Make A Big Difference!

## The School and The Community

Niton Central School was opened in September 1952 in the hamlet of Niton Junction located 45 km East of Edson, Alberta. It is a rural K-9 school; 83 % of students ride the bus to school, and of the remainder, most are parent/guardian transported, and a few live in the hamlet and walk. There are currently 123 students, with a staff of seven teachers and two support staff. The Elementary classes are split-graded with an average class size of 24 students. The Division provides the school with a half-time Learning Support Teacher, a part-time Family School Liaison, and the school provides space for preschool programming with an enrollment of twelve students. The School also provides space for preschool programming, Successful Kids and Families, and Yellowhead County's Parent Link program. In conjunction with Yellowhead County, the school houses the Niton Public Library and the attached outdoor Green Grove Swimming Pool. Yellowhead County continues to maintain the grounds around the school - this has included an adjacent outdoor skating rink, skateboarding park, playground, and public washrooms.

The application of technology in the school is extensive. All students have access to individual digital devices on two different platforms, Apple iPads, and Google Chromebooks. Students in Grade 3 and above have the use of Chromebooks. Digital resources are plentiful and form a significant resource base for teaching and learning. Integration of students with special needs and English Language Learners occurs at all grade levels. Support programming is developed in collaboration with our Learning Support Teacher, classroom teachers, and parents. Extra-curricular activities were suspended in spring 2020 until this fall. This restriction is now lifted and students in Junior High have access to participation in team sports this school year. Archery starts in Grade 3 for interested learners.

## Principal's Message

This is my first year at Niton Central School and the thirty-first within Grande Yellowhead Public School Division. Niton Junction is a welcoming community and Niton Central School has a tradition of being the heart and the hub of this community. As in most small rural schools, the majority of students are spread out over various properties; a few live in Niton Junction. The community comes together to support the students and the school and we have an active School Council. The school motto, "Small Schools Can Make a Big Difference" resonates with me. I too attended a small K – 9 rural school and believe that a rural education is an excellent education. The sense of community and shared responsibility of providing our students with a range of opportunities to thrive academically, socially, and personally helps us to achieve our vision for our school.

Niton Central School staff is dedicated to student learning and values targeted instruction to meet student learning goals. We use a variety of benchmark assessments to data-inform our decision-making. Valuing the whole child, our small staff works together to provide many different learning opportunities and extra-curricular activities to showcase their strengths and interests. We believe in wrap-around support for our students including referrals to our Family School Liaison, Speech-Language Pathologist, BEST coach, and Occupational and Behavioural Therapists. This approach enables students at Niton Central School to learn in a safe, inclusive community.

I am proud to be a part of the world-class education system and the team that makes a difference for students within Niton Central School.

Ms. Jan Wiens

Principal, Niton Central School



## Assurance Measures Report

- Alberta Education provides all school jurisdictions in Alberta with Accountability Pillar Reports each year. The results for the measures of High School Completion, Drop Out Rate, Post-Secondary Transition Rate, and Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate are updated after the end of the school year.
- Parents, students, and teachers are invited and encouraged to complete the Accountability Survey (created by Alberta Education and administered at schools for students and teachers). **Parents with students in Grades 4, 7, and 10** complete paper surveys or an online survey option which are both mailed directly to them.
- All students in grades 4-12 and all teachers are provided opportunities by GYPSD schools to complete the survey.
- Surveys are typically open from the beginning of January until the third week of February and results of the survey are available in early October of the following school year.

Areas included on the Assurance survey and examples of questions asked to determine the ratings are as follows:

1. **Student Growth & Achievement**
  - Provincial Achievement Test results.
  - Diploma Exam results.
  - High School Completion results.
2. **Teaching & Leading**
  - Survey measure of Education Quality.
3. **Learning Supports**
  - Survey measures of Safe & Caring, Student Inclusion, and Access to Supports & Services.

- Programs, services, strategies, and local measures/data used to demonstrate that the school authority is improving First Nations, Métis, and Inuit student success and ensuring all students, teachers and school leaders learn about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives and experiences, treaties, agreements, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- Programs, services, strategies, and local measures/data used to demonstrate that all students have access to a continuum of supports and services, including specialized supports and services, consistent with the principles of inclusive education.

#### **4. Governance**

- Survey measure of Parent Involvement.
- School authorities provide the amount budgeted for 2020/2021, the amount spent, and the variance between these amounts for operational expense categories.
- Processes, strategies, and local measures /data to demonstrate that the school authority has effectively managed its resources including collaboration with other school authorities, municipalities, and community agencies.
- Processes, strategies, and local measures/data to demonstrate that stakeholders were engaged to develop priorities and share progress and results, including how the school board met its obligations under the School Councils Regulation, section 12.

#### **5. Local & Societal Context**

- Information about the school authority, students, staff, and communities served (such as demographic or socioeconomic data) that provides context for the plan and report.

## **Diploma and Provincial Results**

Grande Yellowhead Public School division embraces the belief that all students can learn and develop their gifts. GYPSD Schools approach all measures of student success from within this philosophical framework. A vast array of classroom assessment practices, both formal and informal measures are employed to

determine student success. Students receive the highest quality education and, in turn, the best opportunities to develop their gifts, talents, and potential in school and beyond.

As a result of COVID 19, Diploma exams and Provincial Achievement Tests were cancelled for the 2020 – 2021 school year so these measures **have not been updated in the Alberta Education Assurance Measures Results.**

## **Division Screening Tools**

GYPSD uses screening tools to assess how students are doing in reading comprehension and fluency, writing, and mathematics to inform instruction to ensure the success of all student assessment, and mathematics to inform instruction to ensure the success of all students.

### **HLAT**

The Highest Level of Achievement Tests are administered in the fall and again in May. This test assesses students in reading and writing.

### **Mathletics**

Mathletics is administered online to grades 4 – 9 students. It assesses students' knowledge and skills in mathematics.

### **3 Rs – Retell, Relate, Reflect**

The 3R's of retelling, relating and reflecting assesses reading comprehension skills by having students think about what they are reading and interacting with the text.

# Assurance Measure Results

## Required Alberta Education Assurance Measures - Overall Summary

Spring 2021

School: 2015 Niton Central School



Assurance Domain	Measure	Niton Central School			Alberta			Measure Evaluation		
		Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Year Average	Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Year Average	Achievement	Improvement	Overall
Student Growth and Achievement	<a href="#">Student Learning Engagement</a>	72.1	n/a	n/a	85.6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">Citizenship</a>	89.8	84.4	82.2	83.2	83.3	83.0	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">3-year High School Completion</a>	n/a	n/a	n/a	83.4	80.3	79.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">5-year High School Completion</a>	n/a	n/a	n/a	86.2	85.3	84.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">PAT: Acceptable</a>	n/a	n/a	86.6	n/a	n/a	73.7	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">PAT: Excellence</a>	n/a	n/a	19.1	n/a	n/a	20.3	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">Diploma: Acceptable</a>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	83.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">Diploma: Excellence</a>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	24.1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teaching & Leading	<a href="#">Education Quality</a>	85.2	80.6	85.9	89.6	90.3	90.2	n/a	n/a	n/a
Learning Supports	<a href="#">Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments (WCRSLE)</a>	90.7	n/a	n/a	87.8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	<a href="#">Access to Supports and Services</a>	83.8	n/a	n/a	82.6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Governance	<a href="#">Parental Involvement</a>	62.4	75.7	80.9	79.5	81.8	81.4	n/a	n/a	n/a

## Reading the Assurance Measures Results

The Assurance Measures report consists of a common set of performance measures and consistent, fair evaluations of results. Through the Assurance Measures Report, increased emphasis is placed on achieving outcomes, reporting results, and using results for informed decision-making for the purpose of improving programs and student results in subsequent years.

### Impact of the New Assurance Measures Reporting System:

- This was a pilot year for this survey in Alberta.
- Results are not available for **PATs, Diploma Examinations, and the Diploma Exam Participation Rate.**
- **3 year and 5 year High School Completion Rates** are based on school-based marks only.

## **School Data Story**

### **Student Success:**

#### **Creating Safe Caring Schools/Learning Supports:**

Staff at Niton Central School value the whole child. We work to ensure students feel safe within an inclusive learning environment. At Niton Central School students are treated as individuals and with dignity and respect and this culture is modeled by the staff and maintained in all areas of our school. Students are greeted by the principal as they get off the bus, and by their homeroom teachers at the door. Students arrive in class with their nutrition bins ready to provide breakfast. Phone calls are made to parents/guardians who have not let the office know of a student's absence in the morning or after lunch. At the end of the day, the principal and elementary teachers wave to students as they head home on the bus.

Every weekend, families receive a digital version of the *Niton Central News*. This newsletter recaps the previous week and outlines the highlights of the upcoming one. Staff members use various methods to continuously communicate with parents including telephone calls, class dojo, Google Classroom, and PowerSchool.

Niton Central School staff believe that in addition to providing a strong academic program, students should be given opportunities to explore new interests, develop their gifts, and be recognized for their talents. This includes running a full sports program with a small staff. In 2020, the Career and Technology Foundations program was expanded to include a new shop area where junior high students could explore and develop skills related to a variety of careers and trades. To support student safety in school and extracurricular activities within a rural setting, we are in the process of certifying a core team of staff in First Aid.

#### **Academic Success:**

Student learning and academic success are achieved through data-driven instructional focus, professional collaboration, inclusive education, and Individualized Education Plans. Individualized learning is supported by educational assistants where needed. Teachers are available for extra help for students and continuously utilize both formative and summative assessments to inform parents of student progress.

#### **Citizenship:**

This is an area of strength. The Niton Central community values interaction between students and active participation in the larger community. Niton Central School is a UNESCO school. Students actively participate in Christmas campaigns to give back to the community and Yellowhead County. When possible, our Junior High students are

willing volunteers through the CTF program.

### **Teaching and Leadership Excellence:**

Niton Central staff are dedicated to professional growth and development as indicated by Professional Growth Plans and engaging pedagogical discussions. Many belong to social media groups that support professional development and have established relationships with colleagues from different schools throughout the division and the province. Teachers email/share resources/strategies that may be of interest to a particular staff member. Each staff member meets with the administration to review progress towards the individual's Professional Growth Plan and to establish what is needed to achieve the goals in that plan. Professional Growth Plans of all teachers and administrators are aligned with the Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) and/or the Leadership Quality Standard (LQS). Along with this, the standard from both the TQS and LQS are embedded into the professional development activities offered division-wide or in the school. In addition to implementing individual Professional Growth Plans and our Niton Central School Professional Learning Team, this year our staff will engage in Professional Learning Teams with other Lobstick schools.

### **Community Engagement:**

Niton Central School's Parent Council is active. Meetings are held monthly. This year, we can have spectators at school sporting events. Although we only have room for parents and siblings to attend, a live stream of the games has been initiated. Our Halloween Parade was held in the bus lane so parents and extended family/community members could take part. Both the Remembrance Day Ceremony and Christmas Concert are virtual via a link. Community members have expressed the desire to return to many of the traditions that are missed due to Covid-19. We continue to look for ways we can uphold these traditions.

### **Instructional Focus**

Building competency in reading comprehension

Building mathematical understanding through common vocabulary

# School Improvement Goals

## Student Growth & Achievement

LITERACY SMARTe GOAL 1	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve student performance in reading comprehension by 1 assessment growth in each of retell, relate, reflect as indicated by divisional used Benchmark Literacy Assessment the 3Rs (Read, Reflect, Relate).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborating with Lobstick schools to participate in a professional learning community with release time given to support peer observations and collaboration.</li> <li>Lead-teacher coaching approaches to improving teacher familiarity with curriculum.</li> <li>Continue to offer lunch class support to individual students.</li> <li>Continue to timetable “Flex” period for additional student support.</li> <li>Promote cross-graded collaboration with teachers using Professional Development days.</li> <li>Provide essential materials and resources to teachers that promote language learning.</li> <li>Utilizing the 3R questions with various day-to-day readings.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An average to improve Student Performance in reading comprehension by 1 assessment growth in each category as indicated by divisional used Benchmark Literacy Assessment the 3Rs Read, Reflect, Relate.</li> </ul>	

LITERACY SMARTe GOAL 2	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase by 3% the number of students descriptive writing at the Proficient Level on the HLAT assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports/EAs in place for grades 1/2</li> <li>• Reading groups</li> <li>• LST pull-out</li> <li>• Super Reader promotion</li> <li>• Phonological and Phonemic awareness professional growth</li> <li>• Literacy Lead professional growth session</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased by 3%, the of student writing at or above grade level requirements by June 2022</li> <li>• Increased by 3% the number of students reading at or above grade level requirements by June 2022</li> </ul>	

NUMERACY SMARTe GOAL 2	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve mathematical vocabulary through cross graded/curricular focus as indicated by Mathletics assessment in June 2022.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use correct vocabulary particularly as related to graphs and charts across curriculums</li> <li>• Consult G.Y.P.S.D. numeracy consultant, Geri Lorway to promote instructional strategies and cross-curricular instruction with mathematics.</li> <li>• Math Bulletin board/Word Wall for extension activities associated with vocabulary and learning concepts between grades.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased by 5% the individual scores of students writing Mathletics assessments</li> </ul>	



<b>NUMERACY SMARTe GOAL 2</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve by 5% the number of correct answers on the Mathletics screen specifically surrounding number sense and operations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathletics for assessment and practicing</li> <li>• Geri Lorway in-services and instructional coaching</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased student results on the final Mathletics assessment for number sense and operations.</li> </ul>	

## Teaching and Leadership

<b>EDUCATION QUALITY SMARTe GOAL 1</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By June 2022, all teachers will have had the opportunity to mentor others or present an area of strength during Professional Learning Community time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributive leadership model</li> <li>• PLT time built into monthly staff meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Teachers will be able to show their focus on the TQS when discussing Professional Growth and Instructional rounds.</li> <li>• Teachers involved in Divisional Leadership opportunities.</li> </ul>	

<b>PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, SUPERVISION and EVALUATION SMARTe GOAL 2</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By June 2022, all staff will be a part of a Lobstick professional learning community and have knowledge of instructional rounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer template that includes TQS for Professional Growth Plans.</li> <li>• Refer to TQS when reviewing the implementation and success of the Professional Growth Plan.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use TQS as a reference when debriefing after Instructional Rounds. Supervision of instruction will be ongoing with the program Principal visiting classes on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Introduce leadership opportunities for teaching staff.</li> <li>• Professional Growth plans submitted and individual Professional Development is being reviewed and discussed.</li> <li>• Professional reading/discussion at staff meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation rate and evidence produced</li> </ul>	

## Learning Supports

<b>SAFE AND CARING SMARTe GOAL 1</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a high level of excellence as related to WCRSLE measure on Assurance Model.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BEST coach working in classrooms.</li> <li>• FSLC support for students</li> <li>• Zone of Regulations</li> <li>• Adding Drama extracurricular</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance Model data indicates a maintaining or improving WCRSLE score.</li> </ul>	

<b>STUDENT INCLUSION AND ACCESS TO SUPPORTS AND SERVICES SMARTe GOAL 2</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the percentage of parents who are satisfied with the level of academic support their child is receiving in school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.5fte LST</li> <li>• 1 to 1 tech to student ratio</li> <li>• Access to Speech Pathologist</li> <li>• FSLC</li> <li>• Google Classroom</li> <li>• HAPARA</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flex</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance Model data indicates a 5% improvement in parents being able to access help for their student's schoolwork and learning.</li> </ul>	

## Community Engagement

Community Engagement SMARTe GOAL 1	STRATEGIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase parent and community involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host monthly meetings with the School Council targeting communication to share student learning.</li> <li>• Request feedback from the School Council on issues when required.</li> <li>• Review S.C.I.P. with the School Council and post on our website.</li> <li>• Provide weekly parent memos (Niton News)</li> <li>• Parent progress phone homes</li> <li>• Increase direct communication to parents from teachers and administration.</li> <li>• Continue to provide access to student success and celebration digitally</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Success</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased results on Assurance Measure Survey to pre-Covid levels.</li> </ul>	

**Professional Development Plan for 2021/2022**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Activities Planned</b>
September 1, 2021	Numeracy, Literacy, and Health and Wellness	Teaching & Support Staff	Kick Off Event
October 22, 2021	Data and Instructional Focus	Teaching Staff	Data gap analysis: parent/teacher/student.
December 3, 2022	Safe & Caring <hr/> Numeracy Literacy	Teaching & Support Staff	First Aid <hr/> Build teacher-efficacy in the use of Geri Lorway Strategies. Speech to text Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) sessions with Lauren Komarnicki from Khan Communication Services.
March 4, 2022	Literacy	Teaching Staff	Irene Heffel - Vocabulary
		Support Staff	
April 29, 2022	Literacy/Numeracy	Teaching & Support Staff	Hapara Autism & Lifeskills
May 20, 2022	TBD	Teaching & Support Staff	TBD