

E.A. Butler All-Grade 200-394 Annual School Development Report 2021 - 2022



We are a K-12 school focused on creating a positive and supportive environment that encourages students to achieve their maximum potential! Our students and staff have worked hard to develop an inclusive school with a positive school culture, where everyone experiences success.



We believe in Respect for:
Self, Others, Academics and Resources

E.A Butler Mission Statement:

To create an environment where respect for self, others, academics and resources is the norm, ultimately promoting the social, moral, emotional, and academic development of lifelong learners, adaptable to a changing society.

EA Butler All-Grade (#200394)
Box 10
McKay's, NL
A0N 1G0
(709)645-2330
EAButlerAll-Grade@nlesd.ca

Strategic Issue: Optimal Learning Environment

Strategic Question: How can we, as a community, maximize an Optimal Learning Environment?

How did you know this was a Strategic Issue? What evidence did you have?

-According to classroom observations and feedback, as well as the PMF data, improving student motivation and engagement still continue to be areas requiring more focus.

-Student absenteeism (during the last two months of school in particular) was also an indicator of a lack of focus and motivation. Unfortunately, this must also address the data collected through the reasons for the absenteeism; parents primarily excused their children or never notified the school as to the reason for the absenteeism. (All K-12 parents were also notified through Smartfind if their child was absent from school and a reason was not provided.)

- Records of interventions for missing work and/or assessments indicated a lack of motivation for some students.

- Attendance records for students during online learning demonstrated less motivation to attend classes for some students.

Year-end Summary of Progress. What evidence do you have to support this progress?

There is a change in direction associated with teaching and learning now, and we have also started to initiate this change at EA Butler. The NLESD has been encouraging a more ‘Student-led’ approach, that helps students become more independent critical thinkers. Deep learning activities are replacing some of the pencil-paper tasks and students are actually becoming more engaged. For instance, our younger students are always referring to their fruit and vegetables they grew with the Little Green Thumbs Program in Grade 4 and their (Whole Summer) Garden Project in the 2/3 class. The way the students dug into the dirt to plant their seeds and laughed as they dug up their crops for their “feast” will be talked about for years. That is engagement!

For most of the year we had to follow strict COVID protocols that limited the accessibility of our school to parents and outside agencies. We were unable to have in-person presentations because of those directives; however, many guest speakers and presenters were welcomed into our classrooms digitally. One activity, which was through a partnership with Qalipu First Nation Cultural Connection, gave our grades 5/6 students an opportunity to make authentic medicine bags. That was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone!

Once, during the Spring, we were finally able to arrange “Clusters” with our grade 7-12 students. With the help of numerous parent and community volunteers, the students participated in activities of their choice. If they were interested in cooking or baking, they could join a baker to bake and decorate cupcakes or go with an actual cook, who helped that group make chicken parmesan and a side salad. Yes, they also got to eat their creations! (The baking group did share with others too!) Some students chose to learn how to complete maintenance on vehicles, by checking oil or transmission fluid and changing a tire. There was another cluster of students who explored their artistic side through acting and drama. Other cluster choices included participating in an introductory class in Taekwondo or building their very own toolboxes, from start to finish, using the tools themselves (with supervision and guidance, of course.) Did every student participate? No, unfortunately some were excused by parents. Because everyone who did participate were raving about their experiences and it sounded like so much fun ... the absent students were among those asking when the next “Clusters” would happen again! That is evidence to support progress!

Although the 2021-2022 School Year was also affected by the COVID pandemic, there were minimal interruptions in terms of having to complete online learning. There was a lack of motivation and engagement with completing classes through online learning for some students though, as evidenced through the attendance records. However, for others, it was more of a means through which they could connect with their teachers and peers socially and mentally, as opposed to meeting solely for academics. The absenteeism related to sickness or possessing COVID symptoms were evident throughout the year though, and that had a direct impact on academic achievement of students overall. This was particularly more detrimental to students who required direct support from teachers.

On a positive note, students are becoming more proficient and comfortable with utilizing a variety of forms of technological innovations and programs. For instance, students certainly enjoy Technology classes that require more hands-on activities, whether it be through coding or designing balloon cars. Slowly, this is becoming more common in other subject areas as well. This will continue.

An active Student Council has been established again this year. Some of those students have started to become involved in helping with activities and events.

A School Council has been established as well. The members of the School Council are ready to take a more active role in supporting the staff at EA Butler.

The Reading Specialist and Learning Commons Teaching positions (with other teaching duties) have been combined. That teacher has developed a very inviting and enriching Learning Commons space in one of the classrooms. The K-6 students are very enthusiastic and excited to go and participate in activities in the Learning Commons! Although the intention of this space was initially supposed to be accessible to all of the students from K-12, the actual limited classroom space is really not adequate for larger classes or older students.

PBS assemblies are happening monthly to recognize the achievements of our students across all domains. Teachers also recognize achievements

within their classrooms as well.

Next Steps...

It is quite obvious from the enthusiasm and motivation that students enjoy doing hands-on activities, especially if they have a voice and are directly involved in the decision-making process. Teaching and Learning that is “Student-Centered” is the pedagogical philosophy emphasized in our school systems today. As educators, our teachers will continue to receive professional opportunities to become more familiar with this pedagogy and utilize it in their classes. At the same time, students will continue to be encouraged and taught how to take risks, become more critical thinkers and assume more ownership over their own learning. This also requires a partnership between home and school. Parents also have to ensure their children are expected to participate in activities and events that are planned during the school day. We will continue to encourage this positive relationship between parents and school.

Reaching out to community partners and outside agencies to provide expertise and financial assistance to support teaching and learning is still crucial to our success. We do have support from our community when requested, but also from the district specialists and grants. Brilliant Labs and Western Health, for instance, are necessary as well. We will continue to reach out to those agencies whenever possible.

In the 2022-2023 school year, with the teacher sponsor’s approval and guidance, the members of the Student Council will be encouraged to take more ownership over planning and executing their ideas.

The EA Butler School Council is also actively committed to supporting the students and staff with making decisions that falls within their scope of responsibilities.

The Learning Commons space at EA Butler is very limited. There is a larger space in the school, but it is currently occupied by the Bay St. George Public Library. Unfortunately, previous attempts to move the Learning Commons into that space has not been successful because the Public Library books/shelves cover all of the walls and are not to be moved. We will have to have further discussions about this space again for our Reading Specialist/Learning Commons area.

In our School Development Plan, we also identified having an outdoor classroom established. While we do have a couple of picnic tables in two different areas, they will need to be re-painted again. This action is still included in the Plan.

Strategic Issue: Wellness and Positive Relationships

Strategic Question: How can we improve Staff and Overall Wellness?

How did you know this was a Strategic Issue? What evidence did you have?

- More referrals to Guidance/outside agencies
- Review360 Reports
- Student absences
- Limited extra-curricular activities
- COVID-19 Protocols

Year-end Summary of Progress. What evidence do you have to support this progress?

As always, we strictly followed the COVID protocols provided to us through the NLESD and Department of Health this year. While the 2021-2022 School Year was also affected by this pandemic, we were only closed for on-line learning for three weeks in January. Otherwise, while the safety of our staff and students remained a priority, so too was the social-emotional well being of everyone as well. We ensured our teachers were continuously making connections and having check-ins with students and each other. Effective learning really cannot occur until everyone is emotionally feeling ready to learn. It is important relationship building activities and making connections among each other continue for everyone.

Mental Health Presentations in classes did occur digitally through outside agencies. Teachers received their professional development opportunities throughout the year digitally as well and through one in-person presentation. The strategies and suggestions the teachers received were geared toward helping their students and themselves simultaneously. The teachers and staff will continue to utilize these resources and will continue to receive PD as opportunities permit.

PBS (Positive Behavior Supports) Assemblies have been happening monthly to recognize achievements of our students across all domains. Teachers also recognized achievements within their classrooms as well. This helped to create a sense of accomplishment based on individual abilities, not based on solely a scoring criterion. There were recognition awards for a variety of domains: work ethic, attitude, achievement and helping others. At the same time, “shout-outs” were also highlighted, which recognized activities inside and outside of the school setting. These activities have had

positive results within our school community.

Next Steps...

We will continue to adhere to and follow the NLESD Safe and Caring School policies and procedures.

The PBS Program will definitely continue at EA Butler. We have been embracing it for years and are continuing to find ways to recognize achievements and support each other across all domains (ie. socially, academically, mentally).

We will continue making connections and having check-ins with students and each other as a means of fostering positive relationships and ensuring well-being for all.

A LGBTQ Alliance was created and active throughout the school year. This has received positive support from the EA Butler Community. This will continue.

The restrictions are no longer in place for visitors entering schools. It is the intention to continue to increase the number of in-school and extra-curricular activities as conditions warrant. For instance, we would like to start our breakfast program with parent/community volunteers again, have Literature Fairs and Math Days to name a few. The SSNL Sports Programs, which have always been very popular and well attended need to occur, that includes the *Play for Fun* and *Unplugged* programs, as well as the high school sports. It is important to bring back presentations and events that were very popular in previous years, such as the *Live Different* Interactive Show for our high school students. All of this will build a more positive school culture as our parents and community members will be given opportunities to work more directly with the staff and students again. It will help our E.A. Butler School Community come together and flourish again.