



School District No.87 Stikine Strategic Plan 2026 - 2030

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 87

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The 2026-2030 Strategic Plan is the legacy of the 23-26 Board of Education for School District 87 (Stikine). We acknowledge
The dedication to its completion of:

Yvonne Tashoots, Telegraph Creek (Chair)

Mike Strange, Atlin (Vice Chair)

Joleen Hawkins, Iskut

Fred Loots, Lower Post

Teneal Nole, Dease Lake

School District No. 87 (Stikine) acknowledges that it operates on traditional territory of the Tahltan, the Taku River Tlingit and the Kaska First Nations people.

District Context

School District 87 Stikine serves students and their families in 4 schools in the rural and remote northern communities of Atlin, Dease Lake, Lower Post, and Telegraph Creek. Students from the community of Iskut also currently attend high school in Dease Lake. The construction of a new school in Iskut has the potential to negatively impact School District 87 enrolment if its programming expands. Similarly, proximity to the Yukon communities of Watson Lake and Whitehorse often impacts enrolment in Atlin and Denetia, as parents often choose to send their children and youth to schools with more robust program options.

Despite these challenges, meeting the diverse learning needs of its small but dispersed student population is the Board of Education's highest priority. Students benefit daily from the efforts of dedicated administrator, instructional, and support staff; as well as from the partnerships the school district has created with the 3 Nations Society, local Indigenous organizations, and other community agencies. District staff are committed to confronting the racism of low expectations and to demonstrating a high standard of professionalism in educational leadership, as well as supporting excellence in teaching and learning across the district. The newly formed Indigenous Education Council provides advice and support to District leaders and educators as they pursue success for all School District 87 learners.

The strategic plan which follows is intended to build on and enhance the many successful practices and programs that already exist in the district, and to provide a renewed focus on ensuring that all available human, fiscal, and physical resources are focused on and being fully utilized in support of student success.

Our Students

The district's enrolment as of September 30, 2025, is 176.50 FTE, and numbers have been relatively stable in recent years.

75% of the district's population are of First Nations ancestry. Ministry and local data indicate vulnerability factors in a high proportion of the student population. The complexity and diversity of student needs, combined with the wide geographic dispersion of the schools that serve them, is a defining feature of the school district. It makes recruitment and retention of professional staff difficult; and capacity –building in schools and communities challenging. Access to specialized services for students and families is unavailable locally and often involves travel to Whitehorse YT or Terrace BC. The latter negatively impacts student attendance, which in turn negatively affects student learning and eventual success.

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Our Mission

In School District 87 Stikine, we support every student's success by providing opportunities for them to excel as learners in an environment that honours Indigenous heritage, actively promotes diversity and inclusion, and creates a sense of belonging. All students, without exception, will be encouraged and expected to be lifelong learners and active citizens.

Our Vision

Our learning community will be inclusive and student focused. We honour diversity and, in keeping with the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, we will create and maintain a supportive, safe, and success-focussed environment for all students.

Our Values

Reflecting the values of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples, in School District 87 (Stikine), all students and employees believe:

I belong to the School District 87 learning community

I care for myself, for others, for the land, and for all living things.

I am connected to my heritage, my family, my culture, and my community

I am responsible for being proactive and for doing my best

I demonstrate respect for myself, for the rights and feelings of others, and for the teachings of Elders and Knowledge Keepers

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Board of Education, its management team, and employees are highly committed to the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation.

Implicit in this commitment are the concepts of respecting and valuing local Indigenous culture, a sense of shared responsibility with local communities, and a focus on learning for both students and adults in our school system. The Board, like its District staff, are committed to confronting the racism of low expectations. We are also committed to providing quality governance to support and lead the work of the professional staff across the district.

As noted above student absenteeism school is a significant concern. A mid-November 2025 snapshot revealed that almost 80% of students had already missed 10% or more of the instructional time scheduled for the year. For that reason, a standalone attendance strategy is being developed by staff at the direction of the Board of Education, with a view to reversing this trend, and ensuring students and families understand the connection between attendance and student performance.

The Board and District leadership have invested significant time and energy in developing local educational priorities that align with and support the Ministry of Education's Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and the Ministry of Education's Service Plan. A copy of the district's most recent Framework for Enhancing Learning Report is available [here](#).

A description of the process used to refresh the strategic plan is included in Appendix A.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ONE:

To ensure all students experience physical and psychological safety rooted in pride in their identity, a sense of belonging, positive relationships, and a spirit of resilience. (Rationale for change in placement: Mental Health and Wellbeing are necessary preconditions for learning and learner success.)

System Performance Targets

All students requiring an assessment and intervention plan receive one within a year of the need being identified.

All school-based personnel receive training in and apply trauma-informed practices.

All school-based personnel receive clear direction on their roles and responsibilities with respect to student safety.

All school leadership receive training in conflict resolution and restorative justice.

Based on available evidence, as outlined in the status report in Appendix B, the following strategies should be retained;

Continue to develop outdoor and on the land learning activities and opportunities.

Maintain the elders in schools' program.

Continue to engage with 3N partners individually and collectively in support of student success.

Ensure all staff understand their role in Truth and Reconciliation and their responsibility for meeting the Calls to Action with respect to education.

Ensure all staff have appropriate training in trauma-informed practice and Violent Threat Risk Assessment.

Leverage existing and develop new partnerships with neighbouring school jurisdictions for provision of counselling and other mental health supports.

Ensure all schools display appropriate local cultural artifacts and signage in local indigenous language.

Ensure all staff members receive a cultural orientation to the communities in which they live and work.

Work with 3N community partners to improve access to local mental health support personnel. Inventory and make staff aware of on-line mental health resources.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY TWO:

To ensure all students graduate with dignity, purpose and options, having mastered the Core Competencies of the mandated BC curriculum; Literacy, Numeracy, Thinking and Communicating.

System Performance Targets

All students achieve 90% school attendance or better.

All students benefit from positive expectations of their ability to learn with appropriate instruction and supports.

All primary students achieve or exceed proficiency in literacy, numeracy, and thinking skills by the end of Grade 3.

All Intermediate students achieve or exceed proficiency in literacy, numeracy, and thinking skills by the end of Grade 9.

All students attain enough credits to graduate within 6 years of entering Grade 8.

Based on available evidence, as outlined in the status report in Appendix B, the following strategies should be added

Develop a mandate and terms of reference for the Indigenous Council which focuses its efforts on the improvement of student learning outcomes

Engage parents and community in a process to understand and support the need to improve student attendance.

Based on available evidence, as outlined in the status report in Appendix B, the following strategies should be retained;

Establish a common assessment framework, timetable, and tools for literacy and numeracy across the district.

Increase teacher and support staff knowledge about learning supports and individualized education plans.

Intentionally embed indigenous content into instructional processes and curriculum.

Provide in service training and professional development to improve literacy and numeracy instruction.

Identify and purchase learning resources with indigenous content

Incorporate indigenous language, symbols, and real-life applications into literacy and numeracy instruction.

Supplement traditional textbooks and current resources with manipulative and experiential learning opportunities.

Validate and foster indigenous ways of knowing and expressing learning.

Adopt a district wide approach to improving writing and speaking skills.

Use instructional strategies that make steps in problem-solving, decision-making, and message creation explicit.

Strengthen and build on the 3N Partnership

STRATEGIC PRIORITY THREE:

To ensure our school system remains safe and sustainable by making effective and efficient use of every available human, capital, and fiscal asset.

System Performance Targets

All annual budgets are both balanced and sustainable.

Annual operating surplus equals at least 3 % of the annual budget.

80% of all school-based school personnel are retained for at least three years.

An evergreen Long-Range Facilities Plan exists to guide the management and maintenance of all capital assets.

Based on available evidence, as outlined in the status report in Appendix B, the following strategies should be retained;

IMPROVING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION	OPTIMIZING FINANCIAL RESOURCES	MAXIMIZING CAPITAL ASSETS
Aggressively market geographic, cultural, economic, and educational advantages of working in the Stikine School District. Re-design and maintain the district website to include an employment and Human Resources portal. Develop and implement a Longterm Strategic Housing Maintenance and Improvement Plan. Periodically assess employee satisfaction, and support and professional growth needs. Institute a Service Recognition Program. Leverage and expand partnerships with neighbouring school districts; for professional development and employee support services. Initiate an on-boarding program for new teachers.	Align annual budget development and decisions with identified student learning needs and established priorities. Monitor spending patterns and adjust, as necessary, to achieve desired outcomes. Ensure tendering and procurement processes are aligned with best practice. Invite input from education partners, staff, students, and the public during the District's budget development process	Continually assess facility conditions and learning spaces in support of safety, efficiency and effectiveness, suitability for intended purpose, and intentional visibility of local culture. Implement a planned Preventative Maintenance Schedule. Create a renewal or replacement schedule for all capital assets, including vehicles and equipment. Ensure heating, lighting, and ventilation systems are efficient and environmentally sustainable.

LOOKING AHEAD

The goals and strategies outlined in the Board's 2022-2026 strategic plan represented our highest aspirations for the students, families, and communities served by School District 87 Stikine. Further they were intended to build on many positive aspects of the district's unique history and location; and to create, for both students and staff, a sense of purpose, hope, and direction for the district's future. In reviewing that plan in Fall 2026, it became evident that many of the challenges facing students remain, just as many of the strategies to address them had not been effectively implemented. The Board and its new leadership team have recommitted to the strategic priorities, refreshed the plan to reflect that commitment, and reinforced for all that creating student learning success is the primary function of the school system.

The windshield is bigger than the rearview mirror for a reason.

Increased economic activity and new ground-breaking partnerships about Indigenous territory rights will bring new opportunities and prosperity to the region where School District 87 is located. The School District itself will continue to evolve and grow; as will the demands and expectations placed on it by its communities, its families, and its partners.

The Board recognizes the need to incorporate this necessary evolution into its strategic planning process and is therefore committed to periodic strategic plan renewal. To that end the Board's strategic plan and the operational plans that support it will be reviewed annually and adjusted to meet students' needs and aspirations, and the new realities of life in the Stikine.

Appendix A

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Review of mission, vision and values

As part of the 2026-2030 strategic planning process, the Board of Education, management team, and school-based leaders, reviewed the District's MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES statements, originally developed in 2010, and significant refinements were made. The mission statement was revised to actively promote diversity and inclusion, to address the need for high expectations and to reinforce the focus on student learning. The vision statement was revised to have more of a future focus and to make explicit a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. Values statements were worded as "I statements" to improve clarity, inclusion, and ownership.

Engagement, Environmental Scan, and Evidence Review

The engagement activities for the revised strategic plan included:

A review of student achievement results and an environmental scan process were conducted with the Board.

Principals and vice-principals were engaged in several sessions, one a joint working session with the Board, others with Senior Leadership. An environmental scan was completed as part of these sessions as well.

Community engagement sessions were held in all five communities served by the school district, with separate sessions held in each with local First Nations leaders, parents and community leaders, and with school staffs.

In each session, participants and district staff reviewed some of the District's achievement data; including attendance data and literacy and numeracy data on a school-by-school basis. Overall graduation rates and appropriately masked data about students with special needs were also shared.

There continues to be a high level of congruence in the responses of the Board, management staff, school personnel, students and parents about challenges faced and aspirations held for Stikine students.

Planning Principles

The Board and district staff of School District 87 (Stikine) are committed to the planning principles outlined in the British Columbia Framework for Enhancing Student Learning. District staff also articulated guiding principles for its local strategic planning process that are congruent with the district's values.

Creating student success is our core function.

Human, fiscal, and capital assets must be deployed effectively to support student success.

Local Indigenous history, culture, and ways of knowing, being, and doing, must be respected, celebrated, and infused in our schools.

Strategic Direction

The results of the engagement process and the planning principles were reviewed by the Board and management team in December 2025/January 2026. Consensus was established that due to numerous changes in District and school-based leadership, much of the momentum on the previous strategic plan had lost and that there were significant gaps in the information available to determine the extent of any progress. The three areas of priority focus that had been part of the previous strategic plan still required significant attention. Efforts were made to refine the goal statements and to establish targets to support them. Previously identified as;

Student Learning (Literacy, Numeracy, Thinking and Communicating)

Student Health and Well-being (Indigenous Identity and Pride, Creating Belonging and Resilience, Physical and Emotional Wellness)

School System Sustainability (Employee Recruitment and Retention, Optimizing Financial Resources, and Maximizing District Facilities)

These goals were reordered and refined as outlined in the body of this document.

The Board reviewed and finalized a draft strategic plan in a workshop in early 2026, approved the use of a new mission statement, and formalized its approval of the plan in a subsequent board meeting.

APPENDIX B**SD87 Stikine Strategic Plan 2021-2026 STATUS REPORT December 2025****Priority 1: Student Learning, Communicating and Thinking**

Strategy	Status	Notes
Intentionally embed Indigenous content into instructional processes and curriculum	In progress.	The School Growth Plans indicate ongoing work in this area, and the District Principal and Curtis are providing leadership and support.
Engage parents and community to support improved student attendance	Incomplete	There is no evidence that anything other than required attendance monitoring is happening.
Establish a common assessment framework and timetable for the district,	In progress	A framework has been developed. Direction and coordination of its requirements have been limited.
Increase teacher and support staff knowledge about learning supports and IEPs	In Progress	The schools still identify this as an area where support is needed. The District Principal is providing ongoing leadership and support in this area
Add an educational leadership position to district staff	Complete	Originally a Director position and a District VP were added. Currently three District Principal positions have been created and filled.
Provide in-service training to improve literacy instruction	In Progress/Ongoing	School Growth Plans indicate this is still a mandated and necessary focus.
Identify and purchase learning resources with Indigenous content	In progress	District Principal is conducting an inventory and continuing to purchase resources.
Incorporate Indigenous language, symbols, and real-life applications into numeracy instruction	In progress	TCG has provided Tahltan numeracy posters. A reporting tool for teachers and more professional development is planned.
Supplement textbooks with manipulative and experiential learning opportunities	In progress/ongoing.	On the land activities/ elders in schools help fulfill this strategy.
Acquire and implement a common assessment tool for numeracy	In progress	The new DP's are reviewing assessment tool options
Provide PD in numeracy instruction for all staff	Incomplete	School feedback and assessment results identify this as a area of high need
Validate and foster Indigenous ways of knowing and expressing learning	In progress	The efforts of district leaders are having an impact but there is still work to be done to improve ownership and buy in from school-based personnel
Adopt a district-wide approach to improving writing and speaking skills	Incomplete	Growth Plan analysis suggests that schools are still making local decisions

Use instructional strategies that make problem-solving and decision-making explicit	Minimal progress	There is little evidence to suggest that this is happening. More emphasis is required.
Encourage alternate ways of expressing or representing learning	In progress	Teachers likely do this as part of their instructional planning. There is no evidence that it is being tracked.

Priority 2: Student Health and Well-being

Strategy	Status	Notes
Develop outdoor learning activities	In progress.	On the land activities/ elders in schools help fulfill this strategy. As do field trips.
Expand the elders-in-schools program	Complete	
Continue engagement with 3N partners for student success	In progress	The 3N partnership is foundational although local efficacy varies. The mandated Indigenous Education Council structure will provide another avenue for engagement.
Ensure staff understand Truth and Reconciliation responsibilities	In progress.	School and District leaders provide leadership and support in making this a priority. Staff turnover makes this an ongoing challenge, even though it is prioritized in staffing processes.
Provide training in trauma-informed practice and Violent Threat Risk Assessment	Complete/ Ongoing	There was work done on this during the first three years of the current plan. This is an ongoing priority and is being supported and led by the District Principal.
Develop partnerships for counselling and mental health supports	In progress/ status uncertain	More data required.
Display cultural artifacts and signage in Indigenous languages in all schools	In progress	TNG has provided posters for numeracy.
Encourage daily physical education in all schools		More info required
Improve access to local mental health support personnel	In progress	The creation and filling of the designated District Principal position has been a tremendous boost in this area. The workload and expectations of the position remain high.
Inventory and share online mental health resources	Incomplete but in progress	This is labour - intensive work. Until this current school year there was insufficient manpower to make much progress.

Priority 3: Effective and Efficient District Operations

Strategy	Status	Notes
Aggressively market advantages of working in SD87	In progress/substantially complete	The ability to recruit high quality candidates for the District principal positions suggest this is improving. Maintaining connection with the northern and rural recruitment and retention initiative has also helped.
Re-design and maintain district website with HR portal	Incomplete	The workloads of the Secretary Treasurer and HR leadership did not permit much progress. This should remain a priority.
Develop and implement a long-term housing maintenance plan	Incomplete	This work has not yet been initiated but is definitely a priority,
Align annual budget with student learning priorities	In progress	The current fiscal realities will force some difficult choices and student learning needs to be the main focus of each spending decision
Monitor spending patterns and adjust as needed	In progress	Same as above. As well, we are currently in a structural deficit so expenses need to be aligned with revenue
Ensure tendering and procurement align with best practices	In progress	The District has been following public procurement best practices and utilizing BC Bid
Invite input during budget development process	Incomplete/uncertain	To date, budgets have been prepared by the ST and reviewed by the Superintendent before presenting to the Board. School-based staff and the community must be included, going forward
Implement a preventative maintenance schedule	Incomplete/uncertain	There is unwritten schedules for some assets, like vehicles but all assets like septic, wells and HVAC systems need better documentation and processes
Create renewal/replacement schedule for capital assets	Incomplete	There is not an LRFP in place the purpose of is to identify assets and create planning around. This remains a large priority for Operations.
Ensure heating, lighting, and ventilation systems are efficient and sustainable	Incomplete	Significant work has been done on modernizing these systems however the LRFP will document sustainability
Institute a service recognition program	Incomplete	Incentives for retention are needed: this should remain a priority.
Expand partnerships for PD and employee support	In progress	Working with provincial programs (SET-BC, POPARD, PSO) to provide in-person and virtual student and class-wide services, and support
Initiate onboarding and mentoring for new teachers	In progress	Events and supports were provided during the first three years of the plan. Progress has stalled with turnover in leadership positions.

Final Draft

3-NATIONS AND SCHOOL DISTRICT 87 EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

VISION

A sustainable partnership between the 3-Nations and School District 87 to achieve proud, successful, culturally vibrant communities engaged in life-long learning.

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Kaska, Tahltan, Tlingit Nations and School District 87 acknowledge their sacred and shared responsibility for the care and learning of children and families.

A new wholistic and community-based approach requires full commitment and accountability by all partners in order for all children, to realize their potential and have the success they deserve. The School District, Nations, and communities are ready for this commitment.

The responsibility for students to attain the success they deserve is the owned responsibility of the entire community, Nation and region.

A cornerstone of this new partnership is to collectively address long-standing barriers and act on coordinated joint-solutions.

PURPOSE

This framework provides the mandate to develop the action plans, activities, monitoring tools and resources required to achieve our shared vision.

OBJECTIVES

Our objective is to encompass a wholistic approach that enhances the learning success, protects and strengthens the unique cultural identity, and supports the wellness of the whole child.

To do this, the partners will establish structures and processes that:

Develop a responsive learning environment that is culturally relevant for children at all stages;

Utilize community networks to support the school in meeting the needs of families;

Nurture and promote effective communication between family, school and community;

Welcome, promote and encourage community engagement and involvement in the education of children;

Support the successful transition from high school into career and post-secondary education;

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Increased sense of confidence and pride within our children and communities;

High levels of respect and empathy demonstrated between school community members

School systems of accountability in line with First Nation's ways of knowing

Increased sense of prestige as evidenced by interviews with students

Increased competence in one's ancestral language

First Nations ways of knowing integrated across the curricula

A K-12 scope and sequence for cultural knowledge for all students ➤ Frequent opportunities to display pride in one's ancestry

Increased community engagement and involvement in life-long learning;

All students frequently exposed to culturally relevant experiences

All students exposed to experiences that facilitate living in the Stikine

Community members visible in the educational lives of children assisting with their learning

Evidence of increased education success;

Dogwood Graduation rates consistently above the provincial average

Improved overall academic performance as evidenced by a range of assessments

Increased attendance rates for all grades with student attendance rates of 90% or better ➤ Increased levels of self-regulation by students

A collaborative approach to early childhood development;

All preschool aged children able to access quality early childhood programs

Increased school readiness as evidenced by an early development indicator

Increased collaboration between the SD 87 and the 3 Nation service providers;

Quick and effective community responses to children and families in need

First Nation's ways of knowing integrated into all curricular areas

Opportunities for academic support for students outside of the school within the greater community ❖ Enhanced curriculum which includes relevant cultural components for all grades;

Frequent opportunities to display pride in one's ancestry

All students frequently exposed to culturally relevant experiences

All students exposed to experiences that facilitate living in the Stikine

First Nations ways of knowing integrated into curricular areas

Successful graduation from career and post-secondary education programs;

Annual orientation to post-secondary institutions

Successful transition to post-secondary as evidenced by first and second year completion rates

ACCOUNTABILITY

Tahltan, Kaska and Tlingit Nations are responsible for the wellbeing of their membership. Therefore, their involvement in education is critical to the success of their children.

School District 87 is responsible for delivering education services to students in the Stikine Region public schools as per the School Act of BC.

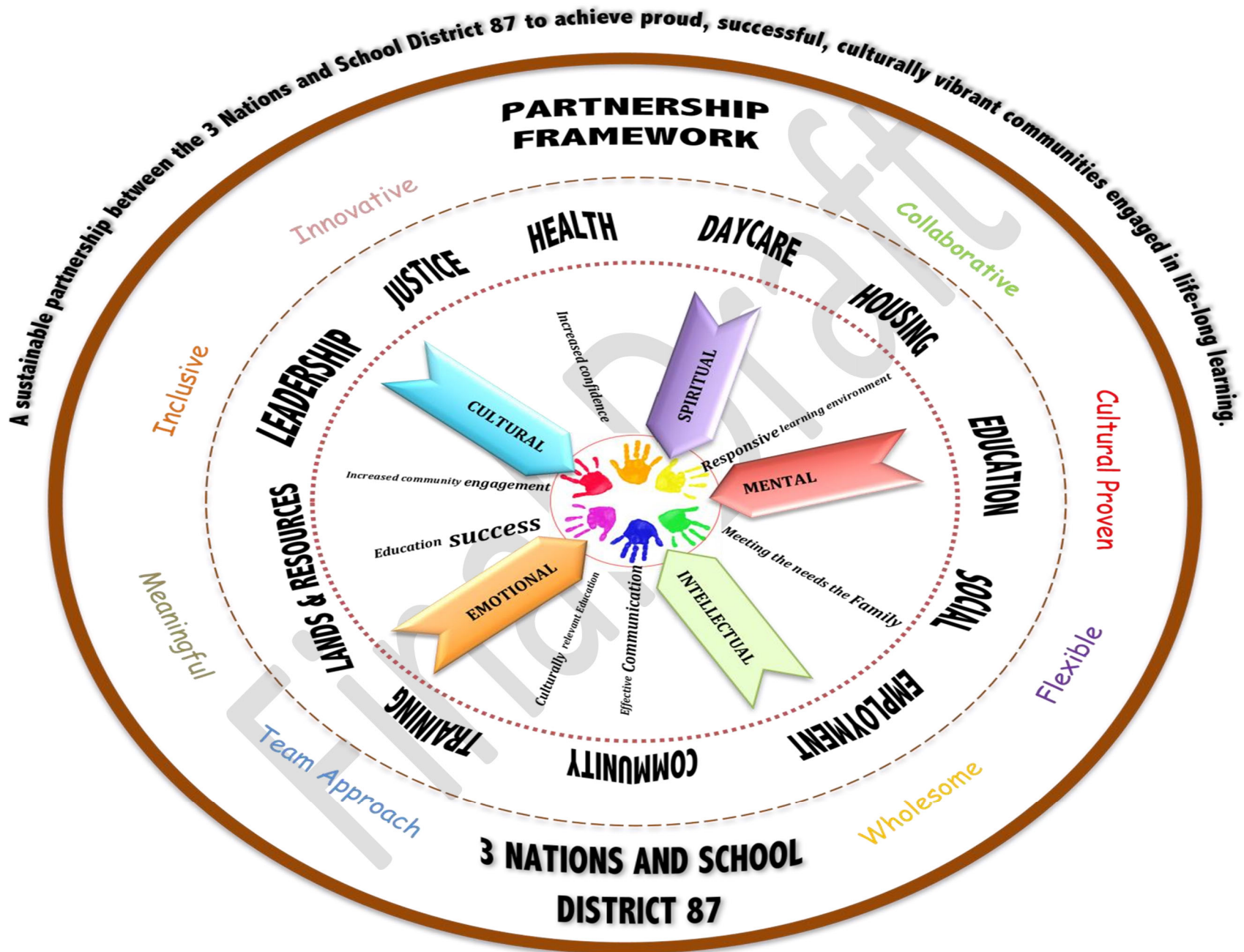
MEMBERSHIP

The partners include:

- 1.1. Daylu Dena Council
- 1.2. Dease River First Nation
- 1.3. Iskut Band Council
- 1.4. Kaska Dena Council
- 1.5. Tahltan Band Council
- 1.6. Tahltan Central Government
- 1.7. Taku River Tlingit First Nation
- 1.8. School District 87

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The implementation of the collective vision and objectives is governed as follows:



8.1 Leadership Team

The Leadership Team's responsibilities are to ratify this Framework, strengthen the partnership and support the Community Based Teams to take actions that achieve the objectives of this Framework.

The Leadership Team will conduct its business as a board, receive an annual report, meet no less than once per year, and consist of the following 7 members:

- 1.1. Deputy Chief: Daylu Dena Council
- 1.2. Chief: Dease River First Nation
- 1.3. Chief: Iskut Band Council
- 1.4. Chair: Kaska Dena Council
- 1.5. Chief: Tahltan Band Council
- 1.6. President: Tahltan Central Government
- 1.7. Spokesperson: Taku River Tlingit First Nation
- 1.8. Board of Education Chair: School District 87

8.2 Proxy

In the event the designated Leader representing one of the Nations or School District is unable to attend a meeting, a proxy will be appointed by the Leader, who has written authority to make decisions on behalf of their community and/or organization.

8.3 Community Based Teams

The Community Based Teams are responsible for ensuring the achievement of the Vision, Purpose and Objectives of this partnership.

A lead administrator of each community (Executive Director, General Manager, Band Manager, Education Manager etc) and a school district administrator will co-manage the Community Based Team.

Agendas, work plans and actions will be based on the Objectives of this Framework.

The representatives are chosen based on their role and familiarity with education, social and community issues and proven ability to work collaboratively and build strong partnerships.

Knowledge keepers will be invited to the Community Based Team when required.

The Community Based Team will meet no less than 4 times per year.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

As leaders and community representatives there is an obligation and expectation to set an example by demonstrating high ethical and professional standards in their own conduct. This conduct must instil confidence and trust as it relates to this Framework.

Maintaining confidentiality around sensitive and personal information is critical to the integrity of the Kaska, Tahltan, Tlingit and School District.