



550-7<sup>th</sup> Street – Room 130  
Nanaimo, BC V9R 3Z2

# Newsletter

#morethanschool

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Website: <https://la.schools.sd68.bc.ca>

Follow us on Twitter: @LearningAltern1

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Brett Hancock,  
District Principal of  
Learning Alternatives

January 2020

LEARNING ALTERNATIVES

The School Newsletter will also be available to students and parents on-line on the Learning Alternatives website.  
If you do not have access to a computer, there will be paper copies available at either school sites for you or your child to pick up.

## BRETT'S COMMENTS

Dear Learning Alternatives Family,

My hope was that the two week break from school allowed for a few days to sleep in, indulge in some junk food, spend time with those you love and recharge your battery for what will be an amazing 2020. During two weeks without students, staff and parents, I reflected on how grateful I am to have each of you in my life. Together we will soar to great success in 2020.

January will be an action packed month. We have Numeracy Assessments, Literacy Assessments, Report Cards, Family Nights and much more. The end of January marks the halfway point for this school year. Unlike other secondary schools, we are on a linear schedule. This means even if you have not completed your courses by the end of January 2020, you will not fail or be withdrawn, you still have until June 2020. With Learning Alternatives, you are able to complete a course at any point during the school year, not just January and June.

This January we will focus on setting goals for our 2020 journey. Many of our students and staff find it helpful to follow the SMART Goal guidelines. This means that each goal should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound. Whatever model you choose to help support you with your 2020 goals, please know that you have a principal and team of staff that are here to support

you in any way that we can.

<b>S</b> Specific	<b>M</b> Measurable	<b>A</b> Attainable	<b>R</b> Realistic	<b>T</b> Time-bound
Do: Set real numbers with real deadlines.  Don't: Say, "I want more visitors."	Do: Make sure your goal is trackable.  Don't: Hide behind buzzwords like, "brand engagement," or, "social influence."	Do: Work towards a goal that is challenging, but possible.  Don't: Try to take over the world in one night.	Do: Be honest with yourself- you know what you and your team are capable of.  Don't: Forget any hurdles you may have to overcome.	Do: Give yourself a deadline.  Don't: Keep pushing towards a goal you might hit, "some day."

I give you my word, that there is nothing I won't do to support students and families. If there is ever anything I can assist with, please know that I can be reached by email at [bhancock@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:bhancock@sd68.bc.ca) or on my cell at 250-713-6240 to help answer any questions or concerns that you may have.

Your Friend,  
Brett

## IMPORTANT DATES IN JANUARY

January 6	-First day of classes for 2020
January 7	-Woodlands SBT @ 8:15am -PAC @ Woodlands @ 6pm
January 8	-Barsby SBT @ 8:15am -Staff Meeting @ Barsby @ 3pm
January 13	-Staff Committee @ Woodlands @3pm

January 14	-Woodlands SBT @ 8:15am
January 15	-Barsby SBT @ 8:15am
January 16	-Meet and Eat @ Wellington from 4-6pm (Students, Staff and Families are all welcome)
January 22	-Provincial Grade 10 Literacy Assessment @ 10am
January 23	-Provincial Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment @ 10am -No Formal Classes
January 24	-No Formal Classes
January 29	-White Hatter Presentation 6-8pm @ John Barsby (more info on pg. 3)
January 30	-Family Photo Night 4-6pm @ Woodlands. Be sure to book your time slot through the office 250-753-6331.

## PAC

Our first meeting of 2020 was on Tuesday, January 7 and allowed our caring group of parents to allocate funds for some exciting trips, groups and learning initiatives. Our next meeting is on Wednesday, February 5 at Woodlands at 6pm. Please use the fire lane off Strathmore Street to access our entrance. Look for the Learning Alternatives sign.



## SYEYUTSUS

Meet and Eat- Syeyutsus: Walking Together in Reconciliation

Date: January 16th, 2020

Time: 4:00 - 6:30 PM

Where: Wellington Secondary

To gain a deeper understanding of Syeyutsus through story.

Please note that this is a different format than the previous Meet and Eats and all participants will be attending the same facilitated breakout sessions.

Please join us for this unique Indigenous learning opportunity. All staff, students, and families are welcome to attend. If you want to attend, please register at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSePesq1M4c1cKi2Mv1vEqK4hUdTSXgUEGAtGR4KjNc6AojmXg/viewform>

## BUILDING BELONGING FOR OUR DIVERSE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Our school recently updated our school goals to better align with our strategic plan and most importantly, to better support students, staff and families. Our school goals are:

- Innovative instruction and assessment for all students and parents.
- Building belonging for our diverse learning community.
- Leading land based learning, environmental stewardship and sustainability.
- Truth and reconciliation.

Each week our staff participate in a trivia challenge. Last week's challenge was to share how you build belonging for our diverse learning community. I wanted to share some of the beautiful work that our teacher Amelia Bieling leads:

**Guiding Question:** How do you create a safe, caring and healthy learning/working environment that is inclusive of the diversity of our entire learning community?

**Answer:** In my teaching practice, I work to be flexible with my resources and delivery so that I can differentiate and personalize learning. Particularly in math, I like to incorporate open-ended questions with the "low floor, high ceiling" approach – this allows all learners to participate and can push the thinking of those who are capable. I try to make learning student centered by posing questions which are relevant to real world situations and are approachable for all levels. I encourage teamwork to complete "big questions" so that students can bounce ideas off each other and all can participate in some way. I also encourage peer teaching and believe I have created a classroom where students are willing to take risks in asking and answering questions (yes, that is Alex on the next page, teaching a fractions

review). I try to make activities as hands on as possible, using manipulatives like algebra tiles, baking banana bread, making soap to talk about chemical reactions, and constructing a massive plant cell analogy model together.

I am working to personalize learning by creating a website that has different resources to support the learning of those who do not wish to engage as actively in person. I also provide diverse ways for students to gain course credit in ways that interest them, such as participating in the Blade Runners training, going on field trips, or undertaking an inquiry project of their choosing.

I work to offer our students a range of activities that suit different skills, abilities, and preferences. I am currently the staff support for the After School Sports and Art Initiative (ASSAI) and the school leader for the Energy Cup Challenge. I enjoy getting our students hyped up for our daily morning walks and encouraging students to try new art activities such as acrylic painting or sewing. I am not an artistic person, but I love trying new things and I am open with my attitude of trying and not always succeeding. I think it is important for them to see that you do not need to be the best at something to enjoy doing it, and that learning new things is part of daily life that extends beyond the learning that takes place at school.

I am receptive to feedback from students and colleagues and always eager to learn and improve as a teacher. This shows my students I care about their learning, their needs, and their success. Being less than 4 years in to my teaching career, I feel like I have so much to learn as an educator. I am excited to participate in the NLSP Numeracy Group and be a Learning Leader at our school. I feel very fortunate to be in such a supportive school with a lot of opportunities and inspiring colleagues such as Breigh and Chad. These opportunities will help me collaborate to gain resources, ideas, and skills to provide more inclusive and diverse teaching strategies.



**WHITE HATTER PRESENTATION**

Do you feel overwhelmed and under-informed on how to best talk, mentor and participate with your children in this ever-evolving digital world? This presentation with the White Hatter will provide parents with a practical digital toolbox that contains the most current evidence-based research, information and online trends they need to know, to help their child proactively understand the enabling power of digital technology. He will also provide parents with the knowledge and information needed to teach their children how to mitigate the sometimes unintended consequences of high risk/undesirable online behaviour.

<https://www.thewhitehatter.ca/>