



Chuntoh Education Society

Yunk'ut Whuts'odul'eh • We Learn From Our Land

2019-2023 Strategic Plan



Introduction

What is the Chuntoh Education Society?

The Chuntoh Education Society (CES) is a PK-12 educational outreach program working in partnership with the John Prince Research Forest (JPRF). The word “chuntoh” is Dakelh for “forest” or “woods”. CES programs focus on the bridging and complementary aspects of Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK) and western natural resource management practices. JPRF, located in the Omineca region of British Columbia, is the largest contiguous research forest in North America. It is co-owned and co-managed by the Tl’azt’en Nation and the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC).

Why PK-12 Outreach?

In 2002, Tl’azt’en Nation observed low engagement and performance of elementary students in the areas of IEK and science. This resulted in fewer students enrolling in science streams at the secondary level, and fewer yet expressing interest in sciences as a post-secondary pursuit. Additionally, youth were less invested in land-based activities (eg. traditional seasonal harvesting practices, outdoor recreation).





Target Audience

Our target audience includes PK-12 learners and educators, as well as Elders and Knowledge Holders in the Fort St. James Ecomanagement District.



Governance

CES was registered as a non-profit society and charity (S-0044521) in 2002. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors with representatives from JPRF, UNBC, College of New Caledonia (CNC), Tl'azt'en Nation, Nak'azdli Whut'en, and School District 91 (SD91).

CES Mission

CES supports PK-12 science programming that is experiential, culturally relevant, and place-based (incorporating local ecosystems and economies).

CES Vision

We will improve retention of local youth in science streams through secondary school, encourage them to pursue post-secondary studies in the natural sciences, and support their return to our communities as natural resource managers and stewards.



CES Values

◆ Respect for the Land

We value maintaining and strengthening our connection to and stewardship of the land that sustains us.

◆ Respect for the People

We value Indigenous Ecological Knowledge, which represents millennia of land and resource management practices in an ever-changing ecosystem.

◆ Respect for Learners

We value diversity in learning preferences and honor the many ways individuals grow through discovery, exploration and sharing.

CES Strategic Goals

1. **INVITE** families with children aged birth-6yrs to participate in nature exploration.
2. **ENGAGE** PK-7 learners in hands-on, culturally-relevant outdoor science.
3. **MENTOR** G8-12 learners in project-based science and post-secondary transition.
4. **SUPPORT** Elders and educators with co-teaching models and strategies.
5. **SUSTAIN** support to our communities through capacity development.



Goal 1:

Invite families with children aged birth-6yrs to participate in nature play.

Objectives

I. Increase early childhood exposure to plants and animals in our local ecosystems.

II. Improve physical and social emotional health through nature-based play.



Partners

- ◆ Fort St. James Early Child Development Committee
- ◆ David Hoy Strong Start
- ◆ Fort St. James YMCA
- ◆ Sum Yaz, Tl'azt'en Nation
- ◆ Nak'azdli Childcare Centre

Strategies

a) Host free, monthly Nature Walk & Talks, organised by an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) and co-guided by an Elder and a forester or biologist.

b) Provide grant-writing and coordination support for outdoor, nature-based play spaces in the communities of Fort St. James and Tache.



Goal 2:

Engage K-7 learners in hands-on, culturally-relevant outdoor science.

Objectives

- I. Weekly Elder days at each school.
- II. Weekly outdoor learning days at each school.
- III. Increase environmental inquiry and stewardship in K-7 learners.



Partners

- ◆ David Hoy Elementary
- ◆ Eugene Joseph Elementary
- ◆ Nak'albun Elementary

Strategies

- a) Hire Elders to visit with each school weekly, in the outdoor and/or Carrier classroom(s).
- b) Provide financial, grant writing and coordination support for gear, equipment, supplies, transportation, meals, and teacher-on-call (TOC) expenses associated with outdoor learning and field trips.



Goal 3:

Mentor G8-12 learners in project-based science and post-secondary transition.

Objectives

- I. Increase G8-12 participation in STEAM events.
- II. Increase retention of G10-12 learners in science streams.
- III. Increase the number of G12 learners transitioning to post-secondary studies.



Partners

- ◆ Fort St. James Secondary School
- ◆ UNBC
- ◆ CNC

Strategies

- a) Provide financial, grant writing and coordination support for gear, equipment, supplies, transportation, meals, and teacher-on-call (TOC) expenses associated with ES11/GEO12 (6 credits) and Dakelh (3 credits).
- b) Provide specialized mentorship for students participating in citizen science and district, regional, provincial, and national STEAM events.
- c) Hire 2 or more summer students for job-based learning and experience.
- d) Offer an annual G12 scholarship for post-secondary FN and/or NRM studies.



Goal 4:

Support Elders and educators with co-teaching models and strategies.

Objectives

- I. Increase Elders and Knowledge Holder participation in local schools as partners in Education for Reconciliation.
- II. Increase outdoor education planning, management and reporting skills in Elders and educators.



Partners

- ◆ SD91
- ◆ Tl'azt'en Nation
- ◆ Nak'azdli Whut'en
- ◆ CNC
- ◆ UNBC

Strategies

- a) In consultation with all partners, create a Guideline for Working with Elders and Knowledge Holders.
- b) Provide targeted, specialized support for "school champions".
- c) Create a path to education employment for Elders and Knowledge Holders.
- d) Offer Cinnabar Research Station as a venue for continuing education (CE), professional development (PD) and Elder & Educator retreats.



Goal 5:

Sustain support to our communities through capacity development.

Objectives

- I. Prioritize cultural recovery and preservation with the creation of authentic educational resources.
- II. Increase each school's on-site, outdoor education capacity.
- III. Increase CES self-generated funding.



Partners

- ◆ Tl'azt'en Nation
- ◆ Nak'azdli Whut'en
- ◆ District of Fort St. James
- ◆ Regional District Bulkley Nechako

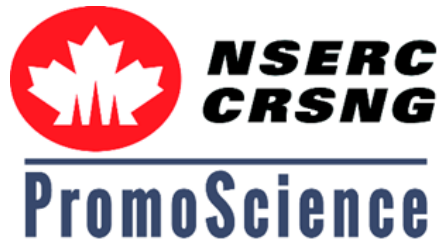
Strategies

- a) Seek federal funding partners for cultural revitalization activities that result in local, authentic educational resources.
- b) Provide funding, grant writing and coordination support for each school to increase on-site, outdoor education resources and capacity.
- c) Conduct a feasibility and sustainability study on the development of a cultural interpretative centre, the profits of which would be distributed to local schools to support activities that align with CES' vision and values.



Nenachailya ♦ Thank You

Funding & Project Partners



Tanizul Timber Ltd

