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## **Thorsby Junior-Senior High School Assurance Plan 2024-2025**



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### School Profile:

- Thorsby Junior-Senior High School (TJSHS) is located 40 minutes southwest of Edmonton in the Town of Thorsby, AB, and is a part of the Black Gold School Division. Historically the school's enrollment ranges from 175 to 200 students however, the area is currently experiencing a population bulge and our roll is approaching 215 students from grades 7-12. These students are split fairly evenly between junior and senior high. About 40% of students live in the town with the rest reaching school from the surrounding rural area by bus or personal transportation.
- The school currently has 13 teachers (including two administrators) and 10 support staff.
- TJSHS offers a wide range of courses at both the junior high and high school levels. At the junior high level, we offer the regular core classes and have expanded our option classes by incorporating quarters and including a day one/two rotation. This allows each student to experience six to eight options, which include: Cosmetology, Industrial Arts, Basketball, Volleyball, Adulting 101, App Inventor, Creative Writing, Dance, Outdoor Education, Active Living, Photography, Driver;s Education, Sports Medicine, Band, 3D Printing & Design, Art, Yoga, Foods, Computer Studies, and Guitar. To offer a broader range of academic options our high school cycle physics (even starting year) and chemistry (odd starting year) as our student population cannot support running those courses each year. We offered the following options during the 2023/2024 school year at the High School level: Art, Cosmetology, Personal Psychology, Learning Strategies, CTS Combo, Yoga, Foods, Industrial Arts, Introduction to Sports Medicine, Sports Performance, Registered Apprenticeship Program, and Work Experience. We are supported via our in-reach opportunity where we are able to offer: 47 core classes, 30 options, and 114 CTS credits. TJSHS also operates a Dual Credit program through Black Gold School Division which has partnerships with Lethbridge Polytechnic, University of Lethbridge, Olds College, Northern Lakes College, Lakeland College, Portage College, and SAIT.
- **School Mission Statement:** In creating a positive and productive learning environment, Thorsby Jr. Sr. High School, together with students, parents, and the community will strive to have students reach their potential.
- **Vision Statement:** To create an atmosphere where students, staff, parents, and the community are engaged in learning.
- **Core Values:** Staff, students, and the learning environment at TJSHS are to be:
  - Safe
  - Accountable
  - Bold
  - Respectful
  - Engaged
  - Student-Centered



## **Celebrations:**

### **Overall**

- Student attendance has been strong.
- The continued integration of Google Classroom has made it easier to manage student work.
- Increasing parent literacy in the Google Suite of programs and PowerSchool has improved the effectiveness of parent-school communication
- Staff maintain focus on supporting mental health and building relationships with students from a trauma-informed perspective as described in our mental health plan.
- School communication has increased with respect to academics (see above) but also on positive student experiences and events in the school.
- We have increased the variety of options courses that students can take
- We have shifted to quarterly options changes, which, in combination with our Day1/Day 2 allows students to experience up to 8 options /year
- Our breakfast program has returned and serves our students at the start of the day; this includes a grant from PC Financial to support our program.
- We continue to actively address food insecurity. This includes providing Work Experience opportunities to support our Breakfast and Lunch programs.
- We have a strong relationship with the Leduc Food Bank that supports our Breakfast Program, Snack Attack Program and Lunch Program.
- Staff are extremely engaged and care about each other and the school community.
- Teachers' completion of the TOSREC, HLAT, and MIPI assessments for screening student needs for literacy and numeracy went well at TJSHS.

### **Academics**

- Semestered options now with a Day 1/Day2 schedule continue to provide an opportunity for more depth within our option classes as well as a more even distribution of time for each option (see above).
- Projects in industrial arts such as pens, clocks, pepper mills, glass etching, and fishing lures are keeping students engaged.
- Addition of CNC machine has broadened the scope of construction and fabrication.
- Addition of a 3D printer has broadened the scope of our Com and Tech options.
- Access to personalized, hands-on guidance counselling for post-secondary school is provided for each grade twelve student, and we are working to expand access to grades 10 and 11 as well.
- Math Olympics and Problem of the Week continue to support numeracy within the building.
- A Post-Secondary Fair through ELAA was held in October and was attended by students from Thorsby, Warburg and Calmar. It was well attended and well received by all students (with requests for it to happen again next year). This will be in December for the 2024 school year.
- Students traveled to the Skills Canada competition.

### **Co/Extracurricular**

- Sports participation included all major sports.
- Handball was introduced at both the junior and senior high levels.
- THS and Warburg combined travel club ran a school dance and our spirit team organized theme days and participation-based assemblies.
- Increased work with the BGSD MHC team (Angela DeFrancesco and Hailey Glover) on Thursdays. This has grown to include lunchtime activities to increase positive school culture.
- Our GSA is running again and is well attended.

- Ski Club continues to grow.
- Intramurals are back and popular during lunch.
- Field trips included a trip to the Citadel, Camp Warwa, Hockey Hooky, and the Reynolds Museum.

Challenges:

- We continue to have low completion rates for the Assurance Survey by parents. This was exacerbated by there being three separate surveys sent to parents last year: Assurance, Rural Schools Survey, and Principal Evaluation Survey all at the same time.
- To fall in line with staffing there are multiple split-grade classes which can cause some difficulty in providing instruction to multiple groups at a time.
- EA support from Jordan's Principle has once again been a slow-process and has increased our challenges with supporting some of our most vulnerable students.
- There are some struggles ensuring students are in the correct stream despite prior course marks and teacher recommendations.
- The music program was on hold while our music teacher was on leave. We introduced a guitar option this year, and are seeking to rebuild the band by partnering with the elementary to introduce band back into the school.
- Grade seven and eight classes, while separated for Science, Language Arts, Math, and Social, are combined for Physical Education.
- Students continue to struggle with making connections between their current schooling and long term aspirations.
- Chronic and compounding mental health challenges are an ongoing issue, exacerbated by the lack of easy-to-access community-based support.
- Chronic tardiness and absences of a handful of students
- Student cell phones continue to be a distraction for some students.
- Balancing student mental health with teacher mental health and their finite capacity.
- Continued Assurance Survey dissonance muddies areas for targeting
- Encouraging students to use their time free from instruction for accessing tutoring or guidance counselling.

### School Council Message

We are fortunate to have a School Council made up of dedicated parents, guardians, and caregivers who volunteer their time and expertise to help create a nurturing, engaging, and dynamic school environment. We believe that school is not just a place for academics but a space where children grow, explore their interests, make lasting friendships, and develop their talents—all within a supportive and caring community.

Our work is done in close collaboration with the school administration, teachers, and school trustees. Together, we strive to foster and support initiatives—such as social events, workshops, facility improvements, and more—we aim to enrich the school experience for students and families alike.

The School Council also plays an active role in shaping decisions at the administrative level. We meet regularly to provide feedback on key matters. Our involvement extends to the Council of School Councils, where we contribute to broader discussions about education within the division. We are committed to supporting the voices of parents, caregivers, and guardians in this forum.

Fundraising is another important aspect of our work. The funds we raise help to support various student-focused initiatives, from purchasing educational resources to funding special events and activities that enrich learning experiences. We couldn't accomplish this without the generous support of our community, and we are incredibly grateful for the continued involvement and contributions of all who participate.

This year, we were pleased to support a number of exciting events that helped enrich students' school experiences. Some highlights include the Grade 12 trip to the Citadel Theatre, "Hockey Hooky," a career exploration trip to the Skills Canada competition, and a memorable Grade 9 excursion to Camp Warwa. These activities not only provided students with valuable opportunities to learn and grow outside the classroom, but also helped strengthen the sense of community that makes our school such a special place.

As we look ahead to the next school year, we are excited about the continued work of the School Council in supporting our students, teachers, and the wider school community. We invite all parents, caregivers, and guardians to get involved and help us build an even stronger, more connected school community in 2024/2025.

School Council Chair: Cheryl Filipic

## Supplemental Alberta Education Assurance Measures - Overall Summary Spring 2024

Authority: 2245 The Black Gold School Division

Measure	Black Gold School Division			Alberta			Measure Evaluation		
	Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Year Average	Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Year Average	Achievement	Improvement	Overall
<a href="#">Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams)</a>	47.1	0.8	n/a	52.7	3.5	n/a	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
<a href="#">Drop Out Rate</a>	2.3	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
<a href="#">In-Service Jurisdiction Needs</a>	78.2	82.6	82.6	81.1	82.2	83.0	Low	Declined	Issue
<a href="#">Lifelong Learning</a>	74.4	74.7	74.9	79.9	80.4	80.7	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
<a href="#">Program of Studies</a>	82.8	83.0	82.1	82.8	82.9	82.9	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
<a href="#">Program of Studies - At Risk Students</a>	79.5	79.5	79.5	80.6	81.2	81.5	Very Low	Maintained	Concern
<a href="#">Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate</a>	61.8	62.6	61.2	70.7	71.9	70.0	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
<a href="#">Safe and Caring</a>	86.3	87.2	87.0	87.1	87.5	88.1	High	Maintained	Good
<a href="#">Satisfaction with Program Access</a>	72.2	74.9	73.5	71.9	72.9	72.7	Low	Declined	Issue
<a href="#">School Improvement</a>	74.2	74.6	71.6	75.8	75.2	74.7	Intermediate	Improved Significantly	Good
<a href="#">Transition Rate (6 yr)</a>	51.8	54.9	53.0	60.1	59.7	60.0	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
<a href="#">Work Preparation</a>	78.7	79.9	80.8	82.8	83.1	84.0	High	Declined	Acceptable


**School Goal COMPLETE:** Increase students' and parents' understanding of the impact of school learning on careers and life after high school.



**Alignment with Division Priorities** [\(Success\)](#)

*Priority 1 - Success - Goal 3 - A greater number of students achieve learning outcomes and have the knowledge and skills they need to make informed education and career/life choices.*

**Timeline:** 3-year goal: 2021-2024

**Rationale:** In reviewing the assurance survey results of 2020-2021, we noticed that our 4-year and 6-year transition rates are areas of concern. Since that time, we have seen a positive trend in these results, a signal that our efforts are proving fruitful. That said, this data indicates that many of our students do not pursue or complete post-secondary programs. Further, parents' results were notably lower than staff and students in the area of work preparation. This may impact students' perception of the value of their school work. We would like to increase students' intrinsic motivation, and increasing students' perception of the value of their school learning is one strategy we will pursue. Our hope is that increasing our focus on career and life connections will inspire students to see how the curriculum connects to their goals and to pursue further learning after high school.

Timeline	Strategies	Supporting Data
<p>Year 1 (21/22)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly staff meetings will have an agenda item that focuses on making connections between school learning and careers.</li> <li>Require staff to build a meaningful lesson into two of their units which focuses specifically on career connections to the material being learned.</li> <li>Host a virtual University/College info night for students to find information about post-secondary options.</li> <li>Monthly, refresh the career board which displays career options for students.</li> <li>Continuing to use opportunities with RAP and Work Ex employers.</li> <li>Create a Google Classroom to share information with students and guardians about post-secondary opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Assurance Survey results will be reviewed for an increase in the following metrics.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work preparation</li> <li>4-year transition</li> <li>6-year transition</li> </ul> </li> <li>Survey the school council about their perspective on how well the school provides opportunities for students to explore a broad variety of possible careers and how well the school prepares students for post-secondary.</li> <li>Implement a student survey that explores whether students value their school learning and see connections to life outside school.</li> </ul>

<p>Year 2 (22/23)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with the items from year 1.</li> <li>• Create a section in the weekly newsletter to highlight students who have pursued unique careers.</li> <li>• Staff will make a concerted effort to regularly encourage students to think about what they want to do and to seek out support from the guidance counselling staff.</li> <li>• Communicate to parents the career counselling support we provide in the school through a section in our monthly newsletter.</li> <li>• Provide additional information in the monthly newsletter about career options to provide this information to parents.</li> <li>• Host a career fair to highlight the jobs available after post-secondary</li> <li>• Incorporate My Blueprint into grade 9 health so students starting to focus on career possibilities.</li> <li>• Have staff build a meaningful lesson into all of their units that focus specifically on career connections to the material being learned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Assurance Survey results will be reviewed for an increase in the following metrics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work preparation</li> <li>○ 4-year transition</li> <li>○ 6-year transition</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Survey the school council about their perspective on how well the school provides opportunities for students to explore a broad variety of possible careers and how well the school prepares students for post-secondary. Compare the results to year one.</li> <li>• Implement a student survey that explores whether students value their school learning and see connections to life outside school. Compare the results to year one.</li> </ul>
<p>Year 3 (23/24)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with the items from year 2.</li> <li>• Through Visible Learning, staff will intimate career connections to the material being learned.</li> <li>• Increase familial connection to MyBlueprint through newsletter inserts, sharing of family account webinar, and register family accounts on grade 9 orientation night for all incoming grade 10 parents.</li> <li>• All students at TJSHS will have accounts. In grades 7-9, it will be introduced and utilized in health for career exploration. In grade 10, it will be utilized in CALM for career exploration. In grades 11 and 12, students will utilize MyBlueprint to explore post-secondary options and work on their transition planning. This will also be supported by providing staff with PD through the “Train the Trainer” presentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Assurance Survey results will be reviewed for an increase in the following metrics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work preparation</li> <li>○ 4-year transition</li> <li>○ 6-year transition</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Survey the school council about their perspective on how well the school provides opportunities for students to explore a broad variety of possible careers and how well the school prepares students for post-secondary. Compare the results to year two. This will likely be the first year that we will start to get an indication in our 4-year transition if we are making improvements.</li> <li>• Implement a student survey that explores whether students value their school learning and see connections to life outside school. Compare the results to year two.</li> <li>• Measure MyBlueprint familial access by accessing how many accounts we have. Measure MyBlueprint student access through confirmation of accounts by teachers.</li> </ul>

**School Goal:** Increase students' and parents' understanding of the impact of school learning on careers and life after high school.

**Review, Reflection, and Progress on Goal:** As careers continue to evolve this goal we need to be revisited, however in terms of addressing whether we have successfully met the goal, as set out above, our APORI results would indicate that we have made progress in this area. As a result we will intensify our focus on our other existing goals.

**School: 3222 Thorsby Junior Senior High School**

**Province: Alberta**

	Thorsby Junior Senior High Sch													Alberta							
	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		Measure Evaluation			2019		2020		2021		2022	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Achievement	Improvement	Overall	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
4 Year Transition	30	44.0	29	33.8	30	42.6	33	64.7	22	64.3	Very High	Improved	Excellent	44,980	40.9	45,351	40.5	46,242	41.2	47,660	40.2
6 Year Transition	31	66.7	23	33.0	30	65.4	29	61.9	30	57.3	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable	44,832	60.3	44,983	60.0	44,966	60.3	45,342	59.7


**School Goal 1:** Improve communication with parents about positive student attributes, resources available to students at the school, and enhancements to school culture.

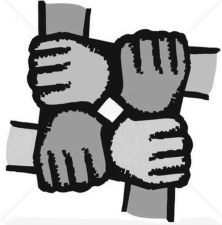
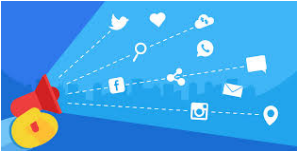
**Alignment with Division Priorities** ([Engagement and Partnerships](#))

*Priority 3 - Engagement and Partnerships- Goal 1 - Families and school communities are engaged in their children's education.*

**Timeline:** 3-year goal: 2023-2026

**Rationale:** Based on a lack of engagement on the Assurance Survey and continued feedback from the School Council, which we take to be indicative of the school community as a whole, we are seeking to continue to improve parent knowledge of programs and services within the school, along with positive parental engagement on the whole.

Timeline	Strategies	Supporting Data
<p>Year 1 (22/23)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will send a letter of introduction and communicate course information at the start of each semester</li> <li>• Weekly communication to parents of school events communicated through the weekly newsletter and an increased social media presence.</li> <li>• Our weekly newsletter will focus on highlighting the programs and services within the school, as well as highlighting post-secondary opportunities such as Open Houses, application deadlines, scholarships, and other relevant content.</li> <li>• Continue to encourage staff to contact each student's parent by phone or email with positive communication about something their child is doing well at in school.</li> <li>• Use social media, the weekly newsletter, school council and School Messenger to encourage completion of the Assurance Survey</li> <li>• At each staff meeting, take the first 10 minutes to get teachers sending home positive contacts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Assurance Survey results will be reviewed for an increase in parents' knowledge and understanding of the following metrics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Access to Supports and Services</li> <li>◦ Parental Involvement</li> <li>◦ Satisfaction with Program Access</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anecdotal information will be documented from the school council about their knowledge of the supports and services available to students at the school early in the school year.</li> <li>• The school council will be surveyed at the end of the school year about their knowledge of the supports and services available to students. Information will be gathered about how they became aware of the support and services.</li> <li>• Look for an increase in the overall completion rates of the Assurance Survey by parents</li> </ul>

 <p>Year 2 (24/25)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with all the strategies of year 1</li> <li>• A staff meeting item each month will focus on students who are achieving growth and success.</li> <li>• Each staff member will make four positive contacts with home each month.</li> <li>• The principal's message at the parent council will highlight one program or school service each month.</li> <li>• Explore removing the technology barrier for the Assurance survey.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Determine what requesting a paper copy looks like.</li> <li>◦ Determine which households would prefer a paper copy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Assurance Survey results will be reviewed for an increase in parents' knowledge and understanding of the following metrics.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Access to Supports and Services</li> <li>◦ Parental Involvement</li> <li>◦ Satisfaction with Program Access</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Look for an increase in the overall completion rates of the Assurance Survey by parents</li> </ul>
 <p>Year 3 (25/26)</p>		

**School Goal 1:** Improve communication with parents about positive student attributes, resources available to students at the school, and enhancements to school culture.

**Year 1 Review, Reflection, and Progress update:** This goal did not yield the desired outcome of increased participation with regards to the Assurance Survey. I believe, and can confirm from anecdotal conversations with parents and members of the parent council, that this was hampered by the distribution of three separate surveys related to aspects of the school: The Assurance Survey, Rural Schools Survey, and Principal Survey.

As a result, the goal and the strategies to achieve it will be continued for a third year. With the participation in the two next Assurance Surveys forming the evidence for its success, or otherwise.

**SCHOOL GOAL 2: Visible Learning Focus:** We will strive to improve teacher clarity by focusing on learning and progress through the three essential questions of “What am I learning?”, “Why am I learning this?”, and “How will I know if I have learned it?”

**Alignment with Division Priorities** ([Success](#))

**Timeline:** 2023-2025

**Rationale:** We chose this focus as it is the cornerstone of Visible Learning. It is when this is established that we can springboard to other elements within Visible Learning.

**NOTE:** Given the plethora of areas that fall under the Visible Learning umbrella the district has chosen to focus on teacher clarity with emphasis on specific learner outcomes and success criteria. This echoes the targets we identified last year allowing us to continue with this goal.

Timeline	Strategies	Supporting Data
October 4-5, 2023	Build foundation Knowledge and Awareness of Visible Learning concepts.	All administrators can identify the Ten Mind Frames along with researched evidenced high-yielding practices for student achievement.
Oct 5- Dec 19, 2023	Data collection on the three essential questions related to teacher clarity.	Will return to the next Visible Learning PD session with evidence related to teacher clarity.
Jan 8- June 28, 2024	Using the data collected, formulate an action plan on how to improve teacher clarity within the school. Strategies to support this can include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For numeracy: the addition of vertical learning spaces in our classrooms</li> <li>• For numeracy: increasing active review activities</li> <li>• For numeracy: creating opening routines in classrooms that will foster critical thinking and shared thinking to diversify</li> <li>• For literacy: continue with individual literacy intervention for those below grade level</li> <li>• For literacy: focus on pulling out key terminology from the curriculum to create a stronger focus within our teaching</li> <li>• For literacy: create a continuum of writing support for grades 7-12, including rubrics.</li> </ul>	Will re-administer the survey process to identify if strategies have made a positive impact.

2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October PD day for all staff.</li> <li>• November: revisit October PD</li> <li>• November: dovetail PD with individual growth plans where possible.</li> <li>• November-June: develop database of quality learning intention and success criteria statements to serve either as directly useful to staff or as templates for writing new ones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact with content presented by Corwin to give staff first-hand experience with the material and undistilled instruction</li> </ul>
2025-2026	Further steps will be determined following data gathering from the 2024-2025 school year.	Further steps will be determined following data gathering from the 2024-2025 school year.

**School Goal 2:** We will strive to improve teacher clarity by focusing on learning and progress through the three essential questions of “What am I learning?”, “Why am I learning this?”, and “How will I know if I have learned it?”

**Review, Reflection, and Progress update:** We have made progress with respect to aligning our practice with this goal. As we continue to grapple with the implementation of visible learning we will focus on more concrete, APORI report-centric, determinants of success.