
Thorsby Junior-Senior High School Assurance Plan 2022-2023



Thorsby Junior-Senior High School Assurance Plan - 2021-2022

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. The school's enrollment is typically stable, ranging from about 175 to 190 students. That said, the school currently has a population of 197 students from grades 7-12. There are 113 students in grades 7-9, and 94 students in grades 10-12. About 38% of students live in the town with the rest attending from the surrounding rural area. 46% of our students are transported to school by bus. The school currently has 12 teachers 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 regular core classes and options that include: Cosmetology; Industrial Arts; Band; Film Studies; 3D Printing & Design; Art; Yoga; Foods; Computer Studies; and Guitar. Our high school course offerings do change minimally from year to year. We cycle physics (even starting year) and chemistry (odd starting year) as our student population does not necessarily support running those courses each year. We offer the following options during the 2022/2023 school year at the High School level: Art; Computer Science; Cosmetology; Esthetics; Yoga; Forensics; Foods; Industrial Arts; General Music; 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 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 movement to more digital assignments and the use of Google Classroom has made it easier to manage student work.
- The entire staff maintains a continued focus on supporting mental health and building relationships with students from a trauma-informed perspective as described in our mental health plan.
- Overall school communication has increased; focussing on positive student experiences and events in the school.
- We have increased the number of courses that students could take (additional options courses)
- We have increased the number of teachers to reduce class sizes.
- We have increased the number of Educational Assistants through Jordan's Principal to provide optimal support for students who are complex as well as general classroom support.
- A new guitar option has been created and is going well.
- Our breakfast program has returned and serves our students at the start of the day.
- All staff are extremely engaged and care about each other and the school community.
- Teachers' completion of the 3T, HLAT, and MIPI assessments for screening student needs for literacy and numeracy went well at TJSHS.

Academics

- Semesterd options have been brought back. This is providing an opportunity for more depth within our option classes and has been embraced by both students and teachers.
- New projects in industrial arts such as pens, clocks, pepper mills, glass etching, and fishing lures are keeping students engaged.
- Excellent personalized, hands-on guidance counselling for post-secondary school is provided for each grade twelve student.
- Math Olympics and Problem of the Week have been started to support numeracy within the building.
- A Career Night was created and well attended. Next year we would like to expand this into a Career Day.

Co/Extracurricular

- The return of sports is greatly appreciated and we see a number of students participate in various sports offered, with a marked increase at the junior high level.
- THS Students Union is meeting again; decorating the Crash Area for holidays, and organizing theme days.
- Increased work with the BGSD MHCB team (Angela DeFrancesco) on Mondays. This has grown to include lunchtime activities to increase positive school culture.
- Our GSA is running again and is well attended.
- Ski Club has returned and is growing.
- Intramurals are back and popular during lunch.
- We are beginning to explore field trip options once again.

Challenges:

- We have a relatively low completion of the Assurance Survey by parents
- There are larger class sizes at grade 7, 11 and 12 levels which have students with various learning needs. This has resulted in some split-grade classes which can cause some difficulty in providing instruction to multiple groups at a time.
- The challenge of not being able to offer extracurricular sports last year may have led to some lower participation numbers in senior high sports teams this year.

- There are some struggles ensuring students are in the correct stream despite prior course marks and teacher recommendations.
- The music program is on hold while our music teacher is on leave. We are still offering a guitar option, and are researching some other options for the band.
- Grade seven phys ed has been combined.
- There is evidence of some academic COVID gaps this year. There are also challenges with the level of socialization and maturity in our junior high classes.
- We are increasingly aware of the mental health challenges of our students. There is a lack of easy-to-access support for this in the community.
- We have challenges with some students being chronically late.
- Student cell phones continue to be a distraction for some students.
- It is challenging to find a balance between student mental health and teacher mental health.
- On the Assurance Survey there appeared to be a dissonance in some areas between the satisfaction level of students and teachers and the perceived levels of parents in some of the metrics.
- The other challenge is the low completion rates of parents of the Assurance Survey with only 15 completing it this year.
- Students often prefer to take their spare for socializing instead of accessing tutoring or guidance counselling.

School Council Message:

Our school council was excited to return to in-person meetings this year. As a community, we have experienced many challenges in the past few years, but parents, teachers, and students continue to work together to find opportunities to move forward effectively.

As a council, we work to support the school in different ways. We participate in discussions at the administrative level, such as our council meetings, giving feedback on school calendars and providing input into the future direction of Black Gold Schools at the Council of School Communities gatherings each year. We provide a space for the parent's voices and work with school staff to ensure the best experiences for our children. We raise money through our fundraising body to purchase items to enhance student experiences in learning - something we wouldn't be successful at without the support of our amazing community. We also try to advocate for our children and schools when the need arises to ensure the best support for our children's education, whether this is with the division or different levels of government.

Even as we come out of the big challenges of the pandemic, many other challenges remain. Only by working together - parents, schools, and students - can we continue to move forward in creating the best educational experience. Communication is and will be key to carrying out this plan and we are excited to see new strategies and ideas within it to do this.

We want to thank all the school staff for their continued commitment to connecting with students and families and creating space for discussion and ideas. With these connections, we will be stronger moving forward and our children will be the ones to benefit the most.

School Council Chair: Kimberley Chung

Supplemental Alberta Education Assurance Measures - Overall Summary

Spring 2022

School: 3222 Thorsby Junior Senior High School



Measure	Thorsby Junior Senior High Sch			Alberta			Measure Evaluation		
	Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Year Average	Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Year Average	Achievement	Improvement	Overall
Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams)	n/a	n/a	48.6	n/a	n/a	56.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Drop Out Rate	1.6	1.7	2.6	2.3	2.6	2.6	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
In-Service Jurisdiction Needs	82.6	66.7	75.2	83.7	84.9	85.1	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Lifelong Learning	76.5	85.4	88.5	81.0	82.1	72.0	High	Maintained	Good
Program of Studies	73.8	86.5	74.9	82.9	81.9	82.3	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Program of Studies - At Risk Students	76.6	86.4	88.6	81.9	82.7	84.8	Very Low	Declined Significantly	Concern
Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate	74.2	71.8	65.4	70.2	68.0	66.4	High	Maintained	Good
Safe and Caring	88.0	92.6	90.2	88.8	90.0	89.2	High	Maintained	Good
Satisfaction with Program Access	73.2	75.3	81.4	72.6	71.8	74.1	Intermediate	Declined	Issue
School Improvement	58.1	89.2	75.4	74.2	81.4	81.3	Very Low	Declined Significantly	Concern
Transition Rate (6 yr)	65.4	33.0	52.5	60.3	60.0	59.8	High	Maintained	Good
Work Preparation	80.8	83.3	93.8	84.9	85.7	83.5	High	Declined	Acceptable


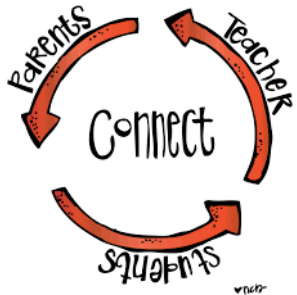

School Goal 1: Improve communication with parents about positive student attributes, resources available to students at the school, and enhancements to school culture.

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: 2-year goal: 2021-2023

Rationale: After reviewing our Assurance Survey results we noticed a number of areas where both teachers and students rated what was happening within the school as significantly higher than what parents were reporting. This was confirmed in meetings with the school council when discussing endeavours within the school, positive school culture, and various areas of support. In this discussion, the parents on the council (our most involved group of parents) did not have a lot of knowledge about the support and services the school provides to the students. We also only had 15 parents complete the Assurance Survey which indicates lower engagement.

Timeline	Strategies	Supporting Data
<p>Year 1 (21/22)</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will send a letter of introduction and communicate course information at the start of each semester • Weekly communication to parents of school events communicated through the website and an increased social media presence • The monthly newsletter will focus on highlighting the programs and services in the school • We will begin sharing the monthly newsletter using both the website and SchoolMessenger • A counsellor's section in the newsletter will focus on services available to students • Start 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. • Use social media, the website, school council and School Messenger to encourage completion of the Assurance Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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"> ○ Access to Supports and Services ○ Parental Involvement ○ Satisfaction with Program Access • 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. • 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. • Look for an increase in the overall completion rates of the Assurance Survey by parents
<p>Year 2 (22/23)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with all the strategies of year 1 • A staff meeting item each month will focus on students who are achieving growth and success. • Each staff member will make 4 positive contacts with home each month. • The principal's message at the parent council will highlight one program or school service each month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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"> ○ Access to Supports and Services ○ Parental Involvement ○ Satisfaction with Program Access • A final survey will be given to the school council to measure if they have an increased understanding of the resources available to students. • Look for an increase in the overall completion rates of the Assurance Survey by parents

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

Review, Reflection, and Progress update:


School Goal 2: Increase students' and parents' understanding of the impact of school learning on careers and life after high school.


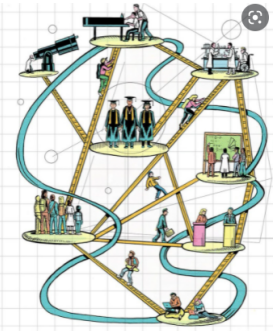
Alignment with Division Priorities [\(Success\)](#)

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

<p>Year 2 (22/23)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with the items from year 1. • Create a section in the weekly newsletter to highlight students who have pursued unique careers. • 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. • Communicate to parents the career counselling support we provide in the school through a section in our monthly newsletter. • Provide additional information in the monthly newsletter about career options to provide this information to parents. • Host a career fair to highlight the jobs available after post-secondary • Incorporate My Blueprint into grade 9 health to get students starting to focus on career possibilities. • Have staff build a meaningful lesson into all of their units that focus specifically on career connections to the material being learned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assurance Survey results will be reviewed for an increase in the following metrics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work preparation ○ 4-year transition ○ 6-year transition • 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. • 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.
<p>Year 3 (23/24)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with the items from year 2. • Require staff to build regular lessons into all of their units that focus specifically on career connections to the material being learned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assurance Survey results will be reviewed for an increase in the following metrics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work preparation ○ 4-year transition ○ 6-year transition • 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. • 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.

School Goal 2: Increase students' and parents' understanding of the impact of school learning on careers and life after high school.

Review, Reflection, and Progress update: