



Smithers Secondary School Growth Plan 2026/2027

SD #54 Mission - To empower all learners to live the challenges of a diverse and changing world.

School Culture - What does it mean to be a Gryphon? What are the traits of a Gryphon?

School Focus - Literacy/Numeracy

Goal - to create a network of understanding and knowledge for students to make relevant, meaningful personal connections to themselves and the world around them.

- Quality assessment of literacy and numeracy at all levels.
- How do we help students become more comfortable with risk/discomfort in problem solving?
- Common/shared vocabulary - community understanding (based on curricular competencies and Bloom's taxonomy)
- Explicitly teaching strategies that support literacy and numeracy: persistence, confidence, new applications, independence, resilience, meta cognition.
- Explicitly teaching reading, writing, vocabulary building, problem solving and specific mathematical applications.

Maintenance of Past Goals (Maintain strategies and continue learning)

- ❖ *To increase the amount of Witsuwit'en culture and language.*
- ❖ *To provide the students with skills / tools to be life-long learners.*

NOIIE - Three-year Inquiry

Our 3-year NOIIE Inquiry brought about new opportunities for professional learning: Over the course of the year, we rethought our CLE and CLE courses for BVLC and Interdisciplinary studies. This is an ongoing process and will continue throughout this third year of the project.

We collaborated as a team with BVLC, SSS and ABED and learned more in depth about our community, our land, and our place so that tasks are meaningfully connected to students' experiences and place. We had to increase our knowledge of our community, services, and instructional practices and to plan and to facilitate events like an employer living library and a health services scavenger hunt. Also influenced by the goals and rationale in the Career Education rationale. We explored the following new learning as a team:

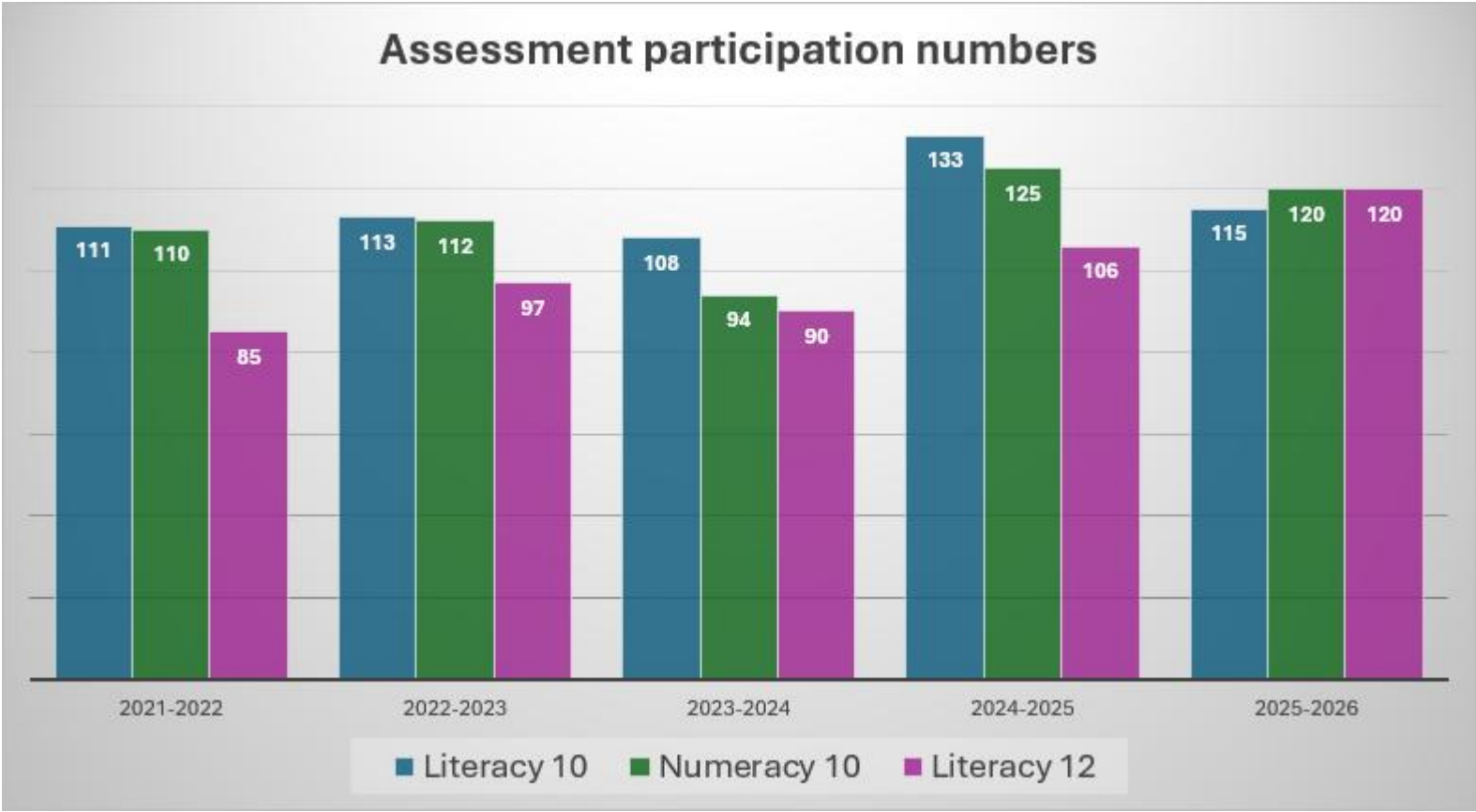
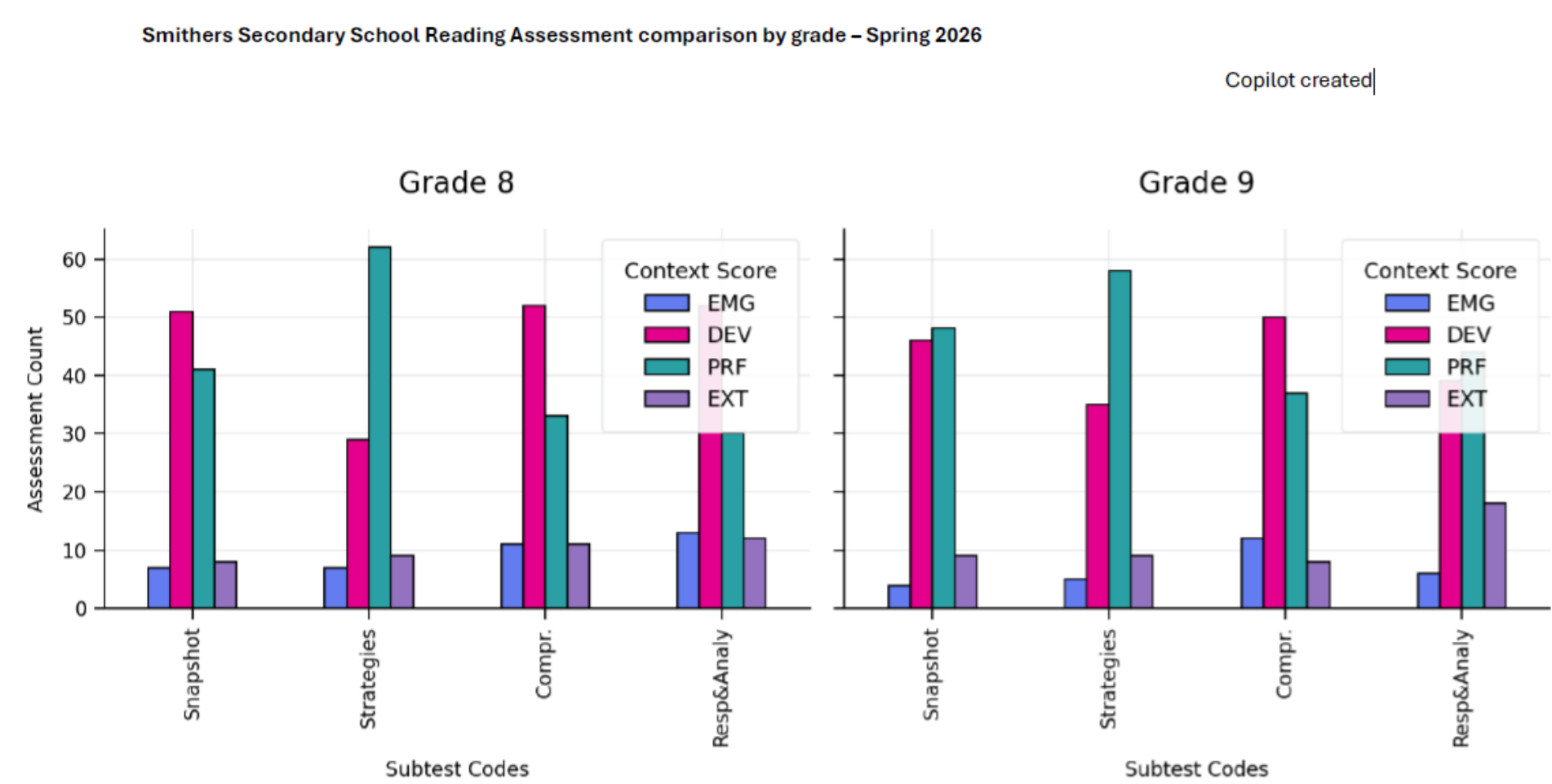
- Transition planning tools - for example - <https://findsupportbc.com/timeline/>
- Digital portfolios that students use to document their learning journeys and become a tool that they can use after graduation.
- Ways to facilitate place-based learning experience.
- Taking time as teachers and individuals to develop a sense of place. Building local knowledge of the historical and current connections between our communities in and beyond the Bulkley Valley.
- We applied the seven learning principles from the conclusion of The Nature of Learning in the overall planning of this three-year project. They are all reflected through the 3 main elements of this project: the instructional approach and the curriculum design, the planning and delivery of the experiences, and students' personal transition plans.

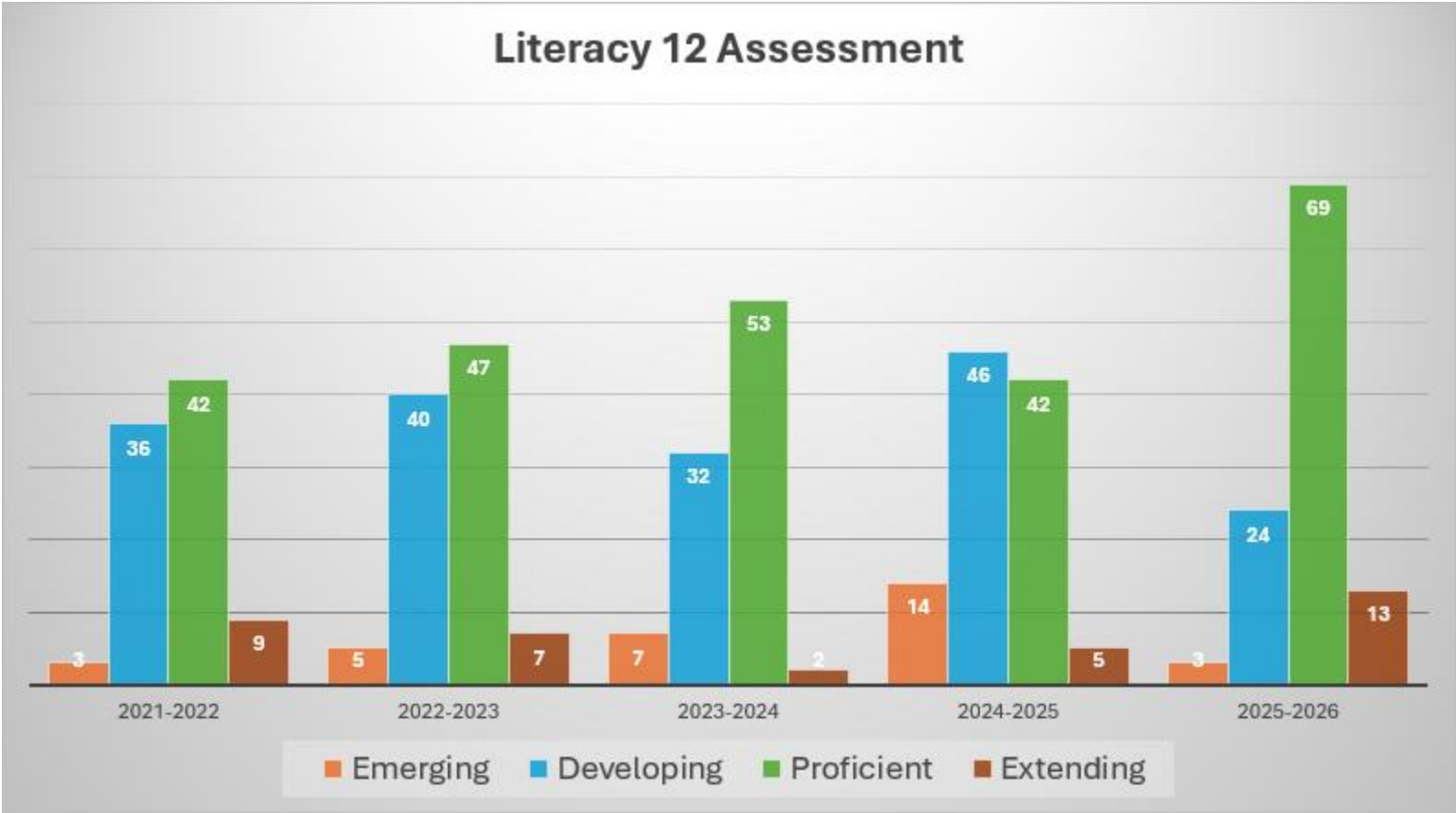
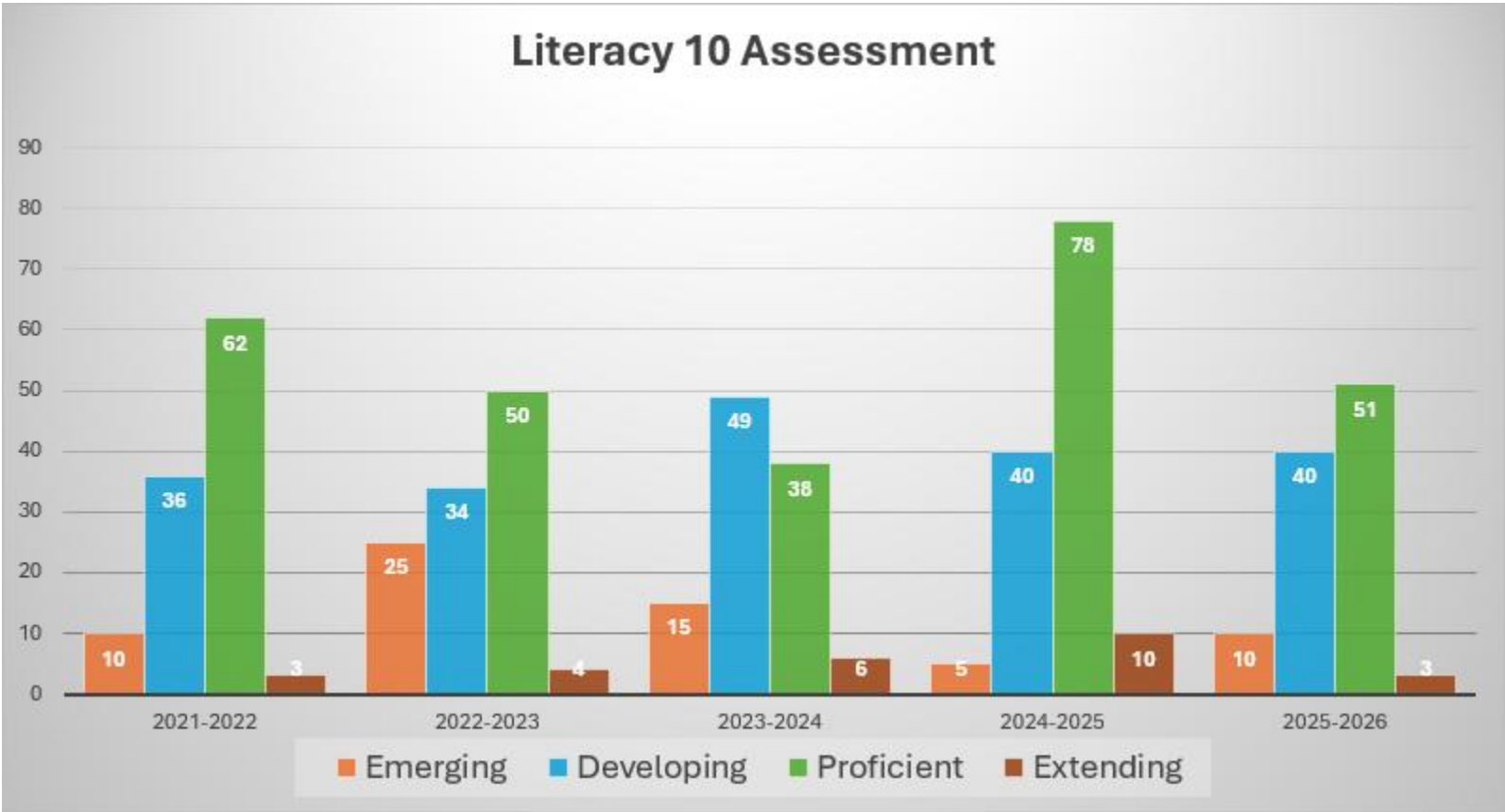
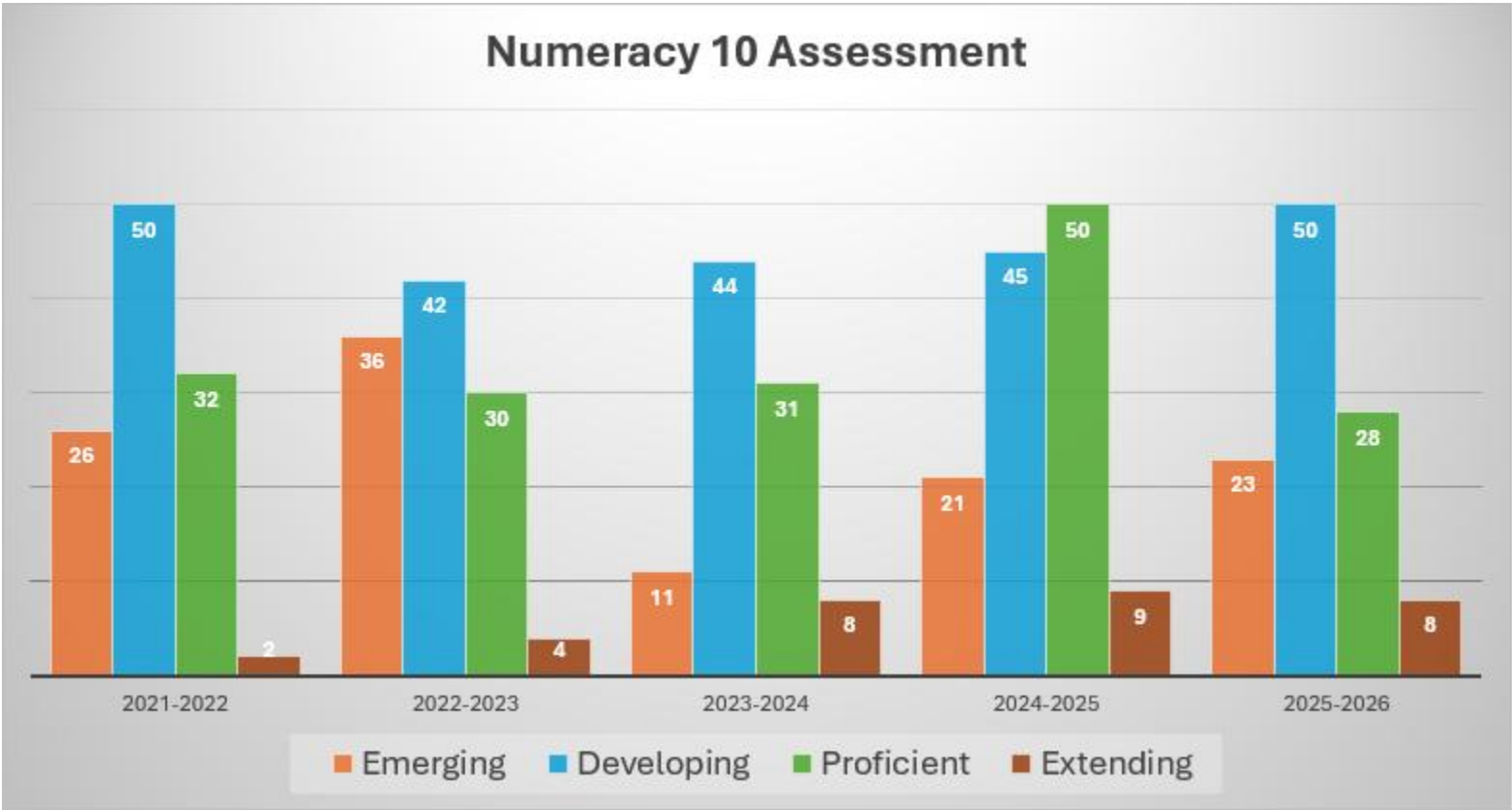
We noticed that many of our students who live off reserve in Smithers and Telkwa and are in vulnerable living situations (poverty and homelessness) work hard to graduate, but once they graduate, they do not have an independent plan that they can follow to become productive and connected citizens in their communities.

We surveyed the students and used the information provided by them to help plan our project and activities.

EVIDENCE

DART 8/9 and Literacy/Numeracy 10 - Assessment results (2021-2026)





Student Interviews - June 2026 - these were completed with grade 8-12 students (approx. 80) and the student feedback was analyzed and discussed on our planning day in September 2026.

Staff noticed (in the interview responses)

How’s it going?

- Students do not understand “the banning” of cell phones and ear buds.
- Most students could name something they enjoy doing at school (clubs, sports, teams, leadership, etc.)
- We are beginning to build a shared language for numeracy and literacy.
- Students can identify Gryphon traits (what it takes to be a meaningful member of society.)
- Our prep for literacy and numeracy assessments shows in better results.
- We are beginning to build key vocabulary in units across curricula.
- Our Core Competency goal setting is more streamlined, and the reflections are more meaningful.
- Students seem to have a better understanding of mental health and that it is important to a sense of belonging.
- Intention of the learning is not always clear.
- Younger students have a harder time understanding the “big picture” statements.
- Students think that earbuds help them focus.
- Most students believe that they have one or more adults in the school who take notice of them and who care for them.
- Students say that they need more concrete examples of quality work.

What’s next

- A better understanding of the impacts of earbuds.
- Make learning intentions clear and less abstract.
- Big ideas can be worded as critical questions.
- Having students become more comfortable accessing adaptive technology.
- Fine tuning the core competency goal setting process.
- Helping students to use and apply important feedback to move their learning forward.
- Explicitly make a connection between classroom assessment and report card marks and comments.
- We are beginning to build key vocabulary in units across curricula.
- Continue building key vocabulary for the classification of curricular competencies from basic recall to critical thinking.