

2024-2027

# **NEW HUMBLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

## **Three-Year Education Plan**





## Message from the Board Chair

*It all starts with a seed.*

New Humble Community School is in its third year as a public charter school. The school and its students have enjoyed many successes in the first three years of operation with a very exciting future ahead. We are excited to showcase how our unique charter goals and future outcomes will ensure success with the domains of assurance under the Assurance Framework. We are confident that by fully supporting our students and staff, and implementing our strategies, we can ensure success, balance, and growth at New Humble Community School.

We are pleased that our charter was approved for a grades seven to twelve program in 2023. The board of directors already has interested students for the junior high program which will be opening for the 2024-2025 school year. The acquisitions of one modular supported by Alberta Education and three modulators funded by school-generated funds and reserves will make the division three program possible. This Education Plan will be vital to ensuring the success of these new grades when modulators are in place to house the increased student population. This change will be reflected in new ideas, new strategies, and continuous improvement.

Our board is committed to open and honest communication with staff and stakeholders to ensure that we are receiving reports and feedback on our methods and outcomes. We look forward to also receiving information about the domains of assurance to continue improving student outcomes. We extend our deepest gratitude to the extensive network of NHCS champions.

Sincerely,

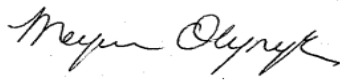
Megan Olynk

Board Chair, New Humble Community School Association

## Accountability Message

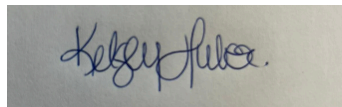
New Humble Community School's Three Year Education Plan was prepared by the Board of Directors in accordance with the responsibilities under the Education Act (2020) and the Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act. This plan was developed in the context of our second year of operation and the Government of Alberta's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used performance results; the information and details of our Capital Plan, previous Education Plan, our current Charter in this plan, as well as acute stakeholder input. We are committed to research-informed innovation, and continuous improvement, and will implement the strategies outlined in this plan to improve student learning and results.

The Board approved the Education Plan for 2024-2027 by board motion on May 22, 2024.



NHCSA Chair

**Megan Olynyk**



NHCSA Vice-Chair

**Kelsey Huber**

## Introduction

The purpose of this Education Plan is to guide the growth and development of New Humble Community School in alignment with the Alberta Education Business Plan (2024-2027); Alberta Education Funding Manual (2024-2027), and Ministerial Order #28/2020 [Education]: Student Learning. This Plan identifies our priorities, measurable outcomes and evidence based strategies to ensure that our students achieve success. This is a three-year, rolling Education Plan.

The vision of New Humble Community School is to foster the growth of each individual learner through innovative academics, stewardship and agricultural literacy. Our mission is to provide learners with a unique educational environment that: expands learning through innovative agricultural and experiential land management education; fosters a joy of learning and instills curiosity and confidence; fully supports and engages their needs, abilities and growth; develops opportunities for genuine collaboration and self-reflection; and is guided by compassionate, hands-on, creative educators who will represent and impart these skills and values in all learners. By keeping these goals and values in mind, we have developed this three year plan, which will guide all aspects of our charter, including determining priorities, outcomes, measures and strategies and more.

## School Profile

New Humble Community School is located in rural Leduc County, at 48469 highway 795.

The name emphasizes the opportunity for the community, students, staff and industry partners to come together to create something new, fresh and innovative. It also signifies the school's commitment to excellence in educating the youngest members of the community.

Our name also honors the history of education in the area. The community had its first school in this location established in 1900, which has always borne the name of its founder and 1st board chair, Thomas Humble.

## Student Growth Chart

Grade	Prior to 2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Kindergarten	0	18	18	21
1	0	16*	23	22
2	0	5*	23	23
3	0	17*	7	22
4	0	11*	22	7
5	0	9*	11*	21
6	0	10*	15*	11
Totals	0	86	119	127

\* - taught in a split grade classroom

Note: The school's population has increased by 46.5% since its opening. There is a waiting list for some grades. The board hopes that added modular classrooms will allow all interested students to attend New Humble Community School in future years. The

projections for 2024-2025 are for 150 elementary students plus 20 junior high students. The Kindergarten cap has been raised from 22 to 25.

## Engagement

Successful school engagement needs to be occurring in many spheres of influence simultaneously. Students must be engaged in their own learning, classes, school and community. Teachers and staff must be engaged in their lessons, the charter goals, their own development and their community. The same follows for other stakeholders. New Humble Community School is proud of our continued achievements in these areas. To paraphrase our Charter School preliminary application, we proposed the name of this school to include *Community*, because we firmly believe that community plays an integral role in education and a healthy society, and that when we support the community and the community supports us back, success will follow.

It is due to the engagement of our community and their communication of priorities and values, that NCHSA applied and was approved for a Charter amendment to offer ECS to grade twelve. Their drive and purpose led to this change.

There are many ways to promote and encourage engagement in the school. At New Humble Community School, we work hard to maintain and increase these relationships with our school families, our wider community, and beyond. We have an earnest School Council, and a very strong Parents' Group society that plans and carries out events, fundraisers, and other programs. Through the Parents' Group, our community can contribute in many ways: various enhancements to learning, fulfilling lists, providing nutrition programs (while following all Public Health Guidelines), helping with field trip costs, hosting seasonal carnivals or events, and others. All of these things are done with the help and support of community members who are engaged with the school.

We are proud to say that we have established a research partnership with Dr. Bonnie Stelmach, Professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta. Dr. Stelmach brings experience and enthusiasm for rural school contexts and parent involvement in schools. Through our partnership and future research studies, we will be able to increase community and wider engagement. Dr. Stelmach has started the study "Triscuit and Pepper Go to School: Elementary School Students' Learning With and From Animals" (in 2023) to learn how the animals at the school support children's academic achievement and life skills development. The research

question for this study is: In what ways does learning with and from farm animals enhance children's curricular and life skills development? This question was developed from the feedback that parents, teachers, staff, and community members provided at the Growing Together community dinner on May 12, 2022. On April 13, 2024 NHCSA Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee hosted the Hand in Hand Humble Roof-Raiser fundraiser, with over 500 attending.

In addition, the Board of Directors hosted a "Town Hall" meeting on March 10th with approximately 75 in attendance to receive feedback on the school's Capital Plan. An excellent conversation occurred regarding the community's priorities considering modular classrooms, school renovation, or a possible new build. The board is planning to hold similar events in the 2024-25 year. School staff also encourage parents and students to visit the barnyard during school events including parent-teacher interviews (student-led conferences) in March of 2024.

Important support also comes from engaged individuals and businesses who want to be part of the school by providing donations of goods or services, or financial support. It is important that our partners, donors and sponsors feel continued engagement with New Humble Community School. It will be a crucial part of all of our committees to ensure that this happens.

Other important areas of engagement include:

Lead Stakeholder	Engaged Stakeholders	Strategies and Methods
School Council	School council members, School Administration (Principal), Staff liaison, NHCSA Board Liaison	Monthly meetings of staff, families and community members allows for engagement and conversation on school direction, planning, challenges and policy.
NHCSA Board	NHCSA Board & Administration, NHCS Staff, NHCS Parents, NHCS Partners & wider community	Public meetings of NHCSA, as well as separate board committee meetings. Engagement from NHCSA board and members of committees (including staff and community members) show transparency and accountability in their actions and direction.
NHCS Parents Society	Parents, Staff Liaison, Community	Monthly meetings of parent volunteers and wider community to plan for fundraising initiatives and priorities.
Communication Liaison - NHCSA Board	Parents, staff, wider community.	Accurate, relevant information on social media. Formal and informal surveys.

TAAPCS	NHCSA and other public charter schools in Alberta.	Regular and special meetings of TAAPCS allows us to build relationships with other public charter schools and advocate for shared beneficial outcomes.
Staff - Board Meetings	Certificated and Non-Certificated Staff	Shared presentations, team building, strategic planning

An exciting initiative by the teachers at NHCS is the development of the “Learning in Action” website that highlights how the school’s charter goals are being showcased within the classrooms. The board feels that is an excellent strategy to demonstrate to the parents and community how the school’s vision is being lived on a day-to-day basis. The teachers will continue to refine this tool as an important component of communicating about the school’s successes and future.

It is also very important that NHCS establishes and maintains a high level of support and engagement back to our wider community. The Board has approved a Greenhouse to continue our hands-on and agricultural focus for the years ahead and it will be completed before the end of the school year. We have built the Humble Hands Legacy Gazebo, a space to honor the lives and legacy of special individuals who have impacted our school and community. We are committed to fostering the betterment and growth of our community outside our school as well as in. We also work at promoting awareness and collecting donations for our local food bank, and other charitable causes such as the Mustard Seed and Hope Mission. We cannot expect engagement and support if we do not engage with and support our community and its needs.

The Board of Directors and the school’s staff were delighted to host a Charter Evaluation Team from Alberta Education on March 19th and 20th. Our partnership with Alberta Education is a critical component of the school’s success. Recommendations from the report are included in this plan.

The board is committed to increasing student engagement which will include a Board-Student Committee that will meet three times per year and plus the Directors will highlight student successes at Board meetings. The board also plans to work with the School Council to see if members are interested in participating in the Student-Board committee .



The board will draw upon multiple sources of input to develop the Three Year Plan including presenting to the School Council requesting input. The Board also sends out surveys to the parents to supplement the Alberta Education surveys that help drive priorities. Multiple Staff-Board meetings have occurred during the 2023-2024 school year and will happen again during the 2024-2027 plan.

## **Domains of Assurance**

Using the domains of assurance framework, NHCSA will identify the areas in which we must establish our process to explore, develop, take action and evaluate. The plans and reports that New Humble Community School Association shall provide to Alberta Education, including this document, as well as our AERRs when they are completed after each school year, shall serve as both products and evidence of our perpetual growth, or continuous improvement. The core documents shall demonstrate our accountability and provide assurance to Alberta Education. Further to this, we declare that these documents, along with our formal research partnership, show that our unique teaching methods can and may be used by other interested educators across the province to enhance student learning and support all areas of education. We are firmly committed to that aspect of the public charter school: that it serves as an example - or even experiment - in education, and that our successful methods be shared in order to elevate learning in our wider communities.



## **Perpetual Growth (continuous improvement)**

Perpetual growth is the very basis of education and life. Our unique focus on agriculture makes us even more keenly aware of this, as it occurs both in nature and our created structures. We will ensure perpetual growth in students, staff, organizational structures, methods, and all other areas through a cycle of continuous improvement.



## Local and Societal Context

The importance of community, in all of its definitions, cannot be underestimated. Not only in terms of crucial support and engagement, but also in that we must fully understand how it affects our students, staff and families. The demographic data, emergent needs and other contextual factors play an important role in ensuring that we understand the needs, interests and motivations of our community, and allow us to establish meaningful and growth oriented DEI commitments.

## Insights from Results Analysis

Results from our AERR are important and one of the key tools used to determine areas for growth, improvement, and success. The report from November 2023 was based on our second school year. Along with the findings of the Alberta Education Charter Evaluation team in March 2023, the AERR has informed some of the changes you will see throughout this Plan. It has provided important insights into where additional data and observations would be valuable.

## Domain One: Student Growth and Achievement

Student learning loss over the past years has been unquestionably detrimental. Students are struggling acutely to meet grade level expectations, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Our Education Plan is designed to meet Alberta Education requirements, including the

Alberta Programs of Study, Student Learning Assessments (SLAs), Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs), and Diploma Examinations.

### **Outcome(s) and Measures**

Outcome:

Teachers and staff will use a variety of methods, including hands-on experiential learning and the lens of agriculture and stewardship, to increase student engagement and respond to the needs of students. The Numeracy and Literacy Team's leadership will be an effective means to reduce the learning gaps identified in our Fall Assessments.

Students will achieve growth in learning and personal development in key areas identified as educational challenges. In addition to key literacy and numeracy skills, students will use agricultural literacy and stewardship concepts to deepen their knowledge retention in all areas of curriculum and life skills.

Students will be engaged, purposeful learners.

First Nations, Metis and Inuit Students 1 - NHCS educators and administration will seek opportunities to expand student understanding and appreciation for Indigenous cultures and perspectives. The staff professional development inservice at Mother Earth Charter School in January 2024 was such an example. Learning regarding Indigenous history and issues will be a continued focus.

First Nations, Metis and Inuit Students 2 - Students will benefit from partnerships with community organizations, Indigenous communities, and other promising groups to strengthen relationships, advance the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) Calls to Action, develop innovative programming, etc. Such an example commencing in 2024-2025 will be the Grain Elevator Historical Society which is a strong fit and support for the school's charter.

Strategies:

Learning Support Teams (LST) at New Humble Community School, consist of classroom teachers, support staff, and a dedicated support teacher, as well as administration, parent volunteers and

any additional resources available pending funding. Roles range from scheduled one-on-one (targeted) support between the support teacher and individual students, to small group support, and full class (universal) support. This team will provide a mechanism for effective collaboration and coordination of resources and services. Additional resources, including materials and manipulatives, continue to be identified as needs arise.

Students who are identified as needing additional support in areas such as mental health and learning disabilities, beyond the capacities of school staff and resources, may be referred to specialized assessment services.

Students will participate in formal and informal surveys to help plan and inform their own learning opportunities.

Performance Strategies for First Nation, Metis and Inuit 1 themes:

- Teachers integrate First Nations, Metis and Inuit “ways of knowing” into their instructional plans as often as possible.
- First Nations Metis and Inuit resources are readily available for teacher and student use both in classrooms, teacher resources, and the library.
- Assurance Survey results
- Seek out opportunities to connect with Elders to further support student learning and relationship building.
- Advocate for school and community-wide participation in Orange Shirt Day, National Indigenous Peoples’ Day, and Truth and Reconciliation Day.

One school-wide learning event a year dedicated to expanding student understanding and appreciation for Indigenous cultures and perspectives.

Performance Measures for FNMI 2 themes:

- Capture narratives reflecting staff and student engagement with First Nations Metis and Inuit activities at the school.
- Establish annual field trips to a First Nations Metis and Inuit focused school.

- Creation and implementation of a land acknowledgment to be used at all public meetings and significant gatherings to demonstrate a commitment to advancing reconciliation.

Development of procedure, process, and budget to include honoraria, protocol, and hosting of honored guests.

Evidence of Outcomes: Students will have increased scores on SLAs and PATs. There will be a reduced achievement gap between students with diverse learning needs and their peers. Student survey results will show high levels of leadership, engagement, and personal achievement.

Evidence of outcomes is being observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed.

To determine the baseline data for First Nations Metis and Inuit understandings, a survey will be developed to administer to students in grades 1 through 9.

## **Domain Two: Teaching and Leading**

### **Outcome(s) and Strategies**

Outcome:

Teachers with an understanding of agricultural literacy are informed about the complexity and interconnectedness of learning and teaching. They are able to use their own growth and professional development to ensure that students' needs are met, and contribute to the cycle of continuous improvement at New Humble Community School. NHCSA will strive to ensure that all teachers and support staff acknowledge and build on their understanding of FNMI teachings.

Strategies:

Professional development will be focused on the desired outcomes at NHCS. As the staff did in 2023-2024, half of the total PD days for the upcoming year will be dedicated to enhancing their understanding and education to satisfactorily meet charter goals. The board may authorize up to

three half days of Professional Learning Community time (Division 1 and Division 2) in addition to the scheduled days in the school's year calendar. The board plans to fund a .4 Curriculum Coordinator to directly support teachers for the 2024-25 school year subject to budget availability. Other PD days shall provide ongoing professional learning and support to staff to develop and implement appropriate cultural competencies and expand upon the understanding and appreciation of Indigenous cultures through both historical and contemporary lenses within the classroom. One example is for teachers and staff to engage in a blanket exercise to instill compassion and a deeper connection.

Some additional staff and administrative opportunities will be necessary as the school transitions to a Kindergarten to Grade Nine program.

Performance Measures for First Nations Metis and Innu themes:

- Achieve an Indigenous Canada<sup>1</sup> completion rate of 60% of staff (certificated and non-certificated) to obtain foundational knowledge regarding the Indigenous people of Canada "From an Indigenous perspective, this course explores complex experiences Indigenous peoples face today from a historical and critical perspective highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations" (University of Alberta, 2023).
- Ensure 100% of certificated staff engage in some form of biennial Indigenous-based professional development to remain current in their teachings and understanding of Indigenous culture. This is to be at the discretion of the individual staff member and collaborated on with administration. It is to be documented in their individual work and growth plan as needed.
- Incorporate Indigenous practices into collaborative staff meetings in ways that are meaningful, honor the cultures and do not appropriate it ex. sharing circles, smudging ceremonies, Indigenous perspectives, etc.

Staff and students will be surveyed to determine their satisfaction with the integration of First Nations, Metis and Innu in programming and its impact. Staff will document the number of professional development hours dedicated to indigenous programming.

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<sup>1</sup> University of Alberta. (2023). Indigenous Canada. Retrieved from <https://www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada/index.html>

Examples of other PD include staff attending other agriculture based schools in Alberta. Initial contact has been made with the Holden charter school with grade 7 to 12 enrollment. These visits must be constructive to the goals of NHCS and should have a strong purpose. Other PD will be led by our research partner Dr. Bonnie Stelmach, to build goals, strategies and framework for including the pillars of agricultural literacy into core lessons.

Teachers will provide feedback in the form of regular communications, as well as focus groups and structured reporting. Administrators and school board members will listen, review and provide support to teachers, while also maintaining accountability to our specific charter goals and outcomes.

Evidence of Outcomes: By 2026, annual teacher surveys will show an increase in reported satisfaction with professional development opportunities, as well as will demonstrate significant growth in teaching practices, as measured by evaluation results. Evidence of outcomes will be observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed. Led by administration, teachers utilize NHCS-developed templates for lesson planning with a focus on Charter Goals and outcomes. These templates assist teachers with effective planning, and also facilitate open communication between all teachers, as well as other staff and board members. The use of these templates will allow for both positive results and indicators for improvement to be easily assessed and built upon. Results will be included in our subsequent AERR.

## **Domain Three: Learning Supports**

### **Outcome(s) and Strategies**

Outcome:

Our school community is inclusive, supportive, and safe. We respect and celebrate our similarities and our differences. All members of our community understand and respect their shared roles and respect our commitment to DEI<sup>2</sup>. NHCS will use all available resources to support the learning needs of all students.

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<sup>2</sup> Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Students, staff and families will be able to understand their own mental health strengths and challenges. They will build and understand strategies to support their own and each other's wellness. The importance of physical literacy and teaching lifelong healthy lifestyles is understood and celebrated.

#### Strategies:

We will utilize resources efficiently and effectively as needed to support the unique learning of each student. We will also continue to apply for any available support to enhance student learning and achievement. This includes engaging our stakeholders both internal and external to optimize support.

Teachers will have direct contact - phone call, video conference, or in person - with parents of each student three times a year at minimum to check on how the student is reporting their academic, mental, and social wellbeing at home. Adjustments may be made based on this information to ensure students are supported where needed and can be successful.

One example of proven, effective strategy for learning supports is our individual learning opportunities for students. This initiative has shown indicators of success for many of our learners, particularly those who have experienced a learning gap in core subject areas. A schedule for these identified learners to have one-on-one dedicated learning time in specific subject areas with either an EA or teacher is resulting in reduced learning gaps. These one-on-one learning opportunities often take place outside of the classroom, in another designated space either inside or outside the school building.

Support learning for students and staff by encouraging the use of our outdoor learning spaces, indoor experiential learning spaces, and traditional classroom settings. This gives learners more possibilities to feel included when one method of learning is not best suited to them. Multi-grade groups during school-wide learning - such as educational events and lessons - to promote engagement and build relationships and skills outside of grade groups will also be beneficial.

Evidence of Outcomes: As with Student Growth and Achievement, evidence such as the reduced achievement gap between students with diverse learning needs and their peers. Decreased incidence of mental health issues among students and increased use of wellness resources will also be assessed and tracked. Student participation and engagement in physical wellness and healthy

lifestyle activities and topics is increased. Evidence of outcomes will be observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed.

## **Domain Four: Governance**

### **Outcome(s) and Strategies**

#### **Outcome:**

New Humble Community School is governed effectively and efficiently by a strong, engaged and dynamic board.

#### **Strategies:**

Directors will seek out perpetual growth by continuing to follow the cycle of continuous improvement in all areas of the school and association, and by performing self-evaluations yearly to identify strengths and areas for development. Directors may take part in school Professional Development days where appropriate. This will allow for opportunities to be part of both learning and providing key knowledge to staff members, and also increases the bonds of respect, professionalism and teamwork between all levels of the school community. Yearly accountability surveys will be conducted to gauge parent and community satisfaction.

Directors will work to engage students, teachers, staff, families, stakeholders and our wider community in our shared charter vision and success at New Humble Community School.

Directors will prepare and ensure proper implementation of resources in a fair and balanced budget to address educational and operating needs.

Evidence of Outcomes: Feedback from internal and external sources around the school community indicates that the board of directors are seen as highly engaged. Results of self-evaluations will show improvements in all areas. All directors have freely volunteered many hours in the school that are not directly necessitated by their board roles. Evidence of outcomes will be observed, recorded, and entered into the continuous improvement cycle at determined intervals in the school year or as needed.

The board will continue to meet and coordinate conversations at Staff-Board meetings three times per year to help develop a shared vision with a focus on continuous improvement. Parents and community members will continue to be invited to engagement meetings to ensure input is collected from all relevant stakeholders. Parents are always encouraged to contact the school principal and the Superintendent to discuss any issues with their children or with the school's operation. Students will meet with the board to provide feedback on how they feel about their learning and their school.

The board will also focus on capacity building for school council members and parents to encourage them to consider becoming a board member. The board acknowledges the importance of succession planning.

## **Charter Goals and Methods**

### **New Humble Community School Outcomes**

The following measurable outcomes are as listed in our Charter:

- 1 - Students will recognize and understand the foundational knowledge of agricultural literacy.
- 2 - Students will demonstrate problem solving through adaptability, resilience and critical thinking.
- 3 - Students will understand the values of goals and outcomes.
- 4 - Students will achieve academic success while displaying leadership.

Measuring the outcomes of agricultural literacy shall be done in conjunction with creating and establishing appropriate benchmarks within the Albertan and Canadian context. Currently these do not exist. The National Agricultural Literacy Outcomes: Benchmarks related to agricultural literacy and academic achievement<sup>3</sup> provide a strong and adaptable foundation, but must be recognized as an American resource. New Humble Community School Association, through our partnership with Dr. Bonnie Stelmach of the University of Alberta, shall utilize this resource and adapt the outcomes at our school's level so that we can accurately assess our targets and expectations. Through further determination of priorities and assessment of benefit to student

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<sup>3</sup> Spielmaker, D. M., & Leising, J. G. (2013). National agricultural literacy outcomes. Logan, UT: Utah State University, School of Applied Sciences & Technology.

learning, these outcomes could be further developed into Alberta Agricultural Literacy Outcomes, and/or the Canadian National Agricultural Literacy Outcomes. Regardless of the level or authority of these outcomes, they will be available to anyone, and can be implemented in schools easily and effectively.

Outcome 1 may be assessed by a student portfolio or learning journal project. Each teacher will develop the required content based on their students' grade level. Depending on the outcomes of this assessment, it may be adjusted in subsequent years. Clear and open communication between teachers will be an effective and integral part of the perpetual growth cycle.

Outcomes 2-4 will be assessed using the strategies outlined below. These are described as suggested and initial strategies; the teachers and staff will continually assess the effectiveness of their application to the outcomes, and make determinations on what was successful and what might require adjustments. Teachers and staff shall have open and constructive communication so that each can build on the efforts of others.

Outcome 4 is also evaluated in the context of student engagement in agricultural tasks and responsibilities in our farm yard (south end of our facility grounds). Students in grades 4-6 may apply for jobs relating to specific animals, plants, or soil health. Staff conduct an application and interview process, encouraging strong leadership and growth from students. Successful candidates must also lead presentations to stakeholders - such as industry sponsors or education partners - on their 'jobs'.

The principal and superintendent, with support from board and other stakeholders, have established measures for these outcomes that can be used to assess their effectiveness and ensure that targets and expectations are being met. The results will be documented and used in the continuous improvement cycle.

### **Action Plan/ Strategies:**

Through open and frequent communication, constructive feedback, and stakeholder support, teachers will support students to achieve our measurable outcomes. The structure of classes and

lessons, as well as our learning spaces have continued to grow and change. Our student population in the 2023-2024 school year has been constrained by the lack of available space. The board's plan has been to increase the number of modular classrooms on site, possible modernization with a larger footprint, as well as looking at the feasibility of a new site and new construction. The Board and the entire school community was delighted to receive news on March 15, 2024 that a modular had been approved to deal with the space limitations restricting enrollment numbers..

Furthermore, the Minister of Education approved the construction project involving three modulares on the north side of the school which have now been purchased and are on site. The school's capital plan was approved in March 2024 and submitted to Alberta Education. As more outdoor structures are added to our facility, teachers will be strongly encouraged and also supported to find the best ways to utilize these resources to continue to achieve the best outcomes for learning.

Due to changes in legislation, our amended Charter no longer lists initial strategies and instructional methods for achieving Charter outcomes (the Charter amendment was approved on March 13, 2024). However, the focus on experiential, hands-on, outdoor learning still remains as the priority for all outcomes. By prioritizing experiential and outdoor learning, teachers can further their understanding of the importance and great impact both of these have upon furthering student recognition, understanding, and achievement of Charter outcomes. Teachers, with the support of the principal and administration, will determine through their lesson planning which instructional strategies are the most effective, depending on the desired outcome(s). With clearly defined student learning outcomes, teachers are able to adequately assess and adapt lesson plans as a means of continuous improvement.

Our recently developed NHCSA Charter Assurance Process also allows for strategic review, assessment, and reflection across various stages and roles. By incorporating such measures throughout the whole learning and instructional process, we are able to better assess the challenges and successes on micro and macro levels along with opportunities for improvement. Experience has taught us that the following instructional methods are successful for achieving desired Charter outcomes:

1. Experiential learning
2. Educational workshops with leading industry experts- this includes large group presentations, small group instruction, and the potential for one-on-one individualized education.

3. Multi-grade projects- students of differing age and grade levels will form cohort groups and work together on communal projects to enhance learning, leadership skills, and foster inclusivity
4. Individualized Program Plans (IPPs) to meet the unique needs of individual students (an example of differentiated instruction)
5. Educational field trips relevant to agricultural industries and environmental stewardship- demonstrations to gain first-hand experience and knowledge while under the supervision of experienced professionals
6. Independent student research projects- project-based learning
7. Tiered lesson planning- an educational approach which provides the students with “different paths toward understanding a particular concept” (Adams & Pierce, 2006, p. 5). Students can take whichever path most appropriately appeals to them and their individual learning style and arrive at the same conceptual understanding and essential (task) understanding as the rest of the class (Adams & Pierce, 2006).
8. Learning Journals- monitor progress and have students evaluate themselves
9. Sensory, graphic, and interactive scaffold learning to support and eventually allow students to become independent thinkers and learners.
10. Teacher-centered instruction- traditional pedagogical approach but tailored to our alternative programming. The Government of Alberta (2020) offers free resources “to help teachers integrate agriculture into the curriculum” (Agricultural education- Lesson plans). These lesson plans are organized by grade level and are directly connected to the appropriate Science and Social Studies programs of study (Government of Alberta, 2020).
11. Hybrid style of learning- blending the individual teacher’s personality and passion with student needs and curricular goals
12. STEM learning

Lesson plan templates have been created to help implement these strategies in a consistent and constructive manner. These templates aid in planning by requiring the teacher to name the lesson or activity, describe it in summary, then identify the agricultural and academic outcomes, select the

appropriate methods (as listed above), as well as identify any other charter goals or outcomes that apply. Teachers have received professional development and additional support and resources to ensure these plans can be carried out effectively and efficiently.

## **Budget and Facilities**

New Humble Community School Association's Three Year Education Plan, Capital Plan and Budget information can be found on our website at [www.newhumbleschool.ca](http://www.newhumbleschool.ca) and direct links are provided on page 23.

New Humble Community School is located in the same facility as the former New Humble Centre School. It is the oldest school in Alberta still in its original location, the first Humble school having been established in April of 1900. It has been part of multiple school divisions throughout the decades, most recently (until 2020) falling under the jurisdiction of Black Gold School Division. NHCSA has a five year lease agreement with BGSD for the school and grounds until June 30, 2026.

We license a shared space within our building to a local playschool group: Humble Beginnings Playschool. They are an active and engaged contributor to our school and wider community, and most students there become NHCS students as space allows.

The grounds comprise approximately 5.75 acres. This space allows for playground equipment, recreation structures and sports fields including a skating rink. Additionally, we have ample open, level ground for both dedicated and flexible outdoor learning spaces for our current student population.; we have a large barn with specialized features, a dual chicken coop, secondary animal shelters and enclosures, a garden, and many more enhancements to facilitate our unique student learning experience. Our Humble Hands Legacy Gazebo was built in the spring 2023; a space to learn, reflect, and honor the impacts of previous champions of our school and community. These unconventional learning spaces promote the opportunities for hands-on, experiential learning, which are necessary pieces to fulfill our charter goals. They also provide an extraordinary level of engagement for our students. Because of tremendous community support, a greenhouse was constructed in May 2024. We are working with local landowners to establish crop test plots, as well as established permissions for walking field trips to expand and enhance learning.



Image: Grade Five NHCS Barnyard course work being completed.



Image: Students on class hike and outdoor lesson.



## Conclusion

The school and facility have a unique and vital role not only in the education of young learners, but as a hub for our community: offering space for activities, encouraging gathering and sharing, and engaging with one another. As we continue to grow, so too will the opportunities to enhance public education across the province, and also to strengthen and build this community foundation. Stronger learners will create a stronger community and stronger society. Our perpetual growth, our dedication to meeting the assurance framework, and our practicable strategies will ensure that our Education Plan is achieved. We look forward to sharing our successes and contributing to excellence in education.

## Links:

Our 2024/2025 Budget can be found here:

[New Humble Community School 2024-2025 Budget Report](#) link

Our 2024 School Capital Plan can be found here:

[New Humble Community School 2024-2027 Three Year Capital Plan](#)