



GITKSEN WEST SECONDARY SCHOOL

Sim'alg̱ax & Gitksen Culture Mentor

Job Description

GITKSEN WEST SECONDARY SCHOOL

Gitksen West Secondary School is a brand-new, state-of-the-art high school serving the Gitwāgak, Gitsegukla, and Gitanyow First Nations. We provide a safe, inclusive, and culturally rich learning environment that blends academic excellence with Sim'alg̱ax language, Gitksen culture, and traditional teachings. Our school is committed to revitalizing the Sim'alg̱ax language by creating authentic opportunities for students to hear, speak, and live the language every day.

JOB SUMMARY

The Sim'alg̱ax & Gitksen Culture Mentor (Gitksen Elder/Knowledge Keeper) is a respected fluent Sim'alg̱ax speaker who works in close partnership with the Sim'alg̱ax & Gitksen Culture Teacher to create an immersive language and cultural learning environment for students in Grades 8–12.

The Mentor's primary responsibility is to model and speak Sim'alg̱ax throughout classroom instruction and on the lax̱yip, providing students with authentic opportunities to hear and use the language in meaningful, everyday contexts. The Mentor shares Gitksen Ayookw, Adaawk, traditional knowledge, cultural practices, and land-based teachings while supporting students in developing pride in their identity, language, and heritage.

Working collaboratively with the classroom teacher, the Mentor provides cultural guidance that ensures learning reflects Gitksen values and ways of knowing. The Mentor is a language role model, cultural advisor, and respected member of the school community.

REPORTS TO

Principal

QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will:

- Be recognized by the Gitksen Nation as a respected Elder, Knowledge Keeper, and fluent language speaker.
- Be fluent in Sim'alg̱ax (western dialect preferred).
- Demonstrate extensive knowledge of Gitksen Ayookw, Adaawk, history, traditions, and cultural protocols.
- Have experience working with youth and sharing traditional knowledge.

- Be passionate about Sim'algyax language revitalization.
- Demonstrate patience, humility, kindness, and strong relationship-building skills.
- Be comfortable working collaboratively with teachers, students, families, and community members.
- Be willing to participate in classroom, outdoor, and land-based learning experiences.
- Understand confidentiality and professional boundaries.
- Successfully complete a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties of the Sim'algyax & Gitksen Culture Mentor include, but not limited to:

Sim'algyax Language Immersion

- Speak Sim'algyax throughout classroom instruction and on the laxyip.
- Model natural conversational Sim'algyax for students and staff.
- Encourage students to communicate using everyday words, phrases, and expressions.
- Support pronunciation, vocabulary development, and conversational language skills.
- Help create a classroom environment where Sim'algyax is regularly heard, spoken, and celebrated.

Co-Teaching

- Work alongside the Sim'algyax & Gitksen Culture Teacher to co-deliver engaging language and cultural instruction.
- Support lesson delivery by providing fluent language models and authentic cultural perspectives.
- Collaborate in planning classroom activities that promote language acquisition through conversation, storytelling, games, songs, and experiential learning.
- Assist the teacher in adapting learning activities to reflect authentic Sim'algyax and culture.

Cultural Leadership

- Share Gitksen Ayookw, Adaawk, and traditional teachings in accordance with Gitksen culture.
- Teach cultural values, responsibilities, and respectful relationships.
- Help students understand their wilp, pdeek, family connections, and identity.
- Share traditional knowledge through stories, seasonal teachings, ceremonies, songs, harvesting, and cultural practices.
- Ensure cultural teachings are delivered respectfully and appropriately.

Laxyip Learning

- Support outdoor and land-based learning opportunities.
- Teach traditional ecological knowledge, seasonal activities, harvesting practices, and cultural skills.

- Help students develop meaningful relationships with the land through Gitksen teachings and language.

Student Mentorship

- Build positive, respectful relationships with students.
- Encourage confidence, cultural pride, and identity through Sim'algyax and traditional teachings.
- Serve as a positive role model grounded in Gitksen values.
- Create a welcoming and culturally safe learning environment where students feel valued and supported.

School and Community Collaboration

- Work collaboratively with teachers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Simgiget, Sigidimhaana'k, families, and community partners.
- Participate in cultural celebrations, ceremonies, field experiences, and community events.
- Support the ongoing revitalization of Sim'algyax within the school and community.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Full-time position following the school calendar.
- Daily co-teaching alongside the Sim'algyax & Gitksen Culture Teacher.
- Combination of classroom, outdoor, and laxyip learning.
- Participation in school cultural events, ceremonies, and community activities.
- Collaborative and supportive professional environment.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Fluent Sim'algyax Language & Cultural Mentor will:

- Honour Gitksen Ayookw and Adaawk.
- Model the daily use of Sim'algyax as a living language.
- Foster student identity, belonging, and pride through Sim'algyax and culture.
- Support the revitalization of Sim'algyax for future generations.
- Strengthen relationships among students, families, huwilp, and community through the sharing of Gitksen knowledge and traditions.

GENERAL DISCLAIMER

THE ABOVE STATEMENTS are intended to describe the general nature and level of the work being performed by employees assigned to this work. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. Gitksen West Secondary School Board reserves the right to amend, change, add or remove responsibilities to meet business and organizational needs as necessary, in accordance with applicable Employment Laws.

EMPLOYEES HAVE THE RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY to ensure their own healthy and safe work environment, by exercising their right to: “Information, Instruction and Training”, “Refuse Unsafe Work” and “Participate in Workplace OH&S Programs”, as outlined in the Worker’s Compensation Act with WorkSafe BC or any other laws or regulations, both provincially and federally governing the Gitksen West Secondary School. It is intended that all tasks and responsibilities are performed by staff in a manner that ensures their safety and health and those of their co-workers.

IN THE OUTLINED DUTIES in this job description, it is highly probable that the employee will be exposed to very confidential and sensitive information. Therefore, it is intended that employees that fulfill these tasks will do so with the strictest of confidentiality as outlined in the Privacy and Confidentiality Act and any other applicable laws or regulations, both provincially and federally governing Gitksen West Secondary School and its employees.

YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW is an acknowledgement and commitment that you have read and understand the above outlined job description and will continually strive to accomplish each task in a professional and appropriate manner.

Mentor’s Name

Mentor’s Signature

Date

GWSS Principal’s Name

Principal’s Signature

Date