


Acknowledgement that we are on the Secwepemc territory and land of the Secwepemc People:

*Secwepemcúl'ecw yi7élye ell, re tmicws re Secwepemc n7élye.*

School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) acknowledges that we reside in Secwepemcúl'ecw and recognizes the Secwepemc as the keepers of their traditions and knowledge.



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# Executive Summary

School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) (also referred to as the District and as SD73) acknowledges that we reside in Secwepemcúl'ecw and recognizes the Secwepemc People as the keepers of their traditions and knowledge. The District believes that a relevant and engaging learning experience is necessary to maximize the success of Aboriginal learners. Truth and reconciliation through equity and inclusion are principles that are fundamental to the positive learning experience of every student. Ensuring equity is the foundation for improving student achievement and is central to each learner's experience and engagement.

As outlined in the [Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement \(2016–2022\)](#) (also referred to as the Agreement), all students must have the opportunity to develop toward the fulfillment of their individual potential. Toward this objective, in 2016, the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) and the District collaboratively implemented the fourth Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. Respectful, inclusive and ongoing consultations between SD73 and its Aboriginal partners resulted in this Agreement, which is based upon mutual values of reciprocated respect and consensus building and is focused on the goals and strategies that lead toward academic and personal success for all District Aboriginal learners. The four goals of the Agreement are outlined later in this report.

Targeted enhancement funding, which is provided to SD73 by the Ministry of Education, is spent on enhancing Aboriginal education programs and services to Aboriginal learners. Such funding is not used to replace other funded programs, such as inclusive education or English language learning (ELL), nor is it used to deliver the provincial curriculum.

Instead, in partnership and collaboration with the aforementioned AEC, the District allocates this funding and oversees the interest of all District Aboriginal learners in the areas of academic, social-emotional, cultural and language enhancements that improve such learners' school experience and academic achievement.

Targeted Aboriginal educational enhancement funding based on 2823 full time equivalent (FTE) students for 2019–2020 is shown in Chart 1 in the Funding and Budget Summary of this report.

# Action Items

To address the continued educational achievement improvements, the following action items will be addressed during the 2020–2021 school year.

The District will:

- Explore partnerships with Thompson Rivers University (TRU) to develop training for Aboriginal Education workers and teachers.
- Finalize mutually agreed upon Local Education Agreements (LEAs) between each local Secwepemc First Nation and the Board of Education.
- Develop a District Aboriginal Parent Advisory Council (DAPAC) to represent Aboriginal voice and advocacy, as well as to foster a culture of inclusion and acceptance.
- Create a District Aboriginal Student Leadership Council (DASLC) for Aboriginal learners in grades 8 through 12.
- Expand the number of professional development opportunities to increase staff members' capacity to build effective social-emotional skills and trauma-informed practice.
- Develop quarterly Aboriginal newsletters and regular AEC bulletins for parents, in order to improve communication and better inform students and families about educational programs and services.
- Create a District-wide system of accountability to ensure that each school is monitoring the success of its Aboriginal learners, as evidenced in each School Learning Plan.
- Create a working group dedicated to improving the completion rates of Aboriginal learners through monitoring student attendance, well-being and achievement so that timely interventions can be implemented.
- Outline, in its Aboriginal Education Annual Report 2020–2021, the results of the Non-Fiction Reading Assessment and District Numeracy Assessment for Aboriginal learners, as well as the literacy and numeracy achievement of grades 10 and 12 Aboriginal learners.
- Through the Aboriginal School Lead Sessions, support learning about the Aboriginal people in the region and support learning about cultural sensitivity, Truth and Reconciliation and the impact of colonialism in Canada.
- Create a plan to construct a traditional winter house at McQueen Lake Environmental Education Centre.
- To align with the District plan, develop a strategy to acknowledge and celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21).
- Create a District powwow to provide an opportunity for students District-wide to appreciate and celebrate Secwepemc culture.

- Increase the number of KAIROS Blanket Exercise lessons in the District to foster truth, understanding, respect and reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- Develop a plan to enhance the support of early Aboriginal learners.
- Develop a current language curriculum to offer Secwepemctsin in District schools.

The District supports the provision of the most enabling learning environment for all District Aboriginal students, and it supports equitable access to education for all Aboriginal learners while honouring the diversity that each learner contributes to society.

This report outlines progress, through a review of the use of targeted enhancement funding and educational achievement outcomes, on the District's commitment to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

## Introduction

Accommodation of Aboriginal culture and identity should be regarded as a core responsibility of public institutions rather than as a special project to be undertaken after other obligations are met. As summarized in the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996), educational institutions have a pivotal role in transforming the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society.)

Therefore, the District supports the provision of the most enabling learning environment for all District Aboriginal learners. The District supports equitable access to education for all Aboriginal learners, while honouring the diversity that each learner contributes to society.

This report outlines progress, through a review of the use of targeted enhancement funding and educational achievement outcomes, on the District's commitment to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

The District provides a public education to approximately 15,000 students, of which approximately 2800 are of Aboriginal ancestry. District residents live in the territories of seven bands or First Nations: Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, Skeetchestn Indian Band, Whispering Pines/Clinton (Pelt'iq't First Nation), Simpcw First Nation, Neskonlith Indian Band, Adams Lake Indian Band and Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band. Most District residents are in Kamloops. Others are in rural communities, including Chase, Barriere, Logan Lake, Westwold, Savona and Clearwater.

Linking student achievement to equity, inclusion and diversity promotes learner well-being, engagement and school connectedness and results in the creation of educated citizens. Therefore, the concepts of equity, inclusion and diversity are central to the District's vision, which is:

*To be a dynamic school district achieving success for all students through a commitment to equity and excellence.*

Through the educational experience, the enactment of this vision enables Aboriginal learners to not only receive a graduation certificate but to also become resilient and engaged citizens with positive life outcomes. It ensures that learners can succeed personally and academically, regardless of background, identity or personal circumstances.

As outlined in the Agreement, all learners must have the opportunity to develop toward the fulfillment of their individual potential. The District supports the provision of the most enabling learning environment for all Aboriginal learners, and it supports equitable access to education for those learners, while honouring the diversity that each one contributes to society.

Through a review of the District's use of targeted enhancement funding and resultant educational achievement outcomes, this report summarizes progress on the District's commitment to the Agreement.

## District Strategic Priorities

As outlined in its [Five-Year Strategic Plan](#), the District's vision of ensuring success for all students aligns to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and imbeds Aboriginal education in all six of the District's strategic priorities. Aboriginal education is part of the District's core responsibility to ensure that its graduating Aboriginal students cross the stage with dignity, purpose and opportunities.

The District's third strategic priority, which is specific to Aboriginal learning, demonstrates the District's commitment to:

1. Ensure that every student acquires strong foundational skills and core competencies;
2. Connect students to their passions and interests;
3. Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives;
4. Foster an inclusive, adaptable and accountable District culture;
5. Strengthen partnerships to enrich the way that the District leads, learns and works; and,
6. Ensure the sustainable use of resources.

## Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

In 2016, the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) and the District collaboratively implemented the fourth [Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement](#). This Agreement, the result of respectful, inclusive, and ongoing consultations between SD73 and its Aboriginal partners, is based upon mutual values of reciprocated respect and consensus building and is focused on the goals and strategies that lead toward academic and personal success for all Aboriginal learners in the District.

This Agreement focuses on four goals:

### 1. Student Success:

- To increase the educational success of all Aboriginal learners.
- To increase the sense of identity, belonging and pride in all Aboriginal learners.

### 2. Language and Culture

- To increase the awareness and understanding, amongst all students and staff members, of Aboriginal culture, traditions, languages, historical contributions and contemporary contributions.

### 3. District and School Culture

- To increase Aboriginal learners' sense of belonging, including sense of place, personal and cultural identity, and self-esteem in caring, safe, inclusive environments.

### 4. Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement

- To enhance, nurture and value positive relationships between the District, parents and communities.

The District's strategic and learning plans and its schools' learning plans are all aligned to the Agreement and enhance the District's commitment to the continuance of collaboration between the District and its Aboriginal partners.



# Policy and Governance

As outlined in the *School Act*, all school-age residents are entitled to enrol in the District's schools. The District's mission as an educational entity is summarized in the preamble to the School Act:

...it is the goal of a democratic society to ensure that all its members receive an education that enables them to become literate, personally fulfilled and publicly useful, thereby increasing the strength and contributions to the health and stability of that society;

...the purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to become literate, to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Therefore, as a District, we are guided by the following statements:

- We believe in the equitable participation and contributions of all learners;
- We promote understanding, acceptance, dignity, mutual respect and inclusion, in order to make our school communities equitable for all learners; and,
- We provide high quality education to all learners in a setting that is most enabling and least restrictive.

Aligned to the Ministry of Education's [Diversity in BC Schools Framework](#), SD73 provides conditions that foster success for all students. These conditions include:

- Equitable access to and equitable participation in quality education for Aboriginal learners;
- District and school cultures that value diversity and respond to the diverse social and cultural needs of the communities that the District serves;
- School cultures that promote understanding of others and respect for all;
- Learning and working environments that are safe, welcoming and free from discrimination, harassment and violence;
- Decision-making processes that give a voice to all members of the school community; and,
- Policies and practices that promote fair and equitable treatment of all learners.

In accordance and alignment with the stated priorities of the Ministry's [Aboriginal Education Branch](#), the District recognizes that its learners are its future.

Therefore, the District strives to:

1. Improve the success of Aboriginal learners;
2. Support all students in their learning about Aboriginal peoples; and,
3. Assist teachers in their efforts to bring Aboriginal knowledge into their teaching practice.

Several guiding documents drive Aboriginal Education in the District and create a framework of action for Aboriginal student success:

[School Act](#)

[Ministry of Education Indigenous Education in British Columbia](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)

[An Audit of the Education of Aboriginal Students in the B.C. Public School System](#)

[BC Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting First Nation Student Success \(2018\)](#)

[BC Teachers' Council: Professional Standards for BC Educators](#)

[Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement](#)

[School District No. 73 District Learning Plan](#)

[School District No. 73: Policy 709.2](#)



# Funding and Budget Summary

To support access to equitable educational outcomes, the Ministry of Education provides targeted Aboriginal education funding. School-age students who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry and who participate in Aboriginal education programs and services offered by public schools are eligible for Aboriginal Education funding. Application of these funds requires the collaboration of boards of education and local Aboriginal communities to develop and deliver education programs and services that integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture and/or language.

Targeted funding provided to the District is spent on the provision of Aboriginal education programs and services to Aboriginal learners. The delivery and outcomes of these programs and services are documented through the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. These funds are not used to replace other funded programs, such as inclusive education or English language learning (ELL), nor are they used to deliver provincial curriculum. Instead, they are used to enhance student programming for the purpose of equitable educational outcomes for Aboriginal learners.

In 2019–2020, the provincial government increased the targeted funding amount to school districts from \$1200 to \$1450 per student.

Targeted Aboriginal funding based on 2823 FTE (an increase of 304 students) for 2019–2020 is shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1. Targeted Aboriginal Enhancement Funding for 2019–2020.\*

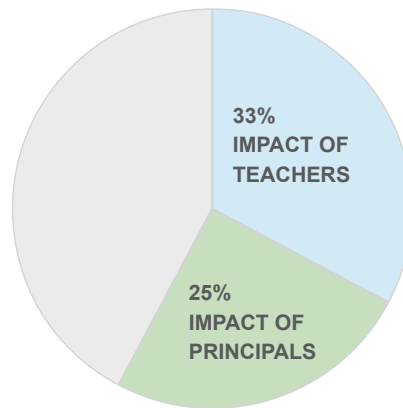
Funding	Revenue
Ministry of Education	\$3,856,550.00
	Expenses
Staffing	\$2,314,111.00
Benefits	568,601.00
Supplies / Services / Supports	243,838.00
Cultural Enhancement	297,450.00
Academic Enhancement	203,000.00
Social-Emotional Enhancement	36,000.00
Language Enhancement	190,000.00
Total Expenses	\$3,853,000.00
Net Carryover	\$3,550.00

\*Note: The budget reflects anticipated expenses by June 30, 2020. Due to school closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic (in the period from April 2020 to June 2020), there may be unanticipated carryover from unspent budgets. Since carryovers due to COVID-19 were not available at the time of this report, they are not reflected in the *2019–2020 Annual Financial Report* for Aboriginal Education.

# Staff and Staff Development

The focus of Aboriginal education in SD73 is Aboriginal student success. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), one of the key factors for such success is the capacity of the staff (OECD, 2001). See Figure 1.

**Factors Affecting Student Achievement**



*Figure 1. Factors Affecting Student Achievement. Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005.*

Accountability to meet the Ministry of Education’s targeted funding requirements for programs and services requires the allocation of staffing resources in schools. These resources address the requirements and provision of services. This aligns to the following Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action:

63(ii) Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.

63(iv) Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

This also supports two of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement goals:

- Goal 1: Student Success; and,
- Goal 2: Language and Culture.

## Staffing

Currently, the District Aboriginal Education department is overseen by the Director of Instruction – Elementary Education and Learning Services and is supported by one (1) FTE District Principal – Aboriginal Education.

The District Principal – Aboriginal Education is to report out on the work and supervise staff charged with implementing the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and matters regarding Aboriginal education. The District Principal – Aboriginal Education ensures good governance by communicating the work of the Council, establishing meeting agendas, developing budget reports and ensuring the meeting functions according to established guidelines and protocols.

The District Aboriginal Education department is supported by:

- One (1) FTE District Principal – Aboriginal Education
- 0.6 FTE District Aboriginal Education department administrative assistant
- Two (2) FTE District Aboriginal Education resource teachers; one (1) elementary and one (1) secondary
- One (1) FTE District Coordinator, Aboriginal Education
- Thirty-two (32) FTE Aboriginal Education workers
- Three (3) FTE Secwepemctsin (Secwepemc language) teachers
- Four (4) Aboriginal secondary school support teachers: two (2) support blocks in Chase Secondary and one (1) support block in each of South Kamloops Secondary School, Sa-Hali Secondary School, and Brocklehurst Middle School
- Two (2) FTE Aboriginal youth and family consultants
- Six (6) FTE Aboriginal Family Counsellors

This staffing structure is designed to:

1. Support student success;
2. Provide programs and services to all self-identified learners, based on the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement; and,
3. Provide programs and services that support the direction given in the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA).

Staffing is funded through a combination of targeted Aboriginal enhancement funds and District operating funds.

## Staff Development

The District follows a hiring policy for new Aboriginal staff that requires consultation, during the hiring process, with the AEC. Many support staff and teacher leader positions have human rights exemptions to support the hiring of staff with Aboriginal ancestry. Historically, the District has struggled to fill these positions with people who have such ancestry and who possess local knowledge of the communities.

Support staff, such as Aboriginal Education workers, often bring a wealth of cultural knowledge and Aboriginal ways of knowing and learning to their students. However, outside of informal collaboration and mentorship, there is no process for formal training in instructional practices. Currently, an annual orientation reviews District processes, as well as the specific management and administrative skills that Aboriginal Education workers require.

In 2019, the District began discussions with Thompson Rivers University (TRU) regarding creation of a dual credit program specific to Aboriginal learners and a certified education certificate. SD73 will continue to support TRU in the creation of this program.

## Professional Development Day – Indigenous Focus

Through the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) (2018), all school districts are to designate one professional development day annually to have an Indigenous focus. Initially, the District professional development committee chose April 27, 2020, as this day. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent short timeline to reorganize and respond, the committee and the Kamloops Thompson Teachers' Association (KTTA) considered cancelling and making the day self-directed. However, the Aboriginal Education department, along with other partners, was able to organize a successful online day focused on Aboriginal learning.

Throughout the year, the department supported teachers with resources to embed Aboriginal content in the curriculum. In many cases, the staff were guest presenters in classrooms, modelling lessons that teachers could repeat in future.

The department also provided professional development sessions, augmented by an online resource bank of lessons, throughout the 2019–2020 school year.

# Community Collaboration

## Key Priorities and Goals

### Ministry of Education Aboriginal Branch

Targeted Aboriginal education funding requires the collaboration of boards of education and local Aboriginal communities to develop and deliver Aboriginal education programs and services that integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture or language or both.

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

10. We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples.

### District Learning Plan

Priority 5: Strengthen partnerships to enrich the way in which we lead, learn and work.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 4: Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement

When schools and community organizations work together to support learning, everyone benefits. Partnerships can serve to strengthen, support and even transform individual partners, resulting in improved program quality, more efficient use of resources, and better alignment of objectives and curricula. Learning partnerships can support student educational achievement outcomes.



## Aboriginal Education Council

The Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) oversees the interest of all Aboriginal learners in the support, implementation and assessment of programs and services that improve the school experience and academic achievement of those learners.

To support student achievement, the AEC is mandated to:

- Advise and hold accountable the District Board regarding the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and Aboriginal education matters.
- Develop a budget that outlines how targeted funds will be used to achieve the goals of the Agreement and Aboriginal Education.
- Monitor progress toward reaching the four goals of the Agreement and Aboriginal Education through an annual report published each February.
- Honour and acknowledge the Secwepemc People.
- Increase the awareness and understanding of Secwepemc and all other Aboriginal cultures.
- Provide direction, guidance and support for the activities and initiatives of the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee.

## Aboriginal Education Council Strategic Plan

The Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) has developed and identified four goals that align within the missions and goals listed in the 2016–2020 Enhancement Agreement and that will guide the AEC’s collective work in SD73. The AEC Strategic Plan is the direct result of an external review that was completed in October 2019 and co-constructed by members of the AEC in November of 2019, with feedback from staff members, students and SD73 Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee members. The AEC Strategic Plan clearly identifies goals for 2020–2023 in the areas of student success, language and culture, parent and community engagement and District and school culture.





# Advisory Committees

## Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee

The Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee discusses items related to the delivery of Aboriginal education programs and services in SD73.

This committee reviews performance measures in order to ensure individual and systemic accountability for Aboriginal learner achievement. As well, the committee's goals are to:

- Provide research, data and information to the AEC as requested;
- Recommend and advise funding priorities related to Aboriginal targeted funding;
- Provide general advice to the AEC on issues related to Aboriginal education; and,
- Make recommendations related to program initiatives, Secwepemc language programs, data collection, strategies for involving Aboriginal parents, cultural awareness within the District, program reviews and other relevant areas related to Aboriginal Education.

## First Nations Advisory Committee: Chase

The First Nations Advisory Committee: Chase discusses items related to the delivery of Aboriginal Education programs and services in Chase in collaboration with the three local bands: Adams Lake Indian Band, Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band and Neskonlith Indian Band.

This committee reviews performance measures to ensure individual and systemic accountability for Aboriginal learner achievement and collaborates with Chase schools to provide support for student success.

## North Thompson Education Advisory Committee

The North Thompson Education Advisory Committee, formed in 2019, discusses items related to the delivery of Aboriginal Education programs and services in the North Thompson region in collaboration with Simpcw First Nation and other First Nations, Metis, Inuit and Aboriginal families and learners in Barriere and Clearwater.

This committee reviews performance measures to ensure individual and systemic accountability for Aboriginal learner achievement and collaborates with North Thompson schools to provide support for student success.

## The Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education (NOIIE)

The Networks of Inquiry and Indigenous Education (NOIIE) is a voluntary network of inquiry-based schools and school districts in BC and beyond. Using an inquiry-oriented, evidence-based approach to learning and teaching through the Spiral of Inquiry, the NOIIE is dedicated to the following principles:

- Every learner crossing the stage with dignity, purpose and options.
- Every learner leaving educational settings more curious than when they arrived.
- All learners gaining an understanding of and respect for Indigenous ways of knowing.

- Through collective efforts, eliminating racism in schools.

Schools participate on an annual basis by engaging in the Spiral of Inquiry and, at the end of the year, submitting case studies to share their learning. The schools in the NOIE share resources, case studies and reflections, in a spirit of generosity, curiosity and growth. Network schools are supported by educational leaders throughout BC and the Yukon, as well as in Australia, in working toward improving outcomes for all learners.

Two (2) SD73 schools participated in NOIE during the 2019–2020 school year:

- Barriere Secondary School; and,
- Valleyview Secondary School.

## Local Education Agreements

Local Education Agreements (LEAs) are an important mechanism to increase accountability and to promote and achieve effective working relationships between First Nations and local boards of education, enabling them to collaborate in supporting First Nation learners. Currently, the LEAs between the seven (7) local Secwepemc First Nations and the SD73 Board expired June 30, 2020. The Board and all seven First Nations have been collaborating to develop new LEAs. Although the process was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District is optimistic that new LEAs will be finalized early in the 2020–2021 school year.

## District Aboriginal Parent Advisory Council

During the 2019–2020 school year, the AEC supported exploring the idea of creating a District Aboriginal Parent Advisory Council (DAPAC), starting in the 2020–2021 school year. This would encourage Aboriginal parent voice, advocacy and opportunities to build positive relationships throughout the District. The DAPAC would advise the District on any matter relating to public education to ensure that Aboriginal parent perspective and voice is consistently represented and heard, and to foster a culture of acceptance, diversity and inclusion in District schools.

## District Aboriginal Student Leadership Council

During the 2019–2020 school year, the AEC supported the idea of creating a District Aboriginal Student Leadership Council (DASLC), starting in the 2020–2021 school year. This would create a venue for Aboriginal student voice, advocacy, leadership and opportunities. The DASLC would advise the District on any matter relating to public education to ensure that Aboriginal learner perspective and voice are consistently represented and heard.

# Equity and Inclusion

## Key Priorities and Goals

### Guiding Documents

1. *School Act*
2. Ministry of Education Aboriginal Education Branch
3. BC Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education
4. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
5. Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): Calls to Action

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

10(i) ...close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.

10(ii) Improving education attainment levels and success rates.

### District Learning Plan

Priority 3: Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives.

Priority 4: Foster an inclusive, adaptable and accountable District culture.

Priority 5: Strengthen partnerships to enrich the way in which we lead, learn and work.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 3: District and School Culture

Meeting the educational needs of students is part of the development of equitable provision in an inclusive society, in which individual rights are recognized and protected. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states that all children have a right to education and, therefore, the right to make progress. Failure to provide education and create the conditions for individual progress may be a denial of a child's rights. At the centre of this challenge lies the goals of inclusion and equity – leading, ultimately, to improved social cohesion.

## Key Equity and Inclusion Projects

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) *Education Policy Analysis* (2003), there are four basic equality practices that should be applied to educational policy and practice:

According to the OECD *Education Policy Analysis* (2003), there are four basic equality practices that should be applied to educational policy and practice:

1. Equity of access or equality of opportunity;
2. Equity in terms of learning environment or equality of means;
3. Equity in production or equality of achievement (or results); and,
4. Equity in using the results of education.

This section outlines three (3) key projects in which the District is invested to address equity and inclusion: Aboriginal School Lead Sessions, the Equity in Action project and equity scans.

### Aboriginal School Lead Sessions

SD73 funded release time for four (4) half-day Aboriginal School Lead Sessions during 2019–2020 (in October, January, February and April). These morning sessions were attended by Aboriginal Education School Lead Sessions teams from each school. At minimum, teams consisted of an administrator, a teacher leader, an Aboriginal Education worker, and a Learning Assistance Resource teacher. District coordinators and counsellors were present, as well as a representative from TRU. Community representatives attended a community-relationship-themed session.

Each session was attended by approximately 160 to 170 educators. Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives were woven into and modelled throughout each session, and cultural sensitivity, including issues regarding courageous conversations about race and privilege, was also reviewed.

Some schools have since developed their own Aboriginal school advisory groups to work on plans derived from these Aboriginal School Lead Sessions.

In the areas of social-emotional learning (SEL), mental health literacy and trauma-informed practice, the District is establishing programming that meets learners' diverse needs. The purpose is to create a climate within each learning environment that supports children, youth and families and that is respectful, welcomes diversity and acknowledges cultural consideration. Teachers, Aboriginal Education workers, certified education assistants and school leaders are valued conduits for such programming. Therefore, ongoing professional development opportunities to increase capacity and foster understanding are crucial components of District programming. Further, SD73's valued partnerships with community agencies continue to help the District to support the needs of students and their families.

A specific focus in 2019–2020 was partnering with the Inclusive Education department to promote diverse instructional practices using Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Unfortunately, the final (fourth) April session was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic; only three (3) of the sessions were completed.

## Equity in Action Project

The Equity in Action project was implemented in a partnership between SD73 and the Ministry of Education. Equity in Action’s student success framework addresses equity and inclusion for Aboriginal learners. Equity and inclusion are reflected in all areas of the plan and through sustainable staffing resources, community collaboration, cultural enhancement, reconciliation and awareness, academic enhancement, social-emotional enhancement and language enhancement. Figure 2 illustrates this framework and its four pillars, which are: the pedagogical core, the learning environment, the learning profile, and policy and governance.



Figure 2. Aboriginal Student Success. Equity in Action, 2016.

During 2019–2020, the Equity in Action project team focused on:

- Unpacking the framework’s four pillars in collaboration with Aboriginal school teams within the Aboriginal School Lead context;
- Conducting an equity scan/equity profile;
- Involving staff and community voice in the equity scan;
- Building a framework for courageous conversations around systemic barriers for Aboriginal learners in schools and the District;
- Identifying key areas to address in the 2020–2021 school year that will assist the District in moving toward equity for Aboriginal learners.

The District reviewed the six- (6-) year completion inequities for District Aboriginal learners. Using the learning profile tool provided by the Ministry of Education, the team began accessing and assisting those individual learners who had a profile that indicated they were at risk of not graduating. This process included identifying such learners and connecting them with the appropriate supports.

During 2019–2020, Equity in Action focused on the Equity in Action framework’s four pillars: the pedagogical core, the learning environment, the learning profile, and policy and governance (Figure 2).

According to the 2019–2020 Equity Scan, the following indicates where the District exhibits (1) strength in and (2) need for work on:

1. Pedagogical Core:

The pedagogical core is responsible for the equity of opportunities for all learners. Learners are empowered to challenge themselves to succeed. Through the use of Ministry approved resources, learners recognize that their cultural background is respected. Learning experiences are intentionally designed to promote opportunities for all learners. Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives are always present. Classrooms are highly connected to families and communities.

*The District exhibits strength in:*

- Decision making that demonstrates a value shift from equality to equity.

*The District needs to work on:*

- Addressing implicit biases and racism in instruction, assessment, reporting and learning.

2. Learning Environment:

The learning environment has a high degree of bias and privilege awareness. Each learner experiences high and motivating expectations for their learning and their future. The learning environment upholds values of equity. Learners are confident and have a profound sense of belonging to their classroom, school and District.

*The District exhibits strength in:*

- Supporting Aboriginal families and communities in feeling welcome and valued; and,
- Educating staff regarding the learning environment for Aboriginal learners.

*The District needs to work on:*

- Providing opportunities for input by Aboriginal learners, families and communities and informing them about curriculum, practices and graduation requirements; and,
- Routinely scanning for equity to access (for example, in extracurricular activities, inclusion, transitions days, and so on).

### 3. Learning Profile:

Learning profiles are robust and evidence informed. Up-to-date profiles, resourcing and interventions are made in time to make a difference. Cultures of reflective practice dominate the professional environment. There is a high degree of advocacy for learners, and empowering systems of belief are evident.

*The District exhibits strength in:*

- Considering multiple sources of data when assessing abilities.

*The District needs to work on:*

- Developing School Learning Plans that reflect equity with explicit (rather than implicit) strategies to address equity; and,
- Describing what happens when Aboriginal learners do not achieve a year's worth of growth in a year's worth of school, describing learners' achievement profiles and indicating if learners' results are improving.

### 4. Policy and Governance:

School and District Learning Plans and collaborative structures are known to and supported by all partners. These plans enable equity and inclusion work; collaborative structures routinely focus attention on and review equity and inclusion in the school. Action plans are obvious to all.

*The District exhibits strength in:*

- Reflecting a dedication to equity in budgets and collaborative planning; and,
- Putting in policies, governance and procedures that support equity.

*The District needs to work on:*

- Ensuring learners' access to Aboriginal languages and culture; ensuring that language and culture are visible parts of learners' experiences;
- Improving community and parent engagement plans; and,
- Inviting communities to participate in decision-making and change processes.

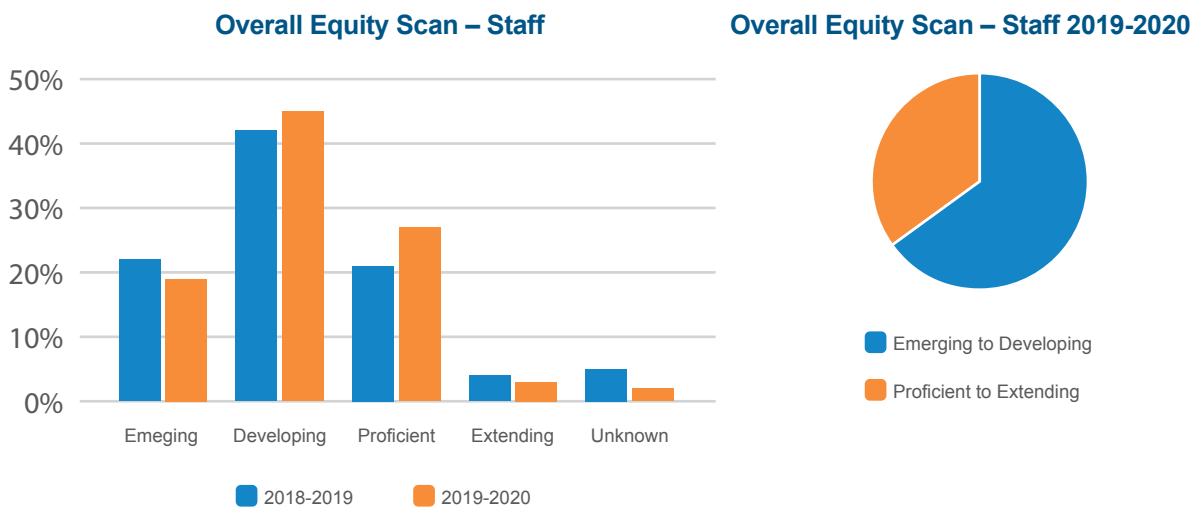
## Equity Scans

Every District school is at a different place and context in the journey to address equity, and it was important for the District to acknowledge this. Thus, for the introduction of the Equity in Action project in 2019–2020, the District intentionally started with school-based action plans. Through developing Aboriginal education leader teams and supports, each school could focus on specific, school-level areas of equity. This approach resulted in engagement in and ownership of the project in individual schools. It also resulted in broader engagement District-wide.

Preliminary data from the 2019–2020 Equity Scan and planning tool reveals general trends for the Equity in Action project team to examine during 2020–2021 in assessing whether there can exist more District-level general supports.

Chart 2 reveals where, according to equity scans for 2018–2019 and 2019–2020, SD73 staff feel they are in regards to the framework’s four pillars.

Chart 2. Overall Equity Scan – Staff.





# Educational Achievement Outcomes

## School Completion Rates

A measure of success within the District is the six- (6-) year completion rate. In 2018–2019, the District had an eighty-four percent (84%) six-year completion rate for Aboriginal learners as compared to eighty-nine percent (89%) for non-Aboriginal students. The provincial (public schools) six-year completion rate was sixty-nine (69%) for Aboriginal learners as compared to eighty-seven (87%) for non-Aboriginal students. See charts 3 and 4. Chart 5 relates to five- (5-) year completion rates.

Chart 3. SD73 Six-Year Completion Rates.

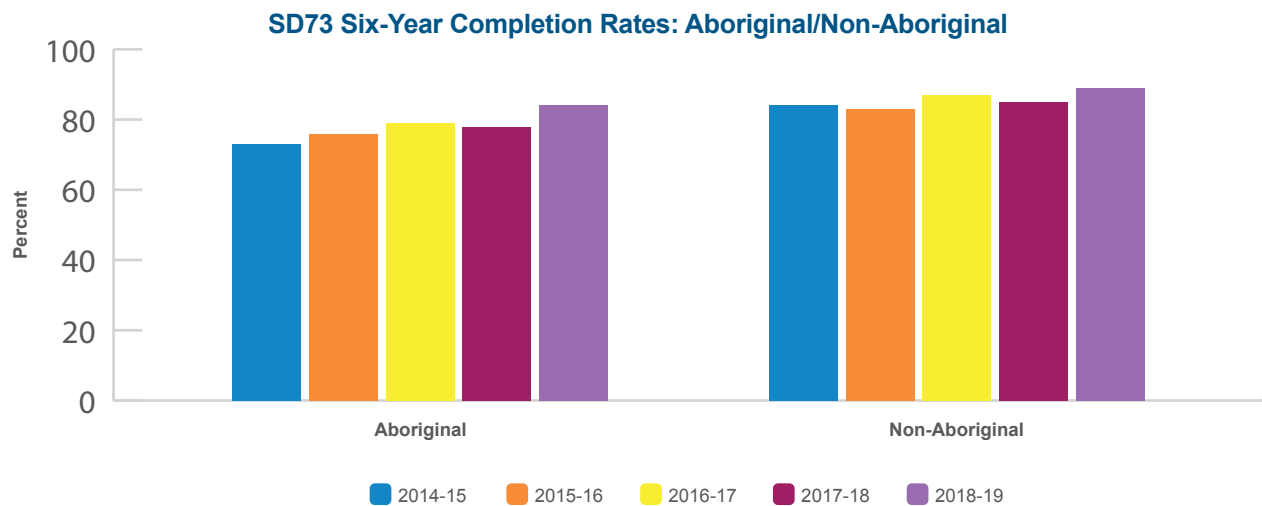


Chart 4: Provincial Six-Year Completion Rates.

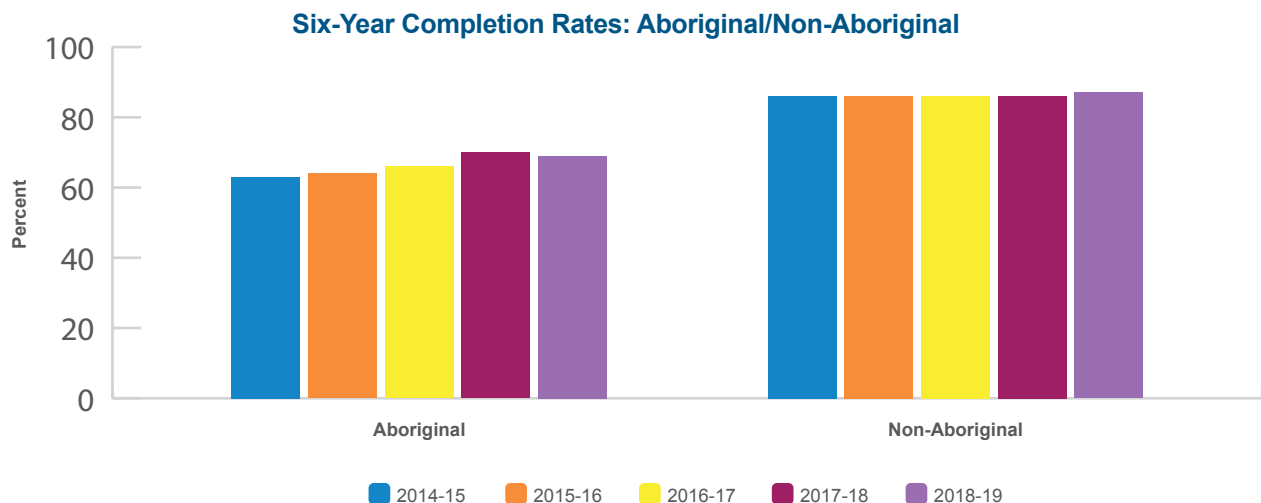


Chart 5: SD73 Five-Year Completion Rates.



Chart 5 illustrates five-year completion rates in SD73 of seventy-seven (77%) for Aboriginal learners eighty-six percent (86%) for non-Aboriginal learners: there is a gap of nine percent (9%) between these two groups of learners.

Provincially, this gap extends to twenty-three percent (23%), as the five-year completion rates are sixty percent (60%) for Aboriginal and eighty-three percent (83%) for non-Aboriginal learners.

SD73's six-year completion rates are almost fifteen percent (15%) higher than the provincial six-year completion rates.

Although this is relatively successful, Aboriginal learners in the District show five percent (5%) below equity with non-Aboriginal students, revealing that SD73's aspiration toward equity has not yet been achieved; more work is required of the District. Achieving equity requires that the success and school achievement results of (1) learners who are of Aboriginal ancestry and (2) learners who are status on reserve be reviewed by each school to ensure that learners' needs are being met.

Beginning in 2020-2021, the District will also closely examine five-year completion rates. SD73 recognizes that support and intervention plans must be created when learners are enrolled in earlier grades. To this end, District staff will assist schools in developing support systems that promote success for all Aboriginal learners.

## Reading, Writing and Numeracy Achievements

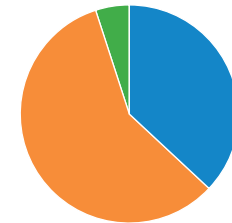
The 2018–2019 provincial Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) demonstrates elementary students' achievement in three foundational skills: reading, writing and numeracy. The FSA is one assessment tool used to indicate student progress. The District also uses the Non-Fiction Reading Assessment and the revised District Numeracy Assessment. For the latter, 2019–2020 data was not yet available for this report but instead will be outlined in the *Aboriginal Education Annual Report 2020–2021*.

## Reading

Chart 6. Reading Achievements for Grades 4 and 7 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students.

### Grade 4: Aboriginal

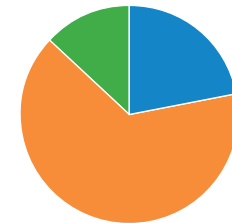
School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	151	92	47	31	98	65	6	4
2015/16	179	91	61	34	111	62	7	4
2016/17	195	92	51	26	126	65	18	9
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	191	90	72	38	110	58	9	5
2018/19	247	96	84	34	146	59	17	7



Emerging On Track Extending

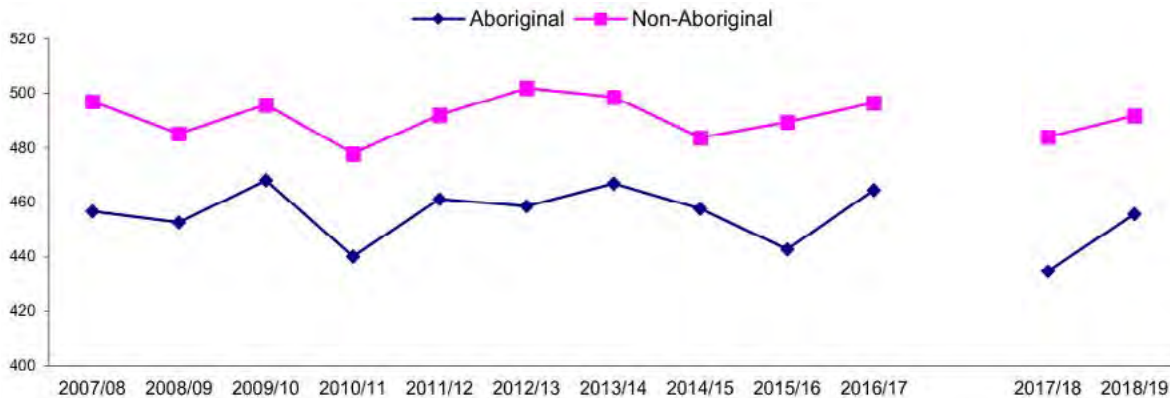
### Grade 4: Non-Aboriginal

School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	800	96	132	17	595	74	73	9
2015/16	785	97	127	16	574	73	84	11
2016/17	875	96	124	14	634	72	117	13
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	814	95	177	22	529	65	108	13
2018/19	908	96	167	18	627	69	114	13



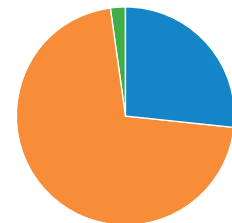
Emerging On Track Extending

### Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 4 Reading



### Grade 7: Aboriginal

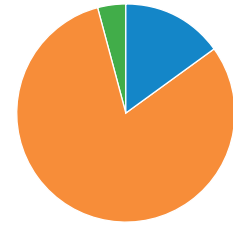
School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	187	90	57	30	120	64	10	5
2015/16	207	92	70	34	130	63	7	3
2016/17	193	90	58	30	131	68	4	2
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	173	89	44	25	126	73	3	2
2018/19	217	92	73	34	141	65	3	1



Emerging On Track Extending

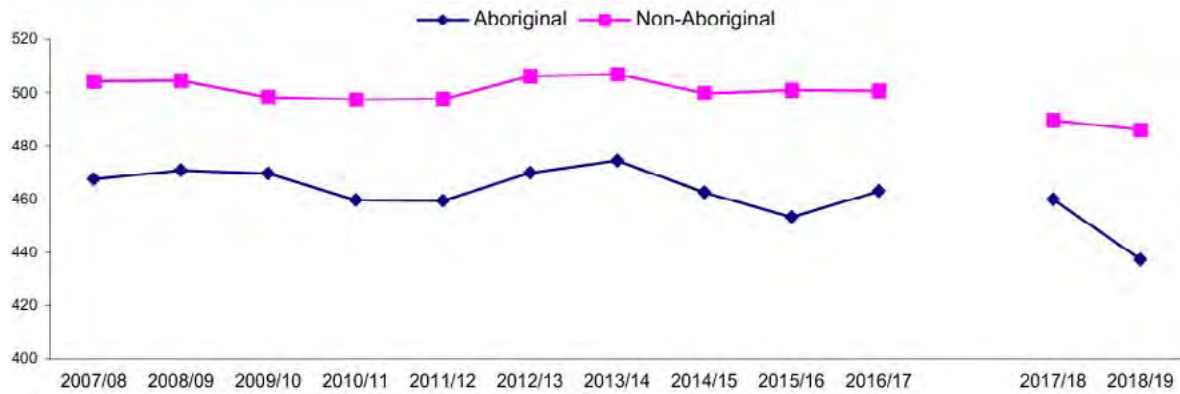
## Grade 7: Non-Aboriginal

School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	768	95	136	18	534	70	98	13
2015/16	758	95	117	15	565	75	76	10
2016/17	799	95	146	18	553	69	100	13
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	799	95	118	15	648	81	33	4
2018/19	805	95	148	18	616	77	41	5



Emerging On Track Extending

## Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 7 Reading

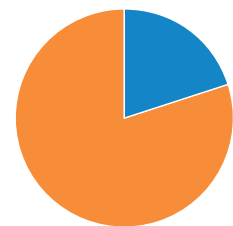


## Writing

Chart 7. Writing Achievements for Grades 4 and 7 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students.

### Grade 4: Aboriginal

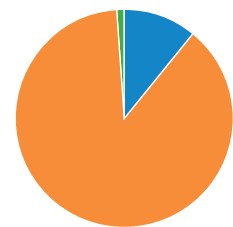
School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	151	92	32	21	118	78	1	1
2015/16	178	91	30	17	147	83	1	1
2016/17	194	92	31	16	162	84	1	1
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	183	86	36	20	147	80	0	0
2018/19	238	92	27	11	211	89	0	0



Emerging On Track Extending

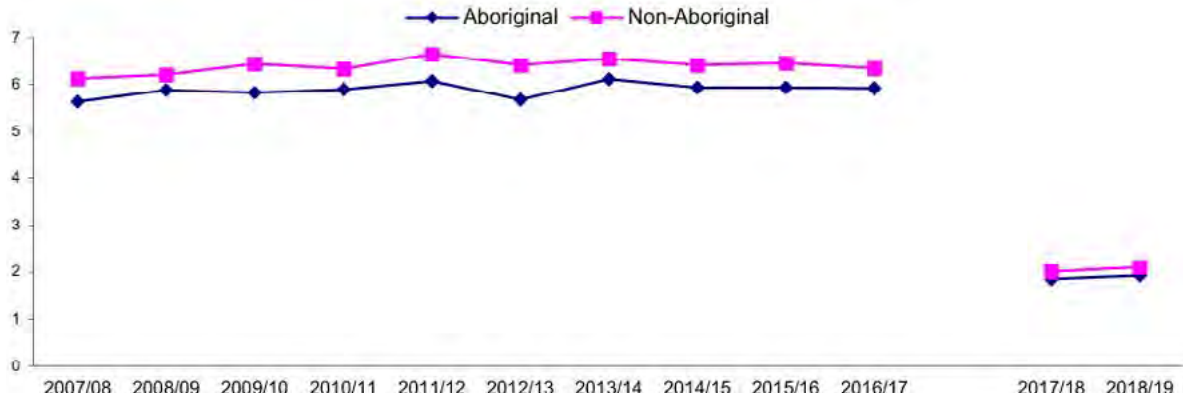
### Grade 4: Non-Aboriginal

School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	797	96	93	12	694	87	10	1
2015/16	784	97	69	9	710	91	5	1
2016/17	875	96	78	9	784	90	13	1
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	794	92	86	11	703	89	5	1
2018/19	896	95	37	4	854	95	5	1



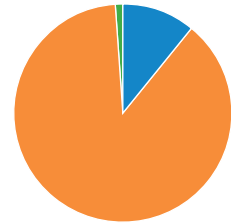
Emerging On Track Extending

### Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 4 Writing



### Grade 7: Aboriginal

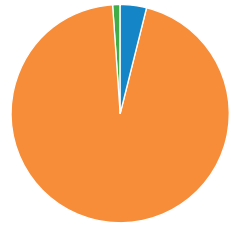
School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	186	89	20	11	166	89	0	0
2015/16	200	89	42	21	156	78	2	1
2016/17	190	88	46	24	144	76	0	0
			<u>Emerging</u>		<u>On Track</u>		<u>Extending</u>	
2017/18	168	87	18	11	149	89	1	1
2018/19	211	89	36	17	171	81	4	2



Emerging On Track Extending

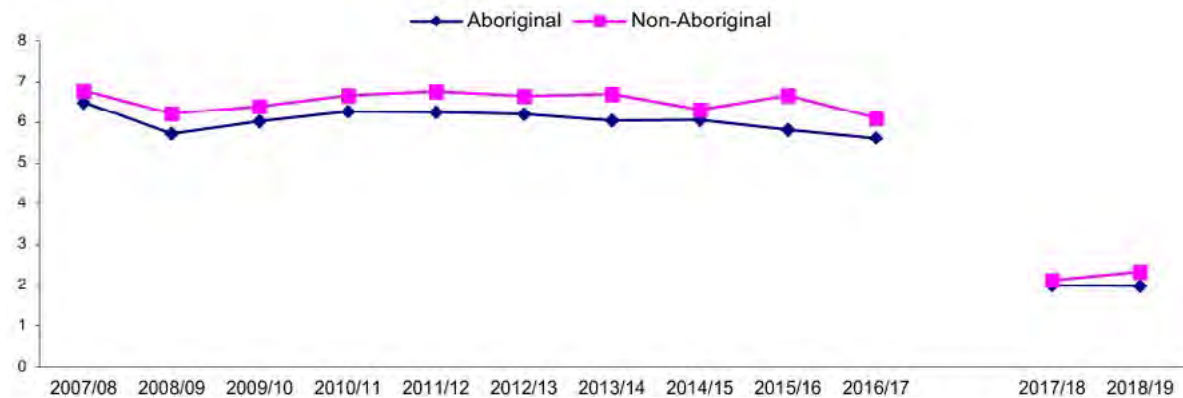
### Grade 7: Non-Aboriginal

School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	763	95	66	9	691	91	6	1
2015/16	755	95	67	9	662	88	26	3
2016/17	794	95	112	14	673	85	9	1
			<u>Emerging</u>		<u>On Track</u>		<u>Extending</u>	
2017/18	773	91	30	4	737	95	6	1
2018/19	791	93	46	6	716	91	29	4



Emerging On Track Extending

### Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 7 Writing

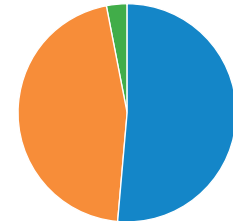


## Numeracy

Chart 8. Numeracy Achievements for Grades 4 and 7 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students.

### Grade 4: Aboriginal

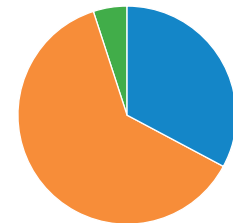
School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	151	92	55	36	94	62	2	1
2015/16	180	92	65	36	114	63	1	1
2016/17	196	93	66	34	122	62	8	4
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	191	90	101	53	85	45	5	3
2018/19	248	96	118	48	122	49	8	3



Emerging On Track Extending

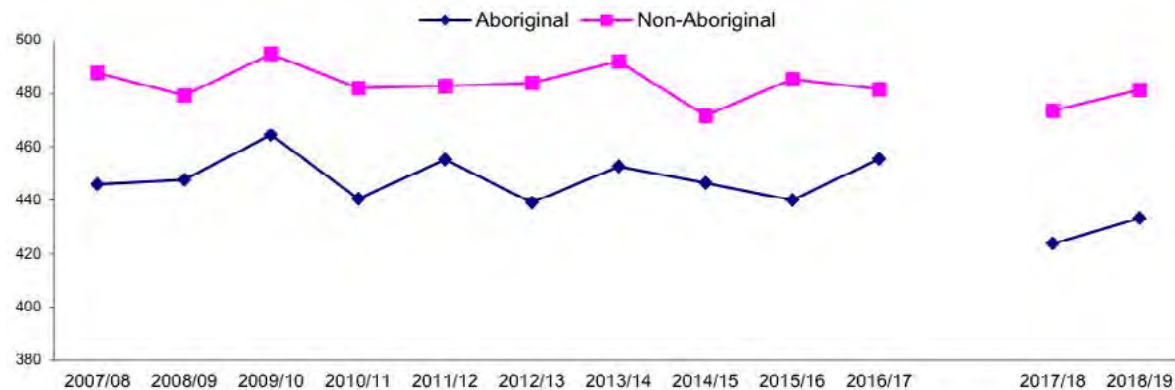
### Grade 4: Non-Aboriginal

School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	798	96	198	25	563	71	37	5
2015/16	786	97	165	21	555	71	66	8
2016/17	878	96	193	22	617	70	68	8
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	814	95	265	33	505	62	44	5
2018/19	906	96	258	28	600	66	48	5



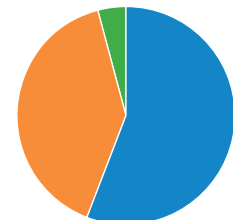
Emerging On Track Extending

### Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 4 Numeracy



### Grade 7: Aboriginal

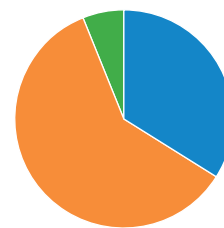
School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	186	89	70	38	114	61	2	1
2015/16	202	90	99	49	95	47	8	4
2016/17	193	90	79	41	107	55	7	4
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	174	90	95	55	72	41	7	4
2018/19	215	91	112	52	101	47	2	1



Emerging On Track Extending

## Grade 7: Non-Aboriginal

School Year	Writers Only #	Participation %	Not Yet Meeting		Meeting		Exceeding	
			#	%	#	%	#	%
2014/15	766	95	179	23	521	68	66	9
2015/16	758	95	180	24	515	68	63	8
2016/17	800	95	168	21	561	70	71	9
			Emerging		On Track		Extending	
2017/18	796	94	270	34	474	60	52	7
2018/19	806	95	229	28	494	61	83	10



■ Emerging ■ On Track ■ Extending

As outlined in the five- and six-year completion rates, educational achievement is not yet equitable for Aboriginal learners as compared to their non-Aboriginal peers.

The Equity in Action project focuses on the elementary achievement of Aboriginal learners to improve achievement throughout all school years.

As the shift to the new curriculum occurs in secondary programs, new data will be required to demonstrate the achievement of Grade 10 and Grade 12 learners in literacy and numeracy. This will be included in the *Aboriginal Education Annual Report 2020–2021* and aligned to the District Learning Plan.

## Educational Achievement for Diverse Aboriginal Learners

The District is guided in its inclusive education policy and procedure by the *School Act* and by the Ministry of Education's *Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*, which guides the implementation of support for SD73's diverse learners.

## Behaviour Disabilities

In the area of behavioural disabilities, the following data includes students in category H (Intensive Behaviour Interventions/Serious Mental Illness) and R (Moderate Behaviour Support/Mental Illness). Chart 9 indicates that, for behavioural disabilities, the District identifies twice as many Aboriginal students per student population as non-Aboriginal students.

Chart 9. Percentage of Students Identified with Behavioural Disabilities.

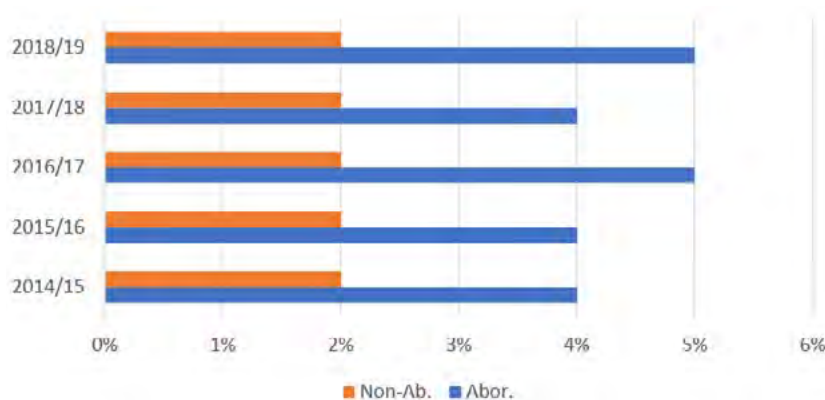
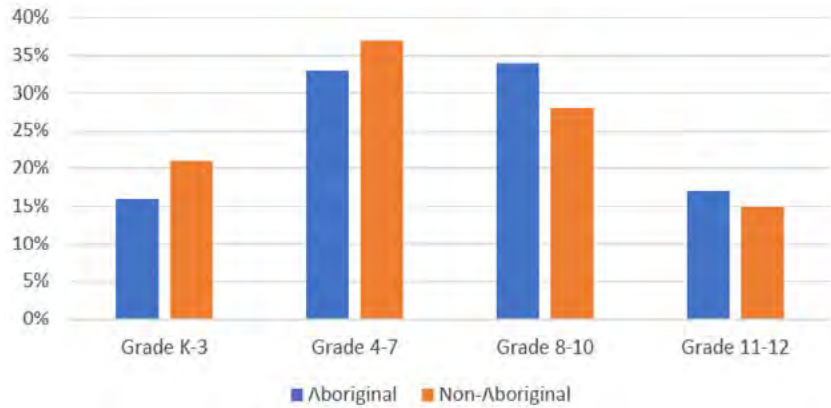


Chart 10. Distribution of Students with Behaviour Disabilities – Five-Year Comparison Trend.

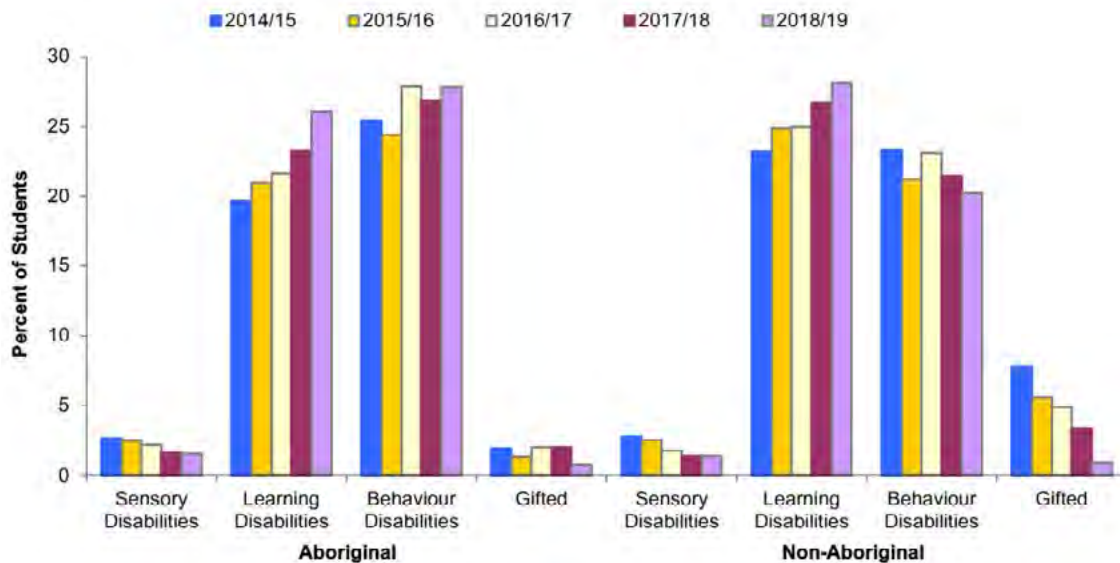


As Chart 10 indicates, most Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students are identified in the middle grades. The difference on this chart is that non-Aboriginal students are more represented per population in the elementary grades as compared to Aboriginal students who appear to be more represented per population in the secondary grades.

## Inclusive Education

Chart 11 illustrates that compared to non-Aboriginal students, Aboriginal students are overrepresented in inclusive education in the areas of sensory disabilities and behavioural disabilities and are underrepresented in the areas of learning disabilities and gifted.

Chart 11. Representation of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students in Special Needs Performance Reporting Groups.

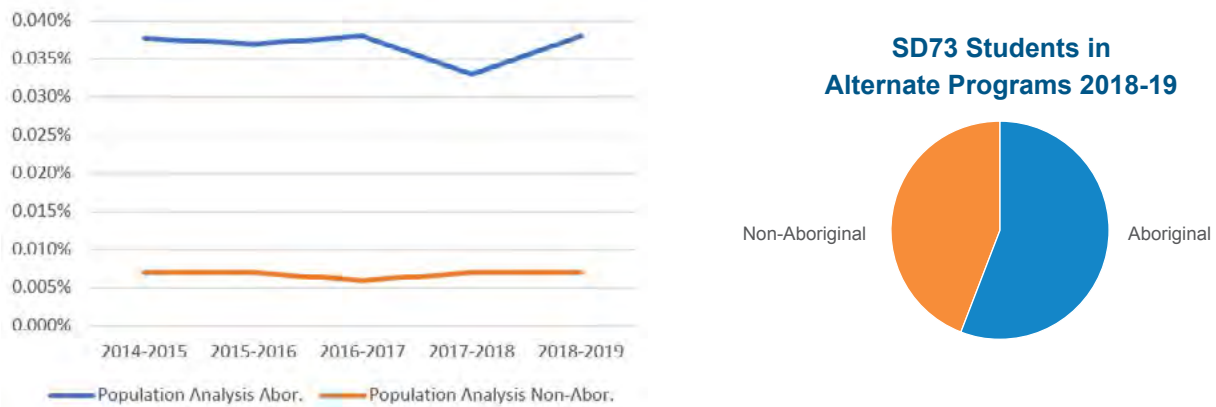




## Alternate Programs

In 2018–2019, Aboriginal students were also overrepresented in alternate programs. As Chart 12 shows, fifty-six percent (56%) of students in alternate programs are Aboriginal as compared to forty-four percent (44%) non-Aboriginal students. Only twenty percent (20%) of learners in the District identify as Aboriginal, yet fifty-seven (57%) of the District’s learners enrolled in alternate programs are Aboriginal.

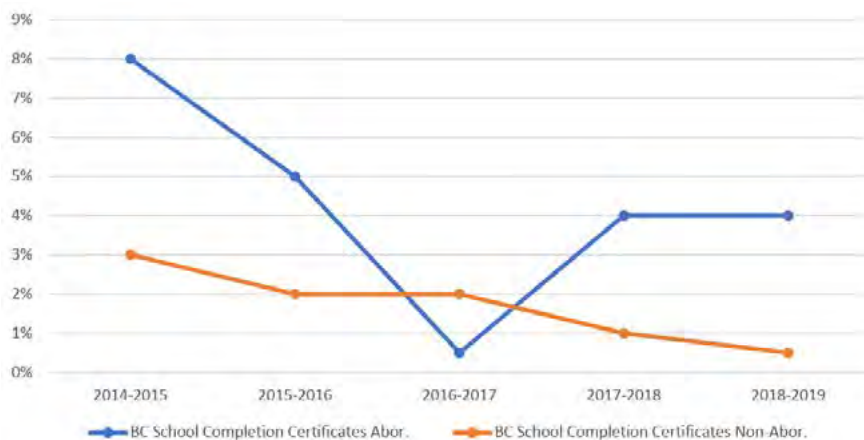
Chart 12. Representation of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students in Alternate Programs.



## BC School Completion (Evergreen) Certificates

Chart 13 shows that SD73 Aboriginal learners are also overrepresented in receiving school completion (Evergreen) certificates.

Chart 13. BC School Completion Certificates Received.



## Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework

Since all learners are unique, and to address and implement equity and inclusion moving forward, the District adheres to the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, a pedagogical approach that helps give all students equal opportunities to succeed. The UDL framework offers flexibility in how students’ access and engage with material and how they show what they know. This framework is based on neuroscience research that has identified three primary networks (recognition, strategic and affective) that impact learning:

- The recognition network deals with incoming stimuli and affects what students learn.
- The strategic network mediates how, based on their experience or background knowledge, students process incoming information.
- The affective network regulates why students want to learn and engage, and it considers students' attitudes and feelings about incoming information as well as their motivation to engage in specific activities.

Over the past two (2) school years, the District has provided UDL training to small school-based teams. In 2019–2020, a UDL network and collaboration with SET-BC existed. Ten (10) pilot schools received a combination of professional development training, collaborative time to plan learning and observation from an educational leader, to foster District teachers' understanding of UDL.

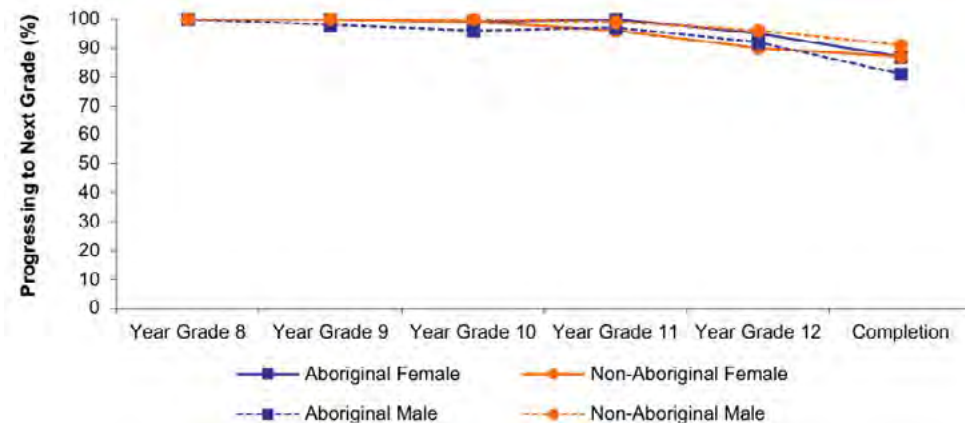
## Educational Achievement and School Connectedness

School connectedness supports students in becoming educated citizens, in developing strong foundational skills and core competencies, and in maintaining positive mental health. School connectedness is developed as a result of a positive school environment in which teachers and other adults create opportunities for students to feel valued, supported and respected, and in which students develop individuality, mastery and purpose while engaged in the learning community.

## Transitions

An area that the District looked at is the progress of students between elementary and secondary school. Chart 14 shows the trend of student progress by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal and by gender for the 2018–2019 cohort.

Chart 14. Progress of Students Entering Grade 8.



As indicated in Chart 14, after entering Grade 8, data for this cohort shows minimal difference in progress across Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and gender. As this cohort transitioned through secondary school, progress rates gradually separated slightly but noticeably for Aboriginal males. There was a nine percent (9%) gap between Aboriginal male learners and their non-Aboriginal male counterparts in school completion. Aboriginal male learners in this cohort achieved an eighty-one percent (81%) school completion rate, whereas Aboriginal

female learners had the same completion rates (parity) as their non-Aboriginal female counterparts: eighty-seven percent (87%). Non-Aboriginal male learners out-performed all groups for school completion, achieving ninety-one percent (91%).

## District Engagement, Well-Being, and Resiliency Survey

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2019–2020 spring District Engagement, Well-Being, and Resiliency Survey (DEWRS) was not completed. The data presented next is based on the 2018–2019 spring DEWRS data.

In DEWRS, the District asks learners about the impact of Aboriginal Education upon their learning. Students are asked if they learn in a way that makes them feel connected to Aboriginal culture. In the 2018–2019 DEWRS, thirty-three percent (33%) of secondary school students agreed or strongly agreed. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of elementary school students agreed or strongly agreed.

In DEWRS, elementary school students are asked if they are learning about Aboriginal people in the District's region and in Canada. In the 2018–2019 DEWRS, sixty-nine percent (69%) of these students agreed or strongly agreed.

In DEWRS, secondary school students are asked if they learn about Aboriginal people and the impact of colonialism in Canada and elsewhere. In the 2018–2019 DEWRS, sixty percent (60%) of these students agreed or strongly agreed.

These results indicate that a greater degree of impact is required in student learning in this area. Accordingly, in 2020–2021, the Aboriginal School Lead Sessions will introduce curriculum to support learning about the Aboriginal people in the District's region and the impact of colonialism in Canada.



## Student Learning Survey

In the Student Learning Survey, all learners are asked to reflect upon their learning experience. The survey's questions and results shown in charts 15 through 24.

Chart 15.

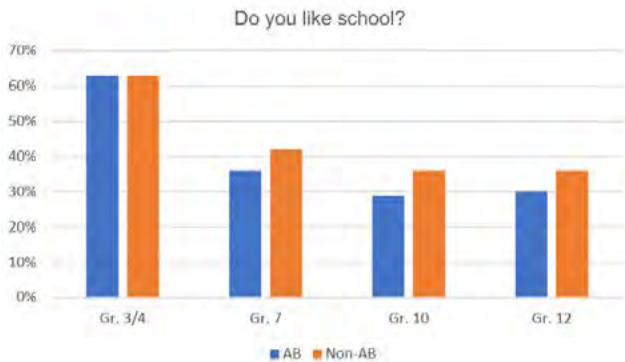


Chart 16.

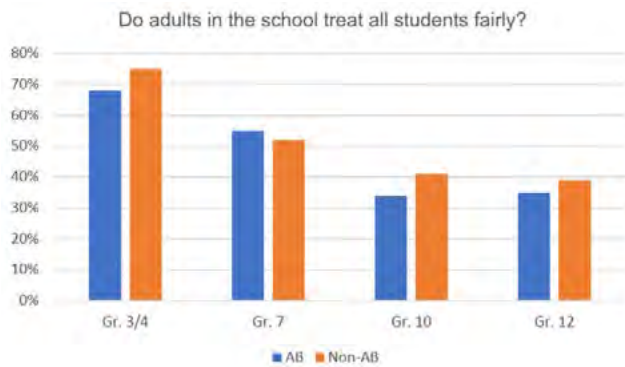


Chart 17.

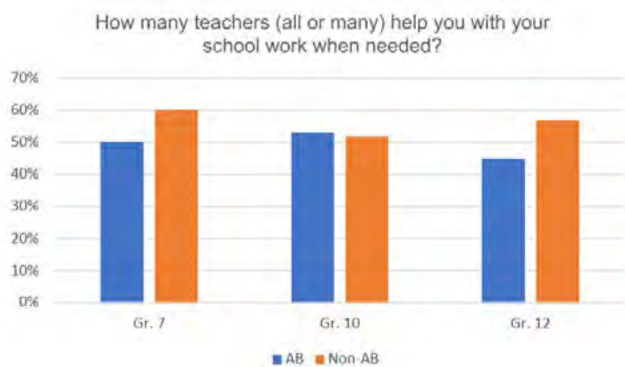
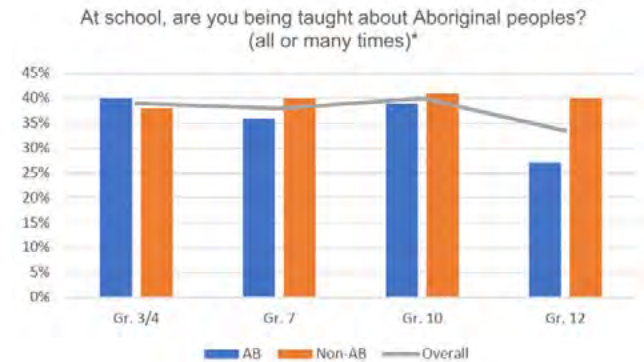


Chart 18.



\*Note: The question in Chart 18 was framed positively in the survey; however, Chart 19 shows the percentage of students who believed they were being taught about Aboriginal peoples rarely or sometimes.

Chart 19.

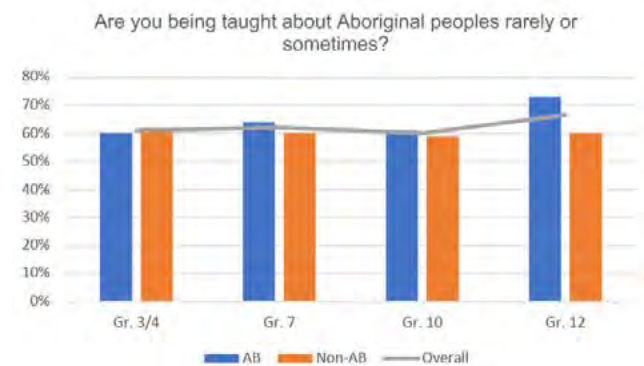


Chart 20.

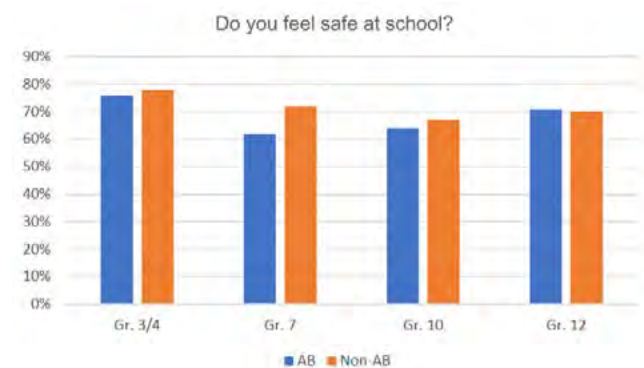


Chart 21.

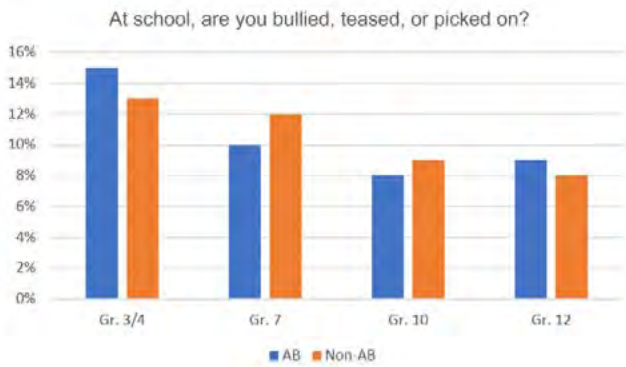


Chart 23.

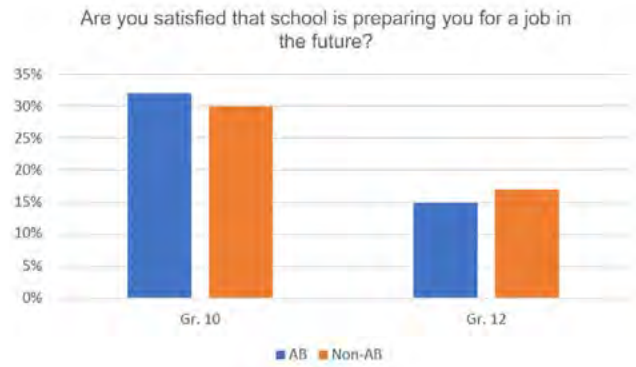


Chart 22.

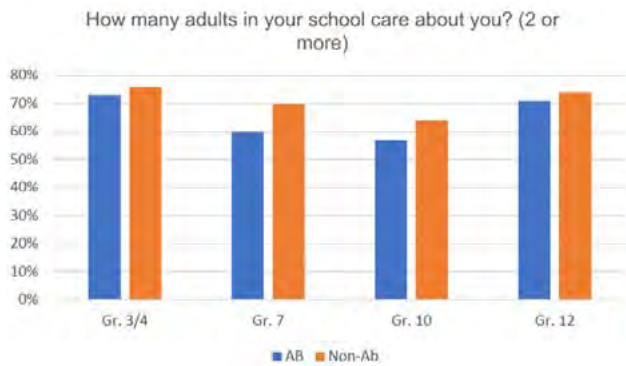
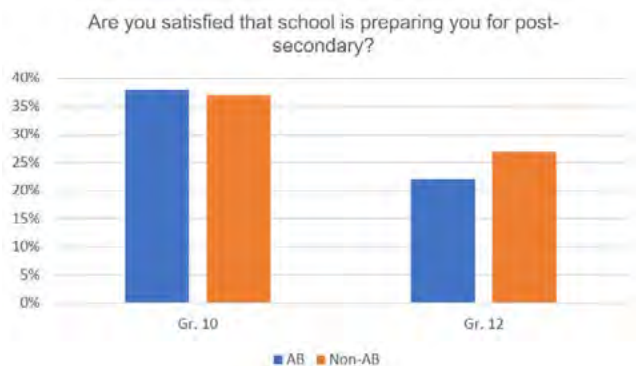


Chart 24.



# Cultural Enhancement, Reconciliation and Awareness

## Key Priorities and Goals

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

63(iii) Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.

## District Learning Plan

Priority 3: Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives.

## Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 1: Student Success

Goal 2: Language and Culture

Goal 3: District and School Culture

Goal 4: Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement

As a responsibility of reconciliation, the TRC: Calls to Action, specifically 63(iii), calls on governments and public education to build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect. Part of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement addresses this call to action through its goals to increase a sense of belonging for Aboriginal learners, as well as to raise awareness for all students about the traditions and cultures of the Secwepemc and other Aboriginal peoples represented in District schools.

The four goals of the Agreement, honouring the local First Peoples and Secwepemcúl'ecw, and teaching Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives, build upon the following:

- Valuing diversity;
- Being culturally self-aware;
- Understanding the dynamics of cultural interactions; and,
- Institutionalizing cultural knowledge and adapting to diversity.

## Cultural Enhancement, Reconciliation and Awareness Programs

The following lists some of the key cultural enhancement, reconciliation and awareness programs and services for 2019–2020. Note that these programs and services were in addition to the cultural, reconciliation and awareness programs and services in each school.

### McQueen Lake Aboriginal Cultural Centre

During 2018–2019, a plan was developed to build a traditional winter house at McQueen Lake to support cultural understanding and Aboriginal education programming. The experiential aspect of this project was to be realized when students help plan and construct such a house at McQueen Lake Environmental Education Centre during the 2019–2020 school year. However, delays in organizing an archeological survey through the local nation, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (TTS), followed by the COVID pandemic have resulted in the project being delayed until the 2020–2021 school year.

Once constructed, the winter house will remain as a centre for further cultural educational activities at McQueen Lake, accessible for students District-wide. Eventually, this winter house will be surrounded by other traditional items, such as a summer home framework, fish baskets and dugout canoe, which classes can visit during field trips to learn about Aboriginal communities and ways of life.

### TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) Program Canoe Project

Brocklehurst Middle School expanded their TEK 8 program in 2018–2019 from Grade 8 students to include Grade 9 students. This was a project-based learning course focused on building a traditional hand-carved dugout canoe. Students did this by working with local master carver Frank Marchand. They also conducted research, explored the natural environment, accumulated field notes, interacted with elders and took part in traditional activities. Brock TEK program, by centering on the communal carving of a canoe, focused on how Aboriginal people lived and worked together and how this enabled prosperity in the natural environment.

Unfortunately, the project was delayed, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2018–2019 TEK 8 program finished, in June of 2019, with a traditional gathering and celebration, launching the students' hand-carved canoe onto Little Shuswap Lake. A similar celebration was planned but had to be cancelled for the end of the 2019–2020 school year. With the resumption of school, the 2019–2020 TEK project will be completed. Continuation of this project into 2020–2021 has already been approved by the Aboriginal Education Council and Brocklehurst Middle School.

The principal and TEK teacher noted that during the two (2) years this project has run, the attendance, behaviour and learning of participating students has improved. The project has also a source of pride for the students as they welcome guests to the school to view it and discuss what they are learning.

The project was shared at parent nights, in a British Columbia Teacher's Federation (BCTF) publication and in a learning plan presentation to Board trustees.

## Orange Shirt Day

Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph's Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration project and reunion events that took place in May 2013 in Williams Lake. This project was the vision of Alkali Lake (Esk'etemc) Chief Fred Robbins, a former SD73 student. It brought together former students and their families from the Secwepemc, Tsilhqot'in, Southern Dakelh and St'at'imc nations, along with Cariboo Regional District municipalities, school districts and civic organizations.

The events commemorated the residential school experience, witnessed and honoured the healing journey of the survivors and their families and committed to the ongoing process of reconciliation. Chief Justice Murray Sinclair challenged all who participated to keep the reconciliation process alive.

Since then, SD73 has been recognizing Orange Shirt Day through various school activities, in which participants wear orange. Phyllis (Jack) Webstad, wearer of the first orange shirt, is Northern Secwepemc (Shuswap) from the Canoe Creek Indian Band (Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation) and was invited to the District in September 2018 to give presentations in two (2) secondary schools. In 2019, all elementary and secondary schools were provided with teacher resource packages and copies of Phyllis' Story.

SD73 is planning on continuing recognizing this day as a District-wide event in 2020–2021.

## Moose Hide Campaign

In February, 2020, the District continued raising awareness of the Moose Hide Campaign, which stands up against violence toward women and children. The campaign distributes moose hide squares across Canada, and participants wear the squares to signify their commitment to honour, respect and protect women and children. Schools were encouraged to organize activities or events in recognition of this day.

## Day of Sucwentwecw

On April 7, 2020, the seventh annual Day of Sucwentwecw (meaning, acknowledging one another) was held in all District schools. The Day of Sucwentwecw is an initiative that recognizes and celebrates the history of the Secwepemc people (Secwepemcúl'ecw) and other Aboriginal people residing within the territory of the Shuswap Nation. The theme was "Walking Together: Relationships & Worldviews," based upon the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL).

This year, the Day of Sucwentwecw was acknowledged differently. Usually, it is a day when each District school invites an Elder, knowledge keeper or representative from one of the Secwepemcúl'ecw local bands to witness and be welcomed. It is meant to be a day for students to share their learning, to learn more, and to participate in reconciliation with Aboriginal people through respect and acknowledgement.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2019–2020 it became a day that the District acknowledged together, from the heart and from a distance. Online resources and stories were shared with teachers, who shared them with their students.

The District acknowledged and celebrated its Elders by simply thanking them. Keeping the Elders safe and protecting everyone's safety while reflecting on their teachings kept the spirit of this day alive for all.



## Aboriginal Graduation

Aboriginal graduates were initially invited to cross the stage with dignity, purpose and opportunities at McArthur Island Sportsplex on June 8, 2020. However, the Aboriginal Graduation ceremonies, like other graduation ceremonies in the 2019–2020 school year, did not proceed as planned. A graduation video was put together that included a commemorative graduation programme. Every graduate received an Aboriginal Education bursary to help pursue post-secondary training.

Here are the links to the 2020 Aboriginal Graduation ceremony and to the two Aboriginal Valedictorian addresses:

- [2020 Aboriginal Graduation](#)
- [Valedictorian address 1](#)
- [Valedictorian address 2](#)

There were 172 Aboriginal graduates in 2020. Each graduate was awarded a COVID-19 bursary of \$200. Thirty (30) additional scholarships and bursaries were also awarded, for a total of \$17,000.

## North Shore/South Shore/Westsyde Cultural Days

In 2019, the North Shore Cultural Day (May 31) hosted approximately 560 students from six (6) elementary schools. The South Shore Day had approximately 450 students from four (4) elementary schools.

In 2020, the District hoped to include a day for Westsyde schools. Unfortunately, the cultural days were cancelled but are planned for spring 2021.

## National Indigenous Peoples Day

The District had planned on acknowledging National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21) on June 19. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these days were modified at each school and were, in some schools, recognized virtually. The District supported schools with resources and suggestions on how to acknowledge the day. The goal for 2020–2021 is to bring greater awareness to this day and have District schools acknowledge and celebrate it.

## SD73 Powwow

Historically, Twin Rivers Education Centre (TREC) has hosted an annual powwow in May. The District had planned to expand this event to allow for greater participation. The planning committee had booked the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (TTS) Powwow Arbour for the event and collaborated with local community to help host. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled, due to COVID-19. With the permission of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (TTS), the committee hopes to plan the event again in spring 2021.

## KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE)

The KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE) is a unique, participatory history lesson developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers and educators. The KBE fosters truth, understanding, respect and reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

In 2018, SD73 obtained a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with KAIROS Canada to train and facilitate the KBE within the District. In 2018–2019, the District trained twenty (20) of its staff members to facilitate the

KBE. Many schools took advantage of the training, and a KBE was planned for spring 2020 for the Board but was cancelled due to COVID-19.

The District has continued the MOU through to 2021. The District now has three (3) KBE kits, available to SD73 schools through Henry Grube Education Centre.

### **Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society**

The District has a contract with the Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society to provide the services of a cultural worker to District schools. Schools can book the cultural worker to offer provide workshops and activities to students and staff members. The cultural worker also sits on several District committees, as an advisor.

### **Secwepemc Museum**

The District has a contract with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (TTS) to provide the services of a cultural worker to District schools. Schools can book the cultural worker to offer cultural workshops and activities to students and staff members. The cultural worker also sits on several District committees, as an advisor. This contract includes discounted and priority access for District students and classes to the Secwepemc Museum & Heritage Park and to the Kamloops Indian Residential School tour.



# Academic Enhancement

## Key Priorities and Goals

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

10(i) ...to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.

12 We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.

### District Learning Plan

Priority 1: Ensure every student acquires strong foundational skills and core competencies.

Priority 2: Connect students to their passions and interests.

Priority 3: Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 1: Student Success

Enhanced programs and services are available to self-identified Aboriginal students. These programs and services support the equitable educational achievement of learners.

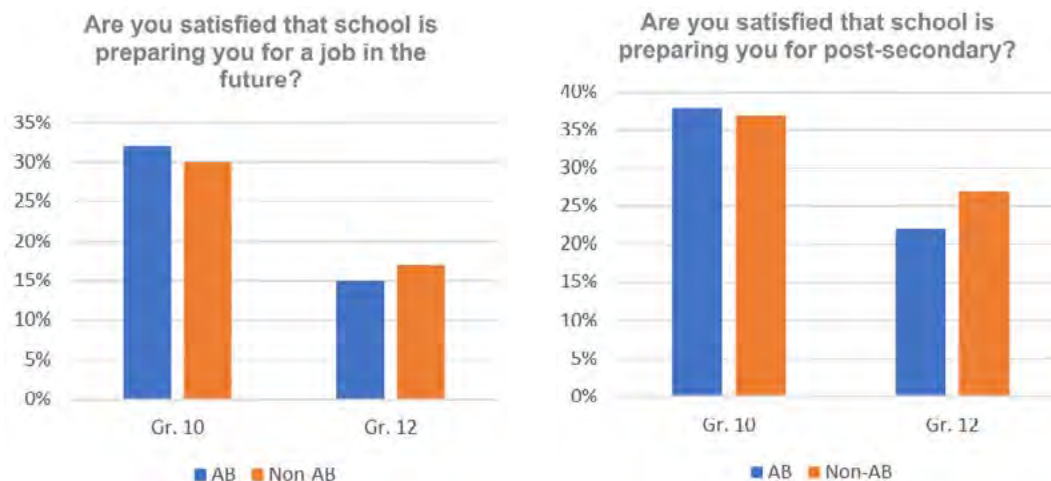
## Early Learning

Early learning continues to be an area of need for Aboriginal learners. Currently, the Aboriginal Education Elementary Resource teacher is involved in the District's Kindergarten screening process when an Aboriginal learner and family are involved. The Aboriginal Education Council has also allocated funds for the 2020–2020 year for an Aboriginal Early Learning working group to assess current programs and identify areas of need and support. This working group will meet early in the 2020–2021 school year to begin the process, working closely with the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee.

## Aboriginal Transitions to Post-Secondary

According to the provincial Student Learning Survey, Aboriginal students in Grade 10 (2018–2019) felt more prepared for jobs and post-secondary learning as compared to non-Aboriginal students. This was not true, however, for Aboriginal students in Grade 12, who felt less prepared for post-secondary education.

Chart 25. Provincial Satisfaction Survey for Secondary Students (2018–2019).



In recent years, the District has partnered with TRU in the annual Aboriginal Transitions Day, providing an opportunity for SD73 Aboriginal secondary learners in grades 10 and 11 to experience a day on campus. The day offers information regarding post-secondary options available to students after graduating from either an academic or trades stream. Students learn about the supports and mentors available for post-secondary Aboriginal learners and hear stories and experiences from current post-secondary learners.

On November 14, 2019, approximately one hundred (100) secondary students in Grade 10 attended the Aboriginal Transitions Day at TRU.

For SD73, one of the purposes of this event is to address equity in school completion for Aboriginal learners. The TRC: Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the Auditor General of BC's report on Aboriginal Education all point to the need for public education to create equitable opportunities and options for Aboriginal students.

The District hopes to continue partnering with TRU in offering this enriching experience for its Aboriginal learners. By exposing District Aboriginal learners to post-secondary options and creating an atmosphere of safety and inclusion, SD73 can build toward equity.

## Career Education, and Trades and Transitions

The Aboriginal Education department collaborated with the District Career Education Coordinator to co-create the *Career Resource Guide*. This guide contains links directly to Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives and to the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL). Professional development for career coordinator training reflects on how the FPPL deeply connects to students' life journeys and career development.

Three (3) resources that the Career Education department highlights to support Aboriginal learners are:

- BC's Career Guide for Indigenous People (WorkBC);
- Health Careers Guidebook (First Nations Health Authority); and
- Career Journeys First Nations Career Role Model Program (First Nations Education Steering Committee [FNESC]).

The Trades and Transitions programs support Aboriginal learners and include the following programs:

- Aboriginal Transitions to Post-Secondary; and,
- Heavy Metal Rocks (which reserves spaces for Aboriginal students).

## Four Directions Secondary School

Four Directions Secondary School provides an alternate learning environment designed to serve secondary school Aboriginal learners who are more likely to succeed in a smaller, more personal and more flexible setting.

This is an academic program taught through an Aboriginal lens: it includes a significant focus on Aboriginal culture and a variety of out-of-school activities. Entry to the program is based on a referral from the student's home school to Twin Rivers Education Centre (TREC).

## Aboriginal Support Teachers

Aboriginal support teachers have blocks in five (5) secondary schools. The intent is to provide additional supports for Aboriginal learners in academics, self-awareness and engagement. To start the 2019–2020 school year, support teachers were in four (4) District secondary schools. In the winter semester, Sa-Hali Secondary School was awarded one (1) block as a pilot to increase the number of schools to five (5). The AEC approved continuing these additional supports through 2020–2021.

Schools that currently have blocks are:

- Chase Secondary School (two [2] blocks)
- South Kamloops Secondary School (one [1] block)
- NorKam Senior Secondary School (one [1] block)
- Brocklehurst Middle School (one [1] block)
- Sa-Hali Secondary School (one [1] block)

# Social Emotional Enhancement

## Key Priorities and Goals

### District Learning Plan

Priority 2: Connect students to their passions and interests.

Priority 3: Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives.

Priority 4: Foster an inclusive, adaptable and accountable District culture.

Priority 5: Strengthen partnerships to enrich the way we lead, learn and work.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 1: Student Success

Goal 3: District and School Culture

Goal 4: Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement

SD73 schools are increasingly multicultural and multilingual, with students from diverse social and economic backgrounds. Educators and community agencies serve students who have different motivations for engaging in learning, behaving positively, and performing academically. Social-emotional learning (SEL) provides a foundation for safe and positive learning and enhances all students' ability to succeed in school, careers and life.

Research shows that SEL not only improves achievement by an average of eleven (11) percentile points, but it also increases prosocial behaviours (such as kindness, sharing and empathy); improves student attitudes toward school; and reduces depression and stress among students (Durlak et al., 2011). Effective social and emotional learning programming involves coordinated classroom, school wide, family and community practices that help students develop. The District provides several key supports and services for its Aboriginal learners.



## Aboriginal Family Counsellors

Starting in 2019, the District employed six (6) Aboriginal Family Counsellors, who transitioned from being independent contractors, working under the direction of the AEC administrator. Six family counsellors facilitated boys and girls groups and provided one-to-one student counseling support for the following:

- Alcohol and drugs;
- Grief and loss;
- Cultural support;
- Sexual abuse;
- Parenting skills;
- Suicide;
- Violence;
- Depression;
- Parent-child conflict;
- Self-esteem;
- Low motivation;
- Self-harm;
- Anger management;
- Sex education; and,
- Anxiety.

## Aboriginal Youth and Family Consultants

With the transition of Aboriginal Family Counsellors to the District in 2019, two (2) new positions of Aboriginal youth and family consultant were created. The Aboriginal youth and family consultant position was developed further to:

- Provide advocacy, support and consultation for Aboriginal families and students, particularly during inclusion planning in schools; and,
- Provide community and cultural connections for families and students.

## Boys and Girls Groups

Aboriginal boys and girls groups are based in elementary, middle and secondary schools. The purpose of these groups is to create a healthy understanding of gender identity within the context of cultural identity. The groups provide marginalized and at-risk Aboriginal girls and boys with the opportunity to explore their experiences and challenges in a safe, non-threatening environment. Programs are held in both rural and urban settings.

During the 2019–2020 school year, the focus and facilitation of boys and girls groups changed due to increasing demand and the need to expand the availability of these groups to Aboriginal students. In the past, these groups were run by Aboriginal Family Counsellors only, along with support from Aboriginal Education workers. The District employs only six (6) Aboriginal Family Counsellors, and the demands of the groups took away from the opportunities for one-to-one counselling supports. To adjust, Aboriginal Education workers were trained as facilitators of groups, with Aboriginal Family Counsellors available for supports when needed.

In 2018–2019, sixteen (16) schools had active Aboriginal boys and girls groups. With this model, the District was able to expand the number of groups in schools to 44 groups in 20 schools.

YouPower provided facilitator training in 2020 and certified thirty (30) staff members as boys and girls group facilitators. Chart 26 shows data from that training.

Chart 26. Boys and Girls Group Data 2019–2020.

Grade Level	Males	Females	Students with Aboriginal Ancestry	Rural Students	Urban Students
K-7	133	193	326	48	278
8-12	97	149	246	63	183





# Language Enhancement

## Key Priorities and Goals

### Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

10(iv) Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.

### BC Tripartite Education Agreement

Schedule E: Language and Culture

### District Learning Plan

Priority 2: Connect students to their passions and interests.

Priority 3: Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives.

Priority 4: Foster an inclusive, adaptable and accountable District culture.

Priority 5: Strengthen partnerships to enrich the way in which we lead, learn and work.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 1: Student Success

Goal 2: Language and Culture

Goal 3: District and School Culture

The BC First Nations Education System has been created to build upon and reflect First Nations' rights; First Nations' languages, cultures, values, and traditions; and First Nations' commitment to quality education and improved students' outcomes. The loss of First Nations languages and cultures that resulted from Canada's colonial history and the limited resources that have been available to address this serious problem has detrimentally affected First Nations students in terms of their self-esteem and self-identity in addition to the health of their families and communities.

Revitalization, preservation and maintenance of languages is integral to the well-being of First Nations communities. Canada and BC have expressed the priority of, and have made commitments to, the revitalization of Indigenous languages and to the endorsement and implementation of the UN Declaration, which recognizes (1) First Nations' right of self-determination and right to education that is rooted in their languages and cultures, and (2) the TRC: Calls to Action, which include a number of calls to protect, preserve and promote Indigenous languages (BCTEA, 2018).

The District is developing a current language curriculum, as well as offering Secwepemctsin in six (6) District schools.

## Secwepemc Language Programs

The District employs three (3) Secwepemc language teachers, who offer Secwepemc language lessons in four (4) secondary schools and three (3) elementary schools, as follows:

- Chase Secondary School
- Valleyview Secondary School
- Brocklehurst Middle School
- Haldane Elementary School
- Marion Schilling Elementary School
- Arthur Hatton Elementary School

## Secwepemc Language Curriculum

SD73 is one of nineteen (19) districts with a language curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education. The last updated version of this curriculum was in 1999. In 2018, the District Aboriginal Education department, in compliance with the direction from the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA), began exploring the process of updating the Secwepemc language curriculum and connecting it with the current BC curriculum and core competencies. Conversations and consultation with local language knowledge keepers started in 2018 and will continue for 2020–2021.



# Conclusion

The *Aboriginal Education Annual Report 2019–2020* has reported on the four goals set out in the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. This report brings to light the commitment and achievements of students and staff members who are striving to meet these goals. Through the commitment of all educators, connections made with parents and community members continue to improve. These connections, in turn, are instrumental in improving the success and the personal well-being of all District students.

The highlight of this report is the rise in the District of the Aboriginal six-year completion rate from seventy-eight percent (78%) in 2017–2018 to eighty-four percent (84%) in 2018–2019. This achievement represents an increase toward equity but falls short of having all Aboriginal students graduate with dignity, purpose and options for the future. There is more work to be done!

As SD73 strives to eliminate the educational achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners, effective strategies and interventions within District schools will be implemented in enhancing academic success, social-emotional learning (SEL), and opportunities to access Aboriginal language and learning about Aboriginal culture.

As the District moves forward in its work, the focus must remain on ensuring that each Aboriginal student has the opportunity to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful after graduation.

