



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 73
(Kamloops-Thompson)

2024-2025 Career Development Annual Report

School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson)

May 2026

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 Secwépmc as the keepers of their traditions and knowledge.

We are grateful to be guests on the territory of seven Secwépmc First Nations: Tk'emlúps te Secwépmc, Sexqeltqin (Adams Lake Indian Band), Skwlāx te Secwepemcúl' ucw, Neskonlith, Simpcw, Pellt'iq't (Whispering Pines Clinton Band), and Skítsesten (Skeetchestn Band).



Our Mission: Supporting learning opportunities and environments which inspire students to thrive.

Our Vision: Fostering educated and resilient citizens empowered to contribute to a diverse, inclusive, caring, and sustainable society.

Our Values: Connections / Relationships, Equity, Well-being, Sustainability

SUMMARY

Career Development

The Career Development Department is committed to ensuring that students have access to meaningful career exploration and in-depth learning experiences prior to high school graduation. Our focus is to provide students with opportunities that allow them to explore career clusters aligned with their personal goals, interests, attributes, and values. By engaging students in authentic, hands-on learning, we help them make informed decisions about their future pathways—whether that includes post-secondary education, apprenticeship training, or direct entry into the workforce.

A highlight of recent years has been the continued strength and growth of our Youth Train in Trades programs. Enrollment remains robust, demonstrating both student interest and confidence in skilled trades as viable and rewarding career pathways. These programs provide students with dual credit opportunities, industry-recognized certifications, and exposure to real-world training environments. Early access to trades training gives students a head start in their career journey, builds confidence, and fosters resilience as they navigate rigorous, industry-standard expectations.

We are particularly encouraged by the increased female participation in our Construction and Mechanical Sampler programs. Through intentional outreach, inclusive programming, and visible role models, more young women are exploring trades-related career paths. These programs are helping to challenge stereotypes and broaden perceptions of who belongs in skilled trades. By creating welcoming and supportive learning environments, we are seeing greater diversity and representation in areas traditionally underrepresented by females. This growth reflects both student interest and the success of our efforts to promote equity in career exploration.

Our Health Sciences Academy continues to flourish through strengthened partnerships within our local health care community. Collaborations with Royal Inland Hospital and Interior Health provide students with invaluable exposure to acute care and community health settings. In addition, partnerships with senior care homes and First Light Midwifery Clinic expand student understanding of diverse health care roles across the lifespan. These organizations work collaboratively to offer meaningful work experience placements, mentorship, and real-world insight into the health sector. Students benefit from observing interdisciplinary teamwork, patient-centered care, and the professionalism required within health services. These authentic experiences not only build practical

skills but also deepen students' understanding of the demands and rewards of health-related careers.

Enrollment in our 1–4-day career exploration experiences remain high, reflecting strong student engagement and curiosity. These short-term, immersive opportunities allow students to “try on” a career area of interest before committing to longer-term programming. Whether exploring skilled trades, health sciences, engineering, or natural resources, students value the opportunity to gain firsthand exposure. These experiences often serve as a catalyst for future course selection, career planning, and post-secondary decision-making.

Industry and post-secondary partnerships are foundational to the success of our programming. Such partnerships are essential for events like the RCMP Youth Academy, Heavy Metal Rocks, and Jr Fire Crew because they connect youth directly with professionals working in those fields. These collaborations provide hands-on experience, mentorship, and real-world insight into career pathways. We were proud to collaborate with Molycop to deliver the Discover Engineering event, where students engaged with engineers and technical professionals to explore career pathways in manufacturing and industrial operations. Our ongoing partnership with the Natural Resource Science Department at Thompson Rivers University supports the McQueen Lake Forestry and Environmental Camp, offering students experiential learning in environmental science, forestry, and land stewardship. Additionally, in partnership with New Gold's New Afton Mine, we host an annual Women in Mining event that highlights career opportunities for females in mining and resource sectors.

The Career Development Department relies heavily on strong industry and community partnerships to make these transformative experiences possible. Employers, health care providers, post-secondary institutions, and community organizations generously contribute their time, expertise, and resources to support our students. Their involvement ensures that programming remains relevant, current, and aligned with labor market needs.

As we reflect on the 2024-2025 school year, it is clear that providing early and authentic career exposure empowers students to make confident, informed decisions about their futures. Through robust enrollment, increased diversity in programming, and strengthened community partnerships, the Career Development Department continues to create pathways that prepare students not only for graduation, but for lifelong career success.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

2024-2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

Key Programs

Department Mandate

The Career Development Department supports counsellors and Trades and Transitions Coordinators to guide student transition planning, deliver sustainable dual credit and career exploration experiences, monitor student success, and collaborate with families, Bands, and community partners to co-create transition supports that foster academic readiness and emotional belonging.

Highlights and Achievements

Post-Secondary Transition

~5-7% of Grade 12 students transition to post-secondary before graduation, gaining early career training, increased confidence, and a clear transition plan into apprenticeship or employment.

Focus on Equity

15% of students registered in male dominated Youth Train in Trades programs in SD73 were female (national average is 5–7%).

28% of Sampler students were female participants, surpassing the district's goal to have at least double the national representation of female students in trades programs (10%).

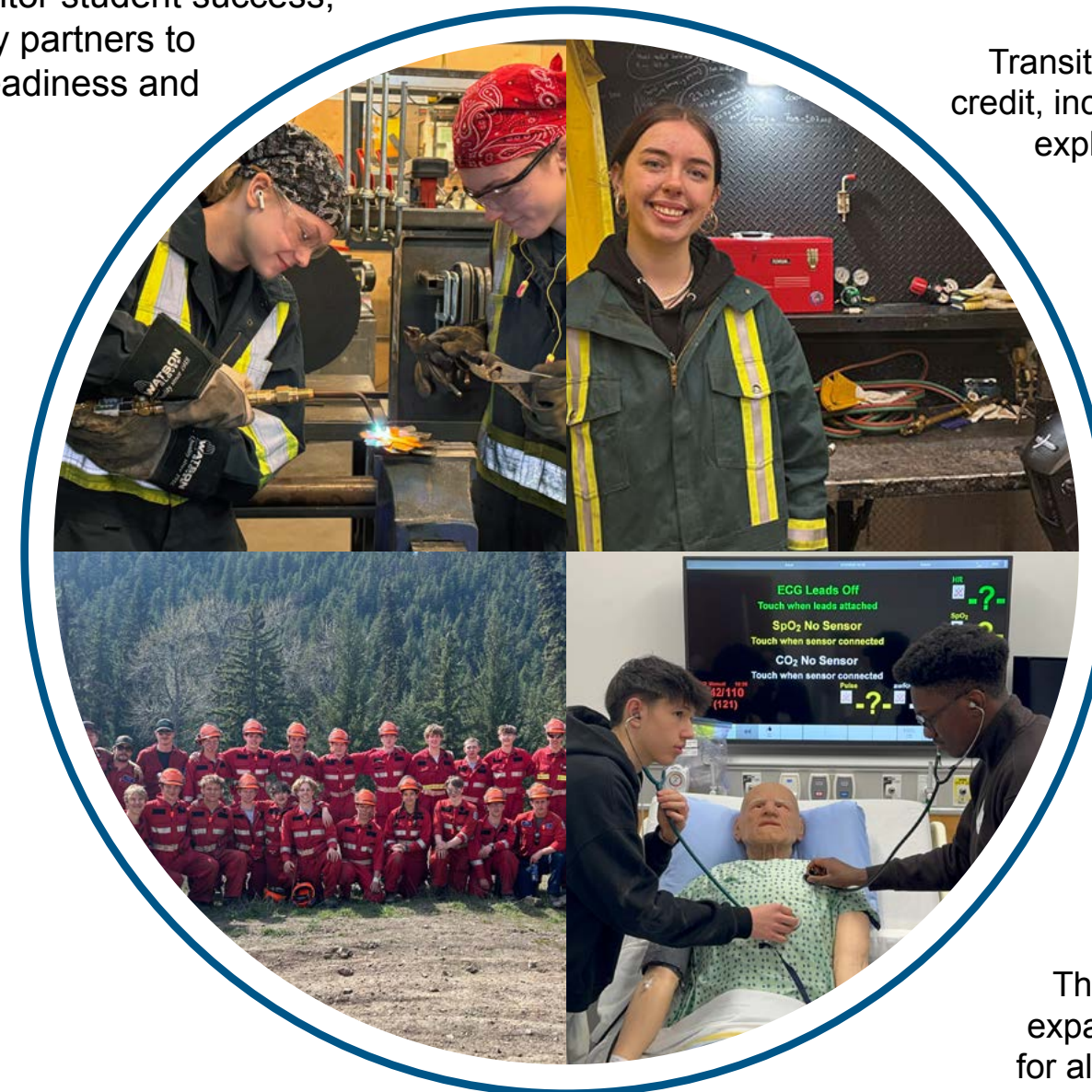
25% of students enrolled in a Youth Train in Trades program were Indigenous.

Expansion of Dual Credit

18 students took one or two TRU Start courses. Expanded Dual Credit opportunities with TRU Start gave Grade 12 students access to post-secondary courses aligned to their career goals and pathways.

Innovative Career Programming

26 Grade 11-12 students participated in the **Health Sciences Academy** at Brocklehurst Secondary, gaining hands-on exposure to careers in health care. **8** academy students applied to nursing programs and **4** applied to Bachelor of Science programs.



Trades Programs

In partnership with SkilledTradesBC, District Trades Programs serve approximately 65–75 Grade 12 students annually, offering certified training, with strong enrolment in construction, electrical, welding, and heavy mechanical trades.

Transition Programs

Transition programs offer high school and post-secondary course credit, including the new Health Sciences Academy, where students explore in-demand health care careers through job shadowing and firsthand experience with health professionals.

Transition Events

Transition events are opportunities throughout the year for students to explore a potential career path.

Girls Explore Trades and Technology (GETT) is a one-day experiential event at TRU for Grades 6–9 female students to gain hands-on exposure to skilled trades, while challenge traditional career stereotypes.

Discover Day: Health Care is a one-day event at TRU for 60 Grade 10–12 students to explore health careers through hands-on simulations, professional interactions, and learning about training employment opportunities.

Moving Forward

The Career Development Department's future goals focus on expanding equitable access to career exploration opportunities for all students. We will increase supports for students requiring additional assistance by reducing participation barriers through enhanced social-emotional supports, improved communication, transportation assistance, and targeted financial support where needed. The department will continue strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities to inform program development, support culturally responsive practices, and encourage greater Indigenous student participation. These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to inclusive programming, student success, and respectful community partnerships.





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Youth Train in Trades Heavy Mechanical Student: Willow Hart

Willow Hart is an outstanding example of a student who has fully embraced the many career exploration opportunities available to her. Throughout her high school experience, Willow has actively participated in a wide range of career development events and programs that have helped shape her interests and guide her toward a future in the skilled trades. Her willingness to explore different opportunities demonstrates both initiative and determination as she works toward building a meaningful career pathway.

Willow first explored trades through hands-on experiences such as the Mechanical Sampler program, where she was able to learn about different mechanical trades and develop foundational skills. She further expanded her exposure by participating in the Girls Explore Trades and Technology event as a mentor, an initiative designed to support and encourage young women interested in entering trades and technical fields. Through this program, Willow had the opportunity to connect with fellow mentors, learn from industry professionals, and gain valuable insight into potential career paths.

In addition to these programs, Willow attended the Heavy Metal Rocks event and the Women in Mining event, both of which

introduced her to career opportunities in industries traditionally dominated by men. These experiences allowed her to see firsthand the possibilities available in the trades and reinforced her interest in pursuing a career in this field.

Building on these experiences, Willow is now enrolled in the Youth Train in Trades: Heavy Mechanical program. This program provides her with the opportunity to gain specialized training while still in high school, giving her a significant head start toward a career in the heavy mechanical trade.

Willow continues to seek out new learning experiences and is scheduled to participate in the upcoming Jr. Fire Crew event in April 2026, where she will gain further exposure to career pathways connected to emergency services and outdoor operations.

As a female entering a male-dominated trade, Willow is helping break down barriers and challenge traditional stereotypes. Her enthusiasm, curiosity, and willingness to take advantage of every opportunity available make her an inspiring role model for other young women who may be considering a future in the skilled trades.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Health Sciences Academy Student: Marchella Louise Binuya

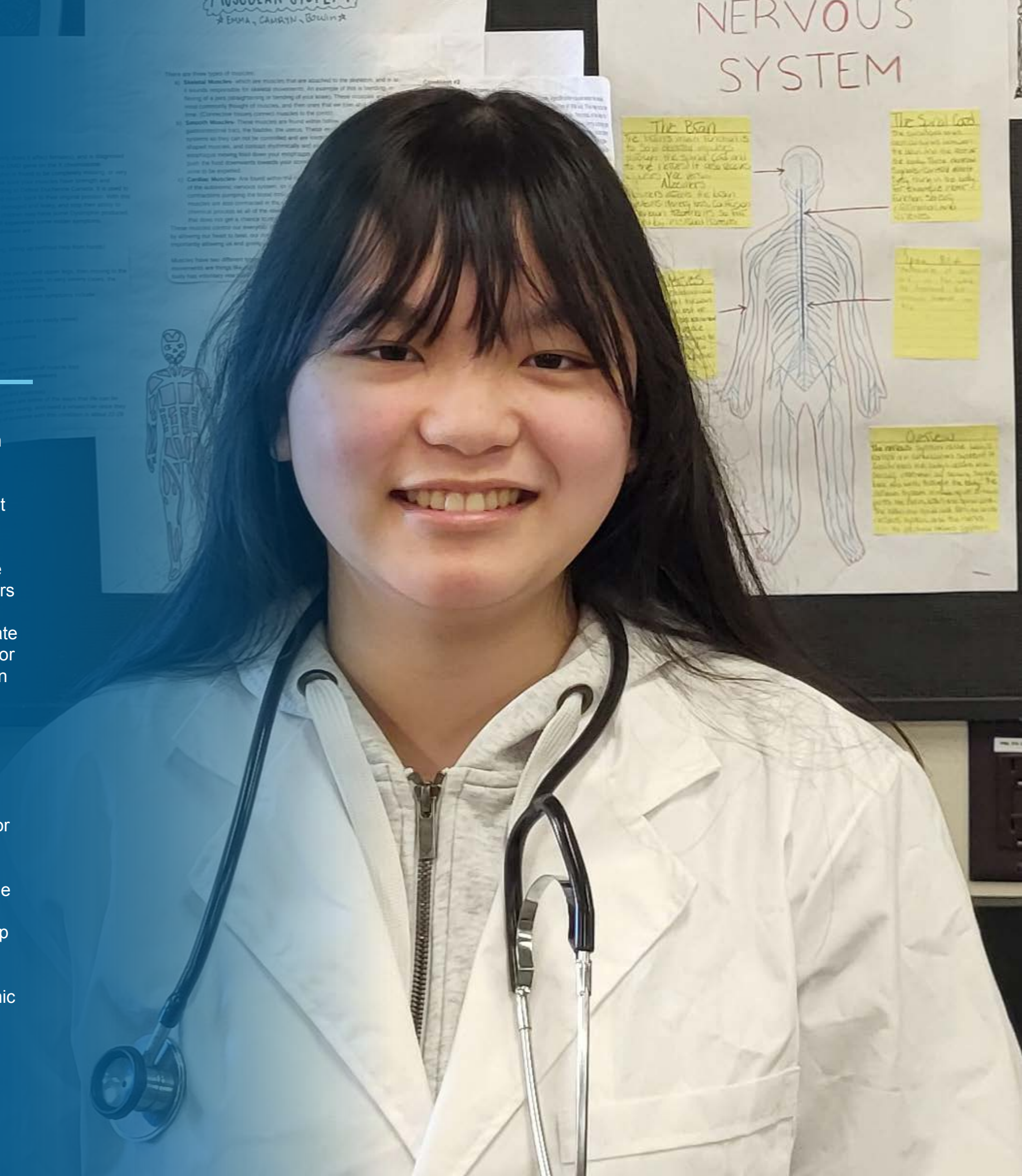
Marchella Louise Binuya, a Grade 12 student at Brocklehurst Secondary, has been an exceptional participant in the Health Sciences Academy and a strong example of dedication, leadership, and commitment to a future career in health care. Through her time in the program, Marchella consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic and a genuine passion for learning, making her one of the top students in the cohort. Her engagement in coursework, thoughtful contributions in class, and commitment to producing high-quality work on assignments set her apart as a motivated and focused learner.

Marchella's efforts have recently been recognized through her acceptance into the Nursing program at Thompson Rivers University (TRU), where she will begin her studies in September. She plans to complete her nursing degree and gain valuable experience working in the field before continuing her education at the graduate level. Marchella's long-term goal is to pursue a Master's degree and become a Nurse Practitioner, allowing her to take on a greater role in patient care and health care leadership.

One of Marchella's most meaningful contributions during her time in the Health Sciences Academy was her Capstone project, which focused on supporting both patients and staff in the Rehabilitation Unit at Royal Inland Hospital. Drawing on her experience and connections as a hospital volunteer, Marchella worked to coordinate a project with the hospital unit and teachers and students at Brocklehurst Secondary. The initiative encouraged students to create messages and words of encouragement for both staff and patients on the rehabilitation floor.

Through thoughtful planning and collaboration, Marchella successfully connected the school community with the hospital environment, helping to create a small but meaningful gesture of support for individuals working and recovering within the unit. Her ability to use her volunteer experience to connect with the right people and organize the project demonstrated initiative, communication skills, and a deep sense of empathy for others.

Marchella's dedication to service, academic excellence, and her clear vision for the future make her a wonderful example of how students can use career education opportunities to shape their pathway into meaningful and impactful professions.





SUCCESS STORY

Welding Instructor Jim McCarthy Honoured with 2025 Board Award of Recognition

On June 30, 2025, the Kamloops-Thompson Board of Education presented the second annual Board Award of Recognition to Jim McCarthy, honouring his exceptional commitment to students, equity, and community.

Jim McCarthy is a long-standing welding and fabrication instructor at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) and NorKam Secondary. For more than a decade, he has supported students through inclusive, relationship-based teaching that values dignity, belonging, and real-world learning. His classroom is widely described as a welcoming space where all students are encouraged to be their authentic selves.

Students consistently describe Jim as a mentor who listens, challenges, and respects them. One shared, “He actually treats us like workers. He gives us respect, supports creativity, and helps us grow—not just as welders, but as people.”

Jim’s impact extends beyond the classroom. His legacy projects include the development of NorKam’s Mechanical Sampler program, the creation of an Indigenous-themed gazebo with students for future display at TRU, and an Indigenous bench now located outside NorKam’s head office as a gesture of Reconciliation.

Last year, Jim partnered with Insight Support Services to host an inclusive welding experience for students with autism, pairing them with Mechanical Sampler students for hands-on mentorship. The initiative was created to break down barriers and expand access to trades education, with plans to make the event annual.

At the Board Award of Recognition celebration in June 2025, Jim McCarthy reflected on his own journey—finding success through trades when traditional education did not fit—and emphasized the power of offering students opportunity, purpose, and belief.

“This award isn’t about me,” he shared. “It’s about what happens when someone is seen, given a chance, and supported to build something strong.”

Jim McCarthy’s impact reflects the core goals of the Career Development Department: supporting every learner to explore, identify, and pursue pathways that fit their strengths and aspirations. Through inclusive, hands-on learning and mentorship, Jim has helped students discover who they are, build confidence and purpose, and graduate with clear plans for who they aim to become—embodying our commitment to meaningful career exploration, equitable access to opportunities, and successful transitions beyond graduation.

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL DATA

2024-2025 District Career Programs Summary

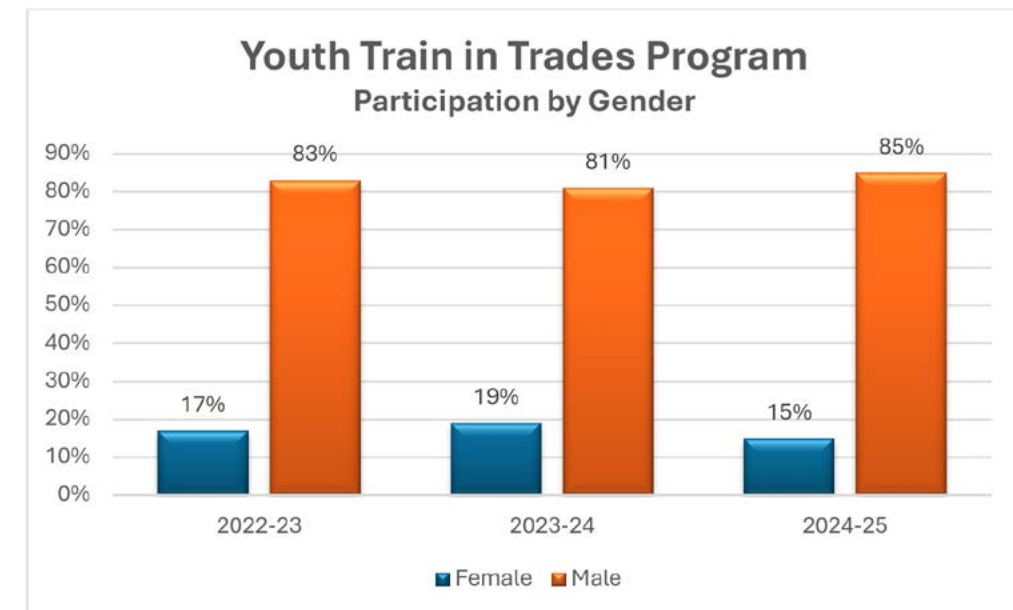
PROGRAMS

- 405 grades 10-12 students enrolled in dual credit / district academies Career Programs.
- Mobile Trades Unit (Welding) at Barriere Secondary.
- Discover Day in Adventure Tourism.
- BAA Health Career Sampler 12 course.
- District Health Sciences Academy.
- TRU Start Programs and Courses Added for 2025-2026
 - Business Foundations Certificate.
 - Education Assistant and Community Support Certificate.
 - Individual courses that connect directly to a career credential.

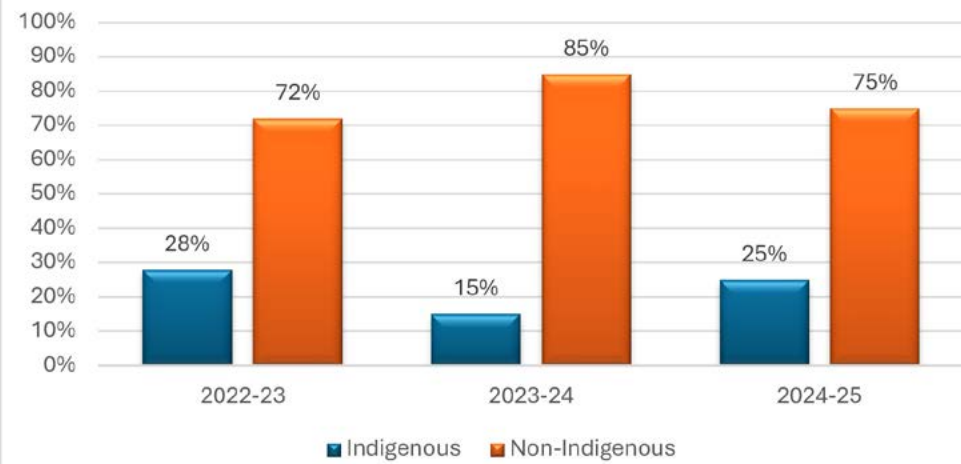
ACHIEVEMENT

- 93% of students enrolled in the Trades Sampler achieved at C+ or better.
- 98% of students enrolled in Youth Train in Trades achieved Foundation-Level Certification (70% minimum mark).
- 98% of students enrolled in the Hairstylist Program achieved Foundation-Level Certification.
- 77% of students enrolled in TRU Start Programs achieved C+ or better.

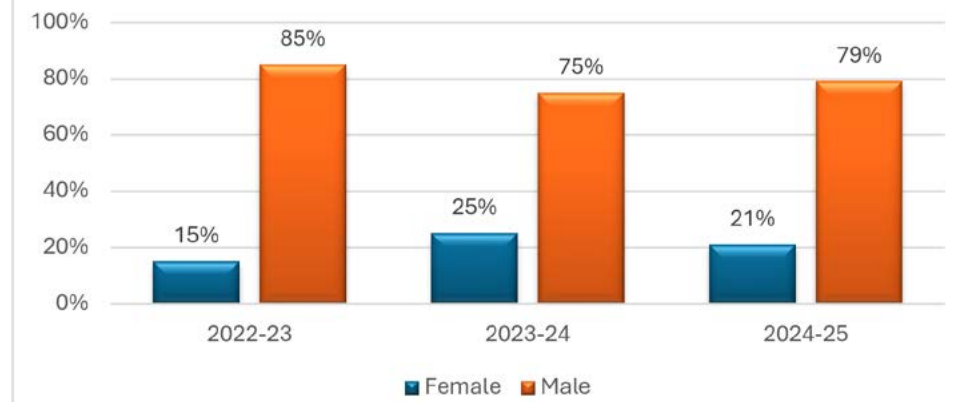
Equity



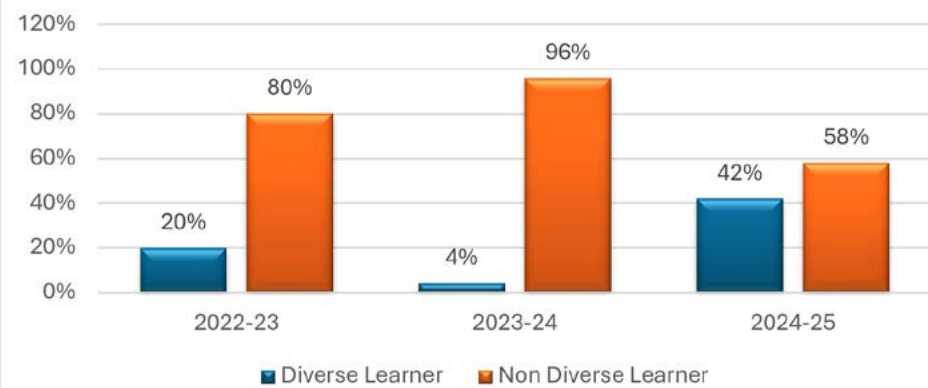
Youth Train in Trades Program
Participation by Indigenous Ancestry



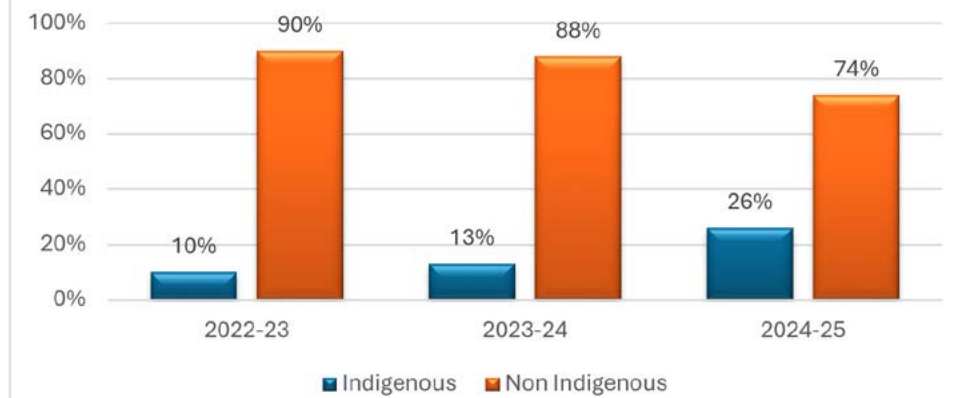
Digital Arts Technology Academy
Participation by Gender



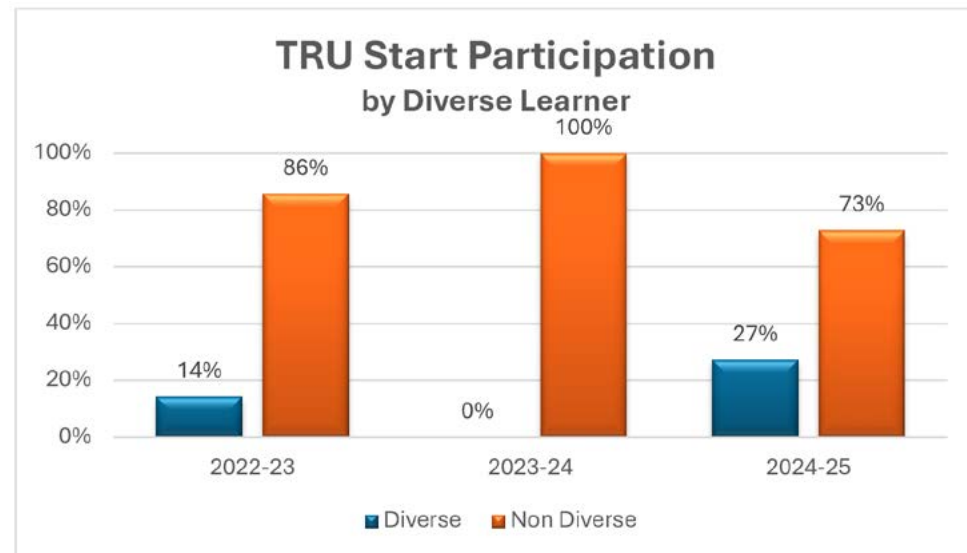
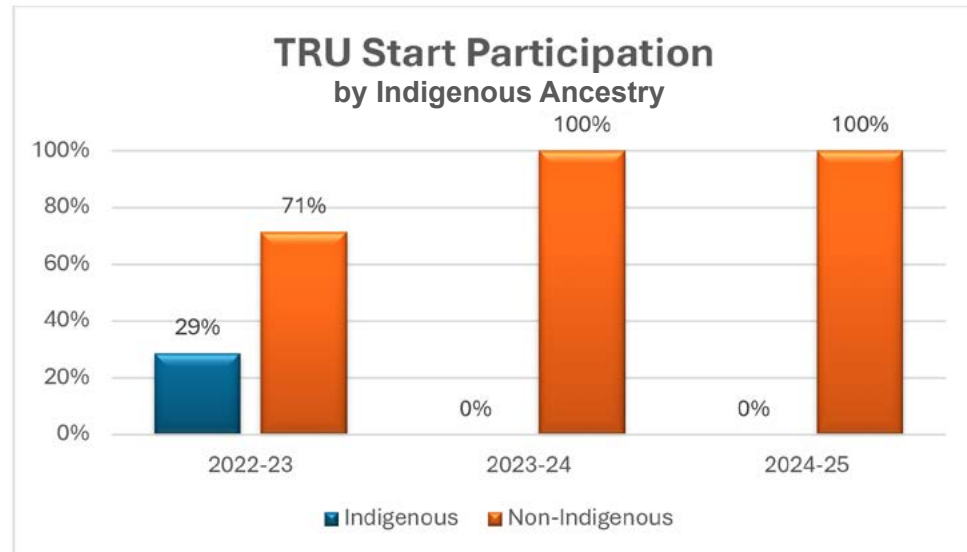
Digital Arts Technology Academy
Participation by Diverse Learner



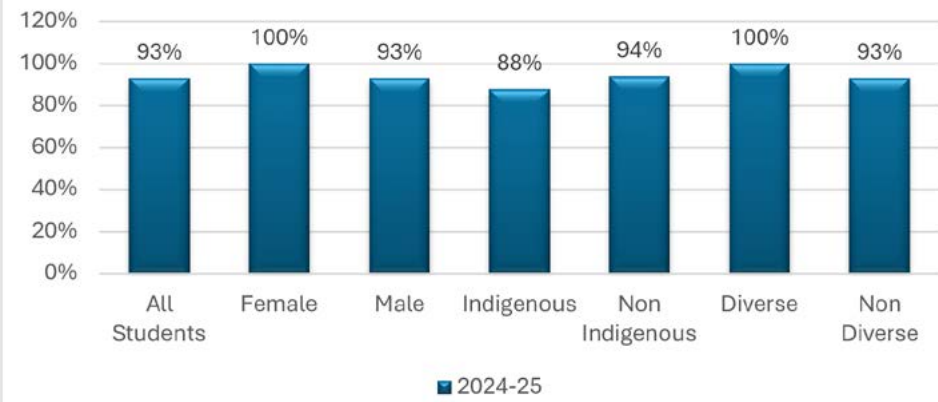
Digital Arts Technology Academy
Participation by Indigenous Ancestry



Achievement



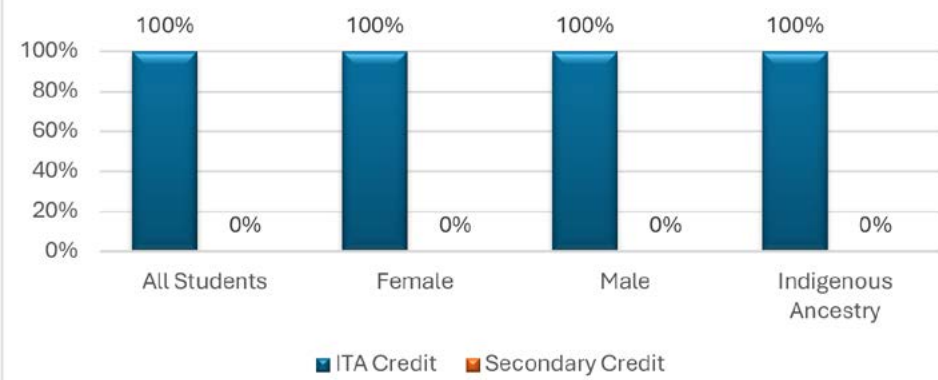
**Trades Sampler Achievement
(C+ or Better)**



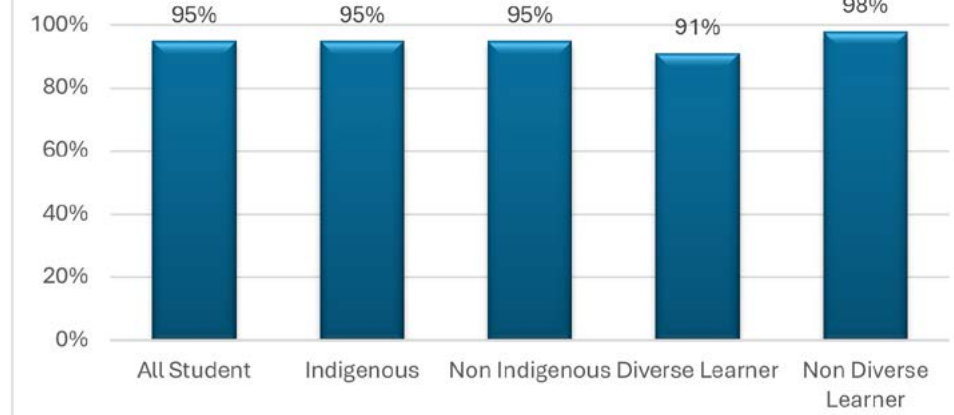
Hairstyling Certification Success Rates



**Youth Train in Trades Achievement
(2024-2025)**



**Digital Arts Technology Academy
Achievement (C+ or Better)**





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