



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 73
(Kamloops-Thompson)

2024-2025 Equity, Inclusion and Diversity 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 Secwépemc as the keepers of their traditions and knowledge.

We are grateful to be guests on the territory of seven Secwépemc First Nations: Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, Sexqeltqin (Adams Lake Indian Band), Skwláx 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

Advancing Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity For Every Learner

The 2024–2025 school year reflects steady and meaningful progress in advancing equity, inclusion, and diversity for all learners across School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson). The coordinated efforts of Inclusive Education, Indigenous Education, and Safe and Caring Schools continue to be guided by a deep commitment to equity, respect, student dignity, relational practice, and culturally responsive approaches that honour the diverse strengths, identities, and experiences students bring to school. Grounded in student-centred practice, the district has advanced initiatives that strengthen access, participation, and success for all learners, with intentional focus on students who are Indigenous; students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities; and students who are children and youth living in care (CYIC).

Key Successes and Supports

Intellectual Well-Being

Student performance data demonstrates both progress and the ongoing responsibility to advance equity. Over the past three years, district Indigenous students in Grades 4, 7, and 10 have consistently shown greater progress than their provincial peers in literacy and numeracy. The District's Primary Reading Assessment showed the greatest literacy gains among Indigenous students (Grades 1–3), and Grade 7 students who are CYIC demonstrated a higher level of achievement than their provincial peers in literacy. In numeracy, Grade 4 Indigenous students increased achievement to 51% (+5%), and students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities demonstrated steady growth over the past four years to 52% (+13%), achieving higher outcomes than their provincial cohort. Grade 7 students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities improved numeracy scores to 32% (+2%), and Grade 10 Indigenous

students have steadily grown to 30% (+10%) over five years. Indigenous students transition at a higher rate from Grade 11 to Grade 12 than their provincial peers and grade-to-grade transitions has steadily increased for students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities over the past 5 years. Six-year completion rates reached historic highs in 2024-2025, including notable gains for Indigenous learners. These outcomes reflect the impact of intentional transition planning, inclusive practices, and sustained support for all learners.

At the school-level, classroom teachers, Learning Assistance Resource Teachers (LARTs), Certified Education Assistants (CEAs), Indigenous Education Workers (IEWs), and administrators are central to inclusive education, ensuring that all students have equitable access to meaningful learning and opportunities to achieve their goals. Classroom teachers differentiate instruction, implement competency-based Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals, monitor progress, and foster inclusive environments that value diversity and support academic and social-emotional well-being. LARTs provide individualized programming, develop and monitor learning plans, deliver instruction and assessment, and consult with teachers and families to meet students' specific learning needs. CEAs are essential members of each student's support team, assisting with classroom and behavior management and supporting all students. IEWs play a vital role in supporting Indigenous students' success by providing social, emotional, cultural, and academic guidance, acting as role models and cultural liaisons, facilitating curriculum and language learning, advocating for students, and collaborating with families, staff, and communities to create inclusive environments that honor both academic achievement and cultural identity. Together, these educators strengthen instructional capacity, remove barriers, and create inclusive, culturally safe learning environments where every student can thrive.

At the district-level, inclusive supports continue to expand, reducing barriers and ensuring equitable access to meaningful learning opportunities for all students. A collaborative network of district specialists provided targeted support across multiple areas: the After-School Sports and Arts Initiatives (ASSAI) Teacher led programs in sports, applied arts, and fine arts that connected students to their interests, provided mentorship from caring adults, offered safe and engaging activities during vulnerable hours, and fostered social-emotional learning; the Chris Rose Therapy and Resource Centre Teacher delivered individualized programming and transition guidance for 26 students; the District Assistive Technology Resource Teacher offered technology, workshops, and staff consultation; District Resource Room teachers provided individualized support to students with complex learning needs to help them access meaningful learning and achieve their goals; English Language Learners (ELL) Resource and Language Enrichment teachers supported over 400 students through assessments, programming, and community-building initiatives; the Health Promoting Schools Coordinator strengthened teacher capacity in physical and health education, social-emotional learning, and mental health literacy; Home and Hospital Services maintained learning continuity for 19 students; Inclusion Support Teachers enhanced educational access for 170+ students through behaviour planning, team consultation, and professional development; the Inclusive Education Coordinator facilitated 62 K-Planning meetings, supported District Resource rooms, and strengthened community and post-secondary pathways; school psychologists supported 270 learners and led Level B assessment training in partnership with UBC; Speech-Language Pathologists advanced communication access for 715 students and participated in professional learning in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC); the teacher for the deaf or hard of hearing supported 28 students with auditory management, language development, self-advocacy, peer connections, and curriculum support; and, the teacher of students who are blind or have low vision supported 23 students

through direct instruction, expanded core curriculum, accessible materials, assistive technology, orientation and mobility training, and family and community collaboration.

Human and Social Development & Cultural and Identity Development

Student well-being continues to be central to district priorities. District data shows overall improvements in students' feeling welcome (+1%), with notable gains for children and youth living in care (+1% to 66%), remaining above the provincial average, and for students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities (+3% to 65%). In sense of belonging, Indigenous students and children and youth living in care reported levels above the provincial average, demonstrating stronger connections to their school communities than their provincial peers. In terms of adult support, students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities maintained a positive response rate of 63%, and Indigenous students increased their positive response rate (+4% to 64%), exceeding the provincial average. These outcomes reflect the district's ongoing commitment to culturally safe, inclusive, and student-centered learning environments where every student can thrive.

To further support this work, coordinated teams of school counsellors, Indigenous Family Counsellors, Indigenous Community Outreach Workers, Indigenous Youth and Family Consultants, mental health clinicians, substance use counselors, and School and Family Consultants provided culturally grounded, trauma-informed, and student-centered support to thousands of learners and their families. School counsellors played a critical role in supporting students' academic, social, and emotional well-being. Indigenous Family Counsellors offered social-emotional consulting, short-term counseling, assessments, and targeted interventions addressing grief, mental health, anxiety, substance use, peer and parent/child relationships, and school attendance, while guiding students and families through critical incidents to foster resilience. Indigenous Community Outreach Workers supported





Indigenous students by engaging with students, families, and community partners to enhance attendance, academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes, track progress, facilitate referrals, implement targeted programs, promote cross-cultural awareness, and serve as positive role models and advocates. Indigenous Youth and Family Consultants facilitated social and cultural groups, provided advocacy and consultation, and strengthened community and cultural connections, including cultural awareness and education. Mental health clinicians delivered individualized support to K–12 students and facilitated group programs, such as Worry Bugs for early learners, Taming the Worry Dragons for Grades 4–6, and the Circle of Security Parent Program, to enhance secure attachments and positive parent–child relationships. In partnership with Interior Health and the Day One Society, SD73 offered confidential and voluntary student-centred substance use health and wellness support in secondary schools, accessible through self-referral or referral by school staff or parents. School and Family Consultants further supported students’ behavioral, social, and emotional well-being by consulting with staff and families, responding to critical incidents, assisting with suicide risk assessments and safety planning, collaborating on classroom management plans, maintaining inter-agency connections, facilitating Taming the Worry Dragons, delivering professional development, and advancing inclusive education and school-based programs. Together, these services create culturally safe, inclusive, and student-centered environments that empower all learners to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Highlights

Inclusive school communities continued to grow through student leadership, land-based learning, and engagement with Elders and community partners, strengthening cultural safety and belonging. District-wide initiatives, including anti-racism and human rights surveys, inclusive programming, and community partnerships, supported environments where

diversity is respected and valued. Professional learning and coaching for staff, combined with coordinated services across specialized educators, have strengthened capacity to provide equitable, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed supports for all learners.

Areas for Growth

In Grades 4, 7, and 10, literacy outcomes for Indigenous students and students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities highlight opportunities to strengthen inclusive, culturally sustaining practices and ensure each learner is supported to succeed. Targeted, culturally responsive, and student-centered supports are fostering progress and creating pathways toward equitable outcomes. In numeracy, we see opportunities to improve outcomes for Indigenous students, which highlights the ongoing need for inclusive, evidence-informed, and culturally grounded strategies that strengthen learning, promote confidence, and ensure all students have equitable opportunities to succeed academically. Social-emotional data indicates that Indigenous students feel less welcome (63%) than district and provincial peers, students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities report lower levels of belonging (47%), and children and youth in care perceive lower adult support (54%), emphasizing the ongoing need for strategies that strengthen connection, trust, and a sense of belonging to ensure all learners can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Participation in student voice initiatives indicates the need for deeper engagement of learners whose perspectives are often underrepresented.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION REPORT

2024-2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

Department Mandate

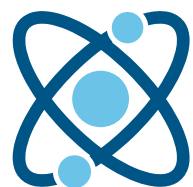
We are committed to ensuring equitable access, meaningful participation, and success for all learners. Through collaborative and relational practices, we all work to support diverse learning needs, promote student well-being, and advance inclusive environments grounded in respect, dignity, cultural safety, and a strong sense of belonging.

Key Programs



After-School Sports and Arts Initiatives

Engaged 1,307 students across 110 after-school and out-of-school programs at 20 elementary and 10 secondary schools, offering diverse, inclusive opportunities such as yoga, drum-making, mountain biking, aerial arts, visual arts, and other experiences that foster creativity, well-being, and skill development.



Inclusive Education

Focused on strengthening multi-tiered systems of support and building staff capacity in inclusive, trauma-informed, and responsive practices to better meet the diverse needs of all learners.



Indigenous Education

Advanced culturally grounded approaches through leadership opportunities, land-based learning, and meaningful engagement with families and community, supporting identity, belonging, and student success.



Safe and Caring Schools

Promoted student well-being and inclusion through nutrition, presentations, partnerships, and programming that support positive relationships, safety, and respectful, inclusive school environments.



Moving Forward

The Inclusive Education Department will continue to strengthen its commitment to equity by embedding inclusive practices and building staff capacity across the district. Priority areas include advancing the Anti-Racism Action

Plan, expanding trauma-informed and culturally responsive approaches, and enhancing the use of disaggregated data to inform equitable decision-making. Central to this work is a focus on relational accountability, amplifying student voice, engaging families and communities, and integrating Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, including land-based learning. These efforts aim to foster learning environments where all students feel valued, safe, and supported, and are empowered to grow, succeed, and thrive.

Highlights and Achievements

CommunityLINK

CommunityLINK Funding supported the academic achievement, social-emotional development, and overall well-being of vulnerable students through programs such as food initiatives, academic supports, counseling, youth workers, and after-school programming.

Scope of Impact: CommunityLINK funding supports over 100 school-based programs, 11 district-wide programs, 6 district resource room programs, district and community staffing positions, providing equitable access to essential resources and services that enhance academic achievement, social-emotional development, and overall well-being for students.



EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION REPORT

2024-2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

Health Promoting Schools

Highlights and Achievements

Feeding Futures & National Food Program

Community-Centered Approach: Students, families, Indigenous partners, and community members are actively involved in program planning and delivery, ensuring inclusivity and cultural safety.

Field Days at the Kamloops Community Food Centre: 270 students participated in 10 hands-on sessions, building food literacy, nutrition knowledge, and healthy eating habits to support lifelong wellness.

Local and Culturally Responsive Programming: Programs prioritized B.C. foods to strengthen local communities, economies, and food system resilience, and provide nutritious and culturally preferred foods that support students' healthy development and learning.

Starfish Backpacks Program: Over 250 backpacks were distributed weekly in partnership with the Kamloops Food Bank, promoting food security and supporting students' well-being.

Scope of Impact: Over 300 school- and district-based programs engaged community partners, including the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Program, Kamloops Boys and Girls Club, Kamloops Food Bank, FoodSHARE, and Mount Paul Community Food Centre, and others to ensure students had daily access to food in an equitable, accessible, and non-stigmatizing way.



Elementary Mental Health Literacy: About 390 students participated in 15 Elementary Mental Health Literacy Resource (EMHLR) sessions, building awareness, coping skills, and emotional well-being.

Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators (EASE): 88 students engaged in four EASE classes, while 23 K–7 educators earned certification, enhancing classroom support for student mental health.

Physical Health and Safety: Grades 1–7 students promoted physical health and safety through participation in the DT Bike Rodeo.

Teamwork and Skill Development: 72 teachers and their students strengthened collaboration, teamwork, and physical literacy through the Junior Canucks Floor Hockey Program.

Safe and Caring Schools

Cultural Awareness Programs: 580 elementary students partnered with Kamloops Immigration Services to build cultural awareness, belonging, and inclusive practices.

Dark Highway Screenings: About 400 students, staff, and community partners engaged in screenings promoting safety, inclusion, and healthy relationships.

Inclusive Clubs and Activities: Over 500 students participated, fostering belonging, community connections, and inclusive school cultures.

Safety and Well-Being Sessions: 141 sessions were delivered in collaboration with the RCMP, Boys and Girls Club, and City of Kamloops to support student well-being and safety.

Student Voice in Policy: 300 students completed the SD73 Human Rights, Anti-Racism, and Discrimination pilot survey, contributing insights to guide district initiatives.

Youth Leadership Summit: Approximately 640 students explored identity, inclusion, healthy choices, and positive relationships, strengthening leadership skills and social-emotional learning.





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Building Skills, Confidence, and Connection: Inclusive Programs for Students who are Blind or have Low Vision

In 2024-2025, SD73 students who are blind or have low vision had multiple opportunities to build skills, confidence, and connection through engaging and inclusive programs. Students participated in the BC Regional Braille Challenge, demonstrating literacy, problem-solving, and perseverance in a supportive, collaborative environment. The event celebrated learners' strengths while fostering connections across the region.

Students also took part in Okanagan Sports Day, an adaptive and inclusive day of physical activity designed to promote wellness, teamwork, and confidence. Learners engaged in a variety of activities that encouraged collaboration, skill development, and a sense of accomplishment, while enjoying movement and recreation in an accessible environment.

To conclude the year, students participated in a year-end camping experience in the Southern Interior of British Columbia, providing hands-on outdoor learning, opportunities to practice life skills, and a chance to strengthen independence and peer relationships in a safe and supportive setting.

These experiences reflect SD73's ongoing commitment to inclusive, learner-centered programming that honours the diverse strengths, interests, and abilities of all students. By providing opportunities for literacy, physical activity, and experiential learning, the district supports students who are blind or have low vision in developing confidence, skills, and connections that enrich their school experiences and foster a strong sense of belonging within the broader learning community.

EVENT SPOTLIGHT

Opening Doors to Possibility: Indigenous Students Explore Futures at TRU Transitions Day

Every fall, SD73 partners with Thompson Rivers University (TRU) to host Indigenous Transitions to Post-Secondary Day, a meaningful learning experience designed to support Indigenous students in envisioning their pathways beyond high school. In 2025, approximately 102 Grade 10 Indigenous students from across the district came together at TRU's Campus Activity Centre for a full day of exploration, learning, and connection.

The day began with a welcome prayer and a drum song from the TRU Drum Club, followed by remarks from TRU Indigenous leadership and the District Principal of Indigenous Education. Students were reminded that post-secondary spaces are theirs to claim, and that their identities, cultures, languages, and community teachings are sources of strength they bring to any future they pursue.

Throughout the day, students engaged with a wide range of opportunities through a faculty mixer, campus tours, and conversations with current Indigenous university students. Interactive booths highlighted fields including science, business, trades and technology, and Indigenous student supports, helping

learners see multiple pathways to success. Students also toured academic and trades facilities, gaining first-hand insight into the environments they may enter after graduation.

A particularly impactful moment came during the student panel, where Indigenous TRU students shared authentic stories about their journeys into post-secondary education—the challenges they navigated, the supports that helped them thrive, and the opportunities that opened as a result.

By the end of the day, students left with more than information. They left with a renewed sense of possibility and belonging. For many, it was the first time they could truly envision themselves on a university campus or pursuing a skilled trade, seeing that these spaces are theirs to access and shape.

Indigenous Transitions Day reflects the district's commitment to inclusive education, cultural belonging, and expanding pathways for Indigenous learners, ensuring that students see post-secondary education as a place where they belong and where their futures can grow.





PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS STORY

Starfish Backpacks: Supporting Students and Families Across SD73

The Starfish Backpacks program helps students in SD73 access nutritious food on weekends, ensuring they have what they need to learn, grow, and thrive. Through a partnership with the Kamloops Food Bank, SD73, local businesses, and volunteers, 250+ backpacks are delivered each week to students across the district.

Every Friday, children take home a backpack filled with easy-to-prepare meals and snacks for the weekend. By providing consistent access to healthy food, the program supports students' well-being and helps create the conditions for learning, connection, and growth. This work reflects SD73's Strategic Plan values of Equity and Well-Being.

What began with just 10 backpacks has grown steadily over the years. Last year, more than 9,000 Starfish Backpacks were shared with students, and this year, the program supports 29 schools—9 secondary and 20 elementary.

The Starfish program is more than a food initiative; it is a collaborative effort that brings together schools, families, volunteers, and community partners to support children's potential throughout the school year, even when schools are closed.

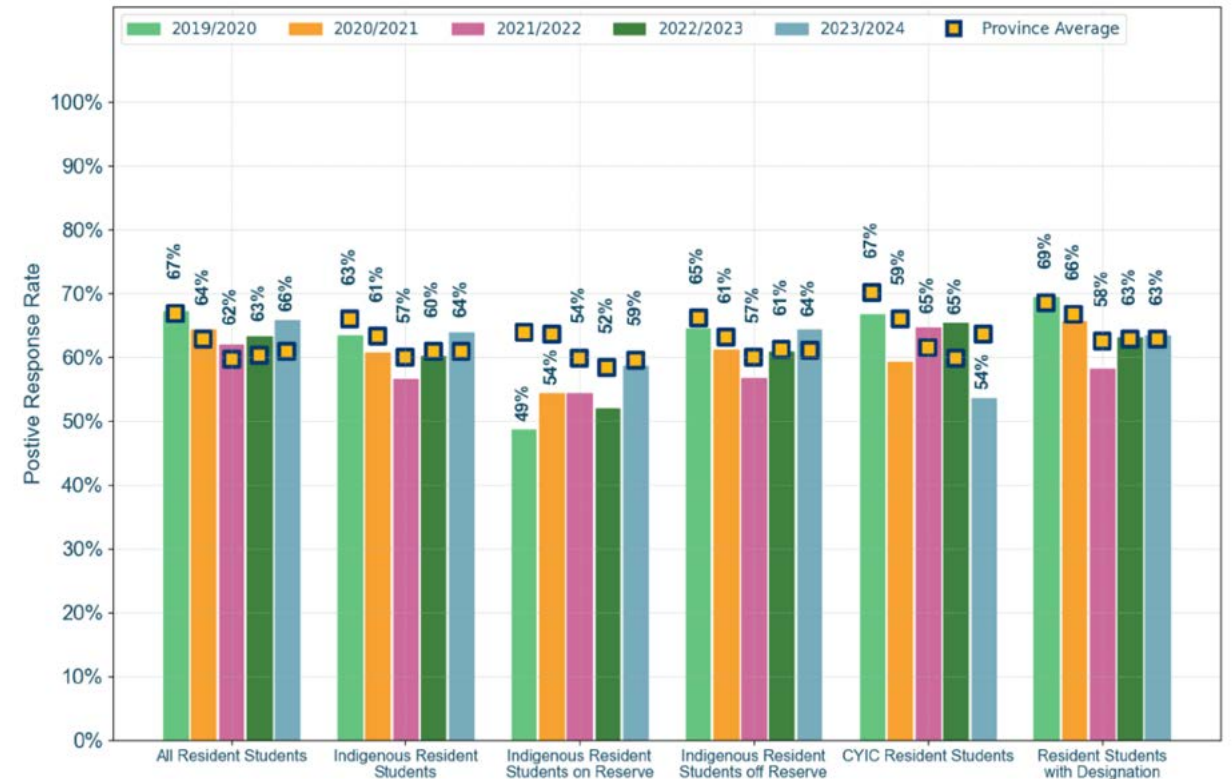
Volunteers play an essential role, preparing and packaging backpacks each week. The district is grateful to the Kamloops Food Bank and all volunteers for their dedication. Together, they help ensure students across SD73 have access to nourishing food, building a stronger, caring community where every child can thrive.

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL DATA

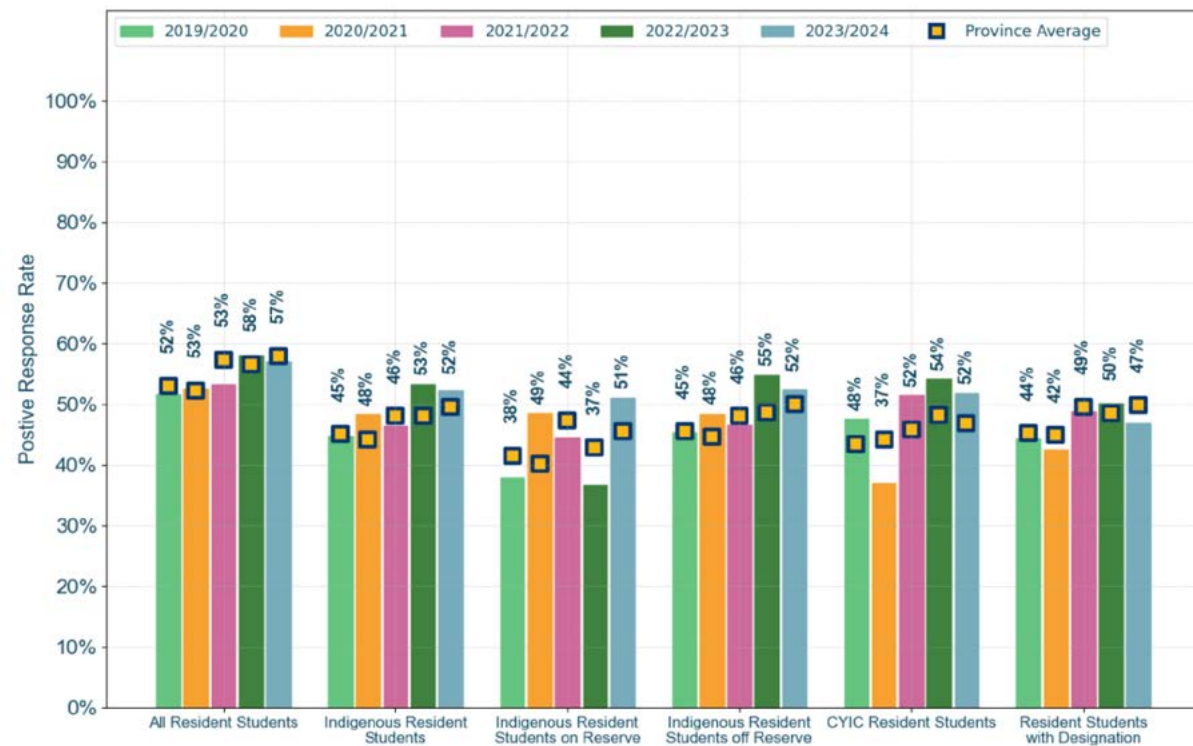
SD073 - Feel Welcome - Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10



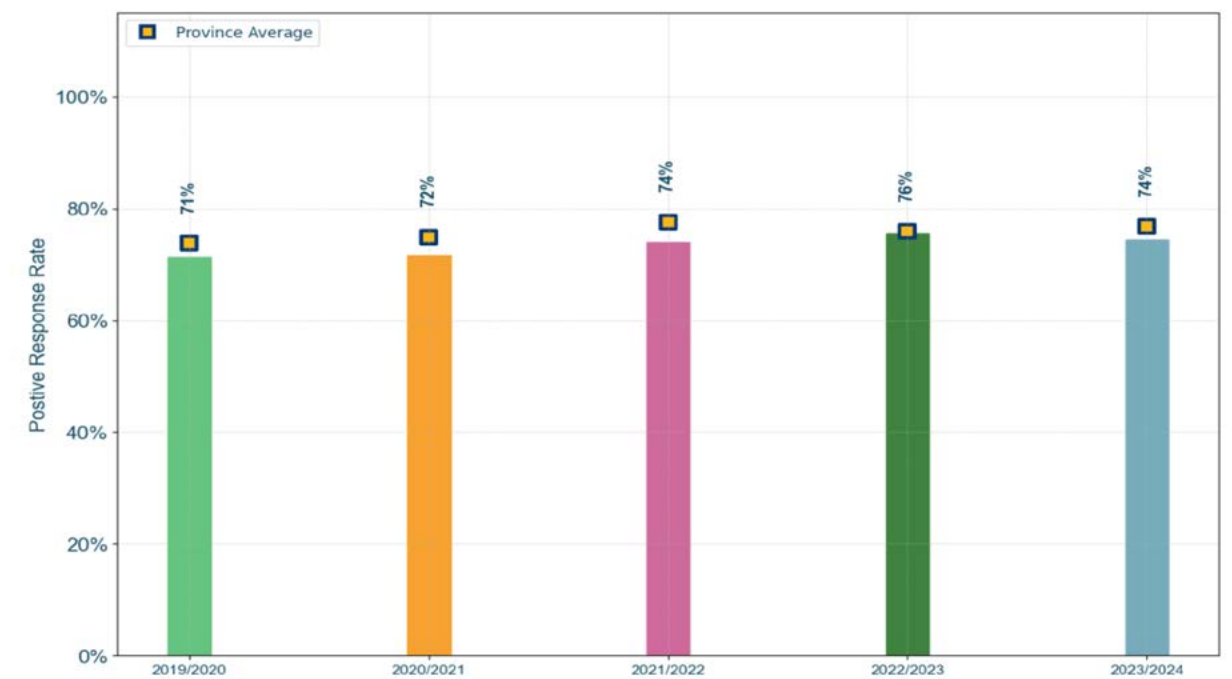
SD073 - 2 or more Adults Care - Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10



SD073 - Sense of Belonging - Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10



SD073 - Feel Safe - Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10





SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 73
(Kamloops-Thompson)