

# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 73  
(Kamloops - Thompson)

# Land Acknowledgement

**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), Skwlāx te Secwepemcúlucw, Neskonlith, Simpcw, Pellí iq̓ t (Whispering Pines Clinton Band), and Skítsesten (Skeetchestn Band).



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>Executive Summary</b>	5
INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT	5
HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	5
CULTURAL AND IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT	5
CAREER DEVELOPMENT	6
<b>Connection to District and Provincial Priorities</b>	7
DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN	7
SD73 INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL	7
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT	7
LOCAL EDUCATION AGREEMENTS	7
GUIDING DOCUMENTS	8
<b>Intellectual Development</b>	9
LITERACY	9
NUMERACY	11
SCHOOL COMPLETION	13
ALTERNATE EDUCATION	14
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	15
<b>Human and Social Development</b>	17
ATTENDANCE	18
CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE	20
INDIGENOUS FAMILY COUNSELORS	20
INDIGENOUS SOCIAL GROUPS	22
<b>Cultural and Identity Development</b>	23
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	23
SECWEPEMCTSÍN	23
CULTURAL AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMS	24
INDIGENOUS STUDENT LEADERSHIP	26
<b>Career Development</b>	27
<b>Systems Development</b>	28
<b>Conclusion</b>	30

# Introduction

Indigenous education holds a vital place within the framework of School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson), recognizing the rich cultural heritage and traditions of the Secwépemc, the original stewards and rights holders of this land. The District acknowledges its responsibility to honour and support the educational aspirations of Indigenous students by fostering a culturally-responsive and inclusive environment. This commitment stems from a deep respect for the unique identities, histories, and contributions of Indigenous communities, which informs all aspects of the District's educational practices.

At the core of the District's mission is the belief in *relationships and connections, equity, well-being, and sustainability*. By prioritizing these values, the District aims to address historical disparities that have impacted Indigenous learners and to create pathways for academic success that are both relevant and affirming. The District is dedicated to integrating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum, ensuring that all students can learn about and appreciate the rich tapestry of Indigenous knowledge and culture.

This annual report serves as a comprehensive reflection of the progress made over the past year in aligning the District's values with educational practices tailored specifically for Indigenous students. It highlights key achievements in areas such as academic support, cultural identity development, and community engagement. By documenting these efforts, the report not only showcases the District's commitment to continuous improvement but also emphasizes the importance of collaborative partnerships with Indigenous communities.

The initiatives and strategies outlined in this report are designed to empower Indigenous students, ensuring they feel seen, heard, and valued in their educational journey. As the District moves forward, it remains focused on nurturing an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive and achieve their full potential.

# Executive Summary

School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) resides on Secwepemcúl'ecw, and the District acknowledges the Secwepemc People as the keepers of their traditions and knowledge. The District is committed to providing learning opportunities that support all students to thrive, and Indigenous education plays a central role in this mission. Through the District's core values of equity, connection, well-being, and sustainability—aligned with the Grandfather teachings—the District is making strides in fostering an inclusive environment for Indigenous learners. This report outlines the District's progress under four strategic priorities: Intellectual Development, Human and Social Development, Cultural and Identity Development, and Career Development.

## INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

School District No. 73 is committed to improving academic outcomes for Indigenous students by addressing literacy, numeracy, graduation rates, and diverse abilities through targeted programs supported by Indigenous Education Targeted Funding (IETF). Guided by the 2024 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA), these efforts integrate academic, social-emotional, and cultural dimensions to close achievement gaps.

IETF provides additional resources tailored for Indigenous learners, complementing Core, Inclusive Education, and ELL programs. Indigenous students also have full access to all system programs, ensuring equitable opportunities for academic success.

## HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The District prioritizes human and social development, emphasizing holistic well-being as essential to student success. Guided by the Grandfather teachings and a commitment to relationships, equity, and sustainability, programs fostering leadership, mentorship, and social engagement among Indigenous students have enhanced connectedness, social skills, and emotional well-being.

In collaboration with the Indigenous Education Council (IEC), Indigenous Education Targeted Funding (IETF) supports culturally grounded social-emotional and mental health programs. Schools are encouraged to honour significant Indigenous cultural days, such as Orange Shirt Day, Day of Suwewtécw, District Powwow, and National Indigenous Peoples Day, through meaningful community partnerships and observances.

## CULTURAL AND IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Cultural and identity development is central to Indigenous education in School District No. 73. Recognizing the importance of cultural identity to student success, the District prioritizes professional development to integrate Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum. Guided by the First Peoples Principles of Learning, educators embed Indigenous knowledge, history, and contemporary issues into their teaching.

Efforts to indigenize the curriculum include language revitalization programs and cultural workshops, created in partnership with local First Nations and Knowledge Keepers. These initiatives connect Indigenous students to their heritage, fostering pride and enriching their educational experience.

Grounded in values of relationships, equity, well-being, and sustainability, schools honour Indigenous cultural practices and ensure students see their culture reflected in their learning environment. Aligned with the AEEA, all students are supported in realizing their potential, with Indigenous knowledge playing a vital role.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career development is a key priority for School District No. 73, aiming to prepare Indigenous students for success in a rapidly changing world. Through district-wide and Indigenous Education Targeted Funding (IETF), students access programs that build the skills and experiences needed for post-secondary education, training, or employment.

The District collaborates with the Indigenous Education Council and community partners to create hands-on learning opportunities. Land-based initiatives, for example, enrich cultural understanding while exploring careers in environmental stewardship and sustainable resource management. Discussions are also underway to develop mentorship programs connecting students with Indigenous professionals to inspire career exploration.

Committed to equitable access, the District ensures Indigenous students can participate in career fairs, apprenticeships, and vocational programs. This focus underscores the District's dedication to lifelong success for all students, with tailored supports to help Indigenous learners overcome barriers and achieve their goals.

## CONCLUSION

School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) is committed to creating an inclusive, supportive learning environment for Indigenous students, grounded in the values of Truth and Reconciliation, equity, and cultural respect. The District's efforts in Indigenous education—spanning intellectual, human and social, cultural, and career development—are guided by strong partnerships with Indigenous communities and the principles outlined in the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

While challenges remain, such as addressing the ongoing achievement gap, language revitalization, land-based learning, completion rates, and enhancing staff recruitment and retention, the District is making significant strides in providing Indigenous learners with the resources and support they need to succeed. As the District continues to move forward, it remains dedicated to advancing reconciliation and ensuring that all students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, can thrive in a learning environment that honours diversity and promotes equity.

# Connection to District and Provincial Priorities

## DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2024 marked the second year of implementing SD73's 2022-2027 District Strategic Plan, which emerged from extensive consultation with students, parents, staff, and community partners. The Indigenous Education Council (IEC) was integral to this process, ensuring the plan was shaped from an Indigenous perspective from the start. The District's four value commitments – connections/relationships, well-being, equity, and sustainability – are anchored in the Seven Grandfather Teachings and reflect the District's focus on incorporating Secwépemc culture, communities, and histories.

Our strategic priorities—intellectual, human and social, cultural and identity, career, and systems development—are designed to support all learners, with specific initiatives aimed at improving outcomes for Indigenous students.

## SD73 INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COUNCIL

Established in 1994, the SD73 Indigenous Education Council (IEC) works in partnership with the Board of Education to ensure that each Indigenous student receives culturally-responsive academic, social, emotional, and cultural programs and services. The IEC is dedicated to enhancing school success and lifelong learning for Indigenous learners. In line with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the IEC plays a key governance role in overseeing Indigenous Education Targeted Funding (IETF) and guiding the District in policy development and cultural programming.

The IEC is made up of representatives from each of the seven local First Nations, the Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society, the Métis community, the North Thompson Aboriginal Cultural Centre Society, and the Board of Education. Together, they advise on educational matters and hold the District accountable for implementing the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

## ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) represents a collaborative commitment between SD73 and the Indigenous Education Council to improve the educational outcomes of self-identified Indigenous students. This fourth Enhancement Agreement (2023-2028) emphasizes culturally-responsive education, language revitalization, foundational skills, mental health, anti-racism education, and career development, among other priorities. Grounded in mutual respect and consultation, the AEEA serves as a roadmap for improving both academic achievement and personal growth for all Indigenous learners.

This year, progress was made in incorporating Indigenous knowledge and culture into everyday learning, creating a supportive environment that fosters academic and social success for Indigenous students.

## LOCAL EDUCATION AGREEMENTS

Local Education Agreements (LEAs) between SD73 and the seven local First Nations are crucial for ensuring that Indigenous students receive culturally relevant and high-quality education. These agreements represent a collaborative partnership where First Nations and the District define their shared responsibilities in meeting the educational needs of Indigenous students. LEAs cover essential aspects such as curriculum development, language and culture programming, and student support services. They are critical in addressing historical disparities and supporting the educational aspirations of Indigenous learners.

SD73's current LEAs reinforce our District's commitment to reconciliation, cultural inclusivity, and closing the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Through these agreements, the District ensures that local First Nations' priorities and values are reflected in our educational planning and delivery.

This Indigenous Education Annual Report reflects SD73's ongoing journey toward reconciliation, equity, and excellence for Indigenous learners. By continuing to work in partnership with local First Nations and Indigenous communities, we remain committed to building an inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students.

## GUIDING DOCUMENTS

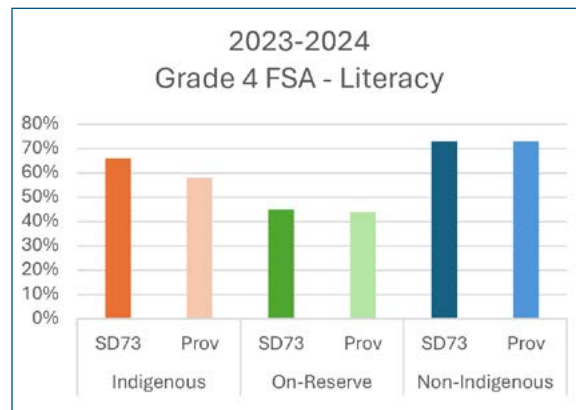
There are several guiding documents that districts are required to be aware of that specifically address key principles and outcomes for Indigenous education in public schools. These are:

- B.C. Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)
  - [DRIPA \(SBC 2019\) Chapter 44](#)
  - [DRIPA Action Plan](#)
- [Calls to Action for Education from the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#)
- [B.C. Tripartite Education Agreement](#)
- [B.C. Ministry of Education and Child Care Equity in Action](#)
- [Professional Standards for B.C. Educators \(Standard 9 from the B.C. Teachers Council\)](#)
- [Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education in British Columbia](#)
- [Bill 40 \(2023\)](#)

# Intellectual Development

## LITERACY

Foundational literacy is essential for all students, but it holds particular importance for Indigenous students as it fosters empowerment and equity. Strong literacy skills help bridge achievement gaps, provide access to both Indigenous knowledge and global perspectives. Literacy builds confidence, enables lifelong learning, and equips students to advocate for themselves and their communities, addressing social injustices and amplifying Indigenous voices. By integrating culturally-responsive practices, foundational literacy helps Indigenous students connect with their heritage while thriving academically, breaking cycles of educational disparities and fostering resilience for future generations.



3-Year Trend – Grade 4 FSA Literacy	Indigenous	On-Reserve	Non-Indigenous
SD73	+3%	+10%	+1%
Provincial	+2%	+2%	0%

SD73 Gap versus Non-Indigenous Outcomes – Grade 4	Indigenous	On-Reserve
SD73	10%	18%
Provincial	15%	29%



3-Year Trend – Grade 7 FSA Literacy	Indigenous	On-Reserve	Non-Indigenous
SD73	+4%	+2%	+3%
Provincial	0%	+1%	+2%

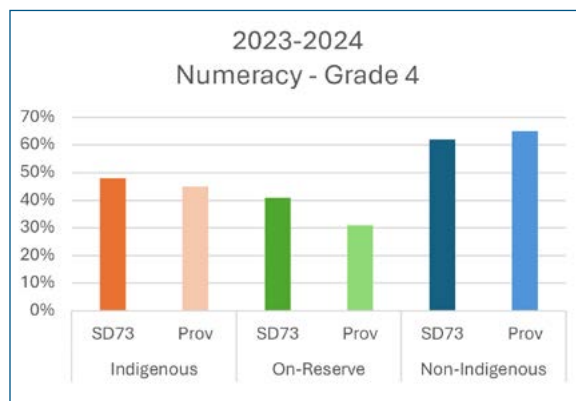
SD73 Gap versus Non-Indigenous Outcomes – Grade 7	Indigenous	On-Reserve
SD73	10%	25%
Provincial	18%	40%

### Program Highlights:

- [SD73 Moe the Mouse](#)
  - Early Indigenized language development program developed and piloted at Marion Schilling and a number of SD73 schools. Intentions to expand the program in 2024-2025
- SD73 Non-Fiction Reading Assessment (NFRA)
  - District literacy assessment tool with Indigenous assessment content (Winter Assessment) that guides literacy instructional focus - Grades 4-9
- Indigenized Mother Goose Program
  - AE Perry implementation project
- Professional Development – Introduction in 2023 to Wayi Wah! facilitated by Jo Chrona, the author. All K-12 schools in the District participated with their school teams (110 school staff), which included Indigenous support workers, teacher leaders, learning assistance teachers, and administrators. 12 district curriculum staff also attended with representatives from the literacy curriculum team. Every school was given a copy of the resource on Wayi Wah! Indigenous pedagogies on how to be culturally responsive and equity focused on their program and instructional practices.
- Chapter One Project: In 2023-2024 the district piloted the Chapter One reading program in three schools as a foundational skill tutoring for selected Indigenous students. This project was supported through funds from Jordan’s Principle. The Chapter One Reading Program supports students as extra literacy support in Kindergarten to Grade 3 but possibilities to expand in family units up to grade nine, focusing on phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary to close reading gaps and build confidence in literacy. We will be expanding the project to all schools in 2024-2025.

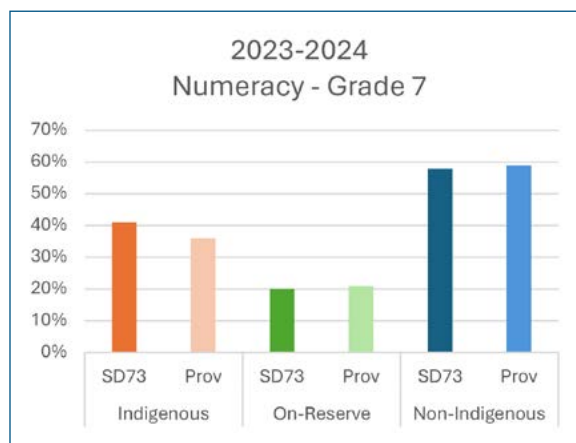
## NUMERACY

Foundational numeracy is essential for all students, particularly Indigenous students, as it supports academic success, real-world applications, and connection. Strong numeracy skills serve as the building blocks for advanced learning, help close achievement gaps, and provide practical tools for everyday life and economic empowerment. For Indigenous students, numeracy can be enriched through culturally relevant teaching that incorporates traditional knowledge, such as mathematical principles in weaving, fishing, or navigation, fostering cultural pride and intergenerational learning. By prioritizing numeracy within equitable and culturally-responsive frameworks, education can support Indigenous students’ confidence, resilience, and success while advancing Truth and Reconciliation efforts in education.



3-Year Trend – Grade 4 FSA Numeracy	Indigenous	On-Reserve	Non-Indigenous
SD73	+1%	+5%	+3%
Provincial	+1%	+3%	+1%

SD73 Gap versus Non-Indigenous Outcomes – Grade 4	Indigenous	On-Reserve
SD73	14%	21%
Provincial	20%	34%



3-Year Trend – Grade 7 FSA Numeracy	Indigenous	On-Reserve	Non-Indigenous
SD73	-4%	0%	+1%
Provincial	0%	+2%	-1%

SD73 Gap versus Non-Indigenous Outcomes – Grade 7	Indigenous	On-Reserve
SD73	17%	38%
Provincial	23%	38%

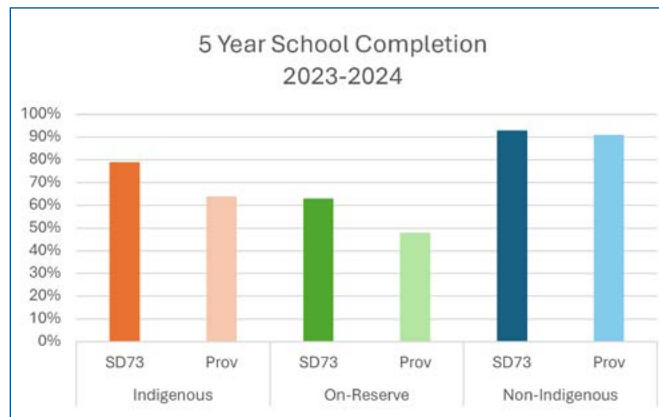
### Program Highlights:

- Indigenous Garden project at Dallas Elementary
  - Included the trade sampler students and involved focus numeracy tasks designed through an Indigenous lens and included local Elders.
- ICCME Math Project
  - Pithouse Building and Design with District Numeracy Coordinator and Math and Humanities Department at Brock Middle School and in conjunction with Dr. Joanne Archibald from UBC.
- Salish Weaving using patters, rote counting, scale, planning and design project for Grade 8 at KSA.
- Professional Development – Introduction in 2023 to Wayi Wah! facilitated by Jo Chrona, the author. All K-12 schools in the District participated with their school teams (110 school staff), which included Indigenous support workers, teacher leaders, learning assistance teachers, and administrators. 12 district curriculum staff also attended with representatives from the numeracy curriculum team. Every school was given a copy of the resource on Wayi Wah! Indigenous pedagogies on how to be culturally responsive and equity focused on their program and instructional practices.



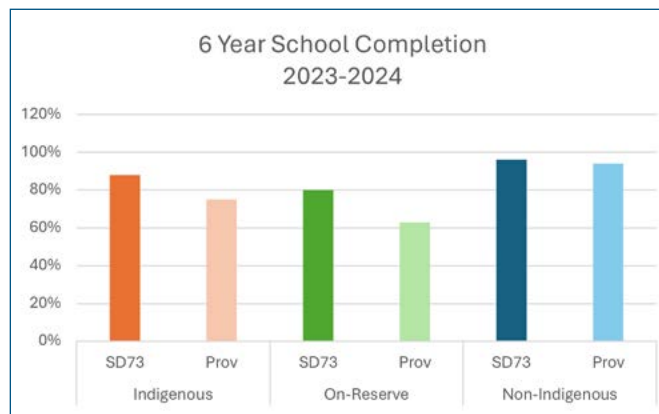
## SCHOOL COMPLETION

School completion and grade-to-grade transitions are critical for Indigenous students as they foster well-being, close achievement gaps, and create opportunities for future generations. The five-year completion rate reflects traditional pathways, while the six-year rate acknowledges the need for flexibility due to systemic and personal barriers. Achieving a Dogwood Diploma opens doors to post-secondary education and employment, whereas the Evergreen Certificate, while acknowledging school participation, offers limited opportunities and must be used thoughtfully to avoid systemic bias. Supporting Indigenous students requires culturally-responsive practices, high expectations, and systemic accountability to ensure equitable access to success.



3-Year Trend – 5 Year Completion Rates	Indigenous	On-Reserve	Non-Indigenous
SD73	+4%	+6%	+2%
Provincial	0%	+2%	-1%

SD73 Gap versus Non-Indigenous 5 Year School Completion Rates	Indigenous	On-Reserve
SD73	14%	27%
Provincial	30%	43%



3-Year Trend – 6 Year Completion Rates	Indigenous	On-Reserve	Non-Indigenous
SD73	+4%	+7%	+2%
Provincial	0%	+1%	0%

SD73 Gap versus Non-Indigenous 6 Year School Completion Rates	Indigenous	On-Reserve
SD73	8%	16%
Provincial	16%	31%

## Program Highlights

- 2024 Indigenous Graduation Ceremony
  - Approximately 250 Indigenous graduates crossed the stage and received recognition

## MOVING INTO ACTION: LITERACY, NUMERACY, AND TRANSITIONS

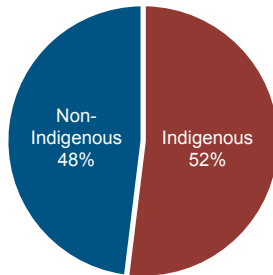
1. **Collaborative Monitoring and Support:** School and district teams will track Indigenous students' progress, share data with families, inform Band education managers, and provide tutoring, mentoring, and transition programs to address learning needs and challenges promptly.
2. **Engagement and Communication:** Host sessions for families to review reporting guidelines, graduation requirements, and post-secondary opportunities. Maintain regular updates on student progress and support services.
3. **Cultural Inclusivity and Capacity Building:** Equip teachers with resources and training for inclusive classrooms and partner with post-secondary institutions to support Indigenous students' education.
4. **Leadership and System Capacity Building:** Provide professional development that builds capacity for school teams that supports them to lead and manage change in their school communities in ways that are culturally-responsive and equity-centered, when addressing foundational skills for Indigenous learners.

## ALTERNATE EDUCATION

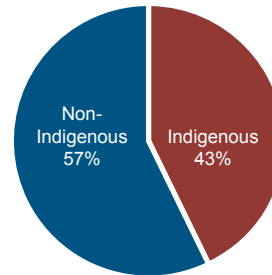
Alternate education in public schools provides non-traditional pathways for students whose needs are not met in mainstream settings, offering personalized support and flexibility to help them succeed. While these programs are vital for fostering equity and preventing dropouts, the over-representation of Indigenous students highlights systemic barriers such as racism, intergenerational trauma, and a lack of culturally-relevant curricula. Addressing this issue requires proactive supports in mainstream schools, culturally-responsive teaching, and collaboration with Indigenous communities to create inclusive environments. Ensuring equitable access to quality education for Indigenous students is crucial to dismantling systemic inequities and fostering their success in all educational pathways.

Note: at the time of this report, data was only available from the 2022-2023 provincial Aboriginal How Are We Doing Report.

### SD73 Alternate Education Enrolment 2022-2023



### Provincial Alternate Education Enrolment 2022-2023



- Indigenous students are overrepresented in alternate education programs by 32% in SD73
- Indigenous students are overrepresented in alternate education programs by 46% Provincially

#### 5 Year Trend

- The percentage of Indigenous students in alternate education programs in SD73 on average in the last 5 years has decreased by 5%
- The percentage of Indigenous students in alternate education programs in the Province on average in the last 5 years has increased by 5%

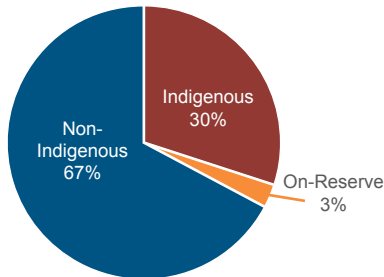
#### Program Highlights

- Four Directions Secondary Program (TREC)
  - Indigenous designed and focused program from Grade 8-12 run through the Twin Rivers Education Centre. Approximately 34 students were enrolled in the program for 2023-2024.

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education in public schools provides tailored support to students with diverse learning needs to ensure equitable access to education. However, Indigenous students are often over-represented due to systemic inequities, misdiagnosis, and culturally biased assessment practices. This over-representation can lead to stigmatization, lowered expectations, and a loss of cultural identity. Addressing this issue is crucial to fostering equity, as it ensures Indigenous students receive appropriate support while honouring their cultural heritage. By integrating culturally-responsive practices, partnering with Indigenous families, and recognizing the impact of historical and systemic barriers, schools can create more inclusive environments that empower all students to thrive.

### Inclusive Education 2023-2024



- 20% of all students in SD73 are Indigenous
- 0.2% of all students in SD73 are On-Reserve
- Overall, Indigenous students are overrepresented in Inclusive Education in SD73 by 13%

## MOVING INTO ACTION: ALTERNATE EDUCATION / INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

### ALTERNATE EDUCATION

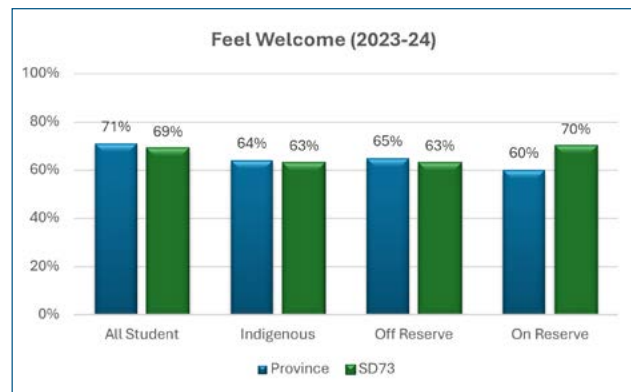
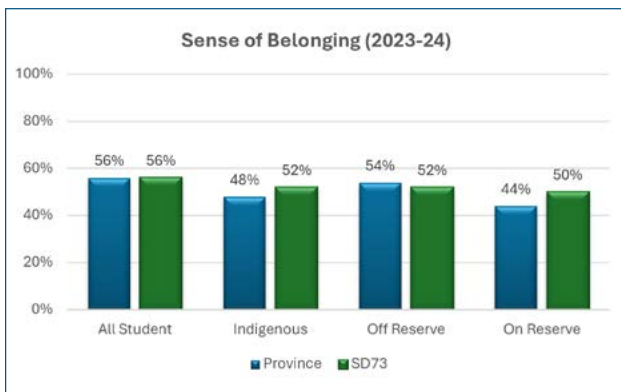
- 1. Address Over-representation and Support Indigenous Students:** Collaborate to develop a district strategy that looks at inclusive and culturally-responsive school environments and builds on staff capacity on culturally competency, and trauma-informed Indigenous perspectives. Also, providing early intervention and support that focuses on identifying and responding to at-risk trends and patterns, addressing root causes, and strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities. Finally, offer culturally sensitive support, including counseling, mentoring, tutoring, and access to language and cultural programs aligning with Reconciliation, Equity Transformation, UNDRIP, and the BC Tripartite Agreement.
- 2. Foster Inclusive and Culturally-Responsive Education:** Provide staff training, align curriculum with Indigenous practices, embed Indigenous perspectives, and collaborate with Indigenous organizations and leaders.
- 3. Strengthen Engagement with Families and Communities:** Establish communication channels with parents and guardians, offer leadership opportunities for Indigenous students, and ensure active involvement of families through workshops and events. Regularly review policies to enhance inclusive and culturally-responsive education.

### INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- 1. Enhance Professional Development and Cultural Competency:** Offer targeted training for educators, administrators, and staff on Indigenous students' needs, cultural competency, historical context, systemic barriers, and integrating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum.
- 2. Strengthen Collaboration and Community Involvement:** Assess needs to identify gaps in inclusive education for Indigenous students. Build partnerships with Indigenous communities to support decision-making, CBIEP development, and culturally-responsive services.
- 3. Implement Data-Driven and Culturally-Responsive Interventions:** Develop CBIEPs with cultural considerations, involve Indigenous families in reviews, monitor outcomes, and adjust strategies for continuous improvement.

# Human and Social Development

Human and social development—feeling safe, welcome, and a sense of belonging—is essential in K-12 schools, particularly for Indigenous students, as it fosters a positive learning environment, supports cultural identity, and promotes equity. It helps counteract historical trauma, aligns with Indigenous worldviews of interconnectedness, and strengthens mental health and well-being. Creating inclusive spaces where Indigenous students feel valued enhances their confidence, resilience, and academic success while addressing achievement gaps. This approach also advances Truth and Reconciliation by addressing systemic barriers, nurturing meaningful relationships, and empowering students to embrace leadership roles within their schools and communities.



## Program Highlights

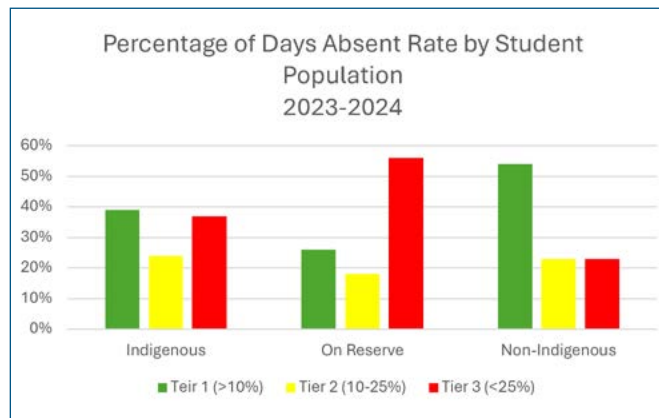
- Provincial Anti-Racism Project
  - 4 Indigenous Student Leaders from SD74 participated and contributed to the Provincial anti-racism project, including attending the provincial symposium in Surrey, BC the fall of 2023.



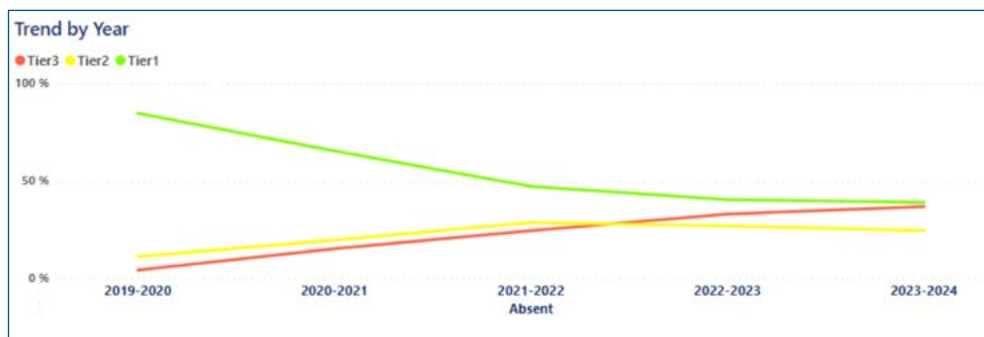
## ATTENDANCE

Attendance is crucial for Indigenous students as it supports academic success, strengthens cultural identity, and fosters social-emotional development. Regular attendance ensures access to culturally relevant programming, connections with peers, teachers, and Knowledge Keepers, and opportunities to engage with Indigenous traditions and community leaders. It promotes a sense of belonging, helps close achievement gaps, and improves graduation rates, empowering students to break cycles of inequity and contribute positively to their communities. By addressing systemic barriers and creating culturally safe, inclusive environments, schools can support consistent attendance and the overall well-being of Indigenous students.

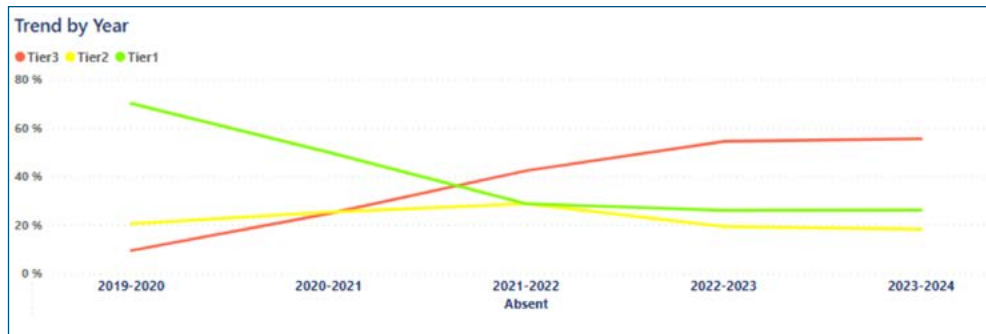
- Tier 1 - Less than 10% absent rate (Green)
- Tier 2 - 10% to 25% absent rate (Yellow)
- Tier 3 - 25% plus absent rate (Red)



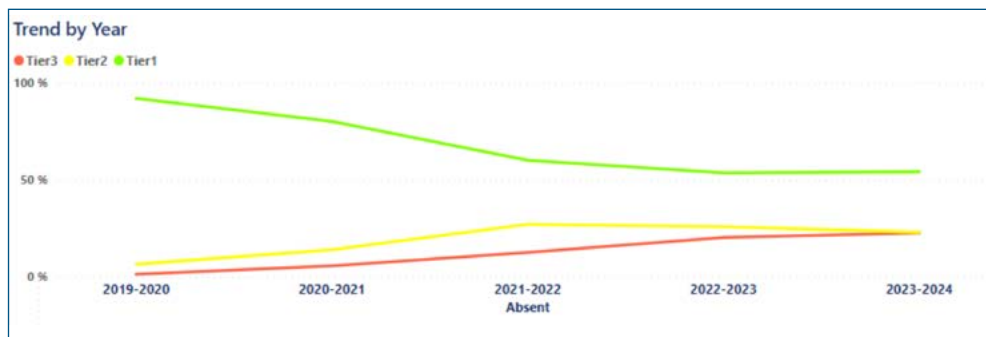
### Trend Over Time – Indigenous Students



## Trend Over Time – On Reserve Students



## Trend Over Time – Non-Indigenous Students



## Program Highlights

- [FNESC Attendance Guide](#) shared out to schools through Monday Memo.
- Attendance Reporting Tool developed by SD73 IT department for reporting regularly to Bands on Nominal Roll (On Reserve) students and in compliance with Local Education Reporting Agreements.
- Individual school reports given on individual nominal roll student attendance in the early spring of 2023 with follow-up connection by each school to the local First Nations band education coordinators.
- Consultation and collaboration on attendance with the Indigenous Education Council and the Chase Aboriginal Advisory Council that included strategies implemented in Chase Secondary School.
- 2023-2028 SD73 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement introduced to schools as a reference in the Monday Memo as well as School Leaders Meetings.

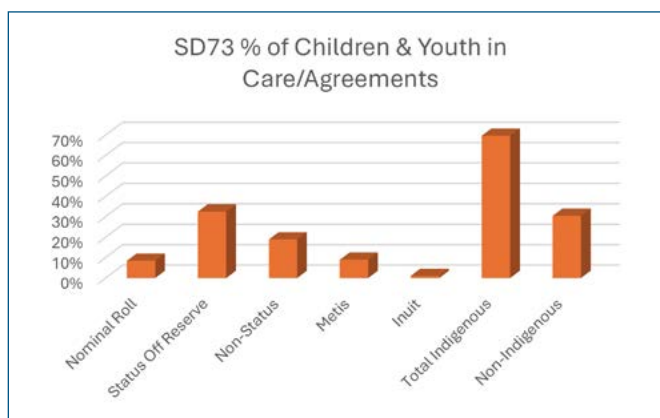
## MOVING TO ACTION: ATTENDANCE

- Establish early and monthly reporting practices by individual schools, particularly for on-reserve Indigenous (Nominal Roll) students to establish early intervention and collaborative approaches and supports for attendance challenges that are trauma-informed and culturally sensitive.
- Introduce the 2023-2028 SD73 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement during the Indigenous Education Council / SD73 Administration Joint Session 2025.

- Create a self-directed school staff professional development session around best practices for addressing attendance challenges for Indigenous learners.

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE

Acknowledging Children and Youth in Care, especially Indigenous students, is crucial for fostering equity, inclusion, and reconciliation in the school district. These students often face unique challenges, including disrupted education and systemic inequities, with Indigenous children disproportionately represented in care due to colonial legacies. Recognition helps build a sense of belonging, affirms cultural identity, and highlights the importance of tailored supports to address their specific needs. It aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action and BC’s DRIPA, fostering collaboration with local Indigenous communities to provide culturally-responsive support. By acknowledging their resilience and potential, schools create a more inclusive environment, promoting educational success and social-emotional well-being for all learners.



### Program Highlights:

- [SD73 Indigenous Cultural Safety, Humility, and Competency Guide](#)

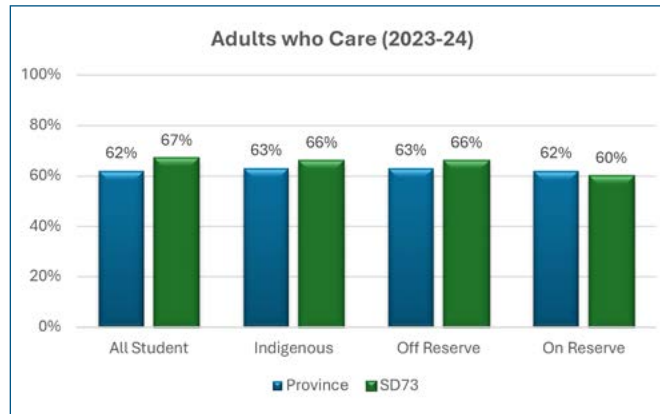
## MOVING TO ACTION: CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE

- **Holistic support and Mentorship Program:** Work on the creation of a culturally grounded mentorship program for Indigenous CYIC. Pairing them with district Community Outreach Workers, Youth and Family Consultants, Elders and Knowledge Keepers and trained mentors.
- **Priority Pathways for Educational Success:** Establish a dedicated district team to support Indigenous CYIC that includes Personalized Education Plans.

## INDIGENOUS FAMILY COUNSELORS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORKERS

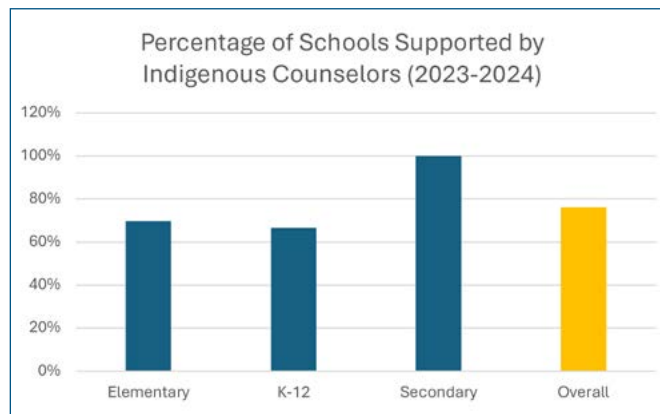
Indigenous Family Counselors and Indigenous Community Outreach Workers and are vital in fostering human and social development in K-12 schools, especially for Indigenous students and families. They provide culturally-responsive support, bridging the gap between schools, families, and communities to create safe and welcoming environments. These professionals help address barriers such as systemic inequities, trauma, and cultural disconnection by offering advocacy, guidance, and resources tailored to the unique needs of Indigenous students. They play a key role in reinforcing cultural identity and belonging, promoting healthy relationships, and

ensuring families feel respected and included in their children’s education. By fostering trust and collaboration, they empower students and families, contributing to improved academic outcomes, mental health, and well-being while advancing Truth and Reconciliation in the education system.



### Indigenous Family Counsellors

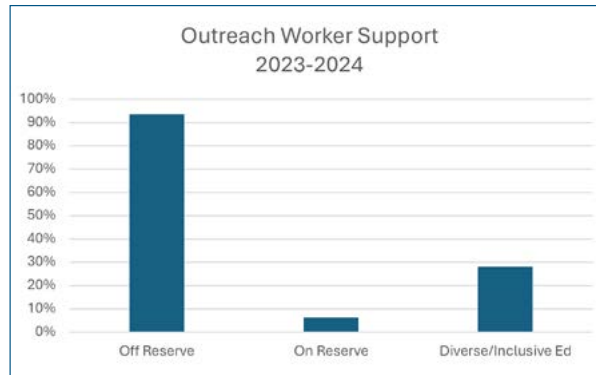
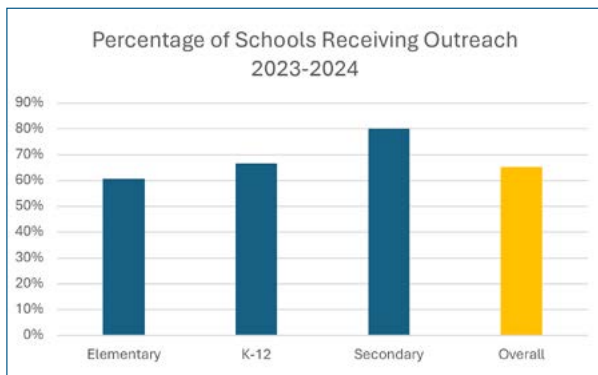
An Indigenous Family Counselor supports the well-being of Indigenous students by integrating cultural knowledge with modern counseling. They build trust with students, families, and communities, promote inclusion, and collaborate with staff to celebrate Indigenous identities and strengths.



- 12% of SD73 Indigenous students received Indigenous Family Counselling support in 2023-2024
- 388 Referrals in 2023-2024 and 6.6 FTE counsellors

### Indigenous Community Outreach Workers

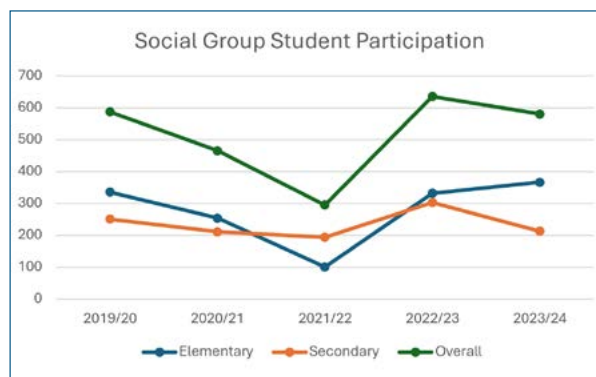
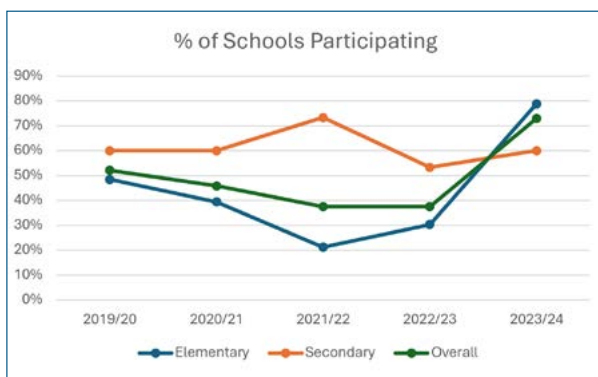
An Indigenous Community Outreach Worker engages at-risk Indigenous families and students, fostering school connections and advocating for those facing barriers to success. They build trust, provide culturally informed support, and help families navigate the education system, ensuring equitable access to resources and creating inclusive, welcoming school environments.



- 65% of SD73 Schools accessed Indigenous Community Outreach Worker support
- 0.5% of SD73 Indigenous students received Community Outreach support in 2023-2024
- 156 Referrals in 2023-2024 and three FTE Community Outreach Workers.

## INDIGENOUS SOCIAL GROUPS

Indigenous Social Skills groups are crucial in fostering human and social development in K-12 schools, particularly for Indigenous students. These groups create safe and culturally-affirming spaces where students can build confidence, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills while connecting with their peers. They integrate Indigenous values, teachings, and practices, helping students strengthen their cultural identity and sense of belonging. By addressing social challenges in a supportive environment, these groups empower students to navigate relationships, resolve conflicts, and advocate for themselves effectively. Additionally, they contribute to overall mental health and well-being, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting resilience. Indigenous Social Skills groups are a vital component of equity-focused education, helping to bridge social and cultural gaps, enhance student engagement, and support positive outcomes in alignment with Truth and Reconciliation efforts.



## MOVING INTO ACTION

1. **Enhance Cultural Understanding and Sensitivity:** Provide professional development opportunities, cultural events, and curriculum updates to increase staff and student understanding of Indigenous history, culture, and perspectives. Ensure these initiatives are trauma-informed and culturally sensitive.
2. **Foster Positive Relationships and Inclusion:** Promote respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and staff through restorative justice practices, inclusive events, and by fostering a welcoming environment with Indigenous symbols, art, and celebrations.
3. **Engage and Support Indigenous Communities:** Involve Indigenous parents and caregivers in decision-making processes, enhance communication with families, and collaborate with HR to increase the recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff.

# Cultural and Identity Development: Sense of Identity, Cultural Safety, and Humility

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is vital for fostering cultural and identity development in Indigenous Education as it equips educators and staff with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to create inclusive, respectful, and culturally-safe environments. By deepening understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and worldviews, it supports Indigenous students in developing a strong sense of identity and pride in their heritage. Training promotes cultural safety by addressing power imbalances, preventing microaggressions, and ensuring students feel valued and respected. Additionally, it fosters cultural humility through ongoing learning, engagement with local protocols, and collaboration with Knowledge Keepers and Elders. Ultimately, professional development strengthens relationships with Indigenous communities, supports Truth and Reconciliation efforts, and drives systemic change within the school district.

### Program Highlights:

- SD73 Indigenous School Lead Team Sessions
- February Indigenous Focused Professional Development Day

## SECWEPEMCTSÍN

Local Indigenous languages are vital to cultural and identity development, fostering a sense of belonging, cultural safety, and humility in Indigenous education. They connect students to their heritage, affirm the value of Indigenous knowledge systems, and create safe, inclusive learning environments. Integrating these languages into schools strengthens Indigenous students' personal and collective identities while also encouraging non-Indigenous staff to approach education with respect and humility. Honouring local Indigenous languages recognizes the rights of local communities as knowledge holders and stewards of their cultural heritage, reinforcing their role as key partners in education. By supporting local languages, schools promote

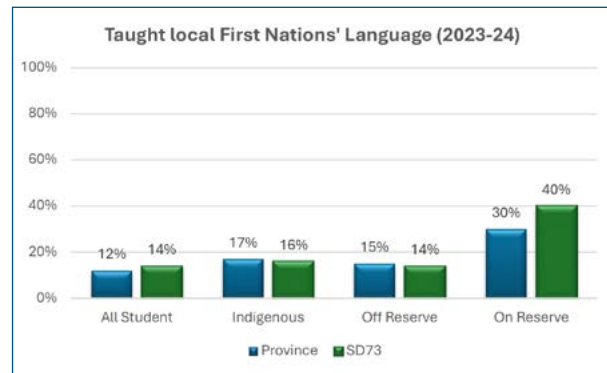
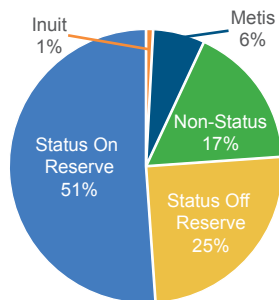
cultural relevance, enhance student engagement, and address systemic inequities, aligning with Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and fostering stronger partnerships with Indigenous communities.

## SD73 Schools Offering Language Programs

Schools	Enrolment
Brocklehurst Secondary	33
Chase Secondary	48
Haldane Elementary	21
Marion Schilling	7
South Kamloops Secondary	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>

- 0.05% of Indigenous students are enrolled in Secwepemctsin.
- 51% of students enrolled are Status-On Reserve.

**Secwepemctsin Enrolment  
2023-2024**

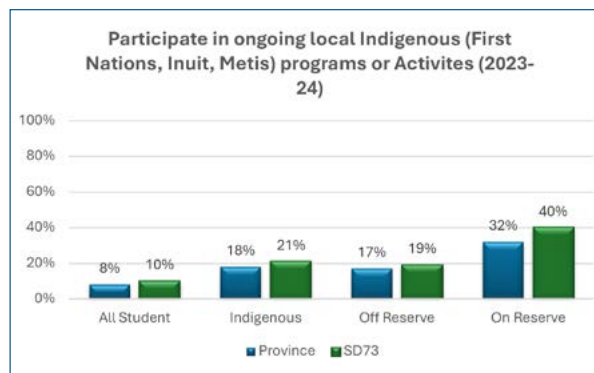
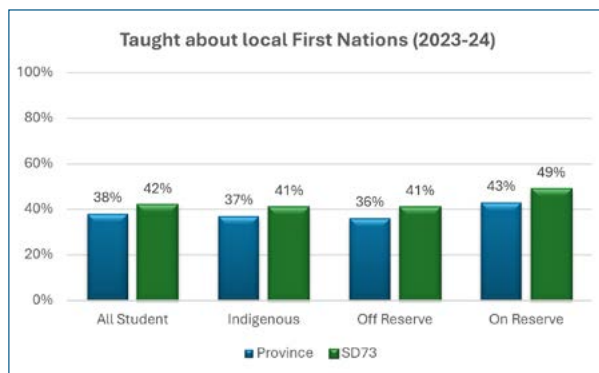


## Program Highlights

- Signage in every school in English and Secwepemctsin that acknowledges the local First Nations territory.

## CULTURAL AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMS, DAYS AND EVENTS

Acknowledging special cultural and reconciliation days is essential for fostering a sense of identity, cultural safety, and humility in Indigenous Education within the school district. These observances validate Indigenous students' histories and cultures, promoting pride and connection to their heritage while creating inclusive spaces that counteract historical marginalization. They encourage reflection, relationship building, and cultural humility among staff and students, fostering dialogue and understanding across the school community. By aligning with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and DRIPA, these acknowledgments demonstrate the District's commitment to equity and reconciliation, enhancing curriculum relevance, strengthening community trust, and modeling cultural respect for all.



## Program Highlights

- Local On the Land Initiatives
  - Development of SD73 Ethnobotany Cards with QR Codes for classes in both English and Secwepemctsin on local Indigenous plants with voice overs from students and local Indigenous Knowledge Keepers. Available to all schools.
- Secwepemctin Seasonal Calendar
  - Creation of a Local Secwépmc Seasonal Calendar with local Secwépmc Knowledge Keepers and Tk'emlúps te Secwépmc. Copies will be distributed in September 2024 for all schools.
- Howling Coyote Scholarship and Bursary Golf Fundraiser
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Indigenous Veteran's Day
- Louis Riel Day
- Day of Sucwenetwecw
- National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Moose Hide Day
- SD73 District Powwow
  - About 1200 students from across the district participated in learning and powwow at the Tk'emlúps te Secwépmc Powwow Arbour.
- National Indigenous Peoples Day

## INDIGENOUS STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Indigenous Student Leadership and Voice are essential for fostering a strong sense of identity, cultural safety, and humility within school districts. By affirming their cultural heritage and connecting with traditions, students develop pride in their identities, while their leadership empowers them to influence inclusive environments that respect Indigenous worldviews. This promotes reciprocal learning, reduces tokenism, and challenges colonial power structures, fostering cultural humility among peers and educators. Indigenous student leaders also advocate for equitable resources and foster connections between schools and Indigenous communities, ensuring education is relevant and responsive. Ultimately, their leadership supports reconciliation by driving systemic change and creating culturally safe, respectful spaces for all.

### Program Highlights

- District Indigenous Student Council
  - Approximately 40 Indigenous student leaders from Grades 8-12 representing every secondary school in the school district. Meeting monthly.
- 2024 Indigenous Student Summit
  - Student planned summit on anti-racism hosted at TRU that involved 10 other districts.
  - [Summit Video](#)
  - [Report from the students to the Ministry of Education and Child Care](#)

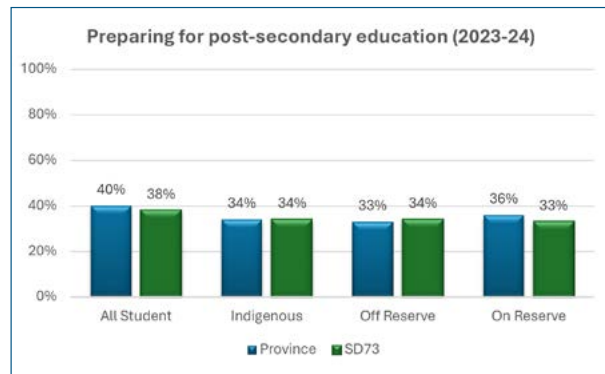
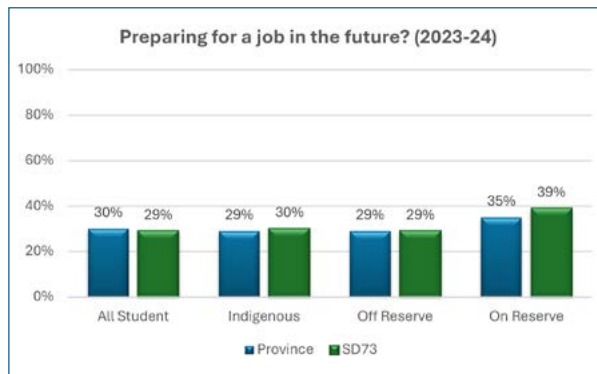
## MOVING INTO ACTION

1. **Collaborative Support and Professional Development:** Partner with Inclusive Education, Curriculum Teams, and Indigenous leadership to offer professional development on decolonization, cultural safety, anti-racism, and Indigenous ways of knowing. Provide accessible training in self-paced, online, and in-person formats.
2. **Enhancing Cultural Inclusion and Leadership:** Foster Indigenous student leadership through the District Indigenous Student Leadership Council, support schools in honoring cultural days, and integrate Indigenous perspectives, programs, and potential language initiatives into the curriculum.
3. **Strengthening Partnerships and Community Engagement:** Foster collaboration through the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA), engage local Indigenous communities, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers in school activities, and promote open communication and shared decision-making with Indigenous families.

# Career Development

Career development is essential for Indigenous students as it fosters self-determination, addresses systemic barriers, and links education to meaningful opportunities. It celebrates their unique strengths and perspectives, empowering them to pursue fulfilling careers that benefit both themselves and their communities. By integrating cultural teachings and aligning with Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, career development promotes engagement, leadership, and economic sustainability while supporting cultural continuity. Providing Indigenous students with culturally-responsive guidance and opportunities helps build confidence, expand awareness of possibilities, and contribute to reconciliation and equity in education and employment.

## Student Learning Survey



## Program Highlights:

- Indigenous Transitions Day to Post Secondary
  - Co-Hosted with TRU and 120 Grade 10 students attended the TRU campus event,
- NITEP Orientation Day
  - UBN NITEP Program visit in the spring of 2024
- Indigenous Trades and Career Day
  - Secondary students visit to TRU trades and careers programs in the spring of 2024
- SD73 Heavy Metal Rocks
  - Heavy Equipment and certification programs experience for SD73 students. Designated 'seats' for Indigenous students.

## MOVING INTO ACTION

1. **Facilitate career development and networking opportunities:** Collaborate with post-secondary institutions and Indigenous professionals to create mentorship programs, networking events, and internship opportunities that provide students with real-world experiences and professional connections.
2. **Promote skill-building and employability:** Support students in developing essential soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership, while guiding them to create professional profiles and attend career-related events.
3. **Provide mental health and well-being support:** Ensure students have access to mental health resources and encourage them to prioritize their well-being as part of their career preparation.

# Systems Development: Allocating Resources Responsibly, Fairly, and Sustainably

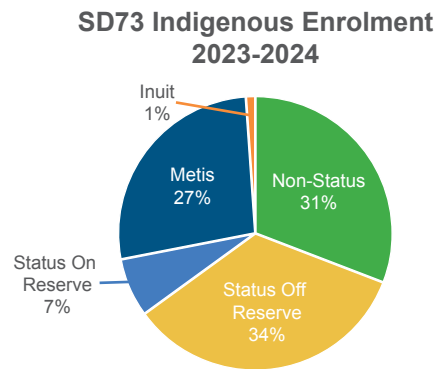
Acknowledging systems development in resource allocation for Indigenous Education is essential to address historical inequities, uphold legal commitments like DRIPA and LEAs, and build trust with Indigenous communities. A systems approach ensures transparency, fairness, and sustainability, fostering long-term capacity building and culturally-appropriate practices. It supports measurable outcomes, respects local Indigenous knowledge, and promotes equity among diverse Indigenous groups. By aligning with Truth and Reconciliation goals and enabling data-informed, collaborative decision making, the district can responsibly and effectively allocate resources to enhance Indigenous student success and advance reconciliation.

## 2023-2024 Indigenous Education Targeted Funds (IETF)

Indigenous Education Targeted Funding (IETF) is a specific allocation provided by the Ministry of Education and Child Care in British Columbia to support the educational needs and success of Indigenous students in public schools. This funding is intended to enhance Indigenous student achievement and wellbeing through culturally relevant programming, services, and resources that reflect Indigenous perspectives, languages, and traditions. This funding and budget must be developed and approved by the Indigenous Education Council and is subject to strict accountability measures, including ensuring that expenditures align with the goals of supporting Indigenous learners through the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement and addresses achievement gaps. The funding can not be used to supplement programs and services that every student can expect to receive, including through the BC Curriculum and Inclusive Education, even if it contains Indigenous content and perspectives. The IETF is meant to be over and above what the District has committed to in the BC Core Competencies and in the BC Teachers Professional Standard 9.

Total Number of SD73 Indigenous Students for 2023-2024: **3385**

- 20% of students in SD73 are Indigenous



### 2023-2024 General IETF Budget Breakdown

Staff	% of IETF
Administration	1%
District Teaching Resource Staff	12%
Family Counselors	17%
Community Outreach Workers	1%
School-Based Indigenous Education Workers	42%
Youth and Family Consultants	1%
School-Based Support Teachers	1%
Staff Benefits	18%
<b>Total Staff Costs</b>	<b>93%</b>
Programs & Services	% of IETF
Operations	1%
Cultural	2%
Academic	2%
Social Emotional / Engagement	2%
<b>Total Programs &amp; Services Cost</b>	<b>7%</b>

- At the end of the 2023-2024 school year, the IETF was left with about a 1% surplus moving into 2024-2025.

## MOVING INTO ACTION

- 1. Enhance Indigenous Education Practices and Partnerships:** Establish dedicated Indigenous education teams within schools, foster strong partnerships with Indigenous communities, and support Indigenous advisory committees to ensure effective consultation, curriculum development, and community involvement in school activities.
- 2. Implement and Support Culturally-Responsive Education:** Develop and implement culturally-responsive curriculum across subject areas, provide professional development for staff on Indigenous histories and cultures, and create a safe and inclusive learning environment that respects Indigenous students' identities.
- 3. Accountability and Continuous Improvement:** Develop comprehensive Indigenous education policies and assessment practices that reflect Indigenous cultural values, and regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of educational practices, with input from Indigenous communities.

## Conclusion

The 2024-2025 Indigenous Education Annual Report for School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) highlights the District's commitment to advancing educational equity, reconciliation, and cultural inclusivity for Indigenous learners. Through strategic initiatives in intellectual, social, cultural, and career development, the District has taken significant strides in addressing achievement gaps, fostering cultural pride, and nurturing the well-being of Indigenous students.

Key achievements this year include progress in literacy and numeracy outcomes, meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities, expanded cultural programming, and support systems tailored to Indigenous learners' needs. These efforts were guided by the values of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, Local Education Agreements, and the District's strategic priorities of equity, connection, well-being, and sustainability.

As the District continues this important work, it remains focused on overcoming challenges such as closing the achievement gap, enhancing language revitalization, and addressing systemic barriers in education. The collaborative partnerships with Indigenous communities, the Indigenous Education Council, and other stakeholders will be crucial in this journey.

Looking ahead, School District No. 73 reaffirms its dedication to creating an educational environment where all students, especially Indigenous learners, feel valued, empowered, and supported to reach their full potential. By continuing to align its practices with the principles of Truth and Reconciliation, the District is not only shaping a more inclusive educational system but also fostering a brighter future for all learners.



