

North Okanagan-Shuswap School District #83
on the Territory of the Secwepemc Nation



Wayt'k – Welcome!

2nd Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

January 16, 2012.

PREAMBLE

WAYT'K

The First Nations Education Council (FNEC) and School District #83 acknowledge with respect that School District #83 resides on the traditional territories of the Secwepemc People. Kukstsemc! We give thanks to the Elders and Chiefs of these territories.

The purpose of the First Nations Education Council is to work jointly with School District #83 to support education programs funded through Provincial Government Ministries that will enhance the learning experiences for all Aboriginal learners within the district. The council guides the design, implementation and assessment of programs and services that will improve and enhance the learning opportunities for Aboriginal students.

The council members include a representative from each of the four Secwepemc bands (Adams Lake, Little Shuswap Lake, Neskonlith, and Splatsin Nation) within School District #83, a representative for the urban Aboriginal population, a Métis representative plus a School District #83 Trustee representative.

In partnership between the First Nations Education Council and School District # 83, the formation of the second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement was created.

A “Renewal of Conversations” with those who have a vested interest in our Aboriginal students was held through the course of the school year. Due to this shared collective responsibility in creating optimal learning opportunities for our students, we “*Gathered Wisdom*” from the Elders, “*Listened to our Students*”, and “*Heard from our Parents*”, both off and on reserve and Métis parents/communities, and last but not least, “*Sage Advice*” from the Educators.

PURPOSE

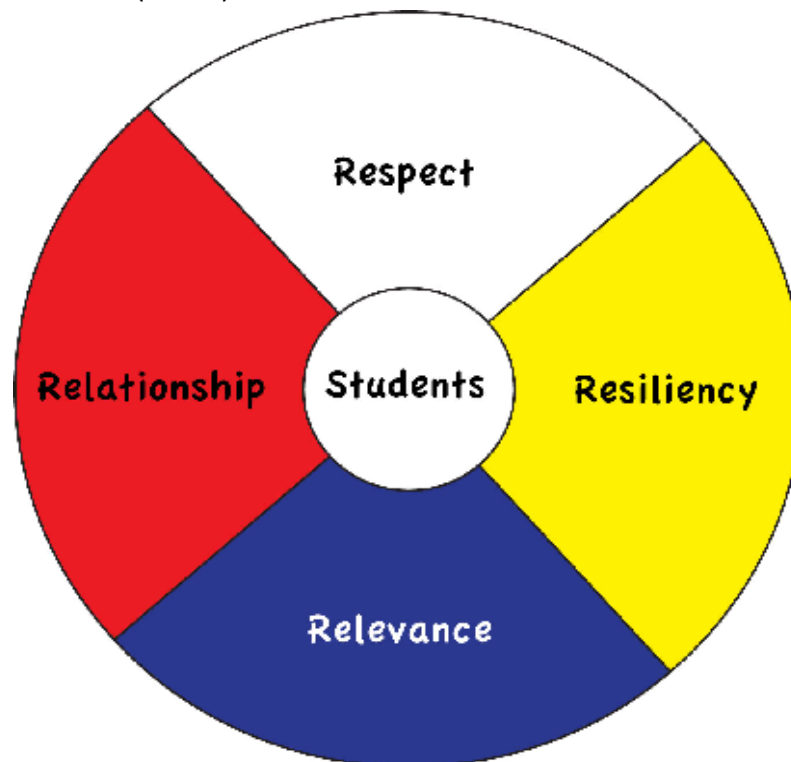
In School District #83’s Student Achievement’s Growth Plan, there is a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and social responsibility (including restitution and student leadership), with the district striving to improve student achievement. In order to “enhance” the School District’s Growth Plan for all students, the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement’s purpose to improve the overall academic performance of Aboriginal students by:

- Creating an environment that supports resiliency
- Supporting academic relevancy
- Engaging students/parents/community in positive, supportive relationships
- Encouraging language and culture steeped in respect

Theoretical Framework

The circle is a symbol of connection, unity, and harmony and is recognized as a theoretical framework to represent meaning for Aboriginal people. The circle represents Aboriginal belief systems of wholeness and balance which symbolizes inclusions and equality for all. For the purpose of this Enhancement agreement, we incorporated the circle to reflect these beliefs. Since life is circular, we placed young children in the East (yellow), teenagers in the South (blue), Adults in the West (red) and Elders in the North (white).

- Research suggests that children who are not able to read by grade three are at risk of poor grades and high school incompleteness (The State of Aboriginal Learning in Canada 2009). (East)
- Research has shown that children experience curriculum that reflect their history, culture and traditions are more likely to be engaged in learning. (Battiste 2002, Ledoux 2006, Kanu 2007). (South)
- “A growing body of research demonstrates the links between parental involvement and students’ outcomes” (Amendt 2007, Gabriel Dumont Institute 2010). (West)
- In the past and in the present, it is the Elders that are responsible for passing cultural knowledge to children. (North)



East – (Children) Resiliency

Goal:

To create an environment that supports resiliency through a sense of belonging and health.

Rationale:

We want to provide the best possible start to school experiences by providing a warm, welcoming space that will “enhance” Aboriginal students’ sense of identity by having aspects of their culture reflected in the environment.

Indicators of Success

- Increase the number of students having their basic needs being met prior to engaging in learning.
- Increase positive, supportive relationships with Aboriginal students that connect them to school.
- Increase number of schools/staff/students participating in community events.
- Increase number of Aboriginal students participating in leadership and friendship groups
- Increase primary achievement results in Grades K-4 – Reading and Writing using PM Benchmarks.

Targets:

During first year of implementation, surveys and base-line data and targets will be developed.

The data for measuring all goals will be provided with assistance from Aboriginal Education staff, School Principals and others.

South – (Youth) Relevance

Goal:

Increase understanding and awareness of Aboriginal history, culture and diversity for all students.

Rationale:

Including Aboriginal content into the curriculum will promote relevant learning to Aboriginal learners and support enriched cultural opportunities for all students.

Indicators of Success

- Increase number of teachers teaching Aboriginal content in the curriculum.
- Increase of school based Aboriginal initiatives reflected in School Growth Plans.
- Increase awareness of Aboriginal culture and history.
- Increase number of Dogwood certificates obtained by Aboriginal students.
- Increase student involvement with career programs.

Targets:

During first year of implementation, surveys and base-line data and targets will be developed.

West – (Parents/Community) Relationships

Goal:

Increase the level of Aboriginal Parent/Community engagement and involvement at the school.

Rationale:

When Aboriginal students and families feel welcomed, supported and respected, they will be inspired to become involved.

Indicators of Success:

- Increase number of parents participating in school based events.
- Increase number of parent information sessions held in local Aboriginal communities.
- Increase number of parents acting as a cultural resource in schools.
- Increase number of school based Aboriginal initiatives that encourage parental involvement.
- Increase retention of Aboriginal students.

Targets:

During first year of implementation, base-line data and targets will be developed.

Base line parent satisfaction survey completed each year.

North – (Elders/Culture) Respect

Goal:

To increase students knowledge of local Secwepemc language, culture and history.

Rationale:

When Aboriginal peoples' language, culture and history is acknowledged and celebrated, it bridges the unknown and creates opportunities for understanding and acceptance.

Indicators of Success:

- Increase number of schools acknowledging the traditional territory at school assemblies.
- Increase number of staff participating in cross cultural opportunities.
- Increase number of schools accessing the “Elder in Residence” program.
- Increase number of students at Salmon Arm West who know ten words or more in Secwepemc.
- Increase number of dual language signs and role model posters visible in schools.

Targets:

During first year of implementation, base-line data and targets will be developed.

Appendices: A

Implementation:

East – (Children) Resiliency

- Promote awareness of healthy nutritional lifestyle choices.
- Increase the visual aspects of Aboriginal culture within the school environment through art, language, and cultural events.
- Increase opportunities for parents/community to be engaged in school events.
- Increased opportunities for leadership development and friendship groups.
- Enhanced opportunities for literacy and numeracy programming.

South – (Youth) Relevance

Implementation:

- Integrate more Aboriginal content into the curriculum and promote participation in BC First Nations Studies 12 and English First Peoples.
- Increase of Aboriginal school based initiatives.
- Provide learning opportunities for building teachers' capacity for teaching Aboriginal content into curriculum.
- Increase number of Aboriginal resources in schools and school libraries.
- Encourage personalized concept of success with Aboriginal students by exploring career options such as the Trades program and /or post-secondary education.

West – (Parents/Community) Relationships

Implementation:

- Proactive contact with parents by school staff in order to create positive relationships.
- Parent information sessions will be held in communities in order to build bridges.
- Eliminate barriers to parents participating in school events (i.e. transportation)
- Encourage and support parents as cultural resource in schools.
- Participation by school staff at Aboriginal community events.

North – (Elders/Culture) Respect:

Implementation:

- Continue to develop Secwepemc language programs and resources in the District.
- Continue to provide learning opportunities for all staff to learn about the Residential school experience.
- Identify positive local role models and promote role model program within our schools.
- Create an “Elder in Residence” program at schools.
- Promote the use of dual language signs in schools with local Secwepemc language.

Performance Evaluation and Agreement Review

The First Nations Education Council (FNEC) will evaluate the results of the district performance data and provide feedback on the district’s level of achievement.

School District #83 and the First Nations Education Council will review the implementation process in Spring of each performance year. The review will identify what is working and what areas of implementation need to be reviewed or re-evaluated.