



School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan)



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Ninth Annual Report

September 2011 – June 2012

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Introduction

We acknowledge that School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan) operates within the Traditional Territory of the Okanagan Nation – the syilx People. In partnership with the Aboriginal communities of the Central Okanagan, the District is committed to upholding the following five guiding principles in support of Aboriginal student success. We believe it is important to:

1. Honour and acknowledge the people, traditional territory, and history of the Okanagan people;
2. Acknowledge the traditional teachings of the Elders and the wisdom of Aboriginal cultures;
3. Promote a learning environment where Aboriginal students feel confident, proud of their ancestry, and a sense of belonging in school;
4. Provide educational opportunities that enhance academic success, and;
5. Develop shared responsibility and mutual respect through ongoing dialogue and strong relationships that recognize the cultural differences and diverse needs of Aboriginal students.

The District's Aboriginal Education Program continues to be supported by the Ministry of Education, through targeted funding. Funding is directly related to the number of Aboriginal students who have been identified as having First Nations (status or non-status, on or off reserve), Métis Nation, or Inuit ancestry. Since 2004, the Aboriginal student population has continued to increase, and is one of the highest growing demographics in Canada. In the 2011-2012 school year, 2182 students claimed Aboriginal ancestry. Of those students, 2133 received service from the Aboriginal Education Program. This amount equates to approximately 10% of the total District student population.

Staffing has fluctuated according to the needs and goals of the program. By the end of the 2011-2012 school year, the program employed 32 Aboriginal Student Advocates, three Certified Education Assistants, five secondary Teacher Tutors, two full-time clerical positions, a Cultural Facilitator, Okanagan Language Instructor, and a District Principal of Aboriginal Education. Various local Aboriginal community members provided support to the cultural program as needed, and on a fee for service basis.

This report serves as a means to outline some of the relevant District-wide achievements and provide a focus for continued dialogue as the next Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement is renewed during the 2012-2013 school year.

The Ninth Annual Report will address the four goals of the District's first Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, and the progress made towards reaching the goals. The goals, although numbered, do not represent importance over the other. The District believes that addressing the needs of the whole child is of utmost importance and critical to student success.

The four goals are listed as follows:

Goal #1: EMOTIONAL

To increase a sense of belonging, self-respect, and pride of heritage for Aboriginal students

Objectives:

- 1.1: Improved attendance rates and decreased tardiness rates for Aboriginal students
- 1.2: Increased Aboriginal student recognition in areas such as academics, athletics, citizenship, leadership and fine arts
- 1.3: UBC - eMentoring Program in collaboration with SD23

Goal #2: SPIRITUAL

To increase awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures, and language

Objectives:

- 2.1: Increased number of Aboriginal students enrolled in an Okanagan Language program in elementary, middle, and secondary schools
- 2.2: Increased number of Aboriginal students participating in school-based, district, and community activities

Goal #3: PHYSICAL

To increase awareness of healthy choices that will enhance the physical well-being of Aboriginal students

- 3.1: Decreased number of students hungry in school
- 3.2: Increased student participation in active living

GOAL #4: INTELLECTUAL

To improve Aboriginal student academic achievement (K-12)

- 4.1: Increased graduation rate with Dogwood completion
- 4.2: Increased number of K-12 students fully meeting or exceeding expectations in reading, writing, and numeracy

Goal #1: Emotional

To increase a sense of belonging, self-respect, and pride of heritage for Aboriginal students

Rationale

We believe that a student’s sense of belonging is fundamental to his or her school success and overall well-being. District data indicates that absences and tardiness are higher for Aboriginal students than the general student population in schools at the K-12 level. Therefore, we are committed to implementing initiatives that increase Aboriginal students’ positive sense of belonging, self-respect, pride of heritage, and commitment to staying in school.

Legend:

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|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| ASA: Aboriginal Student Advocate | OLI: Okanagan Language Instructor |
| ACD: Aboriginal Cultural Department | DAP: District Aboriginal Principal |
| ATT: Aboriginal Teacher Tutor | DLT: District Learning Team |

Objective	Grade(s)	Initiative(s)
1.1: Improved attendance rates and decreased tardiness rates for Aboriginal students	K-12	ASA, ACD, ATT, DAP - Contact and communication with Aboriginal families and school district staff - Daily record-keeping to closely monitor students
1.2: Increased Aboriginal student recognition in areas such as academics, athletics, citizenship, leadership and fine arts	K-12	ASA, ATT, ACD, DLT, OLI, DAP - All Elementary ASAs were provided individual and focused training and support from DLT on the Early Learning Profile, and ways to support struggling readers - Direct early intervention via ASAs in academics (K-7) - ATT: Direct instruction for secondary students with qualified teachers in individual and small group settings (10-12) - ASAs provide incentives and rewards to students for their achievements: stickers, certificates, lunch, pencils, etc. - ASA/DAP: Selected students in middle school and high school were accompanied to the Junior National Racquetball Championships in Winnipeg, MB. Students were profiled on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network - DAP: Students were accompanied to a 24 hour Drum-a-thon to Whistler, BC to promote and encourage student leadership initiatives in Aboriginal education - OLI: Students performed Okanagan songs and drummed at Harmony Day assemblies on the Westside (K-7) - OLI: Song and drum training with students in after school Okanagan Language and Culture programs (7-9) - ASA/ACD/ATT/OLI/DAP: Annual Aboriginal Graduation Celebration Ceremony honoring and recognizing 171 graduating students (12) - ASA/DAP: Aboriginal Career Fair (7-12)
1.3:	7-12	- ASA/DAP: Connecting students to university mentors

UBC - eMentoring Program in collaboration with SD23		through a social media network. Full implementation to begin Sept. 2012
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Goal #2: Spiritual

To increase awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures, and language

Rationale

The teachings of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and language are critical to ensuring that this knowledge will be passed on to future generations of Aboriginal peoples. It also gives students a sense of pride of their rich and unique Aboriginal heritages.

Objective	Grade(s)	Initiative(s)
2.1: Increased number of Aboriginal students enrolled in an Okanagan Language program in elementary, middle, and secondary schools	K-6	- OLI/ACD: Provided an Okanagan Cultural & Awareness program to elementary schools on the Westside (CTE, GPE, SLE). Over 800 students had the opportunity to explore the Okanagan culture, learn some words, sing songs and drum both in classrooms and at school-wide assemblies
	7-9	- OLI/ACD/ASA: After-school programs were offered at CNB and GMS which offered enhanced language and cultural opportunities for middle school students
	10-12	- OLI/ACD/ASA: An after-school program was offered at MBS which offered enhanced language and cultural opportunities for secondary school students
2.2: Increased number of Aboriginal students participating in school-based, district, and community activities	K-7	- ASA: Students at all levels have the regular opportunity to participate in cultural activities provided during Culture Clubs at school. Students benefit from sharing this knowledge with non-Aboriginal students
	K-12	- ACD/DAP: Aboriginal students have the opportunity to participate in field trips and cultural events planned by both the Aboriginal Education Department and/or community sponsors. <u>District planned trips include:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary Winter Gathering - Gr. 7 Movie & Lunch Celebration - Gr. 8 Green Bay Cultural Retreat - Aboriginal Grad Retreat - Aboriginal Day Celebration (Lake Country) - 24 Hour Drum-a-thon Conference in Whistler, BC - Junior National Racquetball Championships in Winnipeg - Gr. 4 Field trips to the Kelowna Museum (field trips planned by teachers, but content provided by Ab Ed Dept) <u>Community sponsored collaborative planned trips include:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Okanagan College Pow Wow - Lake Country Native Association Pow Wow - Aboriginal Career Fair (UBC-O) - Aboriginal Day Celebration (KiLowNa Friendship Society) - siya Celebration (Westbank First Nation)

Goal #3: Physical

To increase awareness of healthy choices that will enhance the physical well-being of Aboriginal students

Rationale

Students who make healthy choices and live healthy lifestyles can participate more fully in their learning.

Objective	Grade(s)	Initiative(s)
3.1: Decreased number of students hungry in school	K-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ASA: Schools are involved in the Bag Lunch Program for students in need. Many ASAs operate the lunch program out of their rooms- ASAs provide a nutritious breakfast through Breakfast Clubs- ASAs provide nutritional snacks in their rooms for Aboriginal students at recess or after school- ASAs may assist families to access the local food banks and/or provide food at the school- ASAs may provide regular hot lunches for Aboriginal students through Aboriginal Education funding
3.2: Increased student participation in active living	7-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ASA provides mentoring and coaching to Aboriginal youth to become active and involved at the local racquetball club- ACD works with local presenters to share the different and unique Aboriginal dances to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Programs are offered both during and after school

Goal #4: Intellectual*To improve Aboriginal student academic achievement (K-12)***Rationale**

Aboriginal students' performance in academic areas indicates that there needs to be a continued focus on improving the number of Aboriginal students meeting and/or exceeding grade level expectations in reading, writing, and numeracy. Improved student performance will lead to a greater number of Aboriginal students receiving Dogwood graduation.

Objective	Grade(s)	Initiative(s)
4.1: Increased graduation rate with Dogwood completion	K-12	<p>The graduation rate increased to 60.9% which is an increase of .9% from 2011-12.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In October 2011, the Graduation Sub-Committee was formed from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee to explore how the upcoming Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement document will address and support learners from Kindergarten to Grade 12, which will lead to increased graduates with Dogwood certificates - The e-Mentoring project which began its preliminary launch in late spring 2012, will allow Aboriginal students to connect with university students who can act as mentors for students - The Career Prep Department launched a program in the late spring to encourage Aboriginal youth to mentor with Aboriginal local businesses for future training and employment opportunities
4.2: Increased number of K-12 students fully meeting or exceeding expectations in reading, writing, and numeracy	<p>K-7</p> <p>7-9</p> <p>1-9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Elementary ASAs were provided extensive training and support from the DLT on the District's Early Learning Profile (ELP), and ways to support struggling readers in the classroom. This will continue to be a focus next year, which may also include middle school ASAs - Direct early intervention via ASAs assisting with academics, based on data from the ELP, and teacher guidance - ASAs provided academic support via a "push-in" program in the classroom (as opposed to pulling students out of the classroom) - ASAs were provided with culturally relevant early reading books for students to augment the classroom's reading program - Certified Education Assistants provided academic support for students at two of the middle schools - ASAs provided academic support for students at three of the middle schools - ASAs hosted Homework Clubs which supported student

4.2, cont'd	10-12	<p>learning either before or after school</p> <p>ATTs provide academic support for students in the secondary schools and at GES for grades 8-12</p>
	K-12	<p>- An Aboriginal Resource Support teacher was hired in late June 2012 to begin working with the program for September 2012. Duties of this teacher include working with and supporting classroom teachers to successfully implement the Ministry of Education's Aboriginal prescribed learning outcomes into their day-to-day planning</p>