

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2011/2012

- District Context.
- Environmental Goal.
- Emotional Goal
- Spiritual Goal
- Intellectual Goal
- Physical Goal
- Action Plan



Delta School District is committed to enhancing success for our students with Aboriginal ancestry. The goals for achieving success were developed based on the question posed to our Advisory Committee: "What would success look like for our students?" The result was this Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, which was signed in January, 2012. The Committee strongly reinforced the concept of

'balance' as being central to health and success. Culture, Personal and Emotional Attributes, Physical Health and Safety are the underpinnings of Academic Achievement. These goal areas are reflective of the Medicine Wheel teachings about achieving balance in the Spiritual (Culture), Emotional (Personal Attributes), Physical (Health and Safety) and Intellectual (Academic) realms. Student success was measured using a wide variety of statistical as well as holistic measures. During this first year of

implementation, baseline data was collected and analyzed related to the 5 goal areas and an Action Plan was created by the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Aboriginal Program staff and district senior administration. The responsibility for implementation of the Enhancement Agreement is shared and funded by all divisions of the district, including core program funding, targeted Aboriginal funding, Special Programs funding and ELL funding.

Aboriginal students



We are working toward students with Aboriginal ancestry:

- feeling that schools reflect respect and appreciation of Aboriginal culture.
- being comfortable in expressing feelings and opinions in classroom settings.
- feeling valued, supported and respected in their school community.
- as well as Non-Aboriginal students and staff developing knowledge about Aboriginal culture and history.
- learning Aboriginal content, especially Coast Salish, in classrooms

Rationale:

We know from our parents, our support staff and our Aboriginal Advisory Committee, as well as research that all students will be most successful in a school environment that understands and appreciates their culture and history. To reach their full potential our students must feel valued and safe. This has been well documented through our ancestors who survived the Residential School system, but is still significant for many of our students who still feel the effects of its legacy. By increasing the opportunities for all staff and students to learn about Aboriginal culture and history, and therefore demonstrate awareness and respect, we hope to create a school culture that fosters such feelings.

Evidence:

- District developed Student Survey which included questions related to the targeted attributes.
- Ministry Document: How Are We Doing?; Satisfaction Survey.
- Student Forum
- Parent Survey
- Support Worker Service Records

ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL

To have students with Aboriginal Ancestry feel safe, respected and included in the school setting.

What we learned:

- Only about half of our students perceive that their schools respect and appreciate Aboriginal culture, although a high percentage (78% - 92%) of elementary students perceive that, in general, differences are respected in their school. In high school this drops to about 60% of Aboriginal students perceiving respect compared to 80% on non-aboriginal students.
- 80% of parents report that they are satisfied with their child's schools understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture.
- On average, 31% of grade 7, 10 and 12 Aboriginal students report that culture is taught in school, compared to an average of 16% of non-Aboriginal students. This would reflect their participation in the Aboriginal program.
- 57% of students report that they are comfortable in participating in mainstream class activities, compared to 87% in Aboriginal program.
- In mainstream classes 60% of students feel they fit in with the group. In Aboriginal classes 97% feel they fit in.
- Students report feeling safe at school in elementary (75%-85%) however this drops to 55%-63% in high school. An average of 20% of Aboriginal students report being bullied at school compared to 10% of non-aboriginal students throughout the grades.
- A significant portion of students (67% -73%) report that they have people they can talk to and sufficient counseling and/or tutoring, although only 56% report that they have sufficient opportunity to learn all they need to in their mainstream classes.
- Only about 35%-45% feel that high school prepares them for the future and/or post secondary.
- Information from an Aboriginal Awareness rubric completed by schools confirm that Aboriginal awareness and attitudes as well as knowledge of the AEEA are at very beginning levels (1-2).
- Aboriginal Support Workers have worked in and/or made presentations to individual classes in all schools and presentations that included the whole school were done at 8 schools.



We are working toward students with Aboriginal ancestry:

- being independent and resourceful.
- being respectful and responsible.
- giving, receiving and asking for help.
- feeling validated, successful and happy.
- demonstrating social responsibility for self, family and community.
- feeling supported.
- demonstrating positive self-esteem and confidence.
- accessing supports and resources as needed.

Rationale:

Research clearly indicates that a positive self-concept and intrinsic motivation are predictors of success. These are built on strong relationships, feelings of support and connectivity and the confidence to take risks. Our Aboriginal Program is strongly committed to fostering such feelings and personal attributes in our students.

Evidence:

- District developed Student Survey which included questions related to the targeted attributes.
- Ministry Document: How Are We Doing?; Satisfaction Survey.
- Student Forum
- ABSW Service Records

What we learned:

- Students report that they are aware of support options and know how to access them.
 - 77% ask for help, 93% are aware of resources and support available, and 80% take advantage of opportunities.
- Students report that they like to get help and ask for it when necessary (87%).
- Students report that they are proud of the decisions they make.
- They are respectful and responsible (100%).

We noted that there were discrepancies between data from the Ministry “How Are We Doing?” student satisfaction survey and the district student survey. As well, the data from both surveys was not consistent with staff observations. Therefore we feel that we need to review and revise this source of evidence.

EMOTIONAL GOAL

Students with Aboriginal ancestry will develop attributes that lead to independence, self-advocacy and responsibility.





We are working toward students with Aboriginal ancestry:

- integrating traditional teachings and values into their lifestyle.
- demonstrating pride in their Aboriginal culture and heritage.
- feeling comfortable 'walking in two worlds' - the traditional and modern way of life.
- sharing culture with others.

Rationale:

Our Elders tell us that we need to know where we have come from in order to know where we are going. Culture is the way to our past, present and future. Participation in Aboriginal cultural activities will foster understanding of Traditional Teachings, which provide the basis for a healthy, balanced life.

Evidence:

- District developed Student Survey which included questions related to the targeted attributes.
- Ministry Document: How Are We Doing?; Satisfaction Survey.
- Student Forum
- Aboriginal Program participation.
- Track students out-of-school cultural activities and/or events

**SPIRITUAL
GOAL**

Students with Aboriginal ancestry will develop awareness of Aboriginal culture, feel pride in being Aboriginal and draw strength, guidance and support from the Aboriginal community.



What we learned:

- According to survey responses, all students report feeling proud of their Aboriginal heritage, although only about half report participation in Aboriginal cultural events in addition to the Aboriginal Program.
- 80% of students feel they understand the 7 Sacred Teachings that are the foundation of an Aboriginal world view.
- However only 64% actively incorporate them into their daily lives.
- 90% report that they feel comfortable with both the traditional and modern way of life.
- 83% of students report that they like to share their culture with others.
- Feedback from the Student Forum identified the 1-1 support received through the Aboriginal program as a very valuable support system (both EA support and Support Worker).
- 80% of parents report that they are satisfied with the Aboriginal cultural program.



We are working toward students with Aboriginal ancestry:

- attending school regularly.
- maintaining passing grades in literacy and numeracy.
- graduating and attend post-secondary.
- taking advantage of the intellectual opportunities that are available.

Rationale:

We know from research that strong literacy and numeracy skills are essential for academic success. We are committed, through several district initiatives, to ensuring all students with Aboriginal ancestry develop skills in these areas to better enable them to be successful.

Evidence:

- Delta District Student Survey which included questions related to the targeted attributes.
- Ministry Document: How Are We Doing?; Satisfaction Survey.
- Student Forum
- School attendance
- Report card grades
- Participation and Pass rate for courses leading to graduation
- Dogwood completion, transition rates
- Scholarships obtained by students with Aboriginal ancestry



INTELLECTUAL GOAL

Students with Aboriginal ancestry will achieve academic success to the best of their ability.

- 83% of students report regular attendance at school, which is consistent with district attendance records.
- 80% of students report that they enjoy reading and learning.
- 34% of secondary students and 36% of elementary students are 'at-risk' (see note) according to district report card marks.
- There has been a downward trend in the number of 'at-risk' students in the district for the past 5 years (37% to 34%).
- Our Aboriginal students do not fare well in FSA results. Only about 35% meet expectations in Reading and Numeracy at both Grade 4 and Grade 7 levels. They do somewhat better in Writing – 48/49%. No Aboriginal students 'exceed' expectations in any area.
- At the secondary level, about 85% of students who attempt the graduation courses receive passing grades, although they experience more difficulty with Math foundations (78%).
- At the Grade 10 level 100% of students participate in both English and Science. 89% of students participate in Math courses.
- In Grade 11 100% of students take Social Studies.
- At Grade 12 61% of students receive a mark in English and 32% receive a mark in Communication.
- 80% of students report that they are aware of scholarship opportunities.
- 67% of our Aboriginal students achieve a Dogwood certificate within 6 years.
- 80% of our Aboriginal students go on to post secondary education within 2 years.
- On the Parent Satisfaction survey, 67% of parents are satisfied with their child's academic progress.
- Only 60% of parents are satisfied with the academic support provided by their child's school.

Note:

In a district initiative to address the needs of all students, lists of students considered to be At-Risk (those who receive Not Yet Meeting, Approaching, C- or below on their report cards) are sent to all schools. Targeted support is given to students in all grades.



We are working toward students with Aboriginal ancestry:

- making healthy choices.
- knowing how to keep themselves safe.
- having adequate food, clothing and shelter.
- engaging in daily physical activity.

Rationale:

Success in achieving the Environmental, Emotional, Spiritual and Intellectual goals will lay the foundation for our students to make appropriate choices and enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

Evidence:

- Students making healthy choices
- Students knowing how to keep themselves safe
- Students having adequate food, clothing and shelter
- Student Survey which included questions related to the targeted attributes.
- Ministry Document: How Are We Doing?; Satisfaction Survey.
- Student Forum

What we learned:

- 83% of students feel they make healthy choices including use of drugs or alcohol and engagement in daily physical activity.

**PHYSICAL
GOAL**

Students with Aboriginal ancestry will live a healthy lifestyle.



Action Plan

A strong trend in the data was that students feel safe, supported and respected within the Aboriginal program setting but not in their mainstream classes. It is clear that we must work with schools and teachers. Therefore we plan to:

- Work with the Aboriginal community and district staff to develop Aboriginal curriculum at all grade levels.
- Provide implementation support for teachers to use the new curriculum.
- Work with administrators and other district staff to increase awareness of Aboriginal history, culture and issues. This will be done through district meetings, workshops, networking groups and invited speakers.
- Continue the existing Aboriginal cultural program as students consistently report it as being valuable

To continue the improving trend of academic success, we plan to:

- Continue, or expand as fiscally possible, the academic support provided by the At Risk grants
- Continue to support students through the Academic Language Development program

To improve results at the high school level, we plan to:

- Provide direct discussion and instruction in the “attributes that lead to independence, self-advocacy and responsibility”
- Engage in collaborative planning with district staff, mainstream teachers, career counsellors, Alternate Education teachers which will include:
 - Increased transition planning, especially from Grade 7 to high school
 - Conferencing with individual secondary students to better determine the barriers to graduation

We also plan to review and revise the district Student Survey and its administration to facilitate more accurate and consistent data.
