

June 21, 2011

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

School District No. 59 (Peace River South)

Ministry of Education

Dawson Creek Aboriginal Education Advisory Council

Chetwynd Aboriginal Education Advisory Council

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN:

Dawson Creek and Chetwynd Aboriginal Education Advisory Council

AND:


School District No. 59 (Peace River South)

AND:

The Ministry of Education

Working together in harmony, trust and mutual collaboration with respect and honour for all Aboriginal peoples, we will develop culturally appropriate and meaningful programs for the benefit and success of all Aboriginal learners. As partners, we jointly recognize our collective responsibility for the success of all Aboriginal learners attending public schools in School District No. 59 (Peace River South). We, the undersigned agree to the terms of this Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. This Agreement is in effect from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2015.


Dated in Chetwynd, BC on the 21st day of June, 2011.



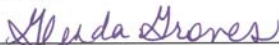
Honourable George Abbott
Minister of Education




Tammy Schock, Chair
Dawson Creek Aboriginal Education Advisory
Council




Kathy Sawchuk, Superintendent
School District No. 59 (Peace River South)



Glenda Groves, Chair
Chetwynd Aboriginal Education Advisory
Council



Wayne Ezeard, Trustee
School District No. 59 (Peace River South)



Isabelle Eagle-Friesen, Elder
Dawson Creek Aboriginal Education Advisory
Council

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Success

Relationships

Culture

Aboriginal students need to believe they can be successful. We believe if the values and cultural beliefs of Aboriginal students and their families are understood, respected, valued and shared, we will be better able to provide the conditions that will lead to success. This will also enhance our ability to relate to one another creating an environment that nurtures a sense of belonging for students and their family members. Success requires participation and we must all feel welcome to play a part.

Aboriginal students must have the best chance possible to graduate with a sense of purpose, dignity and options. This is achieved through having high academic and social expectations for each Aboriginal learner throughout the student's K - 12 experiences.

We can engage each learner by having students participate in planning their learning. Involving students in the planning process provides educators with information they can include in the students' classroom experience. Students need to see their world and culture reflected in their learning. This is also a way of taking into account the unique needs of each learner. By having learners collaborate with educators to establish goals and pathways, connections between teachers and students are strengthened and our understanding of one another is deepened.

1. PREAMBLE

The Aboriginal communities of School District No. 59 (Peace River South) guide and approve the development and implementation of this Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. The vision and spirit of this Agreement is to improve the educational performance and sense of belonging of each Aboriginal learner within the School District's jurisdiction.

School District No. 59 (Peace River South) recognizes and honours the historical and critical importance original peoples place on understanding and valuing of their history and culture, recognizing that culture is not static, it continually changes. Further, they recognize the importance of Aboriginal people feeling pride in who they are, feeling accepted, valued and understood. Aboriginal learners and family members feel a need to see their world represented in classrooms throughout the district. Aboriginal learners are unique, as each differs in learning styles, beliefs, customs, traditions, political views, and cultural backgrounds. Being Aboriginal doesn't totally define the student.

School District No. 59 (Peace River South) supports the Aboriginal community's commitment to the achievement of its children and the desire to receive educational benefits to fulfill personal and professional goals. In addition, this Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement acknowledges and honours the vital role played by representatives of each school and agency who bring forward the interests and needs of Aboriginal students and families.

School District No. 59 (Peace River South) and the Aboriginal communities acknowledge the collective responsibility for the success of each Aboriginal learner. With the guidance from the Aboriginal Education Advisory Councils, School District No. 59 (Peace River South) will maintain a close working relationship with the Aboriginal community. Recommendations from the Council and from individual student information collected will result in a process whereby student success is measured and improved over the time frame of this Agreement.

In respect and honour of all Aboriginal peoples, we intend, with their participation, guidance and wisdom, to keep the success of each Aboriginal learner a priority.

The Councils will meet at least four times per year to discuss and to review this Agreement.

Definition: for the purposes of this Agreement the term "Aboriginal" includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

2. PURPOSES

The purposes of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement are:

- To improve the overall academic performance of each Aboriginal student.
- To ensure each Aboriginal student has the best chance possible to graduate with a sense of purpose, dignity and options.
- To affirm that each student feels respected, understood, accepted and valued.

3. PRINCIPLES

The performance areas selected for improvement are those where there is assurance that the data can be:

- Tracked with integrity and authenticity.
- Tracked over time.
- Used to guide the design and implementation of effective teaching strategies.
- Used to monitor the culture of school community and the impact on Aboriginal students.

4. GOALS

1. Increased Aboriginal students' sense of belonging.
2. Increased Aboriginal students' academic success through a focus on family involvement with schools.
3. Increased Aboriginal student engagement.

Goal 1 – Increased Aboriginal students' sense of belonging.

Rationale:

We believe that, if our students feel a sense of belonging in School District No. 59 (Peace River South) and that their historical and cultural backgrounds are valued, understood and respected, they will experience increased academic success. We believe that if students have opportunities to develop positive, meaningful relationships with school staff and feel confident to engage in their own educational paths, then our students will be more successful. We also believe that if Aboriginal students are exposed to healthy Aboriginal role models within the school system they will see a reflection of themselves in successful Aboriginal people.

Measurable Indicators:

- Satisfaction Survey results - Student and Parent results.
- Anecdotal results.
- School District profiles; the profiles provide live data from BCESIS and teacher input on attendance, course selection, course completion, number of enrolled courses, grades and reading levels. The profile also highlights individual targets and goals established for each student. It provides insight into 4 levels of risk for attendance, reading levels and behavior. This tool will also be used as our documentation of services to Aboriginal students. This indicator is used in all 3 goals.
- Number of Aboriginal role models used in schools.
- Cohort tracking of grade 4 students as they move through to grade 8. Indicators will focus on attendance, work habits and course results.

Baseline data will be collected in the first year and targets set annually for each indicator.

Goal 2 - Increased Aboriginal student academic success through a focus on family involvement with schools.

Rationale:

We believe that our students will experience increased academic success if their families feel a sense of belonging in School District No. 59 (Peace River South) and if they feel valued and respected. We believe that if families have opportunities to develop positive, meaningful relationships with schools and feel confident to engage in their child's education then our students will be more successful.

Measurable Indicators:

- Satisfaction Survey - Student and Parent results.
- Anecdotal results.
- School District profiles; cohort tracking of grade 4 students, as they move through to grade 8. Indicators will focus on attendance, work habits and course results.
- FSA results.

Baseline data will be collected in the first year and targets set annually for each indicator.

Goal 3 - To increase the level of Aboriginal student engagement.

- **Engagement is defined as: interesting, important and challenging.**

Rationale: We believe that creating opportunities for Aboriginal students to have choice and make informed decisions in their learning experiences, educational options and opportunities will increase academic success. We believe that if learning is linked to the outside world and involves opportunity for collaboration with staff and peers, and experiential in nature, students will be more engaged in their learning opportunities. We believe that embedding new pedagogy while involving parents, teachers and students in a collaborative team approach will increase academic achievement. We believe that engagement occurs when students find their learning environment to be interesting, challenging and important. The engaged student feels included in the classroom, drives his or her own learning process, and is able to make learning connections across national and international locations that relate to their own environments.

Measurable Indicators:

- Report cards; attendance, courses completed, work habits.
- School District profiles.
- Satisfaction Survey results.
- Participation in extra-curricular activities.

Baseline data will be collected in the first year and targets set annually for each indicator.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND AGREEMENT REVIEW

The School District No. 59 (Peace River South) Aboriginal Education Advisory Councils consist of the following seats:

Dawson Creek School Reps

Canalta Elementary
Dawson Creek Secondary
(Central Campus)
Crescent Park Elementary
Devereaux Elementary
Ecolé Frank Ross Elementary
McLeod Elementary
Parkland Elementary
Pouce Coupe Elementary
Rolla Traditional
Dawson Creek Secondary
(South Peace Campus)
Tate Creek Elementary
Tremblay Elementary

Community Members

Two positions held.

Elder

One position held.

Agency

Dawson Creek Native Housing Society

School District No. 59 (PRS) Reps

Kathy Sawchuk, Superintendent of Schools
Caron Jones, Vice Principal of Aboriginal Secondary Programs
Cammy-Jo Plummer, Head Teacher of Aboriginal Education
Wayne Ezeard, Board Trustee

Others

Peace River South Teachers Association

Chetwynd School Reps

Chetwynd Secondary
Don Titus Elementary
Little Prairie Elementary
Moberly Lake Elementary
Windrem Elementary

Agency

Moccasin Flats Métis Society
Tansi Friendship Centre
Saulteau First Nations
West Moberly First Nations

APPENDIX I - Strategies

- Infuse relevant local Aboriginal content into curriculum with specific attention to grades 4, 7, 9 and 12.
- Yearly, new staff orientation, including the Alaska Highway Consortium on Teacher Education students, in the purpose and content of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.
- Aboriginal Student Achievement Project.
- Provide positive role models throughout the year for special events, activities, guest speakers, elders, cultural performances, cultural demonstrations etc.
- Encourage and provide resources to schools to actively acknowledge dates important to Aboriginal people.
 - Nov 16 – Louis Riel Day
 - June 21 – National Aboriginal Day
- Develop a directory of local Aboriginal role models.
- Maintain a District leadership role specific to Aboriginal Education.
- Provide professional development training to staff.
- Increase “in service” training for all staff that focuses on the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and its goals.
- Review and revise Aboriginal support job descriptions to collaborate with the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.
- Infuse relevant historical content into curriculum: grades 4, 7, 9 and 12.
- Implement Grad and Grade Coaching strategies that involve positive parent input.
- Use of Restorative Practices as a means of participatory learning and decision making about positive behavior.
- Provide on-going training in Restorative Practices and Grad and Grade Coaching.
- Recognize successes of Aboriginal learners.
- Create opportunities for students to have choice, including the design of their learning experience.
- The learning involves opportunity for collaboration and peer learning.
- The learning will be active and experiential in nature and linked to the outside world.
- Embed new pedagogy to meet the needs of each Aboriginal learner.
- Develop leadership that is responsive, proactive and distributed.
- Develop a collaborative team approach that involves parents, teachers, and students.
- Assist Aboriginal students to make informed decisions regarding their educational options, pathways and opportunities.
- Grad and Grade Coaching.
- Restorative practices.
- Inquiry based project learning.
- Aboriginal Student Achievement Project.
- Curriculum development: grades 4, 7, 9, and 12.
- Focus on literacy achievement at the primary level.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Committee Members

Dawson Creek Aboriginal Education Advisory Council Members

Angela Healey (Chair)
Tammy Schock (Vice Chairperson)
Cindy Blayney
Isabelle Eagle-Friesen
Cindy McAllister
Tara Tom
Jocelyn El Namer
Diane Horseman
Paula Friesen
Diana Grunewald
Cindy Balmforth
Tammy Cooke

Chetwynd Aboriginal Education Advisory Council Members

Glenda Groves
Darcy Groves
Beatrice Thompson
Carly Lalonde
Laura Murfitt
Stephanie Coutorielle
Darlene Campbell
Annette Carter
Jerri Morine

School District No. 59 (Peace River South) Representatives

Kathy Sawchuk	Superintendent
Caron Jones	District Vice Principal of Aboriginal Secondary Programs
Cammy-Jo Plummer	Head Teacher of Aboriginal Education
Cody Norris	Social Worker
Wayne Ezeard	Board Trustee
Crystal Fordyce	Secretary
Karen Edwards	Peace River South Teachers Association Representative