

Indigenous Learners in British Columbia's Public Post-Secondary System

TRANSITIONS, ENROLMENTS, AND OUTCOMES

MINISTRY OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND FUTURE SKILLS

Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	2
CHAPTER 1 – Brief Demographic and System Overview.....	5
BC Population Demographics and the Impact on Public Post-Secondary Enrolment	5
Indigenous Self-Identification in the K-12 and Post-Secondary Systems	9
CHAPTER 2 – K-12 Completions and Public Post-Secondary Transitions.....	12
K-12 Certificates of Graduation	12
K-12 Public School Completions.....	13
Public Post-Secondary Transitions	14
CHAPTER 3 – Indigenous Learners in the British Columbia Public Post-Secondary System.....	23
Number of Indigenous Learners	23
Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs)	28
CHAPTER 4 – Characteristics of Indigenous Learners in Public Post Secondary in British Columbia	32
Indigenous Learner Characteristics.....	32
Indigenous Learners by Identity Group	35
Former Youth in Care.....	38
CHAPTER 5 – Credentials Awarded to Indigenous Learners.....	40
Number of Credentials Awarded	40
New Teacher Certifications.....	45
First Year Retention/Completion Rate.....	46
CHAPTER 6 – Student Outcomes Surveys	47
Education and Employment Outcomes	48
Student Outcomes Survey Results by Student Survey Group.....	49
CHAPTER 7 – New for this Issue and Future Directions.....	54
Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic.....	54
New Gender and Sex Data Standard.....	54
Indigenous Studies and Languages Programs.....	55
CONCLUSION.....	57

INTRODUCTION

About this Report

The 2025 Indigenous Learners Report compares the experiences and outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous domestic learners attending public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia (BC). This report is a snapshot of the BC public post-secondary system and serves as a resource for collaborative work between the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (the Ministry), the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), and Métis Nation BC (MNBC) to inform policies, programs, and initiatives that support reconciliation and the broader social, cultural and economic well-being of Indigenous peoples in BC.

Background and Context

This report is shaped by key documents and the Ministry's commitment to lasting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in BC. Key guiding documents include:

- *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*
- *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*
- *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and the DRIPA Action Plan*
- BCOHRC report: *Disaggregated demographic data collection in BC: The grandmother perspective* and its insights about distinctions-based data
- *Anti-Racism Data Act* and its standards and priorities, and
- *Distinctions-Based Approach Primer*
- *Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*

Many of the outcomes in this report reflect the Ministry's responsibilities under the [DRIPA Action Plan](#). The report aligns with Action 3.14, to “[a]dvance the collection and use of disaggregated demographic data, guided by a distinctions-based approach to Indigenous data sovereignty and self-determination [...]”.¹

The report reflects a distinctions-based approach, as guided by the Distinctions-Based Approach Primer, ensuring where feasible information distinct to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners is included to represent the unique post-secondary experiences and outcomes of each group.² Importantly, Inuit learners represent less than 2% of Indigenous learners in the public post-secondary system, and according to the 2021 Census, number fewer than 2,000 in BC. The small population size presents challenges in making meaningful comparisons with First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous populations, as it increases the risk of inaccurate conclusions. Accordingly, Inuit learners are by and large excluded from this analysis. In future reports, the authors will look for opportunities to expand their inclusion.

¹ *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan: 2022-2027*, 20.

² https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/distinctions_based_approach_primer.pdf

The findings in this report reflect long-standing systemic issues that Indigenous peoples face when pursuing post-secondary education such as colonialism, access to education, and socioeconomic factors. These systemic issues should be kept in mind when interpreting the data.

This report examines data up to the 2022/23 academic/fiscal year, as available, including data from during the COVID-19 pandemic and initial explorations on how the pandemic has impacted Indigenous peoples in the BC public post-secondary system.³ While the pandemic created widespread impacts on all students, numerous studies have shown that Indigenous peoples across Canada were disproportionately affected by COVID-19.⁴

Terminology

As guided by Principle 10 of the Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia’s Relationship with Indigenous Peoples, this report employs the term Indigenous as a collective term for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. The term Indigenous identity is used to distinguish between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, while the term Indigenous identity group is used to distinguish between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Data in this report was collected using the now retired Aboriginal Administrative Data Standard, in which learners self-identify as an Aboriginal person. Discussions are currently underway across government and with Indigenous partners on revising the data standard through the *Anti-Racism Data Act*.

A new Gender and Sex Data Standard was released province-wide by the government in February 2023 but was made available to public post-secondary institutions to adopt on a preliminary basis from June 2021. Gender classification was previously based on students identifying as male or female; and where gender information was not available, gender was categorised as ‘unknown’. Under the new data standard there is an expanded classification of gender to reflect the self-identification of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people, including non-binary. As this new standard has just recently been implemented, an updated demographic picture is in development. Reflecting the transition to this new data standard, information, tables, and graphs in this report display ‘Women’ and ‘Men’, replacing ‘female’ and ‘male’, and non-binary self-identification. While the current data presentation is limited in its ability to fully reflect the diversity of gender identities, it is shared with the intention of aligning with the evolving provincial standard. We recognize the importance of respectful, inclusive representation and are committed to continuously improving how gender data is reported. Our province is stronger because of our diversity, and work continues to advance equity throughout BC.⁵

³ See Statistics Canada (2024), “[Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on postsecondary education of First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit](#)”

⁴ For example, see: Amanda Bleakney et al. (2021), “Labour market impacts of COVID-19 on Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces: March 2020 to August 2021”; Tara Hahmann and Mohan B. Kumar (2022), “Unmet health care needs during the pandemic and resulting impacts among First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit”; Kelsang Yangzom and Huda Masoud (2022), “Indigenous workers receiving Canada Emergency Response Benefit payments in 2020”.

⁵ For more information see [Gender equity & 2SLGBTQIA+ resources - Province of British Columbia](#).

Acronyms

The following list describes acronyms used in this report.

- BCAGD British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma
- BC HEADset British Columbia Higher Education Accountability Dataset
- BCIT British Columbia Institute of Technology
- CAM Camosun College
- CAPU Capilano University
- CDW Central Data Warehouse
- CMTN Coast Mountain College
- COTR College of the Rockies
- CNC College of New Caledonia
- DRIPA Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act
- DOUG Douglas College
- ECU Emily Carr University of Art + Design
- FNEsc First Nations Education Steering Committee
- FNMPsi First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes
- FYIC Former Youth in Care
- FTEs Full-time Equivalents
- GPA Grade Point Average
- IEP Individual Education Plan
- IAHLA Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association
- JIBC Justice Institute of British Columbia
- KPU Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- LANG Langara College
- NIC North Island College
- NLC Northern Lights College
- NVIT Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
- OKAN Okanagan College
- PASBC Post-Secondary Application Service of British Columbia
- PSE Postsecondary education
- RRU Royal Roads University
- SEL Selkirk College
- SFU Simon Fraser University
- STP Student Transitions Project
- TRU Thompson Rivers University
- UBC University of British Columbia
- UFV University of the Fraser Valley
- UNBC University of Northern British Columbia
- UVIC University of Victoria
- VIU Vancouver Island University
- VCC Vancouver Community College

CHAPTER 1 – Brief Demographic and System Overview

Key Chapter Takeaways

- From 2016 to 2021, BC's Indigenous population grew by 7.3%.
- First Nations population grew by 4.4%, Métis by 9.5%, and Inuit by 6.5%.
- Indigenous population growth has slowed but the Indigenous population remains younger and continues to grow faster than the non-Indigenous, non-immigrant population.
- The more youthful Indigenous population documented in the 2021 Learners Report has resulted in a larger percentage of Indigenous learners in the public post-secondary system.
- On average, Indigenous learners enrol in post-secondary at an older age than non-Indigenous learners.
- More Indigenous learners attend post-secondary institutions in the Mainland/Southwest and Thompson Okanagan regions, than any other regions.
- In the 2022/23 academic year, 25,870 public post-secondary learners identified as Indigenous, making up 7.6% of the total domestic learner population.
- In the same year, there were 12,725 (49.2%) Indigenous learners that self-identified as First Nations, 5,430 (21.0%) as Métis, 400 (1.6%) as Inuit, and 8,215 (31.8%) as Indigenous only.

In BC, there are 25 public post-secondary institutions. These include four research-intensive universities, seven teaching-intensive universities, eleven colleges, and three provincial institutes across the province. BC's public post-secondary institutions award a variety of credentials upon completion of a program, ranging from certificates and diplomas to degree and graduate programs.

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) represents Indigenous controlled post-secondary and adult education institutes across BC, which serve a unique and critical role in the BC post-secondary system. Importantly, the *First Nations Mandated Post-Secondary Institutes (FNMPIS) Act, 2024*, acknowledges First Nations-mandated institutes as a key pillar of BC's post-secondary system and commits the Province to contribute ongoing operational funding and capacity funding for eligible institutes. FNMPISs play a vital role by providing First Nation learners with access to a safe and culturally relevant education rooted in their language and culture that supports successful experiences and outcomes. First Nations learner data is not collected from FNMPISs.

The Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills collects and reports on public post-secondary data to inform policy development, improve program delivery, and ensure student success. This includes, but is not limited to, data on the number of learners in the public post-secondary system, the number of credentials awarded, and employment outcomes of learners leaving the public post-secondary system.

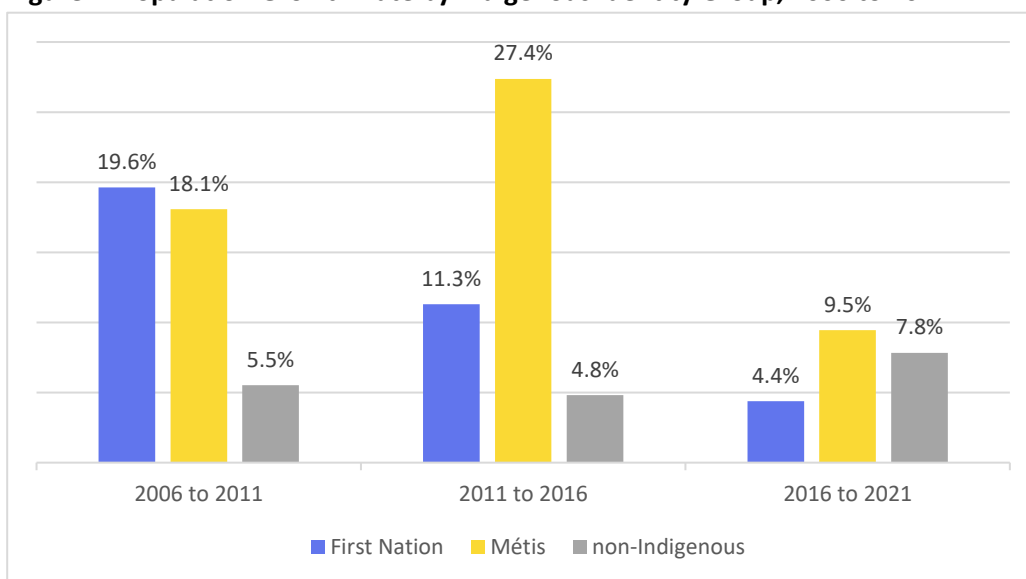
BC Population Demographics and the Impact on Public Post-Secondary Enrolment

With the release of the 2021 census, there is a relatively recent snapshot of population demographics in the province. Population shifts in age demographics and growth rates often influence post-secondary transitions and enrolment, offering insights to the future of Indigenous learners in BC's public post-secondary system.

Population Growth and Learner Mobility

From 2016 to 2021, the number of people in BC who self-identify as Indigenous grew by 7.3%, to 290,210.⁶ The self-reported First Nations population grew by 4.4% to 180,085, and the self-reported Métis population by 9.5% to 97,860.⁷ Despite consistent growth, the rate of growth of the Indigenous population has slowed. Figure 1 shows that the gap between the growth rate of the Indigenous populations and non-Indigenous population has leveled out.

Figure 1. Population Growth Rate by Indigenous Identity Group, 2006 to 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census; 2016 Census, 2011 Census, 2006 Census

There are two key reasons for this change. First, there has been a slight decrease in the birth rate of Indigenous peoples, with the share of the population aged four years and younger falling slightly since 2016. Second, there could be a slowing of what Statistics Canada calls “response mobility”, in which people who had previously not identified as Indigenous have become more likely to do so.⁸ So, while the growth rate of the Indigenous population has slowed, the population remains younger and continues to grow at a faster rate than the non-Indigenous, non-immigrant population in BC.

⁶ In the same period, the Inuit population by 6.5% to 1,720. Given the relatively smaller Inuit population, this report focuses on the First Nations and Métis populations.

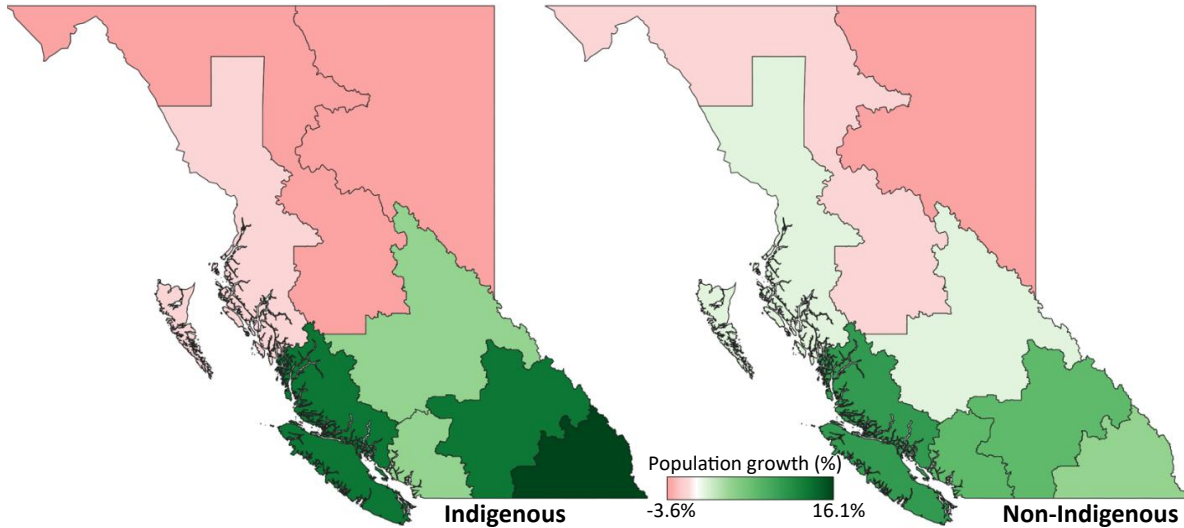
⁷ As of the 2021 Census, there were 5,980 individuals that identified as any two or all three of the following: First Nations, Métis and/or Inuit. There were also 4,560 individuals who did not identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, but who report having Registered or Treaty Indian status and/or Membership in a First Nation or Indian band. While both of these groups are included in self-identified Indigenous population, they are not included in the Indigenous identity group totals.

⁸ Source: “Indigenous population continues to grow and is much younger than the non-Indigenous population, although the pace of growth has slowed”. See here: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921a-eng.htm>

Growth Rates and Development Regions

Growth rates vary across the eight development regions in the province.⁹ Figure 2 shows that the highest growth rates of the Indigenous population in BC occurred in Kootenay, Thompson Okanagan, and Vancouver Island/Coast, while the northern regions experienced declines. The most significant change in growth patterns has occurred in the Mainland/Southwest, which had previously held the largest growth rate but has since fallen to slower growth rate of 4.3%. The non-Indigenous population also experienced growth, although more evenly distributed across regions.

Figure 2. Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Population Growth by Development Region, 2016 to 2021

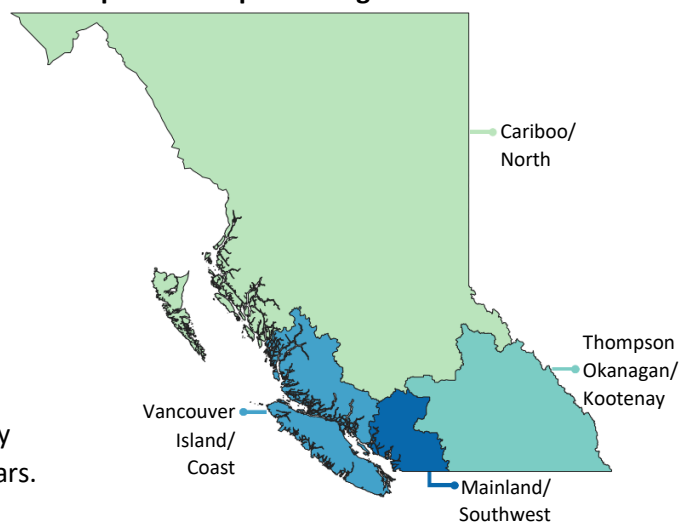


Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census and 2021 Census

Using the eight development regions in Figure 2 provides a useful visual representation of population growth across the province. However, the rest of this report uses the four grouped development regions, as this grouping aligns closer with the interaction of geography, institution locations, and learner mobility.

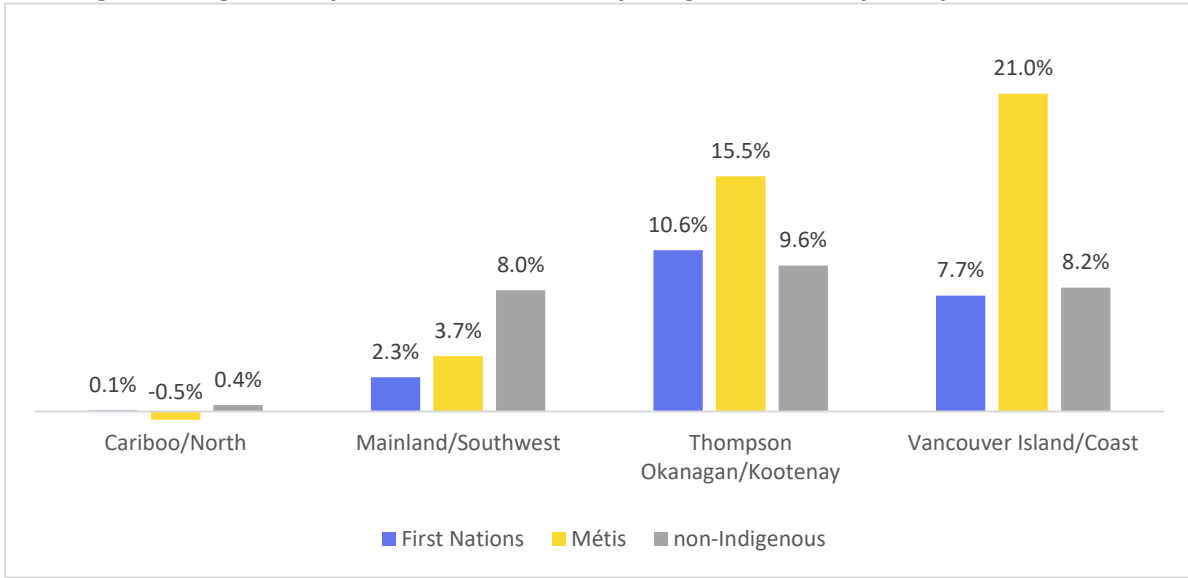
First Nations and Métis population growth rates also vary depending on the region. Figure 3 below shows that while the First Nations population experienced the highest growth rate in Vancouver Island/Coast, the Métis population experienced the highest growth rate in Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay. While these shifts in regional growth patterns have slightly changed the regional share of the Indigenous population, there has not been an associated change in the regional distribution of Indigenous learners. The Lower Mainland/Southwest and Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay regions have maintained a steady share of the Indigenous learners over the past five years.

Grouped Development Regions



⁹ Grouped development regions based on provincial administrative divisions found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries>.

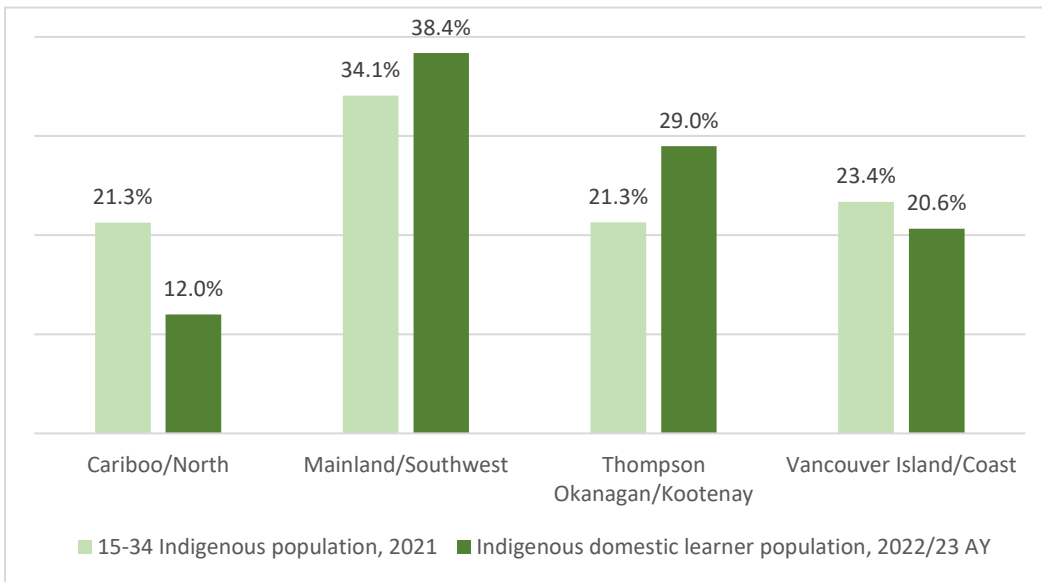
Figure 3. Regional Population Growth Rate by Indigenous Identity Group, 2016 to 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census; 2016 Census

Figure 4 shows that although 21.3% of the Indigenous population aged 15 to 34 years lives in the Cariboo/North, 12% of Indigenous learners are attending post-secondary in the Cariboo/North. In comparison, 21.3% of the Indigenous population aged 15 to 34 years old lives in the Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay region and 29% of Indigenous learners attend post-secondary in that region.¹⁰

Figure 4. Regional Distribution of 15-34 Aged Indigenous Population and Indigenous Learner Population



Regional distribution of the Indigenous population 15-34 aged from the 2021 Census, and regional distribution of the Indigenous learner population from the 2022/23 Academic Year.

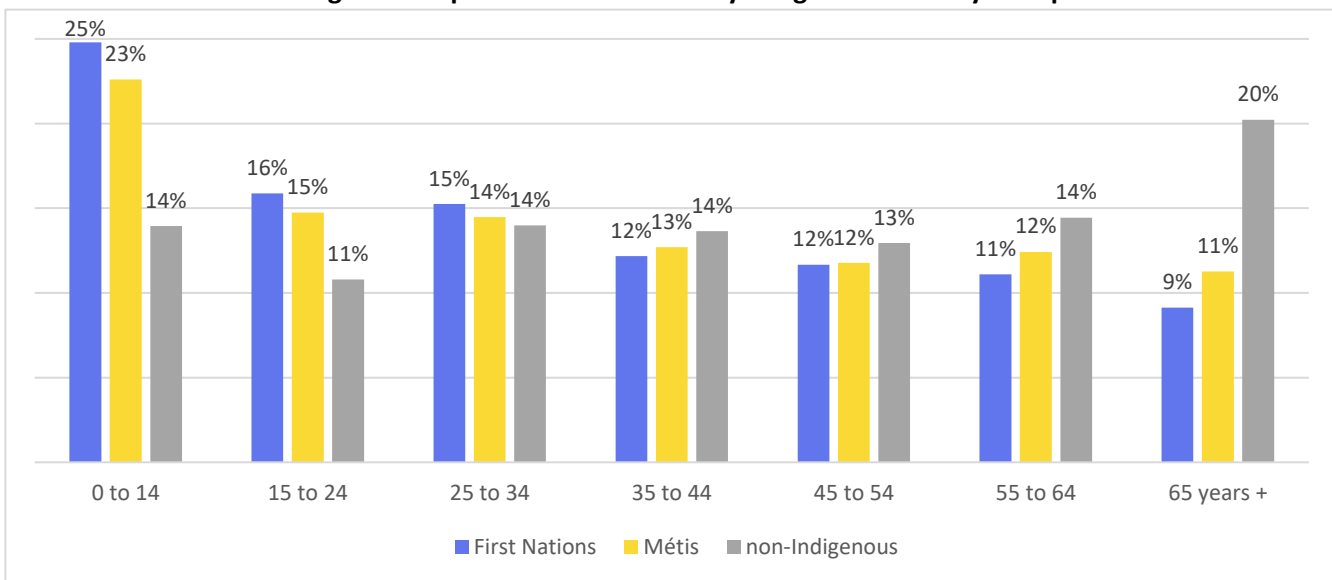
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census; Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

¹⁰ There are some limitations to tracking student mobility in post-secondary. Learners may be attending a regional campus location of a main institution, or they may be enrolled in online or distance education, both of which would allow them to attend post-secondary without relocating.

Age Demographics and Enrolment

The Indigenous population of BC remains younger than the non-Indigenous population. Within the Indigenous population, the First Nations population is slightly younger than the Métis population (see Figure 5). The more youthful Indigenous population was also represented in the 2021 Learners Report, and in that report, it was suggested that this youthfulness may eventually result in a larger percentage of Indigenous learners in the post-secondary system. This prediction appears to be happening, as Indigenous learners have been steadily increasing their share of domestic enrolment since the declines resulting from the pandemic in 2019/20 (see Figure 21 in Chapter 3). Moreover, the largest increase has come from those aged 30 to 39. Given that the proportion of Indigenous peoples aged under 25 has stayed largely consistent with the 2016 Census, and that Indigenous learners tend to enroll in postsecondary at an older age than non-Indigenous learners, we can likely expect this trend to continue.

Figure 5. Population Distribution by Indigenous Identity Group



Distribution of First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous populations as a percent of each group total from the 2021 Census.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

Indigenous Self-Identification in the K-12 and Post-Secondary Systems

While population demographics are obtained from census data, the Indigenous identity of learners is determined by self-identification at the kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) and/or post-secondary level. In 2007, the then Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (now the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills) worked with the then Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Partners Data Working Group, and the Post-Secondary Application Service of British Columbia (PASBC) to implement a system-wide standard for Indigenous data collection. The primary purpose of implementing a provincial data standard was to support improved administrative data across the province.

The Aboriginal Administrative Data Standard was implemented by the public post-secondary system in 2008. Although the data standard was retired in December 2021, data continues to be collected according to the standard to facilitate consistent reporting at every institution. The data standard uses two standardised questions to allow Indigenous learners to self-identify:¹¹

- 1. Do you identify as an Aboriginal person, that is, First Nations, Métis or Inuit?
- 2. If you identify yourself as an Aboriginal person, are you First Nations, Métis, or Inuit?

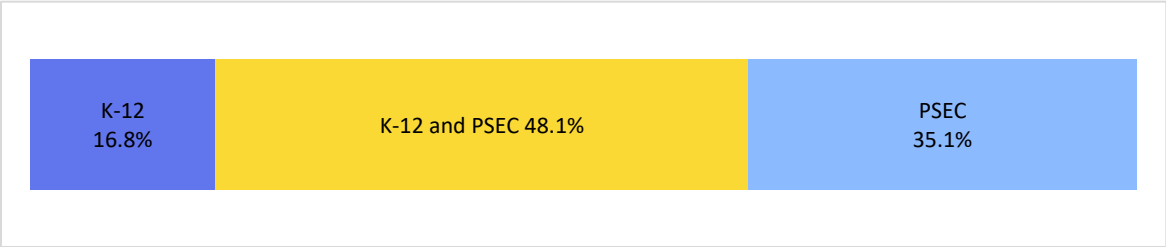
Institutions were given a year to implement the new data standard, and by 2009/10 the data were considered reliable for reporting. Unless otherwise stated, all data included in this report is based on this form of self-identification. This is helpful to see broader information for Indigenous learners and is crucial for improved distinctions-based analysis of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners.

The data used in this report indicates where an Indigenous learner was identified or self-identified: in the K-12 system, at a post-secondary institution, or both the K-12 system and at a post-secondary institution. Indigenous learners who self-identify at any time in the K-12 or post-secondary systems will be identified as Indigenous for all their post-secondary enrolment. Indigenous learners in the public post-secondary system may have been identified only in the K-12 system or self-identified at a public post-secondary institution, or in both the K-12 system and the public post-secondary system.

In the 2022/23 Academic Year, approximately 35.1% of Indigenous learners in public post-secondary self-identified at some point in their post-secondary education, and 48.1% of all Indigenous learners self-identified in both the K-12 system and in the public post-secondary system. Approximately 16.8% of Indigenous learners in public post-secondary were only identified as Indigenous by a parent or guardian in the K-12 system (see Figure 6).

The 2021 Learners Report noted a trend of an increasing proportion of Indigenous learners who self-identify at the post-secondary education and combined K-12 and post-secondary education, and a decrease in reporting identification in the K-12 system only. This trend continues, with the proportion of learners being identified as Indigenous solely at the K-12 level, falling by 1% from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

Figure 6. Indigenous Self-Identification in the K-12 and Public Post-Secondary Systems

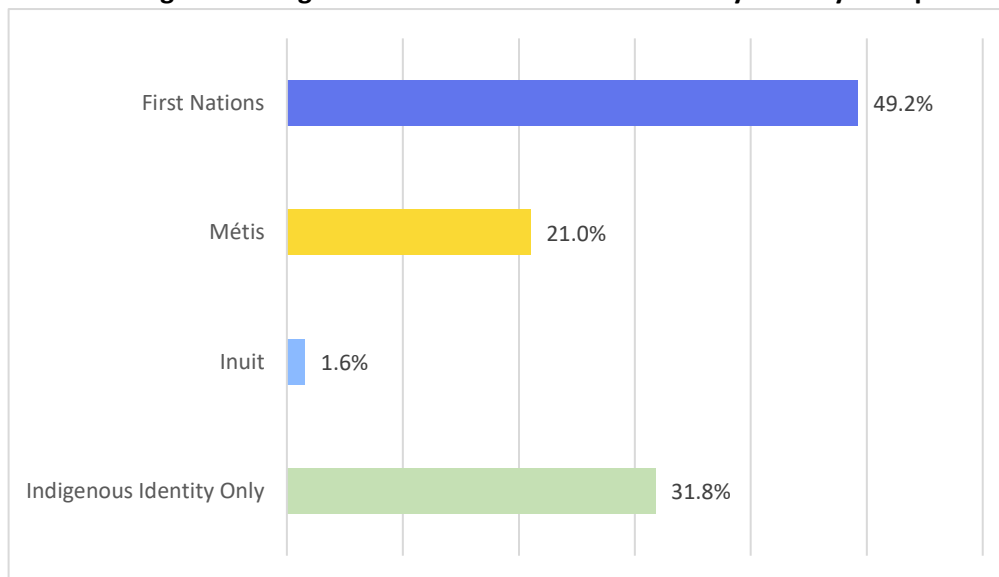


Rates of Indigenous self-identification according to place of identification for the 2022/23 Academic Year. Categories are mutually exclusive and include K-12, K-12 and PSEC, or PSEC. Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

¹¹ The Ministry of Education and Child Care data differs slightly in that it is based on self-identification of Aboriginal ancestry.

In the public post-secondary system, learners may self-identify as Indigenous in response to the standard questions developed through Aboriginal Administrative Data Standard, and they may also choose to self-identify as one or more of the following: First Nations, Métis or Inuit (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Indigenous Learner Self-Identification by Identity Group



Indigenous learners who self-identified as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit or who self-identified as Indigenous only in the 2022/23 Academic Year. Learners may self-identify with more than one Aboriginal Identity Group.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

In the 2022/23 Academic Year 25,870 Public Post-Secondary learners identified as Indigenous, comprising 7.6% of the total domestic learner population. Of the 25,870 learners who identified as Indigenous, 68.2% self-identified as at least one of the following: First Nations, Métis and Inuit.¹² For the remaining 31.8% of Indigenous learners there is no further information on self-identification with an Indigenous identity group, either because no response was provided to the question on self-identification with an Indigenous identity group, or because information on self-identification with an identity group was not collected (e.g. in the K-12 system).

¹² Since the Aboriginal Administrative Data Standard permits respondents to report self-identification with more than one identity group, the analysis in this report includes Indigenous learners with one or more Indigenous identity group reported, unless otherwise indicated. Indigenous learners may self-identify with an Indigenous identity group in post-secondary only. In instances where learners identified with more than one Indigenous identity group, distributions shown are out of the total responses given, not the total number of Indigenous learners. Learners who identify as more than one Indigenous identity group are included more than once.

CHAPTER 2 – K-12 Completions and Public Post-Secondary Transitions

Key Chapter Takeaways

- The BC Certificate of Graduation ("Dogwood Diploma") is awarded to students who complete provincial graduation requirements.
- The Adult Dogwood diploma is for learners aged 18+ to obtain their adult high school diploma.
- The Evergreen Certificate recognizes students with disabilities or diverse abilities who meet their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals.
- Despite making marginal gains, Indigenous students are less likely to complete K-12 and are therefore overrepresented in Adult Dogwood and Evergreen completions.
- Indigenous women are more likely to transition to post-secondary than men.
- Indigenous learners face delayed post-secondary transitions, often graduate without an academic GPA, and are more likely to transition to colleges or teaching-intensive universities.
- Indigenous transitions to college have decreased, while those to teaching and research-intensive universities have increased.

K-12 Certificates of Graduation

The BC Certificate of Graduation or "Dogwood Diploma" is awarded to students who successfully complete the provincial graduation requirements. An adult high school diploma is the British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD), is also known as the "Adult Dogwood." It is for adult learners (18 years of age and older) who want to take courses to complete high school and obtain their adult high school diploma.¹³

The Dogwood Diploma requires 80 credits of study to complete. The Adult Dogwood requires 20 credits of study and there are provincial assessments that are not mandatory for completion. Courses towards an Adult Dogwood Diploma can be taken at school district continuing education centres, or at a post-secondary institution.

The Evergreen Certificate (School Completion Certificate) was developed by the then Ministry of Education¹⁴ in the 2006/07 school year in response to concerns from parents and educators that students, many of them with disabilities or diverse learning abilities, needed to receive a certificate from the Ministry of Education, and needed more meaningful recognition of their achievements prior to leaving school. The Evergreen Certificate recognizes the accomplishments of students with disabilities or diverse abilities who have succeeded in meeting the goals of their Individual Education Plan (IEP).¹⁵ The Evergreen Certificate is not a graduation certificate like the Dogwood and is typically not sufficient for direct entry into most post-secondary programs.

¹³ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/graduation>

¹⁴ Now the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

¹⁵ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/school-completion-certificate-program>

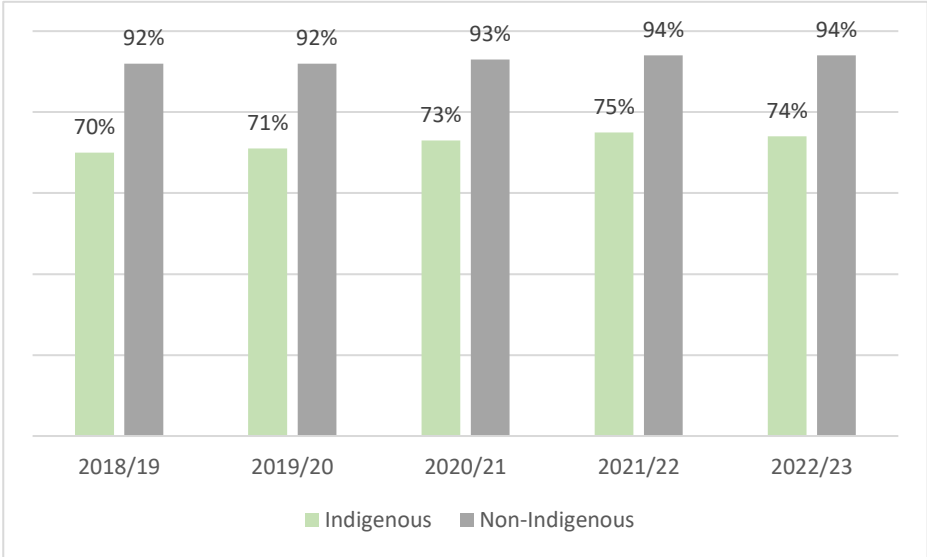
Indigenous students have a higher representation in Adult Dogwood Diploma and Evergreen Certificate completions and are less likely to receive a Dogwood Diploma.¹⁶ Further research is ongoing to better understand the disproportionate number of Indigenous students receiving an Adult Dogwood or Evergreen Certificates. Data on these outcomes will be included in future versions of this report.

K-12 Public School Completions

The six-year completion rate from K-12 public schools includes students who receive a Dogwood Diploma or an Adult Dogwood Diploma within six years of entering Grade 8. Students earning School Completion Certificates, also known Evergreen Certificates, are not included in the six-year high school completion rates.¹⁷

Overall, Indigenous students were less likely to complete K-12 within six-years of entering Grade 8 than non-Indigenous students. Despite a small drop from 2021/22 to 2022/23, the completion rate for Indigenous students has been increasing from year to year. The completion rate for non-Indigenous students, which is higher than for Indigenous students, has been rising too, albeit at a slightly slower rate. In 2018/19, 70% of Indigenous students completed K-12, and this increased to 74% of Indigenous students in 2022/23 (see Figure 8 below). Notably, the adult dogwood contribution to the six-year completion rate is 10% for Indigenous students, and 2% for non-Indigenous students in the 2022/23 school year. However, when accounting for adult Dogwood completions, the gap in overall completion between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is wider than Figure 8 alone suggests.

Figure 8. Six-Year Completion Rate from K-12 Public Schools by Indigenous Identity¹⁸



Completion rates by Aboriginal identity from 2018/19 to 2022/23 School Year
 Source: Ministry of Education and Child Care, *How Are We Doing? 2022/23*

¹⁶ For more information on educational outcomes of Indigenous K-12 learners in BC’s public school system, see the [Aboriginal Students: How Are We Doing 2023/24? Report](#), published by the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

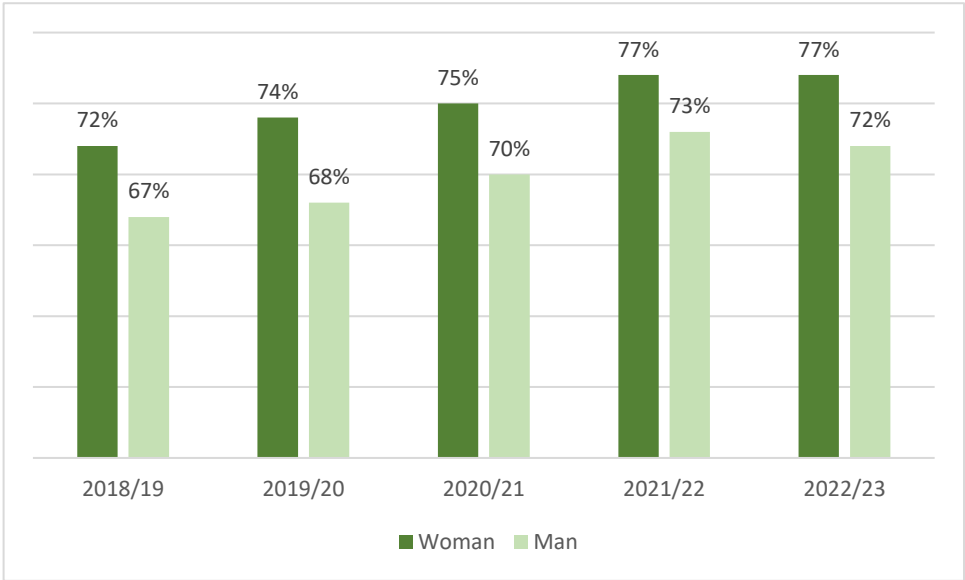
¹⁷ The School Completion (“Evergreen”) Certificate is intended to celebrate success in learning that is not recognised in a Certificate of Graduation (“Dogwood Diploma”).

¹⁸ Since its inception in 1999, the *How Are We Doing* report has included data from all students, regardless of residency status. In 2020, the Ministry was exploring a new way to report the Six-Year Completion Rate by taking out the non-resident students. Since then, all performance-related measures have been re-calculated with “BC Residents” only.

Among Indigenous students, women were more likely to achieve a Dogwood Diploma or an Adult Dogwood Diploma within six-years of entering Grade 8 than men. The percentage of Indigenous women who achieved their Dogwood or Adult Dogwood Diplomas increased from 72% in 2018/19 to 77% in 2022/23. Although Indigenous men had lower completion rates, the percentage of Indigenous men achieving their Dogwood or Adult Dogwood Diploma also increased, from 67% in 2018/19, to 72% in 2022/23 (see Figure 9 below).

The higher rate of completion among Indigenous women follows the same trend observed in non-Indigenous students, with a higher rate of completion among non-Indigenous women than non-Indigenous men. However, the gap between the completion rates for women and men is more pronounced in the Indigenous student population compared to the non-Indigenous student population.

Figure 9. Six-Year Completion Rate of Indigenous Students in K-12 Public Schools by Gender

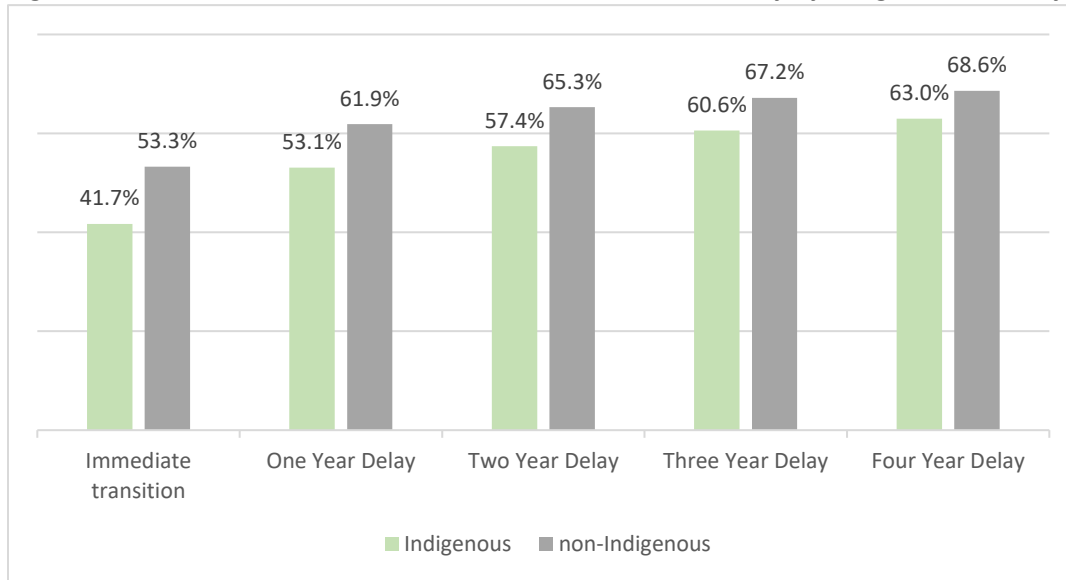


Indigenous completion rates by gender for 2018/19 to 2022/23 School Year.
 Source: Ministry of Education and Child Care, *How Are We Doing? 2022/23*

Public Post-Secondary Transitions

Indigenous learners who complete high school transition to post-secondary institutions at a lower rate than non-Indigenous learners. As illustrated in Figure 10 below, the difference is particularly acute when looking at rates of immediate entry to post-secondary education from high school. When looking at the cumulative transition rate over five years, the difference remains but decreases over time.

Figure 10. Cumulative Transition Rates to Public Post-Secondary by Indigenous Identity



2017/18 grade 12 high school graduates cumulative transition rates by Indigenous identity.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

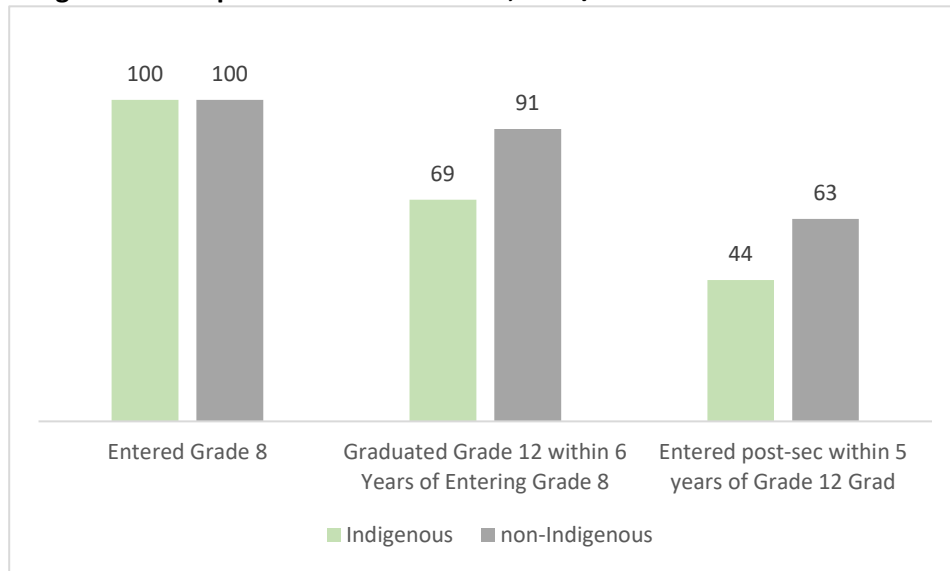
For 2017/18 Indigenous grade 12 graduates, 41.7% transitioned immediately to post-secondary, compared to 53.3% of non-Indigenous grade 12 graduates. By 2022/23, 63.0% of Indigenous learners who graduated in 2017/18 had entered post-secondary compared to 68.6% of non-Indigenous learners. For Indigenous learners, this rate is on par with the 2021 Learners Report, while for non-Indigenous learners, these numbers are slightly lower. The transition rates include only learners who completed secondary school with a Dogwood Diploma and who enrolled at a BC public post-secondary institution. This will include learners who enrolled at a public post-secondary institution to complete upgrading courses. These numbers do not include students who completed secondary school with a Dogwood Diploma and then enrolled in a private post-secondary institution in BC, or any post-secondary institution out-of-province. According to Finnie et al. (2023), only a small percentage of Indigenous learners attend post-secondary out of province, and patterns of access to post-secondary are similar for in-province and out-of-province Indigenous learners. Regardless, a small number of learners who do not transition, according to provincial data, may, in fact, be transitioning to an out-of-province institution.¹⁹

Figure 11 below shows the cumulative loss of Indigenous learners in the K-12 education system prior to enrolment in a post-secondary institution compared with non-Indigenous learners; it is based on an inference of a cohort of 100 Indigenous learners and 100 non-Indigenous learners who enter grade 8 (note that any attrition that occurs prior to grade 8 is not accounted for in this figure). Of 100 Indigenous learners who entered grade 8, only 69 graduated from grade 12 within six years, compared to 91 non-Indigenous learners entering grade 8. Furthermore, only 44 of the 100 Indigenous learners transitioned from grade 12 to the public post-secondary system within five years of graduating, compared to 63 non-Indigenous learners.²⁰

¹⁹ Ross Finnie, Ashley Pullman, and Michael Dubois, *Indigenous Students' Access to Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia: Evidence from BC PEN Linked Data* (SRDC, 2023), 8, 35-36. Including out-of-province transitions may raise Indigenous and non-Indigenous transition rates slightly but would not address the transition rate gap.

²⁰ Figures are time adjusted based on when students have graduated.

Figure 11. Completions and Transitions, 2017/18 Grade 12 Graduate Cohort



Rate of grade 8 students who graduated from grade 12 in 2017/18 and transitioned to BC public post-secondary by Indigenous identity

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Transition Rates by Region

Regional transitions of learners from their high school college region to their post-secondary region can offer some insight on the mobility of learners and the rate learners relocate to another region to attend post-secondary.

Table 1 below illustrates where Indigenous high school graduates from the 2016/17 cohort transitioned to for public post-secondary after completing high school. The majority of Indigenous high school graduates who transitioned to public post-secondary remained in the same region where they completed high school (transition rate highlighted in blue). This trend is the same for non-Indigenous graduates transitioning to public post-secondary institutions. However, graduates from the Cariboo/North are more likely to transition to public post-secondary institutions in another region, and this is more pronounced with Indigenous learners who delay entry to post-secondary education and transition to public post-secondary institutions outside the Cariboo/North. Graduates from the Cariboo/North are more likely to transition to a post-secondary in their K-12 region if they transition immediately, suggesting that graduates from the Cariboo/North are relocating to other regions if they delay their transition to post-secondary.

Table 1. Regional Transition Rates of Indigenous High School Graduates, 2016/17 Grade 12 Graduates

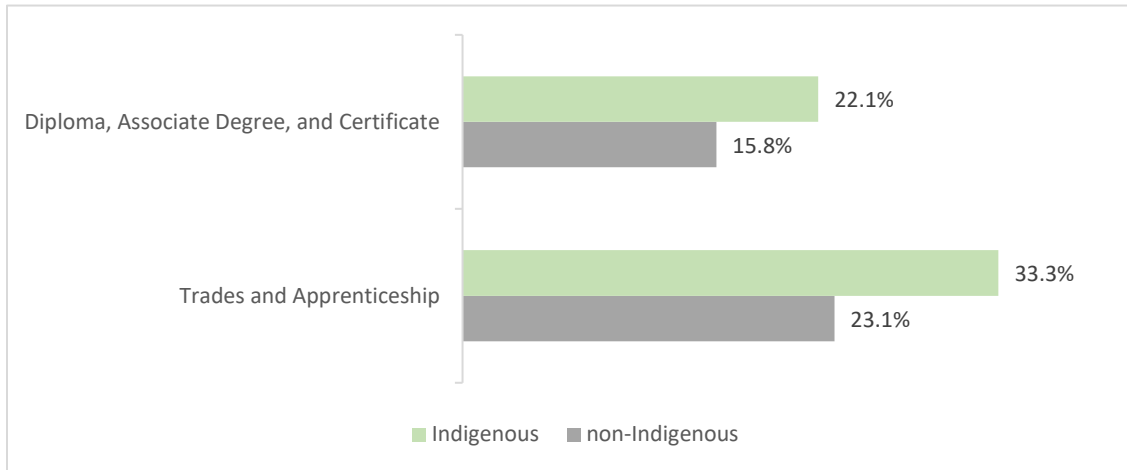
Entry Status	Hight School Region	Total Transition Rate	Cariboo/ North	Mainland/ Southwest	Thompson Okanagan/ Kootenay	Vancouver Island/ Coast
Immediate Transition	Cariboo/North	38.8%	75.2%	6.9%	10.2%	7.7%
	Mainland/Southwest	37.9%	0.8%	88.1%	6.3%	4.8%
	Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay	43.4%	1.6%	7.7%	84.7%	6.1%
	Vancouver Island/Coast	43.3%	0.0%	6.6%	4.4%	89.0%
1 Year Delay	Cariboo/North	11.2%	71.8%	7.0%	16.9%	4.2%
	Mainland/Southwest	10.4%	0.0%	87.9%	9.8%	2.3%
	Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay	10.6%	1.8%	11.9%	80.7%	5.5%
	Vancouver Island/Coast	11.7%	1.4%	8.1%	1.4%	89.2%
2 Year Delay	Cariboo/North	5.8%	67.6%	21.6%	8.1%	2.7%
	Mainland/Southwest	4.4%	0.0%	87.5%	8.9%	3.6%
	Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay	6.1%	3.2%	21.0%	72.6%	3.2%
	Vancouver Island/Coast	5.4%	0.0%	11.8%	5.9%	82.4%
3 to 5 Year Delay	Cariboo/North	6.2%	51.3%	23.1%	7.7%	17.9%
	Mainland/Southwest	7.8%	4.1%	82.7%	4.1%	9.2%
	Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay	6.8%	2.9%	22.9%	67.1%	7.1%
	Vancouver Island/Coast	7.9%	2.0%	16.0%	6.0%	76.0%
Total Immediate or Delayed Transition	Cariboo/North	62.0%	71.5%	9.9%	10.9%	7.6%
	Mainland/Southwest	60.5%	1.0%	87.3%	6.8%	4.8%
	Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay	66.9%	1.9%	11.1%	81.2%	5.8%
	Vancouver Island/Coast	68.4%	0.5%	8.4%	4.2%	87.0%

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

While exploring the learning path of a graduate cohort is not entirely representative of a learner population, it can highlight patterns of transitions and learner mobility. Indigenous learners may not be transitioning to other regions solely to attend post-secondary institutions; regional transition matrices do not account for transitions to regional campus locations or learners taking online learning. However, despite the limitations in the data, regional transitions can highlight instances where there is a higher likelihood of student mobility to attend a post-secondary institution.

The higher mobility of Indigenous learners observed in regional transitions, as noted in the previous table, is supported by data obtained from BC Student Outcomes surveys. Former diploma, associate degree, and certificate students and apprenticeship and trades students were asked if they had relocated from their home community to attend a post-secondary institution. Below, Figure 12 shows that a higher percentage of Indigenous learners responded that they had relocated to attend post-secondary compared to non-Indigenous learners, with the gap being slightly larger for apprenticeship and trades respondents than diploma, associate degree and certificate respondents.

Figure 12. Rate of Relocation from Home Community by Indigenous Identity, 2021 to 2023



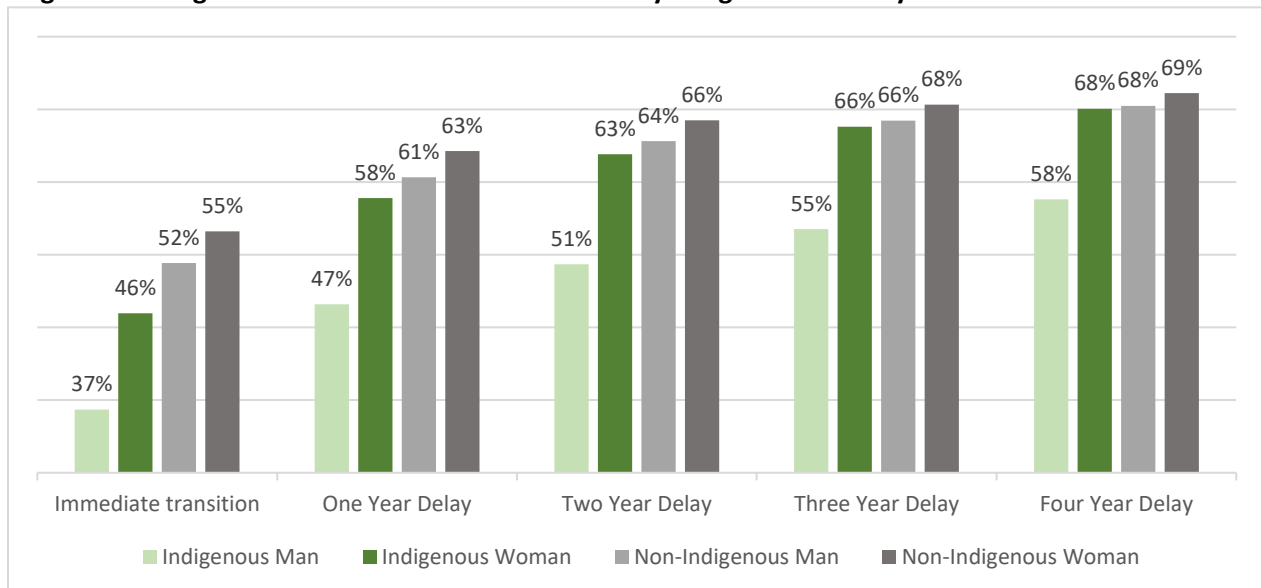
Rate of former learners by survey type for the years 2021, 2022, and 2023, that responded “yes” to the question, “Did you relocate from your home community to attend the [Name of program] program at [Name of institution]?”
 Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

Transition Rates by Gender

Compared to Indigenous men, Indigenous women are more likely to transition to post-secondary, both immediately and in the years following the completion of high school. Figure 13 below shows that within five years of completing high school, Indigenous women, non-Indigenous women, and non-Indigenous men all reach similar cumulative transition rates to post-secondary, while Indigenous men experience lower cumulative transition rates. That said, Indigenous men do show an increase, from 37% transitioning immediately, to 58% cumulatively transitioning within five years of graduation.

Additionally, for all learners except for Indigenous women, the cumulative transition rate is lower than reported in the 2021 Learners Report (among Indigenous learners, 66% and 60% for women and men respectively, and 72% and 70% for non-Indigenous learners).

Figure 13. Indigenous Cumulative Transition Rates by Indigenous Identity and Gender



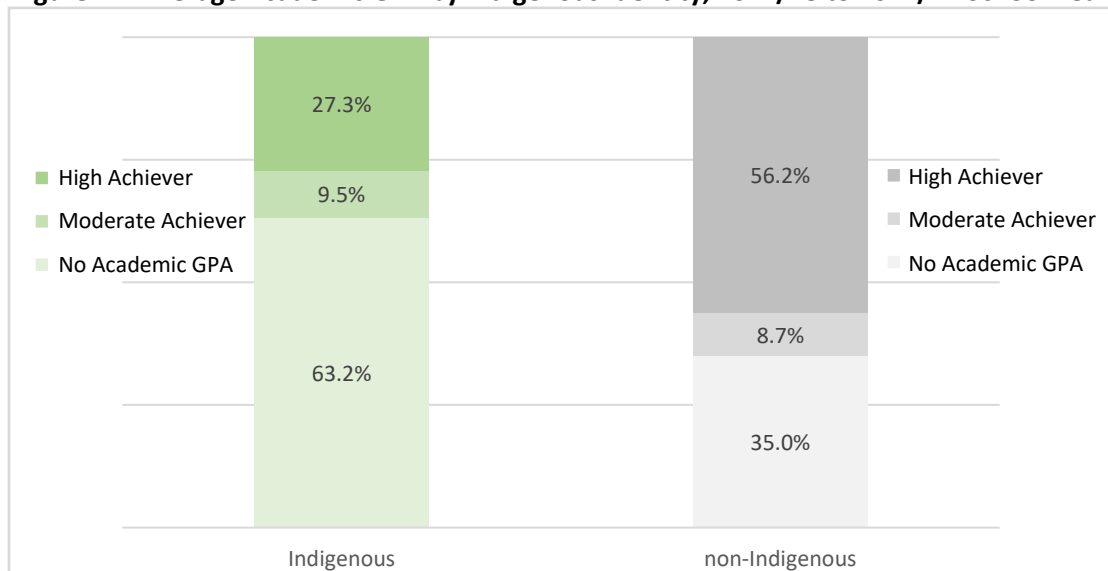
Indigenous 2017/18 grade 12 high school graduates cumulative transition rates to public post-secondary by gender and Indigenous identity
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Academic Grade Point Average (GPA)

Institutions accept students by considering several variables, one of which can be academic grade point average (GPA) received in grade 12. Acceptance based on GPA differs by institution type and program of study; research-intensive universities are more likely to rely on GPA as a factor of acceptance. Under the current curriculum, an academic GPA is derived by taking the average GPA of courses taken to satisfy Language Arts 12 requirements and three of the learner's best other grade 12 academic courses. If a student does not have three grade 12 academic courses, then an academic GPA cannot be calculated.

Figure 14 below shows that Indigenous learners are more likely to graduate high school without an academic GPA and tend to graduate with lower rates of high achievers (above 75% GPA). For the 2017/18 to 2021/22 grade 12 graduating cohorts, an average of 63.2% of Indigenous learners graduated without an academic GPA, compared to just 35.0% for non-Indigenous learners. In the same cohorts, an average of 27.3% of Indigenous grade 12 graduates achieved academic GPAs above 75%, compared to 56.2% of non-Indigenous learners.

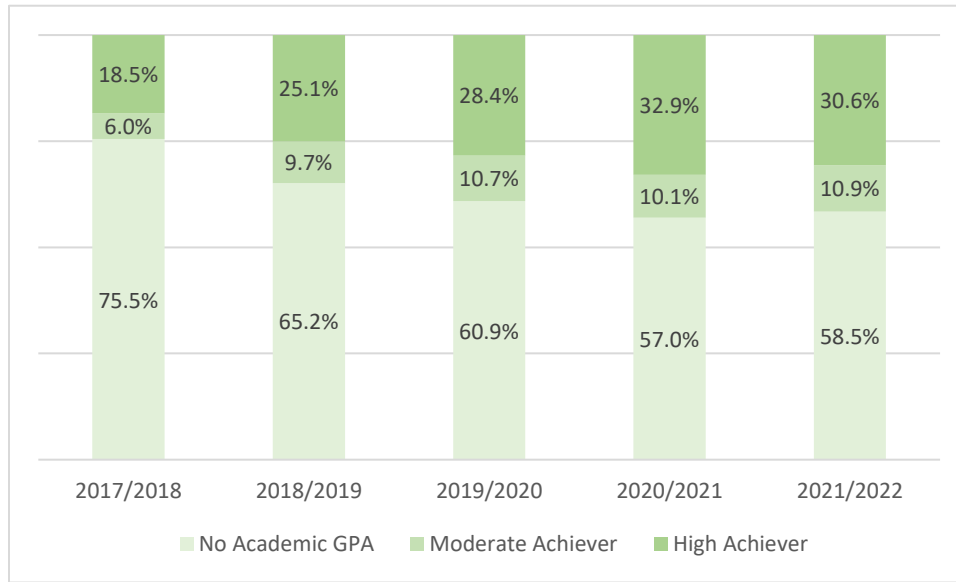
Figure 14. Average Academic GPA by Indigenous Identity, 2017/18 to 2021/22 School Year



2017/18 to 2021/22 high school graduates' average academic GPA by Indigenous identity
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

That said, Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners have both decreased their share of graduates without an Academic GPA, while also increasing their share of high achieving graduates. While the rate of high achieving Indigenous learners slightly dropped from 2020/21 to 2021/22, Indigenous learners have generally improved their achievement outcomes over the past five years (see Figure 15 below).

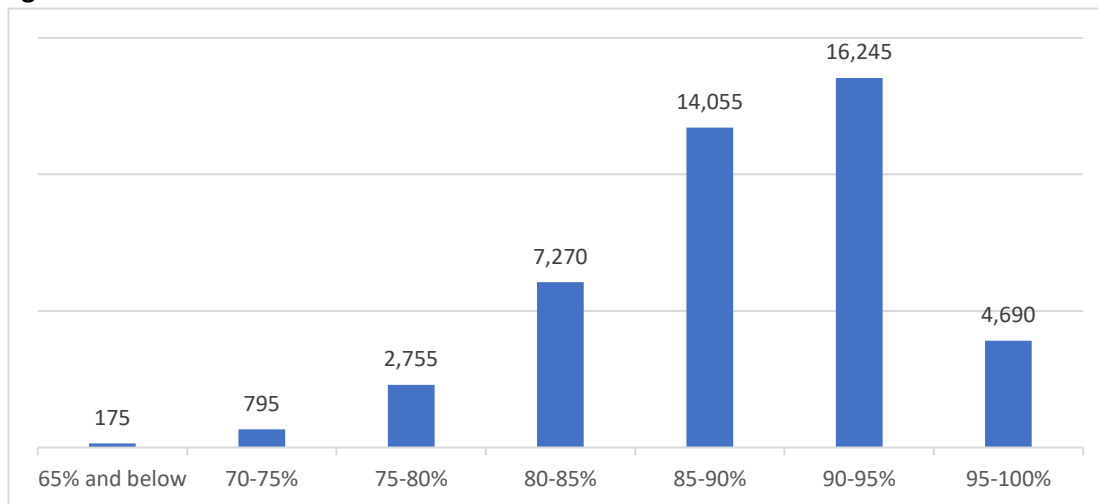
Figure 15. Proportion of Indigenous Learners by Achievement Group and Year of Grade 12 Graduation



Indigenous 2017/18 to 2021/22 high school graduates' academic GPA by year of graduation
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

From 2010 to 2018, the average minimum GPA for admission to research-intensive universities was 76%.²¹ However, only 8% of all domestic K-12 graduates that were admitted to BC research-intensive universities had academic GPAs below 80% making entrance far more competitive for those closer to the minimum requirements (see Figure 16 below).

Figure 16. Academic GPA of Domestic Graduates Admitted to Research-Intensive Universities



Academic GPA of Domestic Graduates Admitted to Research-Intensive Universities, 5-year average from 2017/18 to 2021/22
 Grade 12 Graduate Cohorts
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

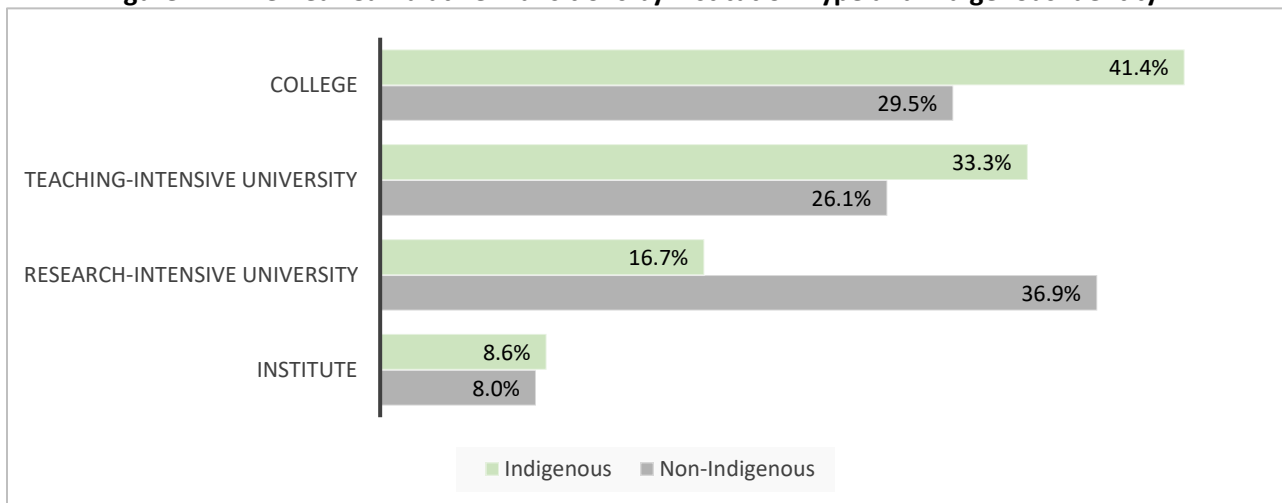
²¹ See British Columbia Higher Education Accountability Dataset (BC HEADset). Data figure uses 2010 to 2018 because, as of 2019, UBC adopted more holistic system of admissions, and accordingly no longer provide admissions data to BC HEADset. Given that UBC comprises about 52% of all research-intensive enrollments, data after 2018 has been excluded.

This suggests that while some Indigenous learners would meet the minimum requirements for admittance to a research-intensive university, they would not have a competitive enough GPA to be admitted. It should also be noted that there is significant variation in GPAs required for admission by individual institutions and program areas, ranging from GPAs in the mid-60s to mid-80s. The average minimum GPA at research-intensive universities has remained relatively consistent over time. Teaching-intensive universities, colleges and institutes are less reliant on GPA for admissions. However, beginning in 2019, UBC adopted a more holistic system of admissions, and is now less reliant on GPA as well.

Transition Rates by Institution Type

Indigenous learners are more likely to transition to colleges and teaching-intensive universities, and less likely to transition to research-intensive universities compared to non-Indigenous learners.²² For the 2017/18 grade 12 graduate cohort that transitioned to a post-secondary program, over 41% of Indigenous learners transitioned to colleges compared to 30% of non-Indigenous learners, and over 33% of Indigenous learners transitioned to teaching-intensive universities, compared to 26% for non-Indigenous learners (see Figure 17 below).

Figure 17. Five-Year Cumulative Transitions by Institution Type and Indigenous Identity



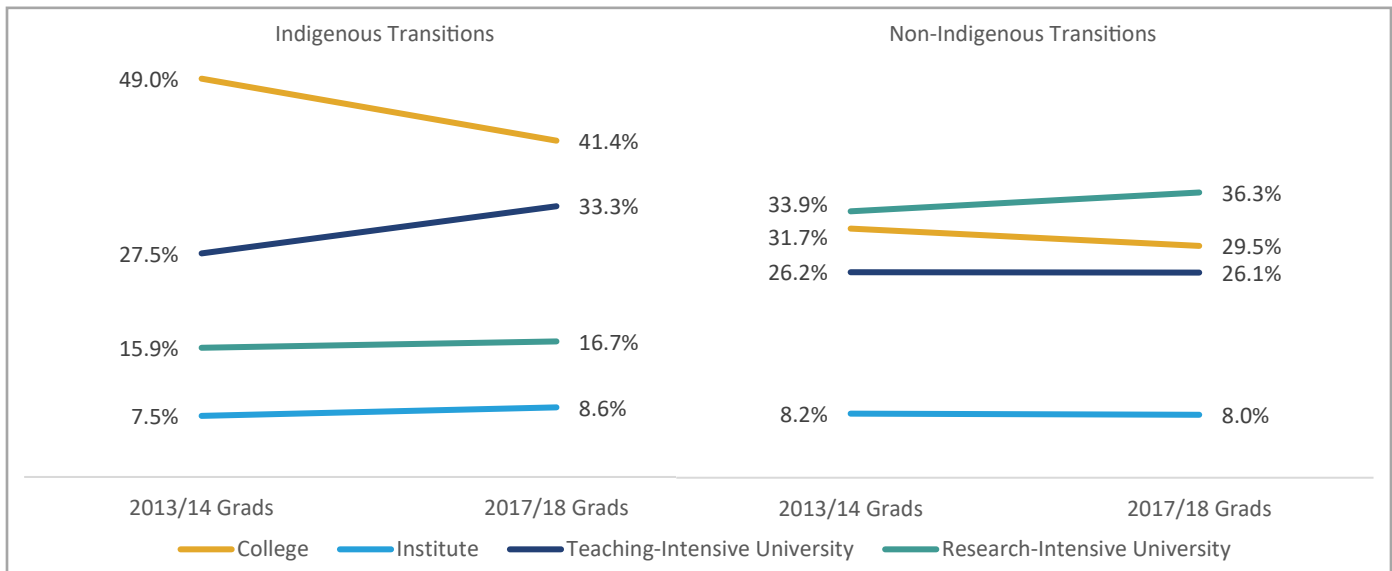
Five-Year Cumulative Transitions by Institution Type and Indigenous Identity, 2017/18 Grade 12 Graduate Cohort Entering Postsecondary from 2018/19 to 2022/23 Academic Years

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

²² Teaching-intensive universities, colleges, and institutes offer Adult Basic Education programs, and as such, enrolment in these programs are included in the transition rates by Institution Type as shown in Figure 17.

These trends have changed compared to the 2013/14 grade 12 graduate cohort documented in the 2021 Learners Report. Figure 18 compares the five-year cumulative transition rate by institution type from the 2013/14 grade 12 graduate cohort to the 2017/18 grade 12 graduate cohort. Compared to the previous report, Indigenous learners have seen a significant reduction in transitions to college, and a concurrent increase in transitions to teaching-intensive universities. Indigenous transitions to research-intensive universities and institutes have also increased, albeit less significantly. While these patterns are in line with changes to transition trends for non-Indigenous students, Indigenous students have had more significant changes, particularly around transitions to college and teaching-intensive universities.

Figure 18. Five-Year Cumulative Transitions by Indigenous Identity and Institution Type, 2013/14 and 2017/18 Graduates



Percent of Indigenous and non-Indigenous 2013/14 high school graduates and 2017/18 high school graduates, by institution type transitioning to public-postsecondary within five years of completing high school.
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

CHAPTER 3 – Indigenous Learners in the British Columbia Public Post-Secondary System

Key Chapter Takeaways

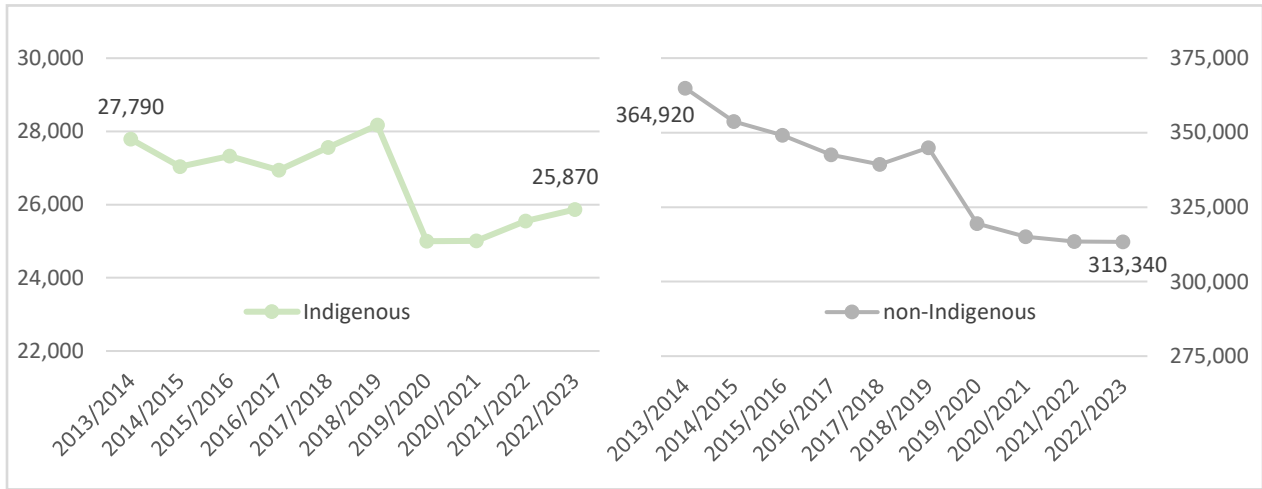
- Since 2013/14, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learner numbers in BC’s public post-secondary system have declined.
- In the last three years, Indigenous learner numbers and FTEs have increased, while non-Indigenous numbers and FTEs have decreased, indicating a stronger recovery for Indigenous learners post-COVID.
- Indigenous learners are more likely to attend colleges and teaching-intensive universities, even as their numbers at colleges decrease and at research-intensive universities rise.
- Indigenous enrolment in Arts and Sciences, Health, and Social Services has grown since 2009/10.
- Indigenous learners continue to be more likely to enroll in Developmental and Trades programs, and less likely in Business and Management, and Engineering and Applied Sciences.
- Since 2013/14, First Nations learner numbers have decreased by 7.5%, while Métis and Inuit numbers grew by 30% and 22.3%.
- First Nations learners continue to comprise the largest proportion of Indigenous learners.
- While the largest proportion of all domestic learners and FTEs are in the Mainland/Southwest, Indigenous learner totals and FTEs are more evenly spread across the province.

Number of Indigenous Learners²³

The total number of domestic learners in the BC public post-secondary system has decreased by over 13% since 2013/14, from 392,710 learners in 2013/14 to 339,210 learners in 2022/23. Much of this is driven by a decrease in non-Indigenous learners. In contrast, the number of Indigenous learners has declined less steeply, and has been steadily increasing over the last four academic years (see Figure 19).

²³ The number of individual students registered in at least one course in a given academic year.

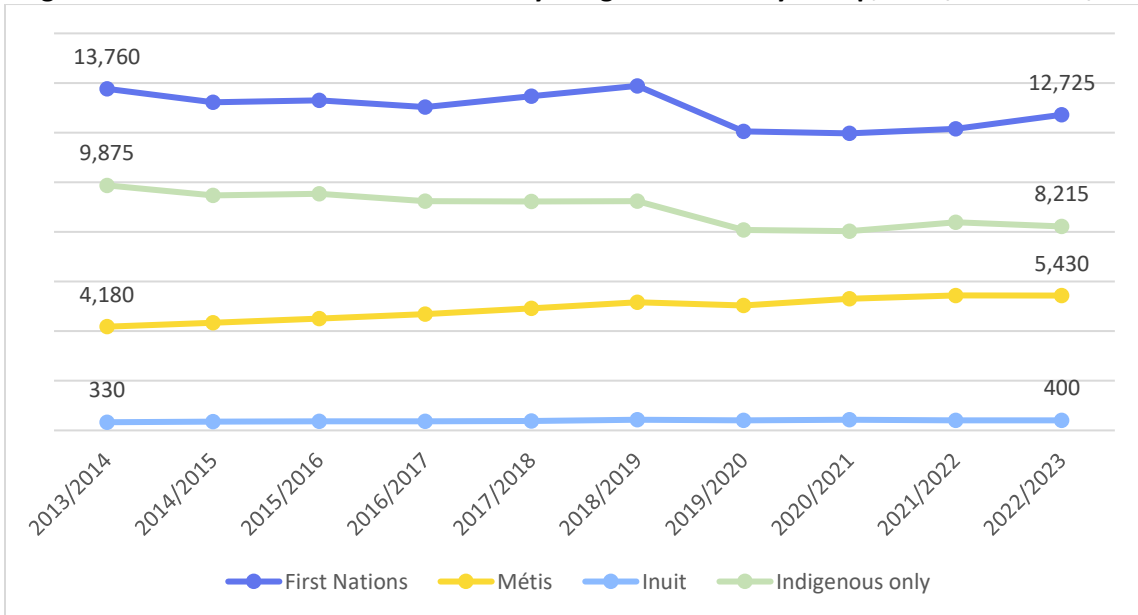
Figure 19. Number of Domestic Learners by Indigenous Identity, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Total number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous domestic learners from the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Academic Years
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

First Nations and Métis learners have had different levels of growth since 2013/14. First Nations learners represent the largest proportion of Indigenous learners, but have seen their learner population decrease by 7.5% in the last ten years. In the same period, the Métis learner population has grown by 30.0%, and the Inuit learner population has grown by 22.3% (See Figure 20 below).

Figure 20. Number of Domestic Learners by Indigenous Identity Group, 2013/14 to 2022/23

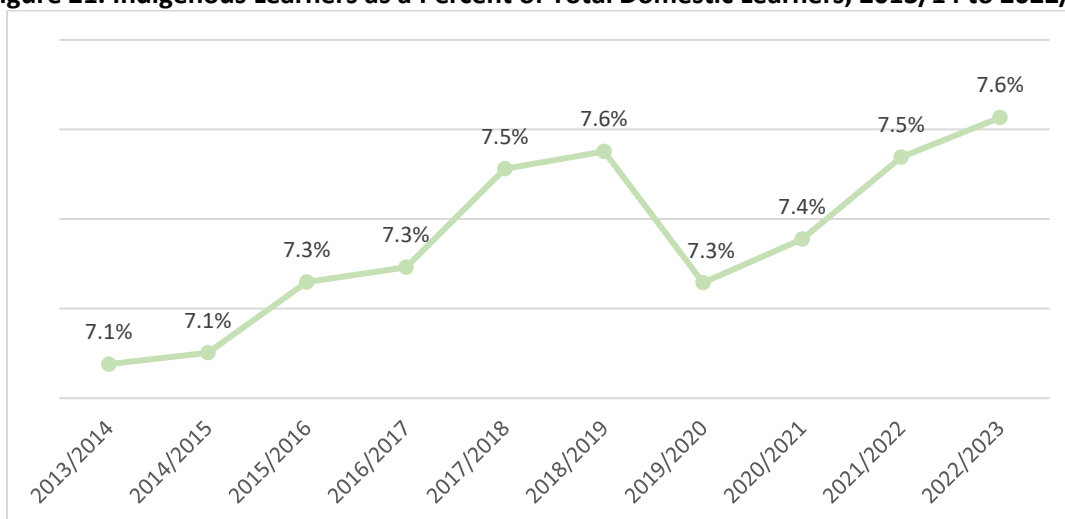


Total number of domestic learners by Indigenous identity group from the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Academic Years
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Compared to First Nations people, Métis people have a higher rate of response mobility, which refers to the rate in which people provide different responses over time to census questions about Indigenous identity.²⁴ In other words, there are more people that moved from identifying as non-Indigenous in the 2011 Census, to Métis in the 2016 Census, than did move from identifying as non-Indigenous in the 2011 Census, to First Nations in the 2016 Census.²⁵ Given the higher rate of response mobility amongst Métis people, and that since 2013/14 the number of learners who identified as Indigenous only declined by 16.8%, it is likely much of the growth of the Métis learner population can be attributed to increasing trends in self-identification.

The number of Indigenous learners as a percentage of total number of learners grew, from 7.1% in 2013/14 to 7.6% in 2022/23, although there has been both growth and decline within that ten-year period (see Figure 21 below).

Figure 21. Indigenous Learners as a Percent of Total Domestic Learners, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Number of Indigenous learners as a percent of total domestic learners from the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Academic Year
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

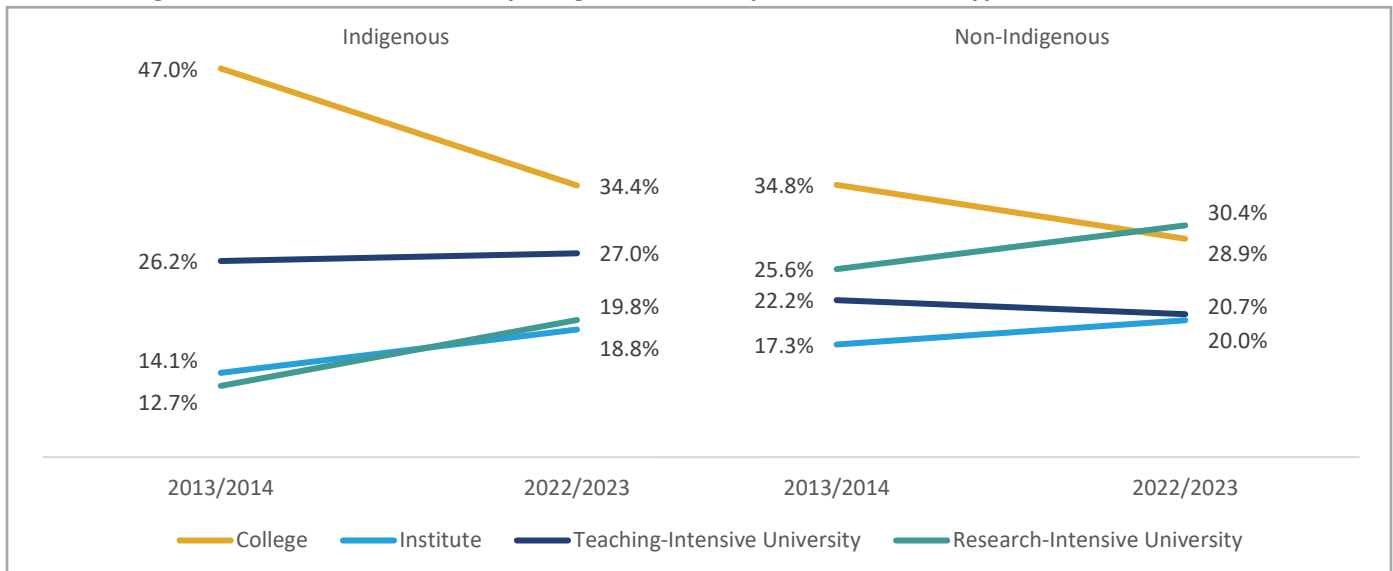
Indigenous Learners by Institution Type

Indigenous learners are more likely to attend colleges and teaching-intensive universities. However, the proportion of Indigenous learners attending colleges has decreased from 47% in 2013/14 to 34.4% in 2022/23 (see Figure 22). During this time, the proportion of Indigenous learners attending institutes, teaching-intensive universities and research-intensive universities has increased, the latter from 12.7% to 19.8% over the same period. For non-Indigenous learners, there has also been a drop in attending colleges and a rise in attending research-intensive universities over the same ten-year period, although the changes to college attendance have been less pronounced.

²⁴ See [Response mobility and the growth of the Aboriginal identity population, 2006-2011 and 2011-2016](#)

²⁵ Research is not available to compare response mobility from 2016 Census to 2021 Census.

Figure 22. Domestic Learners by Indigenous Identity and Institution Type, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Distribution of Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners by institution type for the 2013/14 and 2022/23 Academic Years.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

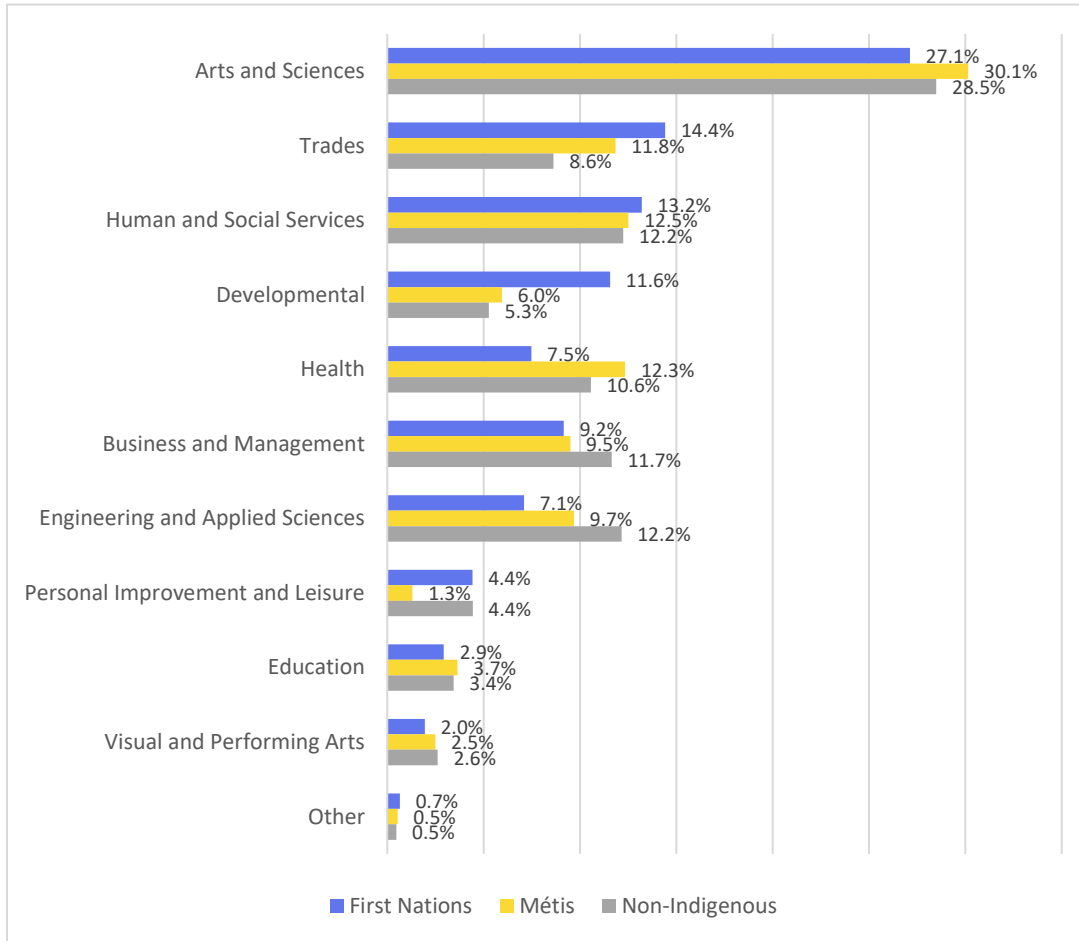
Indigenous Learners by Program Area²⁶

Indigenous learners tend to enroll at different institution types, and in different program areas than non-Indigenous learners. While the following data is for the 2022/23 academic year, the proportion of learners in the various program areas has been relatively stable for the past five years or longer. The top program areas of Indigenous enrolment are largely the same as compared to the 2021 Learners Report. There has been an increased enrolment in Health, from 8.2% in 2018/19 to 8.9% in 2022/23, while Arts and Sciences saw the largest increase of all program areas, from 24.7% in 2018/19 to 28.5% in 2022/23. Indigenous enrolment in Development programs saw the largest drop, from 12.8% in 2018/19 to 9.8% in 2022/23.

Figure 23 below shows the percentage of learners in a program area. When using the number of learners at the program level a single learner may be enrolled in two different program areas within an academic year. If this is the case, they will be counted twice—once in each program area—and the program headcount may be higher than the institution headcount. However, the following analysis is considered representative of student activity in the public post-secondary system.

²⁶ Program area groupings categorized according to the national Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP).

Figure 23. Domestic Learners by Program Area and Indigenous Identity Group



Distribution of domestic learners by Indigenous identity group and program area in the 2022/23 Academic Year.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Figure 23 above compares First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous learner enrolment, showing the proportion of all learners in each identity group by program area of study. For example, 28.5% of non-Indigenous learners study in the Arts and Sciences, compared to 27.1% of First Nations learners and 30.1% of Métis learners. These rates that are now close to on par had a significant gap four years ago. A higher proportion of First Nations learners are enrolled in Developmental and Trades programs,²⁷ and a much lower proportion in Business and Management, and Engineering and Applied Sciences programs.

While enrolment in Developmental programs remains relatively high, the number of Indigenous learners in Developmental programs has decreased by over 50% since 2009/10.²⁸ At the same time, the number of Indigenous learners enrolled in Arts and Sciences, Health, and Human and Social Services has increased.²⁹

²⁷ Trades includes trades foundation programs (introductory trades programs that provide learners with first level apprenticeship training credit) and technical training programs (in-school portion of an apprenticeship program).

²⁸ Developmental programs include Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and Adult Special Education programs; these programs are not at the post-secondary level.

²⁹ The following programs clusters generally do not have credit-based programs: Developmental, Personal Improvement and Leisure, and Other.

Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)

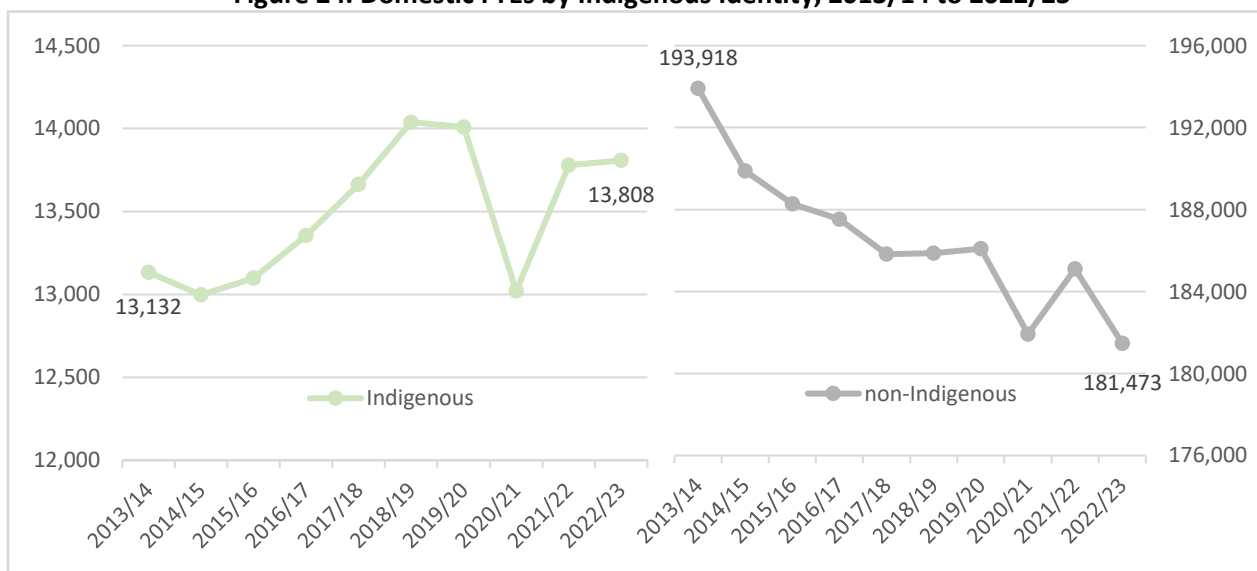
FTEs are not a count of students, but instead represent instructional activity of all full-time and part-time enrolments, converted to represent the number of students carrying a full-time course load.

Instructional activity is measured in terms of Learning Units, normally expressed in terms of course credits or instructional hours.³⁰

System-Wide FTEs

In the past 10 years the number of Indigenous learner Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) has increased by 5.1%, from 13,132 in 2013/14, to 13,808 in 2022/23. During the same period, non-Indigenous learner FTEs decreased by 6.4%. Below, Figure 24 illustrates both of those trends, with the Indigenous FTE values denoted by the left-side axis and the non-Indigenous FTE values denoted by the right-side axis. In 2020/21 there was a significant drop in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous FTEs, due in large part to the COVID pandemic. However, the decrease was larger for Indigenous FTEs, dropping by 7.1% from 2019/20 to 2020/21, compared to a 2.2% decrease for non-Indigenous FTEs. In the two years since, Indigenous learner FTEs have shown signs of recovery, with Indigenous learner FTEs increasing by 6.0% from 2020/21 to 2022/23. In comparison, non-Indigenous learner FTEs have had more volatile ups and downs. Non-Indigenous learner FTEs showed early signs of recovery, as rates significantly increased in the year after the initial COVID restrictions. However, due to a subsequent drop in 2022/23, non-Indigenous learner FTEs were 2.5% lower in 2022/23 than in 2019/20, suggesting that although Indigenous learner FTEs had a sharper initial decline, they also had a stronger recovery from the COVID pandemic than non-Indigenous FTEs.

Figure 24. Domestic FTEs by Indigenous Identity, 2013/14 to 2022/23



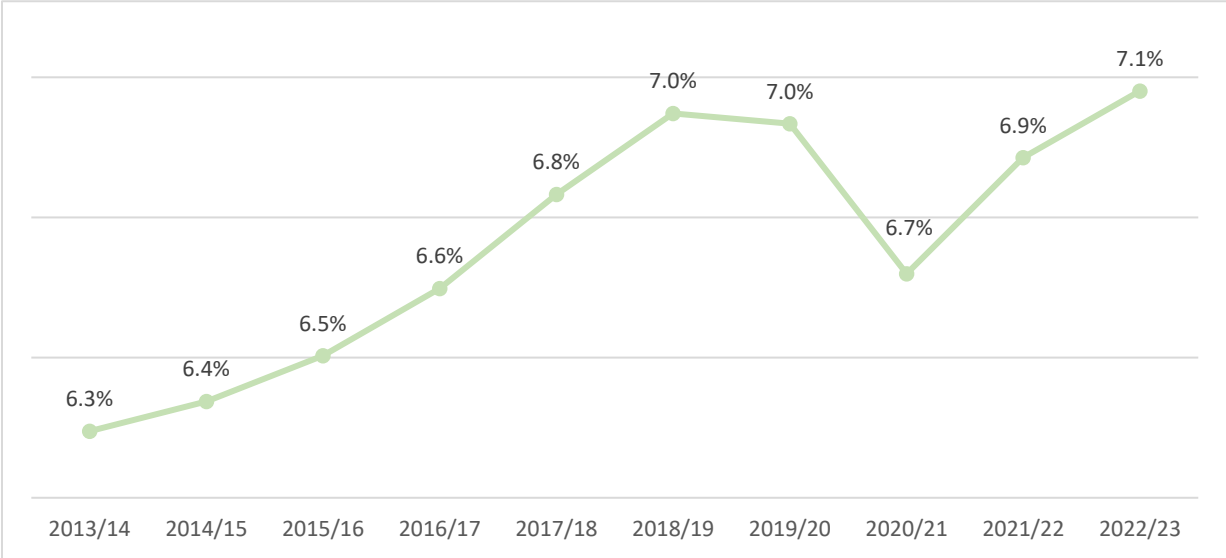
Indigenous and non-Indigenous domestic FTEs from the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Fiscal Years
 Source: Data request for 2023-24 reporting cycle of Performance Measures 1 and 3

³⁰ See the Ministry of Post-Secondary and Future Skills' [Enrolment Data](#) page for more information.

Until 2018/19, the increase in FTEs and a stable number of learners together suggest that a greater proportion of Indigenous learners were enrolled full-time than non-Indigenous learners. It is important to note that the increase in Indigenous FTEs could be attributed in part to growth of the population in the province. The decline and then recovery of Indigenous learner numbers combined with the drop and then recovery in Indigenous FTEs suggests that COVID has had a disproportionate effect on the ability for Indigenous learners to begin or continue full-time course loads.

In 2013/14, 6.3% of FTEs were Indigenous; by 2022/23 this had increased to 7.1%. This rate is a significant increase from a 6.7% low in 2020/21 which was due in large part to the disproportionate effect of COVID on Indigenous learners (see Figure 25 below).

Figure 25. Indigenous Domestic FTEs as a Percent of Total Domestic FTEs, 2013/14 to 2022/23

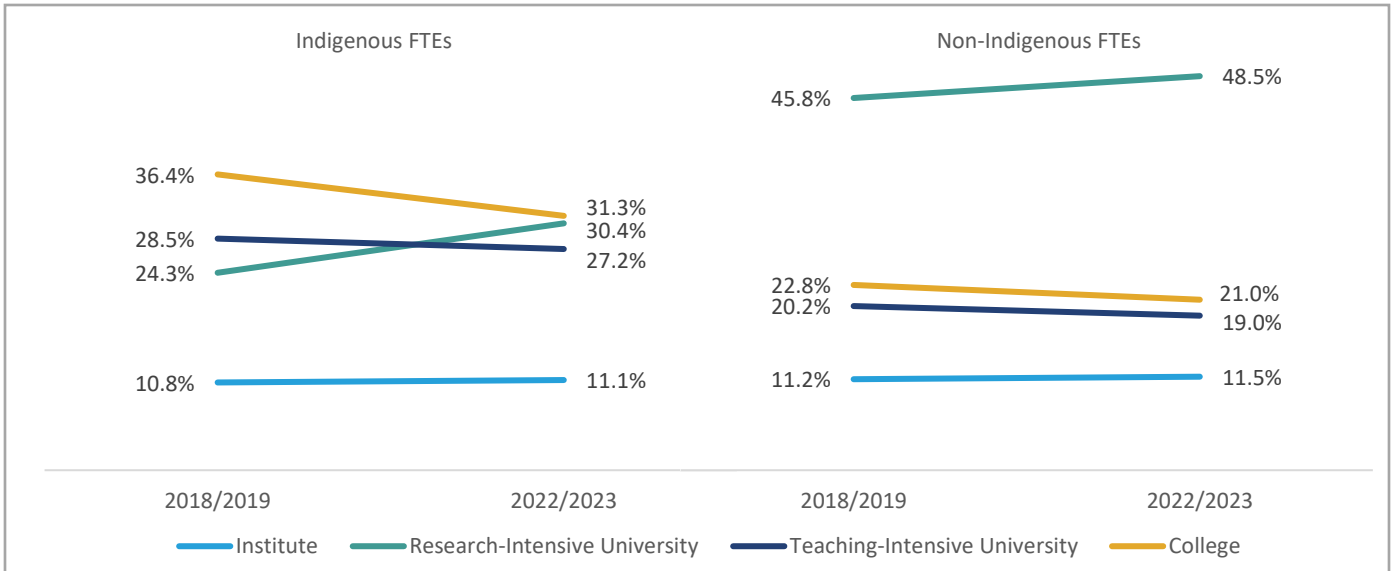


Indigenous domestic FTEs as a percent of total domestic FTEs from the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Fiscal Years
 Source: Data request for 2023-24 reporting cycle of Performance Measures 1 and 3

Public Post-Secondary Institution FTEs

Similar to the trend seen in transitions above, FTE data shows Indigenous learners were more likely than non-Indigenous learners to attend colleges (31.3% vs. 21.0%) and teaching-intensive universities (27.2% vs. 19.0%), illustrated in Figure 26 below. Indigenous learners were less likely than non-Indigenous learners to attend research-intensive universities (30.4% vs. 48.5%). Significantly, though, some of those gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous FTEs are narrowing, with a 15.5% drop in college FTEs and a 23.2% increase in research-intensive university FTEs for Indigenous learners since 2018/19.

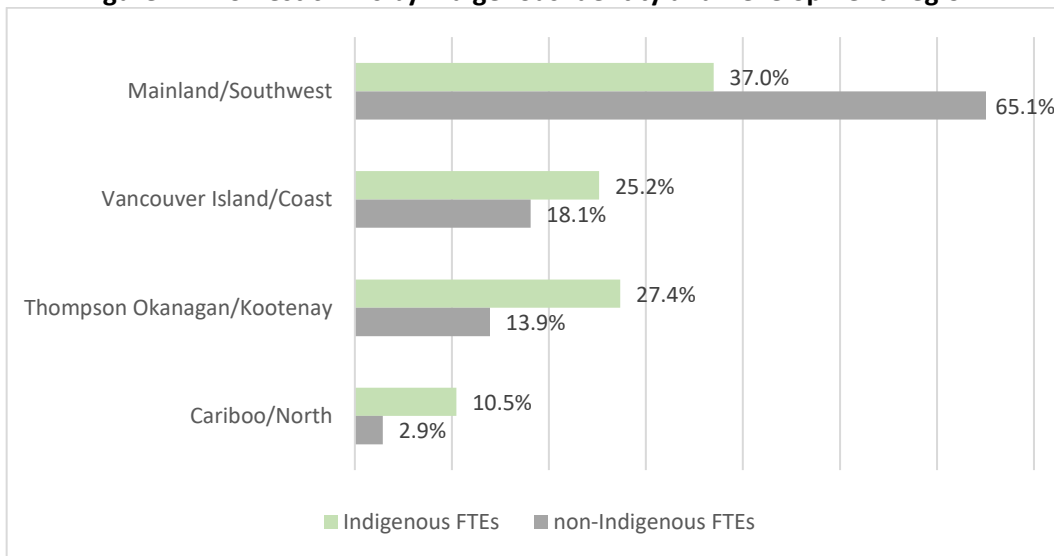
Figure 26. Domestic FTEs by Indigenous Identity and Institution Type, 2018/19 to 2022/23



Distribution of Indigenous and non-Indigenous domestic FTEs by institution type in the 2018/19 and 2022/23 Fiscal Years
 Source: Data request for 2023-24 reporting cycle of Performance Measures 1 and 3

As Figure 27 illustrates, most non-Indigenous learners (65.1%) attend institutions in the Mainland/Southwest, while only 2.9% attend institutions in the Cariboo/North. Indigenous learners follow a similar pattern but are more evenly distributed across the province. The largest proportion of Indigenous learners (37.0%) still attends an institution in the Mainland/Southwest, although the proportion is far smaller compared to non-Indigenous learners. The remaining learners are more evenly enrolled across the province.

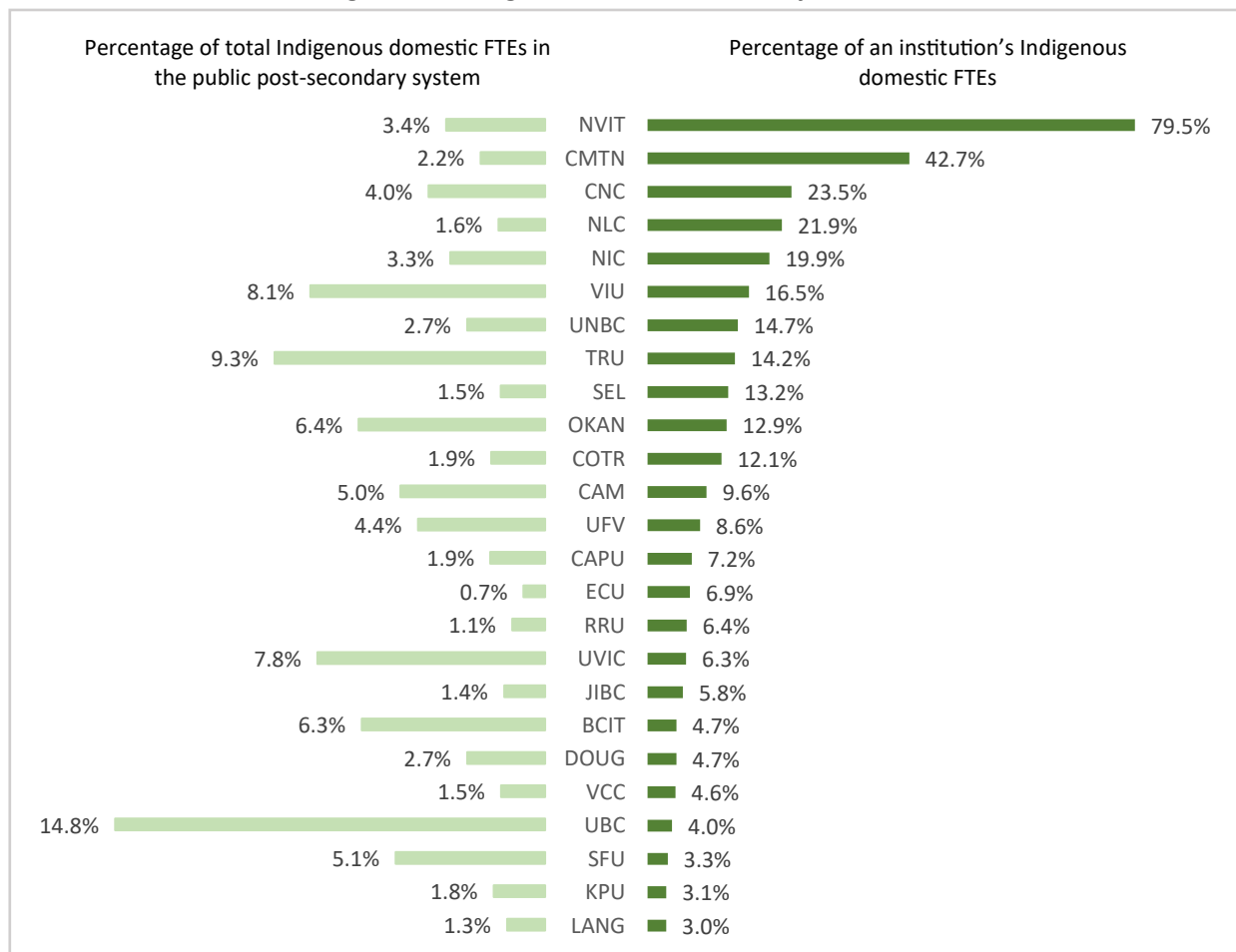
Figure 27. Domestic FTEs by Indigenous Identity and Development Region



Distribution of Indigenous and non-Indigenous domestic FTEs by development region in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year
 Source: Data request for 2023-24 reporting cycle of Performance Measures 1 and 3

Figure 28 below shows the differing representation of Indigenous learners across each of the institutions in the public post-secondary system. The data show the percentage of domestic FTEs at each institution that is attributed to Indigenous learners alongside each institution's Indigenous FTEs as a percentage of the total number of Indigenous FTEs in the public post-secondary system. As an example, 3.4% of all Indigenous FTEs in the system attend Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT), while 79.5% of the FTEs at NVIT self-identify as Indigenous, which has a mandate to serve Indigenous learners.³¹

Figure 28. Indigenous Domestic FTEs by Institution



Indigenous domestic FTEs as both a percentage of total FTEs in the public post-secondary system and as a percentage of an institution's domestic FTEs in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year

Source: Data request for 2023-24 reporting cycle of Performance Measures 1 and 3

³¹ NVIT is an Indigenous-governed provincial institute with a mandate to serve as British Columbia's public Indigenous post-secondary institution. NVIT offers a range of programs including developmental, career training, trades, health, human services, business and university transfer leading to certificates, diplomas and baccalaureate degrees. Established in 1983 as a private Indigenous institution and designated as a public post-secondary institution in 1995 under the College and Institute Act. NVIT now has campuses in Merritt and Vancouver.

CHAPTER 4 – Characteristics of Indigenous Learners in Public Post Secondary in British Columbia

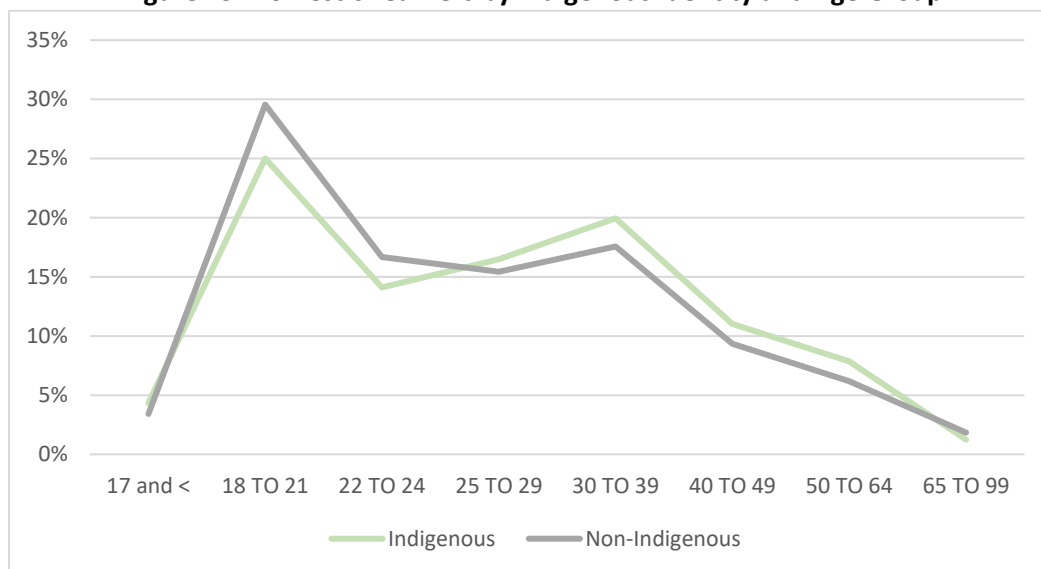
Key Chapter Takeaways

- Indigenous learners in BC's public post-secondary system tend to be older than non-Indigenous learners, despite the Indigenous population in BC being younger overall.
- There are more women than men in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learner populations, with the gender gap wider for Indigenous learners.
- From the 2018/19 to the 2022/23 Academic Years, 48.5% of Indigenous learners self-identified as First Nations, 20.4% self-identified as Métis, and 1.6% self-identified as Inuit.
- The Métis learner population has grown by 30% in the last ten years, likely due to an increase in the Métis population in BC and increasing self-identification trends.
- Indigenous learners are more likely to enroll in teaching-intensive universities.
- Compared to Métis learners, First Nations learners are more likely to enrol in colleges, and less likely to enrol in research-intensive universities.
- About 1.3% of BC's domestic public post-secondary learners are former youth in care (FYIC).
- Indigenous learners are overrepresented in the FYIC population, as they comprise 44.9% of the FYIC population but only 7.5% of the overall domestic learner population.

Indigenous Learner Characteristics

Figure 29 below shows that Indigenous learners in BC's public post-secondary system tend to be older than non-Indigenous learners. In the 2022/23 Academic Year, 56.6% of Indigenous learners in post-secondary were 25 years and older, compared to 50.4% of non-Indigenous learners.

Figure 29. Domestic Learners by Indigenous Identity and Age Group



Distribution of domestic learners in the 2022/23 Academic Year by Indigenous identity and age group.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Importantly, the Indigenous population in BC is younger than the non-Indigenous population. Table 2 outlines the age demographics as of the 2021 Census, in which approximately 24.7% of the non-Indigenous population was under the age of 25, compared to much higher rates of 40.7% of the First Nations population, and 37.3% of the Métis population. These numbers are slightly lower than in the 2016 Census, meaning that each identity group are on average older than five years ago, but the First Nations and Métis populations are still significantly more youthful than the non-Indigenous population.

Table 2. Distribution of Population by Age Group and Indigenous Identity Group, 2021

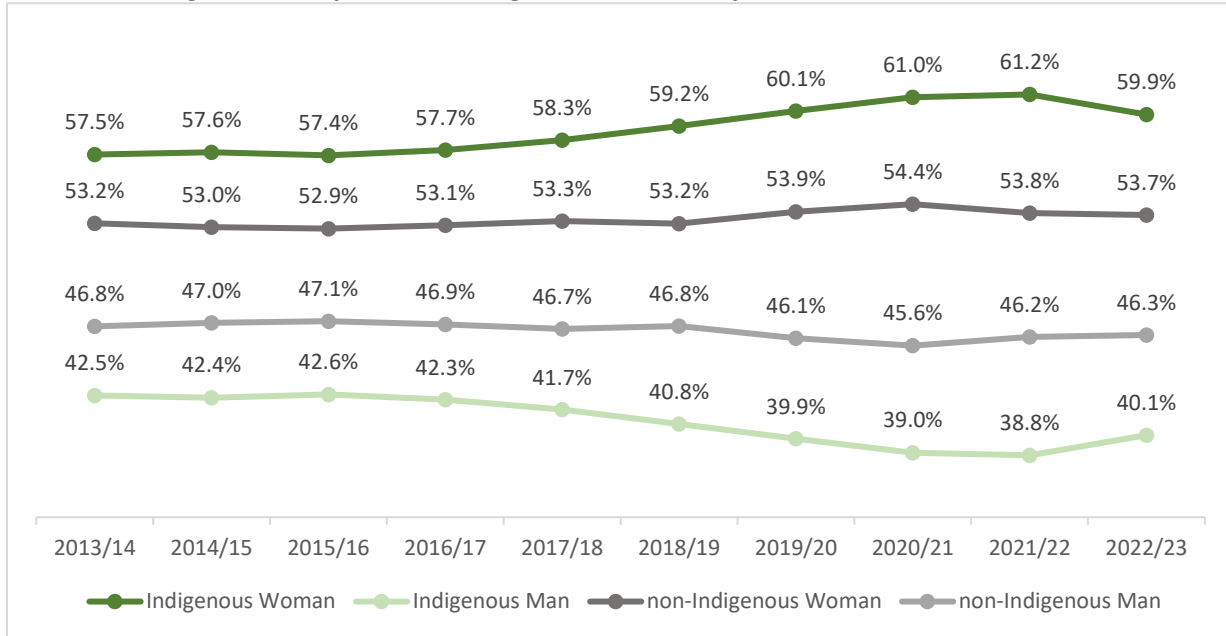
Age Groups	First Nations	Métis	non-Indigenous
0 to 24	40.7%	37.3%	24.7%
25 to 34	15.2%	14.5%	14.0%
35 to 44	12.2%	12.7%	13.6%
45 to 54	11.7%	11.8%	12.9%
55+	20.2%	23.7%	34.7%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

Despite having a relatively youthful population, there may be factors inhibiting younger Indigenous learners transitioning to public post-secondary institutions. The Indigenous population under 25 years old – about the age when all learners are more likely to transition to post-secondary institutions – includes a large population under the age of 15 (24.1% of the Indigenous population is under 15 years old). Based on the demographic trends observed, there should be an increase in the number of Indigenous learners transitioning to post-secondary education in the coming years. This prediction appears to be happening, with Indigenous learners having steadily increased their share of domestic enrolment since the declines resulting from the pandemic in 2019/20. Given that the proportion of Indigenous peoples aged under 25 has stayed largely consistent with the 2016 Census, and that Indigenous learners tend to enroll in postsecondary at an older age than non-Indigenous learners, we can likely expect this trend to continue.

In both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous student populations, there are more women than men. This gender gap is noticeably larger in the Indigenous population where 60.3% of the student population on average from 2018/19 to 2022/23 was women, compared to 53.8% in the non-Indigenous population. While the proportion of students by gender in the non-Indigenous student population from 2013/14 to 2022/23 remained stable from year to year (around 53%), among Indigenous learners the proportion of women grew while the proportion of men declined, further widening the gender gap from 14.9% in 2013/14 to 19.8% in 2022/23. That said, while the gap was at its largest in 2021/22, Figure 30 below shows that it has narrowed in the last academic year.

Figure 30. Proportion of Indigenous Learners by Gender, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Percent of Indigenous learners by gender out of total number of learners for the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Academic Years.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

The gender gap in the Indigenous learner population may be the result of two contributing factors. First, in the 2021 Census, the Indigenous population of men under 24 years was larger than the Indigenous population of women in the same age group, but the proportion of Indigenous women 25 years and older is larger than that of Indigenous men (see Table 3 below). This shift in gender ratios is apparent in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population, but it is more pronounced in the Indigenous population. A contributing factor to this shift in gender ratios may be the result of higher mortality rates among men, which is seen in nearly all population groups.³²

Table 3. Distribution of BC Population by Indigenous Identity, Gender, and Age Group, 2021

Age Groups	Indigenous Identity		Non- Indigenous Identity	
	Women+	Men+	Women+	Men+
0 to 14	48.5%	51.5%	48.5%	51.5%
15 to 24	48.1%	51.9%	48.1%	51.9%
25 to 34	51.4%	48.6%	49.9%	50.1%
35 to 44	52.8%	47.2%	50.8%	49.2%
45 to 54	53.0%	47.0%	51.9%	48.1%
55 to 64	55.0%	45.0%	51.9%	48.1%
65+	55.0%	45.0%	53.0%	47.0%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

³² Statistics Canada (2018), *Mortality Overview, 2014 to 2016*.

Second, Indigenous men without post-secondary education are more likely to be employed than Indigenous women without post-secondary.³³ Indigenous men have higher participation in jobs that do not require post-secondary, for example many construction and transportation positions, which are primarily dominated by men and not as easily accessible to women. The employment rate for women increases if they received post-secondary qualifications.

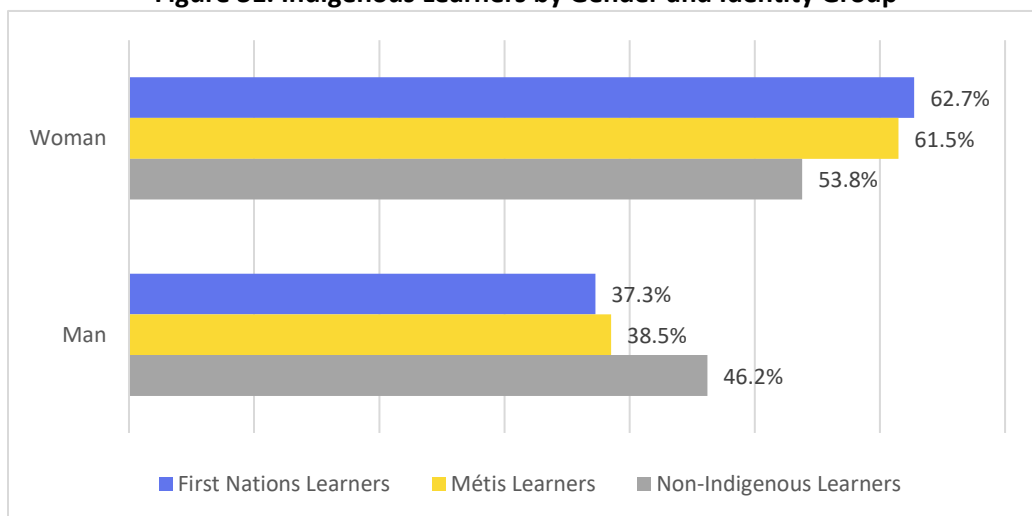
Indigenous Learners by Identity Group

As discussed above, 68.2% of Indigenous learners in the 2022/23 Academic Year self-identified as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. For 31.8% of Indigenous learners there is no further information on self-identification with an Indigenous identity group. This includes Indigenous learners who only self-identified in the K-12 system where self-identification with an Indigenous identity group (i.e. First Nations, Métis, Inuit) is not consistently collected. (Note: For the 83.2% of total Indigenous learners who self-identified in K-12 and post-secondary, 86.2% further self-identified with an Indigenous identity group.)

From the 2018/19 Academic Year to the 2022/23 Academic Year, 48.5% of Indigenous learners self-identified as First Nations, 20.4% self-identified as Métis, and 1.6% self-identified as Inuit. The following section explores the demographic characteristics of learners who have self-identified as First Nations and Métis in comparison with the characteristics of the overall Indigenous and non-Indigenous learner population. Inuit learners represent a small proportion of Indigenous learners and are not included in this analysis.

As noted above, there are more women than men in public post-secondary and the gap is larger in the Indigenous learner population than in the non-Indigenous learner population. Among learners who self-identified as First Nations and Métis, the gap between women and men is considerably larger than the gender gap between non-Indigenous learners, as illustrated in Figure 31 below.

Figure 31. Indigenous Learners by Gender and Identity Group



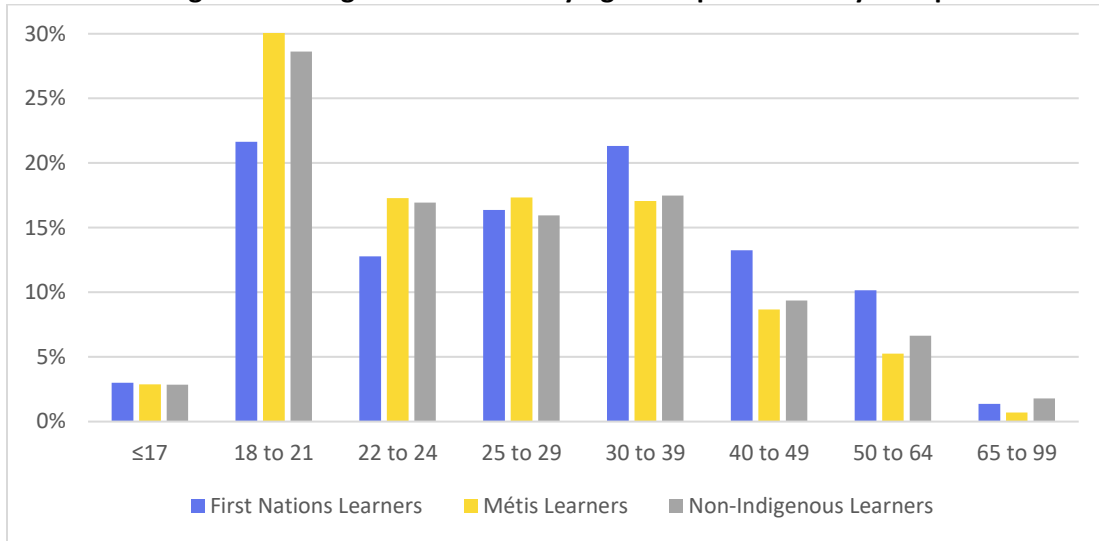
Proportion of domestic learners by Indigenous identity group and gender as an average for the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Academic Years.

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

³³ Aboriginal Peoples Survey (2019), *Employment of First Nations men and women living off reserve*; Aboriginal Peoples Survey (2019), *Employment characteristics of Métis women and men aged 25 to 54 in Canada*.

Overall, Indigenous learners are older than non-Indigenous learners. First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous learners have similar proportions of learners aged 25 to 29 years old (around 17%). However, First Nations learners tend to be older while Métis and non-Indigenous learners tend to be younger. As illustrated in Figure 32 below, a larger proportion of Métis learners are in the 18 to 21 and 22 to 24 age groups compared to First Nations and non-Indigenous learners. The younger Métis population suggests that Métis learners are more likely to transition to public post-secondary immediately or shortly after completing high school compared to First Nations learners.

Figure 32. Indigenous Learners by Age Group and Identity Group

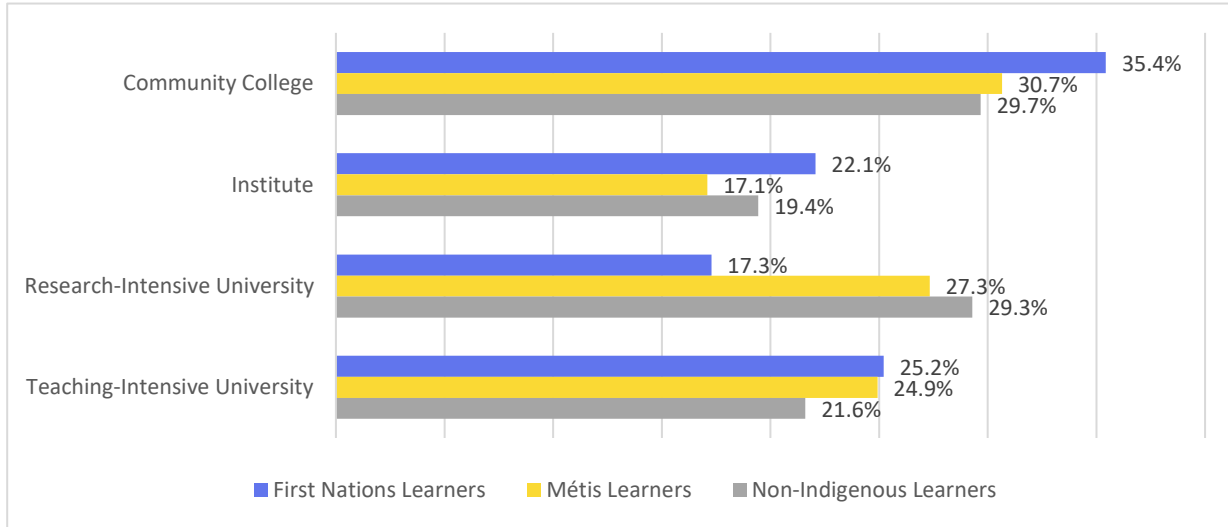


Distribution of domestic learners by Indigenous identity group and age group as an average for the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Academic Years.

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

First Nations learners have a higher proportion of enrolment in colleges than Métis and non-Indigenous learners (see Figure 33). Compared to non-Indigenous learners, First Nations and Métis learners are more likely to enroll in teaching-intensive universities; however, Métis and non-Indigenous learners are more likely to attend research-intensive universities than First Nations learners.

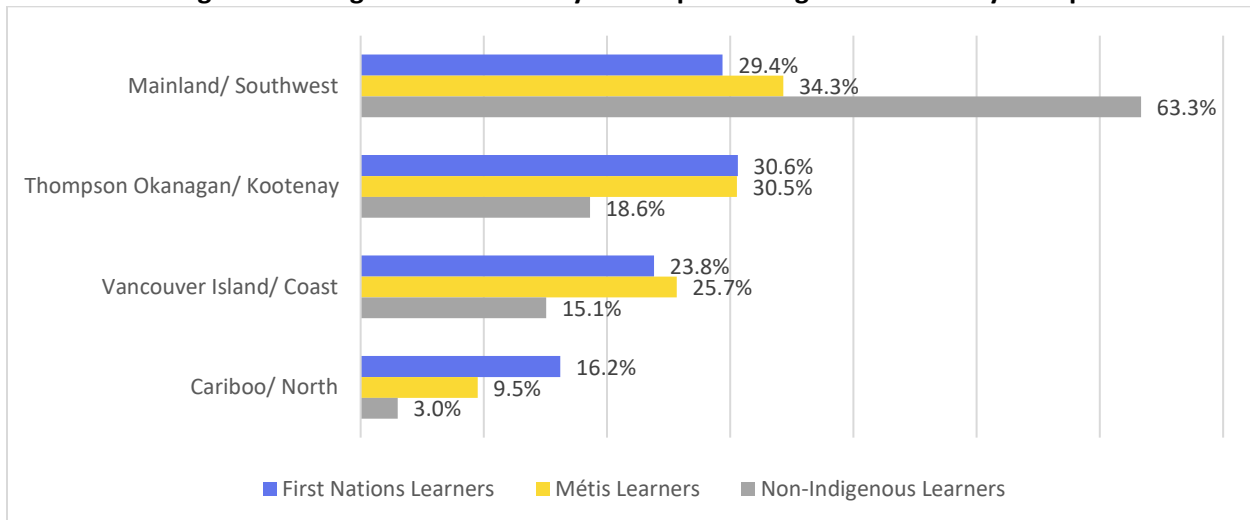
Figure 33. Indigenous Learners by Institution Type and Identity Group



Distribution of domestic learners by Indigenous identity group and institution type as an average for the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Academic Years
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Figure 34 below shows that Indigenous learners attend public post-secondary institutions with different regional distribution than non-Indigenous learners. Although the highest proportion of Indigenous learners attend public post-secondary institutions in the Mainland/Southwest and Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay, the Indigenous learner population is much more evenly distributed across BC than the non-Indigenous learner population. First Nations learners have higher enrolment at institutions in the Cariboo/North than other groups, while Métis learners are evenly spread out at institutions in the Mainland/Southwest, Thompson Okanagan/Kootenay and Vancouver Island/Coast.

Figure 34. Indigenous Learners by Development Region and Identity Group



Distribution of domestic learners by Indigenous identity group and development region. Average for the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Academic Years
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

First Nations Learners

First Nations learners represent the largest proportion of Indigenous learners who further self-identified with an Indigenous identity group. From 2013/14 to 2018/19, the First Nations learner population fluctuated from year to year, before reaching its peak of 13,890 learners in 2018/19. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic the following year, the First Nations learner population reached its lowest totals in the last ten years, declining by 13.3% for a net loss of 1,840 learners. However, since the pandemic, the First Nation learner population has increased by 5.7% from 12,045 learners in 2019/20 to 12,727 learners in 2022/23. The overall decline of the First Nations learner population is not unique, but reflects the overall decline of 13.6% from 2013/14 to 2022/23 in domestic enrolment in the BC public post-secondary system and the relatively slow growth of the overall population in BC.

The First Nations population in BC is relatively youthful compared to the non-Indigenous population, and approximately 25% of the First Nations population is under 15 years old. Between the 2016 Census and the 2021 Census, the proportion of the First Nations population aged 15 to 24 years old decreased slightly and this may be a contributing factor to the decline in the First Nations learner population. In addition, since First Nations learners are more likely to transition to post-secondary later than non-Indigenous learners, the First Nations learner population may not increase for several years if learners continue to delay transitioning to post-secondary. That said, while the total First Nations learner population in 2022/23 is still 7.5% lower than in 2013/14, growth trends in recent years suggest that the population could return to pre-COVID levels in the next few years.

Métis Learners

The Métis learner population continues to grow. From 2013/14 to 2022/23, the Métis learner population grew by 30%, with high levels of growth for both women and men. A contributing factor to this growth is the increase of the Métis population in BC which increased by over 26% from the 2011 National Household Survey to the 2016 Census, and then over 9% more between the 2016 Census and the 2021 Census. Another important factor is an increase in reporting self-identification, which Statistics Canada identifies is a factor in the high rates of population growth, particularly for the Métis population.³⁴ The increase of the Métis learner population in the last ten years has been met with a concurrent 16.8% decrease of learners who identified as Indigenous only, suggesting that an increase in Métis self-identification is also occurring at the post-secondary level.

Former Youth in Care³⁵

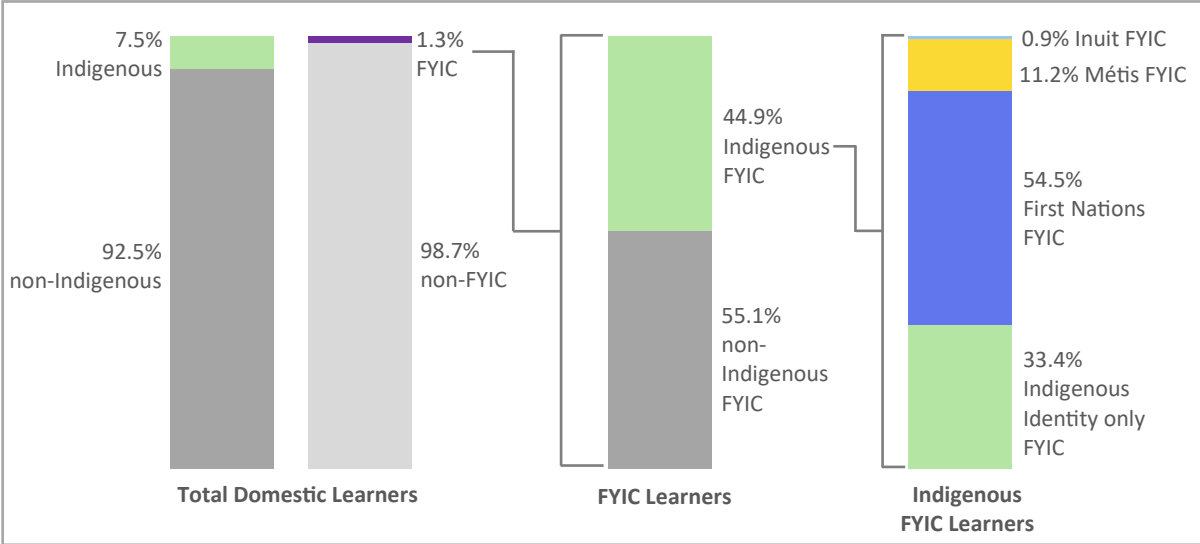
Indigenous learners are heavily overrepresented in the former youth in care (FYIC) population attending public post-secondary institutions. From 2018/19 to 2022/23, there was a total of 22,090 enrolment records for FYIC students, or about 4,420 enrolments per year, putting FYIC students at 1.3% of the domestic student population. In the same period, despite comprising just 7.5% of the total domestic learner population, Indigenous learners made up 44.9% of the FYIC population (see Figure 35 below).

³⁴ Statistics Canada (2015), *Projections of the Aboriginal population and households in Canada, 2011 to 2036*.

³⁵ Former Youth in Care refer to any persons that are currently or formerly in any BC MCFD or Indigenous Family and Children Family Service Agency (ICFSA) Legal Status (either while living in BC or while placed by MCFD or an ICFSA on an Interprovincial Placement Agreement [IPPA]). To be eligible for the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program, the student must have been in care at the time they have turn(ed) 19 or for at least 24 months (730 days) (consecutive or accumulated in any combination).

Among all FYIC learners, 54.5% identify as First Nations, compared to 48.5% of all Indigenous learners identifying as First Nations, as reported in the Indigenous Learners by Identity Group section. Conversely, 11.2% of Indigenous FYIC learners identify as Métis, also compared to 20.4% of all Indigenous learners identifying as Métis, noted in the same section. The rate of FYIC that have identified as Indigenous only (33.4%) is on par with the rate of all Indigenous learners that have identified as Indigenous only (31.8%). The disproportionately higher number of Indigenous FYIC learners reflects the overall higher proportion of Indigenous children and youth in care in BC. As reported for the 2022/23 Fiscal Year, 68% of children and youth in care were Indigenous;³⁶ however, Indigenous children and youth represented only 10% of the child population in BC.³⁷

Figure 35. Domestic Learners by Youth in Care Status and Indigenous Identity Group



Comparison of domestic learners and Former Youth in Care domestic learners by Indigenous identity and Indigenous identity group, as an average for the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Academic Years.
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

From the program start in the 2017/18 to the 2022/23 Academic Years, the Provincial Tuition Waiver Program (PTWP) has had 2,555 enrolment records for FYIC learners. The PTWP waives tuition and eligible fees for B.C students who are current and former children or youth in care. As this refers to all records, students who have used the PTWP program multiple times are counted multiple times. Of those records, 2,265 (89%) matched enrolment records in the most recent BC public-post-secondary data, while 2,260 of those records have unique PENS, and so represent unique students.

Of that 2,260 cohort of unique students for which we have data, Indigenous learners make up approximately 42%, or 945 students. This is slightly lower than the proportion of Indigenous FYIC students, who comprise 45% of all FYIC learners.

³⁶ See: <https://mcfcd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection/permanency-for-children-and-youth/performance-indicators/children-in-care>. While overall numbers of Indigenous children and youth in care have been in decline for more than five years, the simultaneous decline in non-Indigenous numbers means that the share of Indigenous children and youth in care has grown.

³⁷ For more information on the education outcomes of children and youth in care, and former children and youth in care, see the 2022/2023 Children and Youth in Care, How are we Doing Report at: https://studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca/assets/reports/cyic_hawd.pdf

CHAPTER 5 – Credentials Awarded to Indigenous Learners

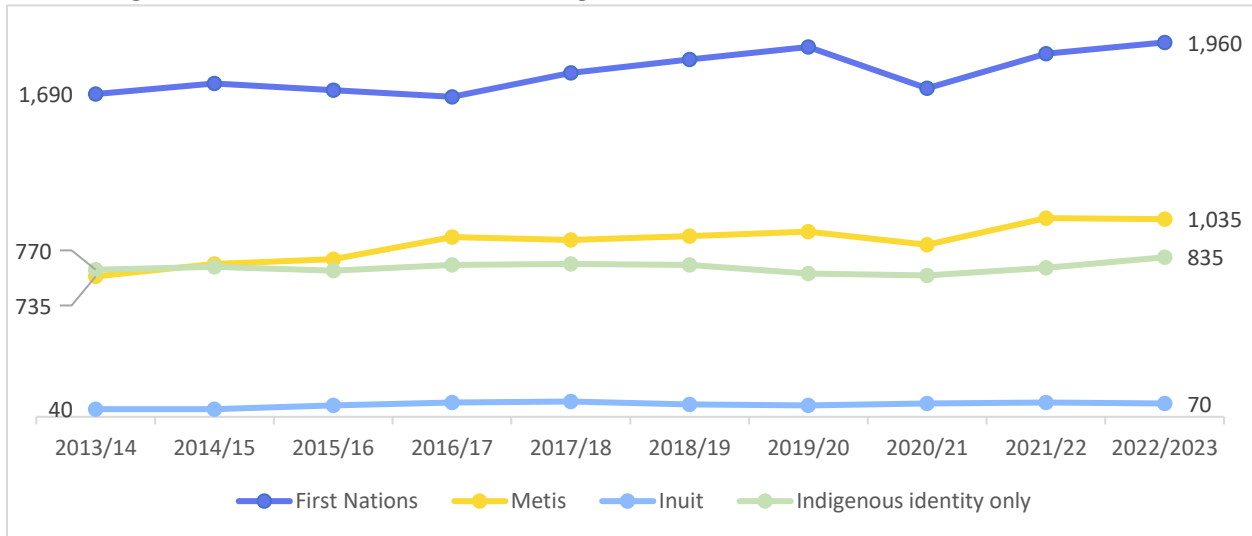
Key Chapter Takeaways

- In the past decade, credentials awarded to Indigenous learners increased by 18.4%, while those for non-Indigenous learners declined by 5.3%.
- Indigenous learners saw a 48% increase in bachelor's degrees, and a 104% increase in master's degrees over the last ten years.
- In 2022/23, about two-thirds of credentials awarded to Indigenous learners went to women, and about one third to men, a larger gender gap compared to non-Indigenous learners.
- 38% of Indigenous women earned credentials beyond a diploma, compared to 30% of Indigenous men.
- First Nations and Métis learners are more likely to earn certificates and diplomas and less likely to earn bachelor's degrees.
- First Nations and Métis learners are more likely to earn credentials in Trades, Human and Social Services, and Developmental programs, and less in Business and Engineering.
- In 2022/23, 120 Indigenous learners were eligible to apply for teaching certification, with a 33% increase in eligible new Indigenous teachers over the past five years.
- Indigenous learners have a lower first year retention rate than non-Indigenous learners.

Number of Credentials Awarded

The number of credentials awarded to Indigenous learners has increased by 18.4% from 3,095 in 2013/14 to 3,665 in 2022/23 the highest total ever. Within the Indigenous learner population, each Indigenous identity group has also experienced growth in the number of credentials awarded (see Figure 36 below). This contrasts with non-Indigenous learners, who have been trending downwards in the last ten years – that is 5.3% fewer credentials awarded in 2022/23 than in 2013/14. The 2020/21 year had a significant decline in the number of credentials awarded to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, due in large part to the impact of the COVID pandemic. However, the number of Indigenous credentials awarded, quickly bounced back. Most of this recovery can be attributed to a significant growth in the number of certificates, bachelor's degrees, and master's degrees awarded since 2020/21.

Figure 36. Credentials Awarded to Indigenous Domestic Learners, 2013/14 to 2022/23



Total credentials awarded to domestic learners by Indigenous identity group from the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Fiscal Years.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

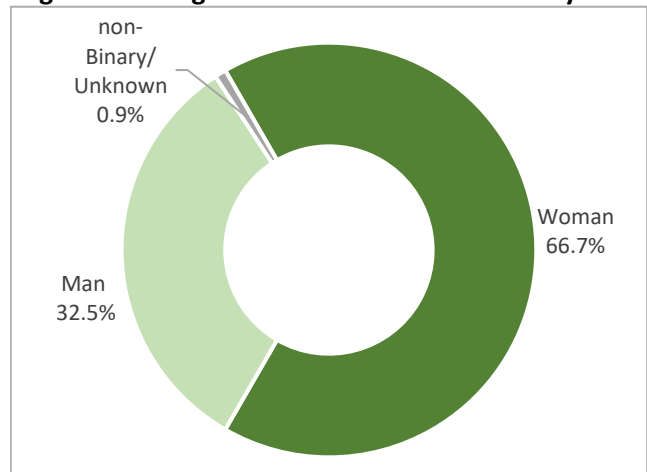
In the past ten fiscal years, the most notable increases in credentials awarded to Indigenous learners have been for bachelor’s degrees (+48% since 2013/14) and master’s degrees (+104%). These two degree types have accounted for 85% of the growth in credentials awarded from 2013/14 to 2022/23, despite comprising just 33% of all credentials awarded to Indigenous learners in the same period.³⁸

Credentials Awarded by Gender

Partly as a result of the higher proportion of Indigenous women enrolled in public post-secondary institutions than Indigenous men, Indigenous women have been awarded more credentials. In the 2022/23 Fiscal Year, 66.7% of Indigenous learners who were awarded a credential were women, compared to 32.5% men (see Figure 37 below).

The gender gap between Indigenous women and men receiving credentials in the 2022/23 fiscal year (34%) is larger than the gender gap between Indigenous learners enrolled (19.8%) (See Figure 31). In the non-Indigenous learner population, although there is a gender gap between women and men receiving credentials (58.7% for women compared to 40.7% for men), it is not as pronounced as in the Indigenous learner population. Indigenous women are also more likely to pursue further education, with 38% of Indigenous women in the 2022/23 Academic Year earning credentials beyond a diploma, compared to 30% of Indigenous men.

Figure 37. Indigenous Credentials Awarded by Gender



Credentials awarded in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year to Indigenous learners by gender
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

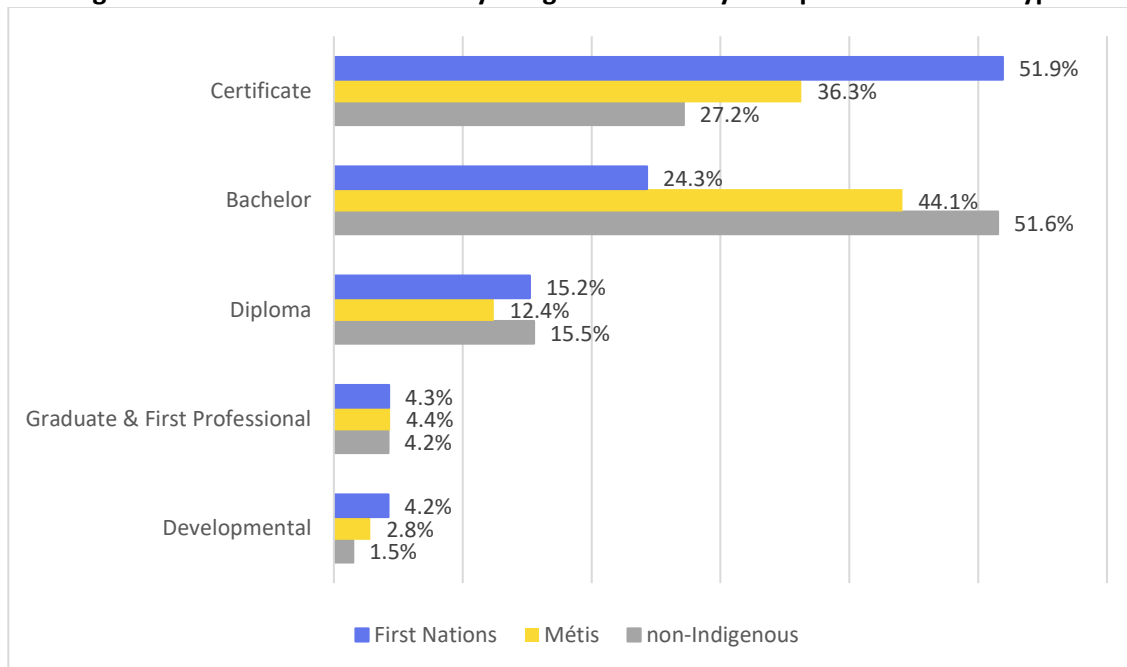
³⁸ Other certificate categories such as Advanced Certificates, Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diplomas more than doubled their numbers, too, between 2013/14 and 2022/23; however, their small actual numbers have had a correspondingly smaller impact on the overall trends in credentials awarded.

Credentials by Type and Indigenous Identity Group

Indigenous learners are more likely to attend colleges and teaching-intensive universities, and less likely to attend research-intensive universities than non-Indigenous learners. As a result, Indigenous learners and non-Indigenous learners tend to earn different types of credentials upon graduation. Below, Figure 38 displays the types of credentials earned by First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous learners for the 2022/23 Fiscal Year. Both First Nations and Métis learners are more likely to earn certificate and developmental credentials, and less likely to earn baccalaureate degrees. First Nations and non-Indigenous learners are on par in terms of their likelihood to earn a diploma, both of which are a higher likelihood than for Métis learners. While First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous learners all have a similar likelihood of earning a certification from the graduate & first professional level, they have all also experienced a significant decline in credentials earned in this level compared to four years ago.

The proportion of learners who enroll in the developmental program area is higher than the proportion of credentials granted. This may be because many learners studying in the developmental program area may be taking one or two upgrading courses as prerequisites for other post-secondary programs without the intention to pursue a developmental credential (e.g. Adult Dogwood).

Figure 38. Credentials Awarded by Indigenous Identity Group and Credential Type

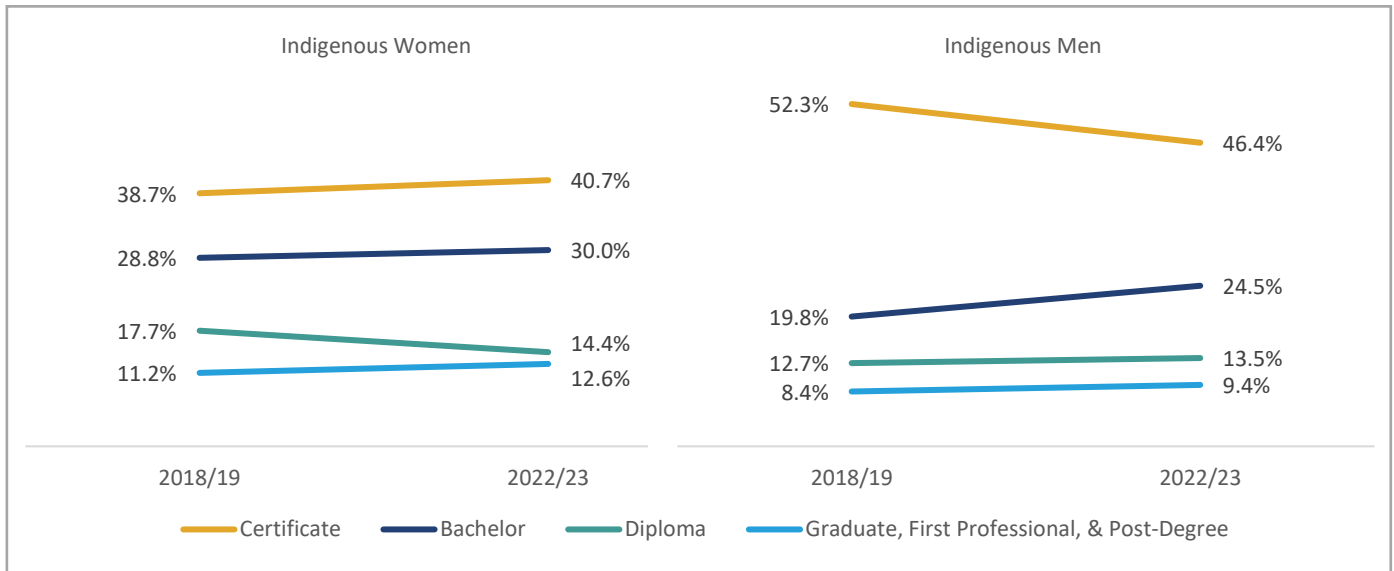


Credentials awarded to domestic learners by Indigenous identity group and credential type in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

As illustrated in Figure 39 below, among Indigenous learners, men are more likely to achieve a certificate or diploma, while women are more likely to earn a credential at the bachelor level or higher. Approximately 38% of Indigenous women in PPSIs earn a credential higher than a diploma (bachelor and graduate/first professional degrees), compared to 30% of Indigenous men.

A contributing factor to the lower number of men, among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, receiving credentials could be related to the types of program areas they are enrolled in, and whether they need a credential to gain employment. For example, many Indigenous men are enrolled in Trades programs, but there has not been as steady an increase in credentials awarded in Trades programs, compared to total credentials awarded to Indigenous men. Learners in Trades programs may either have obtained trades certification from SkilledTradesBC, not registered for a credential if it is not needed to secure employment, or not continued in their studies if they feel they have gained sufficient knowledge and experience to secure employment. Credentials data also does not capture apprenticeship credential certifications and will therefore exclude learners who are completing an apprenticeship. As a result, although a learner may have had a successful outcome from their education, a completed credential would not be reported at the public post-secondary institution.

Figure 39. Credentials Awarded to Indigenous Learners by Credential Type and Gender, 2018/19 to 2022/23

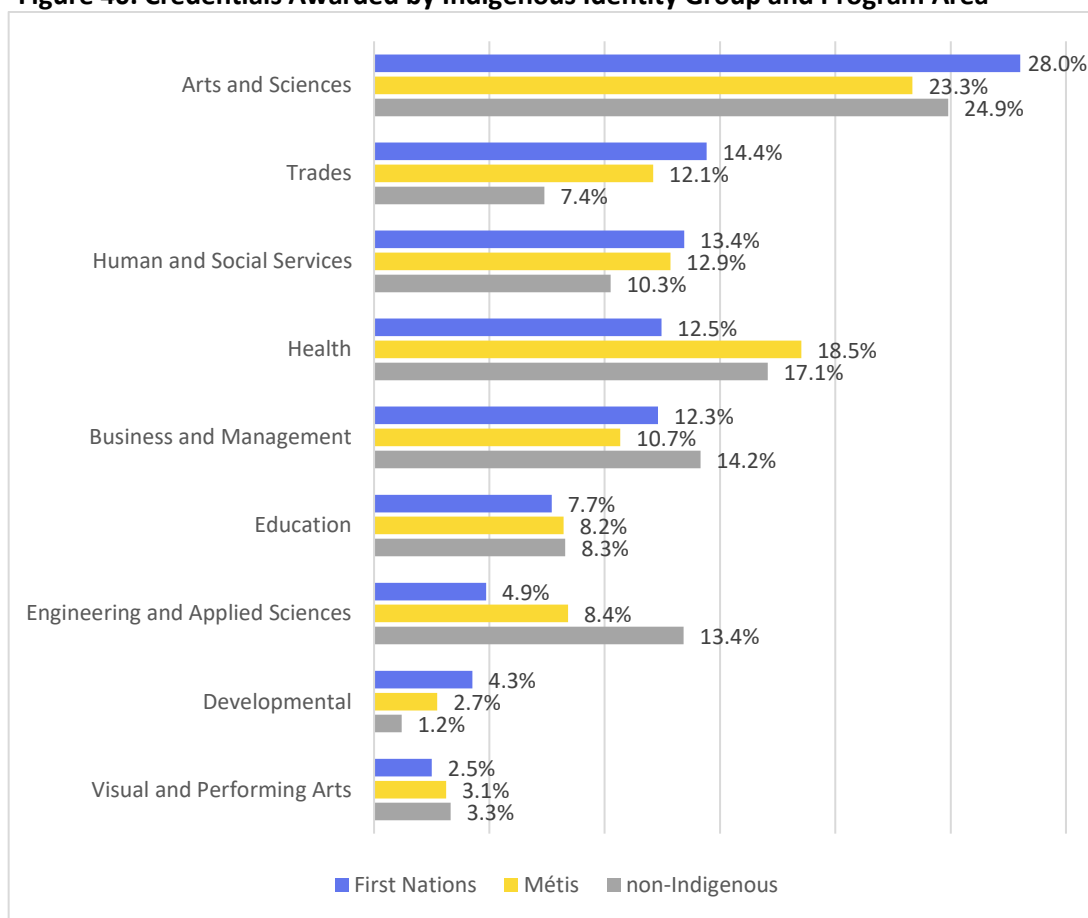


Credentials awarded to Indigenous domestic learners by gender and credential type in the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Fiscal Years.
 Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Credentials by Program Area and Indigenous Identity Group

Figure 40 shows the percentage of all credentials awarded in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year to First Nations, Métis, and non-Indigenous learners within each program area. For example, 7.4% of all credentials awarded to non-Indigenous learners are in Trades programs³⁹, compared to 14.4% for First Nations learners, and 12.1% for Métis learners.⁴⁰ When compared with non-Indigenous learners, both First Nations and Métis learners are more likely to receive credentials in Trades, Human and Social Services, and Developmental programs, and less likely to receive credentials in Business and Management, and Engineering and Applied Sciences. First Nations learners are more likely to receive credentials in Arts and Sciences and Trades, while Métis learners are more likely to receive credentials in Health programs. Métis learners are also more likely to receive credentials in Engineering and Applied Sciences programs than First Nations learners, but less than non-Indigenous learners.

Figure 40. Credentials Awarded by Indigenous Identity Group and Program Area



Credentials awarded to domestic learners by Indigenous identity group and program area in the 2022/23 Fiscal Year.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

³⁹ Trades credentials do not include apprenticeship credentials, as these are not awarded by public post-secondary institutions but by SkilledTradesBC. There are no credentials awarded for foundation programs.

⁴⁰ “Other” and “Personal Improvement and Leisure” are excluded due to the low number of credentials awarded in those areas “Other programs” are not associated with a specific program and are sometimes general studies. “Personal Improvement and Leisure” is primarily leisure and recreational courses, interpersonal and social skills courses, personal awareness and self-improvement courses, and some health-related courses such as First Aid.

New Teacher Certifications

Increasing the number of Indigenous teachers in the elementary and secondary school systems is one of the Actions in the [DRIPA Action Plan](#). Expanding the number of Indigenous teachers would have a positive impact for Indigenous learners and for the province as a whole.

Learners can take different pathways to teaching certification including an education degree or completing a bachelor's degree followed by post-degree teacher training. On average over the past five years, approximately 90 Indigenous learners per year have been eligible to apply for new teacher certification, which is fewer than necessary to ensure that Indigenous people are well represented in the teaching profession. Most of these learners are obtaining a bachelor's degree in education, with the remainder obtaining a post-degree diploma or certificate. In 2022/23 a total of 120 Indigenous learners graduated and were eligible to apply for teaching certification. The number of new Indigenous graduates eligible for certification increased by 33% from 2018/19 to 2022/23 (see Table 4 below). The increase in new eligible Indigenous graduates was notably higher than the overall growth in new teacher certifications, which increased by 12% from 1,565 in 2018/19 to 1,755 in 2022/23 over the same period.

Table 4. Indigenous Learners Eligible to Apply for New Teacher Certification

Development Region	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Lower Mainland / Southwest	50	45	45	50	70
Thompson / Okanagan	*	10	10	20	20
Cariboo	10	10	*	10	*
Vancouver Island and Coast	25	25	25	30	25
Total	90	90	85	115	120

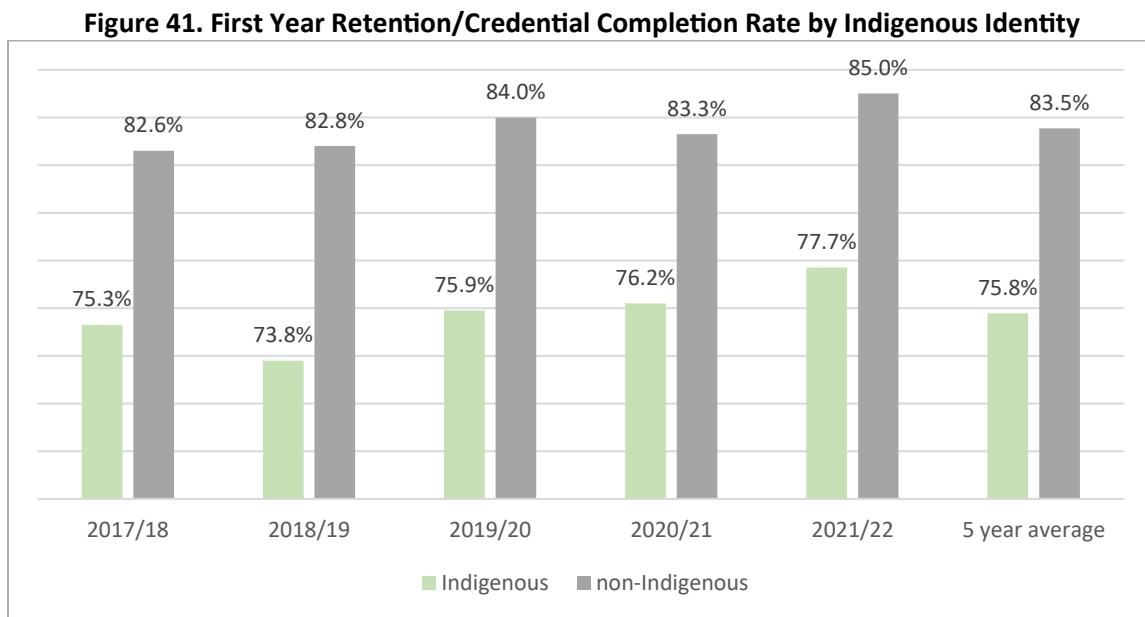
Total number of Indigenous learners eligible to apply for new teacher certification for the 2018/19 to 2022/23 Fiscal Years.
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Indigenous learners typically account for between 5% and 7% of all teaching credentials awarded per year. In 2022/23, Indigenous learners accounted for 7% of the 1,755 graduates eligible for new teacher certification. Similar to non-Indigenous learners, the majority of Indigenous learners eligible to apply for teaching certification are women. For many years, that majority was around 75% for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners; however, over the past three years the percentage of Indigenous women (versus men) awarded teaching credentials has grown slightly, and in 2022/23 reached 79%.

First Year Retention/Completion Rate

The First Year Retention/Completion rate captures the percentage of learners who returned to public post-secondary studies after their first year in a new level of study or were awarded a credential after completing their first year.

Below, Figure 41 shows that Indigenous learners have an overall lower first year retention rate than non-Indigenous learners. Based on the 2021/22 cohort, 77.7% of the Indigenous cohort either returned to their studies in the following year or were awarded a credential, compared to 85.0% of the non-Indigenous cohort. Over the past five years, the retention rate for Indigenous learners has averaged 75.8% while the average for non-Indigenous learners was 83.5%.



Percent of students retained or awarded a credential after their first year by Indigenous identity for the 2017/18 to 2021/22 Academic Years

Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Learners who take a leave of absence but return to their studies in later years are not included in this measure. Additional measures of persistence are currently being explored to account for students who might interrupt their studies but eventually return and complete their program.

Learners who self-identified as Indigenous in Student Outcomes Surveys have indicated a higher likelihood of having to interrupt their studies for financial reasons compared to non-Indigenous learners. In the 2021 to 2023 surveys, an average of 18% of Indigenous Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate respondents and 16% of Indigenous Baccalaureate Graduates reported that they had interrupted their studies for financial reasons, compared to 12% and 11% respectively for non-Indigenous respondents.

CHAPTER 6 – Student Outcomes Surveys

Key Chapter Takeaways

- Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners across all student groups reported high overall satisfaction with the education the quality of instruction.
- Indigenous respondents reported higher unemployment than non-Indigenous respondents for all survey groups except for Baccalaureate Graduates, shifting previous trends in which Indigenous respondents had previously reported higher unemployment in all survey groups
- Indigenous Baccalaureate Graduates and former Apprenticeship Learners reported lower unemployment rates compared to other survey groups.
- Indigenous Baccalaureate Graduates and former Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Graduates were more likely to have jobs related to their program than non-Indigenous grads.
- In all survey groups, Indigenous and non-Indigenous women report lower incomes than men.
- Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Graduates were less likely to be in the labour force, partly due to those pursuing further education contributing to lower participation rates.
- Indigenous former Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program learners reported being less likely to secure an apprenticeship than their non-Indigenous counterparts.

This chapter summarizes select results of annual surveys of former learners from BC’s public post-secondary institutions and some private institutions – providing insight into satisfaction with education and employment outcomes. The data in this chapter represents the aggregated results from three years of surveys, 2021 to 2023, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners (see Table 5 below).⁴¹ In the 2021 to 2023 surveys, Indigenous respondents represented approximately 6% of all survey respondents in those years.⁴²

Table 5. Student Outcome Survey Respondents by Indigenous Identity and Gender, 2021 to 2023

	Baccalaureate Graduates	Diploma, Associate Degree and Certificate Learners	Apprenticeship Learners	Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program Learners
Indigenous	1,036	1,673	297	528
Woman	757	1,281	50	161
Man	274	384	244	364
Non-Indigenous	22,322	22,985	4,316	4,262
Woman	13,485	15,020	380	832
Man	8,817	7,906	3,917	3,412

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

⁴¹ Survey respondents who declare their citizenship as Canadian are further asked if they identify as Aboriginal. Survey data includes respondents who provided a response to this question and excludes respondents who did not provide a response.

⁴² Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondent and measure totals include all respondents. Indigenous identity group subpopulations may exclude respondents who did not respond to the survey question. Subpopulation totals may not match Indigenous and non-Indigenous totals where expected.

Education and Employment Outcomes

Education Outcomes

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners across all student groups surveyed in BC's Student Outcomes surveys reported high overall satisfaction with the education they received and high levels of satisfaction in the quality of instruction (see Table 6 below).

Table 6. Satisfaction with Education and Quality of Instruction by Student Group and Indigenous Identity, 2021 to 2023

	Satisfied with Education		Satisfied with Quality of Instruction	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Baccalaureate Graduates	91.4%	90.2%	91.6%	91.6%
Diploma, Associate Degree and Certificate Learners	91.9%	91.3%	95.5%	94.6%
Apprenticeship Learners	92.2%	90.1%	94.3%	93.2%
Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program Learners	90.6%	90.7%	93.5%	94.3%

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

Employment Outcomes

Completion of post-secondary education is a key determinant of employment outcomes. In BC, according to the 2021 Census, the Indigenous population aged 25 to 54 whose highest level of education was a high school diploma had an employment rate of 64.8%. Upon completion of a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree, the employment rate of the Indigenous population aged 25 to 54 increases to 73.5%. Overall, Indigenous employment rates are consistently lower than non-Indigenous employment rates, except in the case of those who hold a baccalaureate degree or higher, in which Indigenous employment rates are on par with non-Indigenous rates (85.5% vs. 85.0%).⁴³

In the 2022 Indigenous Peoples Survey, Indigenous men were reported to be more likely to be employed than Indigenous women.⁴⁴ The 2017 survey notes that women, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have higher unemployment rates than men regardless of education level, the gender gap in employment narrows with higher levels of education.⁴⁵

In Student Outcomes survey results, Indigenous respondents reported higher unemployment than non-Indigenous respondents for all survey groups except Baccalaureate Graduates, with the gap being particularly wide for former Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program Learners. For Indigenous respondents, the gender gap in unemployment rates was similar for respondents to the

⁴³ Statistics Canada, 2021 Census (2021), *Highest level of education by Indigenous identity and labour force status*.

⁴⁴ Indigenous Peoples Survey (2022), *Disability status, disability severity class and labour force status by First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit, age group and gender*.

⁴⁵ Aboriginal Peoples Survey (2019), *Employment of First Nations men and women living off reserve*; Aboriginal Peoples Survey (2019), *Employment characteristics of Métis women and men aged 25 to 54 in Canada*; Statistics Canada, 2021 Census.

Baccalaureate Graduates survey, and Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program Learners survey. Indigenous men responding to the Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Graduates survey reported higher unemployment rates than Indigenous women, while the inverse occurred for Indigenous men and women who responded to the Apprenticeship Learners survey (see Table 7 below).

Table 7. Graduate Unemployment Rates by Student Group, Indigenous Identity and Gender, 2021 to 2023

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous	
	Woman	Man	Woman	Man
Baccalaureate Graduates	5.4%	4.5%	6.0%	7.2%
Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Graduates	7.2%	12.6%	6.4%	10.2%
Apprenticeship Learners	8.2%	5.1%	5.4%	2.6%
Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program Learners	15.0%	15.9%	10.3%	9.0%

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

Student Outcomes Survey Results by Student Survey Group

As illustrated in this chapter’s Key Takeaways section, student outcomes vary according to gender, Indigenous identity, and student survey group. The following section provides a more detailed analysis of each student survey group.

Baccalaureate Graduates

Each year, baccalaureate graduates from BC’s public post-secondary institutions are asked to participate in a province-wide survey. These surveys provide important feedback on graduate satisfaction, further education, education financing and student debt, and employment outcomes. The survey interviews former baccalaureate graduates two years after graduation. Approximately 70% of baccalaureate graduates surveyed obtained their degrees from a research-intensive university.

Below, Table 8 shows that less than 10% of all respondents were not in the labour force at the time of survey. Respondents are not in the labour force if they are not seeking work, which includes respondents who are taking further education. Respondents are considered unemployed if they are seeking work (e.g. are in the labour force) but are not employed. In the past, Indigenous baccalaureate graduates have experienced marginally higher unemployment rates than non-Indigenous baccalaureate graduates. However, from 2021 to 2023 that trend has reversed, with Indigenous baccalaureate graduates reporting an unemployment rate of 5.2%, compared to 6.5% for non-Indigenous graduates. In addition, Indigenous baccalaureate graduates who find employment are more likely than non-Indigenous graduates to report being in a job related to their program, and that the knowledge and skills they acquired are useful in their job. Among graduates, women (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) report a lower average income than men.

Table 8. Baccalaureate Graduates' Employment Outcomes by Indigenous Identity and Gender, 2021 to 2023

	Respondents	Of those employed...					Mean Annual Income from Main Job
		Not in Labour Force	Unemployment Rate	In Job Related to Program	Skills Acquired Useful in Work		
Indigenous	1,036	8.8%	5.2%	83.0%	90.0%	\$69,773	
Woman	757	8.3%	5.4%	83.2%	91.7%	\$66,288	
Man	274	9.6%	4.5%	82.4%	85.2%	\$79,312	
Non-Indigenous	22,322	9.6%	6.5%	75.6%	85.9%	\$71,432	
Woman	13,485	9.8%	6.0%	76.1%	87.2%	\$66,319	
Man	8,817	9.3%	7.2%	74.9%	83.8%	\$78,889	

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Graduates

Each year, former diploma, associate degree, or certificate program learners in the BC post-secondary system are asked to participate in a province-wide survey. These former learners are surveyed within two years of completing or leaving their program. They provide feedback on student satisfaction, ratings of programs, further education, and employment outcomes. Not all students surveyed have achieved a credential; students who complete the bulk of their credits at one institution but move to another to complete the credential (e.g. university transfer students), are also included in this survey. Students included in the employment outcomes have acquired a credential.⁴⁶

Table 9 below shows that, compared to other surveys, respondents from the diploma, associate degree and certificate programs are less likely to report being in the labour force. Respondents who are taking further education contribute to lower reported labour force participation. Table 9 also shows that Indigenous learners experienced higher unemployment rates compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts (8.4% vs 7.6%), and unemployment rates are higher for both groups compared to the 2021 Learners Report preceding years (2017-2019). Among Indigenous learners, men had a higher unemployment rate than women (12.6% vs. 7.2%); that trend was also true among non-Indigenous graduates (10.2% vs 6.4%). Among those who are employed, Indigenous learners are slightly more likely to be in a job related to their program, and slightly more likely to find that the knowledge and skills acquired are useful in the job.

⁴⁶ Note that there are no trades programs included with the diploma, associate degree, and certificate program results.

Table 9. Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Graduates' Employment Outcomes by Indigenous Identity and Gender, 2021 to 2023

	Respondents	Of those employed...					Mean Annual Income from Main Job
		Not in Labour Force	Unemployment Rate	In Job Related to Program	Skills Acquired Useful in Work		
Indigenous	1,673	12.4%	8.4%	78.9%	90.2%	\$46,769	
Woman	1,281	11.7%	7.2%	81.3%	90.8%	\$45,274	
Man	384	14.0%	12.6%	70.3%	87.9%	\$52,199	
Non-Indigenous	22,985	11.3%	7.6%	75.6%	87.7%	\$50,677	
Woman	15,020	9.8%	6.4%	78.4%	89.4%	\$48,522	
Man	7,906	14.2%	10.2%	69.7%	84.0%	\$55,179	

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

Apprenticeship Learners⁴⁷

The BC Student Outcomes Survey includes learners who participated in apprenticeship programs, which is a combination of on-the-job training and classroom learning that leads to a trades credential or “ticket” to practice a trade, usually within four years. About 20% of an apprentice’s time is spent on technical training, which is delivered through a public post-secondary institution or private training organization. Men represent most apprentices: Indigenous women account for 17% of all Indigenous former apprentices surveyed, compared to 9% for non-Indigenous women.

Table 10 below shows that Indigenous and non-Indigenous former apprentices report high levels of satisfaction with their overall education, the quality of their course instruction, and their workplace training experience. Regardless of Indigenous or non-Indigenous status, men tend to report higher levels of satisfaction with their workplace training experience than women. A lower proportion of Indigenous former apprentices obtain their certificate of qualification compared to non-Indigenous former apprentices (80.8% vs. 85.5%). Non-Indigenous women are less likely to report having obtained their certificate of qualification compared to non-Indigenous men. This is flipped for Indigenous respondents, with Indigenous women being more likely to report having obtained their certificate of qualification compared to Indigenous men.

Table 10. Apprenticeship Learner Education Outcomes by Indigenous Identity and Gender, 2021 to 2023

	Respondents	Satisfied with Workplace Training Experience	Obtained Certificate of Qualification
Indigenous	297	91.3%	80.8%
Woman	50	86.7%	83.0%
Man	244	92.1%	80.5%
Non-Indigenous	4,316	91.1%	85.5%
Woman	380	86.9%	82.3%
Man	3,917	91.4%	85.7%

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

⁴⁷ Apprenticeship respondents include those who attended private institutions.

As illustrated in Table 11 below, 2.4% of Indigenous former apprentices were not in the labour force at the time of survey. Indigenous former apprentices face an unemployment rate double that of non-Indigenous former apprentices (5.6% vs 2.8%). Among former apprentices, Indigenous women had the highest unemployment rate (8.2%) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous former apprentices.

Table 11 below shows that of those who are employed, Indigenous and non-Indigenous former apprentices reported that they were in a job related to the program at a similar same rate (92%). Indigenous and non-Indigenous former apprentices reported similar median hourly wages at \$36 and 35\$ respectively, but women reported lower median wages than men (whether Indigenous or not).

Table 11. Apprenticeship Student Employment Outcomes by Indigenous Identity and Gender, 2021 to 2023

	Respondents	Not in Labour Force	Unemployment Rate	Of those employed...		
				In Job Related to Program	Knowledge and Skills Acquired Useful in Work	Mean Hourly Wage at Main Job
Indigenous	297	2.4%	5.6%	90.7%	91.9%	\$36
Woman	50	2.0%	8.2%	84.4%	86.7%	\$31
Man	244	2.5%	5.1%	91.9%	92.8%	\$37
Non-Indigenous	4,316	1.9%	2.8%	91.8%	92.0%	\$35
Woman	380	1.6%	5.4%	87.0%	90.7%	\$30
Man	3,917	2.0%	2.6%	92.2%	92.1%	\$35

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

Trades Foundation and Trades-Related Vocational Program Learners

The BC Student Outcomes Survey also surveys learners from trades foundation programs, which give trades learners the key skills and knowledge needed for entry into a particular trade, and trades-related vocational programs, which offer a blend of academic and practical skills and provide expertise that is broader than foundation training. In this report, outcomes for trades foundation and trades-related vocational learners have been combined except for questions that were asked of only one learner group.

Trades foundation programs offer training in both classrooms and in-shop settings and for some learners it can lead to an apprenticeship. Former trades foundation program learners were asked if they had tried to get employment as an apprentice after leaving their program. Table 12 below shows that a majority of both Indigenous (83.1%) and non-Indigenous (84.0%) former trades foundation respondents tried to get employment as an apprentice. However, of those who tried to get an apprenticeship, Indigenous former trades foundation learners were less likely to have been successful than non-Indigenous learners (70.9% vs. 81.5%).

Table 12. Trades Foundation Learner Education Outcomes by Indigenous Identity, 2021 to 2023

	Respondents	Sought employment as an Apprentice after leaving program	Of those who sought employments as an Apprentice... Were successful	Of those who were successful... Responded their program prepared them for their training
Indigenous	528	83.1%	70.9%	90.8%
Non-Indigenous	4,262	84.0%	81.5%	94.0%

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

Table 13 below shows that Indigenous learners that are former trades foundation learners report a higher unemployment rate than non-Indigenous former trades foundation learners (15.5% vs. 9.3%). Of those employed, Indigenous former trades foundation learners also report being less likely to be in a job related to their program than non-Indigenous trades foundation learners (73.8% vs. 80.6%). Among Indigenous former trades foundation learners, women and men had very similar unemployment rates and similar likelihood to be in a job related to their program.

Table 13. Trades Learners Employment Outcomes by Indigenous Identity and Gender, 2021 to 2023

	Respondents	Of those employed...				
		Not in Labour Force	Unemployment Rate	In Job Related to Program	Knowledge and Skills Acquired Useful in Work	Mean Hourly Wage at Main Job
Indigenous	528	8.5%	15.5%	73.8%	86.5%	\$24
Woman	161	11.9%	15.0%	71.4%	85.3%	\$22
Man	364	7.1%	15.9%	74.8%	86.8%	\$24
Non-Indigenous	4,262	7.7%	9.3%	80.6%	87.5%	\$23
Woman	832	7.6%	10.3%	72.5%	82.6%	\$21
Man	3,412	7.6%	9.0%	82.5%	88.7%	\$24

Source: BC Student Outcomes Survey, 2021; 2022; 2023

CHAPTER 7 – New for this Issue and Future Directions

Key Takeaways

- Indigenous enrolment in BC's public post-secondary system has largely recovered from COVID-19 declines, unlike the overall decline in domestic enrolment.
- Early findings from the 2023 Gender and Sex Data Standard show Indigenous respondents are more likely to identify as non-Binary than non-Indigenous respondents.
- Over the past decade, enrolment in Aboriginal languages, education, and studies has grown.
- Nearly 75% of students in these programs over the last ten years have been Indigenous.
- There has been a significant increase in credentials awarded in Indigenous languages and linguistics, especially among Indigenous learners, supporting language revitalization efforts.

Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic

An important factor impacting the post-secondary system in BC since the previous report is COVID. The previous report was released at the height of the pandemic, but reported pre-pandemic data. This current report explores the impact of the pandemic, albeit with tentative interpretations. After all, it is too soon to see what trends will continue, and which will revert to pre-pandemic patterns. For the public post-secondary system in BC overall, research found that during the pandemic, “some sub-populations of graduates of 2019/2020 were less inclined to enrol in post-secondary education in 2020/2021, but there is some evidence of recovery beginning to emerge.”⁴⁸ That parallels what the data in this report indicates for Indigenous learners: a decline in enrolment during the pandemic, seen especially in the drop in FTE numbers, but a rebound since. In fact, the rebound in Indigenous enrolment took place within the context of continued decline for domestic learners overall. That said, it will take more time to better understand post-COVID trends.

New Gender and Sex Data Standard

The new Gender and Sex Data Standard has now been released by the government,⁴⁹ and updated gender categories are beginning to be included in post-secondary data, with a non-Binary option now available to respondents. Some preliminary numbers are available in the Central Data Warehouse (CDW) data but limited STP data, meaning that data from research-intensive universities has only been seen for 2022/23. Nonetheless, some tentative comments can be made. For example, Indigenous respondents have been more than twice as likely as non-Indigenous respondents to identify as non-Binary over the past five years (see Table 14 below). While the sample size is small, these results might reflect the diverse and complex understandings of gender in some Indigenous cultures, as represented by the umbrella term Two-Spirit. Conversely, these early results might simply be a matter of differences in adoption or reporting at the institutional level. Either way, these data points will be worth monitoring in the coming years as they become better established.

⁴⁸ *Student Transitions Project (STP): Transitions of BC High School Graduates into BC Public Post-Secondary Education (2023)*, 25.

⁴⁹ Province of British Columbia (2023), *Gender and Sex Data Standard*.

Table 14. Indigenous Non-Binary Response Rates and Overall Indigenous Learner Rates, 2018/19 to 2022/23 Academic Year

	% of Non-Binary Indigenous respondents	% of all Indigenous domestic learners
2018-19	21.3%	8.8%
2019-20	18.7%	8.4%
2020-21	17.0%	8.5%
2021-22	17.8%	8.7%
2022-23	15.4%	8.8%

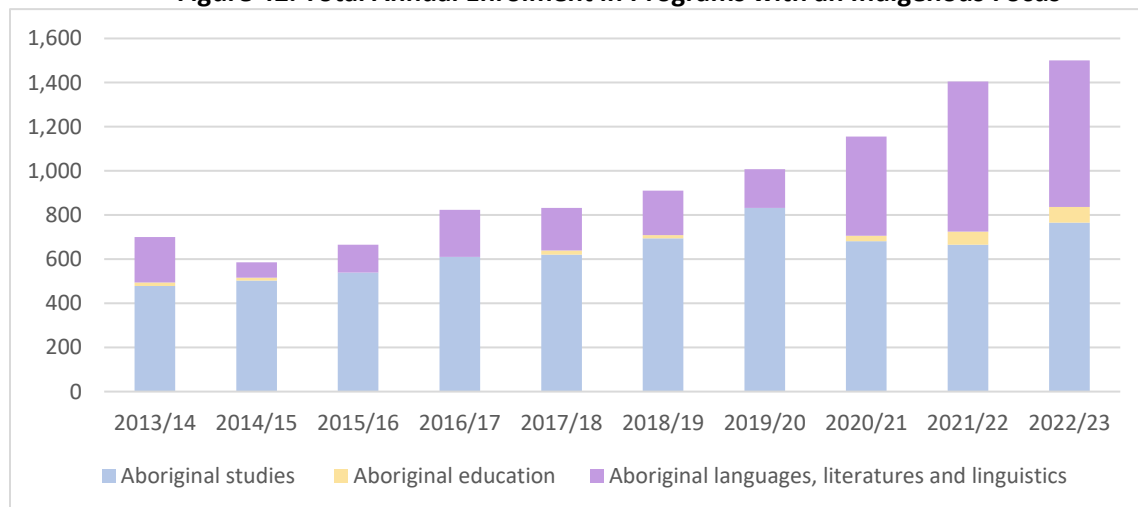
Figure shows the percentage of respondents who self-identified as both Indigenous and non-binary, compared to the percentage of respondents who self-identified as Indigenous.

Source: Central Data Warehouse, October 2023 submission

Indigenous Studies and Languages Programs

Greater access for Indigenous learners in conventional post-secondary programming is fundamental to ensuring improved educational outcomes and labour market participation for Indigenous peoples in BC. Additionally, commitments to reconciliation and the goals of the Declaration Act Action Plan involve supporting programs that foster Indigenous cultural resiliency and self-determination. This includes programs that are categorized under the following CIP designations: Aboriginal languages, literatures and linguistics (16.1001); Aboriginal education (13.0203); and Aboriginal studies (05.0202)⁵⁰. Enrolment within specific program classes has fluctuated over the past ten years, but the combined enrolment for all three has grown consistently (see Figure 42 below).

Figure 42. Total Annual Enrolment in Programs with an Indigenous Focus⁵¹



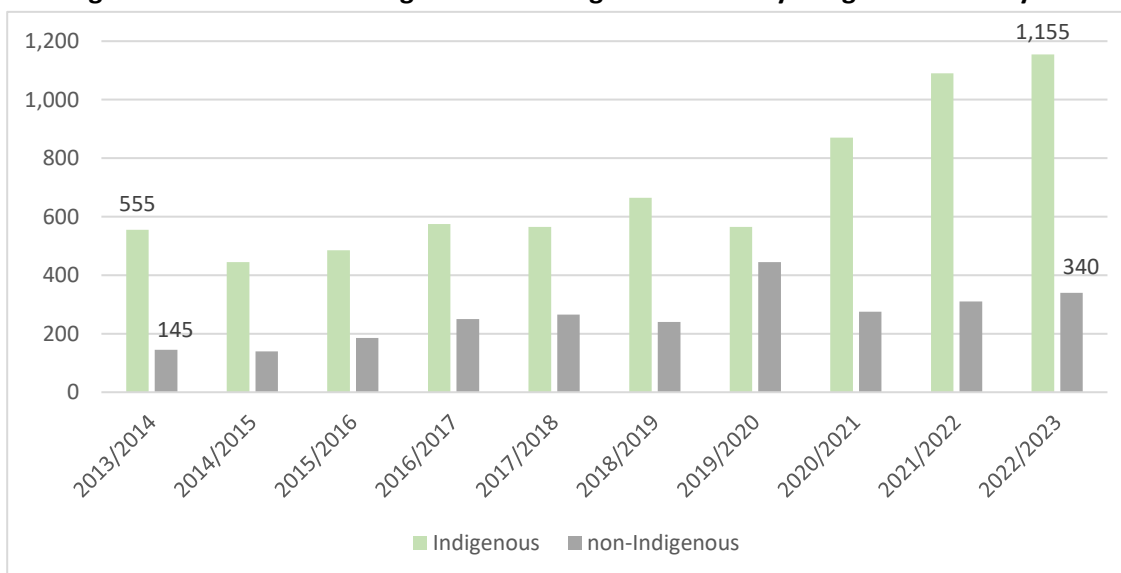
Total domestic and international enrolment in programs with an Indigenous focus for the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Academic Years
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

⁵⁰ The 2023 Student Transitions Project classifies programs using the 2016 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP). The names of each program have been changed with the release of the 2021 CIP: Aboriginal languages, literatures and linguistics -> Indigenous languages, literatures, and linguistics of the Americas; Aboriginal education -> Indigenous education; and Aboriginal studies -> Indigenous peoples of the Americas studies.

⁵¹ Totals include international students.

In addition, despite individual years as outliers, growth in enrolment has been maintained by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (see Figure 43 below). Over the past ten years, around 73% of students enrolled in the three program classes have been Indigenous learners.

Figure 43. Enrolment in Programs with Indigenous Focus by Indigenous Identity⁵²



Total domestic enrolment in programs with an Indigenous focus by Indigenous identity for the 2013/14 to 2022/23 Academic Years
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

Finally, the maintenance and revitalization of Indigenous languages has been identified by the DRIPA Action Plan as a key part of the reconciliation process and of supporting Indigenous social and cultural well-being. Below, Table 15 shows a largely steady increase in the number of credentials awarded within programs in the class 'Indigenous languages, literatures and linguistics'. As with the enrolment numbers in Figure 40 above, Indigenous learners outnumber non-Indigenous learners, but both groups have experienced growth over the past ten years.

Table 15. Indigenous Languages, Literatures and Linguistics (16.1001) Credentials Awarded, by Indigenous Identity, 2013/14 to 2022/23

	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023
Indigenous	30	25	*	35	45	50	55	55	80	280
Non-Indigenous	*	*	*	*	*	20	*	10	25	20

Credentials awarded for CIP 16.1001 (Indigenous Languages, Literatures and Linguistics) by Indigenous Identity for the 2013/14 To 2022/23 Fiscal Years
Source: Student Transitions Project, Fall 2023 submission

⁵²Non-Indigenous enrolment counts include international students.

CONCLUSION

This report highlights shifts and continuities in Indigenous learners' experiences and outcomes, revealing both encouraging trends and gaps in specific areas, warranting more research and intervention.

K-12 Completions, Transitions, Program Areas and Institution Type

For Indigenous learners, disparities in graduation rates, educational pathways, and barriers to post-secondary transitions persist in K-12 education. However, a positive shift is seen in the narrowing of the gap in high school completion rates, and in immediate transitions. In terms of immediate transitions, comparing the 2013/14 cohort (as reported in 2021) with the 2017/18 cohort, the gap decreased from 12.2% to 11.6%. Additionally, for the 2017/18 Grade 12 graduate cohort, 44% of Indigenous learners that entered Grade 8 went on to graduate from Grade 12 and enter post-secondary within five years of graduation. This is an increase from 39% compared to the 2013/14 Grade 12 graduate cohort that was documented in the 2021 report.

Similarly, gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners persist in five-year cumulative transition to research-intensive universities. The 2017/18 cohort witnessed a slight increase in the transition rate compared to the 2013/14 cohort covered in the 2021 report. However, relative to the 2021 report, there is a decline in the proportion of Indigenous learners attending colleges, alongside an increase in enrolment at research-intensive universities. While the average minimum GPA at research-intensive universities has remained relatively stable, some institutions have introduced more holistic admissions processes that are less reliant on GPA. These changes indicate evolving approaches to access, but the continued gaps in transition rates may reflect that broader systemic factors still influence outcomes.

In terms of program areas and credentials, a mixed picture emerges. Indigenous learners are more likely than non-Indigenous learners to enroll in arts and sciences, health, and education, and less likely to enroll in business and management, and engineering and applied sciences. Compared to non-Indigenous learners, both First Nations and Métis learners are more likely to earn certificates or developmental level credentials and less likely to earn baccalaureate degrees. However, among both First Nations and Métis learners, a higher proportion earn baccalaureate degrees than diplomas.

A related development is the increase in the number of Indigenous learners eligible to apply for new teacher certification, which rose by 33% from 2018/19 to 2022/23. The growing number underscores the importance of fostering supportive pathways from teacher eligibility to acquiring teacher certification. While recent gains reflect meaningful progress, continued attention is needed to ensure these opportunities translate into representation in the profession, aligned with the broader goal of building a teaching workforce that reflects BC's diversity and promotes Indigenous perspectives in education. Action 4.02 in the [DRIPA Action Plan](#) commits the Province to "develop and implement an effective recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the K-12 public education system." Toward this end, the Ministries of ECC and PSFS, FNESC, and the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) have formed a working group that is co-developing initiatives to support the training, recruitment and retention of First Nations teachers.⁵³

⁵³ <https://declaration.gov.bc.ca/actions/4-02/>

Former Youth in Care (FYIC) Learners

As mentioned, Indigenous learners, specifically First Nations learners, represent a disproportionately high share of former youth in care (FYIC) students in the public post-secondary system. Data limitations exist due to inconsistent identification of children and youth in care (CYIC) across school districts. The Province has committed to improving their educational prospects, especially in implementing [DRIPA Action 4.18](#) which stipulates that in keeping with the First Nations Children and Youth in Care Protocol, it is incumbent on the Province to “support improved education outcomes of current and former First Nation children and youth in care, including meaningful data collection to inform policy, planning and service delivery.”

Distinctions-based Data

In addition to gender, age, institution type, and development region, additional distinctions-based data has been included under the number of credentials awarded by fiscal year, credentials by program area and type, and the proportion of learners with youth in care status. Distinctions-based data is not available, however, for K-12 completions, transitions to post-secondary, and FTEs. It is expected that this data, along with any emerging and future data, will support the Province’s policy work.

Demographically, when compared to First Nations learners, a larger proportion of Métis learners is in the younger age groups (18 to 21 and 22 to 24 age groups), in addition to the growth in the number of learners identifying as Métis from 2013/14 AY to 2022/23 AY. The previous report showed an even distribution of First Nations learners across development regions, with continued higher enrolment at institutions in the Cariboo/North region. In this report, while First Nations learners still have a strong presence in the Cariboo/North, their proportion of enrolment in this region has declined over time. At the same time, other regions have seen increased representation of First Nations learners, indicating a shift in geographic distribution. For Métis learners, the previous report documented a higher proportion of enrolment in the Mainland/Southwest and Vancouver Island/Coast regions; however, this report shows a more even distribution across most development regions, with the exception of Cariboo/North, where representation remains lower. These patterns reflect distinct regional enrolment for First Nations and Métis learners and may be influenced by factors such as changing learner preferences and access to institutions and programs.

This report displays a higher enrolment of First Nations at college, institute, and teaching-intensive university compared to Métis and non-Indigenous learners who report a higher representation in RIUs. However, compared to the 5-year average over 2014/15 - 2018/19 Academic Years, covered in the 2021 report, the current report shows a downswing in First Nations learners’ college enrolment and a rise in RIU enrolment. To ascertain whether it signals a shifting trend for First Nations learners requires analyzing data over the coming years. Further, the report reveals distinct patterns in credential attainment by program areas among First Nations and Métis learners during the 2022/23 fiscal year.

Future Research

Areas for future research include but are not limited to:

- The impact of demographics on enrolment trends is a useful analysis but omits the impact of the labour market on enrolment trends. How and to what extent do current labour market conditions affect enrolment, retention, and completion rates?
- The learning path of a graduate cohort is useful to highlight patterns of transitions and learner mobility, but does not account for transitions to regional campus locations or for learners taking online learning. Research has been discussed to gain a stronger understanding of learner mobility, including analyzing online vs in-person enrolment by various demographics.
- Different post secondary institution types often have different levels of instructional activity (i.e., part-time versus full-time courseload). Compared to non-Indigenous learners, do Indigenous learners have varying levels of instructional activity? And if so, are the differences more prevalent depending on the type of post secondary institution?
- First Nations mandated Institutes and First Nations led programs are increasing in their prevalence and availability. Compared to non-Indigenous learners and/or First Nations learners in the rest of the system, do transitions, retention, and credential attainment vary for First Nation's learner entering these institutions and programs?
- The gender gap in enrolment of Indigenous learners is wider than non-Indigenous learners. Indigenous men without post-secondary education are more likely to be employed than Indigenous women without post secondary as Indigenous men have higher participation in jobs that do not require post-secondary education. However, more research should be conducted to better understand this gap.
- Compared to non-Indigenous learners, a higher proportion of Indigenous learners are enrolled in Developmental programs. Although enrolment in Developmental programs remains relatively high, the number of Indigenous learners in Developmental programs has decreased by over 50% since 2009/10, while the number of Indigenous learners enrolled in Arts and Sciences, Health, and Human and Social Services has increased over the same period, suggesting that Indigenous learners may be earning Developmental credentials then enrolling in other program areas. However, more research needs to be done to better understand the pathways of Indigenous learners upon completion of a Developmental programs.