


Acknowledgement that we are on the Secwepemc territory and land of the Secwepemc People:

School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) acknowledges that we reside in Secwepemcúl'ecw and recognizes the Secwepemc as the keepers of their traditions and knowledge.



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# Executive Summary

School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson) (also referred to as the District and as SD73) acknowledges that we reside in Secwepemcúl'ecw and recognizes the Secwepemc People as the keepers of their traditions and knowledge. The District believes that a relevant and engaging learning experience is necessary to maximize the success of Aboriginal learners. Truth and reconciliation through equity and inclusion are principles that are fundamental to the positive learning experience of every student. Ensuring equity is the foundation for improving student achievement and is central to each learner's experience and engagement.

As outlined in the [Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement \(2016–2022\)](#) (also referred to as the Agreement), the District recognizes the potential of its Aboriginal learners. Toward this objective, in 2016, the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) and the District collaboratively implemented the fourth Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. Respectful, inclusive and ongoing consultations between SD73 and its Aboriginal partners resulted in this Agreement, which is based upon mutual values of reciprocated respect and consensus building and is focused on the goals and strategies that lead toward academic and personal success for all District Aboriginal learners. The four goals of the Agreement are outlined later in this report.

Targeted enhancement funding, which is provided to SD73 by the Ministry of Education, is spent on enhancing Aboriginal education programs and services to Aboriginal learners. Such funding is not used to replace other funded programs, such as inclusive education or English language learning (ELL), nor is it used to deliver the provincial curriculum.

Instead, in partnership and collaboration with the aforementioned AEC, the District allocates this funding and oversees the interest of all District Aboriginal learners in the areas of academic, social-emotional, cultural and language enhancements that improve such learners' school experience and academic achievement.

Targeted Aboriginal educational enhancement funding based on 2823 full time equivalent (FTE) students for 2019–2020 is shown in Chart 1 in the Funding and Budget Summary of this report.

# Action Items

To address the continued educational achievement improvements, the following action items will be addressed during the 2020–2021 school year.

The District will:

Explore partnerships with Thompson Rivers University (TRU) to develop training for Aboriginal Education workers and teachers.

Finalize mutually agreed upon Local Education Agreements (LEAs) between each local Secwepemc First Nation and the Board of Education.

Develop a District Aboriginal Parent Advisory Council (DAPAC) to represent Aboriginal voice and advocacy, as well as to foster a culture of inclusion and acceptance.

Create a District Aboriginal Student Leadership Council (DASLC) for Aboriginal learners in grades 8 through 12.

Expand the number of professional development opportunities to increase staff members' capacity to build effective social-emotional skills and trauma-informed practice.

Develop quarterly Aboriginal newsletters and regular AEC bulletins for parents, in order to improve

Increase the number of KAIROS Blanket Exercise lessons in the District to foster truth, understanding, respect and reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Develop a plan to enhance the support of early Aboriginal learners.

Develop a current language curriculum to offer Secwepemctsin in District schools.

The District supports the provision of the most enabling learning environment for all District Aboriginal students, and it supports equitable access to education for all Aboriginal learners while honouring the diversity that each learner contributes to society.

This report outlines progress, through a review of the use of targeted enhancement funding and educational achievement outcomes, on the District's commitment to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

## Introduction

Accommodation of Aboriginal culture and identity should be regarded as a core responsibility of public institutions rather than as a special project to be undertaken after other obligations are met. As summarized in the (1996), educational institutions have a pivotal role in transforming the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society.)

Therefore, the District supports the provision of the most enabling learning environment for all District Aboriginal learners. The District supports equitable access to education for all Aboriginal learners, while honouring the diversity that each learner contributes to society.

This report outlines progress, through a review of the use of targeted enhancement funding and educational achievement outcomes, on the District's commitment to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

The District provides a public education to approximately 15,000 students, of which approximately 2800 are of Aboriginal ancestry. District residents live in the territories of seven bands or First Nations: Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, Skeetchestn Indian Band, Whispering Pines/Clinton (Pelt'iq't First Nation), Simpcw First Nation, Neskonlith Indian Band, Adams Lake Indian Band and Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band. Most District residents are in Kamloops. Others are in rural communities, including Chase, Barriere, Logan Lake, Westwold, Savona and Clearwater.

Linking student achievement to equity, inclusion and diversity promotes learner well-being, engagement and school connectedness and results in the creation of educated citizens. Therefore, the concepts of equity, inclusion and diversity are central to the District's vision, which is:

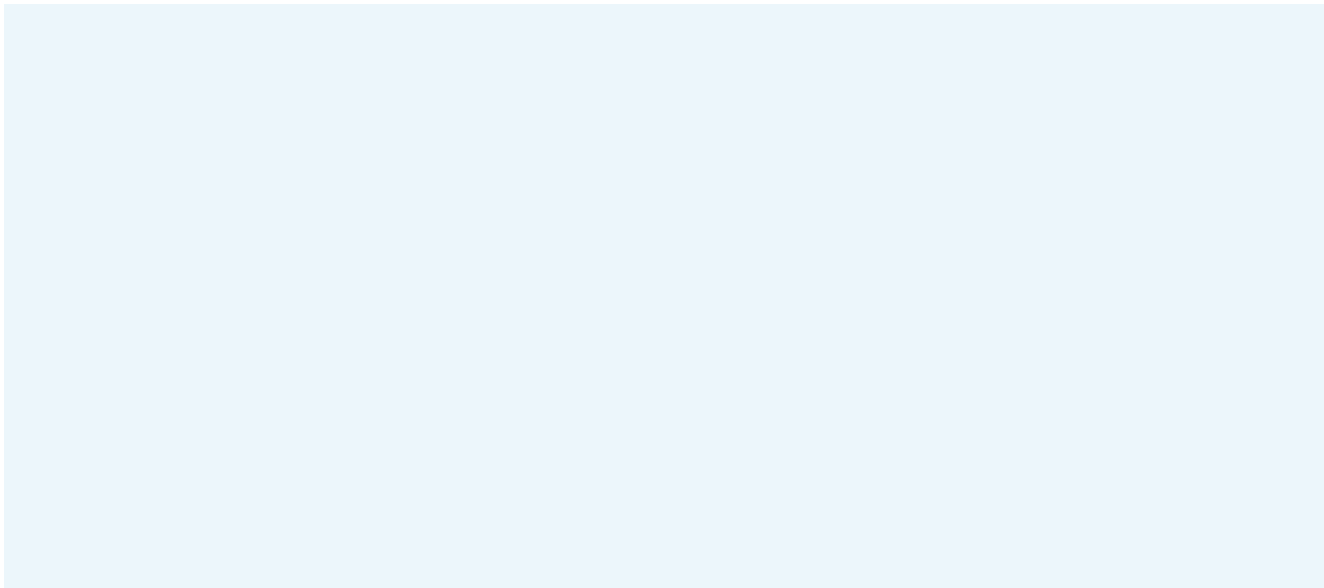
Through the educational experience, the enactment of this vision enables Aboriginal learners to not only ensure that learners can succeed personally and academically, regardless of background, identity or personal circumstances.

The District supports the provision of the most enabling learning environment for all Aboriginal learners, and it supports equitable access to education for those learners, while honouring the diversity that each one contributes to society.

Through a review of the District's use of targeted enhancement funding and resultant educational achievement outcomes, this report summarizes progress on the District's commitment to the Agreement.

## District Strategic Priorities

As outlined in its [Five-Year Strategic Plan](#), the District's vision of ensuring success for all students aligns to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and imbeds Aboriginal education in all six of the District's strategic priorities. Aboriginal education is part of the District's core responsibility to ensure that its graduating Aboriginal students cross the stage with dignity, purpose and opportunities.



## Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

In 2016, the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) and the District collaboratively implemented the fourth [Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement](#). This Agreement, the result of respectful, inclusive, and ongoing consultations between SD73 and its Aboriginal partners, is based upon mutual values of reciprocated respect and consensus building and is focused on the goals and strategies that lead toward academic and personal success for all Aboriginal learners in the District.

This Agreement focuses on four goals:

### 1. Student Success:

To increase the educational success of all Aboriginal learners.

To increase the sense of identity, belonging and pride in all Aboriginal learners.

### 2. Language and Culture

To increase the awareness and understanding, amongst all students and staff members, of Aboriginal culture, traditions, languages, historical contributions and contemporary contributions.

### 3. District and School Culture

To increase Aboriginal learners' sense of belonging, including sense of place, personal and cultural identity, and self-esteem in caring, safe, inclusive environments.

### 4. Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement

To enhance, nurture and value positive relationships between the District, parents and communities.

The District's strategic and learning plans and its schools' learning plans are all aligned to the Agreement and enhance the District's commitment to the continuance of collaboration between the District and its Aboriginal partners.



# Policy and Governance

As outlined in the [District's Strategic Plan](#), all school-age residents are entitled to enrol in the District's schools. The District's mission as an educational entity is summarized in the preamble to the School Act:

...it is the goal of a democratic society to ensure that all its members receive an education that enables them to contribute to the health and stability of that society;

...the purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to become literate, to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Therefore, as a District, we are guided by the following statements:

We believe in the equitable participation and contributions of all learners;

We promote understanding, acceptance, dignity, mutual respect and inclusion, in order to make our school communities equitable for all learners; and,

We provide high quality education to all learners in a setting that is most enabling and least restrictive.

Aligned to the Ministry of Education's [Diversity in BC Schools Framework](#), SD73 provides conditions that foster success for all students. These conditions include:

Equitable access to and equitable participation in quality education for Aboriginal learners;

District and school cultures that value diversity and respond to the diverse social and cultural needs of the communities that the District serves;

School cultures that promote understanding of others and respect for all;

Learning and working environments that are safe, welcoming and free from discrimination, harassment and violence;

Decision-making processes that give a voice to all members of the school community; and,

Policies and practices that promote fair and equitable treatment of all learners.

In accordance and alignment with the stated priorities of the Ministry's [Aboriginal Education Branch](#), the District recognizes that its learners are its future.

Therefore, the District strives to:

1. Improve the success of Aboriginal learners;
2. Support all students in their learning about Aboriginal peoples; and,
3. Assist teachers in their efforts to bring Aboriginal knowledge into their teaching practice.

Several guiding documents drive Aboriginal Education in the District and create a framework of action for Aboriginal student success:

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[Ministry of Education Indigenous Education in British Columbia](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

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[BC Tripartite Education Agreement: Supporting First Nation Student Success \(2018\)](#)

[BC Teachers' Council: Professional Standards for BC Educators](#)

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[School District No. 73 District Learning Plan](#)

[School District No. 73: Policy 709.2](#)

# Funding and Budget Summary

To support access to equitable educational outcomes, the Ministry of Education provides targeted Aboriginal education funding. School-age students who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry and who participate in Aboriginal education programs and services offered by public schools are eligible for Aboriginal Education funding. Application of these funds requires the collaboration of boards of education and local Aboriginal communities to develop and deliver education programs and services that integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture and/or language.

Targeted funding provided to the District is spent on the provision of Aboriginal education programs and services to Aboriginal learners. The delivery and outcomes of these programs and services are documented through the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. These funds are not used to replace other funded programs, such as inclusive education or English language learning (ELL), nor are they used to deliver provincial curriculum. Instead, they are used to enhance student programming for the purpose of equitable educational outcomes for Aboriginal learners.

In 2019–2020, the provincial government increased the targeted funding amount to school districts from \$1200 to \$1450 per student.

Targeted Aboriginal funding based on 2823 FTE (an increase of 304 students) for 2019–2020 is shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1. Targeted Aboriginal Enhancement Funding for 2019–2020.\*

Funding	Revenue
Ministry of Education	\$3,856,550.00
	Expenses
Úcæ-, } *	\$2,314,111.00
Ó^}^, c•	568,601.00
Supplies / Services / Supports	243,838.00
Cultural Enhancement	297,450.00
Academic Enhancement	203,000.00
Social-Emotional Enhancement	36,000.00
Language Enhancement	190,000.00
Total Expenses	\$3,853,000.00
Net Carryover	\$3,550.00

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic (in the period from April 2020 to June 2020), there may be unanticipated carryover from unspent budgets. Since carryovers due to COVID-19 were not available at the time of this report, they are not available for Aboriginal Education.

# Staff and Staff Development

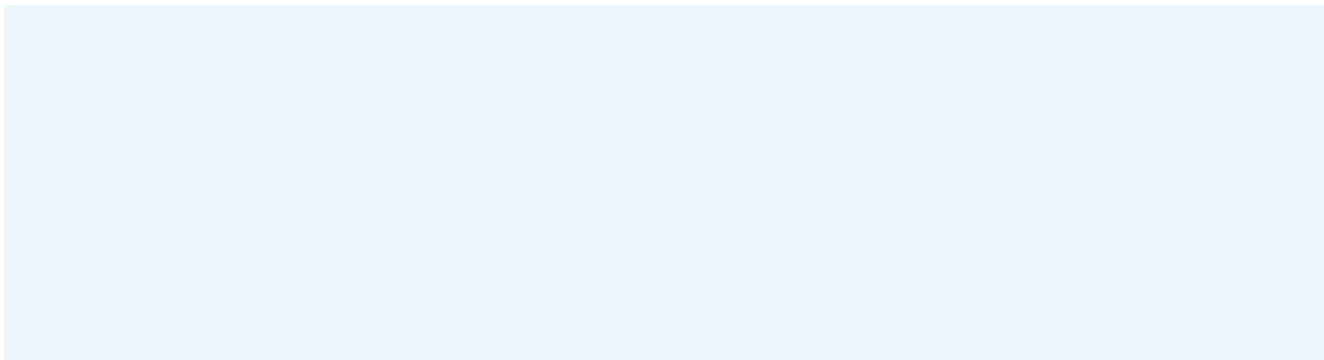
The focus of Aboriginal education in SD73 is Aboriginal student success. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), one of the key factors for such success is the capacity of the staff (OECD, 2001). See Figure 1.

Factors Affecting Student Achievement. Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005.

Accountability to meet the Ministry of Education's targeted funding requirements for programs and services

## Staffing

Currently, the District Aboriginal Education department is overseen by the Director of Instruction – Elementary



## Staff Development

The District follows a hiring policy for new Aboriginal staff that requires consultation, during the hiring process, with the AEC. Many support staff and teacher leader positions have human rights exemptions to support the who have such ancestry and who possess local knowledge of the communities.

Support staff, such as Aboriginal Education workers, often bring a wealth of cultural knowledge and Aboriginal ways of knowing and learning to their students. However, outside of informal collaboration and mentorship, there is no process for formal training in instructional practices. Currently, an annual orientation reviews District require.

In 2019, the District began discussions with Thompson Rivers University (TRU) regarding creation of a dual TRU in the creation of this program.

## Professional Development Day – Indigenous Focus

Through the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA) (2018), all school districts are to designate one professional development day annually to have an Indigenous focus. Initially, the District professional development committee chose April 27, 2020, as this day. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent short timeline to reorganize and respond, the committee and the Kamloops Thompson Teachers' Association (KTТА) considered cancelling and making the day self-directed. However, the Aboriginal Education department, along with other partners, was able to organize a successful online day focused on Aboriginal learning.

Throughout the year, the department supported teachers with resources to embed Aboriginal content in the curriculum. In many cases, the staff were guest presenters in classrooms, modelling lessons that teachers could repeat in future.

The department also provided professional development sessions, augmented by an online resource bank of lessons, throughout the 2019–2020 school year.

# Community Collaboration

## Key Priorities and Goals

### Ministry of Education Aboriginal Branch

Targeted Aboriginal education funding requires the collaboration of boards of education and local Aboriginal communities to develop and deliver Aboriginal education programs and services that integrate academic achievement and Aboriginal culture or language or both.

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

10. We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples.

### District Learning Plan

Priority 5: Strengthen partnerships to enrich the way in which we lead, learn and work.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 4: Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement

## Aboriginal Education Council

The Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) oversees the interest of all Aboriginal learners in the support, implementation and assessment of programs and services that improve the school experience and academic achievement of those learners.

To support student achievement, the AEC is mandated to:

Advise and hold accountable the District Board regarding the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and Aboriginal education matters.

Develop a budget that outlines how targeted funds will be used to achieve the goals of the Agreement and Aboriginal Education.

Monitor progress toward reaching the four goals of the Agreement and Aboriginal Education through an annual report published each February.

Honour and acknowledge the Secwepemc People.

Increase the awareness and understanding of Secwepemc and all other Aboriginal cultures.

Provide direction, guidance and support for the activities and initiatives of the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee.

## Aboriginal Education Council Strategic Plan

The AEC Strategic Plan is the direct result of an external review that was completed in October 2019 and co-constructed by members of the AEC in November of 2019, with feedback from staff members, students and parents. The plan is aligned with the goals and objectives of the 2016–2020 Enhancement Agreement and that will guide the AEC's collective work in SD73. The AEC Strategic Plan is the direct result of an external review that was completed in October 2019 and co-constructed by members of the AEC in November of 2019, with feedback from staff members, students and parents for 2020–2023 in the areas of student success, language and culture, parent and community engagement and District and school culture.



## Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee

The Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee discusses items related to the delivery of Aboriginal education programs and services in SD73.

This committee reviews performance measures in order to ensure individual and systemic accountability for Aboriginal learner achievement. As well, the committee's goals are to:

Provide research, data and information to the

Through collective efforts, eliminating racism in schools.

Schools participate on an annual basis by engaging in the Spiral of Inquiry and, at the end of the year, submitting case studies to share their learning. The schools in the NOIE share resources, case studies and throughout BC and the Yukon, as well as in Australia, in working toward improving outcomes for all learners.

Two (2) SD73 schools participated in NOIE during the 2019–2020 school year:

Barriere Secondary School; and,

Valleyview Secondary School.

## Local Education Agreements

Local Education Agreements (LEAs) are an important mechanism to increase accountability and to promote and achieve effective working relationships between First Nations and local boards of education, enabling them to collaborate in supporting First Nation learners. Currently, the LEAs between the seven (7) local Secwepemc First Nations and the SD73 Board expired June 30, 2020. The Board and all seven First Nations have been collaborating to develop new LEAs. Although the process was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the

## District Aboriginal Parent Advisory Council

During the 2019–2020 school year, the AEC supported exploring the idea of creating a District Aboriginal Parent Advisory Council (DAPAC), starting in the 2020–2021 school year. This would encourage Aboriginal parent voice, advocacy and opportunities to build positive relationships throughout the District. The DAPAC would advise the District on any matter relating to public education to ensure that Aboriginal parent perspective and voice is consistently represented and heard, and to foster a culture of acceptance, diversity and inclusion in District schools.

## District Aboriginal Student Leadership Council

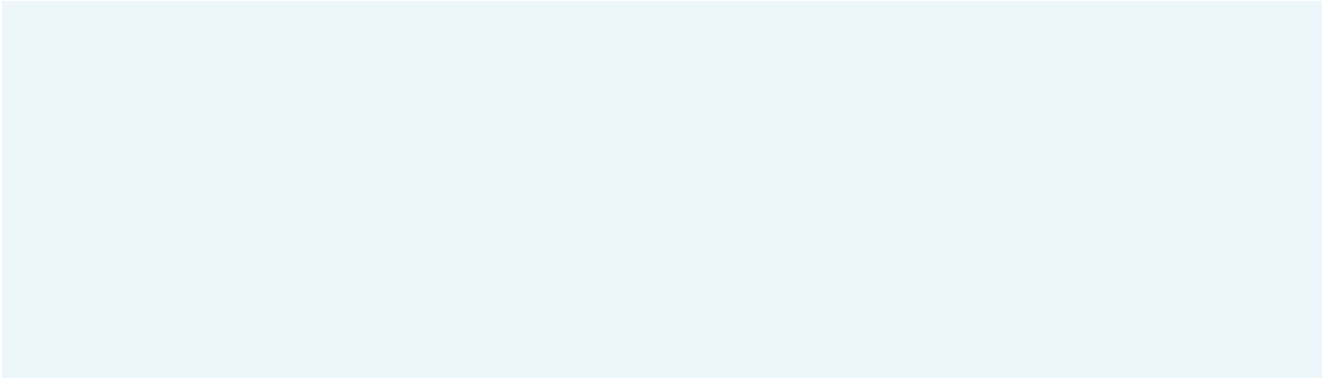
During the 2019–2020 school year, the AEC supported the idea of creating a District Aboriginal Student Leadership Council (DASLC), starting in the 2020–2021 school year. This would create a venue for Aboriginal student voice, advocacy, leadership and opportunities. The DASLC would advise the District on any matter relating to public education to ensure that Aboriginal learner perspective and voice are consistently represented and heard.

# Equity and Inclusion

## Key Priorities and Goals

### Guiding Documents

- 1.
2. Ministry of Education Aboriginal Education Branch
3. BC Auditor General's Report on Aboriginal Education



## Equity in Action Project

The Equity in Action project was implemented in a partnership between SD73 and the Ministry of Education. Equity in Action's student success framework addresses equity and inclusion for Aboriginal learners. Equity in Action's framework is built on the pillars of collaboration, cultural enhancement, reconciliation and awareness, academic enhancement, social-emotional enhancement and language enhancement. Figure 2 illustrates this framework and its four pillars, which are:

Aboriginal Student Success. Equity in Action, 2016.

During 2019–2020, the Equity in Action project team focused on:

Unpacking the framework's four pillars in collaboration with Aboriginal school teams within the Aboriginal School Lead context;

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Involving staff and community voice in the equity scan;

Building a framework for courageous conversations around systemic barriers for Aboriginal learners in schools and the District;

Identifying key areas to address in the 2020–2021 school year that will assist the District in moving toward equity for Aboriginal learners.

The District reviewed the six- (6-) year completion inequities for District Aboriginal learners. Using the learning

During 2019–2020, Equity in Action focused on the Equity in Action framework’s four pillars: the pedagogical

According to the 2019–2020 Equity Scan, the following indicates where the District exhibits (1) strength in and (2) need for work on:

- 1.

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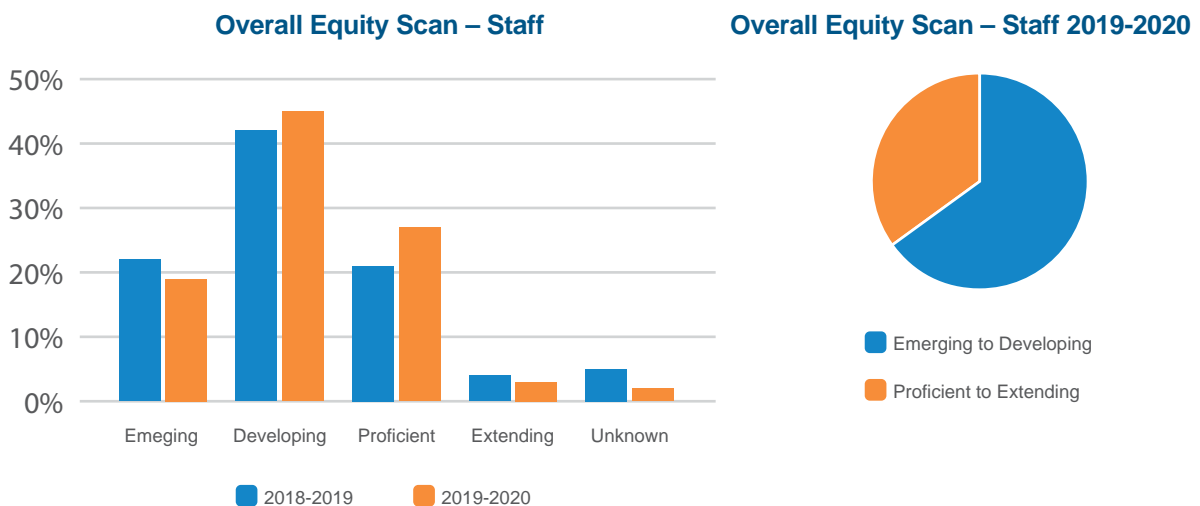
## Equity Scans

Every District school is at a different place and context in the journey to address equity, and it was important for the District to acknowledge this. Thus, for the introduction of the Equity in Action project in 2019–2020, the District intentionally started with school-based action plans. Through developing Aboriginal education leader teams and in and ownership of the project in individual schools. It also resulted in broader engagement District-wide.

Preliminary data from the 2019–2020 Equity Scan and planning tool reveals general trends for the Equity in Action project team to examine during 2020–2021 in assessing whether there can exist more District-level general supports.

Chart 2 reveals where, according to equity scans for 2018–2019 and 2019–2020, SD73 staff feel they are in regards to the framework’s four pillars.

Chart 2. Overall Equity Scan – Staff.



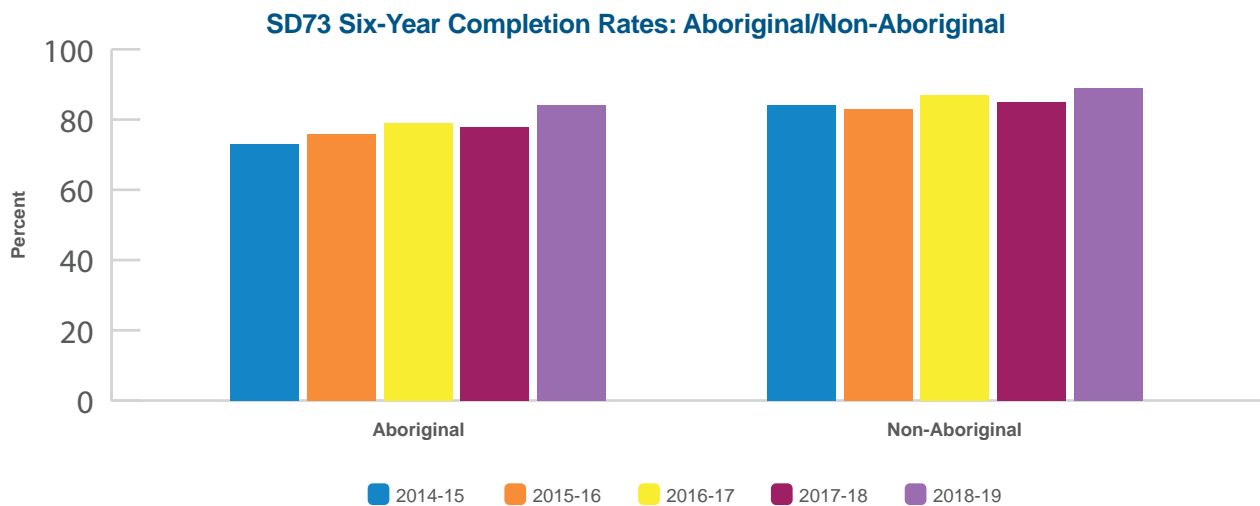


# Educational Achievement Outcomes

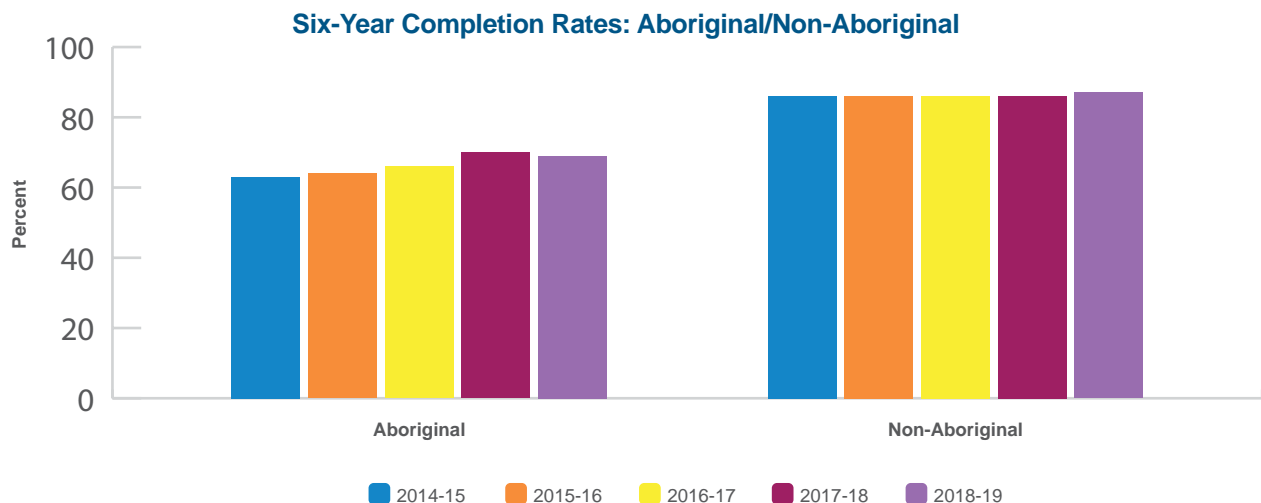
## School Completion Rates

A measure of success within the District is the six- (6-) year completion rate. In 2018–2019, the District had an eighty-four percent (84%) six-year completion rate for Aboriginal learners as compared to eighty-nine percent (89%) for non-Aboriginal students. The provincial (public schools) six-year completion rate was sixty-nine (69%) for Aboriginal learners as compared to eighty-seven (87%) for non-Aboriginal students. See charts 3 and 4.

. SD73 Six-Year Completion Rates.



: Provincial Six-Year Completion Rates.

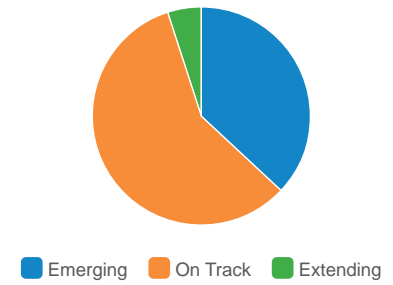




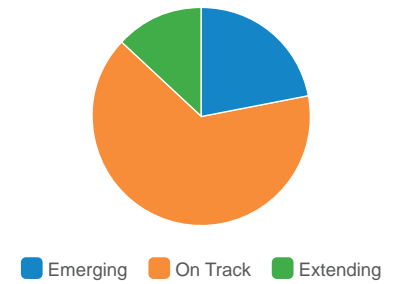
## Reading

Reading Achievements for Grades 4 and 7 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students.

### Grade 4: Aboriginal

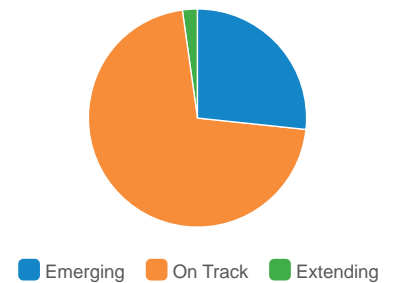


### Grade 4: Non-Aboriginal

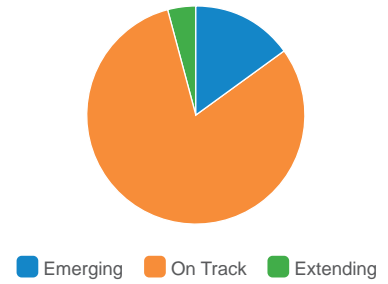


### Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 4 Reading

### Grade 7: Aboriginal



## Grade 7: Non-Aboriginal

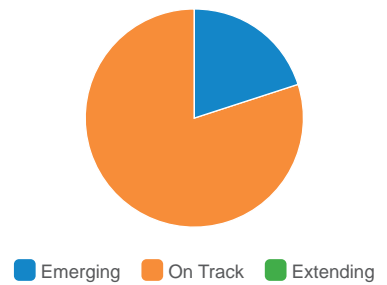


## Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 7 Reading

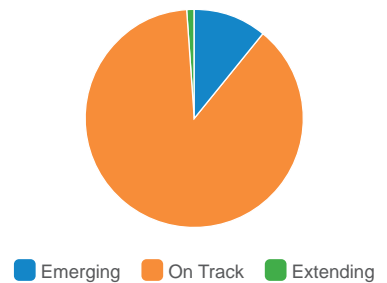
## Writing

. Writing Achievements for Grades 4 and 7 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students.

### Grade 4: Aboriginal



### Grade 4: Non-Aboriginal





**Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 4 Writing**

**Grade 7: Aboriginal**

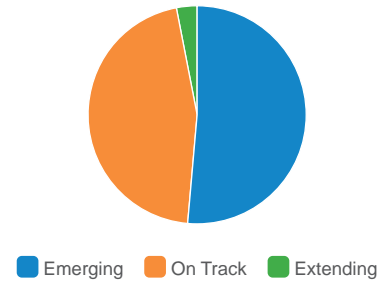
**Grade 7: Non-Aboriginal**

**Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 7 Writing**

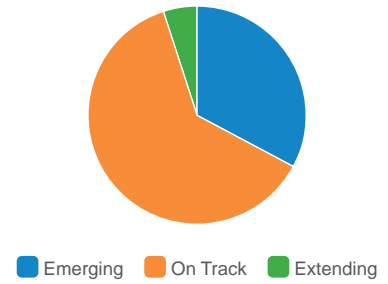
## Numeracy

. Numeracy Achievements for Grades 4 and 7 Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students.

### Grade 4: Aboriginal

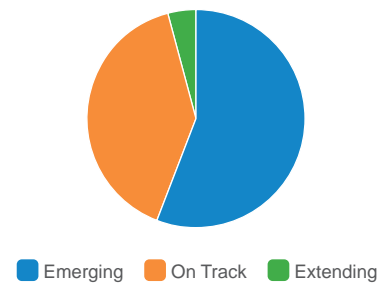


### Grade 4: Non-Aboriginal



### Average FSA Scaled Score – Grade 4 Numeracy

### Grade 7: Aboriginal



## Grade 7: Non-Aboriginal

learners as compared to their non-Aboriginal peers.

The Equity in Action project focuses on the elementary achievement of Aboriginal learners to improve achievement throughout all school years.

As the shift to the new curriculum occurs in secondary programs, new data will be required to demonstrate the achievement of Grade 10 and Grade 12 learners in literacy and numeracy. This will be included in the and aligned to the District Learning Plan.

## Educational Achievement for Diverse Aboriginal Learners

The District is guided in its inclusive education policy and procedure by the Education's implementation of support for SD73's diverse learners.

and by the Ministry of , which guides the

## Behaviour Disabilities

In the area of behavioural disabilities, the following data includes students in category H (Intensive Behaviour Interventions/Serious Mental Illness) and R (Moderate Behaviour Support/Mental Illness). Chart 9 indicates that, non-Aboriginal students.

. Distribution of Students with Behaviour Disabilities – Five-Year Comparison Trend.

difference on this chart is that non-Aboriginal students are more represented per population in the elementary grades as compared to Aboriginal students who appear to be more represented per population in the secondary grades.

## Inclusive Education

Chart 11 illustrates that compared to non-Aboriginal students, Aboriginal students are overrepresented in inclusive education in the areas of sensory disabilities and behavioural disabilities and are underrepresented in the areas of learning disabilities and gifted.

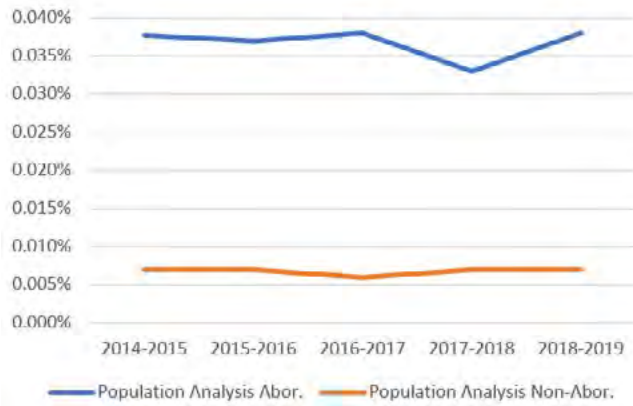
. Representation of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students in Special Needs Performance Reporting Groups.



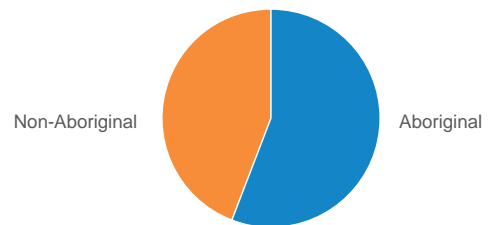
## Alternate Programs

Six percent (56%) of students in alternate programs are Aboriginal as compared to forty-four percent (44%) non-Aboriginal. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the District's learners enrolled in alternate programs are Aboriginal.

Representation of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Students in Alternate Programs.



SD73 Students in Alternate Programs 2018-19



## BC School Completion (Evergreen) Certificates

Chart 13 shows that SD73 Aboriginal learners are also overrepresented in receiving school completion certificates.

Aboriginal learners are overrepresented in receiving school completion certificates.

## Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework

Since all learners are unique, and to address and implement equity and inclusion moving forward, the District adheres to the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, a pedagogical approach that helps give all learners the opportunity to engage with material and how they show what they know. This framework is based on neuroscience research.



female learners had the same completion rates (parity) as their non-Aboriginal female counterparts: eighty-seven percent (87%). Non-Aboriginal male learners out-performed all groups for school completion, achieving ninety-one percent (91%).

## **District Engagement, Well-Being, and Resiliency Survey**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2019–2020 spring District Engagement, Well-Being, and Resiliency Survey (DEWRS) was not completed. The data presented next is based on the 2018–2019 spring DEWRS data.

In DEWRS, the District asks learners about the impact of Aboriginal Education upon their learning. Students are asked if they learn in a way that makes them feel connected to Aboriginal culture. In the 2018–2019 DEWRS, thirty-three percent (33%) of secondary school students agreed or strongly agreed. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of elementary school students agreed or strongly agreed.

In DEWRS, elementary school students are asked if they are learning about Aboriginal people in the District's region and in Canada. In the 2018–2019 DEWRS, sixty-nine percent (69%) of these students agreed or strongly agreed.

In DEWRS, secondary school students are asked if they learn about Aboriginal people and the impact of colonialism in Canada and elsewhere. In the 2018–2019 DEWRS, sixty percent (60%) of these students agreed or strongly agreed.

These results indicate that a greater degree of impact is required in student learning in this area. Accordingly, in 2020–2021, the Aboriginal School Lead Sessions will introduce curriculum to support learning about the Aboriginal people in the District's region and the impact of colonialism in Canada.

## Student Learning Survey

Questions and results shown in charts 15 through 24.

\*Note: The question in Chart 18 was framed positively in the survey; however, Chart 19 shows the percentage of students who believed they were being taught about Aboriginal peoples rarely or sometimes.





## Key Priorities and Goals

## Cultural Enhancement, Reconciliation and Awareness Programs

The following lists some of the key cultural enhancement, reconciliation and awareness programs and services for 2019–2020. Note that these programs and services were in addition to the cultural, reconciliation and awareness programs and services in each school.

### McQueen Lake Aboriginal Cultural Centre

During 2018–2019, a plan was developed to build a traditional winter house at McQueen Lake to support cultural understanding and Aboriginal education programming. The experiential aspect of this project was to be realized when students help plan and construct such a house at McQueen Lake Environmental Education Centre during the 2019–2020 school year. However, delays in organizing an archeological survey through the local nation, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (TTS), followed by the COVID pandemic have resulted in the project being delayed until the 2020–2021 school year.

Once constructed, the winter house will remain as a centre for further cultural educational activities at McQueen Lake, accessible for students District-wide. Eventually, this winter house will be surrounded by other traditional trips to learn about Aboriginal communities and ways of life.

### TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) Program Canoe Project

Brocklehurst Middle School expanded their TEK 8 program in 2018–2019 from Grade 8 students to include Grade 9 students. This was a project-based learning course focused on building a traditional hand-carved dugout canoe. Students did this by working with local master carver Frank Marchand. They also conducted

## Orange Shirt Day

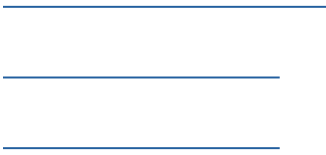
Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph's Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration project and reunion events that took place in May 2013 in Williams Lake. This project was the vision of Alkali Lake (Esk'etemc) Chief Fred Robbins, a former SD73 student. It brought together former students and their families from the Secwepemc, Tsilhqot'in, Southern Dakelh and St'at'imc nations, along with Cariboo Regional District municipalities, school districts and civic organizations.

The events commemorated the residential school experience, witnessed and honoured the healing journey of the survivors and their families and committed to the ongoing process of reconciliation. Chief Justice Murray



## Aboriginal Graduation

Aboriginal graduates were initially invited to cross the stage with dignity, purpose and opportunities at McArthur Island Sportsplex on June 8, 2020. However, the Aboriginal Graduation ceremonies, like other graduation ceremonies in the 2019–2020 school year, did not proceed as planned. A graduation video was put together that included a commemorative graduation programme. Every graduate received an Aboriginal Education bursary to help pursue post-secondary training.



KBE. Many schools took advantage of the training, and a KBE was planned for spring 2020 for the Board but was cancelled due to COVID-19.

# Academic Enhancement

## Key Priorities and Goals

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

12 We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.

### District Learning Plan

Priority 1: Ensure every student acquires strong foundational skills and core competencies.

Priority 2: Connect students to their passions and interests.

Priority 3: Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 1: Student Success

Our services support the equitable educational achievement of learners.

## Early Learning

Early learning continues to be an area of need for Aboriginal learners. Currently, the Aboriginal Education Elementary Resource teacher is involved in the District's Kindergarten screening process when an Aboriginal learner and family are involved. The Aboriginal Education Council has also allocated funds for the 2020–2021 year for an Aboriginal Early Learning working group to assess current programs and identify areas of need and support. This working group will meet early in the 2020–2021 school year to begin the process, working closely with the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee.



Three (3) resources that the Career Education department highlights to support Aboriginal learners are:

BC's Career Guide for Indigenous People (WorkBC);

Health Careers Guidebook (First Nations Health Authority); and

Career Journeys First Nations Career Role Model Program (First Nations Education Steering Committee [FNESC]).

The Trades and Transitions programs support Aboriginal learners and include the following programs:

Aboriginal Transitions to Post-Secondary; and,

Heavy Metal Rocks (which reserves spaces for Aboriginal students).

## Four Directions Secondary School

Four Directions Secondary School provides an alternate learning environment designed to serve secondary students who are interested in learning about their culture and a variety of out-of-school activities. Entry to the program is based on a referral from the student's home school to Twin Rivers Education Centre (TREC).

## Aboriginal Support Teachers

Supports for Aboriginal learners in academics, self-awareness and engagement. To start the 2019–2020 school year, support teachers were in four (4) District secondary schools. In the winter semester, Sa-Hali Secondary School is continuing these additional supports through 2020–2021.

Schools that currently have blocks are:

Chase Secondary School (two [2] blocks)

South Kamloops Secondary School (one [1] block)

NorKam Senior Secondary School (one [1] block)

Brocklehurst Middle School (one [1] block)

Sa-Hali Secondary School (one [1] block)

# Social Emotional Enhancement

## Key Priorities and Goals

### District Learning Plan

Priority 2: Connect students to their passions and interests.

Priority 3: Honour the First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPL) and honour Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives.

Priority 4: Foster an inclusive, adaptable and accountable District culture.

Priority 5: Strengthen partnerships to enrich the way we lead, learn and work.

### Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

Goal 1: Student Success

Goal 3: District and School Culture

Goal 4: Aboriginal Parent and Community Engagement

SD73 schools are increasingly multicultural and multilingual, with students from diverse social and economic backgrounds. Educators and community agencies serve students who have different motivations for engaging in learning, behaving positively, and performing academically. Social-emotional learning (SEL) provides a foundation for safe and positive learning and enhances all students' ability to succeed in school, careers and life.

Research shows that SEL not only improves achievement by an average of eleven (11) percentile points, but it also increases prosocial behaviours (such as kindness, sharing and empathy); improves student attitudes toward school; and reduces depression and stress among students (Durlak et al., 2011). Effective social and emotional learning programming involves coordinated classroom, school wide, family and community practices that help students develop. The District provides several key supports and services for its Aboriginal learners.

## Aboriginal Family Counsellors

Starting in 2019, the District employed six (6) Aboriginal Family Counsellors, who transitioned from being independent contractors, working under the direction of the AEC administrator. Six family counsellors facilitated boys and girls groups and provided one-to-one student counseling support for the following:

Alcohol and drugs;

Grief and loss;

Cultural support;

Sexual abuse;

Parenting skills;

Suicide;

Violence;

Depression;

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Self-esteem;

Low motivation;

Self-harm;

Anger management;

Sex education; and,

Anxiety.

## Aboriginal Youth and Family Consultants

With the transition of Aboriginal Family Counsellors to the District in 2019, two (2) new positions of Aboriginal youth and family consultant were created. The Aboriginal youth and family consultant position was developed further to:

Provide advocacy, support and consultation for Aboriginal families and students, particularly during inclusion planning in schools; and,

Provide community and cultural connections for families and students.

## Boys and Girls Groups

Aboriginal boys and girls groups are based in elementary, middle and secondary schools. The purpose of these groups is to create a healthy understanding of gender identity within the context of cultural identity. The groups provide marginalized and at-risk Aboriginal girls and boys with the opportunity to explore their experiences and challenges in a safe, non-threatening environment. Programs are held in both rural and urban settings.

During the 2019–2020 school year, the focus and facilitation of boys and girls groups changed due to increasing demand and the need to expand the availability of these groups to Aboriginal students. In the past, these groups were run by Aboriginal Family Counsellors only, along with support from Aboriginal Education workers. The District employs only six (6) Aboriginal Family Counsellors, and the demands of the groups took away from the opportunities for one-to-one counselling supports. To adjust, Aboriginal Education workers were trained as facilitators of groups, with Aboriginal Family Counsellors available for supports when needed.

In 2018–2019, sixteen (16) schools had active Aboriginal boys and girls groups. With this model, the District was able to expand the number of groups in schools to 44 groups in 20 schools.

Aboriginal Education workers were trained as facilitators. Chart 26 shows data from that training.

Boys and Girls Group Data 2019–2020.

Grade Level	Males	Females	Students with Aboriginal Ancestry	Rural Students	Urban Students
K-7	133	193	326	48	278
8-12	97	149	246	63	183



## Key Priorities and Goals

### Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action

10(iv) Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.

## Secwepemc Language Programs

The District employs three (3) Secwepemc language teachers, who offer Secwepemc language lessons in four (4) secondary schools and three (3) elementary schools, as follows:

Chase Secondary School

Valleyview Secondary School

Brocklehurst Middle School

Haldane Elementary School

Marion Schilling Elementary School

Arthur Hatton Elementary School

## Secwepemc Language Curriculum

SD73 is one of nineteen (19) districts with a language curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education. The last updated version of this curriculum was in 1999. In 2018, the District Aboriginal Education department, in compliance with the direction from the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA), began exploring the process of updating the Secwepemc language curriculum and connecting it with the current BC curriculum and core competencies. Conversations and consultation with local language knowledge keepers started in 2018 and will continue for 2020–2021.

# Conclusion

The \_\_\_\_\_ has reported on the four goals set out in the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. This report brings to light the commitment and achievements of students and staff members who are striving to meet these goals. Through the commitment of all educators, connections made with parents and community members continue to improve. These connections, in turn, are instrumental in improving the success and the personal well-being of all District students.

The highlight of this report is the rise in the District of the Aboriginal six-year completion rate from seventy-eight percent (78%) in 2017–2018 to eighty-four percent (84%) in 2018–2019. This achievement represents an increase toward equity but falls short of having all Aboriginal students graduate with dignity, purpose and options for the future. There is more work to be done!

As SD73 strives to eliminate the educational achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners, effective strategies and interventions within District schools will be implemented in enhancing academic success, social-emotional learning (SEL), and opportunities to access Aboriginal language and learning about Aboriginal culture.

As the District moves forward in its work, the focus must remain on ensuring that each Aboriginal student has the opportunity to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful after graduation.

