



**ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT #40 (NEW WESTMINSTER)**

2012-2017



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OUR COMMITTEE

New Westminster's urban Aboriginal population has remained fairly constant over the last decade, consisting of Aboriginal families of First Nation, Métis and Inuit ancestries from all over North America. Our Enhancement Agreement committee and our goals reflect the diversity among our urban Aboriginal population in New Westminster, with respect to language, history and culture as well as the different learning needs and strengths of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students. Established in 2001, the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee guides and approves the development of this Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. This committee includes representatives from the following groups:

- Chief Rhonda Larrabee and family of the Qayqayt First Nation
- Elders Se'qwa:ye'nte'n and Qu':kwa', Sto':lo' Nation
- Elder Keely George, Douglas First Nation
- Elder Lucy Smith, Samahquam First Nation
- Parent representatives from New Westminster
- Student representatives from New Westminster Secondary schools
- Aboriginal Education Staff
- Representatives from the Spirit of the Children Society
- A representative from Douglas College
- A representative from Aboriginal Child and Youth mental health
- A representative from SD 40 School Trustees
- Representatives from SD 40 Senior Management
- Representatives from school district staff and administration
- A representative from CUPE 409
- A representative from NWTU

The Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee acknowledges the shared responsibility for promoting Aboriginal student success with the families, the school district and the Aboriginal community. We wish to further acknowledge the Qayqayt First Nation, on whose traditional territory the school district resides.

QAYQAYT FIRST NATION BACKGROUND

In the last century, there was an Indian Village that ran alongside of what is now Front Street in New Westminster. Its name was Qayqayt (pronounced Ke-kite). In 1859, New Westminster City Council wanted the Indians to move out of the city core, so three reserves were created: 32 acres at Scott Paper's current location, the 27 acres of Poplar Island and the 105 acres across the Fraser River called Brownsville (now Bridgeview). A small pox epidemic killed numerous natives in 1904. The city did not want survivors to bury their dead in "white man's



cemeteries" so the Indians were buried on Poplar Island. Then, in 1916, the McKenna McBride Commission closed the New Westminster Indian Reserve and told the residents to move. Numerous reserves all over British Columbia were being closed at this time, and there is no record of any of the bands being given any compensation to help them move, nor were they given any land to move to. Most of the Indians from New Westminster were married into, or adopted into other bands. In 1945, the Federal Government sold Poplar Island, but in 1995 the Province declared it a "Legacy Park." No members of the band were notified of the sale in 1945, nor were any natives consulted in the 1995 declaration of a Legacy Park.

The New Westminster Band members scattered to other bands such as the Musqueam, Squamish, and Washington State, and were simply forgotten. Recently, thanks to the efforts of Chief Rhonda Larrabee, the New Westminster Band is experiencing a reincarnation. They've received funding from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to run an office out of Chief Larrabee's home.

In spite of the years of injustice, the New Westminster Indian Band has the well-being of the entire community as its prime concern. Therefore, they welcome a partnership with the New Westminster School Board in developing its educational needs. Chief Larrabee says: "I envision a reserve that emphasizes education—that is the mandate of our family—land with a learning center."

(Adapted from "A History of the New Westminster Indian Band", 2004)

ELEMENTS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT 40'S ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

- The Aboriginal community and the school district have established the practice of shared decision making
- The Aboriginal community and the school district have agreed to participate in the development and implementation of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement
- The Aboriginal community and the school district have collaborated on goal setting for Aboriginal student success
- The Aboriginal community and the school district have agreed to track key performance indicators at the student level
- The Aboriginal community and the school district are committed to regular reporting of results , including an evaluation and reporting process on the outcomes of the AEEA
- This agreement includes a focus on continuous improvement in the academic performance of Aboriginal students



- This agreement reflects the commitment to meet the cultural needs of Aboriginal students (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) in all aspects of learning, including resources, strategies and assessment
- This agreement maintains a focus on increasing knowledge of and respect for Aboriginal culture, language and history, which enables a greater understanding for everyone about Aboriginal people

PURPOSE OF OUR ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

- To honor the diverse histories and cultures of Aboriginal peoples (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) represented in the district and in the community
- To increase students', staff's and community members' awareness of the contemporary and historical issues that affect Aboriginal peoples
- To increase the integration of relevant Aboriginal resources in classrooms across the district
- To create belonging spaces for Aboriginal students and their families in district schools, where Aboriginal people feel welcome and safe
- To foster collaborative partnerships with parents and guardians regarding their children's education
- To increase academic and social success for all Aboriginal learners

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The performance goals identified in this agreement can assist staff to ensure that student and program data:

- Are authentic and meaningful
- Are tracked to inform program design and delivery from year to year
- Guide effective instructional practice
- Are used to determine targets that can be adjusted when needed
- Are used to create reports that will be shared with community partners annually
- Are related to the SD 40 Achievement Contract and School Improvement Plans

DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

Aboriginal students represent almost 6 % (447/7559) of the student population (HAWD 2011). There are 9 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, 1 secondary school, which includes three alternate programs, and two home learners programs. About half the Aboriginal students are in K-7 programs. The district works collaboratively with the Aboriginal education staff to provide enhanced services and programs to Aboriginal students, while supporting several district initiatives including: the annual Aboriginal Family Literacy Feast, the district Aboriginal



print and media collection, a post-secondary transitions program, several after-school mentorship programs, and the annual Qayqayt Honoring and Rite of Passage Ceremony.

PROCESS

In the 2010 school year, the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee met several times to analyze data from previous annual reports on Aboriginal Education, the *How Are We Doing Report* and the *District Achievement Contract*. The outcomes were summarized for each of the four goal areas: Culture, Reading and Writing, Grade 12 Completion, and Special Education-Behavior. After reviewing the summaries, the committee decided to focus on three goal areas that still needed attention. The committee administered three surveys: one for students, one for parents and one for district staff, asking for their feedback on early learning, culture and belonging, academic achievement, Grade 12 completion and transitions, and post-secondary education. This feedback allowed the committee to narrow the goal areas down to three categories: **Culture/Belonging, Reading and Writing, and Transitions**. The three goals were drafted and reviewed by the committee in the fall of 2011. In the spring of 2012, commitments and rationales were added. This agreement reflects the district's recognition that consultation with Aboriginal families is important. Extensive and ongoing consultation will allow the district to respond to the Aboriginal community's needs in respect to education.

ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT PERFORMANCE GOALS

1. Help Aboriginal students develop pride, confidence and self-esteem through identification with their ancestry.
2. Improve the performance of Aboriginal learners in Grades 4-7 in reading and writing.
3. Support Aboriginal students in making smooth transitions as they:
 - Enter school;
 - Move between schools;
 - Move from elementary to middle to secondary;
 - Move from Grade 10 to 11 and 11 to 12; and
 - Prepare to enter the workforce or post-secondary education.

BELONGING/CULTURAL GOAL

Rationale

"An array of evidence shows that human beings possess a fundamental need to belong. This is fulfilled by frequent positive interactions with at least a few persons who share mutual concern. Belonging creates positive emotions, particularly pride; rejection produces shame, amongst the most painful social



emotions humans can experience. Belonging to a community is often the most significant factor in Aboriginal identity.”

Larry Bendtro and Lesley du Toit, 2005.

The majority, 75 %, of parents and guardians expressed that knowing one’s culture helps Aboriginal students strengthen their identity and build confidence, and that the inclusion of Aboriginal cultural teachings across the district deepens our understanding of diversity and other perspectives. Our district is committed to helping Aboriginal students strengthen their Aboriginal identity by providing them with opportunities to learn, practice and demonstrate cultural knowledge. These opportunities will allow more Aboriginal students and their families to experience a sense of belonging in district schools.

Goal	Commitments ¹	Indicators
<p>“Help Aboriginal students develop pride, confidence and self-esteem through identification with their ancestry.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Aboriginal students to participate in traditional Aboriginal ceremonies, such as the Qayqayt Honoring and Rite of Passage Ceremony. • Encourage Aboriginal students to participate in cultural events in the community, such as National Aboriginal Day celebrations, the Aboriginal Youth Leadership Conference, traditional regalia making, and other student oriented cultural events. • Continue the focus on increasing awareness of Aboriginal history to all students, staff and community members. • Continue to encourage all students to take First Nations Studies 12, First Peoples English 10/11 and First Peoples English 12, which focus on the experiences, values, beliefs and lived realities of First Peoples. • Begin the integration of Aboriginal content in Art, Music, Culinary Arts, and Woodwork at the secondary level, courses in which Aboriginal students have expressed an interest. • Continue to build the Aboriginal print and media resource collection for use by staff and students, and set up an on-line link for staff to view these resources. • Assess Aboriginal students’ belonging 	<p>Baseline Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be taken from the 2010/2011 school year. • During the 2012/13, student and parent surveys will be developed to assess belonging needs. • Performance indicators for this goal will include these surveys and the Ministry Education Satisfaction Survey data for the District. In addition, self-report measures of Aboriginal student cultural awareness and knowledge will be gathered. <p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five year targets will be created during the 2012/13 school year, and will be assessed annually.

¹ Commitment statements will be reviewed annually and will be adjusted as needed.



	<p>needs individually, recognizing that there is great cultural diversity among Aboriginal students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to build awareness among school staff that some Aboriginal students face multiple barriers, and will need a supportive school environment to be successful. Involve Aboriginal elders in the classrooms to help build a supportive learning environment.• Continue to work with Aboriginal Mental Health and Fraser Health staff on providing supports to Aboriginal students and their families.• Work with local agencies and provide counseling support in schools for Aboriginal students.• Work with local agencies which provide culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.• Work with schools to strengthen parent engagement strategies to increase parent comfort level in district schools.	
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LITERACY GOAL

Rationale

For Aboriginal people, literacy is more than just reading and writing. Literacy includes learning about traditional knowledge that is shared among families. It is important to continue to integrate Aboriginal teachings and Aboriginal ways of knowing in literacy curriculum, as Aboriginal students will benefit from having their worldviews represented in their courses.

District and provincial data for literacy outcomes for Aboriginal learners shows improvement in several areas, but we will continue the focus on ensuring that all Aboriginal learners arrive at high school with a strong foundation in literacy. In particular, boys are less engaged and have literacy achievement at minimally satisfactory rather than fully satisfactory levels. In secondary programs, an average of 65% of boys is failing at least one course. Having a solid foundation in literacy (by targeting interventions to students in grades 4 to 7) will provide all Aboriginal students with more life opportunities.



Goal	Commitments ²	Indicators
<p>“Improve the performance of Aboriginal learners in Grades 4-7 in reading and writing.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with community partners to promote early learning initiatives for Aboriginal children. • Continue to offer culturally appropriate literacy initiatives to Aboriginal families with the intent to encourage family literacy. • Build on appropriate early learning materials and kits to support cultural literacy for K-3 students. • Work with school-based teams to identify Aboriginal students in need of extra reading and writing supports at the start of Grade 4. • Identify and track the Grade 3 Aboriginal student cohort by PEN numbers to determine individual Aboriginal student needs and trends from Grade 4 to Grade 7, as well as group characteristics. • Develop focus questions for boys in Grades 4, 5, 6 and 7 to determine what materials are of interest to them. • Continue to provide extra tutoring supports for Aboriginal students at all grade levels. • Continue to work with classroom teachers in the integration of culturally relevant reading materials across the curriculum. • Continue to build on Aboriginal print and media resource kits for K-7 classroom teachers. • Continue to provide professional development opportunities for teachers around Aboriginal literacy. • Set up mentorship opportunities for secondary students and elementary school students so younger Aboriginal students have positive role models. • Support the mentorship of primary level 	<p>Baseline Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be taken from the 2010/2011 school year. • District Reading and Writing Assessments at the Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7 levels and the Foundations Skills Assessments for Grade 4 and 7 as well as provincial examination results for Grade 10 will be used to track achievement. <p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five year targets will be created during the 2012/13 school year, and will be assessed annually.

² Commitment statements will be reviewed annually and will be adjusted as needed.



	Aboriginal students with Grade 6 and 7 Aboriginal students in reading initiatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support Elders in the Classroom to share traditional knowledge with all students. 	
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TRANSITIONS GOAL

Rationale

Our advisory committee members have spoken about the importance of acknowledging the transition students make from one life stage to another through traditional Aboriginal ceremonies. The annual Qayqayt Honoring and Rite of Passage ceremony provides cultural supports to students who are making the transition from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence to adulthood. Further, research has shown that “early intervention in secondary schools and improvements in the rate at which Aboriginal students’ progress through the grades and into Grade 12 are critical to the successful transition to post-secondary education.” (Student Transitions Project: Education Achievement of Aboriginal Students in BC, Joanne Henslop, 2009.) By recognizing important life transitions and by tracking student successes from Grade to Grade, our district is better equipped to determine what supports are needed as students progress from one grade to another.

Goal	Commitments ³	Indicators
“Support Aboriginal students in making smooth transitions as they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter school; • Move between schools; • Move from elementary to middle to secondary; • Move from Grade 10-11 and 11-12; and • Prepare to enter the workforce or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with school staff and community partners to assist Aboriginal students in making smooth transitions from one school to the next. • Collaborate with students, families and community partners around ways to increase transition rates and high school completion rates. • Continue to offer extra-curricular programs to Aboriginal students to increase school engagement and belonging at school. • Investigate student reasons for lack of school engagement and/or school drop-out. • Provide role models/mentors for Aboriginal students to promote hopefulness and positive connections. • Work with Recreation Education 	Baseline data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be taken from the 2010/2011 school year where available. • Methods for tracking other data will be developed in the 2012/2013 school year. • Provincial data on grade to grade transition and completion rates; the number of students transitioning from Grade to Grade who continue receiving enhanced programs and services from the Aboriginal Education

³ Commitment statements will be reviewed annually and will be adjusted as needed.



<p>post-secondary education.”</p>	<p>Leadership program participants at NWSS to help engage Aboriginal students and assist with smooth transitions from one school to the next.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to offer Aboriginal transition tours for Grade 7 and 8 students moving to secondary programs. • Continue to work with school staff to ensure Aboriginal students have the courses needed for high school completion. • Provide adequate tutoring for students who need extra help in academic courses; stronger achievement increases the likelihood of success for all students. • Continue to offer tours of local post-secondary institutions for all Aboriginal students in Grades 8-12. • Encourage Aboriginal students to participate in career preparation programs, such as the Youth Fire Fighter Program, Police Academy, Aboriginal Summer Science Program, etc. • Encourage Aboriginal students to explore apprenticeship programs offered at NWSS such as the chef’s training, plumbing, and carpentry programs. • Arrange to have mentors from various trades share their career journeys with Aboriginal students. • Assist Aboriginal students in accessing post-secondary funding, by gathering and disseminating information about scholarships and bursaries. • Continue to recognize milestones through traditional Aboriginal ceremonies such as the Qayqayt Honoring and Rite of Passage Ceremony. • Expand the Qayqayt Honoring and Rite of Passage Ceremony to include the honoring of Kindergarten students transitioning to Grade 1. 	<p>department; the number of students who access post-secondary transitions support; and the number of students transitioning to post-secondary programs will be considered.</p> <p>Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five year targets will be created during the 2012/13 school year, and will be assessed annually.
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IMPLEMENTATION

The Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee looks forward to the implementation of our second enhancement agreement, and will endeavor to build upon the successes of our first enhancement agreement. By reviewing our commitment statements for each goal area annually, we will have opportunities to assess and revise our commitments in order to better reach our five year targets.

Our vision is that Aboriginal students will experience success both academically and socially, and will leave our district schools with the confidence to reach their full potential and with pride in their Aboriginal heritage.