

# Q'pethet Ye Tel:exw, Gathering to Understand: A Framework for Creating a Culture of Equity, Year One



- Kwakwaka'wakw Artist Roy J. Hanuse

Siwal Si'wes  
Indigenous  
Department  
*Our  
Forefathers'  
Teachings*



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## Acknowledgment of Territories and of Indigenous Peoples

*Il stl'i kw'els spipetstexw kw'eset ite xwelmexwelh stexwlaq temxwe's ye Stó:lō mestiyexw.*

*We humbly work, learn and play on the Traditional, Ancestral, Unceded, and Shared lands of the Stó:lō people, of Qwó:ltl'el, Leq'á:mel, Matheqwí, Sq'éwlets, who have been inhabitants of this land since time immemorial, and who are still here.*

*Nous reconnaissons qu'en tant que partenaires d'apprentissage du conseil scolaire de Mission, nous travaillons et apprenons humblement sur les terres traditionnelles, ancestrales, non-cédées et partagées du peuple Stó:lō, des nations Qwó:ltl'el, Leq'á:mel, Matheqwí, Sq'éwlets, qui sont les habitants de cette terre depuis des temps immémoriaux.*



Qwó:ltl'el



Leq'á:mel



Matheqwí



Sq'éwlets

Mission Public School District 75 appreciates the vital role of all Indigenous peoples, groups, organizations and associations residing within the lands of Qwó:ltl'el, Leq'á:mel, Matheqwí and Sq'éwlets and those residing in Mission, and involved in and/or connected to and to:



FRASER VALLEY MÉTIS ASSOCIATION



- Fraser Valley Métis Association
- Métis Nation of BC
- Lower Stat'limx Nations
- Mission Friendship Centre
- Future 4 Nations Preschool
- Members of the Inuit Community
- Members of other Indigenous groups whose ancestors originated on traditional Turtle Island territories (the lands which are now known as Canada) and who currently reside on Stó:lō lands.

MPSD75 Contributions:

- Siwal Si'wes Family & Learning Partners
- Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council
- Indigenous Students of MPSD75
- SD75 Educators
- The Board of Education, SD75

***We would like to extend our utmost gratitude to the residents and staff of Kwikwèxwelhp Healing Lodge for allowing us to visit their space, to listen to their stories and share their voices.***



## **Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council**

Siwal Si'wes works collaboratively with all schools to ensure that Indigenous students are successful in Mission Public Schools. While promoting and respecting the traditional territory of the Stó:lō people, they help foster an awareness of and respect for all Indigenous peoples.

The Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council includes representatives from the community at large including:

- Elected co-chairs
- Parents and Caregivers of Indigenous students
- Indigenous Elders & Knowledge Keepers
- Members of Indigenous Communities
- School Staff
- School Board Trustees
- District Principal of Indigenous Education

This council works in an advisory capacity with the School District, local Indigenous communities, and the Ministry of Education.

### **The mandate of the Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Education Advisory Council is to:**

- represents interests in the design, implementation and assessment of programs and services to improve the school experience, academic achievement and school success of Indigenous learners to better meet their needs.
- create an innovative and dynamic space for dialogue, discussions, learning and development of education of Indigenous students of SD75
- help inform and support increased success in all areas of education for Indigenous students of SD75, including social, emotional, physical and academic needs
- recommend and facilitate the implementation of new programs to provide better service to Indigenous students of SD75
- contribute to Equity Scan discussions (and other initiatives by the Indigenous Department of the BC Ministry of Education)
- provide strong communication and connection with Band Councils and other Indigenous groups served by the District.



## The Story of Siwal Si'wes: Our Forefathers' Teachings



In the late 1980's, Agnes Giesbrecht, Robert Charlie and Virginia Joe met to discuss the creation of a vision for the Indigenous Department of Mission Public School System. Heather Hansson (former District Counsellor for Indigenous Youth) and Mel Jack (former Indigenous Liaison Worker) requested self- taught Kwakwaka'wakw artist, the late Roy J. Hanuse, to create a design that would capture and portray the Indigenous Department of Mission Public Schools District 75. Once Roy completed the design, Mel and Heather then enlisted Dr. Gwen Point, who, in collaboration Elders from Coqualeetza, named the design. The design was then gifted the name **Siwal Si'wes: our forefathers' teachings**. A traditional ceremony was held at Fraserview Elementary School (now Fraserview Learning Centre) to celebrate the naming, with the Honourable Steven Point as the speaker of the house. (*Information received from Mel Jack & Heather Hansson, February 2020*).

### Our Mission

Working as a community, we will enhance student empowerment by developing the skills, wellness, confidence, and self-reliance necessary for our children and youth to flourish and prosper throughout their life journey.

### Our Vision

Recognizing and nurturing strengths, students will thrive as individuals, thus contributing to the well-being of their families and communities while preserving tradition.





## Agreement Acknowledgement



THIS AGREEMENT OF ENHANCED EQUITY FOR INDIGENOUS LEARNERS IS  
BETWEEN:

**Mission Public School District 75**

AND

**Qwó:Itl'el, Leq'á:mel, Matheqwí, Sq'éwlets Nations, the Fraser Valley Metis Nation, the Métis Nation of BC, Lower Stat'limx Nations, Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council, Members of the Inuit Community**

AND

**The Ministry of Education in the Province of British Columbia.**

*We would like to acknowledge Equity Scan Team Members, who committed to participation for 2019-2021. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the preliminary work of those who contributed to Enhancement Agreement working group meetings, which we held during the 2018/2019 school year and in the fall of 2019, where we met for several small and large group meetings, working group meetings, focused meetings, and data collation meetings.*

<p><b>Policy &amp; Governance:</b>                  Angus Wilson, Superintendent, Team Facilitator                  Chief Johnny Williams, Sq'éwlets                  Cheryl Gabriel, Education Coordinator, Kwantlen Frist Nation                  Marita Paul, Education Coordinator, Leq'á:mel First Nation                  Camielle Laslo, Councilor, Leqamel First Nation; Halq'emeylem Teacher                  Jim Pearce, Principal, Mission Senior Secondary School                  The Board of Education, SD75:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee Chair, Tracy Loffler</li> <li>• Trustee Co-Chair, Randy Cairns</li> <li>• Trustee Rick McKamey</li> <li>• Trustee Julia Renkema</li> <li>• Trustee Shelley Carter</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pedagogical Core:</b>                  Karen Alvarez – Assistant Superintendent, Team Facilitator                  Tina Phelps, Director of Human Resources                  Marcello Gabriel, Principal, Hatzic Middle School                  Lisa Clarke, Principal, Hillside Traditional School                  Karina Zimmerman, Vice-Principal, ESR Elementary School                  Hardeep Grewal, Principal, Albert McMahan Elementary School                  Peggy Janicki, Indigenous Mentor Teacher, Mission Teacher's Union Indigenous Representative                  Shannon Bowsfield, District Inclusion Mentor Teacher                  Jen Lane, District-Mentor Teacher Librarian                  Jody Shaw, Advocate of Children &amp; Youth in Care                  Jennifer Sherif, Indigenous Liaison Worker</p>
<p><b>Learning Environments:</b>                  Carolynn, Schmor, Director of Student Services, Team Facilitator                  Lolehawk, Stó:lō Elder                  Linda Hamel, Principal, École Heritage Park Middle School                  Mikel Brogan, Principal, West Heights Community School                  Angela Condon, Principal, Windebank Elementary School                  Chandy Ritter, Vice-Principal, Hatzic Elementary School                  Lori Caviggia, Curriculum Mentor Teacher                  Sheri Montgomery, District Inclusion Mentor Teacher                  Tiffany Bishop, Indigenous Liaison Worker                  Rachel Schooner, Indigenous Liaison Worker</p>	<p><b>Learning Profile:</b>                  Vivian Searwar, District Principal of Indigenous Education, Team Facilitator                  Kevin Watrin, Principal, Fraserview Learning Centre                  Shane Sliziak, Principal, Cherry Hill Elementary School                  Beth-Anne Cullen, Principal, Hatzic Elementary School                  Katy Brookes, Indigenous Student Success Coach                  Don Cosens, Indigenous Student Success Coach                  Colleen Hannah, District Principal, International Education &amp; ELL/ESD                  Holly Gallant, Indigenous Liaison Worker                  Robby Williams, Indigenous Liaison Worker                  Jenny Snow, Indigenous Liaison Worker</p>
<p><b>Enhancement Agreement, Data Collection &amp; Collation Working Group:</b>                  Vivian Searwar, District Principal of Indigenous Education; Peggy Janicki, Indigenous Mentor Teacher                  Lori Caviggia, Curriculum Mentor Teacher, Camille Anderson, Curriculum Mentor Teacher, Judy Cathers, Indigenous Liaison and Cultural Worker; Marcy Buell, Siwal Si'wes Administrative Assistant; Joseph Heslip, Former District Principal of Indigenous Education; Larry Jepsen, Former Assistant Superintendent; Chrystal Williams, Sq'éwlets; Marita Paul, Leq'á:mel</p>	



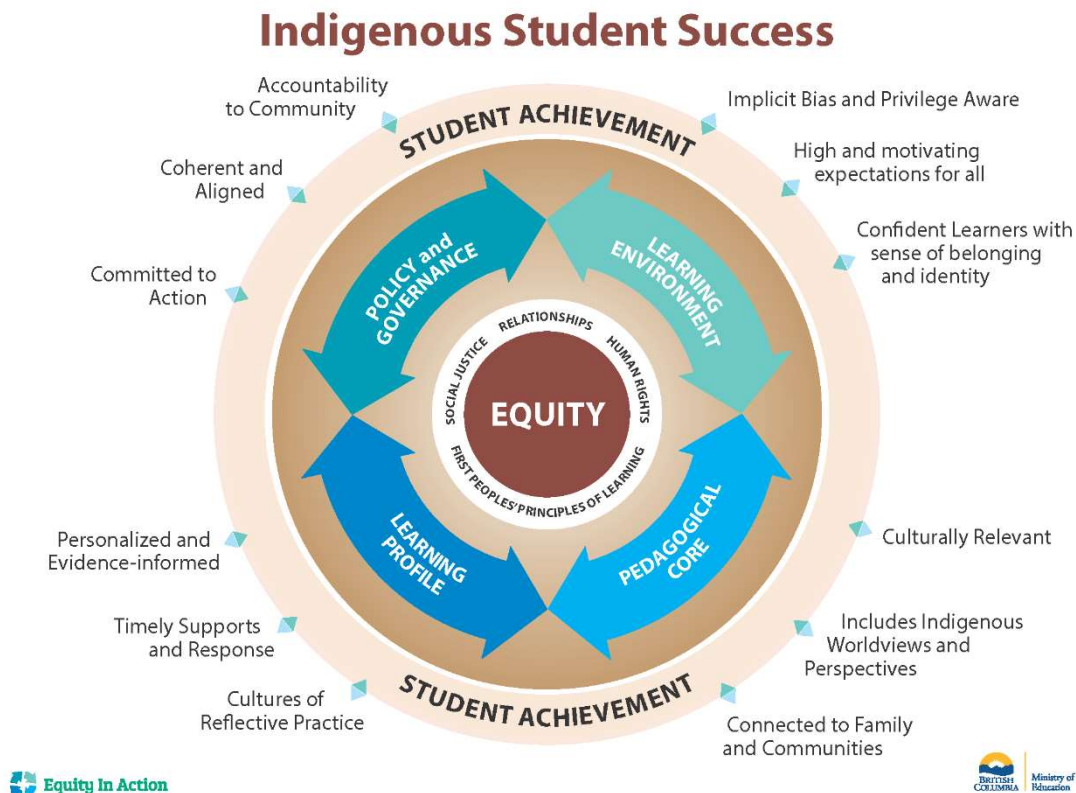
## What is the Equity Scan?

The Equity Scan began in 2016 by the Ministry of Education. The vision is to support school districts in identifying promising practices as well as addressing barriers impacting Indigenous student achievement and success. It is a collective and collaborative decision-making, inquiry-based process involving genuine and meaningful self-assessment dialogue about educational experiences for Indigenous learners with the goal to create conditions for their success.

Four dimensions are explored in the Equity Scan process:

- **Student Learning Profile** - key indicators of achievement and student learning trajectories
- **Policy and Governance** – processes, plans and policies
- **Pedagogical Core** - experience of learners in relation to curriculum, the presence of relevant cultural experiences and values placed on Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives
- **Learning Environment** – includes human and educator bias; learning spaces

During the process and as a team, we will scan current trends, processes and results of Indigenous learners in our school district, construct an Equity Profile, determine a Theory of Change and develop an Equity Action Plan in service to Indigenous learners, families and communities.



## Why Equity?



### Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action

In 2008, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement constituted and created Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). This Commission spent six years travelling to all parts of Canada to hear from more than 6,000 Indigenous peoples, surviving witnesses, who had been forcibly taken from their families as children and placed for much of their childhoods in Residential Schools. In 2015, the TRC released its final report including 94 Calls to Action. The focus was to lay the foundation for the important question of reconciliation.

***Now that we know about the legacy left by the Residential Schools, what do we do about it? How can the past be reconciled?***

Sections 62 & 63 of the TRC Calls to Action Report address tasks for educational institutions.

#### Education for Reconciliation

62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

- i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students
- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
- iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
- iv. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.

63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

(-Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015)

***The TRC laid the foundation for an urgency of change in the education system, with the intentional inclusion of Indigenous truths, histories, knowledges and worldviews in the classroom experience, a call to all educators to reimagine and 'restory' teaching and learning, with a shared responsibility in working toward anti-racism and social justice for Indigenous peoples.***





## The United Nations Declaration on the Rights in Indigenous Peoples



The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is a document of 46 Articles that describe and protect individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. It offers guidance on cooperative relationships with Indigenous peoples and addresses the rights of Indigenous peoples on issues such as: culture, identity, religion, language, health, education and community.

In May 2016, the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs announced Canada is now a full supporter, without qualification, of the declaration. In Canada, it reinforces the Treaty relationships that exist between Indigenous peoples and the Crown and which form “the basis for a strengthened partnership....” The rights outlined in the *UN Declaration* “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world” (Article 43).

The following Articles are of importance to education:

### Article 14

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

### Article 15

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.
2. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.

(-United Nations, 2008)



## BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The provincial government passed the legislation in November 2019 to implement the UN Declaration, which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission confirms as the framework for reconciliation.

The B.C. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* aims to create a path forward that respects the human rights of Indigenous peoples while introducing better transparency and predictability in the work we do together.

It mandates government to bring provincial laws into harmony with the UN Declaration, providing transparency and accountability while bringing Indigenous peoples to the table for decisions that affect them, their families and their territories.

(-Government of British Columbia, 2019)

***UNDRIP and the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act call on educators to ensure that Indigenous children and youth have equitable access to learning opportunities and that Indigenous children and youth are seen, without discrimination, as capable, valued, contributing learners.***

## Professional Standards for BC Educators

Standard 9 is new, as of August 2019, and carries with it the aspiration and expectation that BC educators strive towards truth, reconciliation and healing, acknowledging the history and contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples who have been on these lands now known as Canada.

**9 | Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.**

Educators critically examine their own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to facilitate change. Educators value and respect the languages, heritages, cultures, and ways of knowing and being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Educators understand the power of focusing on connectedness and relationships to oneself, family, community and the natural world. Educators integrate First Nations, Inuit and Métis worldviews and perspectives into learning environments.

(-Government of British Columbia, 2019)

***Standard 9 calls on educators to look inward and lean into the discomfort of our own personal biases, to acknowledge our personal privilege, to recognize our gifts and talents, to be allies of Indigenous peoples to work toward understanding First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, and to share our learning forward.***



## What does our District Data Reveal to Us?

(based on 2018 2019 results)

- **Six-Year Indigenous Graduation Completion Rates** are currently at 67.4%, consistently lower than non-Indigenous students.
- **Dogwood Diplomas:** 40% of all Adult Dogwood diplomas awarded in 2019 were awarded to Indigenous Adult Students
- **FSA Results:** 72.7% of Indigenous Grade 7 Students Meeting Expectations in Reading on the FSA test, graduate.
- **English 10 Results:** 62% of Indigenous Grade 10 students receiving a C in English 10, graduate.
- **SD75 Indigenous Student Connectivity Survey Results:**
  - 49% of Indigenous students K to Grade 12 indicate that they are involved in extra-curricular or service activities as indicated on
  - 78% of Indigenous Students K to Grade 12 indicate that they do well in school as indicated on SD75 Indigenous Student Connectivity Survey.
  - 82% of Indigenous Students K to Grade 12 indicate that they get support from school staff as indicated on SD75 Indigenous Student Connectivity Survey.
  - 83% of Indigenous Students K to Grade 12 indicate that they feel that they belong as indicated on SD75 Indigenous Student Connectivity Survey.
- **Absences:** 16% of Indigenous students have 15 absences or more.
- **Transitions:** 50% of Indigenous Grade 10 students feel that they are well supported when transitioning to a higher grade as indicated on the Ministry Student Learning Survey.
- **Suspensions:** Indigenous Students comprise 27% of the total number of suspensions throughout SD75. Indigenous students currently make up 17.3% of the total student population in SD75.
- **Student Services Data for Students with Ministry Designations:**
  - 67% of Indigenous students “ever designated” as Category R or H graduate
  - There is a 10% difference with Indigenous students (19%) designated as Category H than Non-Indigenous students (9%)
  - There is a 9% difference with Indigenous students (22%) designated as Category Q than Non-Indigenous students (31%)
  - Categories:
    - R: Students requiring behaviour support or students with Mental Illness
    - H: Students requiring intensive behaviour support or students with serious Mental Illness
    - Q: Learning Disabilities
- **Alternate Programs:** 56% of the total students in Alternate Programs are Indigenous



-Recognition Dinner, May 2019



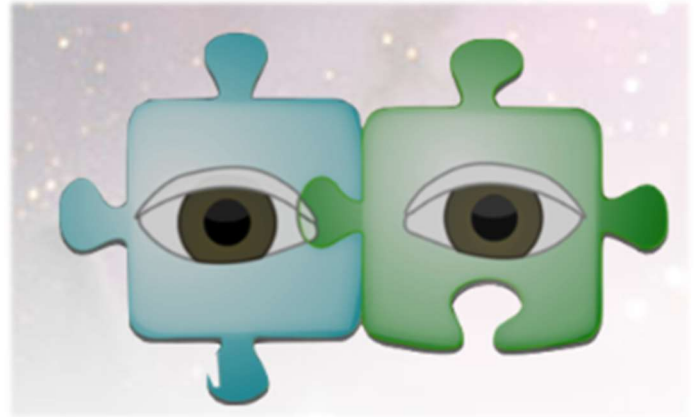
## Enhancement Agreement Emerging Themes

As we worked through the data collection process from the meetings held from September 2018 to December 2019, we considered the words of Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall.

### Etuaptmumk – Two-Eyed Seeing

As we work toward equity for Indigenous students, we create space for Two-Eyed Seeing. *Etuaptmumk* is the Mi'kmaq word for Two-Eyed Seeing, coined by Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall.

*“Etuaptmumk refers to learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledges and ways of knowing ... and learning to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all.”*



– Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall



-Buffalo/Bison Student Decorated Cardstock

Once the information was collated, four themes emerged. We named them **commitments**, which are represented in the image created by Ovila Mailhot, Coast Salish graphic artist.





## Artist Acknowledgment

Ovila Mailhot, Coast Salish graphic artist, originally from Seabird Island reservation in British Columbia, whose roots are both of Stó:lō & Nlaka'pamux Nation created an image to capture these themes. Ovila notes that creating new work and revitalizing the techniques and approaches to Indigenous art is something he feels compelled to do.





## In the Words of the Ovila Mailhot, Coast Salish Artist

*“Art feels vital to me. And being able to share that passion I have, is very special to me. This tradition of work, and this beauty, is so necessary for our culture & for healing.*

*My work must carry some level of simplicity; it must not obscure itself. That’s the tradition I’ve inherited. My work is meant to add to a continuum within a culture so rich and expansive that it still hasn’t been fully actualized or received by mainstream culture.*

*I wanted to put together a minimal style logo that would stand boldly and still be able to tell a story. An image that everyone there could be joyful and proud to have represented.*



*The **eagle** is one of my favourite representations used in our culture & among many Nations. To me the eagle can represent strength, knowledge & wisdom. A symbol that I could see easily tied into students, teachers & family. That some might see as a role model as well, eagle being the one creature capable of soaring closest to the creator above all.*

*The **sunrise** behind the eagle brings meaning of a new day & new journeys ahead. A combination shared by both students & teachers. With the educator’s role to show care, a healthy love while nurturing the students to grow and continue their new beginnings in life.*

*The **paddles raised**. A representation of a diverse group of individuals sharing a common goal on their journey together as educators & students. Each individual has their own unique qualities, different skill sets to paddle on the same path together. The skill sets, techniques and knowledge of operating these paddles in life’s journey come from our educators & parents mentoring and knowledge shared.*

*The **canoe** is a representation of our past and something that is still used to this day. Representing how our culture & traditional ways remain intact. The canoe is used on our destination in a collective journey.”*

-Ovila Mailhot, June 2020



## Sp'óq'es, The Eagle: Honouring Relationships and Kin Connections

***What does it mean to be in relationship with ourselves, with others and the land?***

*Learning partners of SD75 are committed to:*

- creating and maintaining strong and meaningful relationships and kin connections with:
  - ourselves and our identities, recognizing our implicit biases and privilege
  - with Indigenous students and their families,
  - local Indigenous Elders, role models and knowledge keepers,
  - with Indigenous culture and local Nations,
  - with colleagues and all learning partners of SD75
  - with Indigenous curriculum and knowledge,
  - and with Indigenous communities and the land
- taking responsibility both individually and collectively in the creation of a culture of reciprocity to deepen a sense of belonging for Indigenous students in SD75 schools.



*-Storytelling by Elder Florence Thomas & Judy Cathers, Indigenous Cultural Worker*



## Swep'áth', The Sunrise: Creating and Maintaining Safe Learning Environments

***How are kin connections nurtured in a school environment? What does a safe school environment look like and feel like?***

*Learning partners of SD75 are committed to:*

- creating welcoming, nurturing, validating and inclusive learning cultures led by adults
  - who show care, concern and healthy love.
  - who demonstrate an awareness and understanding that students are of diverse family backgrounds, with a range of diverse needs, including basic needs such as food security, clothing, transportation, social-emotional safety and physical safety.
  - who include social-emotional learning and trauma-informed practices in their daily work and in the language used when speaking of, to and with Indigenous peoples.
- Creating culturally responsive learning environments, including learning spaces which reflect Indigenous worldviews and perspectives



*-Learning with the Giant Indigenous Map and Pipte, Halq'emeylem Instructor & Liaison Worker*





## Sq'émél, The Paddles Raised: Supporting Student Success in Equitable Ways

### *What does equity mean? What does equity look like in SD75 schools?*

*Learning partners of SD75 are committed to:*

- meeting students and families where they are and recognizing each student as a differently abled individual, each with unique combinations of gifts and strengths, barriers and needs.
- Supporting student success in equitable ways includes:
  - an awareness, knowledge and growth understanding of anti-racist education,
  - viewing Indigenous students with high expectations, as self-determining individuals, capable of success,
  - realizing that Indigenous student success is a shared and unified responsibility,
  - providing students with necessary supports and opportunities of access,
  - including inclusive and flexible learning environments and schedules,
  - careful selection and scheduling of classes and courses,
  - positive, ongoing communication with parents and caregivers,
  - offering invitations to school events,
  - school staff visiting the Indigenous communities of the students and families we serve,
  - access to after-school programming and tutoring,
  - options for extra-curricular activities and
  - honouring cultural expertise



*-Student Chef, Ricardo Michell, Former FLC graduate, current UFV Culinary Arts student*



## Sléxwelh, The Canoe: Honouring the Past, Being in the Present, Strengthening the Future

***How can we use our understanding of the past to support our efforts in the present and to work toward a shared future?***

*Learning partners of SD75 are committed to understanding that:*

- pre-contact Indigenous communities were diverse thriving, healthy systems with robust languages, traditions, practices, laws and ceremonies;
- that during contact, these systems were significantly disrupted by the intentional cultural genocide caused by the Indian Residential School System, the Indian Day School and the 60's Scoop;
- that throughout and after contact, Indigenous peoples persevered.

By resilience, and through the resurgence and revitalization of language, ceremonial practices and culture, Indigenous peoples are 'restorying' the past and walking toward a shared future.



*-Orange Shirt Day March for Reconciliation, September 2019*





## Equity Scan Beginnings

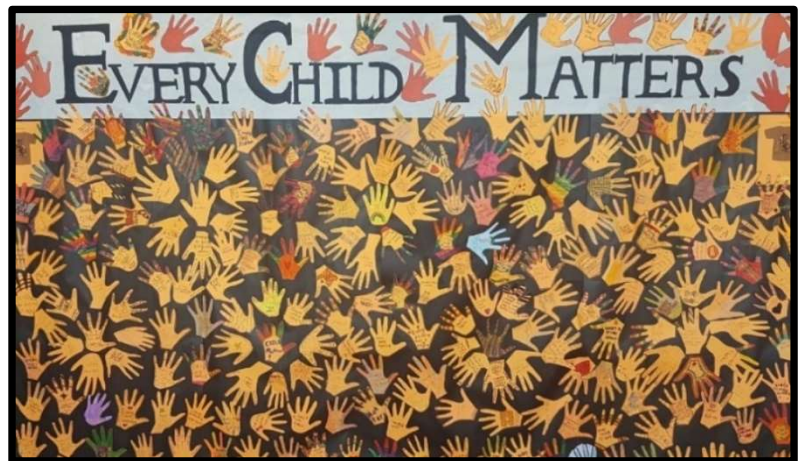
SD75 joined the Equity Scan Project in September 2019. The contributions made during the Enhancement Agreement meetings during the 2018/2019 school year and in the fall 2019 led directly into the Equity Scan Project. These contributions serve as overarching beliefs and commitments to Indigenous learners.

This combined work became:

### ***Q'pethet Ye Tel:exw: Gathering to Understand: A Framework for Creating a Culture of Equity***

The Equity Scan Team includes:

- Local Elders
- Representatives and Education Coordinators from Qwó:lt'el, Leq'á:mel, Matheqwi and Sq'éwlets
- Indigenous Student Success Coaches
- Indigenous Liaison Workers
- Acting District Principal of Indigenous Education
- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent
- Director of Student Services
- Members of Human Resources
- School Board Trustees
- School Administrators
- Members of Student Services
- Classroom Teachers
- District Mentor Teachers



*-Hatzic Middle School Foyer Display*

The Equity Scan is a standing topic on the following meetings: weekly Senior Management, focused Equity Scan Facilitators, monthly Management/Exempt, Committee of the Whole, monthly Siwal Si'wes Advisory Council, and monthly Siwal Si'wes Staff.



## Examining Current Practices

***How do current practices support, connect to and/or hinder the commitments represented by the eagle, the sunrise, the paddles raised and the canoe?***

### **Cultural Relevance:**

Is/does this practice...

- culturally relevant to Indigenous students of SD75 and Indigenous communities?
- reflect Indigenous ways of seeing, understanding and knowing the world?
- consider the effects of racism, oppression, marginalization, poverty and colonization of Indigenous communities?
- promote meaningful Indigenous participation and benefit?

### **Impacts:**

Does this practice:

- have any potential negative impacts on Indigenous populations?
- privilege some individuals or groups at the expense of Indigenous populations?
- perpetuate systemic disparities faced by Indigenous populations?

If yes,

- What are these impacts?
- How can they be maximized to achieve the most equitable outcome?
- What are the success indicators associated with this?

If no,

- Are these impacts minor that can be managed? If so, how?
- Are these impacts significant that may require alternatives? If yes, what might be some alternatives to ensure equity?



*-Sacred Circle Workshop, Fall 2019, Leq'á:mel Gym*



## What We Learned in Year One of the Equity Scan Project

- *The value of listening from the heart from the Indigenous members of the Equity Team*
- *Participants of the Equity Scan are:*
  - *diverse, in terms of their lived experiences and histories.*
  - *at various learning points regarding knowledge of Indigenous histories, systemic impacts of these histories.*
  - *at varying degrees of understandings about the definition of equity and what it looks like in schools.*
  - *at varying degrees of confronting discomfort, their western/colonial mindsets and racial biases.*
  - *at varying degrees of the use of appropriate and acceptable language in the context of Indigenous peoples.*
  - *concerned that some staff are not ready to approach talks on racism and bias in education.*
  - *committed to seeing lasting change across departments.*
- *We need to be mindful of voices who dominate the conversation and create space for all voices.*
- *We are learning to shift our way of thinking, seeing processes and through the lens of equity.*
- *When we start asking different questions and including equity in our questions, we will know that we are moving forward.*
- *There are clear gaps in parity, opportunity and access for Indigenous learners of SD75.*



*-Deroche Elementary School, Field of Streams Display*

***This document is a working document, in that each Pillar Group, through discussion and dialogue will commence an examination of current practices, processes and policies, alongside measures of evidence, leading to Action Plans, resulting in increased equity for Indigenous learners and knowing that we are making a difference, but also knowing how we are making a difference.***



## The Pillars of Equity – Moving Beyond Year One

### Policy & Governance



*-Kwantlen Elder, Lekeyten, Orange Shirt Day March for Reconciliation, September 2019*

#### **Focused Conversations, Commitments & Priorities to Support Equity for Indigenous Learners:**

- Review and align SD75's Plans, Policies, Regulations & Governance Procedures
- Review SD75's Administrative Procedures
- Align SD75's Hiring Procedures, Posting Language and Interview Questions, and specifically the hiring of Indigenous educators to reflect a Culture of Equity
- Ensure District Budget Reports reflect the shared and unified responsibility for supporting learners
- Review process of the inclusion and representation of local First Nation communities in the decision-making process of programs and services that directly affect their children
- Explore potential and possibilities for creation of Indigenous Community Engagement Policy
- Create an Indigenous Language policy for SD75

#### **Actions:**

#### **Measures of Evidence:**

#### **How Will We Know That We Are Making a Difference?**





## Learning Environment



-Kwantlen Elder, Cheryl Gabriel, Sacred Circle Workshop, Fall 2019

### Focused Conversations, Commitments & Priorities to Support Equity for Indigenous Learners:

- Review of:
  - how school culture is enhanced by the First Peoples' Principles of Learning
  - how Indigenous worldviews, perspectives and knowledges are reflected in all physical spaces of the school (includes classrooms, hallways, foyer, gym etc) or lack thereof
  - the Indigenous Student Gathering Place, that it fosters belonging and connectedness
  - school practices welcoming Indigenous students and families,
  - current communication practices between the school and Indigenous families
  - rates of participation of Indigenous learners in specialized programs and courses; identify possible barriers and gaps of opportunity
  - rates of participation of Indigenous learners in extra-curricular activities; identify possible barriers and gaps of opportunity
  - rates of participation of Indigenous learners in student leadership opportunities; identify possible barriers and gaps of opportunity
  - Indigenous presence at school sites; including staff members, Elders-in-Residence; Indigenous Knowledge Keepers & Presenters
  - feedback from the Indigenous community, and the process of gaining input from Indigenous families about the learning environment of their children
  - participation of Indigenous learners and families in school events, those specifically Indigenous and those not specifically Indigenous based

#### Actions for Year Two:

#### Measures of Evidence:

#### How Will We Know That We Are Making a Difference?





## Pedagogical Core



*-ESR Drum Teaching and Making Workshop*

### **Focused Conversations, Commitments & Priorities to Support Equity for Indigenous Learners:**

- Review of:
  - practices for professional growth plans at the district, school and classroom level
  - practices for ensuring the academic of Indigenous students, specifically in CORE courses
  - practices for ensuring that Indigenous students are enrolled in Career Education courses
  - data of participation of Indigenous students in Programs and Schools of Choice, and Advanced Placement courses
  - learning opportunities and professional development for authentic Indigenous learning
  - learning opportunities and professional development for Indigenous Cultural Safety and Sensitivity
  - learning opportunities and professional development practices about Equity, Anti-Racism and Trauma-Informed practices, including transgenerational effects of Indian Residential Schools, 60's Scoop and marginalization of Indigenous peoples
  - learning opportunities and professional development to staff which encourage safe discussion and dialogue about implicit bias and privilege;
  - current policy/guidelines for selection and purchase of authentic Indigenous learning materials and resources
  - the availability and promotion of Indigenous resources created for teachers in Curriculum Connections, Si'wes Digital Resource Collection, by Indigenous Mentor Teacher
  - district's current practice for classroom instructional practices for racial bias
  - classroom instructional practices to ensure that they enhance teaching/s with Indigenous worldviews, perspectives and knowledges
  - assessment practices and feedback of learning
  - practices to include Indigenous families on instruction, curriculum and resources used in the classrooms
  - a need for Indigenous Curriculum Lead at elementary school sites

**Actions for Year Two:**

**Measures of Evidence:**

**How Will We Know That We Are Making a Difference?**



## Learning Profiles



*-Student Drum Group Performing at Hatzic Middle School*

### **Focused Conversations, Commitments & Priorities to Support Equity for Indigenous Learners:**

#### **Continue:**

- Student Success Binders and provide opportunities for sharing and discussion at principal and vice-principal meetings
- Grade 6 & Grade 9 Transition Binders, with focussed transition meetings for Indigenous students transitioning to middle and high school
- Intentional Indigenous Student Success Plans, for students requiring additional supports when transitioning to middle and high school (Appendix A)
- Continuation of weekly Indigenous Student Success Meetings at the middle and high school level
- Focused Grade 12 Indigenous Student Success Meeting in Spring to ensure they are in line to graduate; Create Intentional Student Success Plans for those in danger of not graduating
- Ministry Sharepoint Data as a reporting tool to be shared with SD75 community (Employees, the Board, Siwal Si'wes Advisory Council, Local Bands)

#### **Explore & Review:**

- Use of the Indigenous Learning Profile Tool to monitor and track progress of Indigenous Grade 10-12 students
- Suspension practices, and collaborate to create alternative options as culturally responsive interventions
- Quarterly meetings specifically to track progress, success and needs of students who cross Indigenous Department and Student Services Department;
- Review attendance rates
- Tracking system for non-graduating Indigenous students
- Sense of Belonging Survey for Indigenous Students
- Outside agency supports (ie Jordan's Principle etc)
- Interaction and communications of school personnel with Indigenous learners and families (AIMS)
- Personal learning goals as set by each Indigenous learner assessing their learning through self-reflection and culturally responsive protocols.
- Indigenous learners understanding of identity and understanding of cultural competencies
- Processes for supporting Indigenous students' success in connecting with adults in the building and peers
- Supports for Post-Secondary, including the application for Siwal Si'wes scholarships & Bursaries

#### **Actions for Year Two:**

#### **Measures of Evidence:**

#### **How Will We Know That We Are Making a Difference?**



## **Acknowledgments & Concluding Thoughts**

We would like to extend a grand Kwas'hooy to the Indigenous students, parents and caregivers, families and community members who shared their vision for Indigenous Education in SD75.

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### **Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council Members (2019/2020)**

Agnes Giesbrecht, Co-Chair

Jacqelyn Turner, Co-Chair

Norma George, Past Education Coordinator, Leq'á:mel First Nation

Marita Paul, Education Coordinator, Leq'á:mel First Nation

Chief Johnny Williams, Sq'ewlets

Cheryl Gabriel, Education Coordinator, Kwantlen First Nation

Priscilla Wells, Community Member

Bill Wells, Community Member

Sharon Syrette, Community Member

Lolehawk (Laura Buker), Community Member

Rene Inkster, Métis Community Member

Wendy Matthews, Community Member

### **Staff Support for Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council Members**

Marcy Buell, Administrative Assistant, Siwal Si'wes

Peggy Janicki, Indigenous Mentor Teacher, SD75

Vivian Searwar, Acting District Principal of Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Education, SD75

### **The Board of Education – Trustee Members of Siwal Si'wes Advisory Council (Year One)**

Randy Cairns, 1st

Tracy Loffler, Alternate

*Additional Trustees (attendees of SWSW Advisory Council meetings & Equity Scan):*

Rick McKamey

Julia Renkema

Shelley Carter



