



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

2014-2019

Siwal Si'wes (Our Forefathers' teachings)
Mission Public Schools

Table of Contents

Introduction

Acknowledgement of Territories.....	2
Siwal Si'wes (Our Forefathers' Teachings).....	2

Process Information

What is an Enhancement Agreement (EA)?.....	3
What is the purpose of an Enhancement Agreement?.....	3
What are the goals for the Mission Public School District (MPSD)?.....	3
What does our data tell us?.....	4
How was the second Enhancement Agreement developed?.....	4
How did we gain input into our Enhancement Agreement?.....	4
What did we learn?.....	5
Suggested Actions for Success.....	5

Mission and Vision

Our Mission Statement.....	6
Our Vision Statement.....	6

Themes and Goals for Success

Medicine Wheel.....	7
Goal area 1: Honouring Culture and History.....	8
Goal area 2: Positive Learning Experiences.....	10
Goal area 3: Meaningful Contributions.....	12
Goal area 4: Looking to the Future.....	14

Conclusion & Acknowledgments.....

Cooperative approach to Implementation.....

Acknowledgement of Territories

We begin our second Enhancement Agreement by acknowledging and honouring the traditional territory and history of the Stó:lō people.

Our Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement between our school district, all local Aboriginal communities, and the Ministry of Education also acknowledges and honours the four traditional territories of the following First Nation communities:

Kwantlen First Nation	Matsqui First Nation
Leq'á:mel First Nation	Scowlitz First Nation

Mission Public School District also appreciates the vital role of all Aboriginal peoples, groups and associations, residing within the school district, or involved in, or connected to:

Fraser Valley Métis Association	Lower Stat'limx Nations
Métis Nation of British Columbia	Mission Friendship Center

We also acknowledge the traditional teachings of our Elders and the wisdom of their Aboriginal Culture.

Siwal Si'wes (Our Forefathers' teachings) - Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee

Siwal Si'wes works collaboratively with all schools to ensure that Aboriginal 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 Aboriginal peoples. The committee is comprised of the following:

- Elected co-chairs
- Parents and caregivers of Aboriginal students
- Aboriginal Elders
- Members of our Aboriginal Communities
- School Staff
- School Board Trustees
- District Principal

What is an Enhancement Agreement (EA)?

- An Enhancement Agreement between a school district, all local Aboriginal Communities, and the Ministry of Education is designed to enhance the educational achievement of Aboriginal students.

What is the purpose of an Enhancement Agreement?

- Work to enhance the level of service beyond the goals of the school district's achievement contract;
- Is intended to continually improve the quality of education achieved by all Aboriginal students;
- Support strong cooperative, collaborative relationships between Aboriginal communities and school districts;
- Provide Aboriginal communities and districts greater autonomy to find solutions that work for Aboriginal students, the schools and the communities; and
- Require a high level of respect and trust to function.

What are the goals for the Mission Public School District (MPSD)?

The goals of the EA were created with the knowledge of the school district's plan for and responsibility to all children both aboriginal and non-aboriginal.

The district has two transition objectives specifically for Aboriginal students. These MPSD objectives are listed here:

- Improve the successful transition of Aboriginal students each year from grade 7 to grade 12,
- Improve the percentage of Aboriginal students earning a Dogwood Diploma within six years from the time they enter grade 8.

The goals of the school district, for ALL students, include improving:

- Literacy,
- Numeracy and
- Successful Transitions

A copy of the Achievement Contract for Mission Public Schools can be found on the website www.mpsd.ca.

What does our district data tell us?

- Our six year high school completion rate continues to improve (50% in 2006/2007 to 68 % in 2012/2013)
- Our FSA data consistently shows a 10% difference for our Aboriginal vs. non-Aboriginal learners in both grade 4 and 7 numeracy, reading comprehension and writing
- Our six year high school completion rate shows a 10% difference for our Aboriginal vs. non-aboriginal learners
- Student Sense of Belonging survey results 2013/2014:

I feel I belong in this school.

Grade K-12 83% report Always or often

I am proud to be First Nations, Metis, or Inuit

Grade K-12 92% report Always or often

I participate in extra-curricular at school (i.e. plays, sports etc.).

Grade K-12 54% report Always or often

I do well in school.

Grade K-12 73% report Always or often

I get support from school staff.

Grade K-12 80% report Always or often

- An electronic version of the MPSD Aboriginal Report ‘How Are We Doing?’ can be found on the website www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/ .

How was the second Enhancement Agreement developed?

- The second Enhancement Agreement was developed over more than a two-year period through efforts of our Enhancement Agreement Committee. This team was comprised of Elders from our Siwal Si’wes Advisory Committee, staff, Mission Teachers Union (MTU), principals, parents and students.

How did we gain input into our Enhancement Agreement?

- 6 community forums
- 5 focus meetings with staff and members of the Aboriginal communities
- student and parent surveys (responses)
- Monthly Enhancement Agreement meetings with representatives from our Aboriginal communities, parents and school district staff

What did we learn we need to do?

- Improve communication at all levels
- Foster positive, caring and respectful relationships
- Teach relevant, engaging curriculum including accurate aboriginal content and history
- Increase academic support
- Support health and well-being
- Foster a sense of belonging
- Increase opportunities for students to experience joy, success, personal growth and self-esteem, as well as, extra-curricular activities
- Focus on significance in all cultural teachings in an inclusive way
- Teach Halq'eméylem language in all schools

Suggested Actions for Success:

- Teach Culture and Halq'eméylem Language (upriver dialect)
- Teach True History and History of Stó:lō
- Family Gatherings
- Honour Student Success
- Support Academics
- Support Student achievement
- Celebrations and Ceremonies
- Field Trips and Fun Learning Experiences
- After school and out of school activities
- Opportunities for students to learn about and share their own heritage
- In-service for teachers and support staff



Deroche Student Dancers perform at Mission Winter Games Opening Ceremony

Mission and Vision

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.



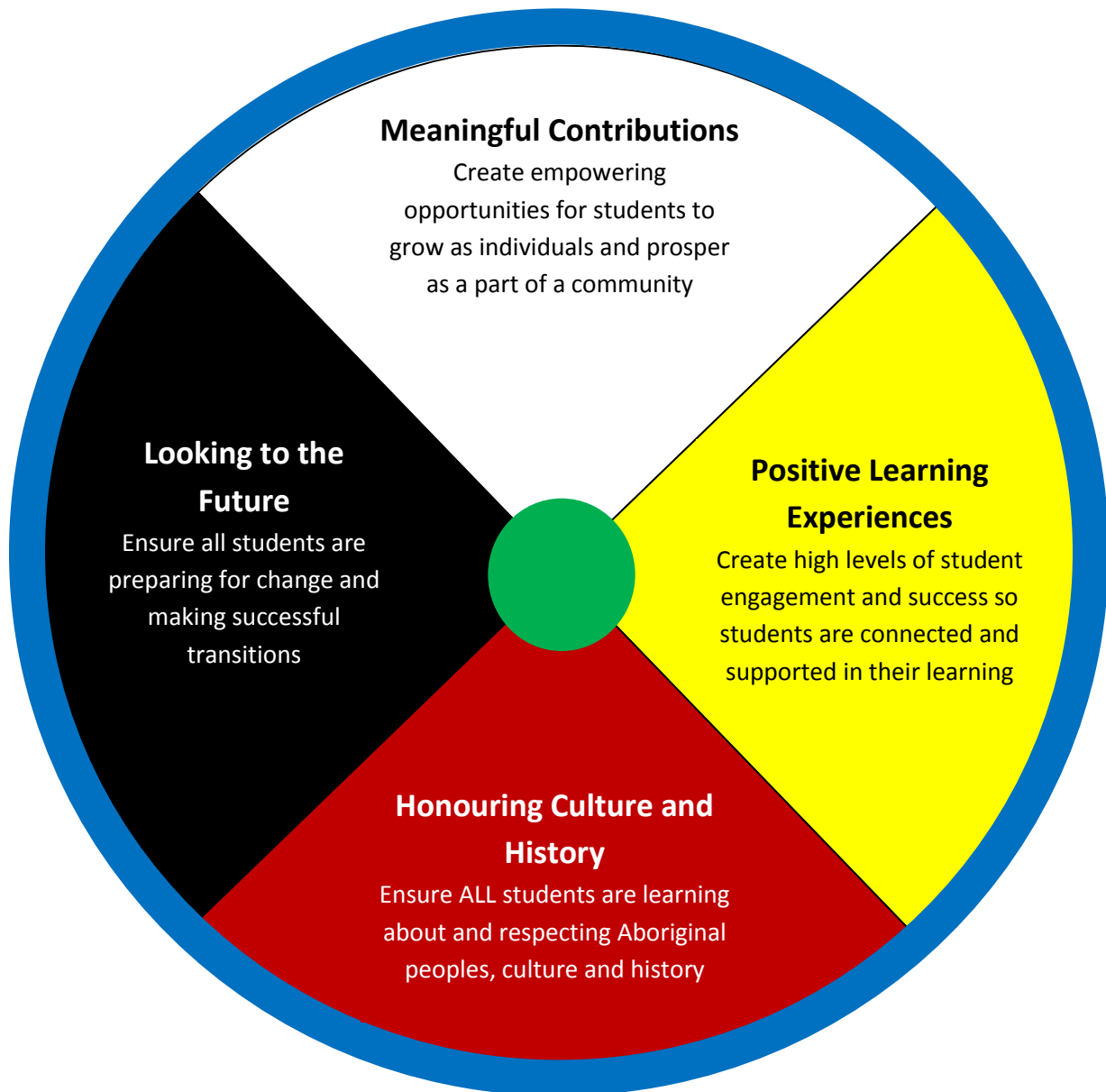
Deroche Elementary Pink Shirt Day

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.



Deroche Elementary Building Bird Boxes

4 Themes for Success



A medicine wheel with Southern Plains/Sioux/Plains Cree and Lakota Colors was felt by our elders to best represent the work of our EA. Today, the Medicine Wheel has become a major symbol of peaceful interaction representing harmonious connections.

Theme 1: Honouring Culture and History

Ensure ALL students are learning about and respecting Aboriginal peoples, culture, and history.

Goal 1:

Increase student knowledge of Aboriginal people, culture and history.

Rationale:

In our community consultation meetings a common theme prevailed that our Aboriginal children's success is connected to students feeling valued and respected in school. It was further acknowledged that the lack of knowledge that exists for many people in our system about Aboriginal people, culture and history is a major road block for building the bridges of understanding, togetherness and ultimately respect. The idea that ignorance comes from lack of knowledge, and that if we ensure students are learning about Aboriginal peoples, culture and history, then it will lead us to the necessary framework for a more knowledgeable, and hence respectful environment for our students. We also believe that Aboriginal students need to see themselves valued in the curriculum, being portrayed positively and that all students need the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the values imbedded in Aboriginal teachings, the impacts of such history as colonization and residential schools and what many in our community have defined as the "true" history. In response to overwhelming community input and the wisdom of our elders, as well as, data that show the majority of our students do not feel they are being taught enough about Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the understanding of the importance for Aboriginal students to see themselves genuinely rooted in the culture of our schools provides the need for this goal.

Performance Expectations:

- Baseline data will be collected and 5 year performance targets will be set and monitored annually.

Measure:

- Increase the percentage of students reporting they are taught about Aboriginal peoples in Canada as reported in ministry satisfaction survey results.
- Increase participation rates in First Nations 12.
- Increase the number of learning opportunities that promote an understanding of Aboriginal peoples, culture, and history.
- Increase participation rates in our Halq'eméylem Language Program.

We will use a combination of indicators to measure the progress with this goal. This set of indicators together will inform our success and course of action. New measures may be developed or become available to further our understandings of the effectiveness of this focus and thus be added to our set of measures.

Actions for Success we believe will contribute to accomplishing our goal:

- Elders and Artist in Residence Programs
- Family Dinners
- Cultural Days and Presentations/Teachings
- Teach True History and History of Stó:lō
- Develop St. Mary's Residential School Experience Curriculum
- Halq'eméylem Language Program



Christine Morrison Elementary students learn Halq'eméylem with Pipte Lindley and their teachers

Theme 2: Positive Learning Experiences

Create high levels of student engagement and success so students are connected and supported in their learning.

Goal: Increase levels of student engagement.

Rationale:

We believe that students come to school for many reasons, but it is the positive learning experiences that keep students engaged through to graduation. We have defined engagement with feeling successful, connected and supported in their learning with student actions such as coming to and staying in school. Students who are engaged in their work are successful, curious, connected, and supported in their learning. Our district data indicates that students in our schools are not feeling as connected and supported as we would want. Our provincial data indicates the percentage of students reporting they like school decreases as they proceed in to higher grades. Our FSA results for grades 4 and 7 in reading, writing and numeracy show a difference in achievement for our Aboriginal learners that is the same difference in completion rates or success for our Aboriginal students. Input from our community meetings and parent and student surveys suggest a need for better relationships and connections, more support with learning and more opportunities to spark curiosity and interest in learning leading to feelings of success and thus keeping children engaged in school.

Performance Expectations:

- Baseline data will be collected and 5 year performance targets will be set and monitored annually.

Measure:

- Increase the percentage of students reporting they like school as reported in ministry satisfaction survey results.
- Increase the percentage of students reporting they have two or more adults who care about them at school as reported in ministry satisfaction survey results.
- Improve attendance rates at middle and high school

- Increase the percentage of students who report they do well in school.
- Increase the percentage of students who report they try their best during class time.
- Increase the percentage of students who report they get support from school staff.

A combination of indicators is necessary to measure the progress with this goal. The above set of measures will inform our course of action. In addition to these measures we will review the indicators in our school district achievement contract for student success to continue to frame our progress with the larger concept of engagement. New measures may be developed or become available to further our understandings of the effectiveness of this focus and thus be added to our set of measures.

Actions for Success we believe will contribute to accomplishing our goal:

- Academic Support
- Reading Incentive Program
- Field Trips
- Social and Emotional Support
- Aboriginal Mentor Teachers
- Summer Camp
- Attendance Support
- Student Success Plans
- Staff survey – connectivity tool



Mission Central Students learn Coast Salish Weaving



Hatzic Elementary Heritage Fair Winner

Theme 3: Meaningful Contributions

Create empowering opportunities for students to grow as individuals and prosper as a part of a community

Goal 3: Increase Aboriginal student involvement in extra-curricular and/or leadership activities.

Rationale:

We believe that empowering opportunities and meaningful contributions are the cornerstones of enhancing the educational experience for students in a way that leads to a purposeful graduation with skills for the future. Dr. Martin Brokenleg states that “Young people must be empowered to care and contribute to the betterment of their families, friends, schools and communities” (Circle of Courage Elementary School Tool Kit). According to the report, Career Development in the Canadian Workplace: National Business Survey, two out of three Canadian businesses say they have difficulty finding candidates with the “soft skills” they are looking for – a positive attitude, good communication ability and a strong work ethic. These learnings are often best obtained in the extra-curricular and leadership opportunities that exist in the school and greater community. Students have also shared with us that how belonging to a club or team was a key factor in staying in school. Input we received from our consultation meetings and surveys called strongly for us to find ways for more of our Aboriginal children to participate in activities that promote empowerment and ways to contribute positively as a part of a community. Currently our data shows that on average only half our children are participating in such activities. We believe empowered students feel they have the independence to make their own choices and thus to acquire the skills, wellness, confidence, and self-reliance necessary for success in life.

Performance Expectations:

- Baseline data will be collected and 5 year performance targets will be set and monitored annually.

Measure:

- Increase the percentage of students reporting they are involved in extra-curricular or service activities on sense of belonging survey.
- Increase the percentage of students who are involved in leadership opportunities within and beyond the school district.
- Increase the percentage of students who are involved in acts of service or volunteerism within and beyond the school district.

New measures may be developed or become available to further our understandings of the effectiveness of this focus and thus be added to our set of measures.

Actions for Success we believe will contribute to accomplishing our goal:

- Extra-curricular, service and leadership Clubs
- Me to We
- Peer Tutors, mentors, buddies
- Fun Learning Experiences
- Theatre (ex. Little Bear's Vision Quest)
- Potlatch
- Leadership Conference



Life Ready Game Ready at Mission Secondary sponsored by Xyolhemeylh

Theme 4: Looking to the Future

Ensure all students are preparing for change and making successful transitions.

Goal 4: Increase Aboriginal student success and preparedness.

Rationale:

Students are prepared for the next steps when they have set goals, made plans, experienced mastery in their course work and have had the experiences necessary to prepare them for the next transition. The better prepared our students are for the next level the greater the likelihood of sustained success and completion of school with skills and options for the future. Our provincial level data shows that our student grade to grade transition rates begin to decrease through middle and high school leading to lower completion rates. The district has two transition objectives specifically for Aboriginal students, which are as follows: Improve the successful transition of Aboriginal students each year from grade 7 to grade 12, and improve the percentage of Aboriginal students earning a Dogwood Diploma within six years from the time they enter grade 8. Our goal is about enhancing this work and providing the value added experience so that our students thrive in these transitions, as well as, beyond high school completion. Information from our community input meetings and student and parent surveys expressed a desire to increase support to students in their learning so they can experience the necessary success in their classes to continue to the next level and feel prepared when they get there.

Performance Expectations:

- Baseline data will be collected and 5 year performance targets will be set and monitored annually.

Measure:

- Increase the percentage of students in grades 10 and 12 reporting that school is preparing them for post-secondary education (for example,

college, university, trade school) as reported in ministry satisfaction surveys.

- Increase the number of students passing all courses in middle and high school.
- Increase the percentage of students achieving grade 12 program examination scholarships and/or Dogwood District/Authority Awards.
- Increase Student Transitions to BC Public Post-Secondary Institutions.

New measures may be developed or become available to further our understandings of the effectiveness of this focus and thus be added to our set of measures.

Actions for Success we believe will contribute to accomplishing our goal:

- Recognition Ceremonies
- Student Transition Support and Retreats
- Inspirational Speakers
- Elder involvement
- Goal Setting and Planning
- Tutoring and Homework Clubs
- Career Fairs and Scholarship support



Student Response at HPSS Family of Schools Dinner Graduation Ceremony

Conclusion:

We are pleased to begin implementing our second EA “Pulling for the Future” and will be continuing to work towards enhancing the educational achievement of our Aboriginal students. We will continue to build strong, cooperative, collaborative relationships between Aboriginal students, parents and communities and our school district personnel. We will ensure our Aboriginal communities have greater say in finding solutions that work for Aboriginal students in Mission Public Schools.

Acknowledgements:

Thank you to the Aboriginal students, parents, families and communities for participating in providing input for our second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. The honest and thoughtful feedback received from our consultation meetings at Kwantlen First Nation, Leq’á:mel First Nation, Matsqui First Nation, Scowlitz First Nation, Mission Friendship Center, Siwal Si’wes Advisory Committee, Mission Teacher’s Union, representatives from Fraser Valley Métis Association and Métis Nation of BC, Siwal Si’wes Staff, Lower Stat’limx Nations, Mission Principals and Vice-Principals Association, the hundreds of responses from student and parent surveys and the work of our Enhancement team during this process directly informed the mission, vision and goals for our new Enhancement Agreement.



Siwal Si’wes Advisory Committee – Front row: Agnes Giesbrecht, Priscilla Wells, Florence Louie, Sharon Syrette, Heather Hansson Back row: Susan Williams, Jan Openshaw, Selina Shaffer, Rene Inkster, Karianne Buckner, Nicholas Louie, Bill Wells,Carolynn Schmor, Councilor Hensmen

Cooperative Approach to Implementing the Enhancement Agreement:

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.

This Enhancement Agreement "requires a high level of respect and trust to function." The inter-relationship and responsibilities reach far beyond the school personnel interacting with students. Regular communication is essential to building these relationships. It is the policy of Siwal Si'wes Aboriginal Education to consult with parents and caregivers, families, and aboriginal communities to ensure that we understand and can support one another in removing barriers and solving problems that may arise. It is very important that doors (and minds) remain open and that we express our concerns with a positive intent for resolving any differences.

Students will approach learning with curiosity and creativity. They will apply their individual talents and gifts, always reaching toward their potential. They will take responsibility for their learning, ask questions, and seek help when needed. Supportive and inclusive fellow learners will help everyone to enjoy their school experiences, and build life-long friendships.

Parents and caregivers have an important role in planning and implementing services at the school level. They provide children and youth with encouragement and needed assistance, including practical supports such as good nutrition, homework assistance, transportation to and from events, and clear expectations regarding attendance, performance, and "doing your best".

Family includes many generations and special relationships with people we care about, whether living in the same household or not. The supportive role and modelling of grandparents and other elders, siblings, aunts and uncles, cousins and all those whom we call 'family' can be crucial to the success of students.

Aboriginal community, whether on- or off-reserve, provides an important link to the traditions, stories, and practical supports for our students. Chief and Council, community leaders and staff may be able to provide assistance with transportation, school-related expenses, sports equipment, ceremonies and recognition for students and their families, making it possible for learners to excel. Regular consultation between community representatives and

MPSD staff can help ensure that aboriginal students are receiving the supplementary services that they require for success.

Siwal Si'wes Aboriginal Advisory Committee works collaboratively with all schools to ensure that Aboriginal students are successful. Promoting and respecting traditions, they also help foster awareness of and respect for all Aboriginal people. The committee meets monthly and in special ad hoc work groups to plan and oversee the Enhancement services provided by the school district. Parents and caregivers of Aboriginal students, Elders, and members of Aboriginal communities are welcome to come to the table, to provide their ideas and guidance. Please visit the Siwal Si'wes Aboriginal Advisory web-site for up-to-date information, meeting dates, and recognition of recent student success. www.aboriginal.mpsd.ca.

Citizens in local communities are showing a growing awareness and desire for understanding and interaction with the Aboriginal cultures and people. A positive environment is emerging, one in which Aboriginal traditions are being recognized and respected. Siwal Si'wes volunteers were recently recognized by the District of Mission in 2014 with a Special Accomplishment Award.

Community, Social and Government provide many additional services and programs for Aboriginal people that complement the education system. Community resource groups, literacy support, outdoor and environmental activities, sports and recreation providers, and the Fraser Valley Regional Library system can enhance the student's learning and provide additional opportunities for learning.



Students learning to Jig at West Heights with Métis Artisan Lisa Shepherd



Inez Jasper at West Heights Elementary

Literacy project at Hatzic Secondary



Mission Secondary sign includes "Welcome" in Halq'eméylem - Éy kwe'se xwe'í



Students learn soap stone carving with Inuit Artisan Lynn Heyes at West Heights Elementary



Little Bear's Vision Quest – play at Christine Morrison Elementary



Mission Central Elementary visits the Coqualeetza Stó:lō Longhouse in Chilliwack

Images used throughout the document are a reflection of the elders, students, staff, families, guests, and community engaged in the work within the school district.

Pulling for the Future – Orange Shirt Day!



“Tset xwelchesem late lhewelep”

“We raise our hands in thanks and respect”