

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



- 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 and learn 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 2020-2021.

<p>Policy & Governance: Angus Wilson, Superintendent, Team Facilitator</p> <p>Johnny Williams, Chief of Sq'éwlets Sonya Williams, Education Coordinator, Sq'éwlets Cheryl Gabriel, Education Coordinator, Kwantlen Frist Nation Dawn Styran, Education Coordinator (Alternate), Leq'á:mel First Nation Camielle Laslo, Councilor, Education Coordinator, Leq'á:mel First Nation Jim Pearce, Principal, Mission Senior Secondary School The Board of Education, SD75:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustee Chair, Tracy Loffler • Trustee Co-Chair, Randy Cairns • Trustee Rick McKamey • Trustee Julia Renkema • Trustee Shelley Carter 	<p>Pedagogical Core: Karen Alvarez – Assistant Superintendent, Team Facilitator</p> <p>Tina Phelps, Director of Human Resources Marcello Gabriel, Principal, Hatzic Middle School Lisa Clarke, Principal, Hillside Traditional School Sharon Widdows, Principal, ESR Elementary School Karina Zimmerman, Vice-Principal, ESR Elementary School Hardeep Grewal, Principal, Albert McMahon Elementary School Shannon Bowsfield, District Inclusion Mentor Teacher Jody Shaw, Advocate of Children & Youth in Care Rebekaah Stenner, Math Mentor Teacher</p>
<p>Learning Environments: Carolynn, Schmor, Director of Student Services, Team Facilitator</p> <p>Lolehawk, Stó:lō Elder Angela Condon, Principal, Windebank Elementary School Chandy Ritter, Vice-Principal, Hatzic Elementary School Sheri Montgomery, District Inclusion Mentor Teacher Tiffany Bishop, Indigenous Liaison Worker Rachel Schooner, Indigenous Liaison Worker Linda Hamel, Principal, Hillside Traditional Academy Mikel Brogan, Principal West Heights Community School Jordan Klassen, Principal Dewdney Elementary Leslie Jensen, Indigenous Liaison Worker Jennifer Lane, Siwal Si'wes Teacher-Librarian</p>	<p>Learning Profile: 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 & ELL/ESD Holly Gallant, Indigenous Liaison Worker Robby Williams, Indigenous Liaison Worker /Youth Care Worker Jenny Snow, Indigenous Liaison Worker</p>



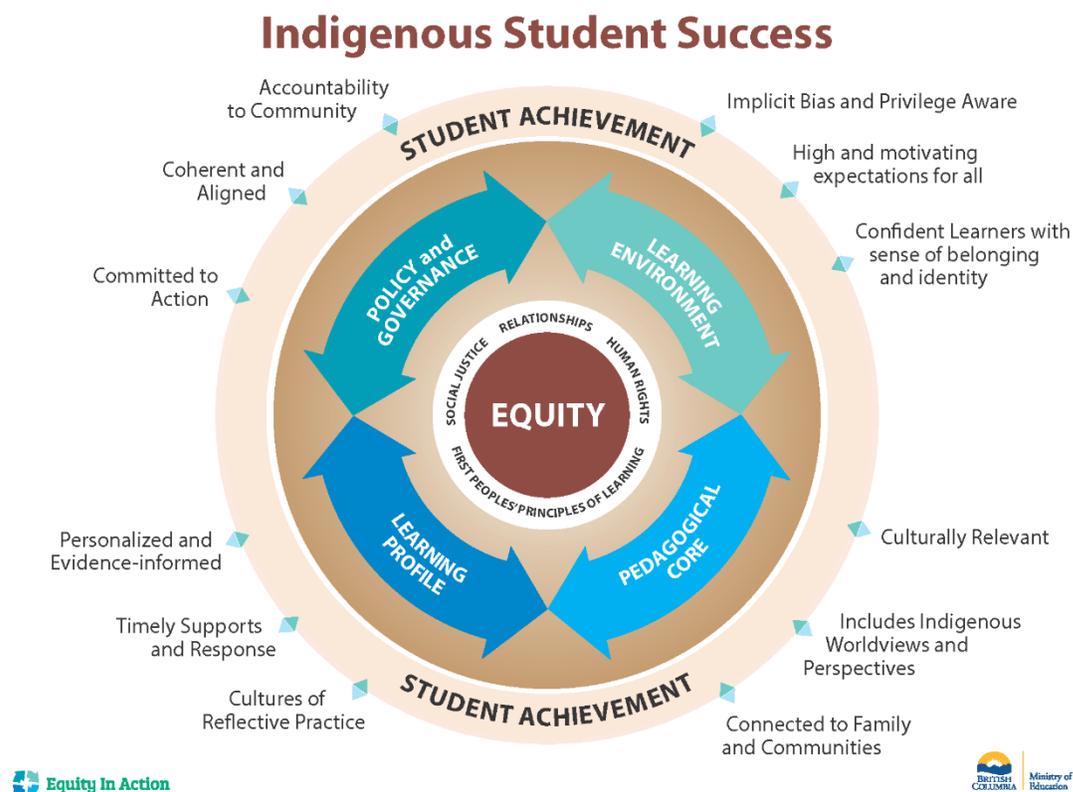
What is the Equity Scan?

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 8:

1. Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.

Article 11:

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artifacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

Article 12:

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.

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 2019 2020 results)

- **Six-Year Indigenous Graduation Completion Rates** are currently at 73%, consistently lower than Non-Indigenous students.
- **Dogwood Diplomas:** 30% of all Adult Dogwood diplomas awarded in 2020 were awarded to Indigenous Adult Students
- 73% of Indigenous students who pass the Grade 10 English Assessment, graduate
- **SD75 Indigenous Student Connectivity Survey Results, where the result shown is a cumulation of answers Always, Often or Sometimes:**
 - 88% of Indigenous students K to Grade 12 indicate that they feel that they belong at their school
 - 91% of Indigenous students K to Grade 12 indicate that they feel safe at school.
 - 89% of Indigenous students K to Grade 12 indicate that they do well in school
 - 84% of Indigenous students K to Grade 12 indicate that they get help from school staff.
 - 89% of Indigenous students K to Grade 12 indicate that they feel that staff care about them.
 - 42% of Indigenous students K to Grade 12 indicate that they are involved in extra-curricular or service activities
- 16% of all Grade 10 Indigenous students are in Precalculus 11 while 42% of all Grade 10 Non-Indigenous Students are in Precalculus 11
- 51% of all Grade 10 Indigenous students are in Workplace Math 10 while 25% of all Non-Indigenous Students are in Workplace Math 10
- In 2020 2021, 44% of Grade Nine Indigenous Students had more than 40 absences.
- **Suspensions:** Indigenous Students comprise 34% of the total number of suspensions throughout SD75. Indigenous students currently make up 15.2% of the total student population in SD75. Indigenous male students comprise 29% of the total number of suspensions throughout SD75.
- **Student Services Data for Students with Ministry Designations:**
 - 59% of Indigenous students with a Ministry Designation, graduate
 - 54% of Indigenous students “ever designated” as Category R or H, graduate
 - 47% of all students with a Ministry behaviour designation are Indigenous
 - 60% of Grade 11-12 students with a Ministry behaviour designation are Indigenous
 - *Categories:*
 - R: Students requiring behaviour support or students with Mental Illness
 - H: Students requiring intensive behaviour support or students with serious Mental Illness
- **Alternate Programs:** 55% of the total students in Alternate Programs are Indigenous



-Sasq'ets, The'itqel, Sasquatch, Honesty, 2020-2021 Sacred Teaching, École Christine Morrison Elementary



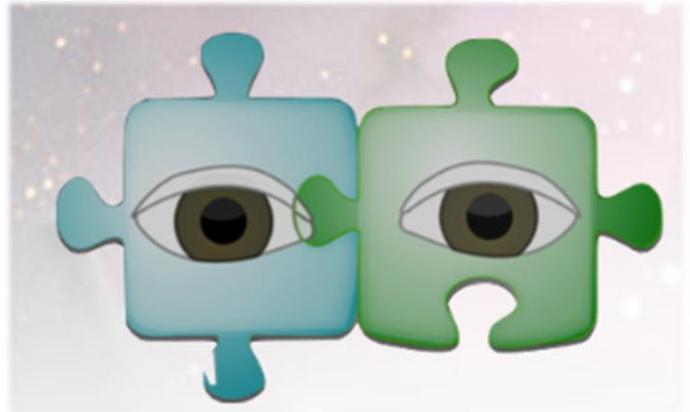
Enhancement Agreement Emerging Themes

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



-Medicine Wheel Drums, Deroche Elementary

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.



-A student from Stave Falls Elementary pulls cedar from the tree



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



Students from Hillside Traditional Academy honour children who never returned home from the Indian Residential Schools



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



MSS Students engage in the 'Table Journey'



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.



-Elders gather before the MSS Commencement Ceremonies



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:ltl'el, Leq'á:mel, Matheqwí and Sq'éwlets
- Indigenous Student Success Advocates
- 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



-A student from the Band Outreach school making cedar roses

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?



A student from Hatzic Middle School working with the Salish Weave Art Exploration



What We Learned in Year Two of the Equity Scan Project

Unpacking the Keeper Current in Education

Equity Shifts & Decolonization:

Working toward equity requires a shift of the mind, of the heart and to make change, it requires decolonization, which includes an understanding the past and bold moves to dismantle the present then rebuild the system and the workings within it.

*“Decolonization then is a process of **unpacking the keeper current in education**: its powerful Eurocentric assumptions of education, its narratives of race and difference in curriculum and pedagogy, it's establishing culturalism or cultural racism as a justification for the status quo, and the advocacy for Indigenous knowledge as a legitimate education topic. It is the channel for generating a postcolonial education system in Canada and disrupting those normalized discourses and singularities and allowing diverse voices and perspectives and objectives into “mainstream” schooling. Indigenous Education first and foremost must be framed within concepts of dialogue, respect for educational pluralities, multiplicities, and diversities. It is about self-determination, deconstructing decisions about curricular knowledge, and re-energizing education and knowledge to the context of lives. Also, it is about deconstructing decisions about curricular knowledge and reframing education and knowledge to be the contexts of peoples lives a sui generis or “one of a kind” education and learning.*

– Marie Battiste, Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit

We are learning the language of equity and there is a need to be courageous by sharing this language with others, in expected and unexpected moments.

As we work through our understandings of language, and specifically the word decolonization, we consider:

- *What do we believe is the meaning of decolonization?*
- *If colonization's legacy is about power (who has it and who has been denied it), where does decolonization live in education?*
- *What does decolonization look like in the face of education, knowing that it goes deeper than a checkbox or the “add and stir” method?*
- *How can we identify and unpack the “keeper currents in education”?*
- *If decolonization ultimately involves the repatriation of land, how does it connect to education?*

We continue to learn to shift our way of thinking, seeing processes, procedures and policies and through the lens of equity and decolonization.



-Grade 12 Students receive the teaching of the drum.



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 Elders honour the cedar tree before pulling cedar

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

Actions Taken or In Progress:

- Review and align SD75's Plans, Policies, Regulations & Governance Procedures (continue)
 - Created an Indigenous Language policy for SD75 - DRAFT
 - Created an Anti-Racism Policy for SD75 – DRAFT
- Align SD75's Hiring Procedures, Posting Language and Interview Questions, and specifically the hiring of Indigenous educators to reflect a Culture of Equity (continue)
 - Applications to BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner – In progress
- Review and revise Strategic Plan to reflect Indigenous Worldviews and Perspectives – completed
- Include Halq'emeylem language in Strategic Plan – In progress
- Education Coordinators from Leqamel and Sq'ewlets met with school-based Indigenous teams met regularly to discuss progress and achievements of on reserve learners – In progress

Explore & Review:

- Review SD75's Administrative Procedures
- 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

How Will We Measure this? How Will We Know That We Are Making a Difference?



Learning Environment



-Learning on the Land, Dewdney Elementary School

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

Actions Taken or In Progress:

- Graduation and commencement ceremonies included an Indigenous knowledge keeper and included Indigenous drumming, singing and speakers who addressed the entire school community. Also included, *The Secret Pocket* (true story by Indigenous Mentor Teacher, Peggy Janicki) as part of all graduation portfolios, for all graduates regardless of ancestry
- Pathways to Employment – Partnership with Douglas College, SD75 and Siwal Si'wes – select Indigenous learners were purposefully and intentionally recruited for this program
- Implemented a Complex Care and Intervention Team and PEACEful schools training to provide trauma informed practice training for school staff to implement in classrooms, care plans and intervention plans.

Explore & Review:

- 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

How Will We Measure This? How Will We Know That We Are Making a Difference?



Pedagogical Core



Earth Day Collection at the Siwal Si'wes Library

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

Actions Taken or In Progress:

- Joyful Literacy – continue tracking early Indigenous learners as they progress through the Joyful literacy framework
- 'Storefront Learning' Framework at middle and high schools for Indigenous learners needing a different option than distributed learning at Summit Learning Centre
- Equity Language document was created and shared with Senior Management, Human Resources Staff, Siwal Si'wes staff and all principals and vice-principals, with the idea that the school administrators would spend time discussing this with staff; to be included in Siwal Si'wes Handbook and Student Services Handbook for Fall 2021
- Increased availability and promotion of Indigenous resources created for teachers in Curriculum Connections, Si'wes Digital Resource Collection, and by Indigenous Mentor Teacher
- Assessment practices and feedback of learning - *In progress through Assessment Pilot*
- Reviewed current policy/guidelines for selection and purchase of authentic Indigenous learning materials and resources
 - Siwal Si'wes library – removing inauthentic resources and replacing them with authentic resources; removal of Dewey Decimal section 398.2 (Myths and Legends)
- Provided learning opportunities and professional development for authentic Indigenous learning, implicit bias and privilege, Equity, Anti-Racism and Trauma-Informed practices, including transgenerational effects of Indian Residential Schools, 60's Scoop and marginalization of Indigenous peoples (for all staff)
 - Created an All Staff Newsletter called Éy St'elmexw Sqwelqwel: Good Medicine Stories



- Provided learning opportunities and professional development for authentic Indigenous learning, implicit bias and privilege, Equity, Anti-Racism and Trauma-Informed practices, including transgenerational effects of Indian Residential Schools, 60's Scoop and marginalization of Indigenous peoples (for interested staff):
 - Ensouling Our Schools: A Universally Designed Framework for Mental Health, Well-Being, and Reconciliation (Dr. Jennifer Katz & Kevin Lamoureux) workshop series to select staff
 - Anti-Racism Workshop Series for interested staff
 - Indigenous Reading Challenge – for interested staff
 - The Ballantyne Project – for interested staff
 - Salish Weave Art Exploration
 - Stó:lō Sitel Stories
 - MHFA – Mental Health First Aid Training (Youth Care Workers and Indigenous Liaison Workers)
 - MAPS & PATH – person-centred vision planning (select Student Services, Siwal Si'wes & ESD Staff)

Explore & Review:

- 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 (i.e. Workplace Math versus Calculus)
 - practices for ensuring that Indigenous students are enrolled in Career Education courses
 - rates of participation of Indigenous students in Programs and Schools of Choice, and Advanced Placement courses
 - rates of participation of Indigenous learners in Adult Graduation program versus Regular Dogwood
 - learning opportunities and professional development for Indigenous Cultural Safety and Sensitivity
 - 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
 - practices to include Indigenous families on instruction, curriculum and resources used in the classrooms
 - a need for Indigenous Curriculum Lead at elementary school sites

How Will We Measure This? How Will We Know That We Are Making a Difference?



Learning Profiles

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

Actions Taken or In Progress:

- Student Success Binders and provide opportunities for sharing and discussion at August 2021 principal and vice-principal learning retreat
- Meetings specifically to track progress, success and needs of students who cross Indigenous Department and Student Services Department (led by Indigenous Student Success Coaches)
- Focused transition meetings and information sharing and collection 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
- 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
- Tracking system for non-graduating Indigenous students
- Ministry Sharepoint Data as a reporting tool to be shared with SD75 community (Employees, the Board, Siwal Si'wes Advisory Council, Local Bands)
- District Discipline Committee – to examine current discipline and suspension practices, collaborate to create alternative options as culturally responsive interventions – *In progress*
- District Transition Committee – to examine current transition practices and to collaborate to revise and strengthen current structures
- Sense of Belonging Survey for Indigenous Students – revised
- Collaborate with and utilize resources from outside agencies (i.e. Jordan's Principle, FNHA, CYMH etc) – *In progress*
- Creation of Siwal Si'wes Graduation Handbook so learners can track their progress towards graduation



-A Student practices archery at Ecole Heritage Park Middle School

Explore & Review:

- Use of the Indigenous Learning Profile Tool to monitor and track progress of Indigenous Grade 10-12 students
- Review attendance rates
- 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 relationships between adults and Indigenous students
- Processes for supporting peer relationships
- Supports for Post-Secondary, including the application for Siwal Si'wes scholarships & Bursaries

How Will We Measure This? 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.

We are grateful to the Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council, to District Staff and to participating individuals from various Indigenous communities and organizations who donated their time to *Q'pethet Ye Tel:exw, Gathering to Understand: A Framework for Creating a Culture of Equity*.

Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council Members (2020/2021)

Agnes Giesbrecht, Co-Chair

Priscilla Wells, Co-Chair

Dawn Styran, Education Coordinator Alternate, Leq'á:mel First Nation

Camielle Laslo, Education Coordinator, Leq'á:mel First Nation

Chief Johnny Williams, Sq'ewlets

Sonya Williams, Education Coordinator, Sq'ewlets

Cheryl Gabriel, Education Coordinator, Kwantlen First Nation

Bill Wells, Community Member

Jeannette Phillips, Community Member

Sharon Syrette, Community Member

Staff Support for Siwal Si'wes Indigenous Advisory Council Members

Marcy Buell, Administrative Assistant, Siwal Si'wes

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 Two)

Shelley Carter, 1st

Tracy Loffler, Alternate

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

Rick McKamey

Julia Renkema

Randy Cairns

