

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

February 2017 – June 2022



Memorandum of Agreement



We, the undersigned, acknowledge our collective responsibility for the success of all students with Aboriginal ancestry attending school in the Richmond School District.

We agree that the terms of the Agreement will provide direction to enhance Aboriginal education in the school district for the period of February 2017 to June 2022.

With respect toward all Aboriginal peoples, we commit to work together to develop appropriate and meaningful programs for the benefit of all Aboriginal learners.

Musqueam First Nation

Chairperson of the Richmond Board of Education

Aboriginal Student

Superintendent, Richmond Board of Education

Aboriginal Student

Assistant Superintendent, Richmond Board of Education

Elder

District Administrator, Richmond Board of Education

Elder

Aboriginal Success Team, Richmond Board of Education

Richmond Teachers Association

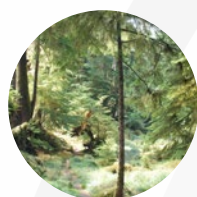
Canadian Union of Public Employees (Local #716)

Richmond District Parents Association

Vancouver Coastal Health

Pathways Aboriginal Centre

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Recognition of Traditional Coast Salish Territory

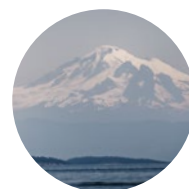
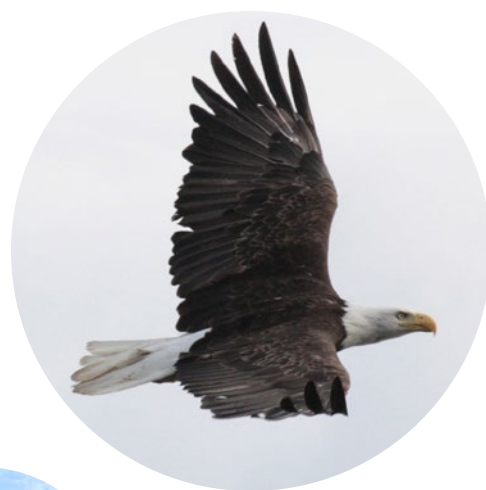
We acknowledge and thank the First Peoples of the territory of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ language group on whose traditional and unceded territories we teach, learn and live, and upon where the Musqueam people continue their traditions and cultural education.

We acknowledge the ancestors, those who have walked before us, and thank them for their stewardship of this beautiful place.

We acknowledge the Elders, the knowledge keepers, and counsellors of traditional teachings.

We acknowledge the work of the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Advisory Committee for their continued partnership and dedication to improving the educational outcomes for all students, especially those with Aboriginal ancestry.

We acknowledge children from all parts of the world, all nations. We are inspired by the vibrancy of your youth and we commit to continually striving to make the world we borrow from you a more peaceful, loving and safe place in which to learn, live and love.



Weaving Possibilities

The learning journey in the Richmond School District has been one of weaving possibilities and honouring Indigeneity in a good and respectful way. As we weave possibilities, we employ the seamless inclusion of Aboriginal content across the curriculum from K-12 through an appreciative and holistic lens. With the First Peoples Principles of Learning as a foundation for what we do and a guide for how we do it, we are joyfully witnessing change in our learners and in our schools. In the words of Maxine Windsor, a former Aboriginal Success Worker within the Aboriginal Programs Department, “This is the generation we’ve been waiting for. When I look into the eyes of the little ones, I see happiness and confidence. This is the generation we’ve been waiting for.”

We see the four goals of our Enhancement Agreement as interconnected, and, like a loom, they will support our good work moving forward. Just as the process of weaving works back and forth across the loom, as we move forward as a school district, we are always looking back to ensure that we are thoughtful and reflective about our practice. Engaged in a spiral of inquiry, we continue to ask what is best for our students. At the



heart of what we do is hope—hope for better schools, for reconciliation, and ultimately, for a better Canada.

“Let us find a way to belong to this time and place together. Our future, and the well-being of all our children rests with the kind of relationships we build today.”

Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, O.B.C.

Our Purpose in Design

It is the belief of Richmond's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement Advisory Committee that a district-wide commitment to honouring and continually working toward the goals in this agreement will create opportunities for students with Aboriginal ancestry to have greater holistic success in our schools. They will develop deep-rooted pride in their cultures and ancestries through seeing Aboriginal peoples reflected across the curriculum in meaningful and respectful ways. With pride and self-confidence, students with Aboriginal ancestry will strengthen their resilience and tenacity to work toward their personal best and engage in life-long learning. We acknowledge that our purpose is a shared responsibility of all stakeholders and that, with good work centred on Aboriginal student success, we will see every Aboriginal learner graduate with dignity, purpose, passion and options.



Our Template

An Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) is designed to enhance the educational success of Aboriginal students. It is a working agreement between our school district, local Aboriginal communities, and the Ministry of Education designed to improve Aboriginal student success. An AEEA also establishes a collaborative partnership between Aboriginal communities and school districts that involves governance, shared decision making and specific goal setting to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students.

AEEAs highlight the importance of academic performance and stress the integral nature of Aboriginal traditional culture to Aboriginal student development and success. Fundamental to AEEAs is the requirement that school districts provide strong programs on the culture of the local First Nations Peoples on whose traditional territories the districts are located.

ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENTS

- 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;
- Are working documents that are developed for a five-year period and provide goals that are reviewed/assessed regularly to determine progress;
- Include actions that are assessed frequently during the term of the agreements to determine their effectiveness and are adjusted as needed.



ELEMENTS OF AN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

1. The Aboriginal communities must be represented by a unified body whose authority to speak for the Aboriginal communities is accepted by the Aboriginal communities.
2. Shared decision making by the Aboriginal communities and the school district must be an established practice.
3. Both the Aboriginal communities and the school district must support participation in the AEEA.
4. Joint consultation and collaboration between the Aboriginal communities and the school districts will enable vision and goal setting in all areas of education for Aboriginal learners.
5. The Aboriginal communities and the school district track key performance indicators at the student level.
6. The Aboriginal communities and the school district must be committed to regular reporting of results. This would include an evaluation and reporting process on the outcomes of the AEEA.
7. The scope of the Aboriginal Education program must include a focus on continuous improvement in the academic performance of all Aboriginal students.
8. Meeting the cultural needs of Aboriginal students in all aspects of learning, including resources, strategies and assessment.
9. Focussing on increasing the respect for Aboriginal culture, language, and history through greater knowledge and understanding.





Building the Loom

As a district embarking on the creation of a second Enhancement Agreement, and recognizing that student voice was largely absent from our first Enhancement Agreement, we began the development of this Enhancement Agreement by attempting to gather student voice from all students with Aboriginal ancestry in our district. Using Linda Kaser and Judy Halbert's essential questions as a framework, all students who indicated Aboriginal ancestry upon school registration and whose parents and guardians had given permission to work with our Aboriginal Success Team, were asked to participate in a student survey that was conducted by members of our Aboriginal Success Team. They were asked questions about their educational experiences in order to gather information about areas where we are doing well as a district, and areas where we need to focus our attention to make real improvements. These interviews were scribed on paper, or recorded on video. While all primary and intermediate students were interviewed individually, some secondary students were interviewed in small and larger groups.

We also worked hard to broaden the contributing voices to this document. In order to elicit the community and community partner voices, we opened up opportunities for dialogue at district-wide events throughout the past five years, where we gathered data at each event. In surveying all educators across the district, we were delighted to have over 200 of our district professionals complete an online educator survey, which resulted in thoughtful and thorough responses. Throughout the last five years, we engaged in meaningful discussion at the Advisory Committee table, where many different groups were represented, including parents, community members, Musqueam educators, CUPE staff, city staff, and Richmond students, teachers, administrators, and trustees. We also consulted with Musqueam First Nation, putting our goals and AEEA draft before Chief and Council. Throughout the development of our new AEEA, we sought continued support from the Richmond School District Senior Staff, the Richmond Board of Trustees, and feedback from the Ministry of Education.

A Back and Forth

LOOKING BACK – REFLECTING ON OUR COLLECTIVE LEARNING JOURNEY

Prior to June 21, 2011, students with Aboriginal ancestry participated in Aboriginal Support Services programs primarily through a pull-out delivery model that was facilitated by two very passionate and dedicated educators. Students engaged in cultural teachings in one-on-one or small group settings, and had close relationships with their Aboriginal teachers, who also worked, upon request, with other teachers to integrate Aboriginal content K-12.

With the signing of our first Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement in 2011, the district embarked on an exciting journey to expand its delivery model and to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to learn Indigenous worldviews and appreciate Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing, through a more integrated approach. Teachers across the district, both independently and with the support of our Aboriginal team, have begun to make changes to their practice in

accordance with Aboriginal pedagogy, and have made efforts to include more Aboriginal content in their curricula. Many teachers have accessed the support of our Aboriginal Teacher Consultants in class, outside of class, and through professional development opportunities. There have been district innovation, Network of Inquiry and Innovation (NOII), and Vancouver Biennale grants across the district that have been used to focus on Aboriginal themes. While our students with Aboriginal ancestry continue to receive personalized service, our Aboriginal Success Team also often collaborates with the classroom teachers of students with Aboriginal ancestry in order that whole



classes now benefit regularly from the work of our team. Due to the more inclusive model of delivery, we have found that the profile of our Success Team is higher in the district, and that more students and families with Aboriginal ancestry have been self-identifying. Furthermore, community gatherings have been well-attended, including our Aboriginal



Achievement ceremonies, which are district-wide celebrations of the academic achievements of our Aboriginal students, and which affirm the commitment of friends, families, guardians, community members, and educators to the success of Aboriginal students.

What we have learned from the last five years is that we still have much to learn. Amongst educators, the interest and desire to support students and be respectful of Indigenous understandings continues to grow. We have learned that the First Peoples Principles of Learning scaffold a pedagogy that centers on community building and social-emotional learning and that honours individual students and their rich and wonderful stories. We have learned that as students with Aboriginal ancestry move up in grades, they may lose their joy of learning and feel less supported and valued in their secondary school settings. We have learned that building a community of students and of

parents, grandparents, other extended family members, and caregivers is essential to student success and a feeling of belonging. We have also learned that we need to pay more attention to student voice and make fewer assumptions about what students want and need.

We have learned that asking the question, “What if?” is a worthy endeavour and has allowed us to engage in meaningful inquiry at the district level, at the professional learning level, and at the classroom level.

Most importantly, we want to know if we are making a difference.

MOVING FORWARD – USING INQUIRY TO GUIDE PRACTICE

While always staying true to traditional teachings and honouring that some knowledge is sacred, the question “What if?” will open the door to weaving more possibilities.

What we have learned since our last Agreement is that we need to work harder to increase the profile of the Agreement and its goals to the educators of our district. As shown by the number of respondents to our educator survey about the Enhancement Agreement, and their thoughtful responses, we know that our teachers feel that these initiatives are important, and that they would like more information about the Agreement. Using the launch of the new curriculum to gain momentum for change, we will be communicating the goals of our new AEEA to all educators in the school district. In implementing our new AEEA, we imagine our educators asking questions about how a commitment to the goals will improve their practice and result in better education for our Aboriginal learners, and furthermore, for all learners. To do this, we envision

educators utilizing the spiral of inquiry, as developed by BC educational innovators Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser, which has been a powerful model for professional development in the Richmond School District.

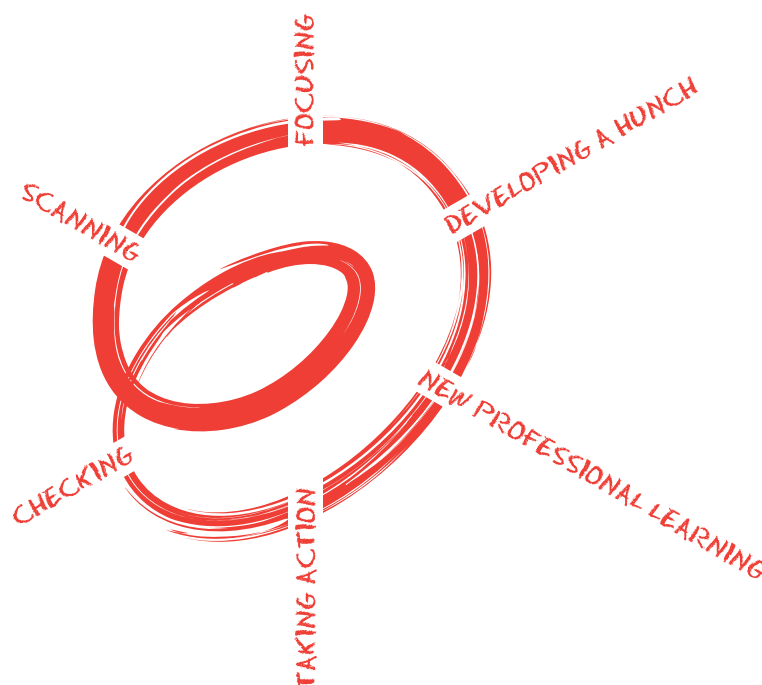
We believe that the best way for schools to fully realize the potential in the Agreement is for schools, at the beginning of each school year, and using the spiral of inquiry as a framework, to scan their settings and come up with hunches around the goals of our Enhancement Agreement. After formulating their own professional inquiry questions around the goals, schools will work on their question(s) throughout the school year, and then check on their progress at the end of the year. Their reflections will then be forwarded to the district administrator for Aboriginal Education to be recorded in our annual report to the ministry, and our signing partners.

Sample inquiry questions will be provided in our Agreement, but it will be essential for schools to formulate questions that matter to each school and make sense in terms of their individual contexts.

SAMPLE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What is working well and how do we know?
- In what ways has our vision changed? How are we continuing to move forward in a good way?
- How can we work with parents of students with Aboriginal ancestry to feel more supported/involved/welcome at our school?
- How can we continue to foster a trusting relationship between Aboriginal parents and the school system?
- How can we empower parents of students with Aboriginal ancestry, who may be currently disengaged from public education in schools, to become more active in the education of their children in schools?
- How can we build the visibility of local Aboriginal culture in the municipality of Richmond, not just in our schools?
- How do we best collaborate as a district in order to meet the goals of the Agreement (school trustees, administrators, teachers, and support staff)?

**What's going on for our learners?
How do we know?
Why does this matter?**



Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement Goals

GOAL 1

BELONGING

Richmond's students with Aboriginal ancestry will work toward a strong sense of belonging through pride in their cultural heritage. Students will be honoured for their stories, celebrated for their individual strengths, and supported throughout their learning journey.

CONNECTING THE THREADS

Students are successful when they feel that they are valued for who they are, and when they feel connected to, supported by, and recognized in their schools.

All students in our schools are on journeys of discovering their own identities. Many Aboriginal students have not yet had opportunities to embrace their Aboriginal cultural heritage. Other Aboriginal students are deeply connected to their ancestry, but have not seen evidence of their ancestry appreciated in schools.

Our advisory committee emphasizes the importance of



students with Aboriginal ancestry building peer connections, and mentoring relationships with other students of Aboriginal ancestry within schools and across the district.

We also understand the strong interdependent relationship between Aboriginal families' connectedness to schools, and their children's sense of belonging in school. We understand the importance of supporting Aboriginal families in our district.

TRANSFORMING THE IMAGE ON THE LOOM

A welcome and safe educational setting for all students, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, that makes them feel connected to, and involved in their school community.

A flexible and personalized model of district Aboriginal Success programming that meets the needs of students.

Representation of Aboriginal content at district-wide events, such as Science Jam, Education Week, Ready Summit, and Heritage Fair.

Consistent commitment to protocol in acknowledging traditional territory at district and school-based gatherings, meetings, and assemblies.

Clearly communicated procedures that encourage Aboriginal families to self-identify when registering for school.

Opportunities for students to learn about their identities, to find their gifts, and to share their stories in classes and schools.

Celebration of students with Aboriginal ancestry at school, district, and community.

Regular community events to encourage connections between Aboriginal families, and to develop the connectedness between Aboriginal families and schools.

EVALUATING THE TAPESTRY

Increased Aboriginal student involvement in district-offered Aboriginal Success programs, and community events.

Increased school satisfaction data from the Ministry of Education School Satisfaction Surveys in grades 4, 7, 10, and 12.

District-based parent surveys indicating growth in children's pride in their cultural heritage.

Increased number of students who are celebrated for their achievement at the annual district Aboriginal Achievement Ceremony.

Increased number of educators who attend district community events, and the district Aboriginal Achievement Ceremony.



GUIDING VOICES

"Success is that kids are excited to go to school."

parent

"Our top priority for our Aboriginal students should be that they are proud of their heritage."

parent

"To be Aboriginal means to always know that your gifts are not your flaws."

student

"'I want to know where I come from' is a common theme from kids. They are hungry for culture."

Aboriginal success worker

"Contributors to success include students' feelings of connection, and belonging. Knowing who you are builds personal strength, and self-confidence which can grow to commitment in one's learning. Feeling represented allows for deeper engagement."

teacher

"Student success depends on a student connecting and caring about what they are learning. Success is more likely when kids have a sense of belonging and are being understood, when they can get the help they need, and when their successes are celebrated."

teacher

"Success is when students are proud of their heritage and feel confident to share their knowledge with others."

teacher

"Student success is dependent on relationships. Having strong, personal relationships and connectedness with students is the key. Success



happens when students are engaged, committed, excited, and invested in their learning. This happens when students feel safe, cared about, and valued."

teacher

"Success is when students know and feel in the core of their being that they matter and belong and have something valuable to contribute to the greater community and world."

teacher

"Success is when Aboriginal students feel a sense of belonging in school and with teachers, mastery and increased independence in their learning."

teacher

"Aboriginal students need to learn about their culture. In schools we need to celebrate and show respect for the culture, and it should be reflected in instruction."

teacher

"Some people misjudge me because I'm quiet, but when you get to know me, I'm really loud."

intermediate student



"Sometimes people think I'm mean, but I want them to know I'm nice."

intermediate student

"The best part about me is the ability to be myself."

student

"I wish people could understand me better."

primary student

"I want people to know that I'm special."

primary student

"I want people to respect me and be kind to me."

primary student

"I wish people would stop laughing at First Nations people. When I did my dance for the school, some people were laughing."

primary student

"The best thing about school is when I feel safe, and when people say I do a good job."

primary student

"I am native. I don't like to hear bad stories about natives. Others don't know I am native."

secondary student

"Some people think I am different because of my culture. I want them to think of me as an equal."

secondary student

"Success in schools is the recognition of identity."

parent

"Success in schools is if they know their identity and are proud of where they're from."

parent

"I have learned that I have low self-esteem, and I know I shouldn't. When we have to write good things about ourselves, it's hard for me."

intermediate student



"I feel proud of what I've learned whenever I get something right that I've been practising, and it's been getting so hard."

intermediate student.

"Our son has been coming home with handmade gifts that he is proud to share."

parent

"To be Aboriginal means to be strong, be positive, to be proud of who you are. It's never too late to learn about culture and respect."

student

"To be Aboriginal means to be accepted."

student

"My eldest daughter has gone through the system, and has pride in her heritage. And my younger ones currently love the classes. The program has been good for all my kids."

parent

"We are new to the Richmond School District, and this is the first time that our son has shown interest in his heritage. I feel like the schools are making it interesting."

parent

"We don't know of the other Aboriginal families in our kids' schools to support each other. We need a connecting point through our school."

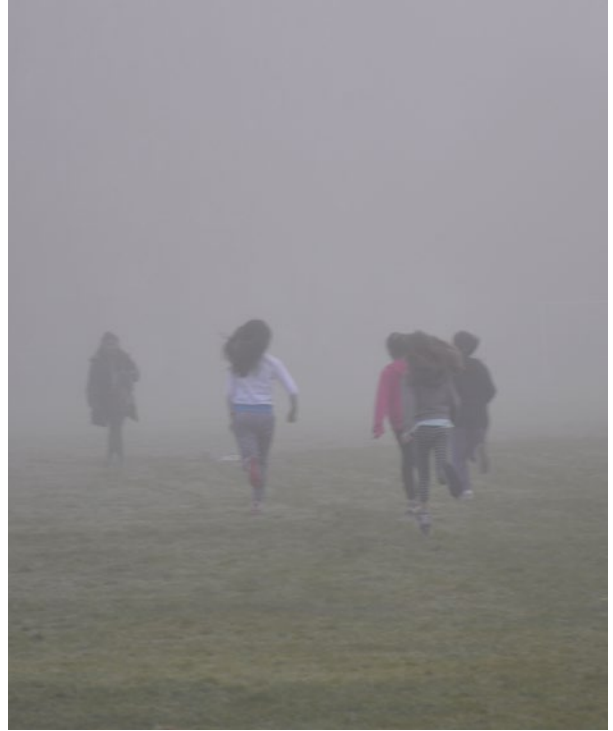
parent

"I want to know why there can't be more First Nations students at school."

primary student

SAMPLE INQUIRY IMAGININGS

1. How does a deeper understanding of identity lead to a greater sense of belonging in schools for students with Aboriginal ancestry, and for all students?
2. How can we better honour students' stories in our classrooms and schools?
3. What opportunities do we have in our schools for our students to share their stories, and how can we increase these opportunities?
4. How can we better encourage the connectedness of families to our school?



GOAL 2

RECONCILIATION THROUGH UNDERSTANDING

The community of learners and educators in the Richmond School District will engage in the meaningful process of reconciliation through education by developing an understanding and respect for the histories, cultures, and worldviews of Aboriginal communities, beginning with the First Peoples of this place.

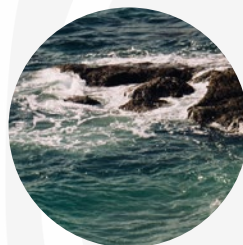
CONNECTING THE THREADS

Reconciliation through education is the key to a revitalized relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadians. In the words of Senator Murray Sinclair, chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, “It was the educational system that has contributed to this problem in this country, and it is the educational system we believe that will help us get away from this.”

Richmond’s Aboriginal community has voiced a strong

request that schools inform all of our students, not only those with Aboriginal ancestry, of the rich and diverse tapestry of Aboriginal cultures and their histories in Canada. It is our hope that new understandings will work to eradicate racism and discriminatory attitudes toward Aboriginal people.

Historically, Aboriginal content has been marginalized in Canadian classrooms. Aboriginal students, parents



and guardians have asked for curriculum that includes Aboriginal content that is taught in a knowledgeable and respectful way. Many Richmond educators are already making steps to understand their own roles in the reconciliation process by informing themselves about Canadian and world history from an Aboriginal perspective, including the difficult legacies of colonization. Furthermore, teachers are working to gain deeper understandings of the First Peoples of Richmond, the Coast Salish people, the First Nations of BC, and Canada's First Peoples. Richmond teachers are steadily gaining confidence in their ability to teach Aboriginal content in their classrooms in respectful ways, and are asking the necessary questions to ensure that they are on track.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA, CALL TO ACTION #63:

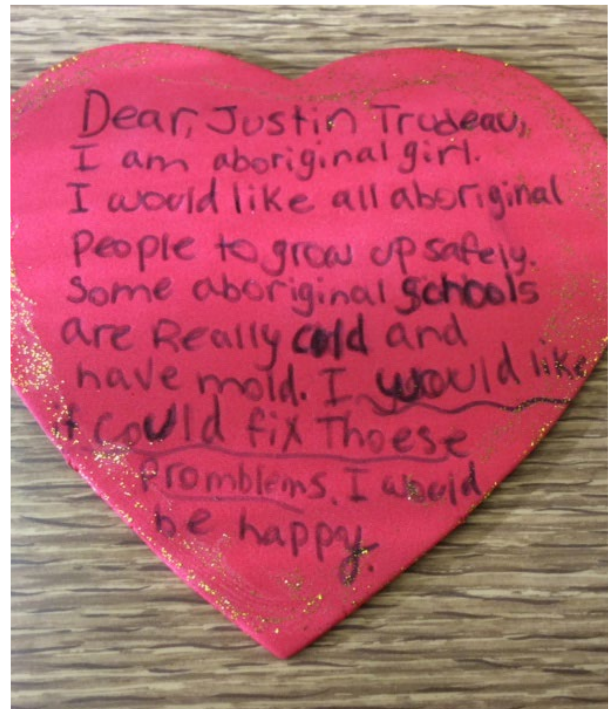
63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- 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.

TRANSFORMING THE IMAGE ON THE LOOM

All Richmond educators aware of and understanding our Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement, both its purpose and its goals.

Educational opportunities for all students to take courses rich in Aboriginal content, such as BC First Nations Studies 12, and English 10, 11, and 12 First Peoples.



Grade appropriate, student-friendly, authentic Aboriginal resources for the Strong Start Program, K classrooms, and for reading levels in all grades.

Consistent commitment to protocol in acknowledging traditional territory at district and school-based gatherings, meetings, and assemblies.

Meaningful professional development activities that will help teachers to deliver Aboriginal content to our students with confidence and respect.

After-school study groups around incorporating Aboriginal content across the curriculum.

A comprehensive district resource library of Aboriginal content with an easily accessible online catalogue, including web-based resources and community contacts.

All students and educators understanding the necessity for reconciliation between Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, and having opportunities to consider how to make that reconciliation personal.

EVALUATING THE TAPESTRY

Increased general student knowledge and understanding about Aboriginal history and/or culture.

Increased general enrolment in BC First Nations Studies 12, and in English 10, 11, and 12 First Peoples courses.

Increased use of Aboriginal resources from the District Resource Centre.

Increased inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives, including stories and literature from K-12.

Increased Elder visits to classrooms and schools.

Increased awareness of Richmond's Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement by educators in the district.

GUIDING VOICES

"Reconciliation is an ongoing process. It begins with each individual committing to listen to the voices of Indigenous people and to reflect upon our historical identity as 'settlers'."

teacher

"To me, reconciliation means being proud of our history, our parents', and our children's success."

parent

"Aboriginal education is for everyone."

Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser

"We need to create a culture of pride and respect through honouring our history and stories, and develop a collaborative working relationship with our First Nations people."

teacher

"I think there should be more Aboriginal education because they were our ancestors and took care of the land before us."

secondary student

"I would create a course for Aboriginal students for all levels in high school. More First Nations 12."

secondary student

"Unless you are native, people don't really learn about our histories."

secondary student

"Healing is demonstrated in the youth singing about their identity."

Elder

"Everybody has the right to be at the table and to be respected. No one is above anyone else. Success is when we all join hands and move forward together."

Elder

"I think students should know more history about Aboriginal people in Canada. Students don't know why they are so many Aboriginal people on the streets, or with drug issues."

secondary student

"I would teach students about Aboriginal culture because people have a right to know."

secondary student

"The goal is that all teachers feel comfortable talking about a shared history."

Elder

"I think there should be more resources for parents without Aboriginal heritage to help them support our children who have Aboriginal heritage."

parent

"We need to dispel the myth that Aboriginal culture was one hundred, or thousands of years ago, or that Residential Schools were hundreds or thousands of years ago."

parent

"I want to make a class where a person tells stories and histories about Aboriginal people, why children were taken away for no reason, and explain and teach to the class the history and language."

secondary student



"Every student should be able to speak about or be knowledgeable about First Nations athletes, singers, and contemporary people."

district coordinator

"Reconciliation looks like a nation that recognizes its colonial past, and the legacy it has left. While

yes, we are largely a settler nation, and much of our identity has been forged on that, the land was not empty when our ancestors arrived, and there is an unethical element upon which our nation has been founded."

teacher

"I think that reconciliation means learning about, accepting and celebrating Aboriginal goals and culture on their terms, not trying to fit them within the narrative of multiculturalism, but letting their voice stand as they would have it."

teacher

"Reconciliation is building connections and understanding, recognizing and acknowledging events of the past, understanding how these events still impact the future, and beginning to move towards fixing those impacts, and community building that includes all people as empowered members."

teacher

"The redesigned curriculum is an important first step. I look forward to the time in the future when every child in BC will come away from school with a strong understanding of our local Aboriginal communities, and have positive feelings about the future we share together."

teacher

"I want to learn how to defeat covert racism and increase the sense of belonging and pride and motivation in Aboriginal students."

teacher

"Reconciliation is moving beyond knowing, moving beyond understanding. It is standing beside one another, supportive, aware, and honoured to be a part of the whole."

teacher

"First, I would like to congratulate the Pro-D Committee for putting on the best Pro-D activity/experience that I have experienced in all my days at Richmond High; in fact, this was the best Pro-D experience that I have ever attended. The fact that it was a timely Pro-D experience (given that the new curriculum does underscore some topics covered on that day) is, in some ways, the least significant aspect of it. One of the aspects that I would like to highlight about the day is the immediate connection which we can make between the activities and topics that were presented and our daily teaching. As an example I would point to this particular insight: teaching can come from the mind or it can come from the heart. We are not doing enough teaching from the heart. If I had not attended this Pro-D day it would have been a lost opportunity for me, not because I can make immediate connections to the new BC curriculum, but because it showed me how to become a better teacher."

teacher who attended a district professional day on Aboriginal education at the Musqueam Reserve.

SAMPLE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

1. What does reconciliation look like in our classrooms and our schools?
2. How can reconciliation in our schools and classrooms build students' core competencies?
3. How do students in our school understand the shared history between Canadians and Aboriginal people?





GOAL 3

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

All students in Richmond will have opportunities to gain an understanding of self, community, land, spirits, and ancestors through education that honours the First Peoples Principles of Learning.



CONNECTING THE THREADS

Teachers in Richmond have become familiar with the First Peoples Principles of Learning, and have identified it to be a foundational document in terms of affirming their current teaching practice, and also in transforming their future teaching practice. Educators district-wide are making intentional connections to the First Peoples Principles of Learning in their planning, their classroom teaching, and in their assessment.

Student-generated data indicated their value of story and the oral tradition, their desire for more outdoor and land-based education, and their focus on the importance of identity, which are all key components of the First Peoples Principles of Learning.

The First Peoples Principles of Learning act as both a starting point for Richmond teachers, and also a place to continually revisit as we move forward in including more Aboriginal content in our schools and classrooms.

TRANSFORMING THE LOOM

Meaningful professional development opportunities on the First Peoples Principles of Learning, and how

these principles might be used in classes to enrich learning for all students.

Explorations of identity and connectedness in the classroom.

Students having greater opportunities to participate in land-based, and experiential learning.

Greater differentiation for learners in the classroom.

Honouring diverse ways of knowing and learning in teaching, and assessment.

Continued growth of the Playful Storytelling through the First Peoples Principles of Learning Group (K-7).

An openness to more holistic learning that crosses subject area lines in classrooms.

EVALUATING THE TAPESTRY

Increased general student knowledge and understanding about the First Peoples Principles of Learning.

Increased general teacher knowledge and understanding about the First Peoples Principles of Learning, which are applied and integrated in teaching practice.

Increased Elder visits to classrooms and schools.

Increased school satisfaction data from the Ministry of Education School Satisfaction Surveys in grades 4, 7, 10, and 12.

GUIDING VOICES

"Educationally, we need to be teaching through the First Peoples Principles of Learning, with a focus on story and place."

teacher

"I see schools and teachers learning a lot more about First Nations cultures. They are allowing students to experience stories and legends through field trips, books, role-plays, film, and hands-on experiences. The First Peoples Principles are being infused into all curricula and teaching."

teacher

"All students should understand the necessity of community in Aboriginal culture."

parent

"The best thing about school is when I'm outside."

primary student



"We need to go outside more like in elementary school. We need to go outside between classes at lunch and at recess. More activities outside."

secondary student

"I don't think I'm doing so great at school. I keep getting in trouble for being the last one to finish

my work, or not being on time. But I'm getting better."

primary student

"I learn best when the teacher shows us how to do something instead of just telling us."

intermediate student

"All students should understand the multiple dimensions of being in and honouring relationships."

parent

"I learn best doing and making things."

intermediate student

"I learn best by watching the teacher, and listening."

intermediate student

"School could be improved by less people in one class and more teachers."

secondary student

"I use the First Peoples Principles of Learning as a framework for teaching in my classroom; first focusing on identity and culture, appreciating family histories, knowing that learning is experiential, and learning about the place in which we live, work, and learn."

teacher

"First Peoples Principles of Learning are applicable to all teaching and are good principles for everyone to follow."

teacher

"We utilize the talking circle daily. I incorporate a huge amount of authentic Aboriginal literature in different subject areas. I teach about the interconnectedness of everything in our world, and try to apply the First Peoples Principles of Learning in my practice."

teacher

"I provide students with experiential knowledge that is not taught in books. I teach them through storytelling about values, sacredness, ceremony and nature."

teacher

"Without discounting much of what we do, or have done, in education, we need to be constantly and frequently exposed to and inspired by examples of how First Peoples perspectives and the First Peoples Principles of Learning are used in our classrooms."

teacher

"Creating teaching and learning environments that reflect the FPPL has as much to do with an educator's philosophy about education, and disposition, as it has to do with curricular content. The disposition includes patience, respect, and curiosity."

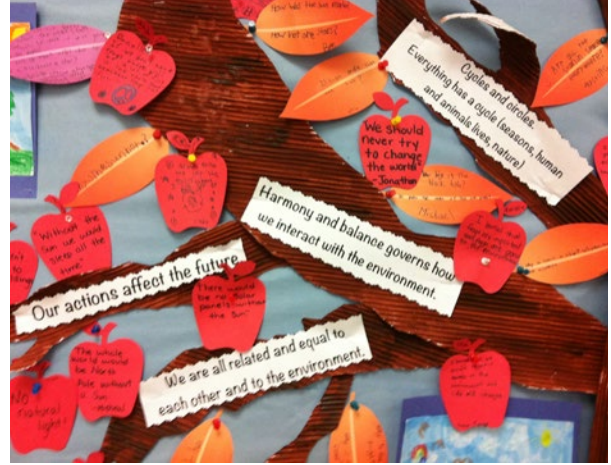
Jo Chrona, Curriculum Coordinator, FNEsc

"Indigenizing education does not simply mean adding a chapter about residential schools to the textbook; it means including an indigenous perspective in schools that would involve getting lessons from elders, taking nature walks to understand science, studying indigenous language, and ultimately learning what it means to coexist in a just and peaceful way."

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada,
Call to Action #62**

SAMPLE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

1. How can community be built in diverse classrooms through using the First Peoples Principles of Learning?
2. How can the First Peoples Principles of Learning be best reflected in my classroom, and in our school?
3. How does our school reflect the principle that learning takes patience and time?



GOAL 4

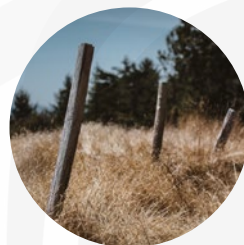
HOLISTIC WELLNESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Improved holistic (emotional, intellectual, physical, spiritual) wellness and achievement of students with Aboriginal ancestry through the development of student success plans that begin at school entry, and are guided by the journey of the individual student, with intentional focus during key transition periods.

CONNECTING THE THREADS

Educator, student, and parent and guardian data indicated the importance of holistic success, focusing on the whole student. The teachings of the medicine wheel assist us in helping to consider the heart, spirit, body and mind when thinking of student success.

In order to guide the work of our Aboriginal Success teachers who engage personally with each student over time, student success plans will be developed upon initial engagement with the Aboriginal Success Team, and revised annually, over time.



Community discussion emphasized that the transitional periods in a child's life can, at the best of times, be unsettling. There is an acknowledged need to create a network of supports as our students enter Kindergarten, move from their elementary schools into high schools, complete their junior secondary courses, and enter the graduation program, and as they pursue their post-secondary or vocational goals.

There is also a recognized need to enhance supports for students who are entering new homes, new schools, or

new communities. Continued attention to transitional support for the families and students with Aboriginal ancestry will allow students to settle into and to feel comfortable in their educational settings.

TRANSFORMING THE IMAGE ON THE LOOM

Welcome letters, and brochures highlighting district personnel and resources to the Aboriginal community when families are self-identifying at registration at any grade level.

Communication between the Aboriginal Success Team and Aboriginal parents to encourage parental involvement in their children's education experience.

Parent gatherings and workshops to build connections, answer questions, and to listen to community voices.

Purposeful consultation and information dissemination around the graduation program, increasing the number of students who are recommended for academic core courses.

Dissemination of scholarship information and education opportunities specific to Aboriginal students, and inclusive of all general information.

Students who feel encouraged and supported as they pursue their goals of transitioning into post-secondary education, or employment.

Mentorship programs involving older Aboriginal youth working with younger Aboriginal youth, to assist at times of transition.

Teacher advocates to be named at each school, as a point of connection for all students with Aboriginal ancestry.

EVALUATING THE TAPESTRY

Increased numbers of self-identified students/families at registration for Kindergarten, and when moving into the Richmond School District.

Increased number of students transitioning from elementary to secondary who request/maintain support through Richmond's Aboriginal Success Team.

Increased transition rates into the graduation program.

Continued improvement in graduation rates for Richmond's Aboriginal student population.

More Aboriginal students transitioning into higher level academic courses in their graduation program.

Improved performance in Language Arts and Math at grades 4 and 7 for students with Aboriginal ancestry.

Increased numbers of students transitioning into post-secondary education institutions in academics, and or trades.

GUIDING VOICES

"I don't get as much supporters as in elementary school because I am older."

secondary student

"I didn't know I was going to get stressed out at school. Sometimes I get angry. I thought I would be feeling happy all the time."

primary student

"I go to school to learn, have new friends, and be a better person."

intermediate student



"I feel that I'm doing great at school, happy and encouraged because of the teachers."

intermediate student

"To me, success as a kid looks like getting good grades, having good friends, and having a safe home to go to."

intermediate student

"I have a summer job in a First Nations reserve. I want to help my people on the reserve. Maybe to be a chief like my uncle. My grandma is a chief."

secondary student

"Communication with families is very important, and specific supports around transitions is a focus."

teacher

"Success is being able to excel academically and develop as a complete person, emotionally, academically and socially."

teacher

"Success is when students are happy to come to school, when they feel safe and cared for, when they welcome their learning journey and set personal challenges, when they feel and know that they are important."

teacher

"Success is when students are engaged, have a sense of fulfilment, and a sense of direction and purpose."

teacher

"My goal is to finish grade school and then attend university. I would like to major in English Lit and also take Fine Arts as my secondary major. I encourage my fellow students to excel in the subject areas that interest you and set achievable goals for yourselves. Be proud of who you are today and thank the creator for the opportunities that lie ahead."

Grade 7 valedictorian for elementary students with Aboriginal ancestry, 2016

SAMPLE INQUIRY QUESTIONS

1. How can we work together more intentionally as teachers, administrators, parents, students, and support workers, to improve transitions?
2. How can we work towards graduating 100% of Aboriginal students with dignity, purpose and options?
3. How can we further demonstrate commitment to the “whole” student in students’ learning journeys?



IN GRATITUDE



Richmond School District's second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) is the result of the work and collaboration of the many dedicated people who make up the AEEA Committee. It has been an honour and joy to gather together, to learn from one another, and to create an Agreement which we feel can make a difference for Aboriginal students within our district.

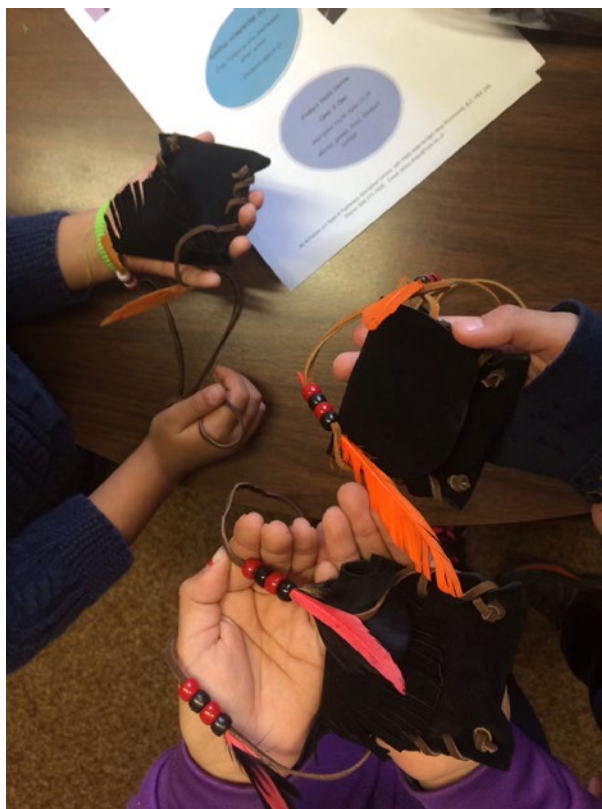
As a starting point in creating our new Agreement, the Committee began by analyzing our existing Agreement, and evaluating our progress in each of the goals. Over the past five years, we have witnessed the goals in action in our classes and schools, and taken time to hear and learn from the voices of the Aboriginal community, youth, Elders, parents, guardians, and educators. Our new Agreement, we feel, is testament to the growth that has happened in our district since the signing of our last Agreement.

On behalf of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Advisory Committee, I formally acknowledge and thank all the contributors to the development of this



Enhancement Agreement who come from many groups in the Richmond School District, including, but not limited to, the Aboriginal community, the Musqueam Indian Band, the students of the Richmond School District and their families, the Richmond Teachers Association (RTA), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE #716), the Richmond District Parents Association (RDPA), the Richmond

Board of Education, the Richmond Association of School Administrators (RASA), the Richmond Youth Services Agency (RYSA), Pathways Aboriginal Centre, the City of Richmond, the Richmond Museum Society, Vancouver Coastal Health, and the BC Ministry of Education. We are truly thankful to have had the participation of all throughout this journey.



This AEEA was developed around the central question: What is success? This question framed our data-gathering with the community (including parents and guardians), students, the Advisory committee, educators, and support staff. Responses were collected, sorted, and analyzed for themes, which were then used to create our new goals.

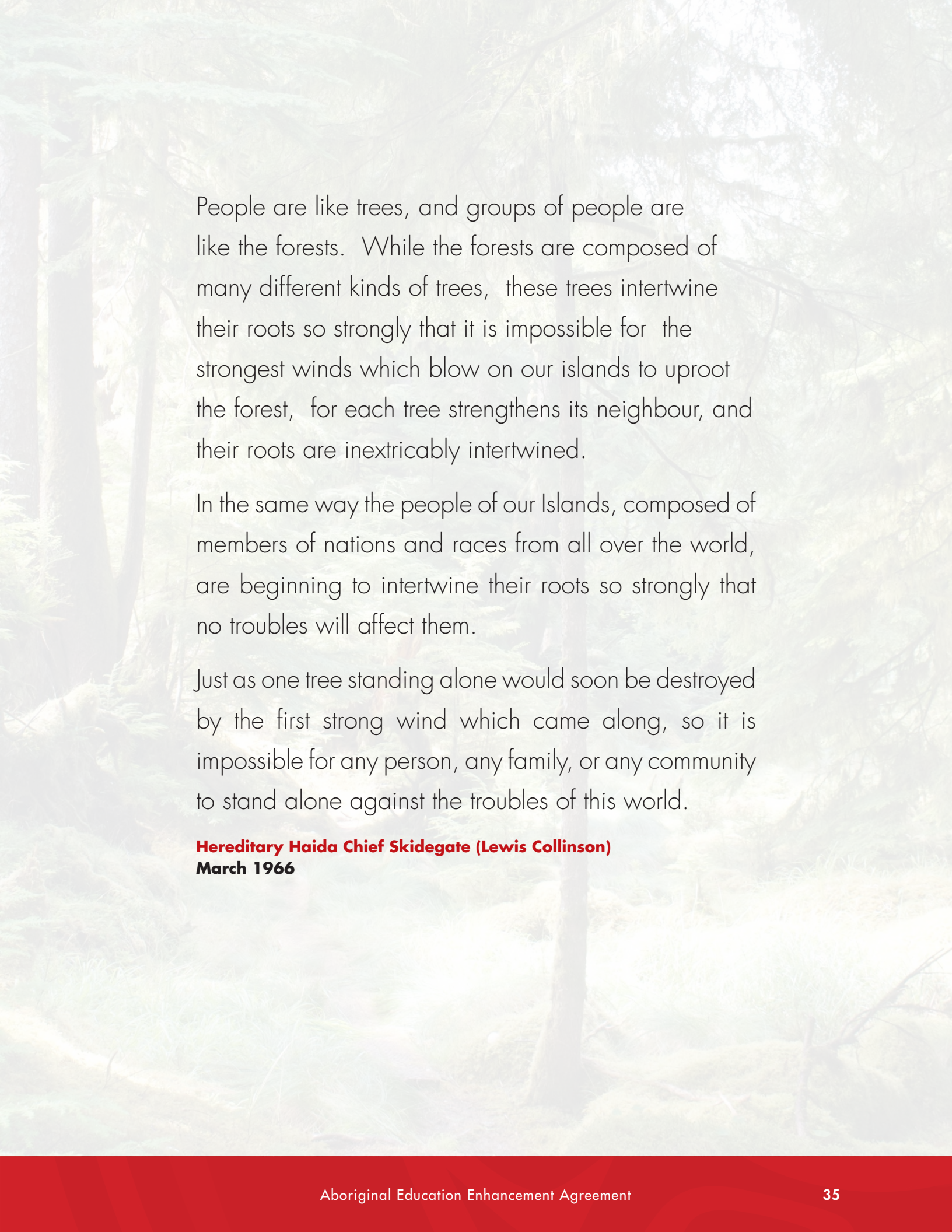
We believe that our AEEA will work to enhance the learning of all learners in our district, both young and old, from those just entering our school hallways to

those who are retiring from many years of dedicated service. We believe that our AEEA will work to build community, and partnerships across differences in Richmond. It underscores our need for reconciliation in BC and in Canada; it acknowledges our shared history, and is hopeful about our shared future.

Our AEEA is a living document, one which we are excited to see revisited and revised in the future. We are only beginning to come to know, and we see much potential for the transformation of classes and schools in the future.

Our district's tapestry is a work in progress. On it, we envision our students with Aboriginal ancestry experiencing an education system in Richmond that is not only free of racism, but celebrates the identities, and successes of all learners. Furthermore, we imagine all of our Aboriginal students and their families feeling that they not only belong, but have pride in who they are, and value their collective learning journey in our schools. Above all, we would like our tapestry to reflect the *hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓* word, *nəc̓əmat* et, first introduced to our district by x̣ʷməθkʷəỵəm (Musqueam) Elder Shane Pointe, meaning "we are one".

Leanne McColl
Teacher Consultant
Chair of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement
Agreement Advisory Committee
Richmond School District



People are like trees, and groups of people are like the forests. While the forests are composed of many different kinds of trees, these trees intertwine their roots so strongly that it is impossible for the strongest winds which blow on our islands to uproot the forest, for each tree strengthens its neighbour, and their roots are inextricably intertwined.

In the same way the people of our Islands, composed of members of nations and races from all over the world, are beginning to intertwine their roots so strongly that no troubles will affect them.

Just as one tree standing alone would soon be destroyed by the first strong wind which came along, so it is impossible for any person, any family, or any community to stand alone against the troubles of this world.

Hereditary Haida Chief Skidegate (Lewis Collinson)
March 1966

COMMUNITY VOICES



ni? ct kwə ?əw məkw wet tə
xwməθkwəyəm Band Council
xwtəlqən kws ni?s ?əw sθəθəy tə
Aboriginal Education Enhancement
Agreement ?i? ?əw sθəθəy kws
ha?kwəxs ?ewə? ?ə ? Richmond Board

of Education tə s?a:n? syəθəs kws θəyts kʷə programs kws
ma?əyts χwte? ?ə kwə xwəlməxw ste?əxwə? səsəw čewətam
ce? kwə ?i ?ə tə ?a tə s?a:n? sxwəlməxwa? ?ə təməxw.

ni? q̄pəta?xwəs tə xwməθkwəyəm Band Council ?əw
?nimə?əs tə xwməθkwəyəm Education Committee səctəw
sq̄əq̄ip kws ya:ys ct ?i? tə Richmond Board of Education,
nəčawməxw xwəxwilməxw ?i? tə BC Ministry of Education.
?a ce? kwə səw ?əyatəl ct ?əw ni?ət ce? wə? ya:ys səw
sq̄əq̄ip ct kws čewə? ct tə ste?əxwə? , səw m̄is ?i:wəstəm tə
ste?əxwə? tə sya:yss səw yəsθəθəyts tə snəwəyts ?ə kwə
skwul ?i? kwəs əw ?amət.

s?i? ct kws q̄əq̄əp ct ?i? tə skwulkwəlstənəq ?i? məkw
siyéyə kws χte?ə?ct ct ce? kʷə programs ?ə kwə
xwəlməxwa? ?ə stəhim̄. ha? ct ce? xifəs səsəw xwə ?əy tə



šxwqwələwəns tə ste?əxwə? ?i? θinamət kwə χəχi:ls ?əw
ni?əs ?ə kwə skwul. s?a:n? ni? χcət kwə sya:ys ct:
təq̄əlləxwəs tə tθələq tə šxwtə?esə?ts tə sxwəlməxwa? ?ə. ?a
ce? təw?aləm kws ?əχəst kwə syəθəss səw m̄is xwə
tə?namət kwə ste?əxwə? kwə swe?ts syəθəs, ?i? ?əw ?i?təs
kwə nəč məsteyəxw kwə sxwəlməxwa? ?ə syəθəs.

The Musqueam Band Council supports the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement between Musqueam Indian Band and the Richmond Board of Education to promote the use of Musqueam history and culture in developing school programs targeting Aboriginal learners within Musqueam traditional territory.

On behalf of the Musqueam Band Council, the Musqueam Education Committee has entered into a collective partnership with the Richmond Board of Education, other aboriginal communities who have representation within School District 38, and the BC Ministry of Education. This partnership is based on a foundation of mutual respect and will focus on setting goals and developing strategies that will foster both academic and personal success for aboriginal learners in the district.

Our goal is to collaborate with educators and families to develop and support programs that facilitate academic success and positive self-esteem through cultural awareness for Aboriginal learners. To achieve this, we will draw on the resources of individuals who carry the traditional values of their First Nations, Métis or Inuit ancestors and are willing to share their knowledge with us. This way, children from those Aboriginal communities who are enrolled in School District 38 will benefit from learning more about themselves and as well, witnessing the respect given to their own valuable heritage.

**Presented by,
the Musqueam Band Council**

Canada will be celebrating its 150th birthday in 2017. Since 2008, Canada was engaged in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which had a unique mandate of 5 years (with a 1 year extension) to examine the effects of the Indian Residential School

system on primarily the children who attended these schools. This quote from the TRC gives a brief historical explanation: “Indian Residential Schools date back to the 1870’s. The policy behind the government funded, church-run schools attempted to “kill the Indian in the child”. Over 130 residential schools were located across the country, with the last one closing in 1996. More than 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were taken from their families and placed in these schools. Many were forbidden to speak their language and practice their own culture. Today, there are an estimated 80,000 former students still living”.

I believe that Canadians share with me that celebrating the 150th birthday of our land is worthy and necessary to help us move on to continue to create a better country for ALL, and we will achieve this through education and knowing our country’s history concerning the Indian Residential School system. Justice Murray Sinclair, the TRC Commissioner said, “This history is everybody’s history”. During the TRC, many provincial ministries of education vowed to include the topic in their curricula, from elementary to secondary. Some universities also made the same commitment.

This past year Richmond School District No. 38 has been actively involved in contributing to reconciliation as they continue to focus on the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) and making changes as the need occurs. What was learned from the first AEEA was incorporated into this second document, which has 4 goals with definite threads that connect in achieving them. The most important goal is to give all students a sense of belonging to enable them to reach their educational goals. This will benefit Aboriginal learners as they gain confidence in their abilities and feel comfortable in the school environment by allowing them to feel pride in who they are and to

enhance the cultural knowledge that some of them bring with them. Self-identifying is a choice they have. Belonging makes for equality, a value in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but equality has to include ACCEPTANCE.

I congratulate all those involved in this educational achievement. It is truly an inspiration to know the many committed teachers, the school trustees and board members, superintendents, students, parents and other professionals who helped in this process. Thank you to their endeavours and commitment. They, like many Aboriginal students, are learning and taking the opportunity to embrace Aboriginal culture and to share in the pride this gives to learners. I want to thank them all for following and respecting the protocols of the Musqueam First Nation whose support and encouragement made this agreement possible. Using the threads of connecting relates to the Musqueam culture as they proudly continue to weave as part of their regained culture and practices.

I spent eleven years of my childhood in residential schools but I value education. I completed a Ph.D. at UBC. I gave my statement when the TRC was in Vancouver. From personal experience, I understand the trauma and the need for healing through reconciliation. Truth telling was a major component of the TRC for the children who attended these schools and willingly shared their experiences and stories, but it is not a condition for reconciliation—it must be a two-way process. Canadians have a role to play in the healing. I believe that these AEEAs are playing a vital role in educating the next generation of learners who will be our future leaders. Through the learning they are engaged in now, they will help to build a better Canada in the future. In education we can adopt ‘sunny ways’ as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in his election speech. We hope to prove that we are able and

committed to the next 150 years in ensuring that all students succeed.

I thank you all for giving the Aboriginal students this unique opportunity to gain confidence and have pride in their culture. They are supported and encouraged in their learning experiences from Kindergarten and elementary school right through as high school graduates and pursuing post-secondary education as a viable goal. The Richmond School District and their professionals, parents and students are making a difference.

Congratulations!

All My Relations,

Rosalyn Ing, Ph.D.
Elder

As a parent, grandparent, educator and community member, I wish to share my gratitude to all for the good work on our Enhancement Agreement. I wish to share that to keep going forward in a good way is very important, and that the healing in this country is not just for the First Nations, it is for all Canadians. It is important that we reach out and join hands together, to heal together, and to go forward together, for the benefit that all of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will receive. In this, they will be healthy, happy and thriving, and that will help us to heal.

In witness of this,

Elder Roberta Price
Parent, Grandparent, and Educator

I am from the Tsartlip and Lil'wat nations and in respect, I am honoured to say that this district lies on the beautiful Musqueam territory. As an Aboriginal student I believe that every learning opportunity that is placed in front of us must be taken and we must do

our best to cherish every moment within that opportunity. Our ancestors and respected elders spent their lives fighting to open doors for this generation of learners and we, as First Nations youth have to do the same for the future generations to walk with the same pride. The Richmond School District has done an amazing job with taking their first steps beside us to support and provide us with the information we need to succeed. A small seed was planted during the first signing of this document in recognition towards the unity between the education system and First Nation People. This year that seed has grown above the earth into a tree, seeking to build strength. In order to find that strength and sustain the connections, more questions pertaining to long term goals need to be asked, not just for the youth, but towards the youth. The district needs to keep in mind that it is impossible to know what we need if you never directly recognize our voice. So, make the actions speak louder than words and seek the help from the youth and Aboriginal communities to help enhance our perception of life. With every promise we speak, as a collaborating system within education, we have to give one hundred times more action to provide the growing tree with nourishment. As aspiring leaders we don't want the generations after us to directly follow our steps because that will not create a world of captivating diversity. Instead, we want the next generation of learners to be inspired by the path that our unity has created and shape their own paths to success within themselves and the dynamic world. The unity of the school district, Aboriginal students and First Nation peoples has planted one tree that will inspire many more to flourish with it.

Katisha Paul
Grade 12 Student
J.N. Burnett Secondary School
Richmond School District

There is nothing more meaningful than opening the heart and eyes of a learner to a deeper understanding of something that is known to be powerful and true.

Embedding Indigenous ways of knowing and teaching into the learning experiences for every member of our school district community is a gift created by the generosity of Indigenous peoples.

We celebrate this District Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement as a signal of our commitment to each other. Together we will work to ensure a today which has learned from the past... and together we will build a promise of an inspiring tomorrow.

With appreciation,

Sherry Elwood
Superintendent of Schools
Richmond School District

The second Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement for the Richmond School District is important for everyone, particularly at this time of educational change in an ever-changing world. The goals of the new Agreement honour the learning of the first Enhancement Agreement and move our learning forward in new directions. In our new Agreement, goal #1 includes language that states "students will be honoured for their stories, celebrated for their individual strengths, and supported throughout their learning journey." Goal #2 begins by stating the "community of learners and educators in the Richmond School District will engage in the meaningful process of reconciliation." Goal #3 states "all students in Richmond will gain an understanding of self, community, land, spirits, and ancestors through education that honours the First Peoples Principles of Learning." Finally, goal #4 includes a focus on "wellness and achievement of students with Aboriginal ancestry through the

development of student success plans.” I am deeply gratified that the goals represent future energy and deep respect for the past and the land, and look forward to learning together through history, story, compassion, and respect.

Lynn Archer
Assistant Superintendent
Richmond School District

I am a newcomer to the Aboriginal Education Department in the Richmond School District, assuming responsibility for the team in January 2016. I have arrived into a rich and vibrant community that thoughtfully, and with great consideration and care, works to support our students and teachers as they journey through their lives and careers. Through the efforts of the team, I have witnessed teachers making significant learning, and I have witnessed students taking significant strides in self-knowledge and pride. There is much work to be done: the redesigned curriculum calls for our teachers to whole-heartedly embrace the First Peoples Principles of Learning in classrooms, and our students continue to remind us that these principles will support their development and growth. I am optimistic that we will continue to grow in that good direction.

Marie Ratcliffe
District Administrator
Richmond School District

Teaching all students in Richmond to have deeper understandings is an ambitious and important goal. Each year, I collaborate with teachers to include Indigenous knowledge, content and historical perspectives. I see more and more teachers embracing the First Peoples Principles, and critically reflecting to change their teaching practices. The new curriculum further encourages teachers to expand their knowledge

systems, to try new things, to make small changes and to approach Indigenous content by infusing it into all areas of study. As the Principles suggest, it takes “time and patience”, and I am witnessing that the time is well worth the effort. I am also noticing that both new and seasoned teachers are requesting support. They are taking advantage of the professional development opportunities and learning series being offered by consultants in Aboriginal Education. I see new patterns emerging. Teachers who have worked extensively and collaboratively on bringing an Indigenous lens into classrooms are going much deeper in their practices by infusing concepts throughout the year and by extending their learning experiences with colleagues and bringing Indigenous pedagogy to staff meetings. Capacity is growing. Teachers are also taking on substantial projects that include school gardens and permanent structures for outdoor education inspired through Indigeneity. Other schools I support are working with big ideas and are bringing the concepts to life through visual arts and dramatic presentations.

Some teachers prefer a social justice approach to Indigenous Education and are exploring history through critical literacy. What do all the cultural teachings and perspectives mean if we don’t understand the systems that created the social injustice that aimed to destroy them? Teachers who are willing to collaborate in an effort to bring residential school history into their practices are reporting a positive transformation in their own teaching and learning as well as that of their students. It is not always easy work but it is important work and an endeavour well worth the time, energy and commitment.

Lynn Wainwright
Teacher Consultant
Richmond School District

My name is Monique Giard. I have Algonquin Mohawk ancestry on my mother's side and French ancestry on my father's side. I have been working as an Aboriginal Success Teacher for the last 6 years in the district of Richmond. When I started, it was a real challenge to pull out students from their classrooms for many reasons: the child did not want to be singled out, called to the counsellor's room, appearing to be "in trouble" or missing classroom teaching, assignments or homework time.

As years went by, students got to understand the importance of that special time with me and with their peers. Together, we reflect about what it means to be Native, we connect through telling our stories about our native communities, our relatives, and our ways of life. Together, we envision possibilities, discover new passions and shape a future after high school. Dr. Brokenleg's Circle of Courage offers a model of hope and mastery for each person. It's been a delight to witness the growth and transformation of students, teachers, and staff members opening up to the new curriculum and progressing on the journey of Truth and Reconciliation. Hearts can open further to allow success for each Aboriginal child.

O'Siem.

Dr. Monique Giard
Aboriginal Success Teacher
Richmond School District

Aboriginal Education is key to enhancing the success of all students throughout the Richmond School District. Acknowledging traditional territory and authentically including Aboriginal stories, perspectives, and histories into all aspects of the curriculum can increase feelings of cultural pride and strengthen ties to identity among students with Aboriginal ancestry.

As part of settler-society, it is crucial for non-Aboriginal students to understand the history of First Nations Peoples in BC, especially with regard to colonization. As an Aboriginal Educator, it is my role to facilitate the authentic inclusion of First Nations content into the curriculum and provide students with opportunities to respectfully participate in Indigenous ways of knowing and learning that are engaging, meaningful, and inspiring. For students with Aboriginal ancestry, success at school means having a safe space to learn, authentic and respectful inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing, and equitable access to academic achievement and leadership opportunities.

O'Siem (with respect),

Sonja Bone
Aboriginal Success Teacher
Richmond School District

On June 21, 2011, Richmond School District's first Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) was officially signed. Over the next 5 years, the Richmond learning community embraced this agreement by rising to the challenge in working towards the 4 goals established in the document. The results of the hard work from students, teachers, administrators, families and the Richmond community have led to a greater awareness and understanding of Aboriginal history and culture. Now, as we ask ourselves "what have we learned from the first 5 years?" -- the answer is, "a great deal--but there is so much more that can be learned". This is not a criticism of the last 5 years, rather it is an invitation to continue on with this incredible journey.

On February 7, 2017, we will sign the 2nd Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. The Richmond Board of Education would like to thank the AEEA

Advisory Committee for their time, effort and passion in putting together this agreement, and congratulate them for a job well done. Building on the District's belief that "our focus is on the learner", we are confident that this document will further educate, guide and inspire not only the learner, but also our families, educators, and the Richmond community.

Ken Hamaguchi
Trustee
Richmond School District

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is committed to supporting healthy communities. A key strategic objective for us is the promotion of wellness through reducing inequities in health. VCH's Aboriginal Cultural Competency policy recognizes the important role that culturally competent, safe and responsive services play in decreasing disparities in health status. Culturally competent education, with teachers who practice cultural humility, provides Indigenous students with a strong sense of belonging. Since education, connection to culture and a sense of belonging are critical determinants of health throughout the life span; applying cultural competencies in education will help reduce health inequities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has called on all levels of government to improve education attainment levels and success rates for Indigenous peoples. As we all move forward together in our journey of reconciliation, we are pleased to offer our support for the goals articulated in the Richmond School District's Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement. We believe these goals applied in practice will provide a strong framework towards developing a healthy school community and a learning environment that will enable Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to thrive and achieve their potential.

**Jennifer MacKenzie, Chief Operating Officer
& Dr. Meena Dawar, Medical Health Officer**
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

The Richmond Museum Society is honoured to support the new Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and continue its shared responsibility of the goals of this new agreement. The Richmond Museum aims to inspire curiosity about our history while exploring our place in the world. Our vision is to make the history of Richmond relevant, engaging and accessible. We are proud to acknowledge the rich and diverse Aboriginal stories that have shaped our community in our exhibitions and programs, and hope that all Richmond students take pride in seeing their cultural heritage reflected in the community.

Greg Walker, Chair
Richmond Museum Society

In the Social Development Strategy for Richmond, 2013-2022, which was adopted by Council in September 2013, the City committed to consult with local First Nations and urban Aboriginal organizations and other partners to gain a better understanding of the needs of Richmond's urban Aboriginal population, and opportunities for future collaboration. It also committed to support Richmond National Aboriginal Day events and Richmond School District Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement initiatives. The City will continue to assist the Richmond School District and Richmond residents in this important work.

Alan Hill
Cultural Diversity Coordinator
City of Richmond
Community Services

It is not the students but the educators who need to change their approach in order to inspire future and present Canadian Indigenous learners. This approach

requires a shift, a shift in thought from the educators to learn and to teach a more accurate historical legacy of the Canadian Indigenous Peoples. With the first Enhancement Agreement signed in 2011 and numerous focus groups within the Indigenous community, the Richmond School District has worked hard to support their teaching staff, through cultural exploration, and appropriate learning materials to deepen their understandings of the rich and vibrant cultures and histories of Canada's First Peoples. However, it is still a work in progress. With the continued support of the Aboriginal Success Team and the Aboriginal Teacher Consultants, the educators in the Richmond School District are better equipped to teach a more appropriate view of the Canadian Indigenous Peoples in classrooms. By better equipping educators with experiential learning opportunities and teaching materials, the entire student body can now walk away feeling empowered knowing that they are learning a more accurate history of the First Peoples, one that celebrates the richness and strength of the Canadian Indigenous Peoples. With the second Enhancement Agreement hot off the press, we at Pathways Aboriginal Center, look forward to seeing the educators continue to strengthen their knowledge through more cultural exploration and continued support from the Aboriginal Teacher Consultants and the Aboriginal Success Team.

Jelica Shaw

**Programs Coordinator, Child, Youth and Family
Worker
Pathways Aboriginal Centre**

Acknowledgement

The logo for the Richmond School District's Aboriginal Success Team was created by student Atheana Picha in June, 2016.

Atheana Picha is a 17 year old emerging artist currently completing grade 12 at Matthew McNair secondary. Atheana has mixed ancestry, being Fijian, Czechoslovakian, English, and Aboriginal from the Kwantlen first nation. Art has always been a important component of Atheana's life, with painting being a primary source of expression. She enjoys biking, exploring her city, and attending concerts in her spare time. Her goals are to become a professional artist, and to work with others on future projects.

Atheana's purpose for the logo design was to incorporate some contemporary elements with traditional colours to represent how we grow from our foundations, and learn from our past. There is an eagle to represent courage, wisdom, truth and honesty. These values are important for learning and growing as an individual. The circle is to represent how culture brings people together to learn from each other.



APPENDIX A

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING



FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.



Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Learning involves patience and time.

Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

For First Peoples classroom resources visit: www.fnesc.ca



APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH ABORIGINAL ANCESTRY

PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE SURVEY

Can you tell me about two adults in this school who make you smile (on the inside or on the outside) and who make you feel good about being at school? Can you tell me who they are and what they do to make you feel happy?

When do you feel best about being in school?

Are there times when you wish you didn't have to be at school? Can you tell me about those times?

What do you know today that you didn't know at the beginning of the year? You can tell me about anything... about yourself, about what you're learning in your classroom, about what you have learned as you continue on your growing journey.

How do you feel you are doing in school?

When do you feel proud of what you've learned?

Are there some spots where you wish you could get more help?

What is the way that you know you learn best?

If you could be the teacher, what would be the important things you would want to teach your class?

If you were in charge of the whole school, what would you change or do differently to make it better?

What do you wish people at your school understood about what makes you special/what makes you YOU?

Is there anything else you want to share with me or that you wish I'd asked you?

SECONDARY SURVEY

Can you name two people in this school/setting who believe that you can be a success in life?

Where are you going with your learning?

Why does what you are learning matter?

How are you doing with your learning?

What are your areas of strength and where do you think you need a bit more help?

Where are you going next with your learning? What kinds of things are you exploring for some possible future plans? What is your vision for the future?

If you could be the teacher, what would be the important things you would want to teach your students?

If you were in charge of the whole school, what would you change or do differently to make it better?

What do you wish people at your school understood about what makes you special and what makes you YOU?

Is there anything else you want to share with me or that you wish I had asked you?

APPENDIX C

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR ADULTS ON COMMUNITY NIGHT

1. What are essential Aboriginal worldviews that all students should understand?
2. How do we ensure we have Aboriginal voice in classrooms and schools?
3. What do you think our top priorities should be for our Aboriginal students?
4. What goal would you suggest for the next Enhancement Agreement?
5. How would you describe what reconciliation looks like to you?
6. How do schools and classes engage and inspire Aboriginal learners?
7. How do we ensure Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives are included in classrooms?
8. In your child's school, what's working? What's not? What's next?

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ON COMMUNITY NIGHT

1. When you're learning, what makes you smile?
2. If you could give teachers advice, what would it be?
3. What is the BEST part about you?
4. What does it mean to you to be Aboriginal?

QUESTIONS ASKED IN ADULT CIRCLE GROUPS FOR DISCUSSION ON COMMUNITY NIGHT

1. How will we know we are meeting the needs of

Aboriginal learners? Can you describe what the evidence should look and feel like?

2. Can you describe things that we can do to ensure that we are successful in meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners?
3. What does student success look like to you? And for your child?

QUESTIONS ASKED IN CHILD AND YOUTH CIRCLE GROUPS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. In what ways do you think that school prepares you for what you want to do after graduation?
2. In what ways are your strengths being developed at school?
3. Can you think of any examples of ways that you get help with your areas of need at school?
4. Can you describe the classes in which you feel that you have the most engaging and valuable learning activities? Can you give examples of the times when you feel that you learned the most?
5. Can you describe what keeps you engaged and motivated to succeed at school?
6. Can you describe what your goals are in the future, and how you determined these goals?
7. Can you describe the things that make your school experience positive and worthwhile?
8. What does success look like and feel like to you? Can you describe some times that you felt successful in school?

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONS FROM ONLINE EDUCATOR SURVEY

1. What grade(s) do you teach?

2. Do you teach in a subject specific area(s)?
If yes, which subjects?

3. Please indicate your familiarity of Richmond’s
Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement
and Goals.
Not at all Somewhat Very

4. Please indicate your knowledge of the factors that
may contribute to Aboriginal student success.
Not at all Somewhat Very
If you answered somewhat or very, please list the
factors as you understand them.

5. What strengths and successes (educational or
otherwise) are you observing in the Aboriginal
students with whom you work?

6. How are schools, classes, or you personally
working to foster the success of Aboriginal
students?

7. Please indicate your confidence/comfort level in
incorporating Aboriginal content, perspectives
and worldviews in your teaching practice.
Not at all Somewhat Very

8. To what extent are you currently including
Canada’s shared history in your teaching practice,
as applicable in your teaching area?
Not at all Somewhat Very
9. As an educator, what support, if any, do you
require to include Aboriginal knowledge,
perspectives and pedagogy in your teaching,
according to the guidelines of the new curriculum?

10. As an educator, what tools, support, and/or
information, do you have to have to better help
you work well with Aboriginal students and
families?

11. What further questions about the Aboriginal
Education Enhancement Agreement do you have?

12. Is there anything else that you would like to share
that may help improve the experiences and
outcomes of students with Aboriginal heritage?

APPENDIX E

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