

Enhancing Student Learning Report

September 2024

In Review of Year 4 of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan



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Introduction

District Context

INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Richmond Board of Education acknowledges with gratitude, the First Peoples of the hən̓q̓əmi̓nəm̓ language group on whose traditional and unceded territories we teach, learn and live.

DISTRICT CONTEXT

The Richmond School District is a large, urban and multicultural school district that lies within the boundaries of the City of Richmond. Our community’s shared history began thousands of years ago as a place where the First Peoples gathered and lived. Today, Richmond is located on the traditional and unceded territories of people of the hən̓q̓əmi̓nəm̓ language group and is a community of over 230,000 people from all over the world.

62 per cent of all Richmond students speak a language other than English as their primary language at home, while 32 per cent of all Richmond students are designated English Language Learners (ELL). Richmond schools include Indigenous students from at least 39 First Nations, Inuit and Métis who make up 1% of our student population. None of our Indigenous students live on reserve.

The District offers a variety of programs of choice at both the elementary and secondary level. In our 37 elementary schools, programs of choice include early and late French Immersion, Montessori and blended learning. French Immersion, International Baccalaureate, Mini Schools, and programs with online and blended learning options are available in our 10 secondary schools. There are also 12 different program options for students with disabilities and diverse abilities, including district alternate programs that address a wide range of learning needs and alternate pathways to graduation.

USE OF DATA

Some populations of students in the Richmond School District make up 1% or less than 1% of the overall student population, therefore data can at times appear inconsistent or be misleading, particularly when each year of data represents a different and very small cohort. This has been taken into consideration in the analysis and how overall trends are addressed.

Student Enrolment in 2023/24		
	Number of Students Registered	Percentage of Total Population
Total Student Population	23656	100%
Indigenous Students	269	1%
Children and Youth in Care	173	.07%
Students with Designations	2437	10%

Current Strategic Plan Priorities

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Richmond School District's [Five Year Strategic Plan](#) was developed during the 2019-2020 school year. Over the course of several months, the Board engaged in a significant amount of consultation beginning with

students and broadening to include staff, parents, and members of the community. Through this process, five strategic priorities were identified: *Inspired Learners*, *Equity and Inclusion*, *Optimized Facilities and Technology*, *A Progressive Workplace* and *A Connected Learning Community*. Every year the Board of Education engages with education partners to gather feedback on the progress in each priority area and to gather suggestions for the focus for the coming year. This feedback, along with provincial and local data sets, informs adjustments to each priority area annually.

SD38 Strategic Priorities:



The Strategic Plan has two strategic priorities focused specifically on enhancing student learning: *Inspired Learners* and *Equity and Inclusion*. Both priorities’ goals focus on intellectual, human and social, and career development. Specific attention is paid in those priorities to supporting Indigenous learners, children and youth in care, and learners with disabilities or diverse abilities.

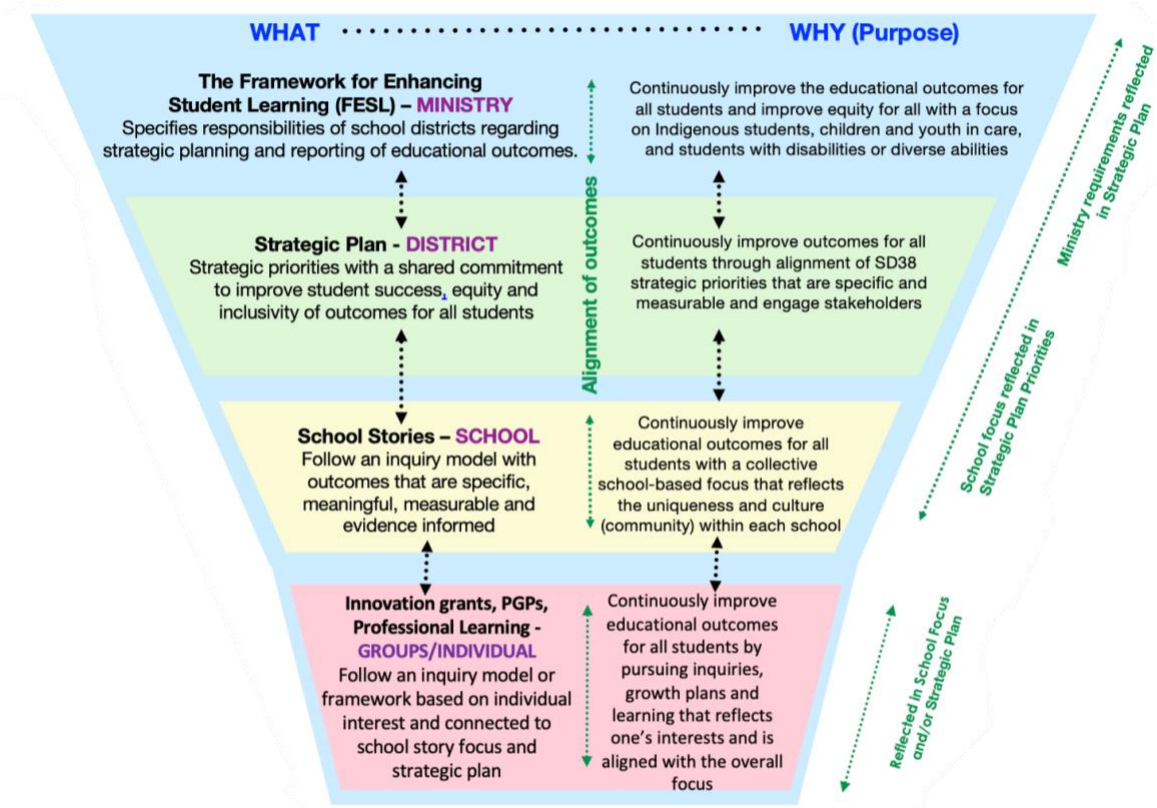
The District has developed an annual planning cycle that links the Strategic Plan to the [District Story](#) which is, in turn, linked to each school’s [School Story](#). Throughout the year, each school engages in a [process](#) to continuously monitor and revise its School Story to demonstrate how the school community is working on improving learning outcomes for students. This is achieved by setting a focus to improve student achievement based on a continual cycle of inquiry.

The videos shared as part of the [Superintendent’s Executive Report to the Board of Education](#) help to highlight how staff and students are connected to the Strategic Plan Priorities.

This [linked example](#) of an elementary School Story illustrates the school’s context and focus as well as actions and evidence that support the intention of the school’s focus. This [linked example](#) of a secondary School Story illustrates the connections to the district’s strategic plan and the Ministry of Education and Child Care’s competency-based curriculum. Links to all of the District’s school stories can be found on the [District’s School Stories page](#). The [District Story](#) demonstrates how the district is working to improve student outcomes. The District Story is driven by examples from school stories as well as district and Ministry level data. For example, the stories and data found on the [Social Emotional Learning page](#) of the District Story relate to social

emotional learning examples from around the school district including data from the MDI (Middle Years Development Instrument).

The image below describes the interconnectedness and coherence being built between the Ministry’s Framework for Enhancing Student Learning, the District’s Strategic Plan and school level planning.



District operational plans and the distribution of resources (human, financial and technological) are aligned with the outcomes set out in the Strategic Plan as evidenced in Strategic priorities 3, 4, and 5. The Strategic Plan is directly connected to the continuous improvement of educational outcomes for all students as the actions within the plan support optimizing learning conditions in the support of human, physical and learning resources with a focus on improving equity for all.

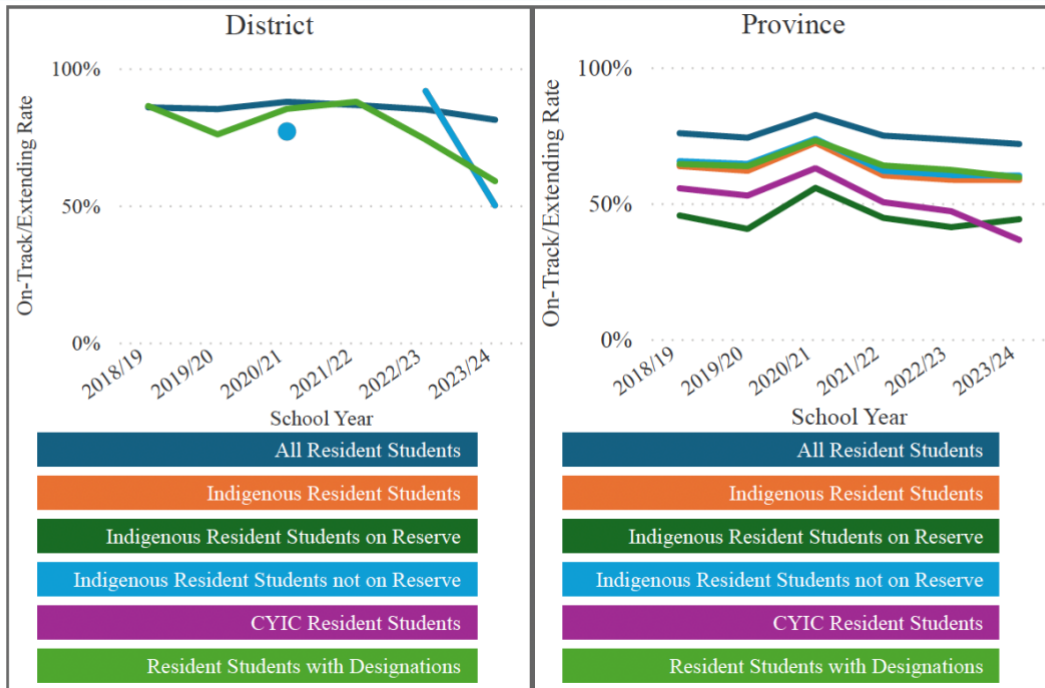
Section A: Reflecting on Student Learning Outcomes

Intellectual Development

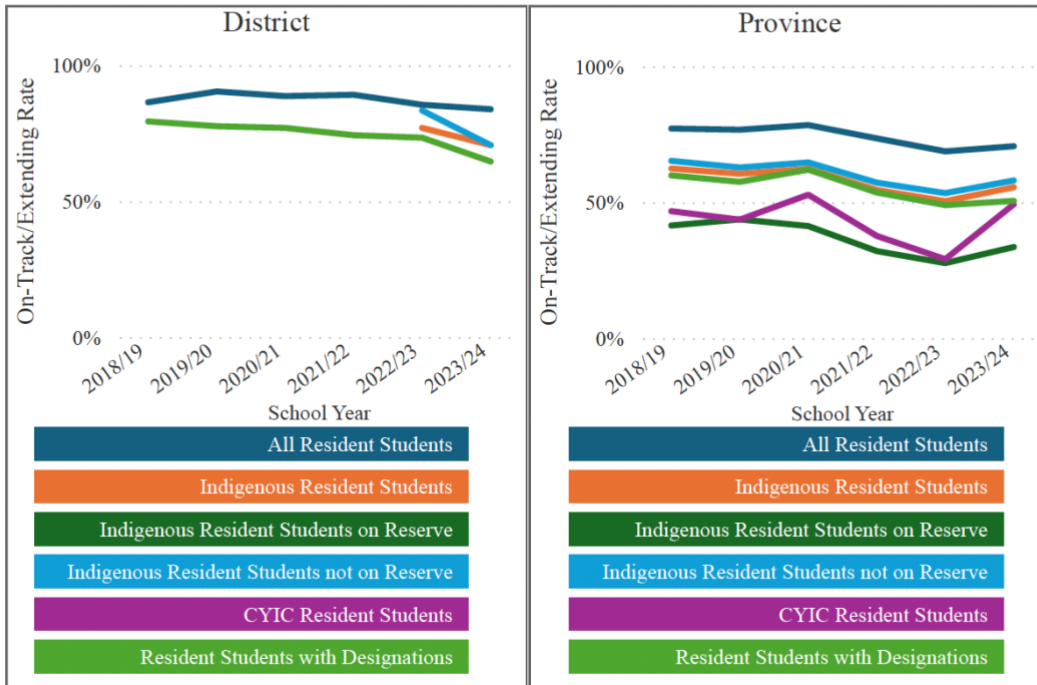
Educational Outcome 1: Literacy

Measure 1.1: Grade 4 & Grade 7 Literacy Expectations

Grade 4 FSA Literacy/Reading (On-Track / Extending Rate)

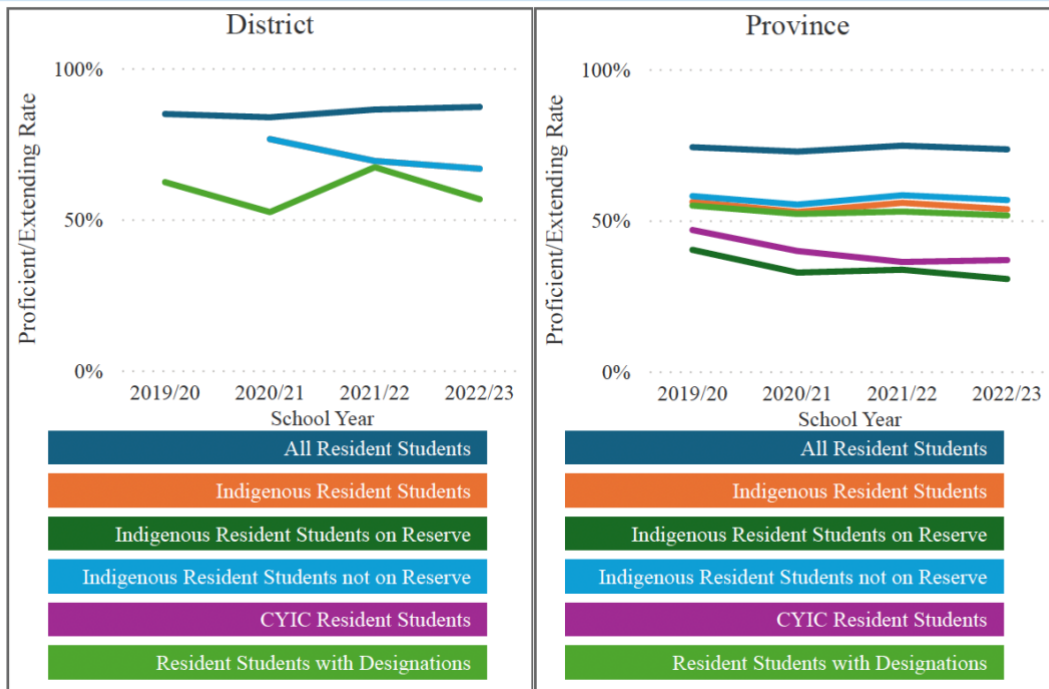


Grade 7 FSA Literacy/Reading (On-Track / Extending Rate)

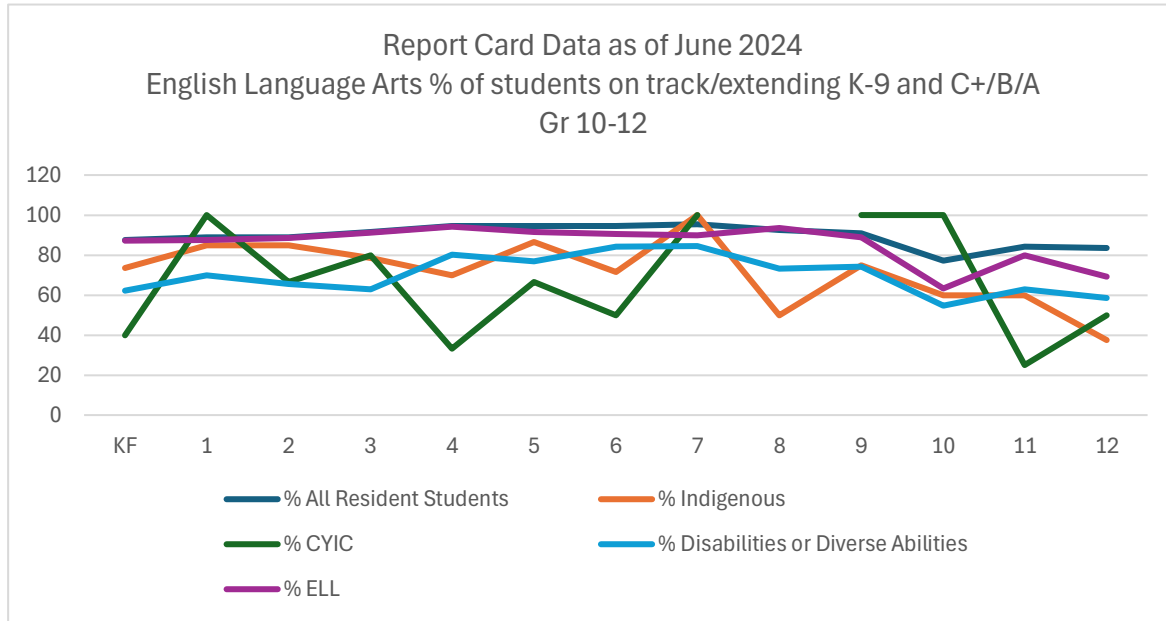


Measure 1.2: Grade 10 Literacy Expectations

Grade 10 Grad Assessment Literacy (Proficient / Extending Rate)



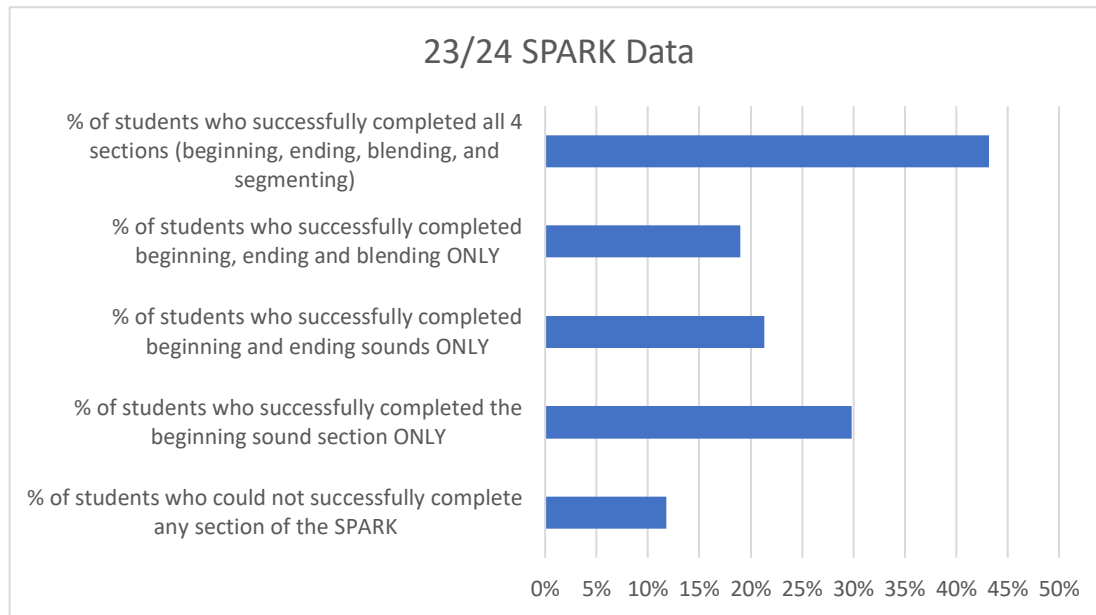
Measure 1.3 Report Card Data



Measure 1.4 Spring Snapshot – Reading Proficiency K-7

Spring Snapshot Reading Proficiency K-7 % of students Emerging 2021-2024									
		K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
2021-2022	% NYM or Emerging	8	14	12	8	4	3	2	3
2022-2023	% NYM or Emerging	10	14	11	7	8	6	4	4
2023-2024	% Emerging	14	15	15	10	9	10	8	7

Measure 1.5 Screener for Phonemic Awareness in Richmond Kindergarten 2024 Data (S.P.A.R.K.)



Analysis and Interpretation

Outcome 1: Literacy

An analysis of the provincial and school level for SD38 Richmond reveals the following:

- In provincial assessments the learners in Grades 4, 7 and 10 perform above the provincial average in Literacy, however there is a slight decrease in performance over time except in Grade 10. One potential reason for this is some of the elementary Literacy gaps that may have been created in formative Literacy years during COVID. The district is working to mitigate this with;
 - o The use of a district developed tool, The Pillars of Literacy, that provides teachers with instructional routines and resources to provide a balanced Literacy program and target areas of need for learners.
 - o Kindergarten teacher training (Sept 2023/24) and Grade 1 teacher training (Sept 2024/25) on how to use the Pillars of Literacy
 - o Targeted instructional support blocks for Literacy in secondary and TTOC release in elementary
- In school-based assessments learners perform slightly higher than on provincial assessments which may be explained by the culminative nature of classroom assessments, vs snapshot data of provincial assessments. Nevertheless, it is important to consider alignment of teaching and assessment practices to ensure classroom practice and assessment is in-line with provincial curricula and criteria.
- Indigenous students this year in Grade 4, 7 and 10 performed at a lower level than in previous years and at the bottom end of the provincial average in Grade 4. They also perform lower than their peers in most grades as per classroom assessment data. This is of great concern as it highlights an inequity in the academic success of Indigenous learners. This year the Indigenous Success Team together with schools' staffs, will investigate some of the reasons for these inequities and work with school staffs to enact strategies based on the data gathered from Indigenous learners and their families to narrow the achievement gap in Literacy. This achievement gap will also be highlighted to all school leaders so they can focus on strategies to support Indigenous learners with

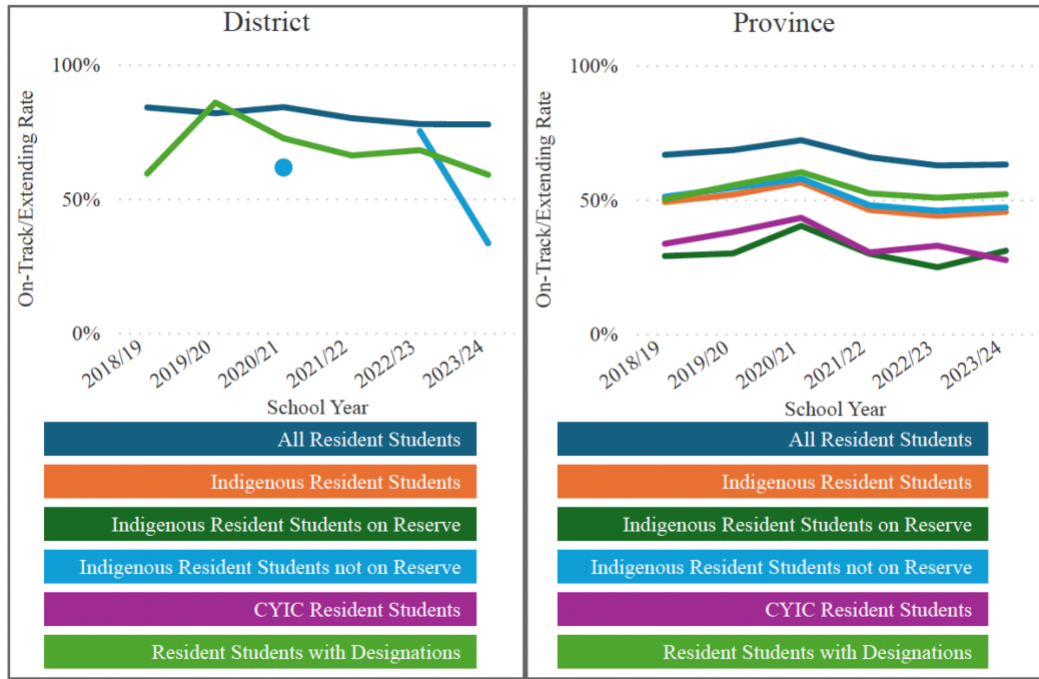
their staff.

- Students with Disabilities and Diverse Abilities also perform at a lower level than their peers, highlighting another potential inequity. A deeper dive into student achievement and potential is required to determine if these students are performing at their capacity as per their IEPs and learning plans, or if additional strategies can be employed to narrow the achievement gap for these students.
- In most cases there is also a gap for Children and Youth in Care (CYIC). Because the district's population of CYIC is so small, the trends vary widely as one student can make a significant impact on the data trend and much of the data is masked. In any case, there remains an achievement gap. One strategy that has made an overall difference for CYIC in this district is focused attention from district and school-based staff to set up learning plans and check ins with CYIC, their teachers and their support teams to help CYIC reach their full potential.
- ELL learners perform very closely to the overall student population until the graduation years when the performance drops somewhat. This could be due to many factors including the level of English in senior courses, however, it bears investigating further to ensure there are no other factors contributing to this inequity.
- As evidenced by the S.P.A.R.K. data there are a percentage of students who do not demonstrate early literacy skills in Kindergarten. The data from this assessment supports teachers to tailor instruction to student needs.
- The Literacy data and evidence reveals that focused attention on Literacy is required. Typically, Richmond learners perform highly in Literacy, and although this is true overall and the downward trends mirror the provincial downward trend, there is a need to support learners in their Literacy development to swing the trend back to an upwards one. The aforementioned Pillars of Literacy tool and teacher support blocks will help support this and is accompanied by professional learning opportunities for teachers as well as for school leaders so they can support the capacity building of staff in Literacy. A focused implementation plan will be attended to this coming school year with monitoring of its success.

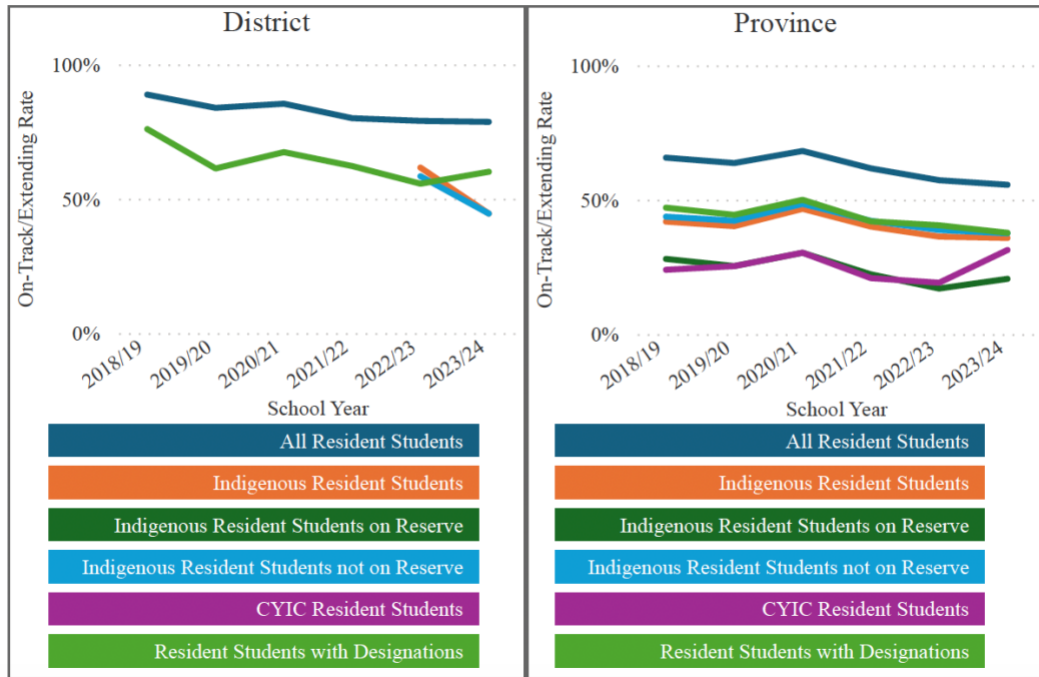
Educational Outcome 2: Numeracy

Measure 2.1: Grade 4 & Grade 7 Numeracy Expectations

Grade 4 FSA Numeracy (On-Track / Extending Rate)

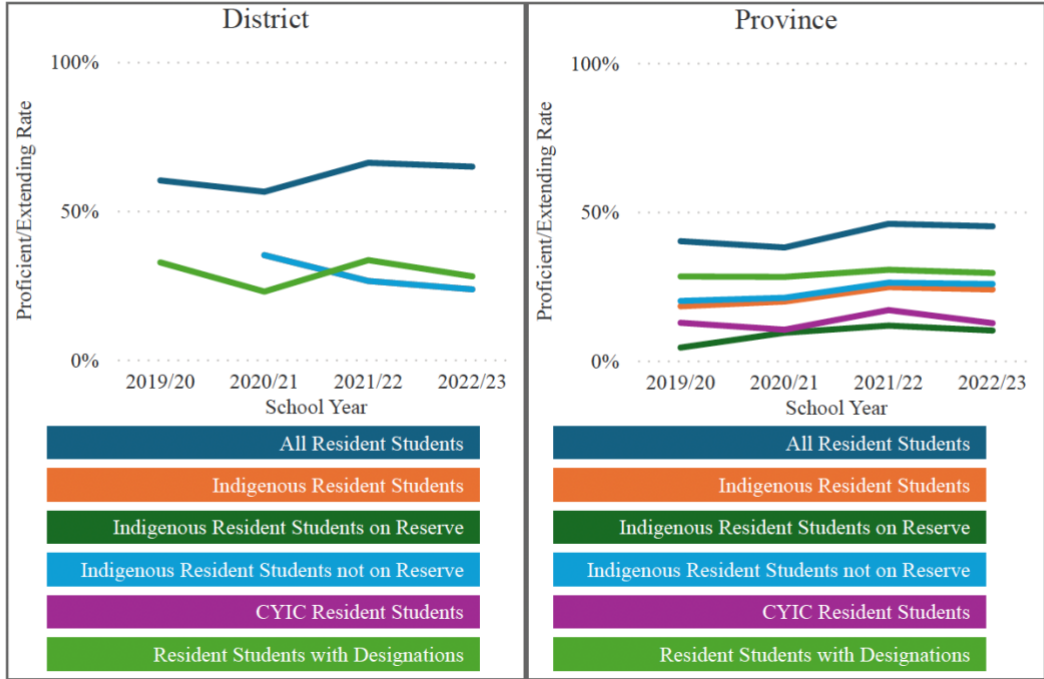


Grade 7 FSA Numeracy (On-Track / Extending Rate)



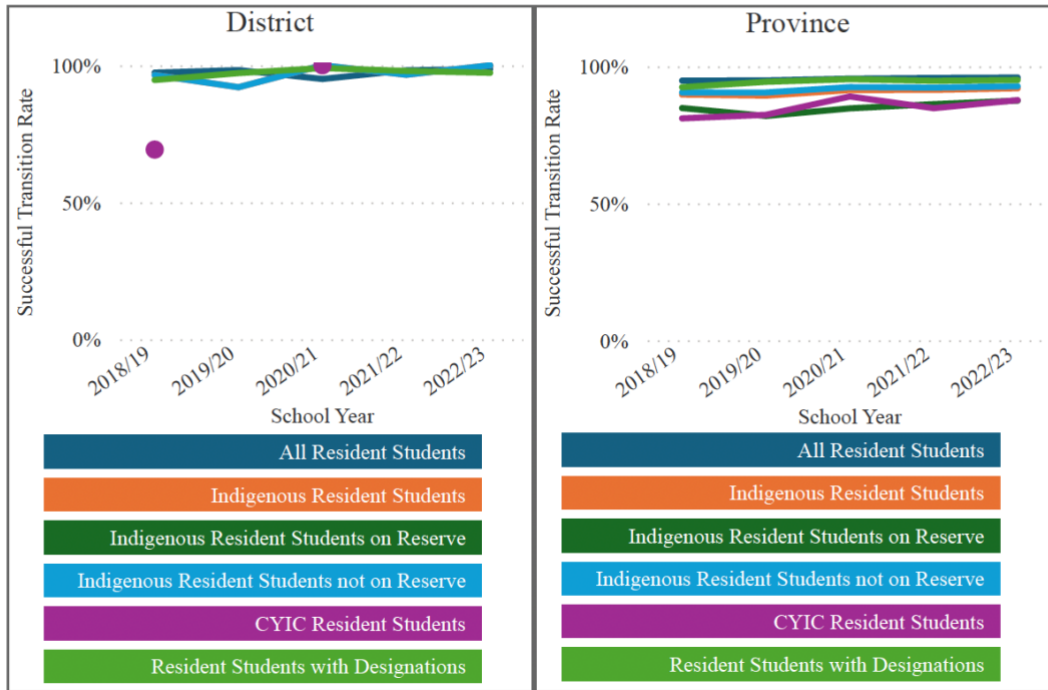
Measure 2.2: Grade 10 Numeracy Expectations

Grade 10 Grad Assessment Numeracy (Proficient / Extending Rate)

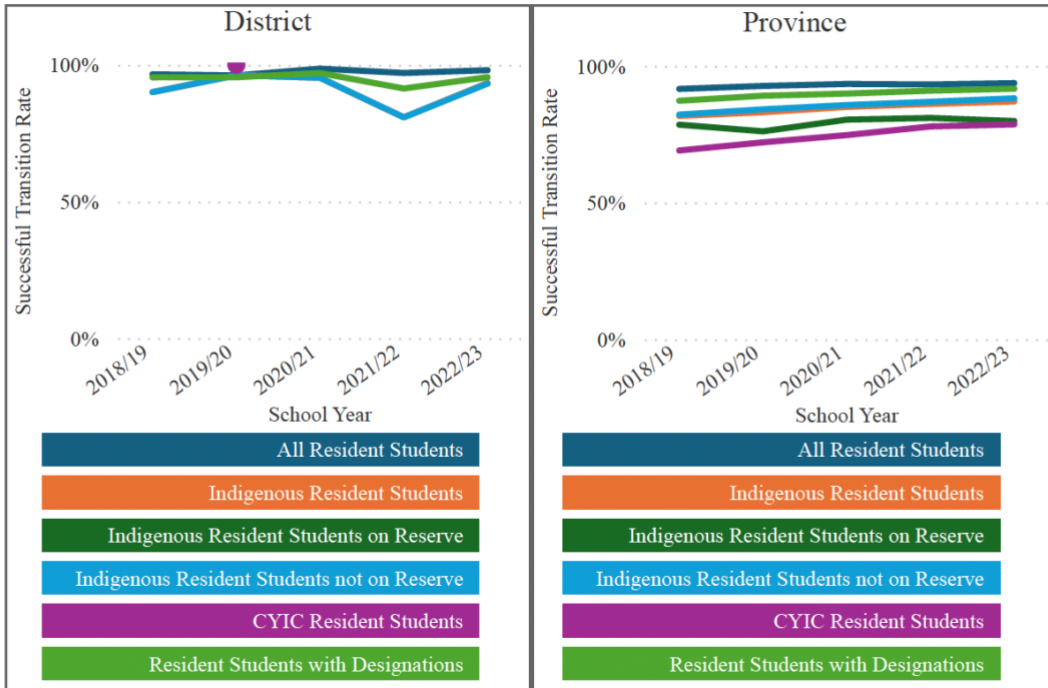


Measure 2.3: Grade-to-Grade Transitions

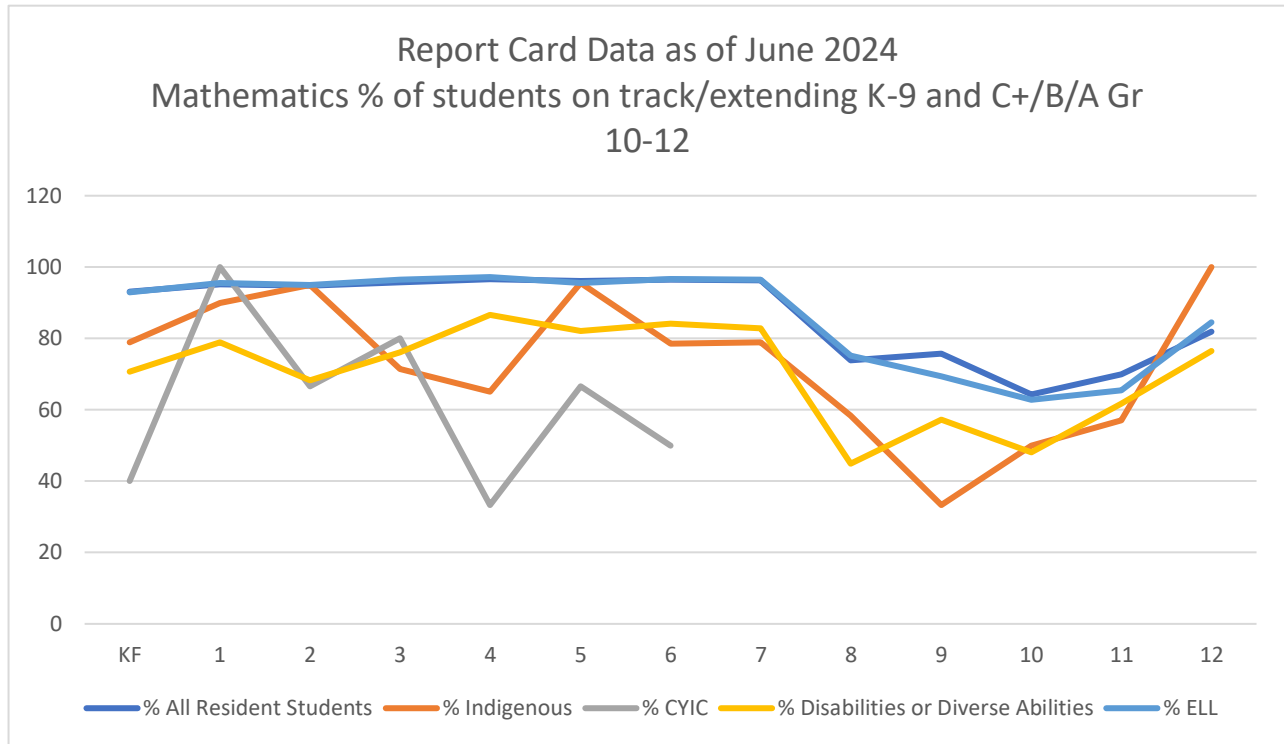
Grade 10 to 11 Transition Rate



Grade 11 to 12 Transition Rate



Measure 2.4: Report Card Data



Analysis and Interpretation

Outcome 2: Numeracy

An analysis of the provincial and school level for SD38 Richmond reveals the following:

- In provincial assessments the learners in Grades 4, 7 and 10 perform above the provincial average in Numeracy, however there is a slight decrease in performance over time except in Grade 10. Grade 10 learners appear to be benefiting from more focused attention to Numeracy skills throughout elementary and secondary schooling over the last few years and have been able to apply that learning to the Graduation Numeracy Assessment (GNA). In elementary learners we are seeing a slight decline on provincial assessments. As with Literacy, some of this decline may be attributed to formative years' learning loss during COVID for which educators are still catching up. The district is working to mitigate this with the use of a district developed tool, Foundations of Numeracy that provides teachers with instructional routines and resources to build capacity and understanding of Numeracy as well as Mathematics instruction.
- In school-based assessments, learners perform slightly higher than on provincial assessments which may be explained by the culminative nature of classroom assessments, vs snapshot data of provincial assessments. Nevertheless, it is important to consider alignment of teaching and assessment practices to ensure classroom practice is in-line with provincial curricula and criteria, and is Numeracy focused. After Grade 7, there is a dip in achievement levels of learners until Grade 11. This is worth investigating for Grades 8, 9 and 10 as it is recognized that students in Grades 11 and 12 self-select to stay in Mathematics/Numeracy courses.
- Indigenous learners this year in Grade 4 performed below the provincial average, in Grade 7 lower than in previous years, and in Grade 10 performed at a lower level than their peers. In classroom assessment data,

although there are two grades where Indigenous students perform at the same level as their peers, this is not a trend. This is of concern as it highlights an inequity in the education of Indigenous learners, similarly to what was seen in Literacy. This year the Indigenous Success Team will investigate the reasons for these inequities and work with school staffs to enact strategies based on the data gathered from Indigenous learners and their families to narrow the achievement gap in Numeracy.

- Students with Disabilities and Diverse Abilities perform higher than the provincial average, but at a lower level than their peers, highlighting another potential inequity. A deeper dive into student achievement and potential is required to determine if these students are performing at their capacity as evidenced in their IEPs or learning plans, or if additional strategies can be employed to narrow the achievement gap for these students.
- In most cases there is also a gap for Children and Youth in Care. Because the district's population of CYIC is so small, the trends vary widely as one student can make quite an impact on the data. However, of note is the absence of CYIC students in Mathematics courses in secondary school. This requires further investigation to determine if there are barriers to access Mathematics courses for CYIC.
- ELL learners perform very closely, or in some cases at a higher level than the overall student population.
- The Numeracy data and evidence reveals that focused attention on Numeracy is required at the elementary level and that the strategies being used in secondary school seem to be making a difference for secondary learners and their Numeracy skills.
- Although, higher than the provincial average, there is still a downward trend in achievement in this area, and the District's Numeracy Foundations tool will help support this area and is accompanied by professional learning opportunities for teachers as well as for school leaders so they can support the capacity building of staff in Mathematics and Numeracy. One strategy includes the addition of staffing in both elementary and secondary schools to support capacity building in Literacy and Numeracy instruction.

Grade to Grade Transitions Data

- Grade to Grade Transitions data shows a very high rate of grade-to-grade transition, with an improvement in the transition of Indigenous learners. It will be important to monitor this trend to ensure it continues from year to year. As our Indigenous learner population is small, one or two students can significantly impact the data.

Intellectual Development Summary

Overall, the analysis of the intellectual development data and evidence shows us that the district is not immune to the downward trends in the province and elsewhere in the world. However, this means that we need to redouble our efforts to ensure strong Literacy and Numeracy foundations for our learners.

The district's strategic plan 2020-2025 called for the development of Literacy and Numeracy frameworks to support instruction and educator capacity building. Those tools are now fully developed and in the beginning of their full implementation phase. As the use of these tools becomes more widespread and a part of teacher practice, we hope to see targeted instruction where students' skillsets need strengthening, and an improvement overall in these two areas. Recognizing the need to support teacher capacity, re-alignment of remedy and district funds is being funneled to support the addition of staffing to support Literacy and Numeracy.

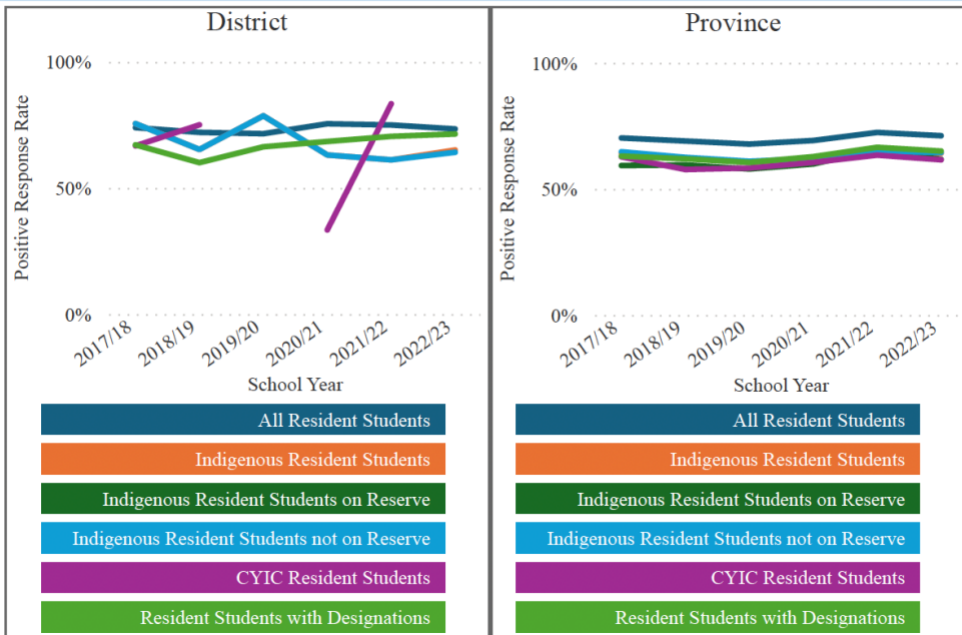
There is also a need to focus on achievement gaps for priority populations. Because the Numeracy Foundations and Pillars of Literacy tools provide for general and for targeted instruction, educators should be able to focus instruction on the skills required by individual learners. We are also fortunate to have district staff with responsibilities for Indigenous learners, CYIC and students with disabilities, and those departments will focus on gathering more specific information from those student populations to determine what strategies might work best for their learning and achievement in the coming year.

Human and Social Development

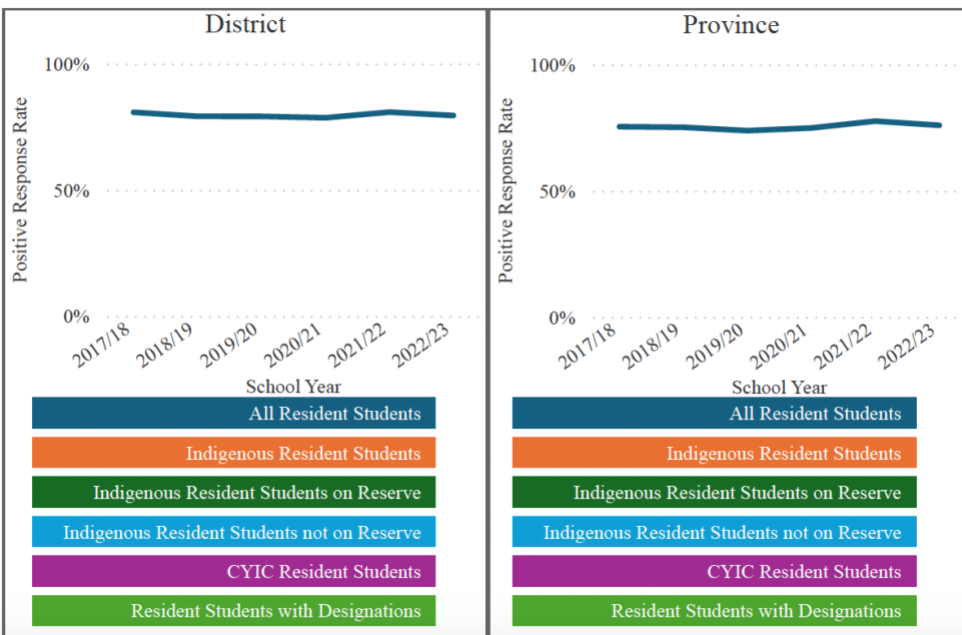
Educational Outcome 3: Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

Measure 3.1: Students Feel Welcome and Safe, and Have a Sense of Belonging at School

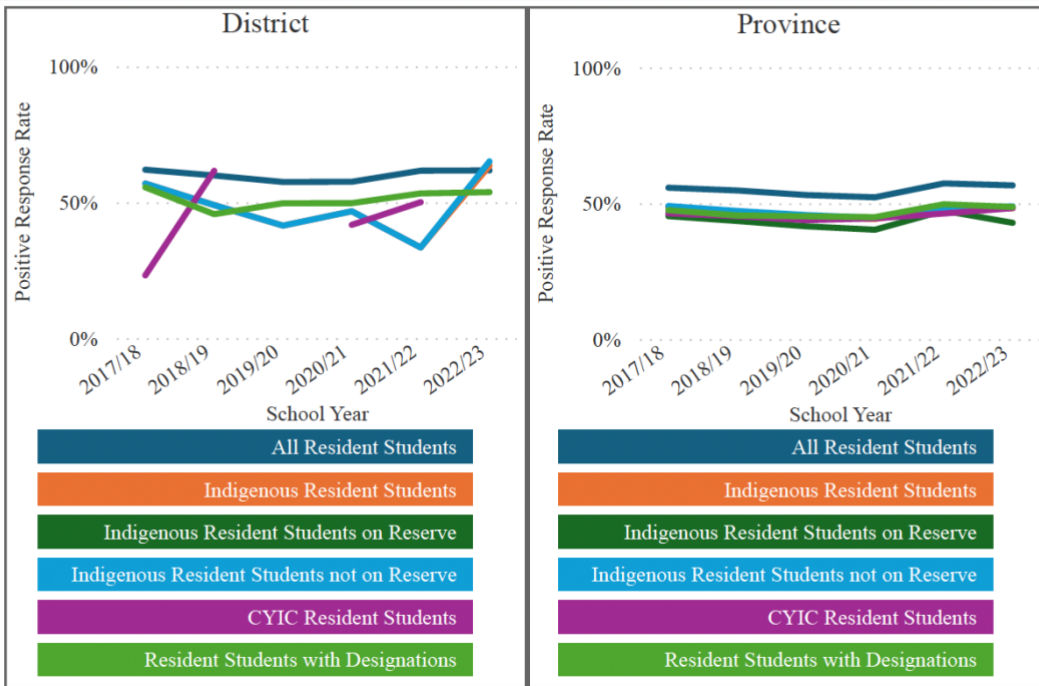
Feel Welcome (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



Feel Safe (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)

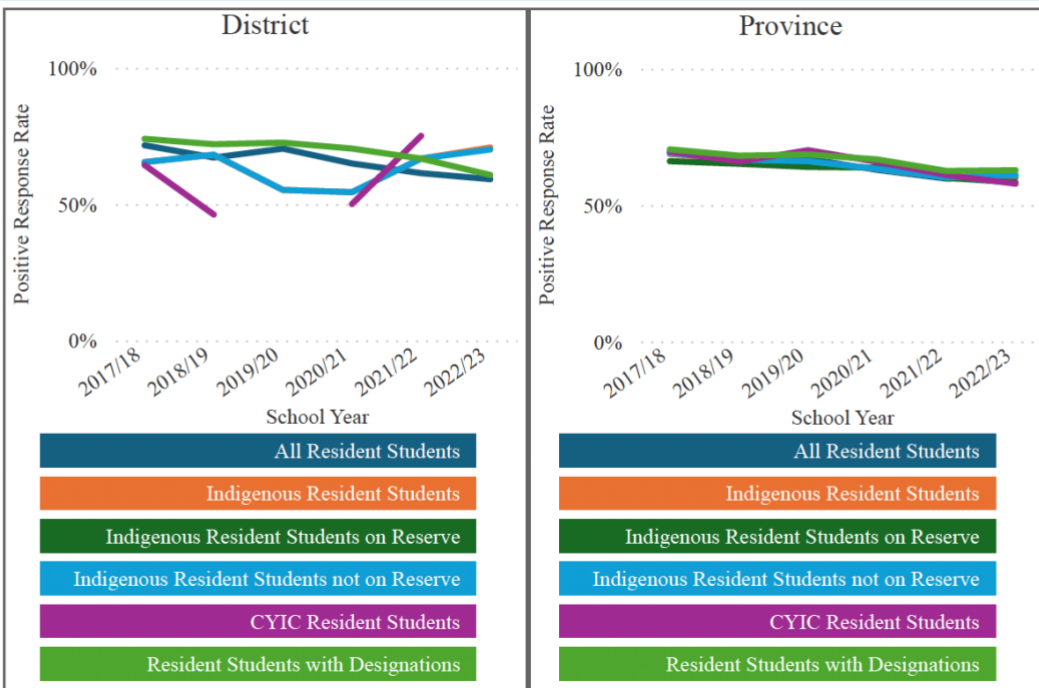


Sense of Belonging (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



Measure 3.2: Students Feel that Adults Care About Them at School

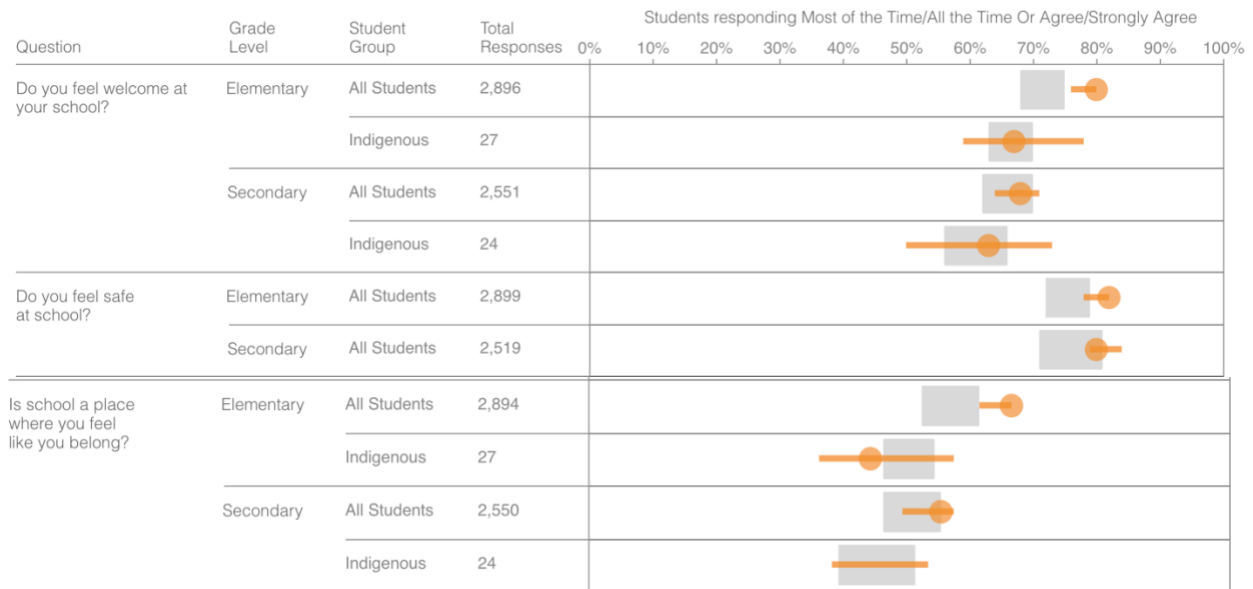
2 or More Adults Care (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



Measure 3.3: Student Satisfaction and Wellness

- Typical range across B.C. (middle 50% of school districts)
- Selected school district's most recent results (2022/2023)
- Range of school district's results over time (2018/2019 - 2022/2023)

Student Satisfaction and Wellness



Measure 3.4 Youth Development Index (YDI) Data

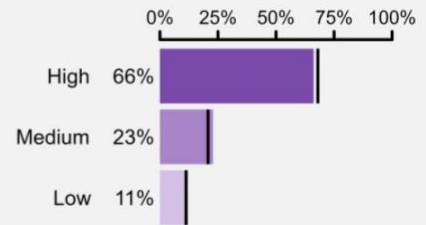
The district participated in the Youth Development Instrument (YDI) for the first time in 2023/24. The YDI collects population-level youth development data that may be broadly used to better understand the developmental trends, health, and well-being of adolescents in British Columbia (BC).

This past year, the YDI was administered amongst Grade 11 students in all secondary schools, to further explore the environments, experiences, and health and well-being of youth from youth's own perspectives as they navigate late adolescence and enter young adulthood.

YDI results continue to inform initiatives required in Social and Emotional Learning. Below is a snapshot of specific data related to feeling welcome, safe and connected at school from Grade 11 students in the Spring of 2024. Richmond specific data is in purple, and the provincial average is marked by a black vertical line:

SCHOOL SAFETY

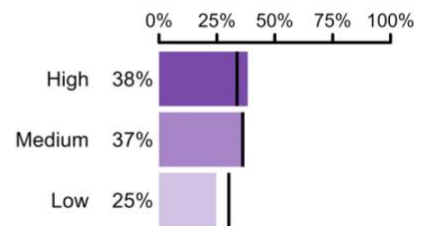
Youth's level of agreement with the statement "I feel safe at my school."



SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT†

Youth's level of agreement with statements about the social atmosphere of the school, including the relationships and interactions between and amongst students and staff.

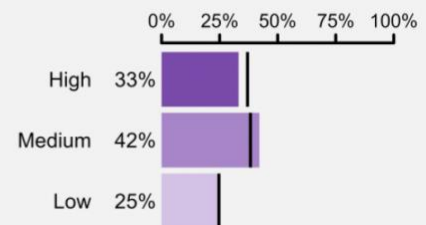
e.g., "Teachers and students treat each other with respect in this school."



SCHOOL BELONGING†

Youth's level of agreement with statements about their sense of belonging at school.

e.g., "I feel like I belong in this school."



Measure 3.5 Student Voice Forum 2024 Student Discussion Themes:

- Supportive School Environments: Students appreciate environments where teachers and counsellors are supportive and understanding, fostering a sense of community and acceptance, especially for neurodivergent and LGBTQ2S+ students.
- Challenges with Mental Health Stigma: Some students feel judged about their mental health issues and experience a culture of silence, particularly among teenage boys, which inhibits open discussions.
- Importance of Mental Health Education: There is a strong call for more mental health education for both students and staff, which is seen as a positive step towards better mental health support.
- Impact of School Culture on Student Wellbeing: School cultures that emphasize academic pressure and competition can lead to stress and a sense of isolation among students, who feel defined by their academic performance.
- Digital Devices and Learning: While technology is beneficial for learning, social media and digital devices can be major distractions, leading to calls for restrictions on certain sites during school

hours from students themselves, which aligns well with new cell phone policies in place for 2024/25.

- Student Participation and Voice: Students value opportunities to express their voices through clubs, surveys, and direct communication with teachers, though they sometimes feel their feedback is not acted upon.
-

Analysis and Interpretation

Outcome 3: Students Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

An analysis of the provincial Student Learning Survey (SLS) data for SD38 Richmond reveals the following:

- SLS survey data indicates that feelings of being welcome, safe and connected drop from elementary to secondary school
- Where data is available, Indigenous students' feelings of being welcome, safe and connected are increasing. This is a trend we are hopeful will continue and is most likely due to the concerted efforts of the Indigenous Success Team to connect personally with each Indigenous student and their family. Of great support are the Board supported Indigenous Gathering Spaces which have grown from two to four in the last couple of years, and help Indigenous students connect with each other.
- Students with designations are also feeling more welcome, safe and connected.
- Overall, the data from the SLS and Youth Development Index (YDI) demonstrate feelings of being welcome, safe and connected at a lower rate than expected because many schools focus on belonging and student wellbeing, collecting data through school surveys and student interviews and acting on the results. To better understand student feelings of being welcome, safe and connected, a district-wide measure needs to be developed so that district data can be triangulated with provincial and school-based data

Human and Social Development Summary

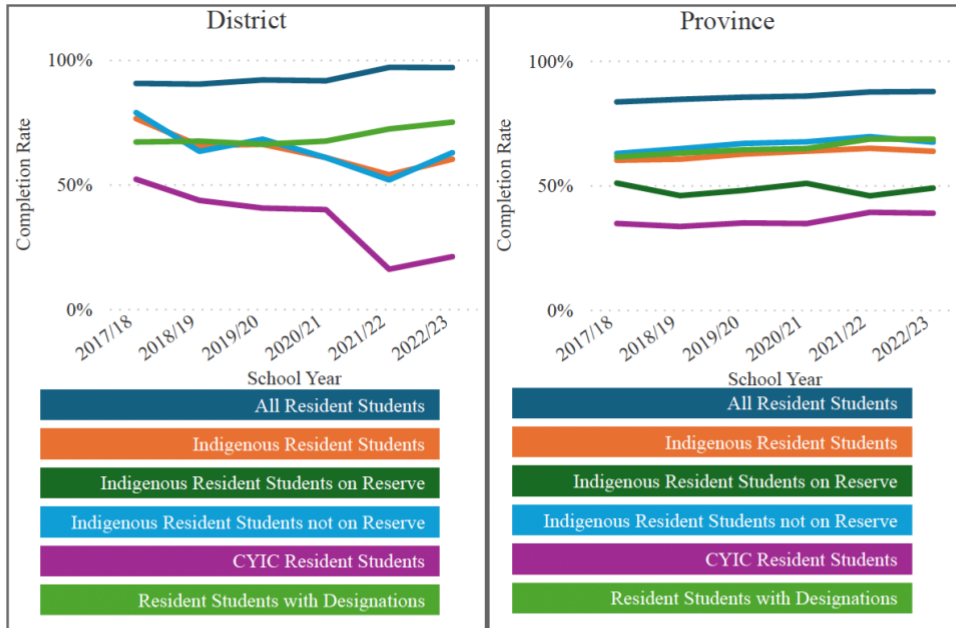
Overall, the SLS and YDI data indicates that we need additional measures to determine how students are feeling at school. Development of a district tool to triangulate provincial data with school data and gather information from students in all grades will be helpful to get a more detailed picture of student wellbeing across the district. Many factors could be contributing to the lower than desired responses related to student wellbeing on the SLS including post pandemic societal factors, the design of the SLS itself, and how the SLS is administered across the district.

Career Development

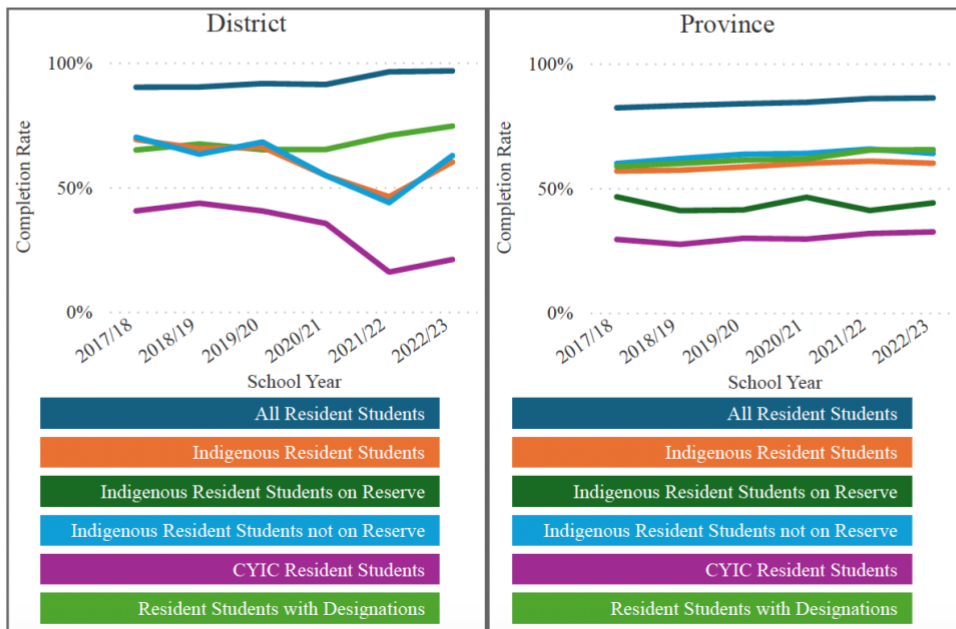
Educational Outcome 4: Graduation

Measure 4.1: Achieved Dogwood within 5 Years

5-Year Completion Rate (Dogwood & Adult Dogwood)



5-Year Completion Rate (Dogwood Only)



Analysis and Interpretation

Outcome 4: Graduation

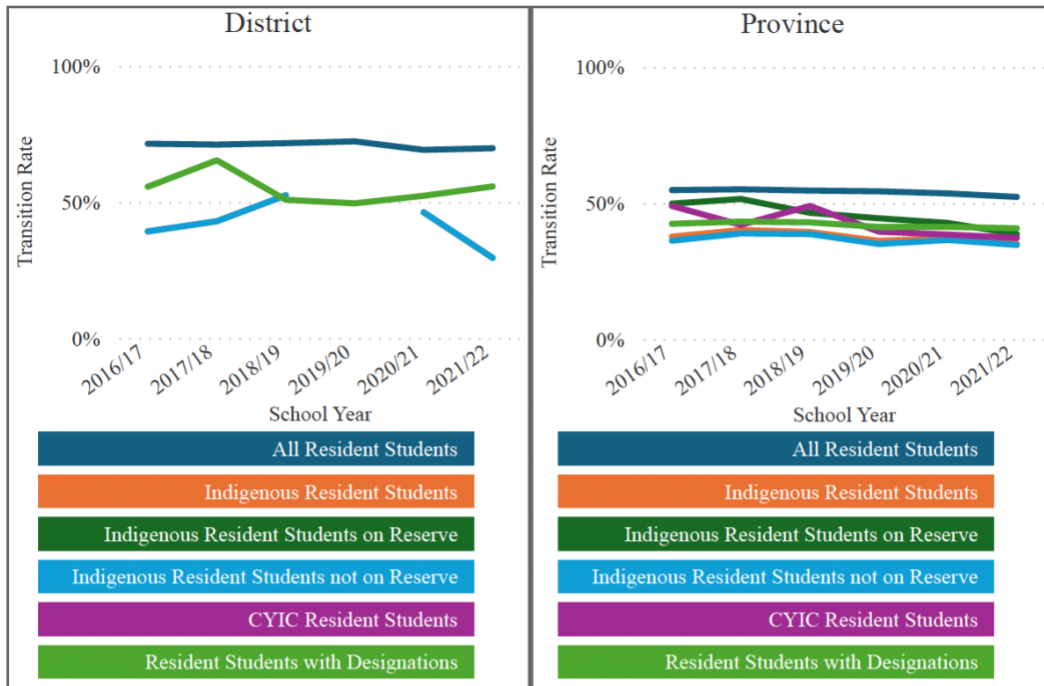
Graduation rates in the district are high overall and are showing an improvement. However, the disaggregated data demonstrates that priority populations are not graduating at the same rate as their peers. This trend aligns with other data in this report where there are gaps between the achievement of the overall student population and priority populations, particularly CYIC and Indigenous learners.

Although there is a gap, there is an upward trend in the data that demonstrates that graduation rates are increasing for priority populations indicating that the strategies being employed by district support and school teams taking a personalized approach to learners in these priority populations is taking effect. Close monitoring of this trend will be required to determine how current strategies continue to work, as the small populations can greatly affect the data trends.

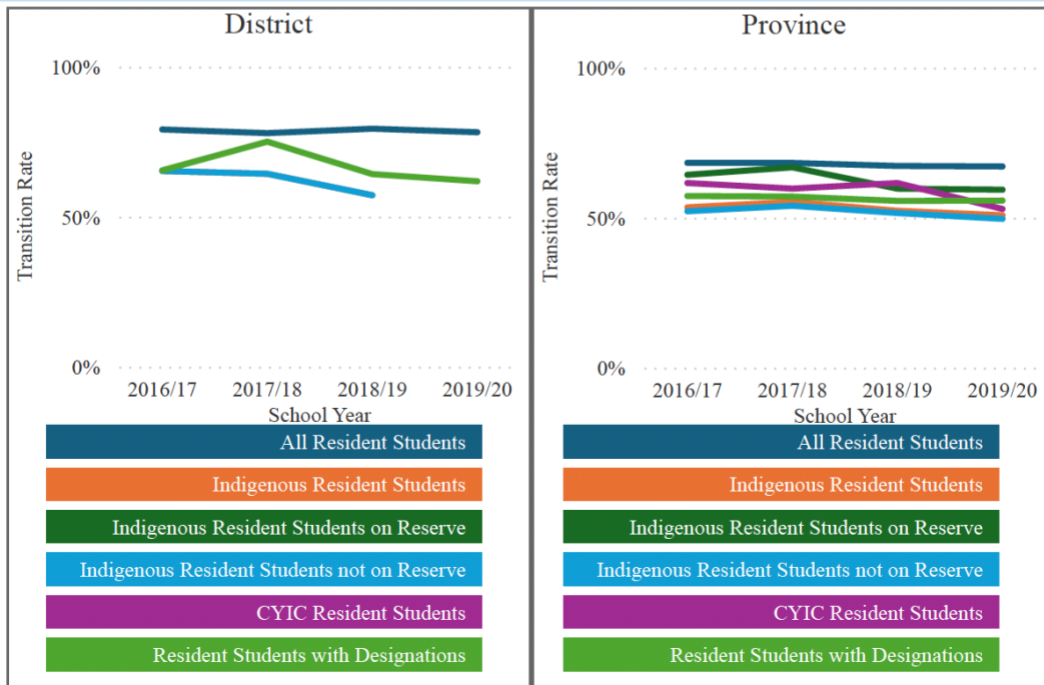
Educational Outcome 5: Life and Career Core Competencies

Measure 5.1: Post-Secondary Transitions

Transition Rate to BC Public PSI (Immediate)



Transition Rate to BC Public PSI (Within 3 Years)



Analysis and Interpretation

Outcome 5: Post-Secondary Transitions

Learners in SD38 transition to post-secondary at a rate higher than the provincial average, which is in line with high graduation rates and overall high achievement. There are, however, persistent gaps between the overall student population and the priority populations.

Section B: Moving Forward

Planning and Adjusting for Continuous Improvement

Looking Back on the Year: Effectiveness of Implemented Strategies

Key strategies implemented this year include:

- Finalization of Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks to inform instruction in Literacy and Numeracy K-12 posted on our internal Sharepoint (see images as examples) and supporting videos on our YouTube pages for [Literacy](#) and [Numeracy](#).

Pillars of Literacy Gr 3-5

The pillars represent the different components of literacy that should be a part of our Gr. 3-5 classrooms. Each pillar plays an important role in nurturing students' growth as readers, writers, thinkers and communicators. ALL of the pillars should be visible in a robust literacy program. The pillars are also connected and overlapping. Many of the literacy learning experiences in our classrooms provide opportunities to work with more than one pillar at a time. Click each pillar to link to a document with ideas and assessment.

Gr 3-5 Example of Pillars of Literacy

Mathematics and Numeracy

SD38 Numeracy Foundations Framework

This SD38 Numeracy Foundations Framework is designed to support the District Strategic Plan's priority of nurturing inspired numerate learners. Part of the strategic plan is developing a K-12 Numeracy Vision and Framework for our district. The Richmond School District Vision statement is:

Numeracy is the application of mathematics in contextual situations in our daily lives to help us understand more about ourselves, others, communities, and the world around us.

"The Richmond School District's Vision for Numeracy supports the development of a shared understanding of the relationship between numeracy and mathematics so that students experience numeracy across all areas of learning. By using numeracy to access and deepen understanding of content, students learn how to solve problems, explore ideas and issues and make informed decisions. All learners will have opportunities to develop numeracy so that they can better understand themselves and the world around them."

Click the below images or captions to access the Numeracy Foundations materials for your grade(s).

Example of Numeracy Foundations

- Beginning phase of implementation of the frameworks in schools and through professional learning
- Focused conversations in schools with support teams for Indigenous learners and CYIC to develop and maintain support plans that address academic success and wellbeing, for example a 15-year-old Indigenous student whose mother is in the Downtown Eastside and whose foster parents are emotionally absent requires daily connection with the support team. This daily connection is helping him come to school and get support to find a pathway to graduation that will include a 13th year and enrol in a trades program. This student requires integrated, school, district and community support and is an example of how the integration will support a student into a positive trajectory.



Example of Data Dashboard

Development of a data dashboard for school leaders to be able to easily access a wide variety of data sources and disaggregate data for priority populations .

- The SD38 2020-2025 strategic plan outlines key priorities that support Equity in Action and creating equity of opportunity for Indigenous learners. Strategic Priority 2 of the Strategic Plan is Equity and Inclusion, including two main goals:
 - District learning environments are equitable and inclusive.
 - The district actively addresses unconscious bias and privilege, systemic discrimination and marginalization based on factors such as ability, colour, cultural identity, gender, gender identity, Indigeneity, political beliefs, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status.

District successes, aligned with the Equity in Action report, are summarized as follows:

- Policy and Governance
 - One of the recommendations in this area was to create new policies and revise older policies with Indigenous communities, families, and students in mind. In 2022/2023, the district's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee developed a [policy checklist](#) to review existing policies and if needed, develop new policies through a lens of equity and inclusion.
 - Noted in both the Strategic Plan and the Policy and Governance section of the Equity in Action report is a commitment to the recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff. In 2021, the district was approved for a BC Human Rights Tribunal Special Program which allows for the preferential hiring of teachers and associated professionals who self-identify as Indigenous.
 - The district has been able to act upon this specific recommendation with the hiring of staff new to the Indigenous Success Team and Teacher Consultant Team over the past 2 years resulting in four of six teachers being of Indigenous ancestry.
 - A key recommendation of note in this quadrant is that the Richmond School District and the Board of Education work to build a reciprocal relationship with the Musqueam First Nation. There continue to be opportunities to engage with the Musqueam First Nation, with a presence at school and district events, including:
 - having Musqueam members present at the September 2023 district professional development day
 - providing the traditional welcome at last year's district-wide Student Voice event
 - leading the annual Indigenous Achievement Ceremony in May
 - In 2023/24, the district transitioned from an Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement Committee (AEEAC) which was aligned with the last Enhancement Agreement (2017 – 2022) to an Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC), which was aligned with the Equity in Action report. Both the AEEAC and IEAC had representation from multiple stakeholders, including parents and members of Musqueam First Nation.
- Learning Environment
 - Two Indigenous gathering spaces were previously in place (Cambie Secondary and Grauer Elementary) and there was a recommendation in the Equity in Action report to



expand the number of Indigenous Gathering Spaces for Indigenous students across the district.

- In 2022/23, the Board of Education approved, with dedicated funding, the development of two additional gathering spaces for Indigenous students. In 2023/24, two new locations were identified (Boyd Secondary and Kidd Elementary) and

curated with the support of Facilities Services working with the Indigenous Success Team as an example of alignment between departments and alignment of resources in support of common goals.

- As part of the Equity in Action project, interviews with students indicated that having a dedicated gathering space has made them feel valued and allowed them a safe and reliable space where they can connect with other Indigenous students across



Indigenous Gathering Spaces

the District, building a larger sense of community.

- The relatively small population of Indigenous students across the District means that some Indigenous students may feel isolated in their individual schools. Many friendships between Indigenous students have developed because of the opportunity to gather, and students report that regular connection with each other, Elders and the cultural teachers with whom they meet in these spaces is very important to their wellness.
- The district continues to encourage and support the visual representation of Indigenous cultures in facilities and schools. In 2022/23, framing of the Coast Salish Weave collection has been completed and has been added to the District Resource Centre. In 2023/24, two mobile wooden carts were built to help transport the collection between schools, accompanied by a robust teacher's guide as well as laser cut Coast Salish shapes. The collection was highlighted at

the September 2024 Indigenous focused non-instructional day. These carts have travelled to all secondary schools for students to access as a learning resources in varied curricular areas and to directly support learning within the Indigenous Graduation required courses. The mobile carts have also been accessed by approximately 50% of the district's Elementary schools and the intention is to have them travel this upcoming year to the remaining schools in the district. The art serves to learn about local Indigenous culture, appreciation, art techniques and history.

- As a district, the Indigenous Success Team (comprised of four teachers and one educational assistant) continues to ensure that Indigenous students have access to Elders and Knowledge Keepers from a variety of Nations and are representatives of the diversity of our Indigenous Students. As many students are considered Urban Indigenous these connections have allowed students to connect authentically with their inherent cultures, language and traditions.
- Last year, the Indigenous Success Team engaged 15 students in Grades 5 – 7 across the district in an overnight trip to Cheakamus Outdoor Education Centre. This



Indigenous Mural at Spul'u'kwuks



Salish Weave Collection

overnight experience provided students an opportunity to engage in cultural activities from a place of land-based learning and reinforce a sense of community as well as culture among Indigenous learners and Indigenous Success teachers. This initiative is tentatively scheduled to occur every two years to support the participation of all Indigenous students currently in Grade 6 and younger during their elementary schooling years.

- Pedagogical Core
 - Providing professional learning opportunities that promote equity, anti-racism, trauma informed practices, and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

Peoples Act in classroom practice is a key recommendation in the Equity in Action report.

- Last year, Teacher Consultants in Indigenous Education provided First Peoples Principles of Learning sessions on professional development days as well as multiple Indigenous-themed book clubs for staff.

- The district’s Learning Services department, with support from the Teacher-Librarian Coordinator and Indigenous teacher consultants, started to develop and explore how best to shelve Indigenous books and stories in schools’ Library Learning Commons. This has become known as the Indigenous Peoples’ Collection project. The project is an example of decolonizing Indigenous collections as the current library organization method of the Dewey Decimal System is not conducive to accessing Indigenous Authors, stories, culture and spirituality. Though in early stages, this project is one that has uplifted Indigenous literature and voices in a pilot elementary and secondary school setting.
- Learning Services staff supported implementation of the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement for all secondary students beginning in the 2023-2024 school year.
 - Implementation of the two Grade 12 courses will be consistent for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school years, and will be reviewed and consideration given for continuation, expansion or alternate options in the years following.
 - Consistent district-wide implementation further allows for comprehensive and cohesive implementation support. Learning Services staff, including teacher consultants for Indigenous Success, Equity and Inclusion and Literacy, and the DRC Coordinator, worked collaboratively to support teachers, beginning in January 2023, to prepare for implementation in September 2023.
 - Collaboration and planning days continued to be offered for professional learning specific to these courses.
- To start the 2023-2024 school year, September 22nd was designated as a non-instructional day, with a specific focus on Indigenous learning for all staff in the district, including both educators and non-education employees. Dr. Dustin Louie led a session on decolonizing education by integrating Indigenous world views and perspectives into the learning organization.
- The district is connected to parents and families through the continued outreach of the Indigenous Success Team, with teachers and a support worker who regularly connect with students and their caregivers.
- Learning Profile
 - Recognizing the need for district and school-based staff to regularly review the progress, assessment data and transitions of Indigenous students, the district developed data dashboards for school administrators in 2023/24. Utilizing this data will be an overarching goal to identify areas of growth that support Indigenous learners’ achievement, connection and belonging, as well as transitions.
 - Over the past two years, there was re-establishment of the k̓w̓əməy̓təm program in schools. As part of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, schools have



Non-Instructional Day September 2024

been encouraged to have a volunteer k̓w̓əm̓əy̓t̓əm (meaning “raise a child” in hən̓q̓əmi̓n̓əm) on staff. The role is intended to increase a sense of belonging at school for Indigenous students through connections to the greater school community. This role is voluntary and is meant to complement the work of the Indigenous Success Team. While the role will depend on context, and is evolving, k̓w̓əm̓əy̓t̓əm will be a friendly face in the halls, and a person who provides encouragement or a safe space if necessary. Currently, 18 schools have identified a staff member to take on this k̓w̓əm̓əy̓t̓əm role, and we will look to grow this in the coming year and monitor its success by collecting student voice data.

Existing and/or Emerging Areas for Growth

The district has identified existing and emerging areas for growth based on feedback from the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, Aboriginal How Are We Doing Report, and a range of data including the Student Learning Survey, FSA, Report Cards, as well as anecdotal student and parent testimonials.

These areas of growth include:

- improving Indigenous student academic outcomes, while not explicitly mentioned in the district’s strategic plan, continues to be an area of focus for district and school staff and will be specifically noted in the next strategic plan which will be under development later this year.
- the strategic plan supports improving Indigenous learner outcomes through a focus on enhancing student connection and a sense of belonging to schools, while supporting teachers in building their capacity in understanding Truth and Reconciliation for the purpose of equity for Indigenous learners.
- in 2023/24, initial steps were taken on highlighting Indigenous learners in each secondary school, by establishing regular meetings between school teams and the district’s Indigenous Success Team to support the needs of individual students with respect to connection, belonging, and academic success.
- evidence in the Student Learning Survey (SLS) demonstrates Indigenous students are feeling more welcome and connected in our schools indicating that the focus on belonging is making a difference. Next steps will include ensuring an impact is also made in narrowing the academic achievement gaps.
- The District is looking forward to establishing the Indigenous Education Council and furthering the work of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee.

Ongoing Strategic Engagement

The district is committed to ongoing strategic engagement with Indigenous students, families, community organizations, and Musqueam First Nation. The transition to a formalized Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC) in 2023/24 built upon the goals outlined in the most recent Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) along with the Equity in Action report recommendations.

The IEAC supports the implementation of the approved recommendations of the Equity in Action report. This includes continued commitment to the goals of belonging, reconciliation through understanding, First Peoples Principles of Learning and holistic wellness and achievement originally shared through the Enhancement Agreement.

The IEAC met three times during the school year and reported to the Board of Education on a regular basis regarding the district's progress with the recommendations outlined in the Equity in Action report, in alignment with the Board's strategic priorities. This includes:

- Providing feedback and guidance around issues and priorities related to initiatives, supports and services for Indigenous students as reflected in the Equity in Action report.
- Providing feedback and input regarding key actions in implementation of the recommendations of the Equity In Action report.
- Seeking and sharing feedback from respective stakeholder groups.

Membership on the IEAC included:

- District staff including members of the Indigenous Success Team, Teacher Consultants for Indigenous Education, an Assistant Superintendent, Director of Instruction, Trustees, and District Administrator connected to Indigenous Education
- Partner group representatives including Musqueam Nation, an Indigenous Parent/Caregiver, Indigenous students, as well as each employee group

At each IEAC meeting, district as well as Indigenous Success Team updates were provided to members. This included information about district gathering spaces, Indigenous community nights, field trip opportunities for students, cultural connections for students, professional development updates, as well as updates regarding Feeding Futures and the Student and Family Affordability Fund, for which there was dedicated funds for Indigenous students.

As part of this engagement, the following issues were raised:

- importance of maintaining a connection between the AEEA and Equity in Action with respect to foundational goals
- identify spaces where students could access homework support after school, in both district and community sites
- requests for further clarity regarding Bill 40 amendments to the BC School Act
- queries about level of support provided to Indigenous students in secondary schools
- feedback about specific Equity in Action recommendations that require further attention

Issues raised will continue to shape practices that center Indigenous voices and inform strategies that support positive outcomes for students and a sense of connection and belonging for families.

The IEAC formalized a working relationship between members as the district is committed to ongoing collaboration with Musqueam First Nation and respected rightsholders with the goal of establishing an Indigenous Education Council (IEC) for 2024/25.

Our district is currently engaging with Aspire Richmond, Inclusion BC, Community Living BC, and Ministry of Children and Family Development – Children and Youth with Support Needs through committee work, special projects, and/or ongoing collaboration meetings. These collaborative relationships help to inform our district supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities. One of our priorities with

community partners continues to be supporting meaningful transitions for youth from secondary school into adulthood through ongoing parent and caregiver information evenings, co-hosted community information evenings, and supported work experiences for students with disabilities.

To better support Children and Youth in Care the district engages with organizations in the following ways;

- monthly meetings with the Complex Youth Table (chaired by a Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Operations Lead), where there are ongoing discussions about how to best support children/youth brought forward, including CYIC; there is representation from VCH, Ministry of Children and Families (MCFD), RCMP, and the district at this monthly
- The district typically connects with MCFD 2 two to three times a year as part of engagement that supports CYIC
- In May 2024, the district provided a letter of support for a Situation Table to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
 - potentially, the Complex Youth Table will transition to this Situation Table, which will support CYIC
 - Situation Table will enable Richmond’s front-line service providers to proactively identify vulnerable people and families at imminent risk of harm or victimization and rapidly connect them to services before they experience a negative or traumatic event

Additional engagement opportunities with education partners occur through a variety of channels;

- The Board’s advisory committees which are comprised of members from each education partner group. For example, members of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee provide feedback on progress in actions in Strategic Priority 2, Equity and Inclusion.
- The Board of Education meets annually with education partners to review progress on the strategic plan and gather feedback from each education partner group. This feedback is woven into operational plans for the coming year.

Adjustment and Adaptations: Next Steps

Next year, the district plans to address the following emerging areas for growth:

- Literacy
- Numeracy and Mathematics
- Learners feeling welcome, safe and connected
- Narrowing the gaps between priority populations and all learners

To address these areas for growth the following strategies are being implemented:

- Literacy and Numeracy support blocks in secondary and TTOC release time in elementary to build teacher capacity

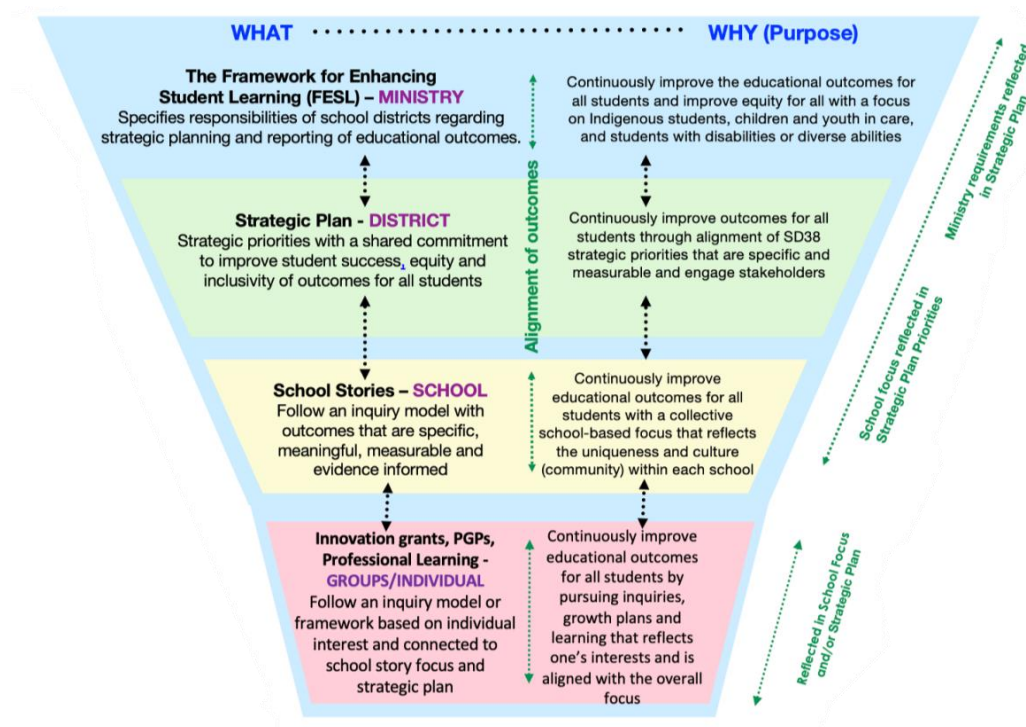
- Timetables reviewed by Principals to ensure enough Literacy and Numeracy is being taught each day
- Methods to collect district data about learners' feelings of being welcome, safe and connected at school to triangulate with provincial data
- Full implementation of Pillars of Literacy and Numeracy Foundations
- School Plans focused on Literacy and/or Numeracy and/or student wellbeing that are evidenced by school-based, district-based and provincial level data such as this linked example entitled ["Letting the Data Guide Us"](#) from an elementary school.
- Explore the implementation of grad coaches for Indigenous students in secondary schools
- Development of a district tool to gather and disaggregate wellbeing and belonging data

The District will continue with strategies that are demonstrating success such as:

- Targeted wrap around planning and case management for CYIC and Indigenous learners with a focus on narrowing the gaps and leveraging increased feelings of belonging to positively affect academic achievement
- Wider implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy frameworks that have been developed.

Alignment for Successful Implementation

The district's approach to overall alignment can be captured in the diagram shared in the introduction, which along with consistent articulation of the Board's strategic priorities helps leaders and employees connect their work to the bigger picture and this helps create cohesion and alignment:



The district, with the support of the Richmond Teachers Association is re-allocating existing resources to support the full implementation of Literacy and Numeracy frameworks this coming year specifically by using remedy funds to provide staffing to schools to support time to build capacity.

Through the development of a data dashboard school plans are becoming more aligned with the data available so that the school plans are responsive to all the information that is available through school, district and provincial data. Student voice data factors highly into school planning.

Sample timetables will also help teachers align their instruction to provide appropriate amounts of time focused on Literacy and Numeracy.

Conclusion

Richmond is a high performing district with a 96% graduation rate and learners who perform about the provincial average in almost all areas of learning. However, even with high achievement, there is still room for improvement and attention to equity gaps for priority populations including ELL.

There is some decline in achievement recently as evidenced by 2023/24 FSA data, and the district is committed to focusing on Literacy, Numeracy and wellbeing to return to or surpass previous achievement levels by building on any learning time lost throughout the pandemic and post-pandemic recovery years.

A consistent focus on the wellbeing, connectedness and belonging of Indigenous and CYIC learners is beginning to make a difference such that the focus can expand to include academic achievement.

During this academic year the Board of Education and senior staff will engage education partners in reviewing, assessing, and developing the next strategic plan. We will build on a strong foundation of academic excellence and continually strive to reduce learning and achievement gaps for priority populations including ELL. At the same time we will maintain our focus on improving student and staff wellbeing for the benefit of all.