



Burnaby Schools
Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement
2014 - 2019



Ministry of
Education



MESSAGES FROM

THE BURNABY BOARD OF EDUCATION

On behalf of the Burnaby Board of Education, I am delighted to present to you the District's second Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement. A two-year labour of love, it was, for me, a great privilege to be a part of the Working Group, and to see first-hand how a community can come together as one for the well-being of our students.

There are so many groups that impact Aboriginal Education in Burnaby, and they each lent their voices to an extensive process of engaged consultation. Using diverse methods to gather input, I was impressed with how respectfully staff listened to grasp a higher understanding of the unique educational challenges faced by our Aboriginal students. The result of this process, this agreement, outlines enhanced ways to address their needs and our commitment to support academic success. This thorough collaboration illustrated that we are indeed, *Stronger Together*.

The Board perceives this Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement as a framework, acknowledging that we will continue to build upon it, and adapt it, as the needs of our learners might change. We wish to thank all of our partners in education for their involvement. Your thoughtful guidance has shaped this agreement to be a true reflection of how the community wishes education to progress in Burnaby, so that students of Aboriginal ancestry have the opportunity to maximize their full potential.



Baljinder Narang, Chair
Burnaby Board of Education

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

I am pleased to be signing the second Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement in the Burnaby School District entitled, *Stronger Together*. It encapsulates the collaborative process of two years of consultation with all partners within our community. Our intention is that this agreement, which is a living document, becomes part of the fabric of the Burnaby School District and the greater community. We believe that all members of the Burnaby Schools community play a part in ensuring success for our students of Aboriginal ancestry. Further, I believe that teaching traditional Aboriginal understandings has value for all District learners.

Thank you to the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Working Group, the Ministry of Education and all of our partners who have come together in partnership to strengthen our community. We look forward to continuing the conversation of how best to enhance programming for Aboriginal students in Burnaby Schools through the life of this agreement.



Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO
Burnaby School District

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We thank and honour the contributions of all students, staff, parents and community partners that helped make Burnaby Schools' second Enhancement Agreement a reality. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the efforts of our Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Working Group which worked behind the scenes to process the information gathered through focus groups, community gatherings and parent surveys, and helped establish themes from that information. This group represents the collaborative participation of all willing stakeholders from within Burnaby Schools.

Community Partners:

Ron Johnston, Director, Office of Indigenous Education, Faculty of Education,
Simon Fraser University

Rebekah Mahaffey, Social Planner, City of Burnaby

Sanya Pleshakov, Program Coordinator, Burnaby Village Museum

The North Fraser Métis Association

School District Partners:

Kevin Brandt, Director of Instruction, Burnaby School District

Marjean Brown, Teacher, Burnaby Teachers' Association Representative

Brandon Curr, District Vice Principal, Aboriginal Education, Burnaby School District

Lorelei Lyons, Aboriginal Youth and Family Worker, CUPE Representative

Wanda Mitchell, Director of Instruction, Burnaby School District

Baljinder Narang, Chair, Board of Education, Burnaby School District

Ben Pare, Literacy Consultant, Burnaby School District

Roberta Price, Elder

David Starr, Principal, Burnaby Principals' and Vice Principals' Association Representative

PREAMBLE

The Burnaby School District acknowledges and thanks the Coast Salish Nations of Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish on whose traditional territories we teach, learn and live. The intention of this second agreement is to continue with the strong foundation laid by the first enhancement agreement entitled *Aboriginal Voices: Creating Our Future* by continuing to support the personal and academic successes of our students of Aboriginal Ancestry. This second agreement, entitled *Stronger Together*, marks a continuation of the collaborative partnership between all stakeholders within Burnaby Schools that seeks to promote mutual respect, common understanding, inclusion and collective ownership.

This five-year agreement highlights key areas of focus in regards to our students of Aboriginal ancestry. After extensive consultation via community gatherings, student focus groups and parent surveys, three focus areas emerged. The three areas of focus are inextricably linked to one another, and as such, we recognize that the focus must be centred on the development of the whole individual. Cultural development, social emotional development and academics must be interwoven to ensure the success of all students of Aboriginal ancestry in Burnaby Schools. This interwoven approach requires our students to walk competently and confidently in the modern, urbanized world in which Burnaby is situated. With that in mind, our areas of focus are student achievement, culture and sense of self, and community connectedness and belonging. Ongoing monitoring and tracking of these three areas will guide the development and implementation of initiatives and programs that will be for the benefit of all students of Aboriginal ancestry within Burnaby Schools.



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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In order to ensure ongoing success for our students, we must take a critical approach to reflecting on our progress thus far and our ongoing progress in the future. As such, the following question has been in the forefront over the course of our data collection period:

What is going on for our learners?

This question will continue to be in the forefront as we assess programming and initiatives aimed at supporting success for students of Aboriginal ancestry. This question will be laced within the following guiding principles:

- **Collective Ownership**

A culture of collective ownership is guided by a shared belief that the primary responsibility of every member of the community is to ensure high levels of learning for every student of Aboriginal ancestry (Buffum, Mattos and Weber, 2012). Every member of the Burnaby Schools community plays a role in determining the level of success for each student of Aboriginal ancestry. A deep understanding of our shared history as Canadians and our shared histories' contemporary contexts are crucial in creating responsive learning environments for our students of Aboriginal ancestry.

- **Walking in Two Worlds**

Walking in two worlds is the ability of our children to be competent in their traditional realm, as well as the urbanized realm in which the community of Burnaby is situated. From 1961 to 2006, the urban Aboriginal population has grown from 13% of the Aboriginal population within Canada to 53% (Norris and Clatworthy, 2011). This trend, which is expected to continue, along with the fact that as of the year 2011, 28% of the Aboriginal population in Canada was under 14 years of age, requires us to provide a framework that supports every Aboriginal youth's chances of maximizing their personal potential, in both their cultural and contemporary worlds (Statistics Canada, 2011).

- **Focus on Learning**

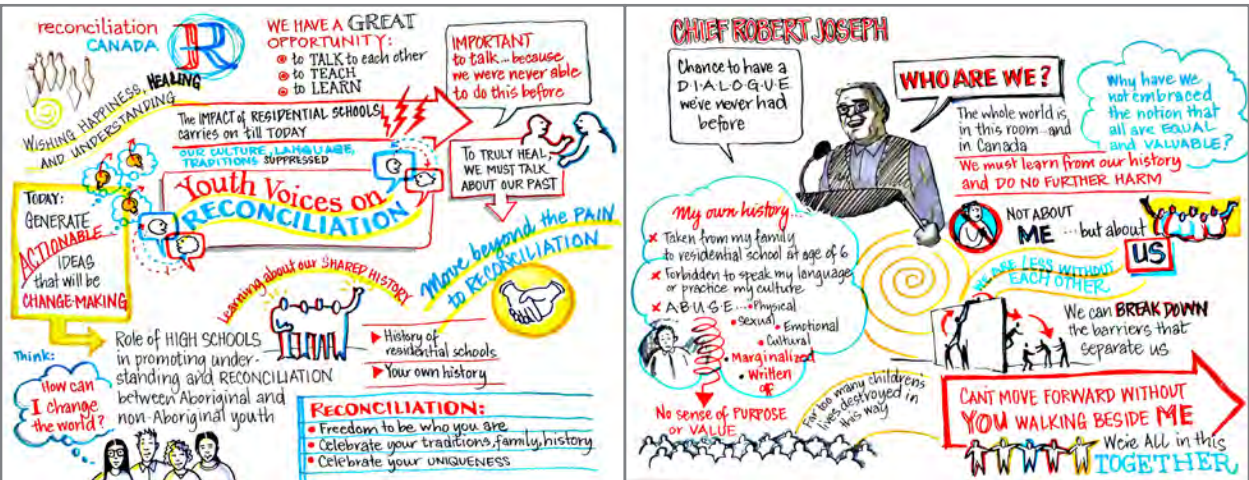
The First Nations Principles of Learning inform us that 'learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors.' Allowing all students to maximize their personal potential within the learning environment is one of the primary responsibilities of the Burnaby School District. The learning environment for our students of Aboriginal ancestry must be reflexive and reflective, as well as representative of Aboriginal peoples.

OUR JOURNEY

Since the signing of our first agreement in 2008, Aboriginal Education in Burnaby Schools has built a strong foundation from which to continue to build upon. Over the course of the 2013-2014 school year, we undertook the process of collecting information from parents, students, principals, teachers, support staff and other members of our community to get varied perspectives on how people feel about how we are supporting our students of Aboriginal ancestry. Beginning in 2012 to Fall 2014, we hosted eleven community gatherings with the focus of each gathering on our children’s experiences within Burnaby Schools. The gatherings were attended by students, parents, elders and staff. These rich discussions spiraled from each preceding meeting, with all shared perspectives collected for further analysis.

Along with the community gatherings, parents were provided with the opportunity to partake in four surveys. Staff were also provided with the opportunity to have their voices heard through three surveys. This information was also collected for further analysis.

All collected information was then provided to our Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Working Group, who worked behind the scenes processing and analysing the information. Through discussion and analysis at working group meetings, information was formulated into goal statements and objectives. These were then shared with community members at gatherings and through surveys for further feedback and discussion. Eventually it was determined that the goal statements encapsulated the sentiments of those that partook in the process, at which point the document was drafted and we held our Enhancement Agreement signing on November 6, 2014.



OVERVIEW

We used our first Enhancement Agreement as a starting point in establishing a basis for our second agreement. The Enhancement Agreement working group took the time to analyze the feedback on the first agreement, as well as the ongoing input on the new agreement. Through the analysis, three theme areas emerged:

- 1) Student Achievement
- 2) Culture and Sense of Self
- 3) Community Connectedness and Belonging

Each theme area has one goal attached to it that is similar to goals in the first agreement. The new goals have been reworked to encompass the guiding principles of this second agreement. Another focus of this agreement was to utilize readily accessible, meaningful data that can be tracked over time and speak to progress being made toward each goal. The data collected will assist in the design, delivery and maintenance of programs that will better meet the needs of our learners.

The working group also decided to leave out the third goal from the original agreement around students developing a healthy lifestyle based on medicine wheel teachings. Although this goal is important for all students, a method of tracking the progress toward this goal was not developed and remains a challenge due to the diversity of approaches to traditional practices amongst Aboriginal peoples that reside within the Burnaby area.

Our thinking around supporting Aboriginal students has evolved since the first agreement and will continue to evolve over the course of this second agreement. Due to these ongoing changes in thinking, we must look at this agreement as a living document, one that is flexible enough to change with our students' and community's changing needs. The signatures on this document represent a commitment to remaining cognizant to shifts in our students' needs and to work in partnership to ensure all Aboriginal students have the opportunity to maximize their full potential within Burnaby Schools.

GOALS

1) Student Achievement

To enhance academic achievement of all Aboriginal learners within the Burnaby School District.

Rationale

The intention of this goal is to increase the level of academic achievement of all Aboriginal learners within the Burnaby School District. The objectives focus on the core skills of early literacy and numeracy, which are foundational in laying the groundwork for enhanced educational outcomes throughout a learner's educational journey from Kindergarten through to Grade 12. It has been found that reading competence is directly related to educational attainment later in life (Statistics Canada, 2011). The focus on grade three reading results marks the point in which students begin to shift from learning to read, to reading to learn, and is also a marker for later school success (Hernandez, 2011).

Objectives	Performance Indicators
Increase Aboriginal student reading performance by the end of grade 3	Grade 3 performance standards data for end of grade 3
Increase Aboriginal student numeracy performance by the end of grade 3	Grade 3 performance standards data for end of grade 3
Increase reading comprehension grade K-7	Grade 7 performance standards data for end of grade 7
Increased reading comprehension scores from K-7	K-7 cohort tracking (Grade specific cohorts will be tracked yearly to monitor year to year progress)

Yearly Performance Targets

Baseline data will be collected in the first year. We expect to see incremental gains every year thereafter.



GOALS

2) Culture and Sense of Self

To increase Aboriginal learners' connection to the school community with a sense of place and belonging that supports and reflects Aboriginal cultural values and perspectives.

Rationale

A student's sense of acceptance into the school setting directly impacts their behaviour and educational outcomes (Osterman, 2000). As such, it is imperative that Aboriginal learners see themselves reflected and represented within their school setting. An Aboriginal student's cultural values may emphasize connectedness and interdependence, so the fostering of a strong sense of identity and self will support the students overall educational outcomes (Fryberg, et al, 2013).

Objectives	Indicators
Increased feelings of positive identity and sense of self	Positive personal and cultural identity competency data
Increased feelings of belonging within the school community	Student survey

Yearly Performance Targets

Baseline data will be collected in the first year. We expect to see incremental gains every year thereafter.



GOALS

3) Community Connectedness and Belonging

To increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal history, traditions and cultures for all learners, supported by the wider school and community.

Rationale

In order to create understanding that supports our Aboriginal learners, we must focus on local actions and understandings in this increasingly globalized environment. Diversity of approaches within our system will help support all learners in their educational journey, but these approaches must include the perspectives of Canada's Indigenous Peoples. As stated by Halbert and Kaser (2013), "We need to build curiosity about our history as well as increasing our knowledge of Indigenous principles of learning." It has also been noted that the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in learning outcomes, instructional methods and assessment results in positive outcomes for our Aboriginal students (Kanu, 2007).

Objectives	Performance Indicators
Increased Aboriginal content in all subject areas K-12	Number of requests for resources from DLRC Number of requests for classroom presentations by Aboriginal Resource Teachers
Increased number of students reporting that they are learning about Aboriginal peoples in school	Student satisfaction survey results grades 4, 7, 10 and 12

Yearly Performance Targets

Baseline data will be collected in the first year. We expect to see incremental gains every year thereafter.



LIST OF REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A: STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Student Achievement

To enhance academic achievement of all Aboriginal learners within the Burnaby School District.

Strategies:

- Targeted Reading Recovery for Aboriginal students
- Infusion of learning strategies into Circle Programs
- Focused literacy and numeracy instruction and intervention K-12

Culture and Sense of Self

Strategies:

- Development of a Visiting Elders Program
- Hosting of Aboriginal community gatherings that highlight traditional protocols

Community Connectedness and Belonging

Strategies:

- Aboriginal Education professional development workshops for all staff throughout the District
- Content development for K-12 classroom teachers



Stronger Together: Aboriginal Education in Burnaby Schools Enhancement Agreement 2014 - 2019

This agreement was developed collaboratively by the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Working Group

comprised of the official signatories outlined below.

The Enhancement Agreement Working Group sought input from all stakeholders in the District including parents, students, teachers, administrators and community partners to develop the goals and statements in the agreement.

It is a collaborative partnership centred around continued success for students of Aboriginal ancestry in Burnaby Schools.

We, the undersigned, recognize our shared responsibility to guide, honour and uphold the contents of this living agreement in the spirit of mutual respect and unity as signed on this 6th day of November, 2014 for the period ending November 5th, 2019.

Ministry of Education	Burnaby Board of Education, Chair	Burnaby School District, Superintendent of Schools/CEO
Parent Representative	Parent Representative	Student Representative
Burnaby Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association, President	Burnaby Teachers' Association, President	CUPE Local 379, President
North Fraser Meets Association	City of Burnaby, Community Witness	Simon Fraser University, Faculty of Education, Dean





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