



# Aboriginal Education Year End Report 2015-2016



*Photo by Cornelia Naylor, Burnaby Now*

# Introduction

This report on the progress of the current enhancement agreement must acknowledge the key events of this past year in the wider British Columbian and Canadian context. One such event is the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC was established out of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement in 2005. The TRC was comprised of Chief Commissioner Murray Sinclair, Dr. Marie Wilson, and Wilton Littlechild.

In terms of truth telling, the TRC collected 6200 statements at TRC national and regional events. They were video and audio recorded and will be housed at the National Research Centre on Indian Residential Schools at the University of Manitoba. Some can be viewed on the Truth and Reconciliation website ([www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)), a useful resource for learning more about projects that are focused on reconciliation for individuals, groups and communities.

The work of the TRC was completed in June of 2014 with the release of ninety recommendations or Calls to Action. The following Calls to Action are particularly relevant for public schools:

62) We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students.

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 12 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.

These Calls to Action, endorsed by trustees, informed much of the progress that was made in Burnaby Schools with respect to our Enhancement Agreement goals.

In 2015-2016,  
**705** students self-identified as being  
of Aboriginal ancestry in Burnaby Schools.

- 430 Elementary Students
- 275 Secondary Students

Aboriginal students in Burnaby Schools  
represent approximately **3%**  
of the District's student population.

# Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement 2014-19: Progress Review

As we move forward with our second Enhancement Agreement and work toward many of the elements contained within the TRC recommendations, we acknowledge the work done to improve Aboriginal student success in Burnaby, but continue to seek a system-wide approach based on collective ownership and shared understanding to increase the success rate of our students. In 2005-2006 our six-year completion rate was 33% for students of Aboriginal ancestry, but in 2014-2015 our six-year completion rate has improved to 58%. This still lags far behind the six-year completion rate of 86% for non-Aboriginal students within Burnaby schools. We plan to investigate why the large gap continues to exist and look for creative, research-based solutions that will support student success.

Aboriginal Education programs, services and strategies that were mobilized to achieve the goal are highlighted in tandem with the data collected and analyzed. These are discussed in the context of informing educational practices. The discussion also highlights progress in terms of movement from the baselines that were established last year.

## **GOAL: To enhance achievement of all Aboriginal learners within the Burnaby School District**

In this section, data and discussion is focused on Reading Comprehension as an indication of academic achievement. The intention of this goal is to focus on the core skills necessary for success in later years. Accordingly, at the elementary level, Aboriginal Education provides targeted Reading Recovery intervention to students referred by school-based teams. Reading Recovery is a preventative early literacy intervention aimed at reducing the number of children experiencing difficulties in literacy learning. For those students who have regular attendance and complete at least 16 weeks, the program is effective in improving literacy for four Aboriginal students (Grade 2) each year.

Reading comprehension is measured in grade 3, which marks a transition from “learning to read, to reading to learn” and again in Grade 7.

# Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement 2014-19: Progress Review

## Reading Comprehension ~ End of Grade 3 Performance Standards

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
<b>MODIFIED PROGRAM OR SLP</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>			
<b>NOT YET MEETING EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>20%</b>			
<b>MINIMALLY MEETING EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>33%</b>			
<b>MEETING OR EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>39%</b>			

## Reading Comprehension ~ End of Grade 7 Performance Standards

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
<b>MODIFIED PROGRAM OR SLP</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>22%</b>			
<b>NOT YET MEETING EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>			
<b>MINIMALLY MEETING EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>30%</b>			
<b>MEETING OR EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>33%</b>			

In reviewing the 2015-2016 year-end grade 3 performance standard data for reading comprehension in comparison to our baseline data collected the year before, we see the percentage of students on a modified program remain the same. At the end of Grade 3 for the past year, 72% of our students are meeting expectations either minimally, fully or exceeding. This is a slight increase from last year's baseline data. We believe that our focus on targeted reading recovery to Aboriginal students, as well as the District's focus on early reading intervention may have contributed to this increase.

When reviewing the year-end Grade 7 performance standard data for reading comprehension, we see the percentage of students who are fully meeting to exceeding expectations at 63%, which is also a slight increase, but not a significant one given the smaller number of students within the cohort. The area for further investigation is the percentage of students who are on a modified program or student learning plan (SLP) at the end of Grade 7. We continue to investigate why we see such a large increase in the number of students who are on modified programs or SLP's, given that the number of students on these pathways is significantly lower at the end of Grade 3.

# Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement 2014-19: Progress Review

## Reading Comprehension ~ Cohort Tracking Grades 2-7

### NUMBER OF STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

2015-2016	01	02	03	04	05	06	07
Gr 7	29	37		26		24	33
Gr 6	28		33		32	31	
Gr 5		21		23	19		
Gr 4	28		26	38			
Gr 3		36	39				
Gr 2	38	27					

We will monitor our students' reading comprehension levels annually in all elementary grades through cohort tracking. This chart shows the percentage of students at each grade level that are fully meeting or exceeding expectations in reading comprehension and how each grade cohort has progressed through their time in Burnaby. There are many holes in the data due to years of job action where performance standard data was not communicated to the District Office. The goal of this review is to identify cohorts that may require further intervention. Although there are years missing in the data, the Grade 5 cohort from 2015-2016 is leading us to ask what is going on for that group of learners? We are currently looking at the data for this cohort more closely, as the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations is significantly lower than other grade level cohorts. We will investigate this further to determine if intervention is required.

# Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement 2014-19: Progress Review

At each secondary school in Burnaby, Aboriginal students have access to an Aboriginal Success Teacher, who is responsible for supporting students in regards to their academic achievement. The Success Teachers identified the following inquiry questions as key to how they view their role of supporting the academic achievement for Aboriginal learners in Burnaby schools:

How can we create a stronger connection between our learners and the school?

- How can we connect to, identify with, curriculum using an inquiry-based course?
- How can we support and encourage a goal of academic excellence? How can we shift the perspective (stigma) attached to failure?
- Are Aboriginal students being streamed or targeted for support programs inappropriately?

The Success Teachers identified the following strategies as particularly effective:

- "Find out the story behind our Aboriginal learners before they come to high school."
- "Consistency of relationships is so important. I believe we make a difference everyday as our students know we are here for them. They know they are cared about. That makes all the difference."
- "Establish trust and maintain alliances with youth and their families."
- "Staying constantly in contact with many students (attachment/community piece). Coordinating efforts with the Youth and Family worker to address student needs. There are students who will be successful whether I'm there or not."
- "Established tutorial community where students work on assignments. Success support after school. Parent meetings."
- "Constant monitoring and follow up discussions with core and elective teachers. One-on-one check-ins during the month to ensure their social-emotional well-being is being addressed. Graduation transition, fees, part-time job hunting, doctor prescriptions, graduation, school leaving criteria. Additional academic support such as completing tests and projects and exam preparation."

## **GOAL: 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**

Last year the first of this cohort was surveyed when they were in Grade 7 and is intended to determine if there is a correlation between feelings of belonging and connectedness to exposure to Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives in the context of their classroom experience. The 2014-2015 cohort is now in Grade 8 and members of the Aboriginal Education team surveyed 16 Aboriginal students across the high schools in Burnaby. The following chart shows changes of feelings of belonging between Grade 7 and Grade 8, although a large sample size would create great reliability in the data.

## “Belonging” within School & Community ~ Longitudinal Cohort Study: Grade 7 & 8 Survey Results Compared

2014-15 / <b>2015-16</b>	2014-15 / <b>2015-16</b>	2014-15 / <b>2015-16</b>	2014-15 / <b>2015-16</b>
<b>1) I like to come to school everyday</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>0%</b>	17.24% / <b>43.75%</b>	68.97% / <b>50%</b>	13.79% / <b>6.25%</b>
<b>2) At my school we acknowledge traditional territory at special events and assemblies</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>6.25%</b>	13.79% / <b>18.75%</b>	31.03% / <b>25%</b>	55.17% / <b>50%</b>
<b>3) My school is welcoming</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>6.25%</b>	0% / <b>0%</b>	37.93% / <b>43.75%</b>	62.97% / <b>50%</b>
<b>4) My school is like a family</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
10.34% / <b>0%</b>	34.38% / <b>50%</b>	37.93% / <b>43.75%</b>	17.24% / <b>6.25%</b>
<b>5) At my school, Aboriginal history, story and perspective are part of our classroom learning</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
3.45% / <b>12.5%</b>	58.62% / <b>62.5%</b>	31.03% / <b>25%</b>	6.9% / <b>0%</b>
<b>6) People care about each other at my school</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>0%</b>	10.34% / <b>12.5%</b>	58.62% / <b>56.25%</b>	31.03% / <b>31.25%</b>
<b>7) I feel safe at my school</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>6.25%</b>	3.57% / <b>12.5%</b>	28.57% / <b>31.25%</b>	67.86% / <b>50%</b>
<b>8) At my school, there is a teacher or another adult who really cares about me</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>0%</b>	10.34% / <b>14%</b>	31.03% / <b>33%</b>	58.62% / <b>52%</b>
<b>9) At my school, there is a teacher or another adult who tells me when I do a good job</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>12.5%</b>	10.34% / <b>6.25%</b>	37.93% / <b>50%</b>	51.72% / <b>31.25%</b>
<b>10) At my school, one or more adults believe I will be successful when I grow up</b> (Same group - last year/this year)			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
0% / <b>0%</b>	10.34% / <b>25%</b>	51.72% / <b>50%</b>	37.93% / <b>25%</b>



The Aboriginal Education Programs, services and strategies that are mobilized for this particular goal includes four elementary Aboriginal Education Resource teachers who provide lessons to classes of students, collaborative approaches to learning about Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives and enhanced support to Aboriginal families and Aboriginal students. Some of the inquiry-based questions asked by these teachers are:

- How do we support the emotional and spiritual health of our Aboriginal learners?
- How can we successfully engage families in their child's education?
- What does the phrase "Truth and Reconciliation" mean for the different staff members involved in Aboriginal student learning?
- How do we move toward "Truth and Reconciliation" and who are we including in the plan?
- How can we reach Aboriginal students directly without creating any negative feelings or stigma?

The elementary Aboriginal Education teachers noted the following practices as particularly effective:

- Aboriginal family events at schools have seen an increase in Aboriginal parents coming into the school. The families have provided positive feedback on the importance of these events for learning their histories and cultures. Learn from these families by asking what their educational needs are.
- Collaborating with school staff to create an environment that welcomes and supports the Aboriginal community and this in turn supports the students. Infusing Aboriginal content into classroom teaching and learning.
- Providing space for Aboriginal families to build community based on their Aboriginal identities.
- Support the need to address social issues within their community.
- Communicate the successes and strengths of Aboriginal students in Burnaby schools.
- Having Aboriginal Education updates as part of school staff meeting.
- Work with small groups of Aboriginal students and infuse Aboriginal content into their inquiry projects.
- Collaborate with groups of teachers on whole school projects such as Aboriginal artists in residence who demonstrate carving (Aaron Nelson-Moody at Gilpin) or weaving (Annjeanette Dawson at Chaffey-Burke).

At the secondary level, Aboriginal Youth and Family Workers focus on establishing positive relationships with Aboriginal students and families through group activities, field trips, leadership development, cultural teachings, emotional support, connecting them with services, and providing safe spaces. Some of the key inquiry-based questions that the Youth and Family workers are asking are:

- How can we invite community members and elders into more classrooms?
- How can we provide continuity of supports?
- How can we support the students who are not as successful because of circumstances beyond their and their family's control?

The Youth and Family workers have noted the following as particularly effective practices:

- Field trips
- Health and wellness activities
- Girls groups
- Boys groups
- Truth and reconciliation events
- Cultural teachings around drumming and singing

These Aboriginal Education Programs, services and strategies provide key supports that are intended to improve the sense of belonging and place in the school and community. The following table shows the 2015-2016 cohort's responses regarding belonging and feelings of connectedness to people and curriculum in the schools.



## “Belonging” within School & Community ~ 2015-16 Grade 7 Survey Results

<b>1) I like to come to school everyday</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>5%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>2) At my school we acknowledge traditional territory at special events and assemblies</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>5%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>3) My school is welcoming</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>0%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>4) My school is like a family</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>10%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>5) At my school, Aboriginal history, story and perspective are part of our classroom learning</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>5%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>6) People care about each other at my school</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>0%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>7) I feel safe at my school</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>5%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>8) At my school, there is a teacher or another adult who really cares about me</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>0%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>9) At my school, there is a teacher or another adult who tells me when I do a good job</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>5%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>10) At my school, one or more adults believe I will be successful when I grow up</b>			
<i>Not at all true</i>	<i>A little true</i>	<i>Pretty much true</i>	<i>Very much true</i>
<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>52%</b>

# Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement 2014-19: Progress Review

## Aboriginal Enhancement Grants

As a new initiative for the 2015-2016 school year, Aboriginal Education provides schools the chance to apply for an Enhancement Grant to support the implementation of the goals of the Enhancement Agreement. The Enhancement Grants are intended to create collaborative partnerships between Aboriginal Education staff, our Aboriginal community, elders, knowledge keepers and schools to create more reflective learning environments for learners of Aboriginal ancestry, as well as increase understandings of Aboriginal history, story and perspective for all members of the Burnaby School District. Selected schools and projects from last school year included:

Chaffey-Burke Elementary	Coast Salish Weaving Artist in Residence Program
Maywood Community School	Aboriginal Family Literacy Program
Stride Community School	Aboriginal Family Gatherings
Rosser Elementary	Aboriginal Community Event
Taylor Park Elementary	3D Artifact Project
Westridge Elementary	Aboriginal Family Literacy Program
Windsor Elementary	Metis Traditional Dance Program
Burnaby Central Secondary	Community Drum Making Project with Elders
Moscrop Secondary	Truth and Reconciliation Day
Moscrop Secondary	Community Drum Making Project with Elders
Burnaby South Secondary	Artist in Residence Program

## Students Learning about Aboriginal Peoples, History and Perspectives

To determine students' perceptions about whether they are learning about Aboriginal perspectives in their classroom experiences, we are utilizing the satisfaction surveys as our measurement tool. The 2013-2014 data is our baseline data from the first year of the agreement. We do see a slight increase in the number of Aboriginal students who feel as though they are learning about Aboriginal perspectives at all grade levels, except for grade 12. The drop in grade 12 is a concerning one, but we hope that with the new curriculum we will see this percentage increase in years to come, along with every other year the satisfaction survey is taken. Our staff are working at all grade levels with colleagues on learning teams, as well as directly in classrooms to enhance the learning environment for our students. As we continue with this practice, we believe the percentage of students self-reporting should increase.

### Satisfaction Survey Results

2013-2014	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	2014-2015	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
GRADE 4	58%	55%	GRADE 04	63%	56%
GRADE 07	28%	19%	GRADE 07	35%	16%
GRADE 10	24%	39%	GRADE 10	38%	41%
GRADE 12	34%	23%	GRADE 12	16%	22%

### Promising Practises

Highlighted below, some of the projects and presentations that students in Burnaby schools had the chance to participate in over the course of the 2015-2016 school year:

Orange Shirt Day
Truth & Reconciliation Days
Aboriginal Education Week
Weaving in Aboriginal Perspectives in Math
Community Gatherings
Stronger Together Aboriginal Education Inquiry Team

# Conclusions and Future Directions



*Photo by Cornelia Naylor, Burnaby Now*



As we enter into our third year of our Enhancement Agreement we always remember the spirit in which the document was created. Throughout the consultation process it was made clear from all involved that this would be a living document. Through ongoing tracking and monitoring of the intended measurement indicators we will be able to make informed decisions about programming and initiatives intended to support our Aboriginal students within Burnaby Schools. This report shows increases in some areas, while areas for further inquiry and investigation as well. As we begin to pay closer attention to our data throughout the term of this agreement we hope that we become more thoughtful in our decision making and programming for students.

We have continued to go forward with an inclusive model of enhanced services to our Aboriginal learners within the Burnaby School District. Though we maintain the targeted nature of our services, we strongly believe that continuing to focus on increasing the knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal perspectives and worldviews for all people in the District will have a profound impact on the achievement of our learners of Aboriginal ancestry. The implementation of the redesigned curriculum is beginning to increase the presence of classrooms that are more reflective of our learners, but we acknowledge that much work exists in developing the shared understanding that is required to work within the redesigned curriculum. We look forward to continuing to work towards increasing the success of our Aboriginal learners, but also support students, colleagues and schools as we move forward with the implementation of the redesigned curriculum.

**We acknowledge the efforts of the Aboriginal Education  
District Team Members for 2015-2016**

WANDA MITCHELL **Assistant Superintendent**  
LYN DANIELS **District Vice-Principal**  
ELDER ROBERTA PRICE **District Elder**

BRANDI PRICE **Elementary Resource Teachers**  
DITTA CROSS  
MARY HOTOMANIE  
TRACY HEALY

KARLA GAMBLE **Secondary Resource Teachers**  
SHELLEY JANVIER

CAILIN LAU **Youth and Family Workers**  
CORRINA CHASE  
LORELEI LYONS  
MENDO BJARNASON

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