

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

2011 – 2016

SKWŪWŪ7MESH NATION
TSLEIL-WAUTUTH NATION
ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN NORTH VANCOUVER
NORTH VANCOUVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION




North Vancouver
School District
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SIGNATORIES

We, the undersigned, acknowledge and honour our collective responsibilities for the success of all students of Aboriginal ancestry attending school in the North Vancouver School District.

We agree that the terms of this North Vancouver Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement will provide direction for Aboriginal education in the school district for the period June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2016.

With respect and honour toward all Aboriginal peoples, we intend, with shared participation and wisdom, to work together in a mutually respectful manner to develop appropriate and meaningful programs for the benefit of all students of Aboriginal ancestry.


Sgwgwú7mesh Nation Chiefs and Council, Co-chair


BC Ministry of Education


Sgwgwú7mesh Nation Chiefs and Council, Co-chair


NVSD Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee


Islell-Waututh Nation Chiefs and Council


North Vancouver School District

PREAMBLE

The North Vancouver School District acknowledges and honours the history and culture of the ƧƧwƧw7mesh and Tšleil-Waututh First Nations in whose territory we reside. The purpose of this second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement is to continue a collaborative partnership to increase the academic and personal success of all students of Aboriginal ancestry in our district. This partnership includes the ƧƧwƧw7mesh and Tšleil-Waututh nations, all other North Vancouver Aboriginal peoples, the North Vancouver School District, and the Ministry of Education.

This five-year Agreement, extending from June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2016, recognizes both shared and individual areas of responsibility among schools, teachers, parents, communities, and governing bodies to meet the educational needs of students of Aboriginal ancestry. Commonly held values of mutual respect, collaboration, consensus building and inclusion, together with a continual focus on the goals and strategies that will lead to positive student growth and school success, informed the extensive consultation process that produced this Agreement. It is the pledge of all stakeholders to continue to work in partnership; to share decision-making and goal setting; and to develop and implement appropriate and strategic programs and initiatives for the benefit of all students of Aboriginal ancestry.

Page 3 acknowledges those individuals and organizations whose hard work gave rise to this Agreement. Pages 4 to 10 specify partners, house posts, guiding principles, overview, and goals. The appendix on pages 11 to 13 identifies some of the actions that will be taken to achieve these goals.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank all students, parents, school district staff, and community members who made the second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement a reality, and we extend a special thank you to the following members of the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council:

gut 'ilwaans, *William Bedard*, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Vanessa Campbell, Elder, *Skwxwú7mesh Nation*
Lyn Daniels, Aboriginal Parent
Nancy Deminger, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Synlha-liya, *Deanna George*, Elder, *Tsleil-Waututh Nation*
Caren Hall, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Michael Kee, Principal, *North Vancouver School District*
John Lewis, Superintendent, *North Vancouver School District*
Susan McLean, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Heather McTaggart, Principal, *North Vancouver School District*
Vida Petrasianas, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Joanne Robertson, Director of Instruction, *North Vancouver School District*
Susan Skinner, Trustee, *North Vancouver School District*
Unskahalote, *Carleen Thomas*, Department of Education, *Tsleil-Waututh Nation*
Marna Thomas, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Sarah Thomas, Tsleil-Waututh Parent
Gretchen Tolfo, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Rosalind Williams, Department of Education, *Skwxwú7mesh Nation*
Andy Wong, Teacher, *North Vancouver School District*
Tsnomot, *Brad Baker*, District Vice Principal, *North Vancouver School District*
Snitelwet iy Siyamiya, *Deborah Jacobs*, Department Head, *Skwxwú7mesh Nation*

PARTNERS

The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement of North Vancouver School District is acknowledged as a partnership with shared responsibility and opportunity to sincerely support students of Aboriginal ancestry achievement and success.

The Partner groups are:

Sḵw̓w̓ú7mesh Nation

Tsleil-Waututh Nation

All other Aboriginal peoples residing in North Vancouver

North Vancouver School District

BC Ministry of Education

The partners have a five-year commitment (June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2016) that will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the complementary goals in the North Vancouver School District Achievement Contract.

DEFINITIONS

Aboriginal	Embraces First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples
Caregiver	Includes but need not be limited to parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, adult siblings, step-parents, foster parents, and guardians
Community	Refers to those responsible for, and those contributing to the care, well-being, and advancement of Aboriginal youth
School Community	Refers to all those who are part of a school, including students, teachers, administrators, and support staff
Other Aboriginal Peoples	Refers to all off-reserve and urban Aboriginal peoples who are not affiliated with Sḵw̓w̓ú7mesh Nation or Tsleil-Waututh Nation

HOUSE POSTS

As the foundation of a stable home for people to live in, the term “house post” is significant in Aboriginal culture. Strong house posts form a solid structure that withstands the forces against it. In this Agreement, the following four house posts encompass all corners of the North Vancouver School District and form the foundation by which the district will achieve the goals outlined in this Agreement:

Implementing strategies that allow school staff to improve the success of students of Aboriginal ancestry

Enhancing all students’ understanding of and respect for Aboriginal culture, history, and language

Strengthening students of Aboriginal ancestry sense of belonging in school and boosting each student’s belief that he or she can be successful in school

Engaging Aboriginal communities, parents, and elders to participate in reaching the goals identified in this Agreement

Strong leadership shared by the North Vancouver School District, Sk̓w̓w̓w̓7mesh Nation, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, and other Aboriginal peoples in North Vancouver; respect for Aboriginal cultures and traditions in every classroom in the district; and a holistic approach to learning, will challenge and inspire North Vancouver students of Aboriginal ancestry to attempt higher and higher levels of achievement. Their success will be measured in their capacity to thrive in both traditional and modern worlds.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To help the above House Posts stand strong, the parties to this Agreement support the following principles:

Consultation		Communication
Collaboration		Consensus

Consultation means involving all stakeholders, including students, parents/caregivers, teachers, school community, and all Aboriginal peoples in the community. The Aboriginal community's leaders include elders, hereditary chiefs, and the band council/elected government.

It also embraces the value that students of Aboriginal ancestry are a meaningful part of, and are able to take pride in, an educational system in which their heritage and culture are reflected, celebrated, and respected.

Collaboration emphasizes partnerships and shared accountability.

Communication embraces the ideal of open dialogue that clearly communicates common goals and objectives.

It also entails that this Agreement continue as a "living" document, building common understanding among all stakeholders.

Consensus entails a process of formalizing and including the collective voice of all stakeholders.

OVERVIEW

The partners have worked diligently over the past year to determine the next path for our students of Aboriginal ancestry. In their assessment of our first Agreement (2006 – 2011), the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council (AEAC) felt that it succeeded in creating a positive learning environment for Aboriginal students. The AEAC also identified some areas in which revision was needed.

One such area was the original Agreement's Goal #1 – “to improve academic achievement of Aboriginal students.” The AEAC noted that, while increasing academic achievement is important, using grade 4 and 7 Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) results as performance indicators was inappropriate because of students of Aboriginal ancestry low participation in FSA testing.

This was one of a number of observations leading to the consensus that supporting students of Aboriginal ancestry to succeed calls for a more holistic approach to their learning. Such support also means developing long-term capacity and ensuring them access to every educational program that the North Vancouver School District has to offer. This expansion of focus and scope is a major departure from our first Agreement.

In this second Agreement, success will be determined by the whole story that encompasses each student, not just test results. Increasing the academic success of students of Aboriginal ancestry (Goal #3) will continue to be a priority, and we will now focus on the grade 4, 8 and 10 cohort groups. Tracking their progress and success will provide us with a window to determine if district strategies are meeting the needs of students of Aboriginal ancestry.

We have maintained the goal that supports a sense of belonging and have moved it from the #3 to the #1 position, because providing welcoming schools for students and families is absolutely fundamental to student success. We have also added the word “presence” to this goal (“to improve the sense of belonging and presence of students of Aboriginal ancestry”), which we define as making every school aware that all Aboriginal peoples of North Vancouver have a rich and vibrant community that needs to be recognized as such.

Our holistic perspective is further reflected in Goal #2 – “to increase the awareness and provision of healthy choices that will enhance the well-being of students of Aboriginal ancestry” – and Goal #4 – “to increase the number of students of Aboriginal ancestry who graduate from secondary school motivated to further their education, realize their career goals, and pursue their dreams.”

This second Agreement, like the first, is a living document. Our knowledge and understanding of the educational needs of students of Aboriginal ancestry has shifted in the past five years and will continue to evolve as will our students, communities, and the world we share. By placing our signatures on this Agreement, we have committed ourselves to remaining mindful of these shifts and to working in partnership to reflect the whole story of our students' lives.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT GOALS

The goals identified in this Agreement are in keeping with those of the North Vancouver School District Achievement Contract. They are goals for which the data can be effectively and accurately measured, and can be tracked with integrity and over time. Some of this data will arise from the Aboriginal Education Survey, which will be created and administered during the 2011-2012 school year, and will establish a baseline to determine our success in achieving our goals.

This Agreement encompasses four main goals:

- GOAL #1** To improve the sense of belonging and presence of students of Aboriginal ancestry.
- GOAL #2** To increase the awareness and provision of healthy choices that will enhance the well-being of students of Aboriginal ancestry.
- GOAL #3** To increase the academic success of students of Aboriginal ancestry.
- GOAL #4** To increase the number of students of Aboriginal ancestry who graduate from secondary school motivated to further their education, realize their career goals, and pursue their dreams.

Goal #1: To improve the sense of belonging and presence of students of Aboriginal ancestry.

Student Performance Indicators:

The following data will be used to determine our success in achieving this goal:

- Increased attendance rates by grade, as measured by attendance records in North Vancouver School District's elementary and secondary schools.
- Increased level of satisfaction related to sense of place, caring and belonging, as indicated in data obtained from the Aboriginal Education Survey.

Goal #2: To increase the awareness and provision of healthy choices that will enhance the well-being of students of Aboriginal ancestry.

Student Performance Indicators:

The following data will be used to determine our success in achieving this goal:

- Increased level of participation in school and community activities, as indicated in data obtained from the Aboriginal Education Survey.
- Increased level of participation and success in physical education classes in elementary and secondary schools.
- Decreased number of students engaged in risk-taking behaviours so that they are living out of harm's way, as indicated in data obtained from the Aboriginal Education Survey.
- Increased number of students who do not become hungry throughout the day, as indicated in data obtained from the Aboriginal Education Survey.

Goal #3: To increase the academic success of students of Aboriginal ancestry.

Embedded within this goal are three key objectives:

- OBJECTIVE 3.1** To increase the number of students who successfully make the transition from grade 3 to grade 4.
- OBJECTIVE 3.2** To increase the number of students who successfully make the transition from grade 7 to grade 8.
- OBJECTIVE 3.3** To increase the number of students who successfully make the transition from grade 10 to grade 11.

Student Performance Indicators:

The following data will be used to determine our success in achieving this goal:

- Increased number of students fully meeting/exceeding expectations in Grade 4 Language Arts assessments and other district assessments.
- Increased number of students fully meeting/exceeding expectations on Grade 8 report cards and other district assessments.
- Increased number of students achieving C+ or better on Grade 10 provincial exams.

Goal 4: To increase the number of students of Aboriginal ancestry who graduate from secondary school motivated to further their education, realize their career goals, and pursue their dreams.

Student Performance Indicators:

The following data will be used to determine our success in achieving this goal:

- Increased number of students who believe they are being successful at school, as indicated in data obtained from the Aboriginal Education Survey.
- Increased number of students who graduate with a Dogwood Diploma or School Completion Certificate with their cohort of students.
- Increased number of students who want to continue their education after secondary school, as indicated in data obtained from the Aboriginal Education Survey.



APPENDIX – ACTIONS

The actions mentioned in this appendix are a sampling of the initiatives that will be undertaken to achieve our goals. Other actions will also be developed over the course of this Agreement.

The actions' effectiveness will be reviewed on an ongoing basis according to their success in:

- Increasing the presence of Aboriginal language, history, and culture in the schools and at a district level.
- Increasing the number of qualified Aboriginal teachers and qualified First Nations Support Workers
- Promoting and increasing participation by all partner groups in joint activities that support school and district initiatives.
- Providing ongoing opportunities to meet and discuss Aboriginal issues and learning. Participants might include the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council, First Nations Support Teachers, First Nations Support Workers, Learning Services, administrators of all schools, membership of Skwxwú7mesh or Tsleil-Waututh nations, parents, etc.

Goal #1 To improve the sense of belonging and presence of students of Aboriginal ancestry.

ACTIONS	INITIATE	INTENSIFY + SUPPORT	ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS
Solidify relationships with all Aboriginal peoples			
Conduct in-service series on cultural awareness and teachings			
Implement Aboriginal themes on the school district website			

APPENDIX – ACTIONS CONTINUED

Goal #2 To increase the awareness and provision of healthy choices that will enhance the well-being of students of Aboriginal ancestry.

ACTIONS	INITIATE	INTENSIFY + SUPPORT	ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS
Create a resource guide for parents and students			
Implement the use of community resources and community subsidies			
Create student plans for at-risk students			
Increase the use of mentors/role models to address issues related to difficulties that youth face			

GOAL #3 TO INCREASE THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF STUDENTS OF ABORIGINAL ANCESTRY.

ACTIONS	INITIATE	INTENSIFY + SUPPORT	ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS
Develop a resource guide of local Aboriginal curriculum experts			
Implement relevant training for First Nations Support Teachers and First Nations Support Workers			
Create an in-service series on Aboriginal Education for all staff			
Introduce Aboriginal resources in all curricular areas			

Goal #4: To increase the number of students of Aboriginal ancestry who graduate from secondary school motivated to further their education, realize their career goals and pursue their dreams.

ACTIONS	INITIATE	INTENSIFY + SUPPORT	ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS
Increase early awareness of post secondary/career opportunities			
Provide secondary students with the opportunity to mentor intermediate students			



CONTACT INFORMATION:

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