



Kootenay-Columbia  
School District No.20



SKY  
ROCK  
WATER  
MOUNTAIN

# ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT



Signed on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2008, at the MIR Centre (Castlegar, BC)

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# **KOOTENAY-COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT # 20 ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT**

## **PREAMBLE**

The Kootenay Columbia School District No. 20 serves approximately 350 Aboriginal students and their families representing many Aboriginal Nations. Approximately 40% of our students are Cree, the other 60% of our students are from other nations which include: Status and Non-Status, Inuit and Metis.

Historically this land has been shared, used, and nurtured by several Aboriginal peoples. The Sinixt people have traditionally lived in these lands prior to and after contact and continue to live on this land.

The Aboriginal Committee on Education (ACE) includes representation from School District No. 20 (Kootenay-Columbia) and representatives of the Aboriginal Communities. We embrace and engage all parents and elders over the life of this Enhancement Agreement. The collective responsibility for promoting the success of all Aboriginal students attending school in School District No. 20 is acknowledged through this advisory committee.

The Aboriginal Committee on Education is dedicated to the inclusion of aboriginal culture and education within the public school system and to the strengthening of the public education system by honouring the diversities in British Columbia.

This Agreement is the result of respectful, inclusive, and ongoing consultation and collaboration between the School District and Aboriginal organizations/peoples and parents. A copy of the draft Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement, along with a survey, went home to all Aboriginal families in November 2007. Families have indicated they are pleased with the direction and intent of School District #20's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

## **VISION STATEMENTS:**

- To provide an inclusive learning environment that supports and increases the success of all aboriginal students.
- To increase our communities awareness of and respect for aboriginal cultural and educational needs.

## **PURPOSES**

The purposes of the Agreement are:

- to improve the achievement and school success of all Aboriginal students; and
- to enhance all students' understanding of Aboriginal cultural, history and language; and
- to improve cross-cultural education and awareness for Aboriginal program staff and school staffs; and,
- to enhance Aboriginal parents' sense of belonging within the schools and enhance their involvement in students' Aboriginal culture, language and history instruction.

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## PRINCIPLES

To further increase:

- the continued high academic success and graduation rates of School District aboriginal students.
- community and school awareness of aboriginal culture and history.

The performance areas selected for enhancement are those where there is assurance that the data can be:

- tracked with integrity,
- tracked over time and reviewed annually, and
- effectively used to plan and implement strategies.

The goals (or operating principles) of this Agreement will be linked with the District's Achievement Contract and will be reflected by the use of data tracking of all Aboriginal students in individual School Growth Plans. **The three goals in this Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement are not stated in order of importance. All three goals carry equal weight and importance to the success of School District #20 Aboriginal Students.**

## GLOBAL GOALS

- Academic excellence with high graduation/retention rates
- Curricular teachings, curricular development
- Increase all staff cohesiveness

## KEY CONCEPTS OF THIS ABORIGINAL ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

Through open and continued dialogue regarding this Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, all parties will focus on the following concepts in order for this document to evolve and grow:

- Culture
- Language
- Heritage
- History
- Inclusiveness
- Staff cohesiveness
- Student success



### *Legend of the Dreamcatcher*

*Dreamcatchers are an authentic American Indian tradition, from the Ojibwa (Chippewa) tribe. Traditionally made by grandmothers in the tribe, dreamcatchers are given to newborn babies to be hung on their cradle-boards. The dreamcatcher lets only the good dream pass through while the bad ones get caught in the hole in the centre and disintegrate. All good dreams flow through the webbing and reach the feather, from whence they drop down to the sleeping child.*

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## **Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Update 2009**

June, 2009

The 2008/09 school year was a busy one for both the school district and its Aboriginal Education Department. Highlights of the year, as they pertain to our Aboriginal student population and communities, include:

- ✓ Over 600 students attending the Aboriginal Week event held at the Mir Centre for Peace in May. Students of all ages from our school district as well as neighbouring school districts attended sessions such as pine needle basket making, the making of raw hide, and bear aware.
- ✓ The Aboriginal Committee on Education was disbanded by the Board of Education, with the intent being that a new structure be formed for the 2010/11 school year focused on improving student achievement results for Aboriginal students.
- ✓ The Aboriginal Education Department was honoured when they received notice that some of the material developed by the department was selected to be used as a resource for a course offered by the University of Victoria.
- ✓ Curriculum development continued to be major focus of the Aboriginal Education Department during the year. The success of this work was evidenced by a professional development session offered to teachers during a district professional development day, and by the increased numbers of teachers asking for programs to be delivered in their classrooms. Specifically, the following curriculum was supported with Aboriginal content developed and used this year: Home Ec (grade 9), Grade 2 Science, Grades 5, 6 and 7 Social Studies and Language Arts, and grades 8-12 Drama.
- ✓ The academic success for our Aboriginal students (goal 1) continued to be a focus for the district this school year. To this end, the Achievement Review Committee, a new structure in our district with representatives from all stakeholder groups, analyzed provincial and district achievement data for Aboriginal students. A broad, summative statement of their findings would be that although district Aboriginal students perform at or above provincial averages on most if not all achievement indicators, the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student performance in the district is wide, with Aboriginal students performing lower than non-Aboriginal students. (For more detailed summaries of the ARC, please see Appendix A of the District Achievement Contract.)
- ✓ The Aboriginal Education Department spent time this school year creating the language and culture and history booklets that will be used for the goal focused on improving Aboriginal students' knowledge of Aboriginal languages (goal 2) and for the goal focused on improving all students' knowledge of culture and history of Aboriginal peoples (goal 3). These booklets will be used with students in the 2009/10 school year and data will be collected as noted for each goal.
- ✓ The number of self-identified students with Aboriginal ancestry continued to rise this school year, and currently sits at approximately 10% of the student enrolment.

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## **Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Update 2010**

June 2010

The focus of the work in the Aboriginal Education Department this school year was to put a District spot light on the department and its work, to analyse and interpret student achievement evidence, and to recommend a new model of connections to community Aboriginal organizations.

### Highlights of the year:

- The school year started with a district wide event featuring Dr. Martin Brokenleg on a professional development day.
- Aboriginal Education was an agenda item on most Principals meetings.
- Regularly scheduled meetings of the Aboriginal Education Department were held monthly.
- Aboriginal Support Workers schedules were changed in order to have workers spend maximum time in schools supporting students.
- Two additional Aboriginal Support Workers have been added to the Department for the 2010/11 school year.
- A focus on supporting the academic needs of Aboriginal students was emphasized.
- A focus on developing shared understanding and shared responsibility for the success of Aboriginal students in our schools was initiated.
- Data pertaining to Aboriginal student performance in the district was reviewed with Aboriginal Education Department staff.
- Recognition by the Department that we cannot continue to deliver the same services and programs and expect to get different results.
- The Board of Education endorsed a new model to engage the local Aboriginal community with Aboriginal student success planning. Based on an 'outreach' model, Aboriginal community engagement will have the Director of Instruction (and, when appropriate, the Aboriginal Culture Integration Teacher and/or the Aboriginal Cultural Coordinator) attend meetings of key local Aboriginal organizations. This will allow for relationships to be developed, perspectives on the work of the District to be explored, and opinions and input regarding the Enhancement Agreement to be shared in a safe and intimate model.
- The academic success of Aboriginal students is now a formal goal of the District, and exists in the District's Achievement Plan.

### Challenges

- Work on creating a shared understanding and responsibility for the success of students of Aboriginal ancestry will continue to be developed within the district.
- Providing Aboriginal language experiences, as articulated in the Enhancement Agreement, continue to be problematic. Aboriginal Support Workers do not have the language skills necessary to deliver language to students, and there is a distinct lack of Aboriginal language speakers, of any nation, in our communities. This aspect of the Enhancement Agreement will need to be revisited when the Agreement is reviewed.

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## PERFORMANCE GOALS

### Area: Academic Excellence (Student Success)

**Goal #1:** To enhance the achievement of all Aboriginal learners.

**Rationale:** Currently, our Graduation Completion rates for Aboriginal students exceed the Provincial average. However, School District #20's goal is to provide the structures, encouragement and support for all our Aboriginal students to graduate.

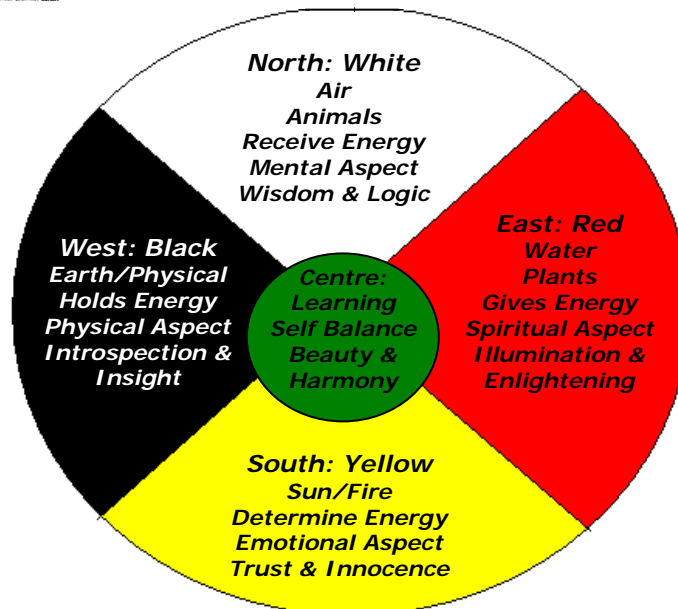
**Objectives:** School District #20 Aboriginal students will perform at acceptable standards (targets) set annually with the ACE Committee and School District #20 using a broad array of measures, including the Provincial Gr. 4 & 7 FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment) results, provincial exams, and retention and graduation rates. Other measures could include participation in school activities, demonstrating leadership, involvement in Aboriginal community initiatives.

**In order to accomplish this goal we will:**

- (i) Involve staff, parents, guardians, grandparents and community members
- (ii) Approach academic success in a holistic manner with sensitivity to the physical, social, spiritual and emotional needs of our Aboriginal learners.

**TARGETS:** Targets / Standards (or expectations) are set annually and evaluated in the fall and spring of the school year. Targets must be thoughtfully contemplated regarding their relevancy and attainability.

## MEDICINE WHEEL



<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b> (percentage of Aboriginal students meeting /exceeding expectations)		06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
READING	Gr 4 FSA		70%	56%	Not available		
	Gr 7 FSA		44%	51%	Not available		
WRITING	Gr 4 FSA		61%	59%	Not available		
	Gr 7 FSA		52%	46%	Not available		
NUMERACY	Gr 4 FSA		65%	59%	Not available		
	Gr 7 FSA		59%	24%	Not available		
DISTRICT MATH ASSESSMENT	Gr 2	n/a start				New baseline	
	Gr 6	10-11				To be determined	
DISTRICT WRITING ASSESSMENT	Gr 3					New baseline	
	Gr 5	n/a start				To be determined	
	Gr 9	10-11					
<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b> (C- or better) Aboriginal Students		06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
PROV EXAM	Gr 10 English	93%	96%	96%	Not available		
	Gr 12 English	92%	100%	100%	Not available		
<b>TRANSITION RATES</b>		06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
Grade 8 to 9		93%	95%	97%	Not available		
Grade 9 to 10		78%	91%	97%	Not available		
Grade 10 to 11		85%	69%	84%	Not available		
Grade 11 to 12		85%	80%	73%	Not available		
<b>GRADUATION RATES</b>		06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12
Dogwood Certificate		74%	67%	76%	Not available		

**Area: Language**

**Goal #2:** To improve Aboriginal students' knowledge of Aboriginal languages.

**Rationale:** It is important to maintain cultural awareness and heritage by appreciating the beauty of Aboriginal Languages. Linda Pelly-Landrie commented that, "It is our firm belief that language cannot be separated from culture - they are two sides of the same coin." \*

**Objectives:** All Aboriginal students in School District #20 will learn Aboriginal words. Other students will have the opportunity to experience the language. Beginning with Grade Four in the 2009-10 school year, every Aboriginal student will learn 20 words. As Aboriginal students progress through the next five years and school grade levels, the numbers of words expected to be learned will be increased.

**In order to accomplish this goal we will:**

- (i) Involve staff, parents, guardians, grandparents and community members in teaching language.
- (ii) Create language booklets.

<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b> (percentage of Aboriginal students who have mastered the required number of words per grade level)	09/10 (Gr 4)	10/11 (Gr 4-5)	11/12 (Gr 4-6)	12/13 (Gr 4-7)	13/14 (Gr 4-8)
<b>Gr. 4 (20 words)</b>					
• Pronunciation	not				
• Meaning	completed				
<b>Gr. 5 (30 words)</b>					
• Pronunciation					
• Meaning					
<b>Gr. 6 (40 words)</b>					
• Pronunciation					
• Meaning					
<b>Gr. 7 (50 words)</b>					
• Pronunciation					
• Meaning					
<b>Gr. 8 (60 words)</b>					
• Pronunciation					
• Meaning					

*\*Linda Pelly-Landrie has more than 20 years of experience in working for First Nation governments, particularly in the field of Aboriginal languages. She is the former president of the First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres and is a former member of the Heritage Advisory Group to the Minister of Canadian Heritage.*



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**Area: Culture & History**

**Goal #3:** To improve all students' knowledge of culture and history of Aboriginal peoples.

**Rationale:** Students must have exposure to wide and diverse experiences with many Aboriginal cultures in order to begin to grasp the complexity and strengths of each Aboriginal Nation. History that is taught thoughtfully and with engagement and meaning, will result in a deep appreciation by students for local Aboriginal peoples history and culture. Progressing from this learning, it is imperative students understand historically and culturally, our provincial and national Aboriginal peoples. It is through this understanding that all students will learn to treat each other with dignity and respect.

- Objectives:** (i) All District students will have an appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal cultures and increase their Aboriginal cultural experiences.  
(ii) District students will be knowledgeable regarding the history of Aboriginal peoples in Canada and Aboriginal students will be knowledgeable regarding their particular nation's history.

**In order to accomplish this goal we will:**

School District #20 staff for the 2008-09 school year, will design a School District #20 Aboriginal Culture & History booklet for Primary students. (This project was started in the 2007-08 year but will be finished in 2008-09.) The following school year staff will design a School District #20 Aboriginal Culture & History booklet for Intermediate students. In year three, a School District #20 Culture & History booklet for Secondary students will be designed. It is the expectation that students will complete activities, participate in cultural events and master at least 85% of the content of these booklets at their grade level.

**Update 2010:**

The idea of creating booklets to address cultural learnings has been changed. The Aboriginal Education Department personnel believe that tracking the number of cultural experiences each Aboriginal student participates in over the course of a year will provide better evidence developing knowledge of Aboriginal culture and history than filling in booklets. With this change, the department will begin tracking student participation in Aboriginal cultural experiences over the 2010/11 school year, with the target being that 100% of students in grades 1-7 will participate in at least 6 Aboriginal cultural experiences in the school year.

<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Grade 1					
Grade 2					
Grade 3					
Grade 4					
Grade 5					
Grade 6					
Grade 7					

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***In order to promote our three goals all parties commit to:***



Leland Bell

Discovering Wisdom

- Increase schools' and Aboriginal parents' involvement in the development and implementation of Aboriginal cultural, historical and language teachings.
- Provide more opportunities and encouragement to engage parents and elders more directly with all students and staff. Understanding builds trust. Our school community will be enriched from the support, positive influence and presence of parents and elders.
- To continue to enhance Aboriginal program staff's knowledge of Aboriginal culture, language and history to reflect the diversity of cultures within our community.
- To provide and encourage the hiring of teachers of Aboriginal ancestry as per the provincial BCTF/BCPSEA understanding.

### **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND AGREEMENT REVIEW**

The School District No. 20 Aboriginal Committee on Education shall undertake an annual assessment of the Enhancement Agreement for the purposes of re-adjusting programs and targets based on Goal attainment analysis and student, parent, staff and Board of Education input. They will communicate progress, successes, set-backs, and growth areas annually in writing to the School District community and the Aboriginal communities.

### **Implementation:**

- Targets are reassessed yearly to see if they are attained or sustained.
- Strategies will be monitored and discussed throughout the year.
- An Annual Report will be developed.
- Parents, guardians and family will be encouraged to participate in sharing their traditions in a classroom setting.
- Workshop opportunities will be offered for Aboriginal culture and promotion of cultural sensitivity for teachers through individual and District Wide Professional Development days.

### **Concepts:**

- Breakfast Club
- Grandparent reading program
- Review Performance Indicators with Aboriginal students:
  - will monitoring these help you be successful?
  - what are the resources for your success?
  - what is your term of success?