



Campbell River School District

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

2014-2019



This fourth Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement affirms a sustained commitment to honouring a partnership and pathway for continued improvement in the achievement of all Aboriginal students.

This Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement proudly acknowledges a formal relationship of trust and shared responsibility focused on attaining success for all Aboriginal students wherever they may be in their learning journey.



Campbell River Aboriginal Education Advisory Council during the development of this Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

**Front Row (left to right):
Audrey Wilson , Laichwilatach Family Life Society; Greg Johnson, District Principal of Aboriginal Education; Curtis Wilson, Wei Wai Kum Nation**

**Back Row (left to right):
Pamela Lee Lewis, We Wai Kai Nation;
Lisa Anwar, Kwakiutl District Council;
Michael Dumont, North Island Métis Nation**

**Missing from photo (with regrets):
Julie Hanuse, Klahoose First Nations;
Kelly Johnsen, Nuw-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council; Alison Trenholm, Homaleco First Nation**

Preamble

The Aboriginal Education Advisory Council (AEAC) is a partnership between the We Wai Kai First Nation, Wei Wai Kum First Nation, Kwiakah First Nation, Xwémalhkwu First Nation, Klahoose First Nation, Kwakiutl District Council, North Island Métis Nation, Laichwiltach Family Life Society, Nuuchah-Nulth Tribal Council and the Campbell River School District (School District 72).

The Campbell River School District is fortunate to have had a strong relationship with the Aboriginal people it has served for over 35 years. The Aboriginal Education Advisory Council representing all Aboriginal students in the district, works tirelessly to improve the educational success of the over 1,100 Aboriginal students served in the school district. These students make up over 23% of the student population of School District 72.

This Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement has been developed with the approval of the Aboriginal community and the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council. The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement is intended to guide and support the daily education of Aboriginal students and to emphasize the commitment of all professionals in recognizing the importance of Aboriginal history and culture in their regular practice. The end goal is to improve success of all Aboriginal learners within the jurisdiction of School District 72.

The Aboriginal Education Advisory Council and School District 72 acknowledge and honour the ongoing relationship that exists with the First Nations within whose traditional territories they operate. They also respectfully recognize and honour the historical and critical importance indigenous peoples place on the preservation of their language and culture.

Further, they recognize the primacy of each First Nation's language and culture within its traditional

territory. This Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement is inclusive of all people of Aboriginal ancestry and supports their commitment to the preservation of their language and culture. This Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement wishes to acknowledge and honour Liq'wala as the principal language of this territory and School District 72, and will continue to support the development of its programs and curriculum. Through affiliation with North Island College and the University of Victoria, School District 72 has demonstrated a commitment to providing in-district support for the training of language and culture teachers. The Aboriginal Education Advisory Council and School District 72 are committed to supporting the development of Aboriginal language programs and honours the School District's special relationship with the:

- Wei Wai Kum Nation
- We Wai Kai Nation
- Kwiakah Nation
- Xwémalhkwu people
- Klahoose First Nation
- North Island Métis Nation
- Kwakiutl District Council Member Nations
- Nuuchah-Nulth Tribal Council Member Nations
- All other Aboriginal peoples who reside within School District 72

With the support of the above mentioned partners, the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council acknowledges the collective responsibility for the success of all Aboriginal learners attending school in School District 72. This partnership intends to develop appropriate and meaningful educational programs for the benefit of all Aboriginal learners.

Vision • To have all Aboriginal learners graduate with pride and confidence in who they are as individuals... and who they will become.



Above and Right:
Copies of the three prior
signed Aboriginal Education
Enhancement Agreements.



Purpose • The purpose of the fourth Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement is to help all Aboriginal students fulfill the vision by supporting them as they...

- Develop pride in their history, heritage, culture, language, and traditions.
- Deepen their sense of belonging through connections to family, school, and community.
- Develop a sense of their own uniqueness, skills, and gifts (talents).
- Gain knowledge about their options, identify their passions, and make choices relevant to their personal strengths.
- Recognize the value of education and lifelong learning as a means to achieving their goals and fulfilling their dreams.
- View themselves as caring, confident, and capable individuals who are respected and valued.
- Recognize they have the wisdom and knowledge to make a difference in the world.

Principles of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

The Campbell River School District and the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council are committed to ensuring that Aboriginal students receive a quality education. One that prepares them to lead successful, productive and healthy lives while enhancing and celebrating their Aboriginal identity and pride through language and culture programs and daily education.

In 1999, in recognition of limited success in British Columbia schools for Aboriginal students, the Campbell River School District and local Aboriginal Communities developed one of the first Local Education Improvement Agreements in the province. This first five-year agreement was aimed at closing the performance gap between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students. A second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (2004 – 2009) reaffirmed the commitment to continued Aboriginal student success by focusing on the importance of ensuring Aboriginal students remain connected to their identity through language and culture. Emphasis was also given to maintaining and improving levels of literacy and numeracy achievement during the intermediate and middle school years and to increasing the number of Aboriginal graduates from high school.

The third Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement continued to build on the successes of the previous agreements by increasing the number of Aboriginal students who are achieving at or above expected levels.

The current and fourth Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement affirms the efforts of the partnership to create a community of support to ensure student success. As in the past, there has been a focused effort to draw from the voices of the Aboriginal community. Three student forums were held, each involving students that represented key transition points in schooling: grade 5 (prior to middle school), grade 8 (prior to high school), grade 12 and recent grads (in anticipation of school completion/graduation). There were also two public forums for adults: one in the afternoon and one in the evening – to increase accessibility and participation of parents and caregivers. Eighty-five parents were also surveyed in person or by phone at the grade 1, 3, 6, 8, 9 and 12 level.

Feedback was also received from 18 parents representing two of the First Nations pre-school programs. All participants were asked to comment on what they perceived was going well and should be maintained; what could be improved in the district; what goals they wished to see in the fourth Enhancement Agreement; and what goals should have the highest priority.

Participants in these forums recognized the importance of focusing on means of increasing the engagement of parents, families, caregivers, educators and the community in order to ensure Aboriginal student success. With this thought in mind, a new goal emerged:

Continued improvement in engaging parents, families, caregivers, educators, and community in ensuring all aspects of Aboriginal student success.

The Campbell River School District and the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council will continue to work in partnership with individual schools, Aboriginal peoples and communities to ensure that strategies and structures are in place to address the need for increased academic success for Aboriginal students including:

- Aboriginal Language & Culture Teachers
- Aboriginal Education Assistants
- Aboriginal Education Support Teachers
- Aboriginal Education Advisory Council
- Aboriginal Support Workers
- District Achievement Contracts
- School Success Goals
- School Support Conversations
- Targeted Interventions

Since the first Local Education Improvement Agreement and through subsequent Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements, gains have been made in literacy and numeracy for many students at all grade levels resulting in higher graduation rates for Aboriginal students. These gains were largely attributable to the efforts on the part of the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council, the Aboriginal communities, and School District 72 to:

- Increase Aboriginal family involvement in the schools.



Campbell River Band Kwanwatsi. Site of the 2014 Aboriginal and HeadStart graduation ceremony.

- Research and implement programs and learning strategies that better meet the needs of Aboriginal students.
- Increase knowledge of and respect for Aboriginal histories, cultures and significance throughout the entire education community.
- Focus on supported transitions for Aboriginal students.

The Aboriginal Education Advisory Council and School District 72 recognize the paramount role that parents, families, caregivers and communities play in the achievement and life success of their children. School District 72 is committed to working in partnership with the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council to explore opportunities to strengthen and extend the partnership with parents, families, caregivers and the school and Aboriginal community. By fostering welcoming schools, encouraging active family input and participation, and providing parents, families

and caregivers and community with knowledge and information that will assist them in identifying ways to support their children, student educational opportunities are enriched and opportunities for success are increased. School District 72 and the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council will continue to formally acknowledge successes through school district, and other community celebrations such as the District Aboriginal Student Success Dinner and the Aboriginal Graduation Ceremony. The active participation of parents, families, caregivers and community at these events provides clear evidence that involvement fosters and supports student success. School District 72 embraces the leadership of all who are committed to supporting and encouraging Aboriginal student achievement recognizing those community members and staff who provide a continuum of support from Early Childhood Education through to graduation and beyond.

Goal 1 • To increase all Aboriginal student's sense of pride and ensure they have the opportunities to participate in and learn about their history, heritage and culture.

This is a foundational goal. The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement strives to nurture a strong sense of self and a pride in Aboriginal culture, language, heritage, and history. Throughout their school years, Aboriginal students should have learning opportunities that enable them to feel connected, capable, responsible, and proud.



Aboriginal Student Recognition Dinner at Carihi Secondary.



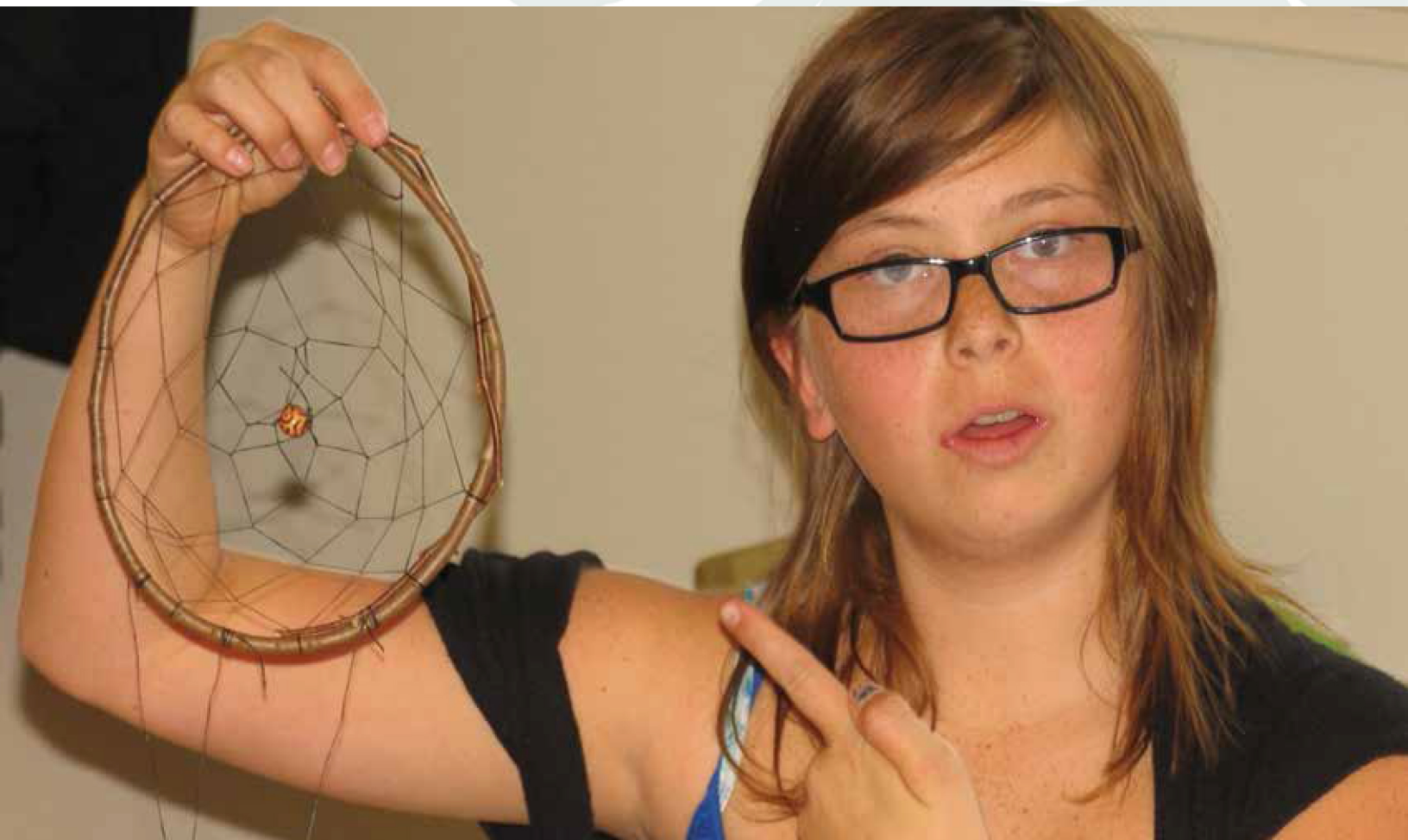
Proud Métis generations at the 2013 Aboriginal graduation.

Goal 2 • Continued improvement in engaging parents, families, caregivers, educators, and community in ensuring all aspects of Aboriginal student success.

Throughout the second and third Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements the importance of engaging parents, families, caregivers and community in contributing to Aboriginal student success was recognized and progress was made in creating welcoming environments and in improving communication with parents, families, caregivers and the community. That being said, during community consultations for the fourth Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement the community expressed the desire and the need to have a goal around this area explicitly stated, measured and focused on in the fourth Enhancement Agreement. By creating opportunities for parents, families, and caregivers to feel welcomed by and connected to the school and larger community, all can become partners in creating opportunities for students to be successful. Efforts need to be made to increase shared knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal history, culture, and life experience. Students and parents need to have a clear understanding of the relationship between course and program choices and the opportunities that exist following high school. Communication between school and home is essential in developing these strong partnerships and in ensuring all Aboriginal students realize their educational goals.

Goal 3 • Year-by-year improvement in literacy and numeracy achievement by all Aboriginal students at the elementary, middle, and secondary school levels (K-12).

Literacy and numeracy skills are essential for success in today's world. Without continued progress in literacy and numeracy at all school levels (K-12) many doors close and graduation becomes more challenging. Tracking the year-by-year progress of student cohorts in these areas allows supports to be put in place to ensure the continuous improvement of Aboriginal students.



Making dream catchers in Southgate Middle School's First Nations Exploration Class.



Aboriginal graduation ceremony at the Campbell River Band Kwanwatsi.

Goal 4 • Continued improvement in the transition readiness of all Aboriginal students at all levels.

The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement acknowledges that it is important to support all Aboriginal students in moving from grade to grade and from level to level of their education. Transitions can often present emotional, social, and educational challenges. As such, this goal remains a focus of the fourth agreement. The goal's intent is to ensure that Aboriginal students are provided with emotional, social, cultural, and academic support appropriate to their individual developmental needs no matter what level or grade they are at in the K-12 system.

Goal 5 • To increase the number of Aboriginal students who graduate with a Dogwood diploma. Aboriginal students will develop a strong self-identity and the skills and knowledge needed to achieve career and life goals.

This goal recognizes the importance of ensuring that Aboriginal students have an educational program that will lead to high school graduation. It is also significant for students to emerge with a strong sense of identity and a belief in themselves and their abilities. Students need to be aware of tangible career options and know they have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide a strong foundation as they pursue their education, career and life goals. They need to see themselves as capable lifelong learners.



Chief Ralph Dick of the We Wai Kai Nation addresses the School District 72 Aboriginal graduates at the 2014 graduation ceremony.

Through Student Eyes

The following excerpts were taken from grade level Aboriginal student forums which had students address the question:

As an Aboriginal student, what are you most proud of in your life?

From Grade 5 Students...
"Being included in this process and representing other Aboriginal students."
"Learning Aboriginal language and culture."
"Believing in myself; that I can do whatever I want to do."
"Proud of Aboriginal celebration days and that we celebrate the culture at my school."
"Sharing my art and culture with my school."
"That students and staff know what my culture is and I am safe and accepted."
"Proud to dance and wear my regalia."
"Happy family and home life!"

From Grade 8 Students...
"First Nations history and culture is here and is celebrated."
"My family being proud of me."
"Grades; honour roll."
"Proud to have my photo in the paper with my soccer team."
"Wonderful stories that are shared through generations."
"My community and the connections I have... carvers, drummers, artists, dancers."
"Not having as much racism against me/us."
"Helping to paint a totem pole."

From Grade 12 Students / Graduates...
"Representing my nation."
"Waking up happy."
"Reconnecting with culture."
"As people we can communicate, listen to each other, and respect one another."
"Making it to graduation with the support of the Aboriginal Education staff members."
"Life experiences have made me who I am and I am stronger because of it."
"That I am a good person."
"That I made it this far!"

Through Parent, Family and Caregiver Eyes

The following excerpts were taken from the surveys administered to parents and caregivers. They represent the percentage of ‘Yes’ responses to surveys in 2009 and 2014. Responses in brackets are ‘Don’t Know’ (introduced in 2014):

Question	2009	2014	Don’t Know
	Yes		
Does your child receive Aboriginal language and culture instruction in school?	62%	74%	
Do you believe your child will finish school?	93%	95%	
Does your child believe he/she can finish school?	87%	80%	11%
Is your child successful at school?	73%	85%	
Does your child see value in school?	85%	73%	10%
Does your child do well or very well in reading and English?	71%	77%	
Does your child do well or very well in writing?	65%	71%	
Does your child do well or very well in math?	65%	66%	
Does your child do well or very well in other subjects?	88%	84%	
Does your child feel safe at school? (2014)	----	85%	
Is there staff to support your child?	----	96%	



A sampling of some of the locally developed Aboriginal Education resources.

Celebration

The following are a sampling of just some successes that have emerged as a direct result of the district's previous three Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements.

- Graduation Rates have improved over the last four years of the Aboriginal Education Annual Report.
- More Aboriginal students are experiencing greater success in core subject areas, achieving a C+ or better.
- Aboriginal student recognition dinners are being attended by more parents, elders and members of the Aboriginal community.
- District Aboriginal graduation ceremony is being held at the Kwanwatsi Big House.
- The development and offering of the Laichwiltach Family Life Society culture group and Cape Mudge tutoring.
- Increased pride with visible presentations of success within the Aboriginal community through role model posters.



Some sage for a smudging ceremony.

Some paddles made by students in the
Laichwiltach Learning Program.



The Wolf: Original artwork by student
Caitlyn Puglas.



This Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement is founded on principles developed by the School District 72 Aboriginal Education Advisory Council and Aboriginal community in partnership with the Ministry of Education. This agreement recognizes that Enhancement Agreements are intended to continually improve the quality of education achieved by all Aboriginal students; support strong, cooperative, collaborative relationships between Aboriginal communities and school districts; provide Aboriginal communities and districts greater autonomy to find solutions that work for Aboriginal students, the schools and the communities; and require a high level of respect and trust to function.



Campbell River School District
Learning to Be Our Best

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