



School: Aboriginal Education

Principal: Kirsten Urdahl-Serr

Director/Assistant Superintendent: Cheryl Schwarz

A. Goal (one goal per page)

Goal 1: To foster a sense of connection and belonging, the Aboriginal Education (AbEd) department will focus efforts on students at key transitions - entry to school (primary years), transition of Grade 7 to Grade 8, students entering the graduation program from Grade 9 to Grade 10, and post-secondary planning. To be more effective, early fall programs need to be planned for Grade 7 to 8 and kindergarten transitions.

B. Rationale

Identified through the Deepening Indigenous Education and Equity Report are recommendations to support students of ancestry in their post-secondary planning and transition to life beyond secondary school. These recommendations have been substantiated through our conversations with the AbEd Advisory Committee, Elders' Committee, and data sources (student learning survey, Early Development Instrument, Middle Years Development Instrument, grade-to-grade transition rates, and graduation data). As such, the department recognizes the key transitions in a student's journey as entry to school, Gr. 7 to 8, Gr. 9 to 10, and transitioning to post-secondary. The goal is to focus our efforts on students during these key transition years by leveraging the 0.4 FTE teaching time assigned to transition planning. There will be an emphasis on leadership planning to foster a sense of belonging, identity, and community. A team approach will also be used to support transition planning for new students entering kindergarten and students moving from elementary to secondary school.

C. Action Plan (list specific actions, school level and district level resources or structures used)

1. Plan post-secondary connections as a team to explore options and support students with applications, identifying financial supports, preparing scholarship and bursary applications, and hosting secondary family night with a focus on Indigenous student connections to post-secondary institutions.
2. Plan two leadership events (kick off and year end) for secondary students to participate in, along with followup activities at school sites between the events.
3. Plan events specific to cultivating connections with Grade 6 and Grade 7 students.
4. Create opportunities for Grade 8 students to build relationships at schools including inviting elementary AbEd staff to connect and check in.
5. Collaborate with early learning helping teacher to connect trained early childhood educators and Aboriginal support workers.
6. Create opportunities for families of primary-aged students to connect at their schools (i.e., Bannock and Books).
7. Connect Elders to the student gatherings at schools to ensure their presence and guidance is offered to students.
8. Create opportunities for graduation program students to access tutoring in term 3 for required graduation coursework.

D. Evidence / Data (how will you measure success?)

Students will report through the 2024-25 student forum that connections to school and each other have improved through Aboriginal Education initiatives in comparison to the information gathered at the last student forum in March 2023. Post-secondary transition rates will improve. Literacy assessments will improve over time as collected through June reports.



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Goal 2: Aboriginal Education (AbEd) staff will continue to learn new strategies and/or teachings to support students in their social-emotional and cultural learning. Staff will be offered culturally responsive resources portraying holistic* Indigenous perspectives in literacy and numeracy to increase their capacity to support student learning.

B. Rationale

The Deepening Indigenous Education and Equity Report highlights student quotes that specifically speak to holistic learning as well as recommendations to support Aboriginal Education staff training in cultural and social-emotional learning. Theme 4 in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) Action Plan focuses on social, cultural, and economic well-being. One of the social actions listed is to “identify and undertake concrete measures to increase the literacy and numeracy achievement levels of Indigenous students at all levels of the K-12 education system, including the early years.” With this in mind, Aboriginal Education staff recognize taking holistic approaches to literacy and numeracy would be beneficial to student learning and classroom instruction. As such, staff will engage in learning holistic strategies to expand their academic supports and activities with students.

C. Action Plan (list specific actions, school level and district level resources or structures used)

1. Educate staff on access to available school and community resources so they can connect students and families.
2. Offer optional additional hours for Aboriginal support workers to create after-school programs for students with a focus on cultural, social-emotional, and/or academic needs.
3. Opportunity for all AbEd staff to co-plan and co-lead cultural learning opportunities for each other.
4. Principal/vice-principal will plan learning opportunities for staff in holistic academic activities with culturally responsive resources.
5. Staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities.

D. Evidence / Data (how will you measure success?)

Staff will report that they feel an increase in confidence in being able to support students in a variety of ways, from cultural teachings to academic and/or social-emotional strategies with holistic* outcomes.

*teachings and strategies that are inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.



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Goal 3: The Aboriginal Education department will focus our efforts on ensuring students and families feel connected to the SD42 Indigenous community.

B. Rationale

Departmental conversations (growth planning, department meetings, conversations with community partners, and Advisory) and the Deepening Indigenous Education and Equity report have identified that connecting families fosters a sense of community and belonging with each other and the school system. Feedback from families and staff from the 2022-23 family events indicates the value families place on these opportunities to build community.

C. Action Plan (list specific actions, school level and district level resources or structures used)

1. Additional monthly meetings for Family Committee to meet and to plan events.
2. Focus on connecting families to community supports.
3. Collaborate with schools to plan events for families to connect in both elementary and secondary.
4. As part of the feedback survey after an event, ask families for feedback on the kinds of community connections they are seeking.
5. Plan events with a focus on intergenerational connections to build community with families.
6. Invite Elders to events during school hours so students with ancestry can build relationships with Elders from the community and land based Nations.

D. Evidence / Data (how will you measure success?)

- Families and students will provide feedback demonstrating the opportunity to connect with others has improved their sense of belonging and connection to their school community.
- Number of people attending events and distribution of attendees across all schools.