

Central Okanagan Public Schools
Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation
2025 – 2030



Nurturing Indigenous student success through the lens of equity



Together We Learn



**Central Okanagan
Public Schools**
Indigenous Education



Contributors

EQUITY IN ACTION AGREEMENT for TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION is between
Central Okanagan Public Schools
and Westbank First Nation, the Okanagan Indian Band,
Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, Lake Country Native Association, Kelowna Métis
Association, Indigenous Education Council and
The Ministry of Education and Child Care in the Province of British Columbia



We acknowledge the contributions of Okanagan Nation Alliance and express gratitude for their collaborative work and effort in creating the Four Food Chiefs Graphic. With gratitude, we thank the Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation Refresh Stewardship Committee for contributing to the development of the updated EIA Agreement (2025-2030).

Jennifer Adamson – CTE Principal (WFN School of choice)
Grouse Barnes – Westbank First Nation Elder
Pamela Barnes – Westbank First Nation Elder
Jesse Bruce – Director of Instruction Indigenous Education & Equity
Bonnie Coble – Westbank First Nation Elder
Brad Dahl – Kelowna Métis Association
Lori Dawson-Bedard – COTA 1st Vice-President
Julia Fraser – Central Okanagan Public Schools Board Chair
Simone Gauthier – Lead Indigenous Student Advocate
Madison Jack – Westbank First Nation Youth Council
Kevin Kaardal – Superintendent of Schools
David Johnson – WAT Vice-Principal
Kevin Kaiser – District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education

Brad Kuhn – CNB Principal (WFN School of Choice)
Ryan Mansley – MBSS Principal (WFN School of Choice)
Lisa Middleton – Indigenous Student Advocate
Wynter Oakes – District Principal, International Education
Alexa Posella – Westbank First Nation Youth Council
Stephanie Read – GRE Principal
Christie Russell – District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education
Tyna Smith – Indigenous Student Advocate
Raquel Steen – Assistant Superintendent
Nicole Werstuik – Westbank First Nation, Youth & Recreation
Laura Wiemken – KLO Vice-Principal
Teri Wishlow – CUPE Local 3523, President
George York – CUPE Local 3523, Vice-President

Mission Statements



Central Okanagan Public Schools

"To educate students in a safe, inclusive, equitable, and inspirational learning environment where each learner develops the attributes and competencies to flourish in a global community."



Westbank First Nation

"Westbank First Nation will work to promote a healthy and prosperous future to ensure its continued existence as a strong political, social, and cultural community."



Okanagan Indian Band

"To ensure the Okanagan Indian Band membership will endure and prosper, we will develop strong individual, family and community self sufficiency by balancing economic activities with cultural values and progressive social and community enhancement."



Kelowna Métis Association

"An Indigenous non-profit society that is one of 39 Chartered Communities of MNBC (Métis Nation BC). We are just over 1500 MNBC Citizens from Lake Country to Peachland and we gather together to cultivate pride in our culture, language and knowledge of Métis history and values."



Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society

"The Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society will provide support for the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual well-being of all people through the development of community-based services, while encouraging the community to preserve, share and promote Indigenous cultural distinctiveness."



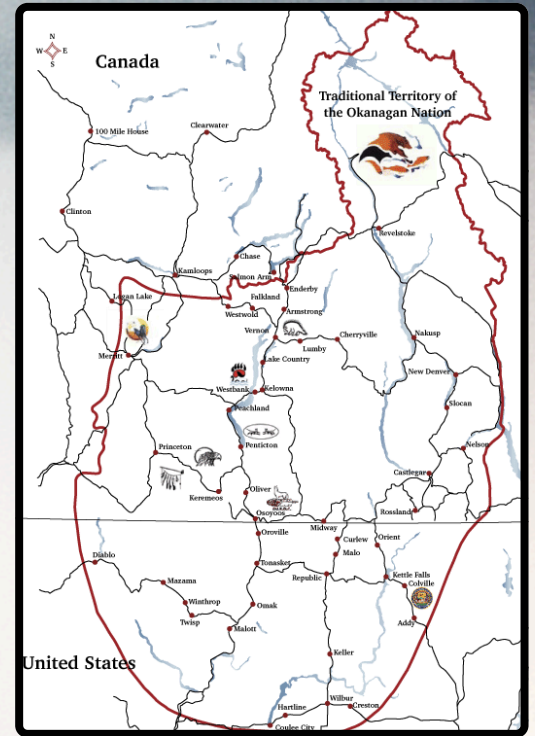
Lake Country Native Association

"Lake Country Native Association provides support to local Indigenous families to participate in culturally appropriate activities and programs that encompass cultural knowledge and identity, life skills and self-esteem, substance abuse prevention, and Indigenous arts and crafts."

Land Acknowledgement

Central Okanagan Public Schools respectfully acknowledges that our school communities are situated on the ancestral, contemporary and unceded territory of the syilx (Okanagan) people. We honour the rich history, culture, teachings, and nsyilxcen language of the syilx people. We also honour the traditional teachings of our Elders, the brilliance of the Okanagan people, and the wisdom they share through their Indigenous culture.

Central Okanagan Public Schools also recognizes the contributions of other First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous partners who reside in the Okanagan territory.



Images credit: Okanagan Nation Alliance Website

Introduction

Central Okanagan Public Schools strives to nurture Indigenous student success through the lens of equity. We believe equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically. District staff partner with the Indigenous Education Council (IEC), including representatives from our host nation, Westbank First Nation, as well as Okanagan Indian Band, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, Lake Country Native Association, and Kelowna Métis Association.

Together, we prioritize Indigenous learners.

Together, we co-develop belief statements, commitments, and priorities.

Focused on equity, we strive to create conditions where Indigenous learners thrive, holistically.

Together, we will create the conditions that empower each Indigenous learner to be cultural, confident, and courageous.



Elementary students at Chief Tomat Elementary School engage in Truth and Reconciliation as a community.

Vision and Responsibility for Equity

Central Okanagan Public Schools' strives to educate students in a safe, inclusive, equitable, and inspirational learning environment where each learner develops the attributes and competencies to flourish in a global community.

The Equity in Action Agreement prioritizes a responsibility to all Indigenous learners and all learners. A focus on equity will set the conditions for all students to thrive.

Equity and progress towards Reconciliation will be evident as school communities co-create and implement School Community Learning Plans.

Equity and progress towards Reconciliation will be evident as the Indigenous Education Department, in consultation with the Indigenous Education Council, carries out the commitments and priorities of the Equity in Action Agreement hand in hand with all district staff.

Equity and progress towards Reconciliation will be evident in the District's continued focus on implementing equitable opportunities to support Indigenous student well-being and success.

We believe that equity empowers each learner to thrive, holistically.

We also believe:

Equity is everyone's responsibility

Equity is about nurturing the spirit

Equity promotes possibility for each Indigenous learner

Equity is possible through reciprocal learning and reciprocal relationships

Equity requires continuous growth and transformative leadership

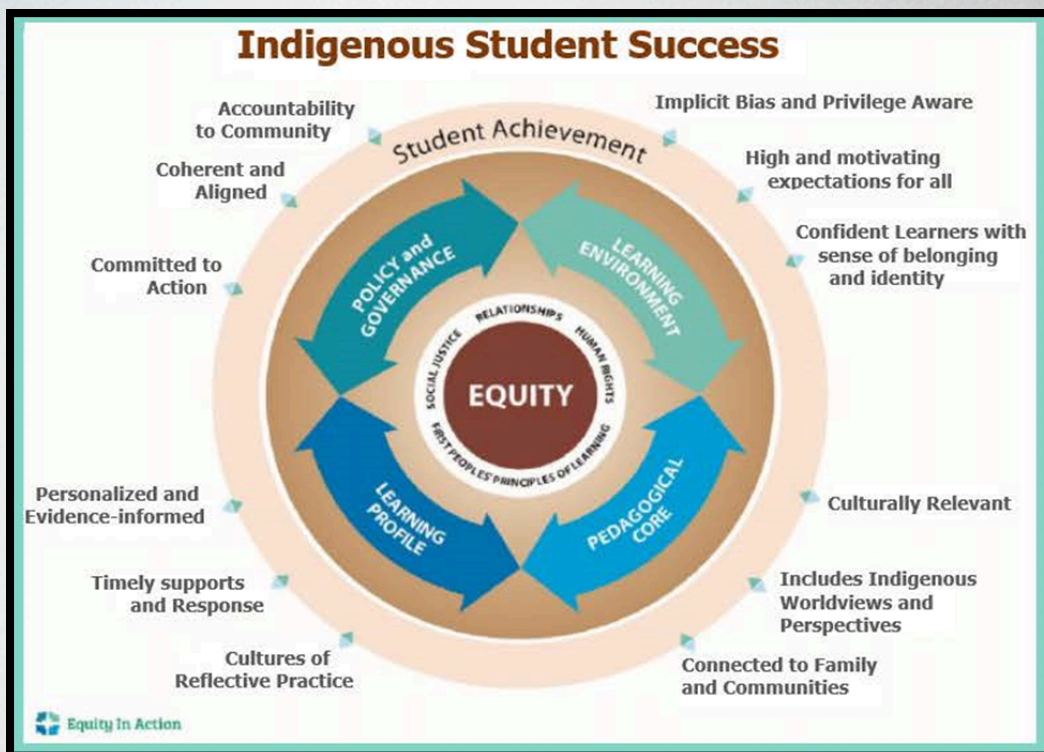


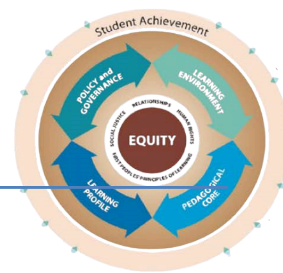
Photo Credit: Chief Tomat Elementary School

District Responsibilities 2025-2030

District responsibilities to equity in action, understanding the truth of our shared history, and reconciliation, are represented in **Four Pillars of Equity**:

1. Board Policy and Governance
2. Learning Environment - School Culture
3. Learning Profile
4. Pedagogical Core





Pillar of Equity: Policy and Governance

We believe:

- Each student has a right and responsibility to learn (Board Policy 401 – Role of the Student K-12).
- A culture of equity will affirm our commitment to inclusion and respect for our diverse learners.

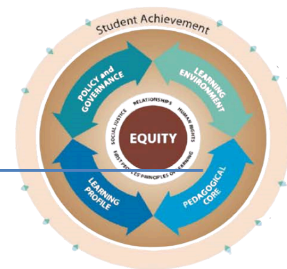
We are committed to the following:

- Maintain a District Equity Committee to support and promote equitable practices at the school and District level, to review the District's progress in achieving equitable practices, and to provide recommendations for deepening the District's focus on equity in action;
- Central Okanagan Public Schools' Policies and Regulations will support and promote equity and reconciliation;
- Central Okanagan Public Schools' Administrative Procedures, created with Indigenous community, will support and promote equity and reconciliation;
- District reports will demonstrate a collective responsibility in working toward equity and reconciliation.



Lifeline - Sqilx[™] Resilience

Created in 2020, at the completion of the first Equity in Action Agreement, this collaborative mural by Sheldon Louis, Kelowna Secondary School art students, and art teacher Timothy Mayer reflects the resilience of the sqilx[™] people, honouring the strength of Ancestors, Elders, Survivors, and Youth, and symbolizing a transition from winter to spring; symbolic of renewal, connection, and hope for future generations.



Pillar of Equity: Learning Profile

We believe:

- Learner success is achieved when learners develop foundational skills and core curricular competencies so that they can be empowered to follow their passions and strengths and engage in personalized learning.

We are committed to the following:

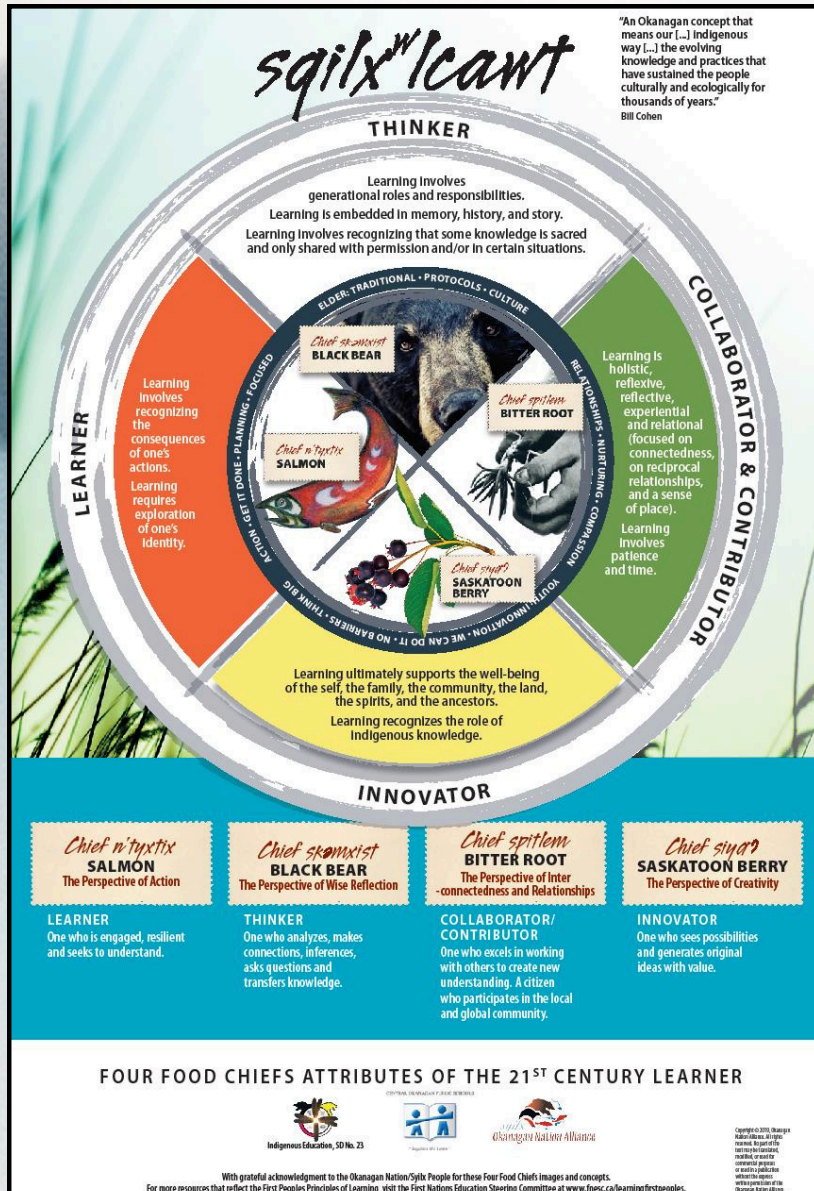
- Personalizing the learning journey for each Indigenous student (success criteria will be learner-specific and holistic);
- Use multiple points of evidence to assess the learning needs of Indigenous learners;
- Utilize multiple data sources (including story and student voice) to be responsive to the learning needs of each student in Grades 10 – 12;
- Engage non-graduating Indigenous students in exploration of opportunities for success in their 6th year (the year after Grade 12) and post-graduation.
- Provide culturally relevant supports that promote Indigenous student success, including cultural appropriate alternatives to suspension and adjusted schedules, in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Department.



Learners at Chief Tomat Elementary, North Glenmore Elementary, and Springvalley Elementary engaging in culturally relevant and differentiated learning opportunities.

Hand in Hand - Shared Responsibilities

sqilx^wcawt The Way of the People



We respectfully acknowledge the Okanagan Nation Alliance for co-designing the Four Food Chiefs graphic, and extend our gratitude to Westbank First Nation; particularly Elder Pamela and Elder Grouse Barnes (in consultation with Okanagan Nation Alliance and Indigenous Education) for the Four Food Chief Descriptions within the Equity in Action Agreement (2025), and Krystal Lazard for the sharing of the Four Food Chiefs descriptions on the Four Food Chiefs graphic (2019), and Coralee Miller for creating the images (2019 and 2025).

The Four Food Chiefs graphic supports educators in Indigenizing learning processes and content, connecting Indigenous ways of knowing with contemporary educational contexts through story, grounded in history, relationship, and meaningful connections.

At the center are the Four Food Chiefs, drawn from the sylix (Okanagan) captikw How Food Was Given. As described in Back to the Root, "Captikw today explores how these traditional stories can guide our thoughts and actions in the present" (p. 8). The four coloured areas represent the First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing, and the outer circle reflects the District's Attributes of the 21st-Century Learner, aligning with these teachings to support the success and well-being of all learners.

The teachings of the Four Food Chiefs have been passed down since time immemorial by the sylix people and continue to guide learning today.

Art credit: Coralee Miller, Westbank First Nation

Chief skəmxist - Black Bear

traditional – protocols – culture

Chief skəmxist, Black Bear, is the eldest of the Food Chiefs and carries tradition, protocol, and sacrifice. Black Bear never asks others to do what they would not do themselves. We are reminded by Chief Black Bear to give thanks to the timx^w, the animal beings, for their sacrifices and gifts. skəmxist demonstrates helping people to live in a good way, the reciprocal relationships between all living things, and ensuring future generations are cared for.

From Chief Black Bear we can learn: courage, humility, and the deep responsibility of leadership.



Commitments:

- Promote intellectual and cultural growth through Indigenous ways of knowing and being.
- Encourage Indigenous leadership.

Priorities:

1. Cultural safety and Indigenous specific anti-racism training will be accessible to all staff.

Evidence:

Resources and process for cultural safety and Indigenous specific anti-racism training will be developed or sourced. Data will be collected to determine the number of staff members who complete a cultural safety training.

2. Each Indigenous Education staff member will be engaged in continuous growth in support of equity, truth and reconciliation, and culturally responsive supports.

Evidence:

All Indigenous Education staff will engage in purpose driven, professional development. Staff participation in professional learning will be reported annually.

3. Each staff member will have access to professional development.

Evidence:

Data will be collected to determine the number of District staff who access Indigenous focused professional development, with a focus on First Peoples Principles of Learning, Indigenizing and Decolonizing pedagogy, instruction, assessment, and Truth and Reconciliation.

4. Each Indigenous learner will graduate with dignity, purpose, and options.

Evidence:

Central Okanagan Public Schools will reach parity in graduation rates between non-Indigenous and Indigenous students.

Focus:

Framework for Continuous Growth

Action:

Data and stories will be collected annually to report on the number of learners participating in cultural activities and learning with a syilx (Okanagan) focus.

Chief spitləm - Bitter Root

compassion - relationships - nurturing

Chief spitləm, Bitterroot, teaches us about resilience, relationship, and the strength that grows from humility. Bitterroot teaches us about reciprocity, to give back to the land with gratitude, respect, and care for all living beings. spitləm reminds us that balance comes from honouring both joy and challenge, and from caring gently to the relationships that sustain us.

From Chief Bitterroot we can learn: to nurture one another, to care for the land that cares for us, and to live in a good way grounded in gratitude, connection, and love.



Commitments:

- Nurture reciprocal relationships to support health and wellbeing of each learner, inspiring personal confidence and a positive sense of connectedness to others.

Priorities:

1. Each Indigenous learner and family will feel connected, safe and cared for in their school community

Evidence:

In addition to the Indigenous Student Advocate, students and parents/caregivers can name two caring adults in the school community.

2. Nurture healthy peer relationships for each Indigenous learner.

Evidence:

Students can identify two or more positive peer relationships within the school community.

3. Each Indigenous learner will have access to multiple pathways for social-emotional support, including culturally responsive wellness practices and community supports.

Evidence:

Students will have access to support services within the school and be connected to outside community when needed.

Focus:

Nurturing Reciprocal Relationships

Action:

The Indigenous Education Department, in consultation with the Indigenous Education Council, and in collaboration with District staff, will co-design the Indigenous Student and Family School Connection Action Plan in year one of this agreement, and review and revise the plan annually.

Chief siya - Saskatoon Berry

innovation – we can do it – no barriers – think big

Chief siya, Saskatoon Berry, teaches us that nourishment is not only about food, but about caring for one another in a good way. Chief siya teaches that true strength comes from caring for others and using our gifts to support the well-being of the whole community. siya reminds us to give what we can, when we can, in a good way and only take what we need. siya teaches us about responsibility, generosity, and service especially to our children, Elders, families, and community. siya reminds us to notice the needs of others and to act with kindness and purpose.



From Chief Saskatoon Berry we can learn: about creativity and innovation, valuing community perspectives, and how our hopes and dreams can be brought to life when we work together with care, gratitude, and respect.

Commitments:

- Co-create cultural opportunities that strengthen home, school, and community connections.

Priorities:

1. Each learner will participate in classroom, school, and district-based cultural activities that focus on syilx (Okanagan) teachings.

Evidence:

Data and story will be collected to report annually, the number of learners participating in cultural activities and learning with a syilx (Okanagan) focus.

2. Each Indigenous learner and family will be connected to school community.

Evidence:

Data will be collected to determine student and family participation in Indigenous school and community gatherings. School Gatherings will be inclusive, accessible, and designed to promote culture and connection.

3. Each Indigenous learner will have the opportunity to engage in leadership opportunities in their school, for the district, or in community.

Evidence:

Data and story will be collected to determine Indigenous student leadership opportunities and the number of Indigenous learners in leadership roles.

Focus:

Indigenous Student Leadership

Action:

The Indigenous Education Department, in consultation with the Indigenous Education Council, and in collaboration with District and school-based staff, will co-design an Empowering Indigenous Student Leaders Action Plan to engage Indigenous students in leadership opportunities.

Chief n'tyxtix - Salmon
action - get it done - focused

Chief n'tyxtix, Salmon, represents perseverance and reminds us that we must take action to create change with confidence, purpose, and focus. Chief n'tyxtix carries powerful teachings about sacrifice, responsibility, and caring for one another in a good way, reminding us to act with strength, resilience, and commitment.

From Chief Salmon we can learn: we must give of ourselves for the good of others. Water is sacred and life-sustaining, working through difficulty builds strength and resilience and caring for one another is a sacred duty.



Commitments:

- Ensure each learner will be actively engaged in learning our shared truth and engaged in reconciliation.
- Empower each Indigenous learner to take action to explore and strengthen their personal identity.

Priorities:

1. Indigenous learners will have access to culturally responsive support.

Evidence:

Indigenous Student Advocates, Success Teachers, and/or Indigenous Education Administration and will be engaged as a member the School Based Team in support of Indigenous learners and families.

2. Each learner will engage in learning syilx (Okanagan) histories and cultural knowledge.

Evidence:

Data and story will be collected to determine the number of Indigenous learners participating in Indigenous content courses, land-based learning, Primary Winter Gathering, Cultural Presentations, and Indigenous celebrations and events.

3. Each Indigenous learner will have opportunities to engage in learning that strengthens their identity.

Evidence:

Data and story will be collected, to determine the number of accessible learning opportunities, as well as the number of learners who access them, including nsyilxcen language instruction, syilx cultural activities, presentations and field studies, and teachings from syilx Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

Focus:

K-12 Connecting to Culture Continuum

Action:

The Indigenous Education Department, in consultation with Westbank First Nation, the Indigenous Education Council, and District staff will engage community partners in a Cultural Program review in year one of this Agreement.

A K-12 Connecting to Culture Action Plan, including a scope and sequence that identifies opportunities for Indigenous learners and families to engage in classroom, school-based, district, and community cultural teachings at each grade level, will be co-designed

The fly teaches us that even the smallest beings carry great responsibility and purpose, and that all voices matter. The fly reminds us to move with attentiveness and intention, noticing what others may miss and responding with care and compassion. ᖃᖃᓄᓐᓴ shares the important teachings about balance, adaptability, and connection to all living things.

From Fly we can learn: about transformation, the fragility of life, and the importance of caring for one another in a good way; especially those whose voices are quiet or easily unseen.



Commitments:

- Ensure each learner is provided with meaningful opportunities to share their voice in their learning and assessments.
- Empower Indigenous learners to recognize and build upon their gifts and strengths throughout their learning journey.

Priorities:

1. Indigenous learners are provided with opportunities to share their voice in creating safety in schools.

Evidence:

Data and story will be collected to determine pathways for creating safety at schools. This information will be shared with Indigenous Education Council and district leadership to inform supports, communication pathways, and culturally responsive interventions

2. Each Indigenous learner will have voice in their learning pathway.

Evidence:

Lead advocates, Indigenous Education administration, and success teachers will connect with students and families around barriers to learning and attendance and co-develop pathways and plans to success based on student voice.

3. Indigenous learners will have opportunities to share their cultural gifts and knowledge within the school community.

Evidence:

Indigenous Student Advocates, Success Teachers, and/or Indigenous Education Vice-Principals will support Indigenous learners to share leadership events, provide mentorship to other students, and uplift learning in community spaces such as Primary Winter Gatherings, Graduation celebrations, cultural events, dancing and drumming, and other opportunities that strengthen belonging and visibility within schools.

Focus:

Lifting student and family voice and strengthening student agency in their learning journey

Action:


The Indigenous Education Department, in consultation with Westbank First Nation, the Indigenous Education Council, and district and community partners, will scan student data and lived experience to identify emerging needs, adjust supports, and respond in culturally grounded and relational ways.

Monitoring Our Progress – A Shared Responsibility

Progress towards attaining the District's Equity in Action goals, as reflected in the Central Okanagan Public Schools' Equity in Action Agreement, will be reported in the Superintendent of School's Annual Enhancing Student Learning Report. Stories and evidence of Indigenous student success will be collected and reported in the Indigenous Education Department's Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Annual Report.

**Equity in Action Agreement
for Truth & Reconciliation
2020 – 2025**

**1st ANNUAL REPORT
2020/2021**



Elder Maureen Zprick and Central Programs and Services through the Land Based Learning Program
June 2021

Equity empowers each learner

Together We Learn
Central Okanagan Public Schools
Indigenous Education

**Equity in Action Agreement
For Truth & Reconciliation 2020-2025**

Equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically

**2021-2022
Annual Report**



"One of my 'Shining Moments' is when I proudly share my nehiyaw (Cree) names with my classmates.
kihew iskwesit
(eagle girl)

I received my name at a ceremony from **KIMBERLY HINDS**, Elder Bob Cardinal, from Enoch Cree Nation.

When we are talking about words that start with the letter "E", I like to remind everyone that I have two names, one that starts with an E."

Amelia



Together We Learn
Central Okanagan Public Schools
Indigenous Education

**Equity in Action Agreement
For Truth & Reconciliation 2020-2025**

2022 - 2023 Third Annual Report

Equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically

"Matriarchs, Grandmothers, Mothers, Aunts, many are residential school survivors, and have never lost faith in their grandchildren or education. Grandmothers' love, support, and pride, flows through generations, maintaining and reconnecting future generations to healthy and sustaining kinship with each other and the land.
... mother of daughters: imtima?/tima?, maternal grandmother: imix, everything with a life, spirit, and Food Chief communities are omix; imx'wala?, land/whole ecology - all the imix intertwined into an interdependent self-renewing earth mother. Schools have potential to connect all children to healthy, appreciative, and sustaining kinship relationships with each other and the earth mother who gives us all we need to live well."

Dr. Bill Cohen
Sylvia Okanagan Artist and Educator
Assistant Professor
UBC Okanagan
School of Education



CESS Graduate, Michael Robins with grandparent, Donna Robins

K'wu knknx'wəwix i? kl snaqslix'
We are walking hand in hand with our relatives.
Nous marchons main dans la main avec nos proches.

Together We Learn
Central Okanagan Public Schools
Indigenous Education

**Equity in Action Agreement
For Truth & Reconciliation 2020-2025**

2023 - 2024 Fourth Annual Report

"What does it mean to you to grass dance with your brother?"



"I hope, my brother, teaches me to Grass Dance and I watch him with my eyes to learn. My dance is a blessing to the ground and it brings on my culture and it brings my culture back to us."
—Dustin Hesse, 14-year-old, Westbank First Nation

"We have come a long way, I wear my regalia for myself, for the kids who couldn't... and I pray for the people, the land, and for the children."
—Sage Paul, 17-year-old, Okanagan Indian Band

Equity Empowers Each Learner To Thrive Holistically

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In 2023-2024, we inspired WONDER.
Ensemble nous inspirons l'émerveillement.

Together We Learn
Central Okanagan Public Schools
Indigenous Education



Annual Equity in Action Reports- found here:

Our Story - An abridged version of the Equity Journey in Central Okanagan Public Schools

Words from Terry Lee Beaudry

Although there remains a journey ahead to ensure the success of each Indigenous learner, each Enhancement Agreement, over the years, has contributed to culturally-responsive learning and reconciliation practices. Joanne DeGuevara coined the saying, “Guided by the Past, Invigorated by the Present, and Providing for the Future.”

Our past reminds us of where we were in this journey while the present enables us to be intentional in our learning, leading, and decolonizing practices all the while holding up a future vision of reconciliation for all of us. Boards of Education, Chiefs and Councils, District staff and community members have dedicated more than 40 years to improving school experiences for Indigenous learners and many continue to engage in this important work today. We honour the local Elders who have taken our hands, walked with us, and guided our learning/unlearning over several decades. Their teachings about truth, equity and reconciliation have deepened our focus on equity in action.

Reflecting on our past, I remember the late Don Fiddler’s innovative work in the 1980s, establishing the first night school for Indigenous students at Mount Boucherie Secondary – an early equity initiative, providing a new pathway to graduation. In the 1990s, Alice Gro and Lois Clark were appointed District Itinerant Teachers, providing advocacy and support for all Indigenous students in the District. During this time, local Indigenous communities and community allies came together to have difficult conversations with District staff about colonized practices in schools, resulting in the first Advocates being hired to support Indigenous learners (K-12). This marked the beginning of an Indigenous Education Program.

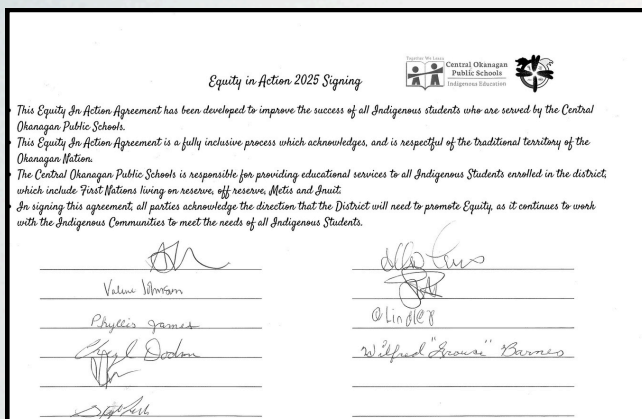
As we entered the new millennium in 2000, we faced the reality that only 31% of Indigenous grade 12s were graduating. In response, the late Chief Brian Eli tasked a group of us, including Pauline Terbasket and Raf DeGuevara, to establish a District Aboriginal Education Committee (which would be later named an Indigenous Education Council). The formation of a committee with representation from Westbank First Nation, Okanagan Indian Band, and the local Indigenous communities lead to the District’s first Enhancement Agreement in 2006. With Edna Terbasket’s and Ann Bell’s influence, this Agreement incorporated medicine wheel teachings into curriculum and school culture – a significant breakthrough in embedding Indigenous knowledges into curriculum.

Words from Terry Lee Beardry.. continued

The 2014 Enhancement Agreement focused on the 40 Developmental Assets, emphasizing belonging, relationships, and connection for Indigenous learners. On February 20, 2020, the first Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation was introduced. Guided by Elders and the leadership of Jordan Coble, and through the collaborative efforts of Joanne DeGuevara and Pauline Terbasket, this Agreement strengthened cultural relevance through learning priorities deeply rooted in the teachings of the Four Food Chiefs. Many of the priorities of this Agreement were also realized through the five-year UBC SSHRC research initiative, building capacity with hundreds of educators to decolonize learning environments and Indigenize pedagogy.

The shared commitment to the journey towards equity has led to remarkable progress, including an 86% Indigenous graduation rate today and a nearly 100% graduation for students living on reserve for the past several years. As Chief Louie shared at a meeting with local Chiefs in 2018, “The success of our Indigenous students is the result of Elders, parents, community, the School District and schools believing in and advocating for our kids.” Together, we’re better...for our kids!

I whole-heartedly believe that this refreshed Equity in Action Agreement is deeply student-centered. The Agreement doesn’t simply hold promise; it reveals actions to be taken to create equity initiatives that embed culturally-responsive learning, empowering Indigenous learners – all learners – including ourselves! Heartfelt gratitude to all of you who are committed to walking this road of reconciliation – together! May the next five years bring unprecedented results!



Sara Tronson, councillor, Westbank First Nation for Chief Robert Louie, Allan Louis, Okanagan Indian Band for Chief Dan Wilson, Valene Johnson, Chairperson, Central Okanagan Public Schools Board of Education, Jon Rever, Superintendent of Schools, Phyllis James, Board of Directors, Lake Country Native Association, Cheryl Dodman, President, Kelowna Métis Association, Candace Jack, Indigenous Parent and Family Education Council, Westbank First Nation, Stephanie Tooke, Secretary of KFS Board of Directors, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society

Signed Equity in Action Agreement 2025

Monitoring Our Progress – Graduating with Dignity, Purpose, and Options



Celebrating the brilliance of our Indigenous graduates. Pictured: Presley Hopf at the Indigenous Blanketing Ceremony; Elder Randy sharing stories with graduates at the Indigenous Graduate Retreat; and Westbank First Nation students with Councillor Jordan Coble, Chief Robert Louie, and Councillor Sarah Tronson.

Gratitude Acknowledgements

The Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation Stewardship Committee extends heartfelt gratitude to the students, families, and staff who generously shared their time and voices to guide the co-development of the 2025–2030 Equity in Action Agreement. Your participation in surveys, community gatherings, and district consultations made a meaningful impact. Thank you for helping to shape the commitments and priorities of this Agreement.

We also express our sincere appreciation to the Indigenous Education Council, District staff, and community partners who contributed to the development of Central Okanagan Public Schools' Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation (2025–2030).


Indigenous Education Council

Wilfred Barnes	Elder, Westbank First Nation
Ann Bell	Project Director, Lake Country Native Association
Denise Clough	Education Service Manager, Westbank First Nation
Jordan Coble	Councillor, Westbank First Nation
Brad Dahl	IEC Member, Kelowna Métis Association
Chantelle Desrosiers	Trustee, Board of Education, Central Okanagan Public Schools
Cheryl Dodman	President, Kelowna Métis Association
Lisa Guderyan	Trustee, Board of Education, Central Okanagan Public Schools
Candace Jack	Parent Representative, Indigenous Parent and Family Education Council
Peggy Joe	Councillor, Okanagan Indian Band
Allan Louis	Councillor, Okanagan Indian Band
Bill McKenna	Board member, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society
Deanna Necan	Parent Representative, Indigenous Parent and Family Education Council
Aaron St Pierre	Executive Director, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society
Nicole Werstuik	Youth and Recreation Manager, Westbank First Nation

District Staff Support for the Indigenous Education Council

Terry-Lee Beaudry	Former Deputy Superintendent of Schools (Ret.)
Jesse Bruce	Director of Instruction – Indigenous Education and Equity
Yvonne Hildebrandt	Executive Assistant and Secretariat to the Indigenous Education Council
Kevin Kaardal	Superintendent of Schools
Kevin Kaiser	District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education
Christie Russell	District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education
Raquel Steen	Assistant Superintendent

Guiding Documents



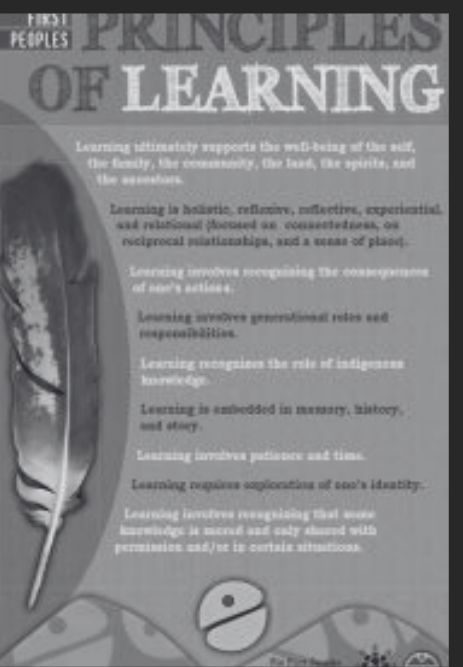
Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR BC EDUCATORS

- 1) Educators value the success of all students. Educators care for students and act in their best interests.**
Educators have a primary purpose of caring for their students. They are responsible for the physical and emotional safety of students. Educators respect and value the diversity in their classrooms, schools and communities, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and other worldviews and perspectives. Educators foster students' positive personal identity, mental and physical well-being, social and personal responsibility, and intellectual development. Educators engage students in meaningful participation in their own learning. Educators treat students equitably with acceptance, respect and respect. Educators understand the importance of confidentiality, and protect student privacy when students request to be seen. Educators do not share or disclose student information for personal, non-educational purposes or other advantage.
- 2) Educators act ethically and maintain the integrity, credibility and reputation of the profession.**
Educators are role models. Educators are held to a higher standard and are accountable for their conduct on and off duty. Educators understand the law as it relates to their duties. Educators' individual conduct contributes to the reputation of the profession to which Educators belong and recognize the importance of the Professional Standards for BC Educators.
- 3) Educators understand and apply knowledge of student growth and development.**
Educators use knowledge about how children and youth develop as learners and social beings. Educators demonstrate an understanding of individual learning differences and needs. Educators recognize the importance and contribution of cultural identity, equity, equity and engagement in student learning. Educators use this knowledge to inform assessment and evaluation practices. Educators work to create a positive, safe and inclusive learning environment to best meet the diverse needs of students.
- 4) Educators value the involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.**
Educators understand, respect and encourage the participation of families and communities in student learning and development. Educators consider the perspectives of parents/guardians regarding their children. Educators communicate effectively and in a timely manner with parents/guardians.

Effective June 18, 2019



PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

Learning intimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.


Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Learning involves patience and time.

Learning requires recognition of one's identity.

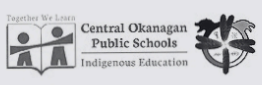
Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission, and/or in certain situations.

Equity in Action Agreement for Truth & Reconciliation 2020 - 2025



Lifeline - Spitzw P Sheldon Louis / KSS Art Students / Timothy Mayer, Art KSS Mar

Fostering Indigenous student success through the lens of equity



Equity in Action Agreement For Truth & Reconciliation 2020-2025

2022 - 2023 Third Annual Report

Equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically

"Mairurchs, Grandmothers, Mothers, Aunties, many are identical school survivors, and have never lost faith in their grandchildren or education. Grandmothers' love, support, and pride flows through generations, maintaining and connecting future generations to wealthy and sustaining kinship with each other and the land. ... tum, mother of daughters; tima'timata, maternal grandmother; mims, everything with a spirit; and Food Chief commences are miv; m'wilda; land's ecology - all the mix' interrel into an interdependent self-renewing earth mother. Schools have potential to connect all children to healthy, appreciative, and sustaining relationship with each other and the earth mother who are as all we need to live well."

Dr. Bill Cohen
Assistant Professor
UBC Okanagan
School of Education



GESS Graduate, Michael Robins with grandparent, Donna Robins


K'wu knknx'tawix i? kl snaqsilx'
We are walking hand in hand with our relatives.
Nous marchons main dans la main avec nos proches.



Equity in Action Agreement For Truth & Reconciliation 2020-2025


Equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically

Second Annual Report 2021-2022



kihew iskweis / Amelia
Kindergarten student

"One of my 'Shining Moments' is when I proudly share my name/Cree name with my classmates. Kihew Iskweis (eagle girl) I received my name at a Ceremony from Kihewahwah Kihew, Elder Bob Cardinal, from Enoch Cree Nation. When we are talking about words that start with the letter 'E', I like to remind everyone that I have such names, one that starts with an 'E'."



Guiding Documents

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

- Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action
- https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf



Government of British Columbia

- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)
- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/new-relationship/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>



BC Ministry of Education & BC Teachers' Council

- Professional Standards for BC Educators – Standard 9 (Truth and Reconciliation, Equity, and Indigenous Education)
- https://www.bcteacherregulation.ca/Documents/Standards/Poster_BCTS_Standards_11X17_final_original_green.pdf



Central Okanagan Public Schools (SD23)

- Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation
- <https://indigenous.sd23.bc.ca/equity-in-action/>
- Equity in Action Agreement 2020–2025– Indigenous Education
- <https://indigenous.sd23.bc.ca/equity-in-action/equity-in-action-agreement-2020-2025/>
- Equity in Action Agreement Annual Reports (2020–2024)
- <https://indigenous.sd23.bc.ca/equity-in-action/eia-annual-reports/>



First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)

- First Peoples Principles of Learning
- <https://www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples/>



Limbert

As we continue to work toward equity for all learners, we are guided by the Okanagan teaching of placing children at the centre of all that we do. Central Okanagan Public Schools is deeply grateful for the relationships we hold with our Indigenous community partners, who walk hand in hand with us on the ongoing journey toward truth and reconciliation.



Together We Learn



**Central Okanagan
Public Schools**

Indigenous Education



SCAN ME



Lifting up student voices