

Together We Learn



**Central Okanagan
Public Schools**

Indigenous Education



Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation

2025 – 2030



**Nurturing Indigenous
student success through the
lens of equity**

Contributors

EQUITY IN ACTION AGREEMENT 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).

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Pamela Barnes – Westbank First Nation Elder	Lisa Middleton – Indigenous Student Advocate
Jesse Bruce - Director of Instruction - Indigenous Education & Equity	Wynter Oakes – District Principal, International Education
Bonnie Coble – Westbank First Nation Elder	Alexa Posella – Westbank First Nation Youth Council
Brad Dahl – Kelowna Métis Association	Stephanie Read – GRE Principal
Lori Dawson-Bedard – COTA 1 st Vice-President	Christie Russell – District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education
Julia Fraser – Central Okanagan Public School Schools Board Chair	Tyna Smith – Indigenous Student Advocate
Simone Gauthier – Lead Indigenous Student Advocate	Raquel Steen – Assistant Superintendent
Madison Jack – Westbank First Nation Youth Council	Nicole Werstuik – Westbank First Nation, Youth & Recreation
Kevin Kaardal – Superintendent of Schools / CEO	Laura Wiemken – KLO Vice-Principal
David Johnson – WAT Vice-Principal	Teri Wishlow – CUPE Local 3523 President
Kevin Kaiser – District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education	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, unceded territory of the syilx (Okanagan) people. We honour the rich history, culture, and teachings of the syilx people. We honour the nsyilxcen language. We also acknowledge the traditional teachings of our Elders and the wisdom of their Indigenous culture.

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



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



Primary Indigenous learners exploring their connection to the land.

Vision and Responsibility for Equity

Central Okanagan Public Schools' purpose is 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 District Strategic Plan and Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation provide coherent leadership and instructional guidance that prioritizes a responsibility to all Indigenous learners. A focus on equity will set the conditions for all students to thrive.

Equity and progress towards Truth and Reconciliation will be evident:

1. As school communities co-create and implement School Community Learning Plans.
2. As the District, in consultation with the Indigenous Education Council, carries out the commitments and priorities of the Equity in Action Agreement.
3. As the District continues to prioritize truth and reconciliation, and equitable opportunities to support Indigenous student achievement, well-being and success.

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

We also believe:

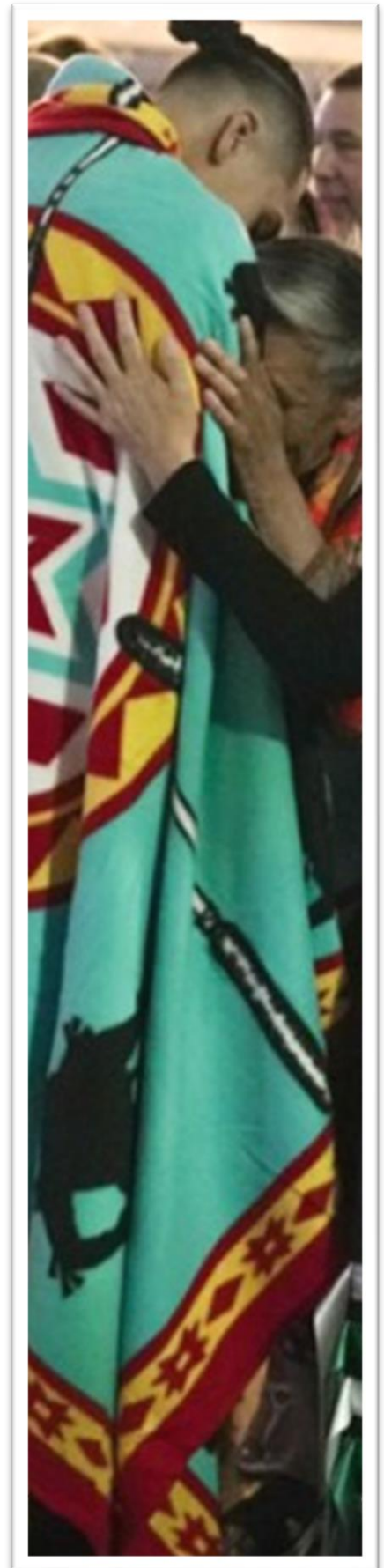
Equity is everyone's responsibility

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



District Responsibilities 2025-2030

District responsibilities to equity in action, understanding the truth of our shared history, and reconciliation, are represented in four pillars:

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



Policy and Governance

We believe:

- Each student has a right and responsibility to learn.
- A culture of equity will affirm our commitment to inclusion and respect for Indigenous 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 regularly review the District's progress in achieving equitable practices, and to provide recommendations for deepening the District's focus on equity in action;
- Policies and Regulations will support and promote equity and reconciliation;
- Administrative Procedures will support and promote equity and reconciliation;
- District reports will reflect a shared responsibility toward achieving equity and reconciliation.



Prior to their Indigenous Graduate's Blanketing Ceremony, Grade 12 Indigenous learners from across Central Okanagan Public Schools participated in a Water Ceremony

Learning Environment – School Culture

We believe:

- Learners should be educated in safe, inclusive, equitable, and inspirational learning environments where each learner develops the attributes and competencies to flourish in a global community.
- Confident learners will have a strong sense of belonging and identity within each learning environment.

We are committed to the following:

- Expand the Elders in Residence Program to provide increased opportunities for schools to have access to Elders to share cultural wisdom and deepen relationships with students, families and staff;
- Ensure a culturally appropriate Indigenous presence in each school, including staff, visual and physical representations of Indigenous culture (with teachings) around those artifacts both embedded in school cultural values and understood by the school community;
- Acknowledge syilx (Okanagan) Territory as a regular practice and ensure an acknowledgment of the Territory is displayed at each District site;
- Ensure quality, culturally relevant space or Gathering Rooms in every school for both students and families to foster belonging, identity and connection to school;
- Engage community partners and community resources in support of student and family wellbeing, connection to school, and sense of belonging;
- Provide opportunities to discuss, acknowledge and educate about bias;
- Display local nation flags in West Kelowna and Lake Country district locations;
- Engage in cultural sensitivity processes for all District employees which includes local, provincial and national relevant topics, including but not limited to the:

*Local Education Agreement with Westbank First Nation and Okanagan Indian Band;

*B.C. Tripartite Agreement;

*Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Calls to Action, and

*United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Learning Profiles

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, engage in personalized learning, and thrive holistically as resilient and engaged global citizens.

We are committed to the following:

- Personalizing the learning journey for each Indigenous student;
- Using multiple points of evidence to assess and respond to the learning needs of each Indigenous learner;
- Engaging non-graduating Indigenous students in exploration of opportunities for success in their 6th year (the year after Grade 12) and post-graduation;
- Being culturally responsive in support of Indigenous student success, including personalizing learning and alternatives to suspension.



Elder Randy Swanson providing traditional, Okanagan, teachings to Grade 12 learners.

Pedagogical Core

We believe:

- We have a shared responsibility for equity, understanding truths, and commitment to reconciliation;
- First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous worldviews bolster pedagogy, instruction, assessment, and learning, and support cultures of safety and belonging;
- syilx (Okanagan) teachings, through authentic Indigenous presence, builds understanding for all.

We are committed to the following:

- Supporting Indigenizing pedagogy and culture, through Indigenous worldviews, First Peoples Principles of Learning, and syilx (Okanagan) teachings;
- Building capacity of staff through authentic learning opportunities to deepen understanding of Indigenous peoples, language and cultural teachings, aligning with the First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous ways of knowing and being;
- Understanding that bias and racism exist and impact the nature of pedagogy and learning for Indigenous learners;
- Creating a centralized Indigenous resource portal with authentic Indigenous resources and pedagogies, cultural guidelines, and professional development opportunities that is accessible to all staff;
- nsyilxcen language presence in schools;
- Building partnerships between Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and non-Indigenous educators through reciprocal learning opportunities;
- Teaching representatives as a Reconciliation Lead at each school.



FOUR FOOD CHIEFS GRAPHIC SUMMARY

We would like to acknowledge Okanagan Nation Alliance for co-designing the Four Food Chiefs Graphic. From Westbank First Nation, we thank Krystal Lezard for providing the Four Food Chiefs descriptions, and Coralee Miller for creating the Food Chiefs images.

The Four Food Chiefs graphic supports educators in Indigenizing processes and content. Understanding teaching through story, and connecting it with contemporary, colonial views and perspectives on Education, help to provide understanding from a local Indigenous perspective. Learning is embedded in history and story. Through our connections and relationships, we can support each student to experience success through the lens of Indigenous teachings.

The Center of the graphic portrays the Four Food Chiefs, who come from the syilx (Okanagan) captikw, "How Food Was Given." "Captikw today explores how these traditional stories can guide our thoughts and actions in the present" (Back to the Root, Pg. 8). "The perspectives of the Four Food Chiefs cover the spectrum from tradition to innovation, from action to relationships. As individuals, we tend to identify more strongly with one of the four perspectives. Differing perspectives of the Four Food Chiefs were brought together to inform discussion, solve problems, and provide decision making on an action plan" (Back to the Root, Pg. 12).

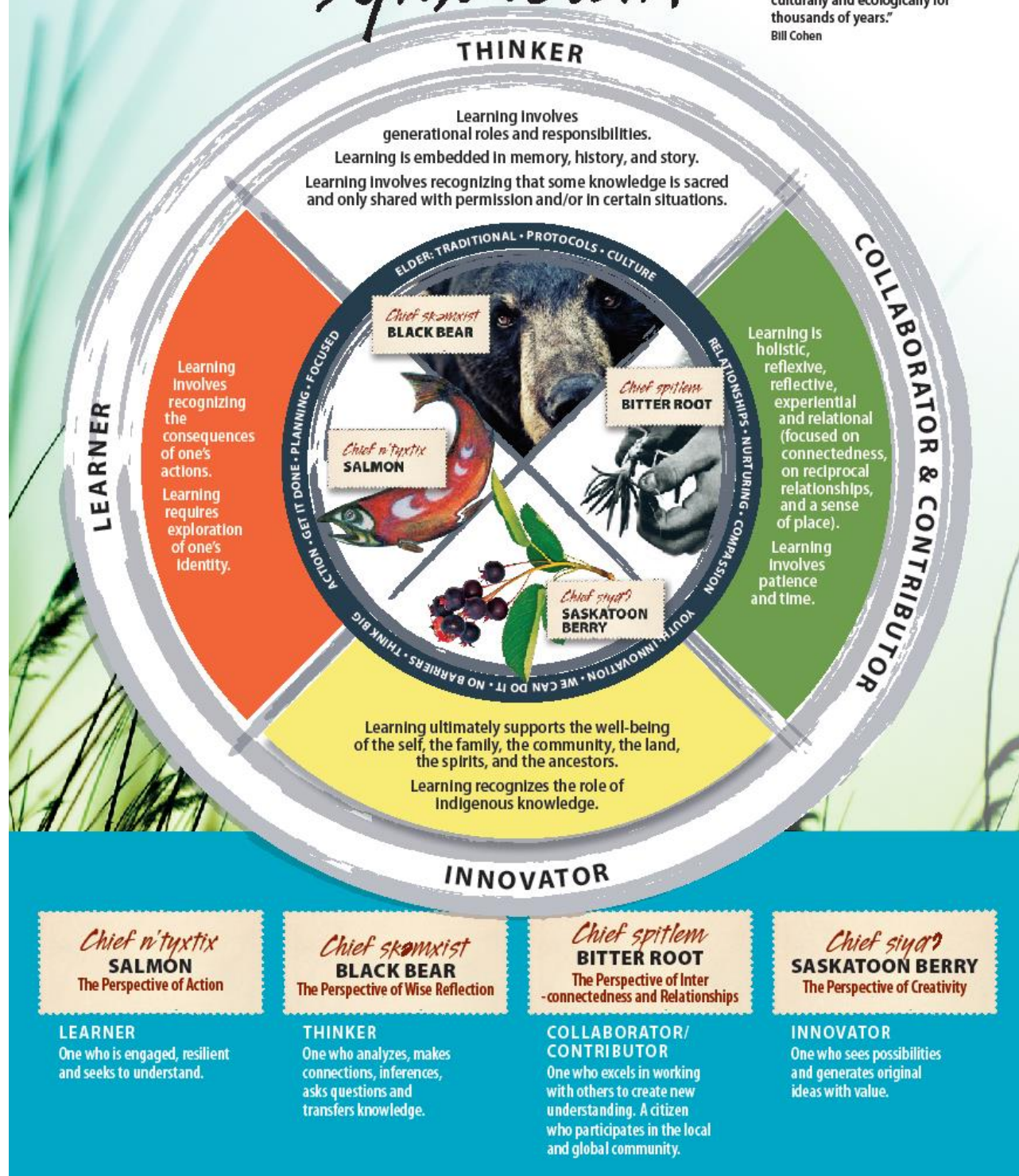
In addition to the Four Food Chiefs picture, the four coloured areas include the First Peoples Principles of Learning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing that guide how we walk through our experiences.

The outside of the graphic reflects the District's Attributes of the 21st century learner. These attributes are very similar to those of the Four Food Chiefs. Understanding and attaining these Attributes will enable all students in the district to experience success.

The Four Food Chiefs teachings have been used since time immemorial by the Okanagan syilx people.

sqilx'lcawt

"An Okanagan concept that means our [...] Indigenous way [...] the evolving knowledge and practices that have sustained the people culturally and ecologically for thousands of years."
Bill Cohen



FOUR FOOD CHIEFS ATTRIBUTES OF THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER



With grateful acknowledgment to the Okanagan Nation/Syix People for these Four Food Chiefs images and concepts.
For more resources that reflect the First Peoples Principles of Learning, visit the First Nations Education Steering Committee at www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples.

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Chief spitlem Bitter Root

compassion - relationships - nurturing

Chief spitlem commemorates our occupation of the land since time immemorial. spitlem offered her life and gave the syilx people access to everything that grows underground for medicine and food. Her roots represent preservation of the land and continuance of understanding the need to protect the diverse territory we live in. During the spring season, she is the one who prioritizes health, wellness and guides with unconditional love. Chief spitlem promotes the feminine aspects of new life that create nurturing relationships.



Commitment:

Nurture reciprocal relationships to support health and wellbeing of each Indigenous 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 with outside agencies. Accessible school and community supports will be provided to Indigenous Education staff and School Based Teams and update regularly.

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 gave the syilx people the ability to harvest all fruit bearing plants for medicine and food throughout the summer. We emulate her teachings by providing service to our children, Elders and Nation. We offer many thanks for her gifts in helping us become attentive to the needs of others. She is the food chief responsible for our ability to be innovative and make our dreams a reality.



Commitment:

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.

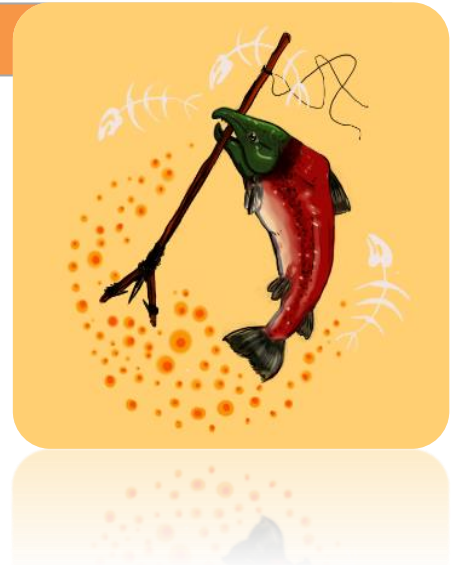
Focus: Indigenous Student Leadership

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

n'tyxtix represents perseverance, working against the current to obtain prosperity. His male energy teaches us that water is our most valued resource and we must take action in a confident and focused manner. n'tyxtix offered the syilx people his life and gave us access to everything that lives in the water for medicine and food. Chief n'tyxtix offers remarkable teachings about life cycles in the fall season and the importance of taking care of one another in a good way.



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

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.

2. Each Indigenous learner will have the opportunity to engage in learning that strengthens their identity.

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. Indigenous learners will have access to culturally responsive support.

Evidence: Indigenous Student Advocates, Success Teachers, and/or Indigenous Education Vice-Principals will support Indigenous learners and be included and will be engaged as a member the School Based Team in support of Indigenous learners and families.

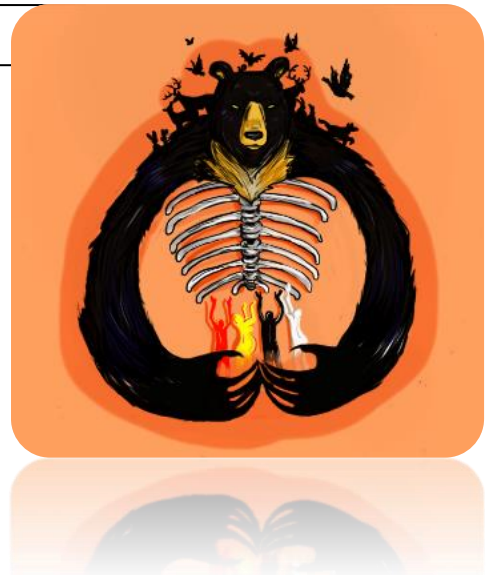
Focus: K-12 Connecting to Culture Continuum

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.

Chief skəmxist - Black Bear

traditional – protocols - culture

Chief skəmxist was the first to offer his life for the syilx people. Chief skəmxist granted the syilx people access to all living things, so that we would have protection and nutriment. He is the eldest Chief and with his significant wisdom he is the true holder of where our traditions and protocols come from. During the winter season is when we are responsible for sharing knowledge with one another. A true leader wouldn't ask of his followers something he wouldn't be willing to do himself. We offer thanks to the timx^w for offering their lives so we could create tools to thrive and survive on our land in a sustainable way to ensure generations to come are provided for.



Commitment:

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, regular, 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: The Indigenous Education Department, in consultation with Westbank First Nation, the Indigenous Education Council, and District staff, will co-design a professional learning **Framework for Continuous Growth**.

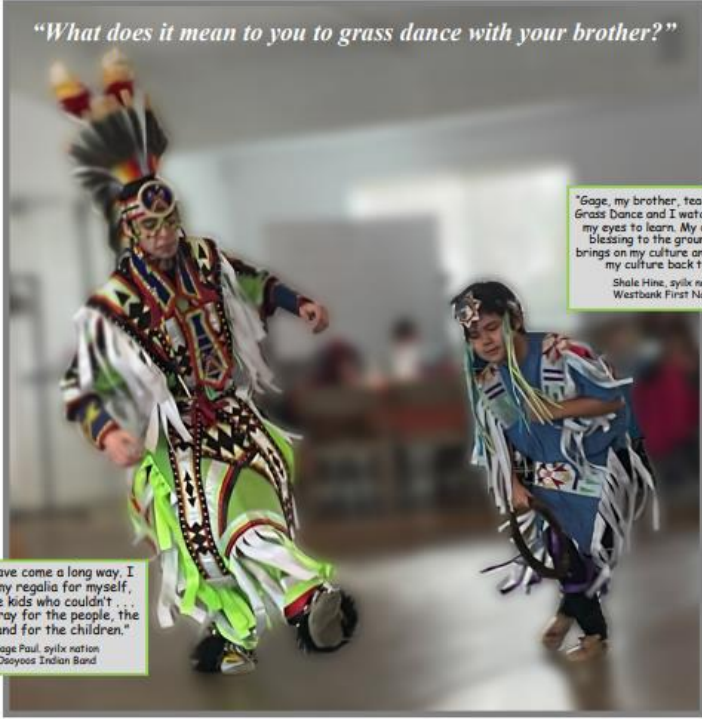
Monitoring Our Progress – A Shared Responsibility

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 2023 - 2024 Fourth Annual Report

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



"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."
Gage Paul, syilx nation
Osoyoos Indian Band

"Gage, 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."
Shale Hine, syilx nation
Westbank First Nation

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 

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



Why Equity?

Lifeline – Sqilxw Resilience

Sheldon Louis / KSS Art Students / Timothy Mayer, Art Teacher

Before the collaborative mural project saw brush put to canvas, Dixon Terbasket and I sat with Kelowna Secondary School Art Classes to share the pre- and post contact history of the sqilxw people located in traditional Syilx territory. We shared our personal experiences and the impact colonialism has had on Indigenous peoples, in particular the loss of language and culture through Residential School Systems, the oppression of the Indian Act and Potlatch Ban, the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and other topics shaping the lives of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada today.

By sharing the darker history of Canada's relations with Indigenous Peoples, we were able to help frame the theme of "Resilience" for the mural. Although the history of our Indigenous Peoples has been burdened with post-contact struggles, we are still fighting to regain, reclaim and revitalize our languages, our cultures and our ceremonies. Even though it has been a difficult struggle to this point, I wanted to showcase the resilience of our People, our Youth and our Elders. It is through the struggles of our ancestors that we inherit resistance and resilience. This mural captures the strength and knowledge of our Tmixw, our Elders, our Survivors, and our Youth. It shows/reflects a transition from winter to spring, signifying the shift in our history and our lives.

It was amazing to watch the mural come to life as students painted; each day it took on new meaning. Each element has special significance:

The spitsin (tether or bond) wrapped around the hands signifies the tradition of sitting around winter fires learning from our Elders; it also signifies the strength of the people, the lifeline or bloodline that connects us to each and every one of our ancestors.

The Salmon are a true representation of the meaning of resilience, the strength and determination embodied in our Ancestors and passed on to our Elders and Residential School survivors.

The winter and summer lodges represent connectedness to the land. The winter home speaks to how our Elders would share captikwl (traditional stories) with our young ones, teaching about our laws and responsibilities. The tulle mat lodge represents the transition from a dark past into a brighter future.

The speetlum (bitterroot) speaks to the need of our Youth to find their "roots" and to reconnect with the land, for it will be they who lead our People forward.

The students used the bridge in the background to represent the bridging of new generations, the bridging of communities.

I am so honoured to have been part of this great project.



Why Equity?

2007 B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

In 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). It includes 46 articles specific to the human rights of Indigenous peoples, including **culture, identity, religion, language, health, education and community**.

The UN Declaration emphasizes the Indigenous peoples' rights to live in dignity, to maintain and strengthen Indigenous institutions, cultures and traditions and to pursue self-determined development, in keeping with Indigenous needs and aspirations.

2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released its final report, including **94 Calls to Action**. The TRC unveiled the truth about the abuse suffered by Indigenous children and acknowledged this long-ignored time in Canada's history. **Educational institutions were tasked with responding to the 'Calls to Action'.**

The TRC's "Calls to Action" spark an urgency for colonized K-12 educational institutions to prioritize the reconceptualization of curriculum, embedding holistic understandings of Canada's past with contemporary perspectives of Indigenous peoples, to co-construct new pathways towards truth and reconciliation. This marks a time in Canada's history where educators are being called upon to reimagine teaching and learning with a shared responsibility for inspiring social justice through the understanding of truths and commitment to reconciliation.

2019 B.C.'s Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

The provincial government passed legislation in November 2019 to implement the UN Declaration, which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission confirms as the framework for reconciliation. Accordingly, provincial laws were to be brought into harmony with the UN Declaration and an action plan to achieve this alignment. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

2019 Professional Standards for British Columbia Educators: STANDARD 9

In August 2019, a ninth Standard was added for BC educators:

Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Educators critically examine their own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to facilitate change. Educators value and respect the languages, heritages, cultures, and ways of knowing and being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Educators understand the power of focusing on connectedness and relationships to oneself, family, community and the natural world. Educators integrate First Nations, Inuit and Métis worldviews and perspectives into learning environments.

Our Story

Together, we will nurture Indigenous student success through the lens of equity.

2016 British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care Equity Scan

The BC Ministry of Education of Education and Child Care embarked on the co-creation of an 'Equity Scanning Tool' to support School Districts in identifying barriers that impact Indigenous student achievement in response to the Report of the Office of the Auditor General, United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

2017 Central Okanagan Public Schools Journey to Equity

From 2017-2019, school and community consultations were completed and a framework was developed to guide the vision for equity development. The Equity Scan concept provided direction at the District, school and classroom level and focussed on impacting student achievement using four pillars: Policy and Governance, Learning Profile, Learning Environment and the Pedagogical Core.

A District Equity Scan Committee, comprised of Elders, District Administrators, Teachers, and Indigenous Student Advocates was formed. From the Ministry's initial 72 questions, the District Equity Scan Committee narrowed to seven guiding questions. Community gatherings, District meetings, student voice, and surveys gave voice to all. The information was used to co-create common beliefs, recommendations, and priorities, then set direction, goals, and priorities for the District's Equity in Action Agreement.

2020 The first Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation (2020-2025) was signed.



Our Story

We believe equity empowers each learner to thrive, holistically.

2025 The Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation Stewardship Committee engaged students, families, community, and staff in a scan and refresh of the original Agreement (2020-2025). The new Agreement communicates co-created and updated beliefs, commitments, and priorities focused on reconciliation and equity.



On February 12, 2025, Westbank First Nation hosted a Community Gathering Consultation, welcoming students, members of the WFN Youth Council, families, and WFN and school district staff.

Community Gathering Consultations were also hosted by Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, Lake Country Native Association, and Kelowna Métis Association. Additionally, Okanagan Indian Band Chief and Council consulted and contributed to the refreshed Agreement.

Gratitude Acknowledgements

The Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation Stewardship Committee extends gratitude to students, families, and staff who gifted their time and offered their voice to guide the co-development of the 2025-2030 Equity in Action Agreement. Your responses to surveys and participation in community and district consultations were impactful. Thank you for helping to shape the commitments and priorities of the Agreement.

We also express sincere appreciation to the Indigenous Education Council, District staff, and community members who contributed to the development of Central Okanagan Public School's 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 Services Manager, Westbank First Nation
Jordan Coble	Councillor, Westbank First Nation
Brad Dahl	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/CEO
Kevin Kaiser	District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education
Christie Russell	District Vice-Principal, Indigenous Education
Raquel Steen	Assistant Superintendent

Supporting Documents

Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action
[calls_to_action_english2.pdf](#)

British Columbia Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act
[Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act - Province of British Columbia](#)

Professional Standards for BC Educators – Standard 9
[Poster_BCTS_Standards_11X17_final_original_green](#)

Central Okanagan Public Schools Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation (2020-2025)
[1 - Equity in Action Agreement 2020 - 2025 - Indigenous Education](#)

Central Okanagan Public Schools Equity in Action Agreement Annual Reports (2020-2024)
[2 - EIA Annual Reports - Indigenous Education](#)

First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) First Peoples Principles of Learning
[First Peoples Principles of Learning – First Nations Education Steering Committee FNESC](#)

