



Coast Salish Dancers Ab Grad 2008

Fall 2008

Volume 2 Issue 1

District Review 2008 & Aboriginal Education

In the latest District Review, Aboriginal Education received several mentions. It was noted that the work of the Aboriginal staff to support student learning is highly valued by teachers and district staff.

However the report observed that school communities appear to have little knowledge of, or expectations related to, the important role the Aborigi-

nal Education Enhancement Agreement has regarding relationships with the Aboriginal communities.

The report states that we should continue our work to sustain relationships and continue conversations with district and Aboriginal Community leaders to further enhance Aboriginal student success and engagement.

The report recommends that schools need to embed the goals of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement in all school plans to support improved success of all Aboriginal students and that we can continue to improve success for Aboriginal students by building support from parents and schools and by tracking Aboriginal students as they move through the system.

Metis Days at Seaview Elementary



On November 12th and 13th, the Mid Island Metis Nation held its annual Metis Awareness Days at Seaview Elementary.

This popular event allows our grade 4 students the opportunity to learn first hand about the history and culture of the Metis Nation. Students from Quarterway, Pleasant Valley, Georgia Avenue, Rock City, Hammond Bay and Seaview rotated through stations which demonstrate the ingenuity and longevity of the Metis Nation history and culture.



viewing and experiencing two very important Metis artifacts, the Tipi and the Red River cart.

The children were introduced to jigging, traditional Metis dancing and had a glimpse of what it was like to be a Trapper, complete with a typical trapper's tent, tools of the day and animal pelts.

Food, always a part of Aboriginal gatherings was sampled by a

Students learned about the Michif language and were given the opportunity to practice beading and finger-weaving;

much appreciative audience, and included bannock and buffalo stew. As always, a big thank you to Lynne Ladret and her many helpers who make this day a huge success.



Metis Nation Helpers:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Kevin Pelletier | Isabelle Ouellette |
| Jennifer Johnston | Margaret Sloan |
| Crystal Easton | Connie Kulhavy |
| Anita Pichette | Cecillia Foster |
| Albert Rodermond | Lawrence Mitchell |
| Julie Ouellette | Trish Crumpton |
| Doug Milles | Margaret Callender |

Questions about Aboriginal Enhancement Agreements

Educators and community members often ask about Enhancement Agreements. As they become more common in the province, there are now 32 signed Enhancement Agreements in BC, the level of interest, curiosity and support is growing. This short article will attempt to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about these Agreements.

What Is An Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement?

Enhancement Agreements are typically designed, developed and signed through a partnership between School Districts and Aboriginal Communities. Following a consultation process that includes feedback from communities and an exploration of Aboriginal student success rates, goals are developed that relate to both academic and social development.

Essentially, Enhancement Agreements are a plan to provide Aboriginal students with a positive school experience that allows them to connect

with Aboriginal culture & language, supports them academically and provides them with the tools to be successful in reaching their personal goals.

Agreements also focus on building knowledge for everyone around aboriginal history and culture. They are a support for schools in their efforts to build success for Aboriginal students.

How can I find out more about enhancement agreements?

Both our district web-site and the Ministry of Education, Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch have information on Enhancement Agreements. You can also contact Aboriginal Education at 741-5318.

What can I do to support SD 68's Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement?

Teachers and Administrators play a very important role in supporting the goals in our Enhancement Agreement.

Things schools can do:

- Believe in your Aboriginal students, set the bar high and require that they put their best efforts forward
- Go to extra lengths to contact Aboriginal families to involve them in their children's education.
- Build your own knowledge around Aboriginal peoples
- Plan to incorporate Aboriginal content in your learning environment
- Use the four goals in our Enhancement Agreement when you do short and long term planning/goal setting

How Are We Doing So Far?

Every year the Aboriginal Education Branch at the Ministry publishes a report that outlines our progress in building success for Aboriginal students. You can access this report through the Ministry web-site or through Aboriginal Education-SD68. In addition, there is an Annual Report on our progress, usually posted to our District web-site in March.



Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network

Another way schools can support the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement is to take part in the Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network which has arisen out of the Network of Performance Based Schools.

Several schools in SD 68 have indicated their interest by submitting a school question connected to the goals of the Enhancement Agreement. Schools committed to:

- Work as a team – teachers, Aboriginal support workers, and administrators together.
- Attend three after school NPBS meetings held regionally during the 2008-2009 school year.
- Develop, understand and use the six major formative assessment strategies to engage learners.
- Present their inquiry at a regional celebration held in the

spring of 2009.

- Complete a two-page case study report for publication and sharing across the AESN.

The focus of the AESN is on schools and the difference that school teams working together can make. In our District, Aboriginal Education worked directly with individual schools as they developed their inquiry. Grants from the AESN to support the inquiries will go directly to schools and each school will submit their case study report.

Schools considered the following in developing their inquiry:

- *A clear focus on deep learning* - This will make a difference for our learners.
- *Classroom based* - What we do together in our classrooms will make the difference.
- *Evidence is classroom based* - We understand, own and use

this information. The use of quality criteria for quality and formative assessment strategies are a central part of our work.

- *A clear connection with the goals of the Enhancement Agreement* – this is an area that our community agrees is important.

THE SCHOOLS:
Forest Park Elementary
Hammond Bay Elementary
John Barsby Community
Ladysmith Primary
North Oyster Elementary
Randerson Ridge Elementary
Seaview Elementary
Uplands Park Elementary
Wellington Secondary
Woodlands Secondary
Cedar Secondary
Brechin Elementary

The Questions:
Will using Faye Brownlie’s Literature Circles approach to studying the Aboriginal Content Book entitled <u>Touching Spirit Bear</u> by Ben Mikaelson, improve our student’s ability to interact with their peers in a more compassionate and
Will consistently using the structure of goal setting, high-inference tasks, explicit instructions in comprehension strategies, and formative assessment using the BC performance standards improve success rates in reading for our Aboriginal students?
Will the participation of Aboriginal students in a formal guided reading program lead to improved reading levels?
Will using strategies for teaching basic facts for addition, subtraction, and multiplication increase Aboriginal students’ performance levels in these operations?
Will integrating Aboriginal content into the Humanities curriculum increase the ‘Aboriginal Literacy’ of grade 6/7 students?
Will using a peer reading program two times each week increase aboriginal student’s performance on PM Benchmark assessments?
Will using strategies from <i>Zoo-phonics</i> and <i>What’s Next for the Beginning Writer</i> increase the writing levels of Aboriginal Kindergarten learners as measured by the BC performance standards writing and representing?
How can we use the performance standards across the curriculum to better track the progress and improvement over time of our aboriginal students? In particular, how can we measure the success of the transition year between grade 7 and grade 8 for our aboriginal students?
Will the use of targeted reading and writing strategies improve engagement and reading comprehension with a selected group of identified struggling readers in grade eight?

Aboriginal Education Pro- D Series

The Aboriginal Education Pro-D Series is well under way for this school year. Our purpose in providing a pro-d series to Aboriginal Education staff is to :

- Build leadership skills within Aboriginal Education
- Build capacity in terms of job skills & certification
- Increase “Aboriginal Literacy” for Aboriginal Education staff
- Improve communication
- Support implementation/focus plan for Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement
- Build Aboriginal Education staff commitment & sense of efficacy

Aboriginal staff, consisting of teachers, tutors and Aboriginal Education Assistants all participate in two full day events, one in September and one in June. The focus of these events is to develop our own Aboriginal Literacy.

In addition, Aboriginal Education staff have selected two out of eight workshops that are taking place throughout the year. On-going sessions will be held one afternoon a month for four consecutive months to allow for team building, deep learning and practice. Where there is room and schools are able to support participa-



tion, other school based-staff are welcome to attend.

These half day workshops include:

Building Artifact Trunks with Terri Mack: These themed trunks will be available for use throughout the district. Participants have found and created artifacts and lesson plans around the Inuit, Salmon and the Coast Salish to name a few. When they are complete we will pilot them in various schools and then have them available to schools through the DRC. *Related to Enhancement Agreement Goal 4: Learning Environment.*

Numeracy Skills with Laura Tait: In order to better support Aboriginal students in math and science Aboriginal Education staff are developing their own math skills and adding to their repertoire of instructional strategies to use with their students. *Related to Enhancement Agreement Goal 1: Academic Achievement*

Book Club with Stella Bates: Ruby Payne’s new book, “Under-resourced Learners” is the focus of discussion at our book club. Payne describes ways of assessing a learner’s resources and various strategies for supporting under-resourced learners. Hopefully the Book Club will be utilizing these strategies in their daily work. *Enhancement Agreement Goal 3 Personal Development*

Guided Reading with Donna Klockars: Many Aboriginal staff members are new to the District and Donna has been providing them with guided reading training. *Related to Enhancement Agreement Goal 1: Academic Achievement*



Learning Strategies with Shelley Belezney: Shelley’s sessions on learning strategies that support Aboriginal Learners will commence in February and will provide Aboriginal staff with yet another set of tools to support our students. *Related to Enhancement Agreement Goal 4: Learning Environment.*

Word Work with Terril MacDonald: Terril will work with Aboriginal education next semester to build our strategies around vocabulary development. *Related to Enhancement Agreement Goal 1: Academic Achievement.*

Other Pro-d Opportunities for Aboriginal Education:

1. *Drive-In Networks: four early evening events where we meet to share ideas, stories, culture and dinner.*
2. *SALT Meetings: Secondary Aboriginal Learning Teams meet with district staff four times a year to discuss Aboriginal students programs at the schools.*
3. *In-service for new employees regarding district protocol, Aboriginal goals etc..*

Secondary Schools

Ladysmith Secondary School

Submitted by Naomi Bibbs
Aboriginal Support Teacher

We have re-opened a room that is being utilized in the morning, before school and at lunch. We are calling it "The Gathering Place". Students come there to do homework and receive help if needed, chat and have lunch. During our lunch time, our child and youth care worker is doing an activity with our students called "Dream Pillows". It is a fun, creative arts and crafts project and a number of kids are involved in this.

toring the cafeteria at this time.

"The Gathering Place" is trying to organize a clothing exchange in our room. We have acquired clothing racks...now we just need the clothes!! Our hope is that the kids will become very involved. We are taking all sizes of clothing, from children to adult. Right now, our goal is to acquire winter items.

We also hosted a Scholastic Book Fair...the students did most of the set up, and accounting, with the organizational and supervisory assistance of Anne Liaros,

Woodlands Secondary School

Submitted by Stephanie Stephens
Aboriginal Support Teacher

The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement is the working agreement between School District 68, all Aboriginal communities, and the Ministry of Education. The purpose is to ensure the academic and social success of all Aboriginal students, to honour and support the histories, cultures and languages of the First Nations communities whose traditional territories are served by School District 68, and lastly, to respect and affirm the diverse histories and cultures represented in our Aboriginal student population.

Woodlands has approximately 85 Aboriginal students. The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement has four goals:

- Goal 1- Academic
- Goal 2 – Individual Development
- Goal 3 – Culture and Language
- Goal 4 – Learning Environment



Vancouver Island University – the Aboriginal Department, visited our students in "The Gathering Place" and gave them some insightful information on course requirements and the different programs and support networks available to students. We are planning a school trip to the University in the new year.

We have a breakfast program at our school and two of our First Nations students assist our culinary arts teacher in getting the food ready as well as moni-

toring the cafeteria at this time.



Secondary Schools

In keeping with the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements, Woodlands Aboriginal staff:

- tutors more than 40% of Aboriginal students in Math from grades 8-12
- assists in Biology 11, English 11 on a daily basis
- assists individuals and small groups with school work
- works with teachers to incorporate Aboriginal content in classes: English 10, SS 9
- advises 14 grade 12 students with Post-Secondary plans including scholarships and bursaries; hosted VIU Aboriginal Advisor information session
- attended a career fair at the Snuneymuxw Band Council with a variety of Post-Secondary Institutes with a focus on Aboriginal requirements and programs; attended a cultural day in Cedar observing dip net fishing; has ongoing communication with students, staff, parents, and community



mine our academic and attendance concerns and put a plan in place to assist them in having more success. We were also able to make sure that each team member was aware of students that we felt would need support both inside and out of the classroom.

October 2008

During October we were given a new Aboriginal Education Tutor, Leslie Wilson. We were able to place her in classrooms where she would be most effective and she immediately made a positive impact on the students that she was working with. During the team meeting this month I set up a Mid Term check up. This had Aboriginal Team members tracking students that we felt may have academic concerns. Each team member met and/or checked in with classroom teachers allowing us to have a strong understanding of each student's academic standing. We were also able to increase the size of the Ab. Ed. Support classes to offer more students support.

Activities:

During this month we had Jennifer Christoffersen from Vancouver Island University speak to over 30 students about post secondary options for students of Aboriginal Ancestry. We also went on an Aboriginal Education day trip to witness Tony Elliot demonstrate traditional cooking methods of the Coast Salish. This was an opportunity for students to continue to build relationships with their schoolmates, administrators, teachers and support staff. This day was greatly enjoyed by all.

November 2008

In our monthly meeting we reflected on progress that was made during Term 1 and made a few schedule changes for our support staff to better assist our students. I have also met with most of the grade 12 students and discussed options for post secondary schooling.

Over the past three months I have opened the weight



Wellington Secondary School

Submitted by Brett Hancock
Aboriginal Support Teacher

September 2008

I introduced myself to each student of Aboriginal Ancestry and gave them a brief summary of the support that is available to them. Working with each member of the Aboriginal Team (Lisa Peace, Phil Letham, Tony Elliot, Kelli Burton and myself) we put together two Ab. Ed. Support blocks to offer support for students who have needed academic support in the past. The Support blocks offer students the opportunity to receive more one-on-one support from myself. During our team meeting this month we were able to deter-

Aboriginal Education in Our Secondary Schools

room regularly and been training a number of our Aboriginal students and emphasizing the importance of healthy living and healthy minds. I have also encouraged a number of our students to become more involved in school athletics, which has been a big success.

December 2008

We have been fortunate enough to have Patricia Burridge working with our team as a student teacher. She worked as an Aboriginal Tutor in the district for five years and has used her experience to make an immediate impact on the academic growth of our students. Currently Patti has taken over my English 11 ISE class and offered them a unit on Legends of the Nuuchah-nulth people.

Tony Elliott has been working with our feeder schools using the Peer Pressure Game to prepare them for life at Secondary School.



John Barsby Secondary School

Submitted by Donna Wilford
Aboriginal Support Teacher

Aboriginal staff at John Barsby greeted the new school year with a series of *Meet and Greets* for all Aboriginal students. Aboriginal Staff members include: Donna Wilford, Aboriginal Support Teacher, Aboriginal Education Assistants; Val White, Michelle Swecera and Jolene Akitt with Chris Jones as the Aboriginal Tutor. At these events, students met the staff, administration delivered a welcome message to Aboriginal students, and staff gave a mini-workshop on class organization, study, and exam skills. Staff also hit the deck running with a large number of new Aboriginal student registrations and transfers.

In October, staff held a ReCheck event for Grade 8s, 9s, and 10s. Staff checked student planners, binders, and lockers to make sure students were on track with their organizational skills. Students who needed help

were given one-on-one instruction.

Five female Aboriginal senior students attended the Mystic Science Symposium at VIU to hear women role models speak about their careers in various science fields that included health care, robotics, city planning, aeronautics, computers, and astrophysics. Several non-Aboriginal students were invited by the JBCS team to join them for the symposium.

Dan Lines, Associate Dean of Trades and Applied Technology at Vancouver Island University, visited in November to talk about VIU's new Aboriginal Construction Program. Students who register for this program will be building the longhouse at VIU.

VIU's Aboriginal student contact, Jennifer Christoffersen, also visited in November and provided a pizza lunch while she talked with students about supports and services at VIU.

Aboriginal teacher Donna Wilford held several information sessions for both parents and students on the new English 12 First Peoples, which will be piloted by the district at JBCS next term.

In early December, Charvelle Van Paridon, a grade 11 student, took her art portfolio to Emily Carr University for the Open House with Snuneymuxw Education staff and another Aboriginal student from Cedar. Charvelle had a wonderful time and received great comments on her portfolio; she felt it was very worthwhile. We are very proud of her.

JBCS Aboriginal staff is extremely proud of its 35 Aboriginal students who made the Honour Roll and Honourable Mention principal's list for their first report cards.

Snuneymuxw First Nation sponsored a fry bread day at JBCS in early December and sent us a superb cook; everyone had a stuffing good time.

Cedar Secondary School

Submitted by Roxanne Harris
Aboriginal Support Teacher

Cedar Secondary Aboriginal Education is enjoying a new and bigger space this year. They have moved out of the main lobby of the school to a classroom on the second floor. On November 20th, Cedar Secondary honoured Aboriginal students at a special gathering in the library. Students with perfect attendance, students with fewer than five absences and students who averaged 67% or better on their report cards were given a certificate of recognition. Diane Neave, Aboriginal Education Assis-

teacher baked cupcakes for the students as another form of recognition.

We were really honoured to have Michelle Sokoloski, Geraldine Manson and Tiem from Snuneymuxw First Nation come and show their support for Aboriginal students.



Nanaimo District Secondary School

Submitted by April Shade
Aboriginal Education Assistant

We have had a luncheon welcoming the Aboriginal grade 8 students to NDSS. It was fantastic to have all our Ab. Ed. team present, including Chris Jones, Aboriginal Tutor and Ricki Kristiansen, Aboriginal Support Teacher.

Jen Kristophersen, from Vancouver Island University, brought some yummy pizza and wealth of information for requirements to some Aboriginal programs available up at our local university.

During lunch I have been teaching beading, 4 students have finished some simple chain designs. We have a couple of students trying more challenging daisy chain designs as well. These will take a little longer; so with little time at lunch to eat and bead, it is a great time we get to share.

I will be teaching Dream Catchers next.



[New Aboriginal Education Web-site: www.sd68.bc.ca/Aboriginal](http://www.sd68.bc.ca/Aboriginal)

Donna Reimer and Shauna Debolt have been working hard to update the district web-site and as part of that we will have a new look for Aboriginal Education.

In the New Year you will be able to visit our site to view the Enhancement Agreement and the Annual Reports that show

how we are doing in building success for Aboriginal students.

In addition, you will see the Annual Aboriginal Education Focus Plan which guides our work for the year.

You will also be able to access information regarding our Aboriginal

Communities and there will be information on Aboriginal Education staff their roles and how to contact them.

The Aboriginal Education newsletter will also be archived on the site along with student writings in the form of Duck Soup for the Aboriginal Soul. We look forward to your visit to our site.

Special Mentions

As the calendar year draws to a close, I am continually reminded that change is the only constant and in that vein, significant changes are taking place in the District Aboriginal Leadership Team. Laura Tait, our phenomenal, District Aboriginal Teacher is leaving temporarily to have a baby, special congratulations to Laura and her husband Gary. In addition, our own Terri Mack has been asked to work with Chemainus First Nations to help that community build Literacy. We will miss them both very much but wish them well as they go on to other things. In their places, I am pleased to announce that Connie MacArthur, currently teaching in the Sooke School District and Connie Kulhavy, Aboriginal Education Assistant most recently from Quarterway have agreed to join the DALT team for what remains of the school year. I look forward to working with both of these very skilled Aboriginal women as we continue to build success for Aboriginal students. The Two Connies can still be reached in our Barsby-based Ab. Ed. office at 250-244-1020.