



SCHOOL DISTRICT 43 (Coquitlam)

Equity in Action for Indigenous Learners

Equity Action Plan Overview 2019/20

June 2020

Our approach to Equity

The end of the school year brings a sense of satisfaction watching another group of students graduate. For those students who are well prepared to transition to post-secondary or to take on other challenges, graduation is a time for celebration with family and friends. Other students may graduate with more time. For educators, this success is tempered by the realization that for some students, completing secondary school is not likely to happen. This is the case for some Indigenous students where only 74% complete high school within six years of starting in grade eight, compared to 96% of their non-Indigenous peers (2018/19 in SD43). The urgency of this Equity gap, which has been true for many years, cannot be denied.

In fall 2019, Coquitlam decided to address the gap by participating in the Equity in Action Project. This project uses the Equity Scan template provided by the Ministry of Education, support from Indigenous Education at the Ministry and involvement of the SD43 Aboriginal Education Department to conduct a review on Aboriginal student achievement through the lens of Equity. The need to work collaboratively on this project meant that a team would need to be assembled to reach conclusions that were both true and useful.

With the shape of the project in place, stakeholders from the local First Nation and others were invited to collaborate on the project. The Equity in Action project was introduced in a variety of ways to collect evidence and to ensure that the Equity Scan process was understood and realized.

In spring 2019, a group of indigenous students in grades 7 to 12 were invited to a full day session to share their educational experiences to date. Aboriginal staff made sure that students at all levels of success had permission and the means to attend the day. The day was planned to be fun and interesting for students, and we hoped their involvement would give us genuine feedback. The students shared lunch and talked together with each other and with staff. When they were ready, students added colored stickers as a response to a prompt and wrote comments on chart paper. This action meant that the principle of Equity was visible in every indigenous voice being included and their contributions recorded.

To coincide with this, parents of indigenous children were invited to complete a survey about their reflections on the education system for their school-aged children. This action meant that parents had an opportunity to add their voice, and possibly hear from their child, a description of their day spent talking about what they said about school.

The introduction of the Equity Scan to the Indigenous Education Advisory Council in January 2019 was the opportunity to bring in our major Equity Scan partner and to seek their support for the project. The Equity in Action project was well received by the council because the Enhancement Agreement, which had similar goals, was widely viewed as having outlived its usefulness.

A number of meetings to introduce the project to district staff were held. In May 2019, the project was first introduced to the District Leadership Team. In October 2019 Senior Management from all walks of the organization participated in a full day workshop with Joe Heslip to become familiar with the model

and to ask questions. Present at that meeting were the Superintendent Patricia Gartland, Secretary Treasurer Chris Nicolls, Assistant Superintendents Carey Chute, Reno Cioffi, Gerald Shong and Robert Zambrano, Assistant Secretary Treasurers Nita Mikl and Ivano Cecchini, Directors of Instruction Paul McNaughton and Stephen Whiffin, Executive Director of Human Resources Randy Manhas, Assistant Director of Communication Ken Hoff, the Coquitlam Teacher Association President Ken Christensen, CUPE Advisory Rep Lisa Gregory, Parent Advisory Rep Stephen Paquette, Community Advisory Rep April Bennett, and the Principal and Vice-Principal Advisory Rep Sarah Husband.

In November 2019, the professional development meeting, "Learning without Boundaries", provided an opportunity for Superintendent Patricia Garland to present the Equity Scan to administrators. In January 2020 the School Trustees were presented with information and also that month Research Analyst Kathryn Peterson was contracted to review SD43 policies for Equity. In February 2020, all District administrators and Learning Services Personnel participated in a workshop on Equity, Privilege and Bias.

It was felt that the Learning Profile aspect of the Scan would be the most important factor upon which to focus, and as a result, a survey about engagement was critical to providing some data. Plans for a process to involve secondary school aged students were in their final stages, when the global health crisis came to British Columbia. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic brought changes to our original approach and our plans quickly shifted from conducting a discussion with students in a series of small groups at each high school, to a plan where one on one remote interviews with students, using a survey of school engagement and school avoidance took place. Research Analyst, Kathryn Peterson was contracted to collate and analyze student, parent, and administration data from the workshops, professional learning, and survey data.

A broader dialogue was encouraged when the Equity in Action Project moved further into the work of the district. The Learning Services Department in partnership with Aboriginal Education Department and the Kwikwetlem First Nation began work on a "Learning Plan" as part of the Local Education Agreement. This template will be used for Indigenous Student Learning Profiles next year. The Learning Services Department and Indigenous Education Departments co created a presentation on Equity in Education, for the Learning Forward conference in St. Louis, Missouri.

The process of sharing the Equity Scan Model and guided questions was introduced at the Learning without Boundaries meeting in Oct 2019. This meeting structure is a model of professional development that focuses on collective wisdom to move from a strategic vision to strategic action. This meeting was an ideal place to begin the Equity Scan discussion with administrators, and time for table talk was provided to collect thoughts. Not everyone who participated provided feedback and some of those who did provide feedback provided information which was too brief to be useful. However, looking at what data was collected, the concept of conducting the Equity Scan was supported.

Building an Equity Scan Team

The process of building a team with rights holders and key partners was an intentional process and was done with respect for the traditions, welcome and assurance that all participants had the same standing as anyone else. Holding the Advisory meeting about the Equity Scan on First Nations land and inviting elders to attend at a place where they felt comfortable, made the process of meeting simple, and acknowledged the traditional territory.

Indigenous educators planned and presented at various professional development days over the course of the school year to share Indigenous knowledge and insights with staff. Time for discussion was provided for presentations on Equity Bias, and Privilege at the District Leadership meetings, for Principals / Vice Principals and on the CTA Pro D Day Keynote speaker and breakout sessions.

Any data collected will continue to be shared with the Indigenous Advisory Council. Their input will be incorporated into further work and any reports will be reviewed by the Council. As the Advisory was already knowledgeable about the district, it was decided to make the Equity Scan team from the members of the Advisory.

The team included District Administration in collaboration with valued rights holders and partners from First Nations, employee groups, and students and parents of students in the district and a parent focus group representative. In the future, other members like post-secondary or indigenous health professionals may be identified as need for someone to speak on new issues appear. It may be of value to consider general communication about the Equity Scanning team, perhaps on the district website or in a newsletter to let the community know about the Equity Scan team and possibly do polls or ask for feedback.

Table 1 Equity Scan Membership

District	First Nations	Representative from	School Community
District Administration in collaboration with valued rights holders and partners	Elder representatives (2)	CVPA	Aboriginal Parents (2)
	Kwikwetlem First Nation	CTA*	Indigenous students (2)
		CUPE DPAC	Aboriginal Parent Focus Group Representative

*The Coquitlam Teachers' Association (CTA) did not have a representative at the Indigenous Education Advisory table this school year. This will likely be an action item in the plan.

Conducting the Equity Scan

The first phase of the Equity Scan is designed to lead Teams toward new understandings and insights about service to Indigenous learners through the guided inquiry questions data, and rubrics in the four quadrant areas. Teams are encouraged to work collaboratively to include the voices of students, families, and communities. The results from the scanning phase then form the Equity Scan Profile.

In this first year, our approach to the Equity Scan process involved the review and discussion of the four pillars and the workbook with the Indigenous Education Advisory Council. During this process, we clarified questions and addressed any concerns. We were pleased to receive full support to proceed with the Equity Scan to improving success for Indigenous students.

After the Advisory agreed to the overarching process of the Equity Scan, the 4 pillars and the 32 guided questions were reviewed with a small working group to ensure understanding of the goals of the project and the way it would be carried out. The group spent time brain storming ideas for what potentially could be done under each pillar. Some of the questions were adjusted for content and audience; however, the revised questions still captured the spirit and intent of the task. This draft information was presented to the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council for further approval.

The contribution of the Advisory in responding to the draft is gratefully acknowledged and the guided questions were reviewed and selected where appropriate for three of the four pillars: Policy and Governance; Learning Environment; and Learning Profile. The pillar that was deferred to a later date was the Pedagogical Core.

Partners and Strategies

To bring a range of viewpoints to the Policy and Governance Pillar, a Research Analyst was contracted as an external critical friend to review SD 43's student policies for Equity (Administrative Procedures).

In 2019, parents / guardians were invited to a community dinner where they filled out a hard copy survey about their child's educational experiences, and then a survey link was sent out district wide to parents / guardians who may not have been at the dinner to bring in all voices.

The Indigenous Education Department staff brought students together grades 7 to 12 for a one day facilitated discussion on their educational experiences. The themes were: school engagement, Equity, Indigenous content in curriculum, health & safety, and requiring a support network. Staff ensured that students of all levels of success were invited to the day to make sure students saw that all Indigenous student voices were included.

In June of 2019, SD43's first LEA was signed with the Kwikwetlem First Nation. This was a very proud moment for all and allowed us to embark together in a more meaningful way in our pursuit of Equity.

In Spring 2020, a Student Engagement Avoidance survey for grades 8 to 12 was done during the pandemic. Indigenous Education staff interviewed students one-on-one to make the process conversational in tone and allow students to comment in a confidential and anonymous way.

The Indigenous Education Advisory Council reviewed the working document in groups and provided direction and comments. As noted, before, the 4 pillars and the guided questions were shared at the Learning without Boundaries meeting in early 2020 to relate Equity to current thinking. The administrators were given time for table talk to discuss further their strengths and stretches related to the concept of Equity, and to provide evidence that could be triangulated to other data. Finally, Learning Services collected data on Indigenous students as they did school by school needs assessments to broaden the data set.

It is important to note that all questions were selected based on the target group (parents, students, educators) to facilitate finding nodes in the data and a basis for triangulation. The following artifacts and structures were created through the Scanning Process. These are: survey questions for students; parent / guardian survey; Indigenous Secondary Student Engagement survey spring 2020.

District Profile for Coquitlam

Important themes in Coquitlam are typically those points of discussion that stopped us when we were reviewing data in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Advisory. Talking over what was collected and considering indicators like the six-year completion rate and the transition to post-secondary rates for Indigenous students helped us to see the bigger picture.

Themes

It was noted that the concept of Equity is not overtly evident in many policies and administrative procedures where it seems that it would be applicable. Also, the emphasis on the success of Indigenous Learners in the district needs to be improved. There were issues related to student connection and engagement to school and there was an inkling of this noted in parent conferences and survey data. Issues related to peer to peer connections and feeling safe at school were also observed.

Themes related to intervention included a process to systematically identify and support Indigenous Vulnerable Learners, and ongoing education professional development especially in respect to a deeper understanding of privilege, bias, and cultural sensitivity.

For students, there were some surprises in the survey results around engagement and avoidance. For example, the pressure that “schoolwork” had on students seemed more important to issue of engagement than otherwise anticipated. It suggests that this needs further investigation. The identification of parity and Equity gaps for Indigenous learners includes summary data like the six year completion rate but also extends to other gaps in what we expect students to experience in the time they spend in Coquitlam schools, as well as gaps in our own understanding of Equity and principles of Indigenous learning. There were also self-reported gaps for some Indigenous parents of elementary aged children about graduation and transition to post-secondary.

Implications

Deficit model

Looking at indigenous students through a deficit lens creates a gap. Some Indigenous students are successful and tell us that they love coming to school and these students are rightfully proud of their accomplishments. This fact cannot be lost in the larger discussion of Equity. (Source Indigenous Student Survey Spring 2020 "I want to go to school and make something of myself." Student in Grade 9 at Centennial.) In fact, almost all data provided by students, whether in achievement terms or in their survey feedback, demonstrates a bi-modal representation. That is, approximately 50% of indigenous students are doing well or feel good about their school experiences, and about 50% of students feel they are not doing well, and do not like school. It is important to learn about what makes some students feel successful, in order to build on strength.

Lack of understanding from staff

This can obscure the fact that Indigenous students who struggle are a complex group and listening to the student voice will help us to make changes that overcome the Equity gap. (Source Indigenous Student Survey Spring 2020. "I sometimes don't go because I am behind and need to catch up" - student in Grade 12 at Dr. Charles Best.) Knowing students and understanding them as people in a culturally sensitive way is paramount to success.

Sharing educational research findings may help

Indigenous parents of elementary aged children tell us that they do not know what comes next for graduation and transition to post-secondary. In comparison, high SES parents who can afford enrichment and opportunity, may be aware of the link between early learning and later success (source Indigenous Parent Survey Spring 2019).

Getting the best out of data

Commonly used measures like the Six Year Completion Rate give us a number for the size of the Equity gap. This number does not tell us how many students graduate with levels of success that make transition to post-secondary unlikely or how many students are taking so long to graduate that they are receive an Adult Dogwood rather than a regular Dogwood. Decisions for post-secondary do not happen because of a percentage increase in the completion rate - they happen if students have a positive connection to school and pass the courses.

Using what we know

Equity may be most easily seen in economics or politics, but education gives us a lens where we can see the Equity gap play out daily. Indigenous students tell us that they are stressed and anxious, and while this may be true for non-indigenous students, the effect for Indigenous learners is magnified. A larger proportion of Indigenous students are in care or are in low income. (Source Indigenous Secondary Student Survey Spring 2020 "I am just so shy and feel like I'm being judged by other kids in the school - because we are poor and my clothes are second hand" - student in grade 8 at Scott Creek.)

Acting as leaders

District and School Leadership need to emphasize the importance in the Equity Scan results to underscore the urgency of it in SD43 – Research at any level outlines the importance of senior leaders in an organization.

When feedback is about needing more time to think

In conversations of Equity, Privilege and Bias some people indicated a need for time, to process and digest what they were hearing and learning about. While for each this is a personal journey towards understanding, the notion of requiring time to process, is an obstacle to immediate action. It is important then to continue the learning in an intentional and meaningful way to ensure urgency of action (source feedback from Stina Brown session on Equity, Privilege and Bias).

Working with valued partners

Collaborative work with valued partners and rights holders rather than agreement on a consensus statement about Equity will bring about change. This will improve success for Indigenous students and benefit others – source Equity Scan model that was accepted by all parties with a signature on the line.

Key Findings

Using the rubric to score the District on aspects of the four pillars, did not seem appropriate at this time. Greater depth of understanding and engagement with Equity concepts will provide a more accurate assessment of where the District falls on each pillar continuum. Rating without context leads to inaccuracies.

Keeping the momentum going

The importance of momentum and the will to ensure that Equity, remains a key focus in Coquitlam. To do this, the importance of Equity must be made evident and overt across many aspects of the organization and tied directly to action. Equity will be an aspect in our new strategic plan, be incorporated in policy and procedure, and used as a lens for learner support and teacher professional development. The personal and professional benefits of making SD43 a better place to learn and work will help to keep the focus on Equity.

Theory of Change in Equity Action Plan in Coquitlam

Our theory of change has emerged over the past year and incorporates a range of evidence. Our theory of change asks for Equity for Indigenous learners in SD43, right now. To achieve this goal, we will use evidence and the Indigenous Success model for planning and ensure staff participation in Indigenous learning and actions for Equity. Not all the following will involve change, some may be helped by simpler and better data, some will need minor adjustments in the way that planning is carried out.

In developing the pillar, Learning Profile we plan to establish systems that will assist in identification of issues as they arise, including systems in place for keeping track of achievement for Indigenous learners. The use of class reviews and school needs assessment to identify indigenous students for support and a regular Indigenous student focus to School Based Team.

We recognize that Indigenous educators and support staff must be part of the process moving forward so that their unique worldview can provide insight into what is necessary for change. SLP's will be developed for those students who, without an IEP, would benefit from targeted intervention and a plan. This will be done with a view to evidence that has been looked at with the lens of the Equity Scan. All school-based teams should have an emphasis on Indigenous Learning to ensure staff is well prepared and to lessen the demands on the Aboriginal team to provide this learning.

With respect to the pillar, Policy and Governance, a research analyst and other critical friends will be used to highlight policy and procedures where the requirement for Equity and the resulting needs for support for Indigenous Learners is silent. As per Board processes staff will recommend Policy change to the School Board and then the Board process of a review and input from stakeholders will ensure applicable revisions. Updating district policies and procedures to reflect Equity in Action for Indigenous students will provide other benefits to the district. For example, by demonstrating that Equity is a value in the district will encourage well prepared applicants to seek careers in the district. Further, the Board and senior staff will commit to have Equity as a pillar of their own professional development and share insights.

There is also room to ensure Equity and/or Indigenous achievement is part of each schools' Action Plan for Learning; review policies/procedures to reflect dedication to Equity in budgets, employment/hiring and specific service to Indigenous learners; and develop an Indigenous parent, family and community engagement policy or strategy

In considering the pillar, Learning Environment, the goal is to Increase/improve parent and student engagement and safety through insights gained from survey data and forums that bring the student voice and parent comments to the dialogue. As well, a regular review of connection to school and safety will act as protective factor for vulnerable learners, including looking at things like Indigenous students who feel bullied or uncomfortable.

Also, the District will continue to:

- Focus on significant intentional and regular adult/student relationship to foster success for vulnerable youth with specific attention to the needs of Indigenous student
- Ensure peer to peer connection when that is not evident in student behavior.
- Co-create and co-plan opportunities in and out of school to ensure equitable participation by all groups.
- Use the Indigenous Education Center at Millside as a culturally appropriate way to provide connection with adults and among students.
- Continue plans to develop "Big House" as a culturally relevant anchor for those initiatives.
- Review school-based resources to vet appropriateness in classroom within the Equity Scan model.
- Continue supporting Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives via the curriculum
- Continue Professional Development with respect Equity, Bias and Privilege

- Identify and intervene in culturally appropriate ways with students and families who are disconnected or not engaged.

The pillar, Pedagogical Core will involve continued deliberate and intentional professional development with senior staff, administrators, and support staff to deepen understanding of Equity, Privilege and Bias to facilitate change. Efforts will be made to engage management, front-line teachers and support staff in targeted professional development related Equity Privilege and Bias to remove systemic racism. To facilitate this, teacher representation on Aboriginal Education Advisory committee must happen in the next school year.

We will use lead administrators to coordinate this work and demonstrate what can be achieved when attention is paid to Equity. As well, Equity will be an aspect in the strategic plan, Directions 2025.

Findings from these efforts will become obvious as further work, especially with respect to data, is completed. The Equity Action Plan is slightly delayed as is the final list of all forms of data that we will use to track progress towards Equity is still being developed. The impact of COVID-19 has been a factor in definitively defining all very specific strategies, actions, and practices. At this point in time, we are looking at data as if we are conducting an inquiry and will be in a better position to define our indicators of successes early in the new school year.

Community Engagement/Travel

The district acknowledges the support of the Ministry of Education in the form of grant monies to work alongside rights holders and partners. Monies were spent for dinner meetings with the Kwikwetlem First Nation to review Equity Scan and LEA, and with the purpose of listening to the parent voices to create the 'Learning Plan'.

Also, monies were spent for a Research Analyst contract work to assist in creating meaningful surveys, providing analysis of policy, and assisting with the completion of the Equity Scan report.

This work occurred at several locations including the Kwikwetlem First Nation, the Coquitlam School District Board Office, Winslow as well as virtual meetings, telephone calls, email communications.

Learning Profile Tool impact

Support from the Ministry includes the provision of specialized data that is provided through the confidential SharePoint site. This data is used to support Indigenous student success. For example, a list of each at risk student was provided to their receptive schools, and the school was asked to formulate a plan for each targeted student. Indigenous Education staff followed up with students who were no longer part of the system, and/or may have disengaged.

It is the case that this data can be cumbersome or out of date. Further, it can be a challenge to blend SharePoint data with evidence we see our roles and use it to improve Equity for Indigenous students. The Equity in Action project may help us use the "Learning Profile" more effectively and construct

change using the Learning Profile. In the meantime, any suggestions of ways to combine SharePoint data with other metrics would be helpful and we will do the same from the district side.

Looking for examples of how the Coquitlam leadership teams used this information shows the following benefits and gaps in this data source.

It is helpful to be able to access lists of students, less helpful if this data is out of date. The data was particularly useful at identifying a few students who had no longer had contact with the District. Virtually all current students were on the radar of school staff and had plans; however, very few had not returned to school, disengaged, or had moved away. It allowed the District an opportunity for clarity on one measure.

The data in the tool was dated. Regular ongoing access to “pulled data” and “real time data” is important and this, in its current form, does not provide it. It was useful as a double check. However, in the district, we currently conduct onsite needs assessments at each site and find these more helpful. Access accuracy and timelines of data is critical.

The “number to parity” feature is extremely interesting and promising. We are working on a way to operationalize that information more systemically. Regular, ongoing access to the Learning Profile Tool is problematic. The bureaucracy of allowing only 3 senior district personnel to access the Ministry SharePoint site is a cumbersome process. The data also needs to be updated more frequently and in as close to “real time” as possible. We have not used this tool to facilitate conversations with school staff yet.

Staff conducted home visits, TEAMS meetings, and regular phone conversations and was included in each school’s vulnerable Teams. Each school identified at risk or disengaged indigenous students and attempted support. For some, remote learning continued to pose a challenge, despite intervention.

Each indigenous child/family was provided with learning resources, emphasizing aboriginal worldviews and perspectives from the department. The Indigenous Education Department has created new on-line presentations and videos for teachers and students to support First People’s Principles of Learning.

Ensuring that all educators will receive consistent and persistent and equitable professional development in data access is always a challenge.

Striving for Equity during a Pandemic

Services and direct supports to Indigenous learners during the COVID-19 pandemic were delivered in different ways, but the commitment to these learners did not change. Indigenous staff was not reallocated to other departments during the pandemic and continued to support their students and families virtually, and physical distancing home visits. All Indigenous students received a hard copy age and culturally appropriate learning resource that was during the Pandemic

Although communication became mostly virtual and was limited by the restrictions of quarantine, Indigenous perspectives were not forgotten, nor were the language and cultural experiences any less


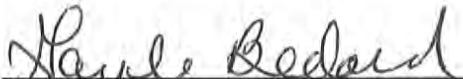

important. The knowledge of the Aboriginal Education staff with respect to Indigenous students and their families and communities made continuity of care for these students a priority for the district.

The school District ensure that each school had vulnerable learner support team, and Indigenous Education staff worked with school is provide additional support during this most trying time. In some respect, it was widely felt that Indigenous education staff became more valuable during this time.

Recommendations from the district

Coquitlam recommends the Ministry continue support for Equity for indigenous learners now, rather than Equity at some point in the future and believe that this message will energize the project.

The Equity Scan process often appears as overwhelming for staffs who work hard to support students, balance teaching responsibilities in a pandemic and maintain a healthy balance at work and home. If leadership demonstrates their support for this goal, reaching it will become easier and we recommend all leadership including school districts, the Ministry and related organizations like post-secondary institutions, share their experience of working for Equity for Indigenous students.

<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED on the <u>25th</u> day of <u>June</u> 2020</p>	<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED on the <u>25</u> day of <u>June</u>, 2020</p>
<p> _____ (signature) Patricia Gartland Superintendent School District No.43</p>	<p> _____ (signature) Gayle Bedard District Principal of Indigenous Education School District No. 43</p>
<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED on the <u>25th</u> day of <u>June</u> 2020</p>	<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED on the ____ day of _____, 2020, on behalf of the Province by its duly authorized signatory</p>
<p> _____ (signature) Carrie Clark Equity in Action Community Member</p>	<p>_____ Kaleb Child Director, Indigenous Education Learning Division Ministry of Education</p>



Appendices

Appendix A1: Youth Engagement Workshop Questions

Appendix A2: Parent/Guardian Survey

Appendix A3: Synopsis of Indigenous Data

Appendix B1: Indigenous Secondary Student Survey

Appendix B2: Synopsis of High School Survey

Appendix C: Policy and Governance

*Appendix D: Indigenous Education Council
Equity Scan, Directions and Comments*

Appendix E: Student Learning Plan - DRAFT



Appendix A1 Youth Engagement Workshop Questions

Youth Engagement Facilitated Session at Winslow – Grades 7 to 12

Equity Scan – Learning Environment Pillar

Students grades 7 to 12 were invited to a one day facilitated session with the Indigenous Education Department staff. Upon arrival the students were given 9 round dots, and they were to visit each chart and place the dot on a part of the chart reflective of their thoughts / feelings. The 9 questions were:

1. Do you like school? (Yes / No)
2. Do Adults in your school treat all students fairly? (Yes / No)
3. When you are having challenges at school, do you go to someone for help? (Yes / No)
4. Is your cultural identity an important part of who you are? (Yes / No)
5. Do you feel students and staff generally respect your Indigenous culture? (Yes / No)
6. Do you feel safe at school? (Yes / No)
7. Have you ever felt bullied, teased, picked on or uncomfortable at school? (Yes / No)
8. Do you feel there is enough support for you at school? (Yes / No)
9. Do you feel school is preparing you for your future after grade 12? (Yes / No)

After the students placed their dots on the charts, we fed the students their breakfast at designated tables for group work after eating.

The Indigenous Youth Workers facilitated discussion at each chart asking the same questions for each chart:

- What do you notice about this chart?
- Why would students choose no?
- What would students choose yes?
- What recommendations could you give to change this?

For some charts, questions were added:

- How do adults treat students differently?
- Who are the people students can go to for help?
- What is identity?

The last activity done was each group create their own school based on the day's discussion.



Appendix A2 Parent/Guardian Survey

Please choose the response that best fits the experience of your child at school. If you have more than one child at a school in Coquitlam, complete a separate form for each child.

My child is in:

- Primary Kindergarten to Grade 3
- Intermediate Grade 4 to 7
- Grade 8 to 10
- Grade 11 to 12

My child is a:

- Boy
- Girl

1. My child/ren enjoys going to school.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. My child is happy in his or her classroom.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
3. My child's school is preparing them for the next academic year.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
4. My child has made good progress organizing their school work.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
5. My child has made good progress in his or her relationships with others.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

6. My child has found someone he or she can count on for help at school.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
7. My family's indigenous heritage is respected at my child's school.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
8. My child has complained about bullying or conflict at school this year.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
9. I am satisfied with the way my child's school is dealing with bullying/ conflict or other issues.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
10. Staff are receptive to parent concerns about bullying / conflict or other issues.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
11. The school community treats all students fairly.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
12. The school is preparing my child for a future after grade 12.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

End of survey. Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.



Appendix A3: Synopsis of Indigenous Data for SD 43, 2019

Introduction

Support for work to increase Aboriginal student success and to bring Aboriginal cultural learning to all students began with an Enhancement Agreement for 2013 to 2018.

An update on some of the goals is presented here:

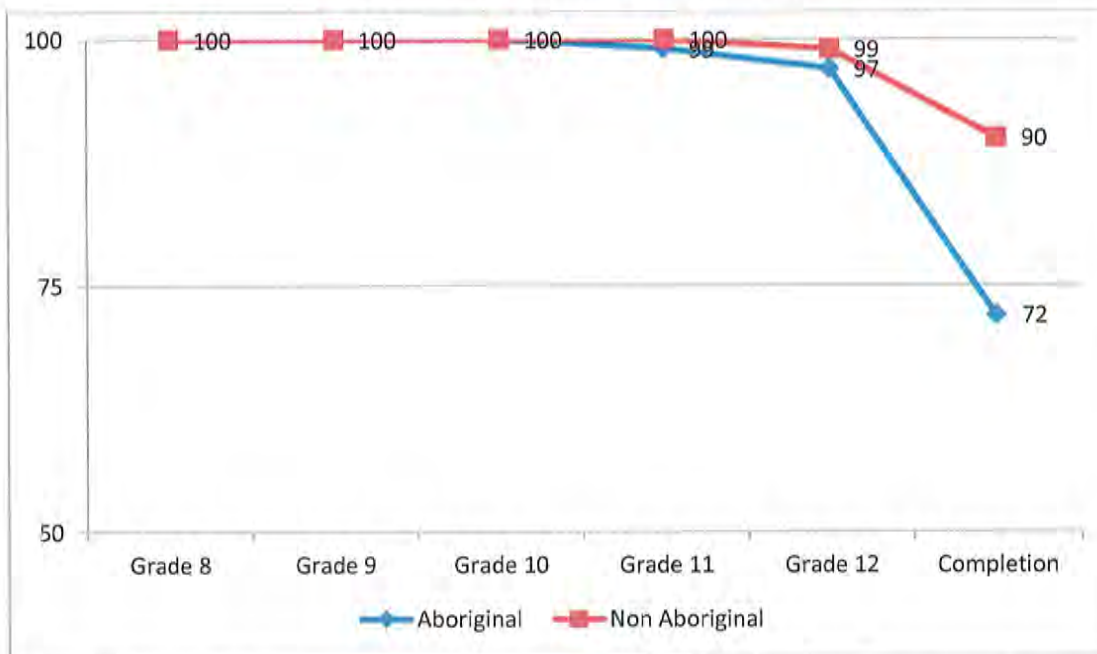
Preliminary goals were set for academic achievement, attendance, transition, satisfaction, literacy and numeracy, post-secondary transition, cultural presence, and continued attention to new measures. Finding evidence to measure improvements remains a challenge but a combination of Ministry data and school and classroom knowledge as well as community and parent feedback and student voice may give direction.

Disentangling any gap in achievement remains a complex goal.

A) COMPLETION RATE IN SIMILAR METRO DISTRICTS (source Ministry of Education AHWD)

District	Year	Coquitlam	Maple Ridge	Burnaby	Province
Total Enrolment	2017/18	33157	15074	25482	563245
All Aboriginal Enrolment	2017/18	1445	1421	860	67616
Total Six Year Completion Rate	2017/18	91%	92%	88%	86%
Aboriginal Completion Rate	2017/18	72%	85%	71%	70%

Progress of students entering Grade 8 in Coquitlam



Progress for Aboriginal students and their non-Aboriginal peers is almost identical to grade 12, but when those students who are in grade 12 but who need the sixth year to complete are considered, a lower per cent of Aboriginal students are able to successfully graduate.

What are these students missing that prevents completion?

Moving ahead with the EA requires 1) Aboriginal resources like the Equity Scan; 2) solid educational research that focuses on good practice like Jennifer Katz's "Teaching to Diversity. The three-block model of Universal design for learning"; 3) insights from educational research that is not specific to Aboriginal success; 4) observations from staff on their own practice in Coquitlam schools.

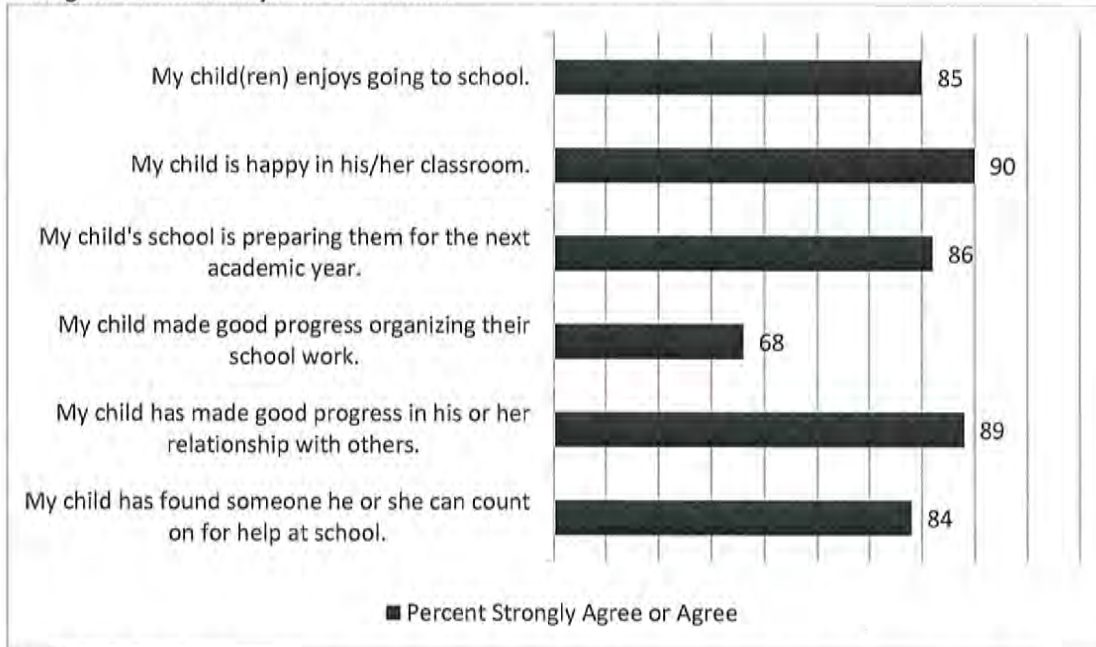
With small numbers, it is possible to observe the effect of the gender balance of aboriginal girls to boys (675:736), or the % of schools with less than 5 Aboriginal students enrolled (39%), the number of Aboriginal students who have a Learning Disabilities designation (167 out of the 438 special needs), with a Behavioural Disabilities (109) or gifted (43). Aboriginal students are overrepresented in LD 38%:28%, BD 25%:11%, and underrepresented in Gifted (10%:42 %) compared to non-Aboriginal. Source Ministry of Education AHWD 2017/18

B) Enhancement Agreement Data Parents

Our data comes from an online survey of 239 Aboriginal parents in June 2019 and included written comments to explain their choice.

Parents, for the most part, are not teachers. They have many different backgrounds, mechanic, or doctor and what they say about their children is valuable. Despite being feeling mostly positive, parents said anxiety, autism or shyness made enjoying school difficult for their child, especially when children formed relationships or needed to ask for help. Some parents noted that organizing schoolwork was a challenge. This suggests that parents are likely realistic about their child's progress.

Aboriginal Parent Survey June 2019 Online



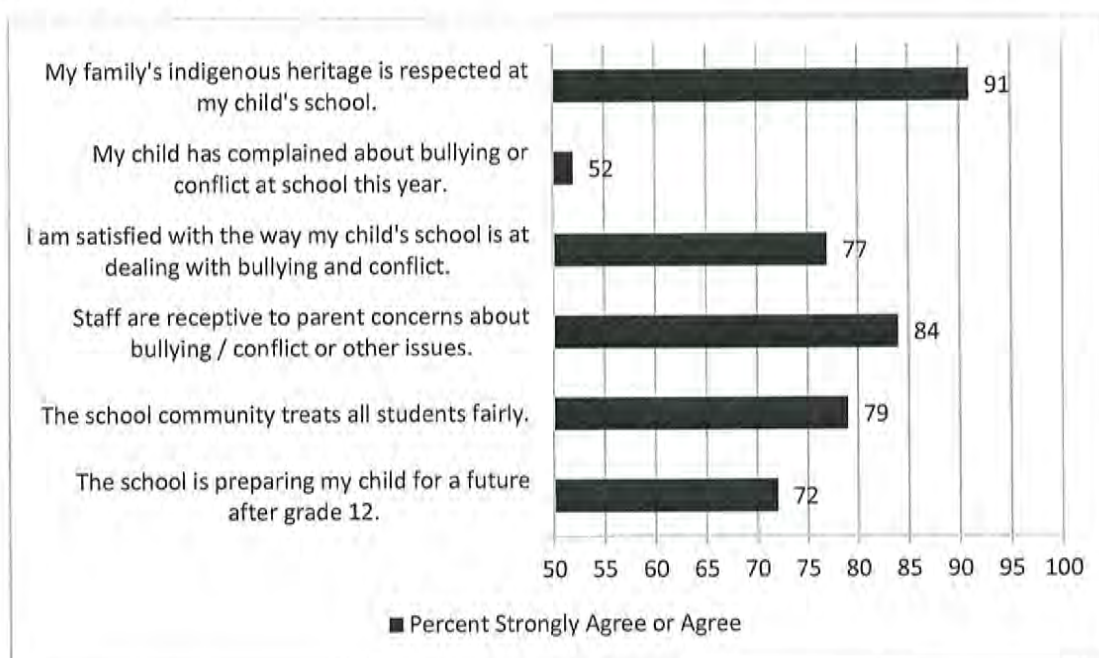
Analysis

A study of students in early primary found that early science learning led to better science achievement later in school. It may help Aboriginal parents so they can advocate for their child when they begin school. Some parents noted that their children were in K so that they were unsure of response about preparation for the next year.

About half of parents said their children had complained about bullying at school this year. The school culture receives a good mark for respect, and a majority were satisfied with the way incidents were resolved.

It was reassuring to see a high number who agreed their Aboriginal heritage was respected and a majority agreed that the school treats students fairly.

Aboriginal Parent Survey June 2019 Online



Analysis:

The impact of the residential school history on student achievement is well described in documents like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and other official rulings. Coquitlam Aboriginal parents were positive about the relationship with the school for the most part but might benefit from knowing how diversity is taught in the classroom.

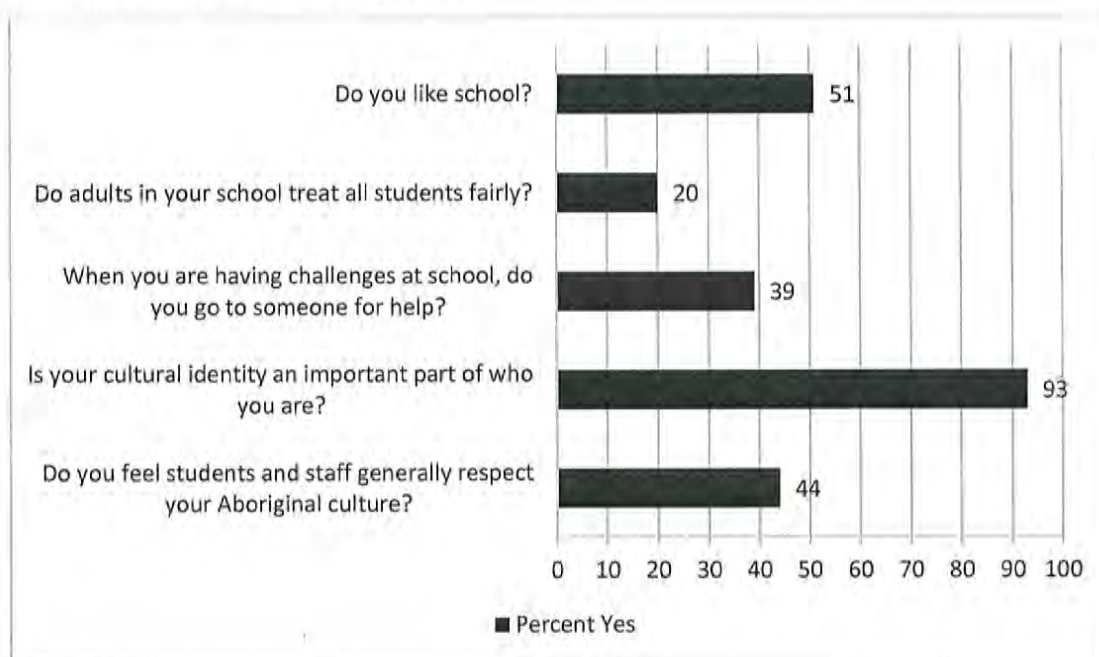
A study of students found that those who had fixed ways of thinking about success had less success than those who were open to thinking in new ways. This was the case regardless of the socio-economic status of the student. The positive influence of the Aboriginal Support Worker in the school acting on behalf of their child is mentioned by parents as helping their child succeed.

The conclusions of the TRC are not debatable. The increased numbers of Aboriginal students who are graduating with advanced degrees in education, law, or medicine provide solid role models for students, especially those facing challenges like being In Care. Coquitlam enrolls 74 students under CCO, of which 40 or 54% are Aboriginal. This is 3% of the Aboriginal enrolment. The six-year completion rate for Aboriginal CCO is masked because of the small number. Source AHWD 2017/18.

C) Students

Our data comes from a one-day session held on February 26, 2019 with Aboriginal District Principal Gayle Bedard and others together with 46 students in grades 7 to 12. Students were asked to respond with a “yes” or “no” answer to a set of questions and then to comment on the reasons why students would choose either answer. Students were asked for recommendations on how to change the situation described by the results of what was asked.

Youth Voice session February 2019 in person



Like their parents, students wrote in comments to explain their answers. Students were less positive about liking school than parents thought when they were asked about their child. Students were able to generate good suggestions about how to improve school, but some said that they had no friends and others felt that the climate did not work for them and were not comfortable at school.

Students were knowledgeable about Aboriginal issues and wanted to have these addressed directly instead of as part of exercises where knowledge or respect might be limited. It may help to look deeper at some of the concerns generated by Coquitlam student voices, for example sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) which might be unnoticed. Students talked about fairness, including teachers leaving for maternity leave as being problematic.

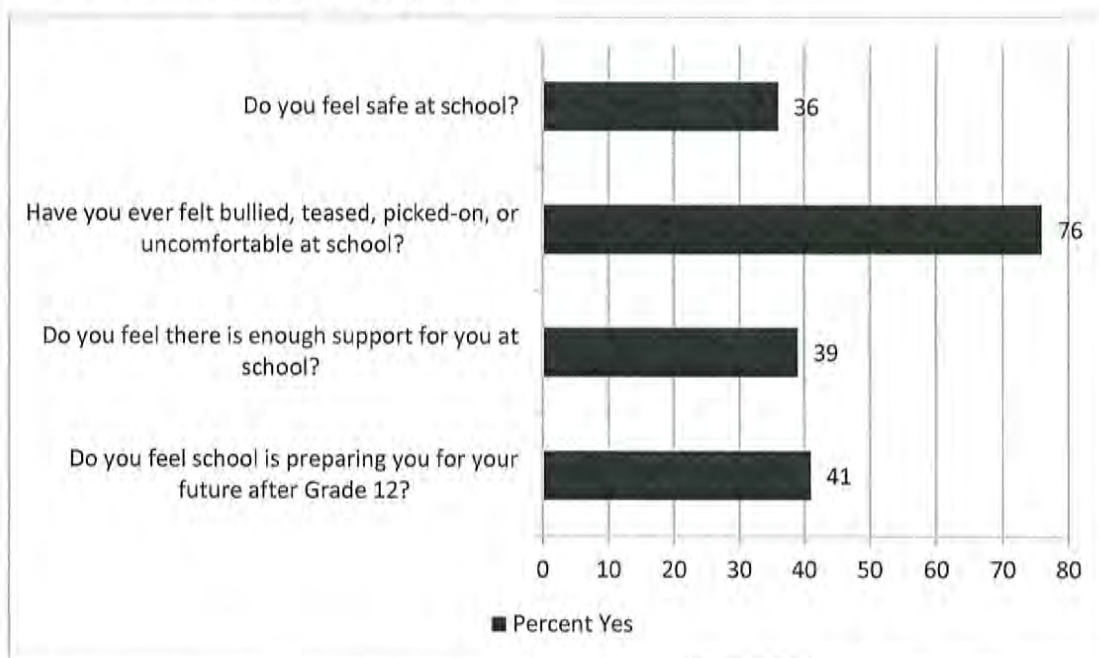
Students learn what is presented to them in the classroom and are directly affected by the Four Pillars of the Equity Scan including Policy and Governance, Learning Environment, Pedagogical Core, and Learning Profile. Using a resource like Teaching to Diversity demonstrates that a shift from equality to equity is present in the practise and decision making of the school and district.

Looking at research, a study of students writing the SAT (a test needed to get into post-secondary) in America found that a proportion of students who chose not to write were in fact qualified for university admission. Writing the test would have qualified them for admission.

The idea is that secondary aged students missed opportunities that were in their best interest and this had a negative effect on their life success. The solution in the SAT case was to make writing the required exam part of the school year instead of something that was done independently. Helping parents and making it simple for students to take advantage of possibilities may improve student success.

Looking further at students feeling about safety and support suggested that students are not all feeling positive about being at school.

Youth Voice session February 2019 in person



Further work is needed to understand what concerns are leading to these results. Students mentioned a need for trust in the system and noted that time was a pressure for them in their learning, especially time with Aboriginal staff and this may lead to feeling unsupported.

Of concern is the variety of feelings, mostly negative, that students had about school. Students mentioned some students being perceived as smarter. This change can best be done within the work of the Equity Scan.

Looking at research, a study of student expectations found that students substantively benefit from teacher opinion about their educational potential.

For example, a student commented that "teachers know about student broken homes and treat us unfairly or judge or blame us." Whether or not the teacher behaves in this way is not known, but the perception around educational potential is clear.

Of note is the comparison of parents (72%) who thought that the school is preparing their child for their future after grade 12 and the 41% of students who answered "yes" to the same question.

D) Administrator Data

Our data comes from a "Learning without Boundaries" meeting on January 17, 2019 with staff.

Participants were asked to discuss the EA data using a model that asks participants to think about the evidence using a series of linked questions. Using a model like this helps to organize evidence in practical ways so that it is possible to move from evidence to insight to action.

Staff noted a need for continued improvement, problems around difficulty in interpreting data and the wide diversity of learners represented in Coquitlam. A need for leadership for Aboriginal culture and more work around defining what we do for testing and inclusion.

E) Administrator Data

Our data comes from a principal's meeting that included Table Talk in 2019.

Administrators were asked to comment on the Student Voice data and noted that students talked a lot about engagement and relationships. Support for the Equity Scan was included in the comments as well as concerns about data (sample for the student voice was 46 students and included a cross section of Aboriginal students), a need to go deeper and some ideas around programs like career education or additions like going outside to make learning an experience students will like to be a part.

Data is limited but an achievement gap persists despite efforts to change this reality.

ACADEMIC ELEMENTARY Source Ministry of Education AHWD

Assessment 2017/18	#		% Participation		% Emerging		% On Track		% Extending	
	Abor	N-Ab	Abor	N-Ab	Abor	N-Ab	Abor	N-Ab	Abor	N-Ab
FSA 4 Reading	66	1773	80%	82%	26%	20%	65%	65%	9%	15%
FSA 4 Numeracy	64	1775	77%	82%	48%	31%	50%	63%	2%	6%
FSA 7 Reading	90	1829	78%	84%	40%	20%	58%	75%	2%	6%
FSA 7 Numeracy	87	1813	75%	83%	60%	31%	31%	56%	9%	13%

Aboriginal students are less likely to meet expectations in reading and numeracy as measured by the FSA. The gap is larger in Numeracy Grade 7 with 60% of writers at the Emerging Level.

In what ways do Aboriginal students who are successful differ from those not participating or achieving Emerging success or similar mark?

ACADEMIC SECONDARY

Assessment 2017/18	# Assigned Final Mark		% C- or better		% C+ or better	
	Abor	N-Ab	Abor	N-Ab	Abor	N-Ab
English 10	138	2756	97%	98%	-	-
Foundations & Pre-Calculus Math 10	138	2756	95%	96%	-	-
English 12	66	2714	97%	97%	70%	74%
Comm 12	16	156	100%	98%	81%	48%

Starting in 2016/17 course based final exams are being replaced by Numeracy and Literacy assessments. Source Ministry of Education AHWD

F) Conclusion

The area of focus suggested by the extensive discussions with students, administrator and the online survey of parents is the gap between parents and students in response to questions about respect for Aboriginal culture.

Group	Question	% Positive
Students	Do you feel students and staff generally respect your Aboriginal culture?	44% said Yes rather than No
Parents	My family's Indigenous heritage is respected at my child's school.	91% Strongly Agree or Agree

G) Possible Next Steps for the Enhancement Agreement

Analysis

That most parents felt comfortable to say that their heritage is respected at their child's school is reassuring. However, this was tempered by comments that suggested parent feelings ranged from a cautious "maybe" to feeling that the respect is "more anthropological than modern" to "respected but not sure it (cultural heritage) is understood."

Students were clear in the comments asking for a greater range of cultural events, Aboriginal extracurricular activities, and language. The theme of acknowledging Aboriginal culture not segregating was mentioned, as well as less negativity, stereotypes, and misunderstanding of Aboriginal issues.

The Aboriginal community has set out resources to use to promote equity and this forms part of this paper.

Looking at the data it is useful to consider:

1. Vigorously continue the work of the Equity Scan and the TRC to improve the climate
2. Continue using a model of inclusion for improved practice

As well, other research findings in education may help to focus thinking:

- Ensure parents recognize that early experiences count science as early as kindergarten/grade one
- Looking at effects of student thinking and teacher expectations for educational potential of students
- Underst Vinopal, K., & Holt, S. B. (2019). Rookie Mistakes: The Interplay of Teacher Experience and Racial Representation. *Educational Researcher*, 48(7), 421–437. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X19867699> and the effect of missed opportunities on later success, especially when not participating could be overcome

And

- Engage with evidence to increase understanding by all stakeholders
- Other ideas that may be effective.

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Appendix B1 Indigenous Secondary Student Survey, Spring 2020

Indigenous Education Department, Coquitlam School District #43

1. Introduction

This paper introduces a survey for Indigenous students at secondary schools in the Coquitlam School District. It looks at the process by which engagement avoidance influences non-completion. The evidence will support the Enhancement Agreement (EA) between local Indigenous communities and the district to improve Indigenous student completion. It will also provide a basis for improving policy and governance and wider research.

Improving completion and transition to post-secondary rates for Indigenous students has been an EA goal since its inception. However, despite efforts by community, district and province, the work of the TRC, the Equity Scan, UNDRIP, and the use of Aboriginal principles of learning in schools an achievement gap stubbornly persists.

2. What do you know?

We know that the talent pool for Indigenous students is deep and at this time, during the current Covid-19 pandemic, we recognize our responsibility to help all students meet their potential and contribute to recovery of the public school system. We also know that indigenous students face challenges that work against their success in completing secondary school and transitioning to post-secondary. We know this is the case because these rates do not mirror the total population.

3. How are you doing this?

Our goal is a short survey, conversational in tone and which the Aboriginal staff can interact with the student to complete. Our survey does not ask all the questions about avoidance engagement, in part because schools are busy places, and because there is little research on the process by which non-completion happens. A triangulation with the provincial learning survey and Equity Scan insights may help determine if we underestimate the prevalence of factors that lead to non-completion.

4. The survey seems negative why not balance this with positive questions as well?

It is useful to look at a single factor at a time to be able to make conclusions about it. Some other time, we could use the same strategy to find out the influence of positive factors on completion, right now because equity is not achieved, looking at a single negative factor seems reasonable.

5. What is needed?

It will be useful to describe the thinking around a single factor (in this case engagement avoidance) and use group data to do statistical analysis for students at risk, those on the margin, and those who are likely to successfully complete school. At some point, it may be useful to develop a similar stratified sample of n-IS to survey.

Administering the survey anonymously will take away the feeling of being stereotyped that students express when deficits are discussed. It will allow professionals the opportunity to engage with data in round tables because they administered the questions and give an opportunity for staff to have informal discussions with students after the survey is done. For example, what went well for the student this school year and restore positivity and optimism.

For this survey, *engagement avoidance* is a multifaceted term that takes in behavioral, emotional, and cognition factors and which is malleable. Our focus is the thinking that goes on when student disengage. Specifically, at,

- a. What thinking was behind the process of engagement avoidance?
- b. How often did these thoughts happen?
- c. How intense were the thoughts for the individual?
- d. What action did the individual take as a result?
- e. What time of year were these thoughts most common?

The questions are written as a first step to see if insights come out of the statistical analysis. A student who avoids engaging because of a death in the family is not the same as someone who avoids engaging because they are thinking about their low reading ability and that they cannot keep up and a description of the data set will help.

To recap:

- a. A survey that is acceptable to students so that they will respond and
- b. Has a limited focus so that it will be quick and
- c. Is valid so the results mean something and
- d. Useful for Aboriginal staff and
- e. Sensitive enough to distinguish between groups so that scarce resources can be used appropriately.

6. How is the survey linked to the policy and governance pillar of the Equity Scan?

The policies of an organization show what is valued and provide guidance for best practice. Coquitlam will benefit from policies that flow the EA and related Equity Scan thinking. There is little research on what factors influence engagement avoidance, but we expect this will benefit Indigenous students, families, communities, and Canadians.

7. Script for administering survey

Obtain a list of Indigenous secondary students to call and administer the survey. (From Gayle Bedard)

"Hello, my name is (your name) and I am calling from the Aboriginal Education Department. May I speak with (student name)?"

If student answers, go ahead, or get a call back time.

"It is nice to speak with you (student name). The Aboriginal Education Department is calling all the Indigenous secondary school students in Coquitlam to invite them to complete a short survey. With your permission, I have a survey that I would like to do with you. The survey is approved by Aboriginal Principal Gayle Bedard."

"The survey is only ten questions long and will take about 15 minutes. Your name will **NOT BE USED** on the survey or in any reports. We will only look at survey data for Indigenous students in Coquitlam as a group."

"Is it okay to ask you the survey questions?"

"You can stop at any time or tell me to skip a question."

Ask survey questions and record responses using survey monkey. Add any comments the student makes.

"Thank you for participating in our survey."

“Are there any questions that you have related to your school year? If I cannot answer them now, I will get back to you as soon as I can. Maybe let us start with what went well this year?”

What grade are you in? 8 9 10 11 12

What gender do you identify with? Male Female Self Defined

1. Have you thought about avoiding school? (Avoiding school means checking out mentally or thinking about quitting.)
 - a. Yes..... a
 - b. No b
2. If the student answers no, above, encourage them to try the survey or if no again, ask them to think about someone else.
 - a. Answering for themselves a
 - b. Talking about what they know about someone else (a friend, sibling) b
3. Some students think about avoiding school most days, while others think about it occasionally. How often do you (or the other person) think about it?
 - a. Occasionally a
 - b. Sometimes b
 - c. Often c
 - d. Most days or everyday d
4. What kind of thoughts have you had about avoiding school? Last time I didn't want to go to school because:
 - a. Assignments too hard Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days a
 - b. Not enough help Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days b
 - c. Wish I had friends in class Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days c
 - d. Older than kids in my grade Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days d
 - e. No one likes me Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days e
 - f. Not like other kids at school Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days f
 - g. Not worth it because marks are low Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days g
 - h. Pressure from others not to go to school Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days h
 - i. Other (write in) Occasionally Sometimes Often Most days i
5. How intense were your thoughts about avoiding school when you had them the last time?
 - a. Mild..... a
 - b. Medium b
 - c. Strong c
6. What did you do when you last had thoughts of avoiding school?
 - a. Nothing went to class and did the work a
 - b. Went to class but checked out mentally..... b
 - c. Skipped by myself c
 - d. Skipped with other kids during school..... d
 - e. Other (write in) e
7. Who did you turn to for help when you last thought about avoiding school? Check all that apply.
 - a. No one a
 - b. Friends b
 - c. Family c
 - d. Aboriginal support staff d
 - e. Adult at school who cares about me e
 - f. Adult from my community or nation who care about me f
 - g. Relied on values that I gained from my Indigenous culture g
 - h. Other (write in) h

8. What times of the school year do you find you have the most thoughts about avoiding school?
- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| a. At the beginning of school | <input type="radio"/> | a |
| b. Vacation..... | <input type="radio"/> | b |
| c. Exams..... | <input type="radio"/> | c |
| d. Throughout year | <input type="radio"/> | d |
| e. End of year | <input type="radio"/> | e |
| f. Other (write in) | <input type="radio"/> | f |

9. Do you expect to complete secondary school (graduate with a Certificate of Graduation or Dogwood)?
- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|---|
| a. Yes..... | <input type="radio"/> | a |
| b. No | <input type="radio"/> | b |

10. What is your school goal for this year? Next year?

11. Do you expect to further your education after grade 12?
- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|---|
| a. Yes..... | <input type="radio"/> | a |
| b. No | <input type="radio"/> | b |

Do you want to make any comments about high school currently, or about furthering your education after grade 12?

My own notes (Aboriginal Staff)



Appendix B2 Synopsis of High School Survey

A) Introduction

This paper presents some results of the Indigenous Secondary Student Survey done in May 2020. The survey is part of ongoing efforts in SD43 to improve success for Indigenous students through collaborative efforts like the Enhancement Agreement, Local Education Agreement, Equity Scan, and the Equity in Action Project.

The survey looked at engagement avoidance to contribute to a dialogue about how students disengage from school and fail to complete. This was important because the primary indicator of equity for Indigenous students has been the six-year completion rate and transition to post-secondary numbers compared to their non-Indigenous peers. In 2018/19, 78% of Indigenous students and 92% of non-Indigenous students completed within six years of starting grade 8 for the first time. This gap means equity of opportunity is limited for Indigenous students at all types of post-secondary institutions, arts, trades, technical, research or teaching intensive.

Education remains the best route to meaningful employment and the means to develop a capacity to contribute to Canadian society and global affairs.

The Covid 19 pandemic has complicated the work but has not changed the determination to achieve equity for Indigenous students, their families, and communities. The collaborative process between the groups present at the Aboriginal Advisory is one of the greatest strengths of the efforts to achieve equity.

B) Indigenous Secondary Student Survey

Coquitlam enrolls 574 Indigenous students in grade 8 to 12, and 276 students (53%) responded to the survey. A telephone survey was done, with Aboriginal staff calling students individually and inviting them to participate. The survey was confidential and anonymous, and the questions were intended to be conversational in tone and staff made suggestions in the wording to simplify it. Students could choose not to answer any question or give a comment instead if they wished. Many students made comments to clarify their response.

The phone call also gave staff an opportunity to talk informally with students about their concerns on any topic and answer questions. The time and effort on both parts, staff, and student, represents a tremendous effort to make a connection, reduce stress for students and catch up with what is happening with them.

An individual phone call is an exceptional contribution to student well-being and mental health and support for Indigenous families through a pandemic. Good work!

C) Who participated?

- 276 students responded, 130 males, 136 females, and 3 who self-defined their gender
- Students at all grades answered, Gr 8 (20%); Gr 9 (22%); Gr 10 (18%); Gr 11 (18%); Gr 12 (22%)
- The three schools with the most respondents were Centennial (41); Riverside (27); Port Moody and Dr. Charles Best (25)
- Suwa'lkh (18)

- Schools with no respondents were Citadel; Eagle Mountain; Maple Creek; Minnehada; Summit
- If students felt uncomfortable answering questions, they could think about a friend etc. (19)

D) What did the survey ask about?

Students were asked about a single factor - avoiding school, which was defined as checking out mentally (mind wanders) or thinking about skipping or even quitting. How often this happened, possible reasons why, intensity of feelings, what they did when they felt this way and who they turned to for help. Students could choose to answer or not or make comments. They were also asked if they expected to graduate and if they expected to further their education after grade 12.

E) Results

1. Have you ever thought about avoiding school? (Avoiding school means checking out mentally (mind wanders) or thinking about skipping or even quitting.)		
Yes	146	55%
No	119	45%
2. How frequently do you (or the other person) think about it?		
Occasionally	76	41%
Sometimes	62	33%
Often	27	15%
Most days or every day	21	11%
3. What kind of thoughts did you have when you last thought about avoiding school? (Check all)		
Assignments too hard	83	
Wish I had friend in class	79	
I feel I don't belong (school or class)	61	
Not enough help	52	
Not worth it because marks are low	45	
Pressure from others not to go to school	30	
Older than kids in my grade	17	
4. How intense were your thoughts about avoiding school when you had them the last time?		
Mild thoughts	106	58%
Medium thoughts	53	29%
Strong thoughts	23	13%
5. What did you do when you last had thoughts of avoiding school?		
Nothing went to class and did the work	71	38%
Went to class but checked out mentally	69	37%
Skipped by myself	34	18%
Skipped with other kids during school	14	7%
Other (took last day before break)	1	
6. Who did you last turn to for help when you last thought about avoiding school? (Check all)		
No one	79	
Family	59	
Friends	52	
Aboriginal Support staff	26	
Adult at school who cares about me	20	
Adult from my community or band	0	

Relied on values that I gained from my Indigenous culture			3
Other (depends on when it is, significant other, turned to more than one source of help)			11
7. When times of the school year do you find you have these thoughts? (Check all))			
Throughout year			80
End of year			26
At the beginning of school			24
Exams			21
Vacation			15
Other (second half – burnout, end of first semester, winter, homework, group projects, tired, football)			44
8. Do you expect to complete secondary school (graduate with a Certificate of Graduation)?			
Yes		249	97%
No		9	3%
9. Do you expect to further your education after grade 12?			
Yes		222	88%
No		29	12%
10. What is the rank order of number of times each reason for disengaging was selected for each of the group of students who “occasionally”, “sometimes”, “often”, or “most days” think about avoiding school?			

What were you thinking about the last time?	How often do you think about avoiding school?			
	Occasionally Rank	Sometimes Rank	Often Rank	Most Days Rank
Assignments too hard	1 (given most)	1	4	1
Wish I had friends in class	2	2	1 (given most)	2
Not enough help	3	5	5	4
I feel I don't belong (school or class)	4	3	2	3
Not worth it because marks are low	5	4	3	5
Pressure from others not to go to school	6	6	6	6
Older than kids in my grade	7 (given least)	7	7 (given least)	7

All groups, except for those who “often” thought of avoiding school, gave “assignments too hard” the most. The “often” group gave “wished that they had friends in class” the most. It might be interesting to explore if students who avoid engagement “often” but not “most days” are lacking friends in class and do not feel they belong in school or class.

F) Comments made by students:

Respondents were mixed on their response to engagement avoidance. More than half (55%) did not think about avoiding school at all. Several students told us they would never miss school and that they enjoyed going to school.

Almost half (45%) did think about avoiding school. Several students avoided school and mentioned mental health, stress, health issues, gaming, bullying, being offered help but not feeling comfortable asking for it, hunger, not

getting along with others, low confidence, boredom, insomnia, tiredness, depression, anxiety, shyness, poverty and more.

One student mentioned being too far behind to catch up and did not have an answer to the question if they are going to college.

G) Discussion

The survey evidence presented here is preliminary, but on first look, there seems to be a reason for tremendous pride in the accomplishments of Indigenous students and concern that some young people are feeling stressed and anxious. More concerning too, is that they are stressed to the point they may check out mentally or avoid going to school. Not going to school regularly makes achieving equity of opportunity at post-secondary nearly impossible.

If we value equity and are willing to do more than to put a voice to a consensus statement, then it is through the collaborative efforts that it will come about. If we are looking for new ways to move forward as outlined in the Equity in Action Project, then the evidence most likely to produce improvement may be the voice of the students. The challenges students talk about appear more telling than reference to completion rates, reading, writing and math scores. The gap between Indigenous students and their non-Indigenous peers for these statistics may have value but including them in reports over multiple years have not produced change.

Parents told us in an online survey in October 2019 that their children are shy or anxious and this makes it hard for them to be successful. Indigenous parents of early elementary students told us they are unsure of what comes next in the process of K to 12 and were unable to answer questions about graduation and transition to post-secondary for their children. Helping Indigenous parents know what research says about the connection between early learning and later success can help to level the playing field by making every advantage available.

The policy and governance pillar of the Equity scan gives us the means to incorporate the incorporate the values we develop for equity into the policies and regulations of the Coquitlam School District. Now is the time to look closer at what is happening with Indigenous students and families and how this experience translates into a statistical picture that does not read like a story of someday soon, things will improve.

The Globe and Mail editorial for June 7th, 2020 talked about closing the Indigenous Education gap and concluded that “the goal in a June not far in the future, is for Indigenous teens to finish high school, and go on to more education and lifelong-success at the same rate as all other Canadians. This conclusion fits well with a comparison of six-year completion rate but is measuring a gap, year over year, what we mean when we say that we work for equity in action for Indigenous students?

Is this the best possible statement of what equity means for Indigenous students, families, and communities?



APPENDIX C Policy and Governance

1. How can the Policy and Governance Pillar of the Equity Scan benefit Coquitlam SD?

The process presents an opportunity to bring policy in line with changes in thinking about diversity and inclusion. The scan is specifically to improve equity for indigenous learners.

Policy is about achieving school district objectives through the use of regulations, laws and other instruments to deliver better outcomes. With better policy, the district becomes more efficient and professional practice more effective.

To support indigenous learner success, we already have a range of ways to deliver better outcomes like mandated curriculum, Enhancement Agreements, Local Education Plans developed with First Nations within district, insights from important documents like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and others. We have an opportunity to do this within Vision 2030, but why look at policy now?

2. Gap persists in the Dogwood Graduation rate (Aboriginal How are we doing? 2018/19)

- a. Of the 126 Aboriginal students in enrolled in Gr. 12 in 2018/19, 81 received a Dogwood (64%)
- b. Of 3,155 Non Aboriginal students in Gr. 12 in 2018/19, 2577 received a Dogwood (82%).

3. In the transition to Post Secondary

- a. Of the 100 Aboriginal Grade 12 graduates in 2014/15 (most recent data available), 30 transitioned to post-secondary in the first year (30%) and of these the largest number 17 entered community colleges (57%)
- b. Of the 2659 Non Aboriginal graduates in 2014/15, 1526 transitioned to PS in the first year (57%) and of these the largest number 781 entered research intensive institutions. (51%).

Learners choose the institution they want to attend. However, determining progress in equity requires that numbers be deconstructed. A decision to select an institution should be equitable as well as reflect the goals and capacity of the individual. A post-secondary education is a lifelong asset and a right.

4. The policy and governance pillar represents an opportunity by:

- a. Prioritizing values and making these explicit through what is included in policy
- b. Promoting a “whole” Coquitlam approach to inclusion
- c. Updating policy language to reflect new thinking
- d. Setting out responsibilities
- e. Allowing progress in equity to be documented.

5. The gain in equity for Indigenous students may be the major goal, but other gains are possible:

- a. Making the district more attractive as a place to work for forward thinking new hires
- b. Encouraging professional judgment in complex situations because the major points of the dialogue are well laid out and structures are in place for equity

- c. Creating a plain language policy that is easy to read for parents, students and other groups who have a stake in indigenous success
 - d. Requiring staff to review policy regularly to encourage attention to documents like the Enhancement Agreement which reference student, parent, and community voices.
- 6. What is in the Guided Inquiry Questions for Policy and Governance? (highly condensed)**
- i. Authority and decision making of district structures for equity
 - ii. Policies and practices to support equity
 - iii. How education for history and current realities for Indigenous learners is done
 - iv. Policy and agreements in budgets, hiring, for equity and services for indigenous learners
 - v. Indigenous parent, family, community engagement policy
 - vi. Description of local First Nation participation
 - vii. Policy around access to indigenous culture and language
 - viii. Ways to ensure indigenous languages are visible and valued.
- 7. What can we do with this Inquiry?**
- a. Proceed like any other Inquiry
 - b. Stay current with issues to help students and families dealing with what is presented on social media and in the news as racism and offer a model of a thoughtful response to equity
 - c. Keep effective communication with stakeholder groups
 - d. Make progress measurable so that you can respond to questions
 - e. Share the responsibility.

8. What complicates this Inquiry?

One of the challenges for policy revision seems to be - who is the targeted group?

For example, the Equity Scan includes two questions around indigenous language. One that refers to policy for access to indigenous language together with cultural programs and another that talks about processes for making language visible and a valued part of each learner's experience.

It's a bit complicated.

For example, the Local Education Agreement between the Kwikwetlem First Nation and the Board prioritizes language and culture for members and other indigenous students while the MOE curriculum prioritizes indigenous cultural and history learning for all students. While these goals are not mutually exclusive, some structures (e.g. role of Indigenous Support Workers) are not the same for the two groups.

9. Summary

The policy and governance pillar presents an opportunity to make practice more effective. It can be a mechanism for making the district a leader in promoting diversity and inclusion. Vision 2030, the District

Strategic plan and the contribution of schools putting in a meaningful goal for indigenous learners, Enhancement Agreement and Local Education Plan together with other support like the TRC will help.

We cannot ignore the gap in indigenous success nor can we view indigenous learners as a group through a deficit lens. Nothing in the goals of the policy and governance pillar is outside of the training and practice of the work of any school district in British Columbia. Good policy will advance equity.



APPENDIX D
Coquitlam SD43 Aboriginal Advisory Meeting

EQUITY SCAN

DIRECTIONS AND COMMENTS

<u>Policy & Governance</u>	<u>Learning Environment</u>
<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More guidelines. • Too much negative, so more positive direction. • Examine all board policies and admin procedures in regard to action rather than in-action. <p><u>Comments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of policies need equity lens. • Improve accountability. • Who would give direction on deciding these? • Outside 'eye' / critical eye. • Partner groups need to all complete the process (with people who understand/work with policy development) 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going into high schools, educate expectations for students. • We are at the very beginning of looking for racial bias and have no systems in place. • Families need to be consulted. <p><u>Comments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One environment won't encompass every learner. • Allowing students to open-up comfortably while hearing their concerns and expectations. Safe environment. • Uncertainty about what is inappropriate now, what contains racial bias (ie the term Indian does that mean the removal of the resource). • We have many very old / materials with significant bias.
<u>Learning Profile</u>	<u>Pedagogical Core</u>
<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's need to reflect and improve on plans to have better equity. • More contact with the families to work with the student education. • Gaps in leadership/honour role/gifted/programs of choice/scholarships. • Do more than lift the floor (grad rates), raise the expectations/equity for all. <p><u>Comments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learners' style of learning should be identified before a learning environment can be properly implemented. • For our indigenous learners, they are being stagnant. We need the percentages to improve with student numbers. • What are the biases that create barriers to POC/leadership, etc. • Talk about cultural bias (who do we select for student leaders? Generally people like us). • We need to support/hire indigenous teachers/staff (role models so kids see themselves). 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More education for the educators. • We need to get to the classroom level. <p><u>Comments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A potential goal would be to reduce the need for aboriginal youth workers because the system as a whole creates an environment where everyone can thrive. • A youth worker saving failing student = band-aid vs fostering environment for all = stopping the bleeding • Teachers don't want to be disrespectful, are afraid to 'get it wrong'. Fear of teaching what they don't know. Fear of approaching to learn.



APPENDIX E Draft Student Learning Plan



INDIGENOUS STUDENT LEARNING PLAN

BC's Framework for Enhancing Student Learning reflects a public commitment by education partners to work together to continuously improve student learning. They commit to addressing long-standing differences in performance among groups of students. (Framework for Enhancing Student Learning, 2019)

STUDENT INFORMATION

SCHOOL:

Name: _____

Grade: _____

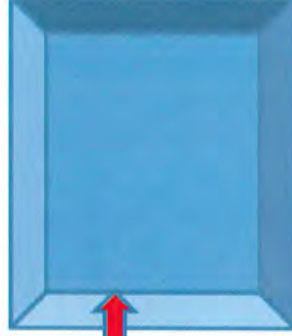
Who is on my learning team:

Parent/Guardian: _____

Indigenous Support: _____

Teacher: _____

School SLP lead: _____



Student Image

GETTING TO KNOW ME:

- I) What excites you and sparks your curiosity? (Who am I)?
- II) I feel most comfortable at school when ...
- III) I learn best when ...

Goal Area: *I can reflect on my work and experiences and tell others what I want to learn more about. (Self awareness)*

E.g. To help develop the connections within the school that would enable _____ to feel comfortable as a learner.

OBJECTIVE (Through collaboration with the SLP team develop a specific objective that is measurable/observable that can be tied into the goal)	STRATEGY What will be put into place to achieve this objective Model at the school: (Identify key individuals supporting the plan as well) KFN support model: (i.e. First Nation Student leadership connection/ First Nation support to listen to the student's stories about their school day)
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Goal Area: *I can participate and contribute in activities that make my classroom and school a better place. (sense of belonging)*

E.g. To develop the strength to read fluently at grade level.

OBJECTIVE (Through collaboration with the SLP team develop a specific objective that is measurable/observable that can be tied into the goal)	STRATEGY What will be put into place to achieve this objective Model at the school: (Identify key individuals supporting the plan as well) KFN support model: (i.e. Afterschool support program in the community hall)
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Goal Area: *I learn best when I can connect my learning with my experiences and efforts. (Literacy, Numeracy, social/communication)*

E.g. To develop the strength to read fluently at grade level.

OBJECTIVE (Through collaboration with the SLP team develop a specific objective that is measurable/observable that can be tied into the goal)	STRATEGY What will be put into place to achieve this objective Model at the school: (Identify key individuals supporting the plan as well) KFN support model: (i.e. Afterschool support program in the community hall)
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BUILDING MY STORY

This section displays a continuity of learning for the student: **Completed at year's end and provided as the student's self-assessment based on the Core Competencies (goals above). Can be communicated using format that student prefers (Digital presentation, oral presentation, written, artistic/craft representation etc.)**

HEARST