



**Central Okanagan  
Public Schools**

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Together We Learn

# Annual Enhancing Student Learning Report 2023

Review of Year 3 of the Central Okanagan Public  
Schools 2021 – 2026 Strategic Plan

Kevin Kaardal, Superintendent of Schools/CEO  
September 2023 - Central Okanagan Public Schools

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## Introduction: District Context

Central Okanagan Public Schools is situated in the Okanagan Valley on the unceded, traditional territory of the Okanagan Syilx people. We are proud to provide educational services to over 230,000 citizens living in 4 municipalities (Peachland, West Kelowna, Kelowna, Lake Country), Westbank First Nation and the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

We are the 5th largest school district in British Columbia serving over 25,000 students and their families in 49 school sites and 3 Learning Centres. In addition, we support early learners in 8 StrongStart Centres, 15 pre-school partnerships, 7 new Childcare Centres and 31 afterschool childcare programs located on school sites.

Central Okanagan Public Schools employs a workforce of 4,443 people comprised of educators and support staff that provide operations, learning and support services to an increasingly diverse population of students. During the 2022-2023 school year, 3,169 students (K-12) identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis or Inuit) from 61 Bands and territories representing over 13% of the District's student population.

The globalization of local schools has been growing each year in response to world events and the growth of the local community. During the 2022/2023 school year, Central Okanagan Public Schools welcomed and supported 2021 new immigrant children and their families from 91 countries in addition to 599 international students from 27 countries.

We are dedicated to creating inclusive and equitable learning environments through our work supporting 3,430 students with disabilities and diverse-abilities and 1,552 students that are English Language Learners.

# Section A: Reflecting Back: 2022-23 Student Learning Outcomes

## Intellectual Development

Central Okanagan Public Schools develops the ability of students to analyze critically, reason and think independently, and acquire basic learning skills and bodies of knowledge; to develop in students a lifelong appreciation of learning, a curiosity about the world around them and a capacity for creative thought and expression.

**Educational Outcome 1: Students will meet or exceed literacy expectations for each grade level.**

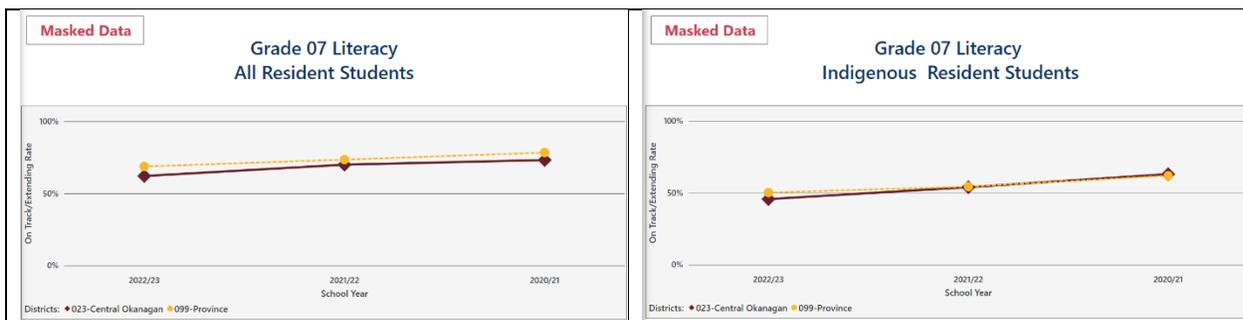
*Measure 1.1: Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students in grades 4 and 7 on-track or extending literacy expectations as specified in provincial assessments.*

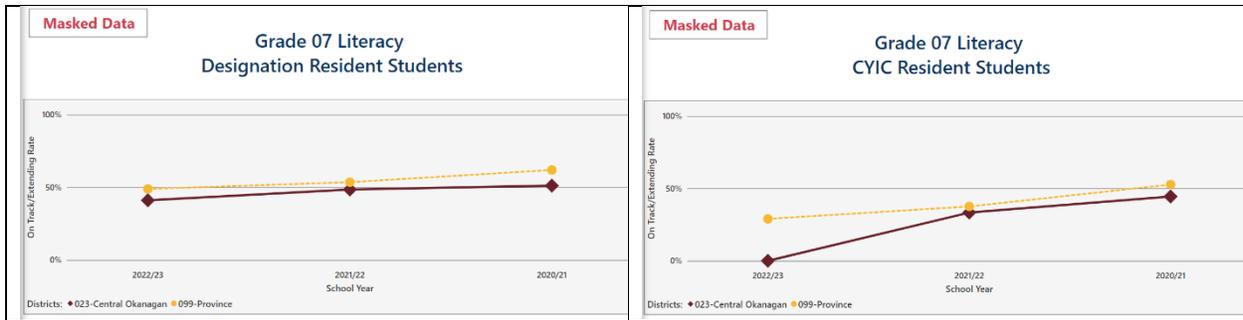
Evidence – Foundations Skills Assessment

### Patterns and Trends Grade 4 Literacy



### Patterns and Trends Grade 7 Literacy

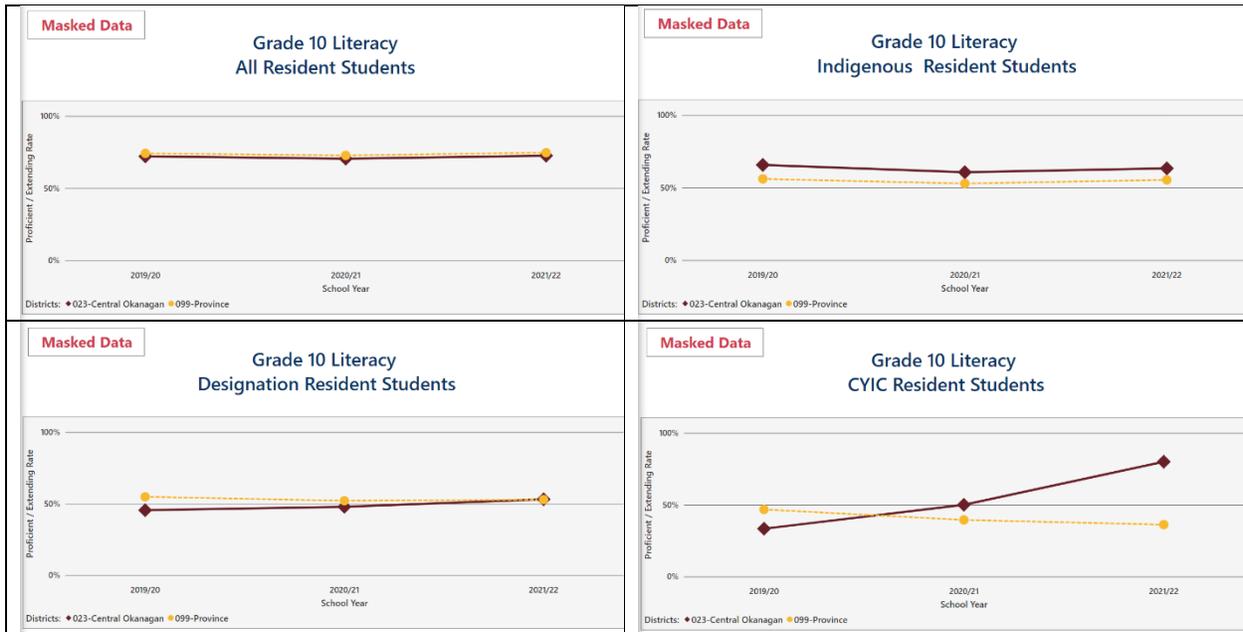




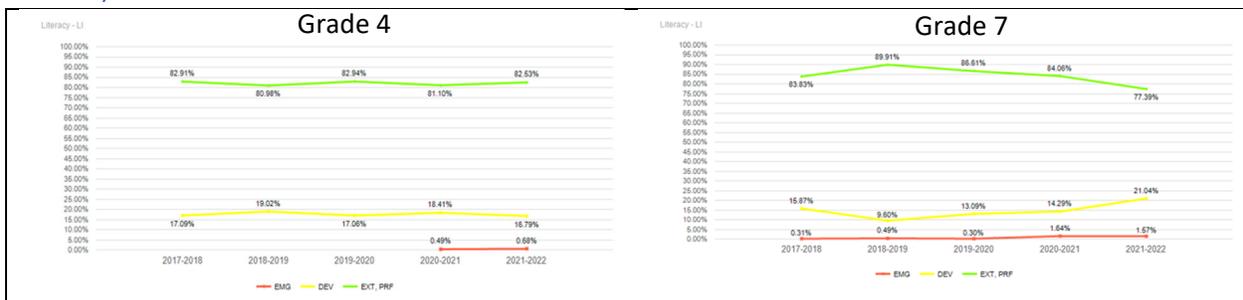
Measure 1.2: Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students proficient or extending literacy expectations as specified in the Grade 10 literacy assessments.

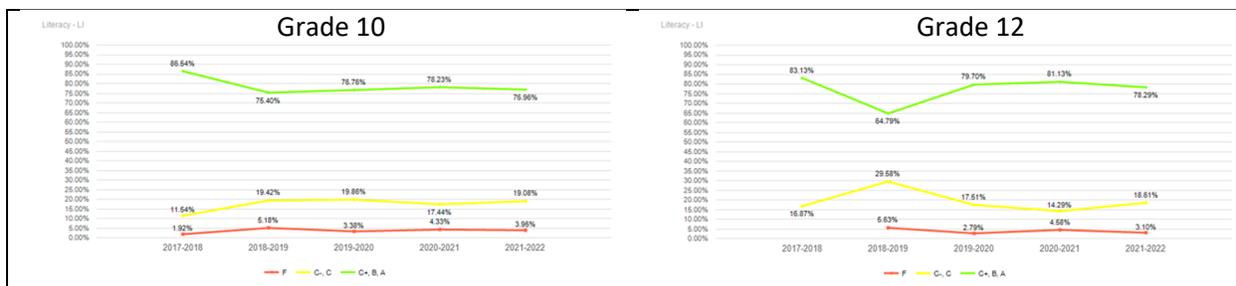
Evidence – Graduation Literacy Assessment – Grade 10

Patterns and Trends Grade 10 Literacy



Relevant Additional Local Data/Evidence – 5-Year Trend Final Report Card Marks for Literacy





### Analysis and Interpretation: What does this mean?

Classroom teacher assessment and evaluation consists of multiple student work samples, projects and classroom-based assessments and is a valid and reliable representation of a student’s literacy development, progress, and proficiency across the District.

In general, students’ proficiency in literacy as indicated by the Provincial Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) continues to indicate an inaccurate representation of student outcomes for reading, writing and oral language development. Unreliable levels of validity and reliability of student performance data on the FSA is most notable when comparing local District and classroom assessment data/evidence. This is evident in the 5-year trend in final report card marks in literacy related subjects/course in which an average of 80% of students in grades 4, 7, 10 and 12 meet or exceed literacy outcomes as evaluated by classroom teachers.

Furthermore, the incongruence between student literacy performance on the Provincial Foundations Skills Assessment and local teacher developed classroom assessments is an ongoing challenge that is significantly affected by factors such as the annual BCTF campaign to encourage parents to excuse students from writing, inconsistent preparation of students to write the assessment, and the lack of relevance for students’ educational program. All these factors significantly diminish the validity of the FSA to accurately reflect a students literacy proficiency.

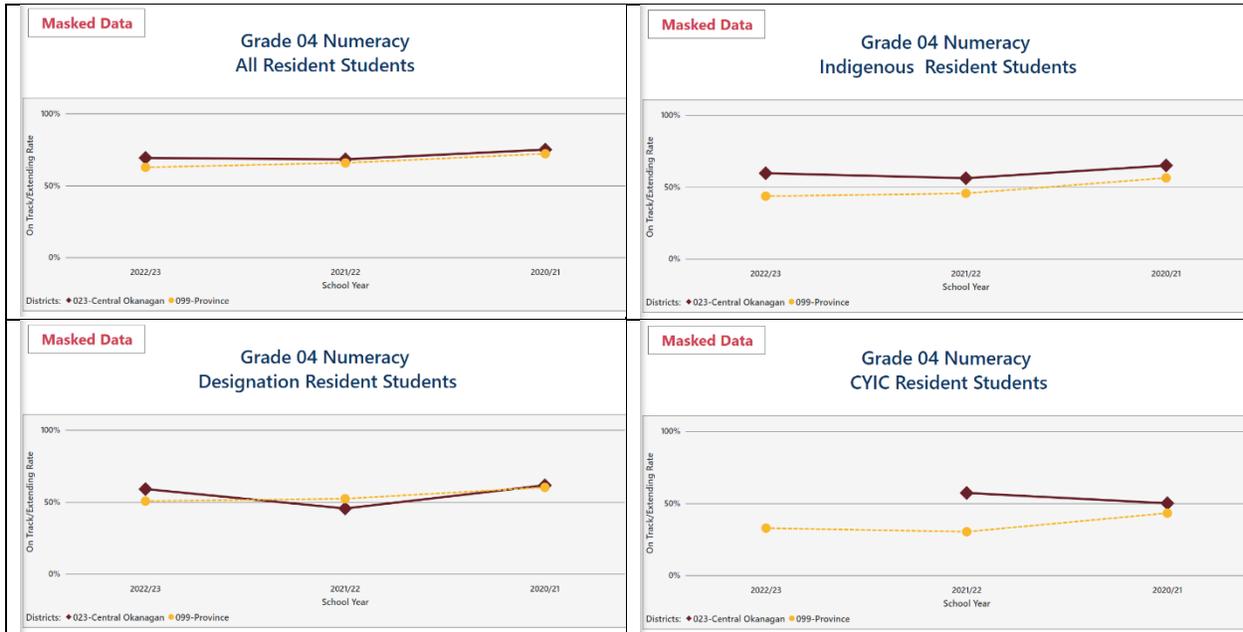
The District continues to regularly assess, monitor and support literacy outcomes for all students K - 12 using local District and classroom-based assessments with particular attention to students in priority populations: Indigenous students, students with disabilities and diverse-abilities, and children and youth in care. Further data and analysis are included in the Superintendent of Schools/CEO Report on Student Achievement 2023 attached as "Appendix A".

### Educational Outcome 2: Students will meet or exceed numeracy expectations for each grade level.

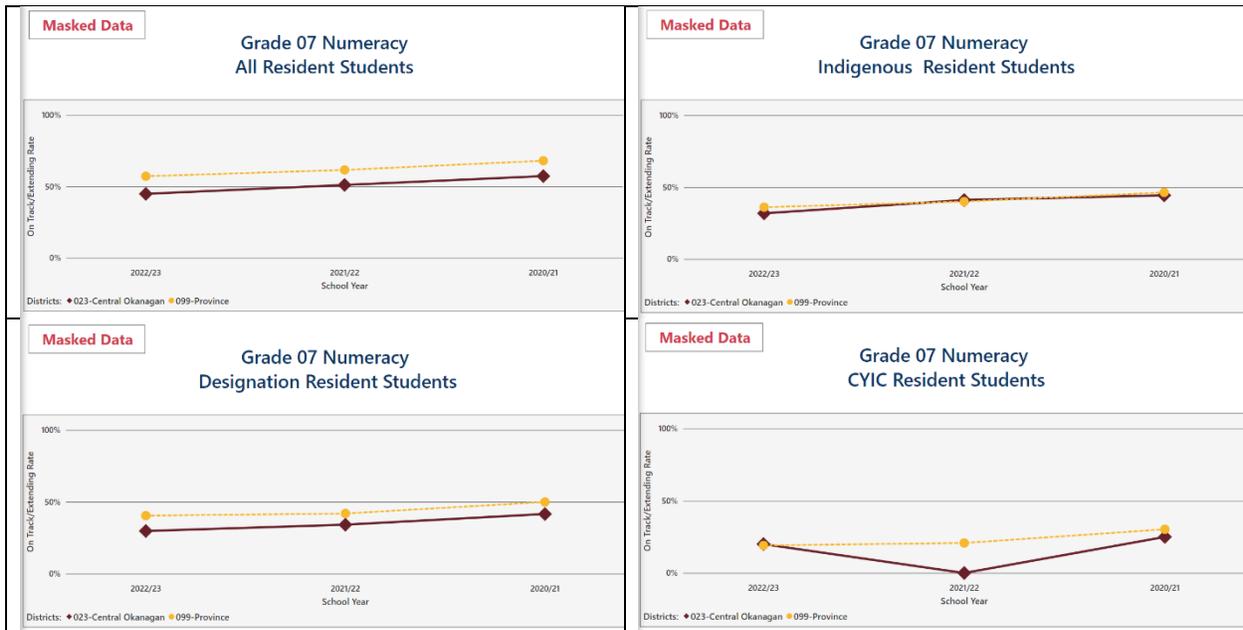
*Measure 2.1: Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students in grades 4 and 7 on-track or extending numeracy expectations as specified in provincial assessments.*

Evidence – Foundations Skills Assessment Numeracy

## Patterns and Trends Grade 4 Numeracy



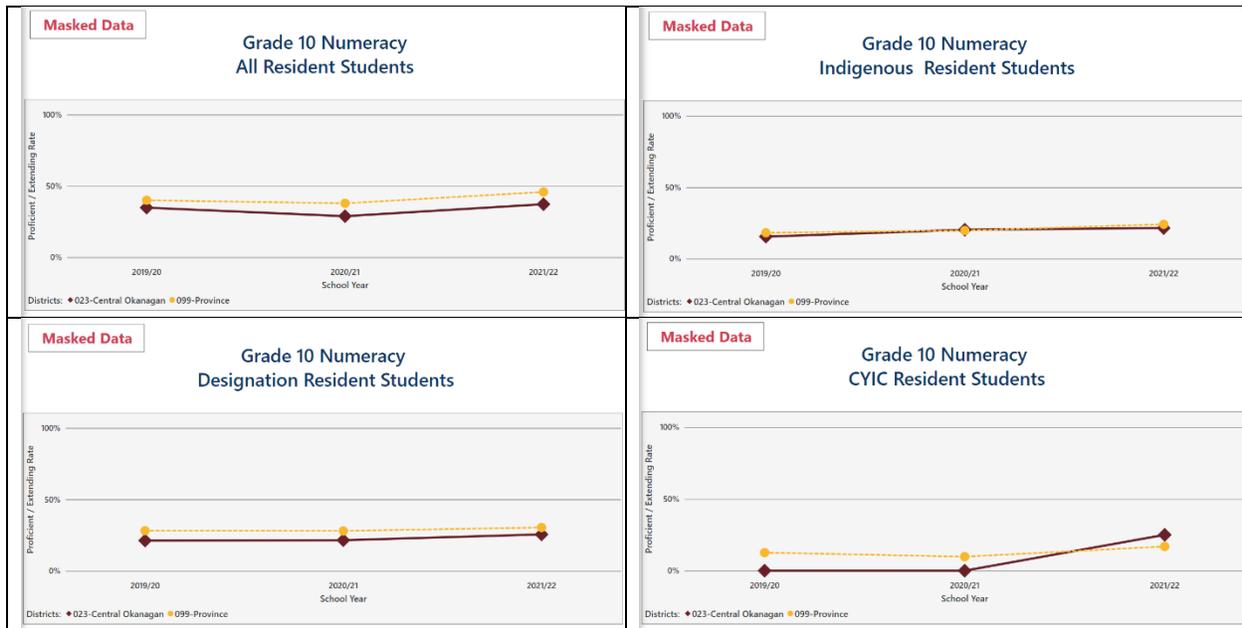
## Patterns and Trends Grade 7 Numeracy



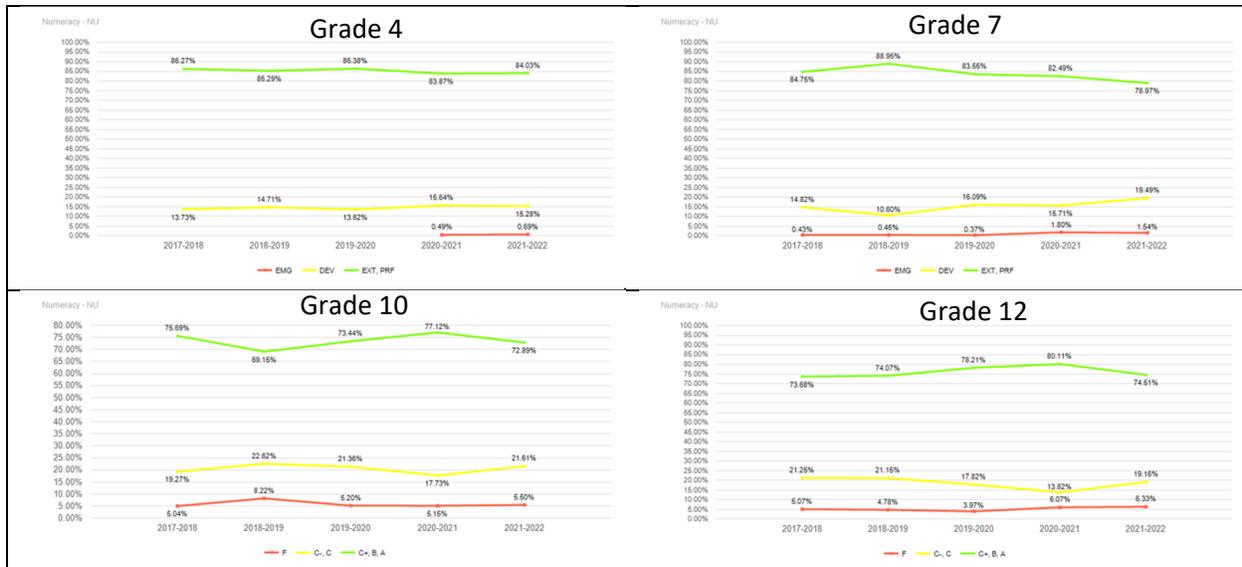
Measure 2.2: Current year and 3-year trend for the number and percentage of students proficient or extending numeracy expectations as specified in the Grade 10 numeracy assessments.

Evidence – Graduation Numeracy Assessment – Grade 10

## Patterns and Trends Grade 10 Numeracy



## Relevant Additional Local Data/Evidence – 5 Year Trend Final Report Card Marks for Numeracy



### Analysis and Interpretation: What does this mean?

Classroom teacher assessment and evaluation consists of multiple student work samples, projects and classroom-based assessments and is a valid and reliable representation of a student's numeracy development, progress, and proficiency across the District.

In general, students’ proficiency in numeracy as indicated by the Provincial Foundation Skills Assessment continues to indicate an inaccurate representation of student outcomes for mathematics and numeracy related competencies. Unreliable levels of validity and reliability of student performance data on the FSA is most notable when comparing local District and classroom assessment data/evidence. This is evident in the 5-year trend in final report card marks in numeracy- related subjects/course in which an average of 80% of students in grades 4, 7, 10 and 12 meet or exceed numeracy outcomes as evaluated by classroom teachers.

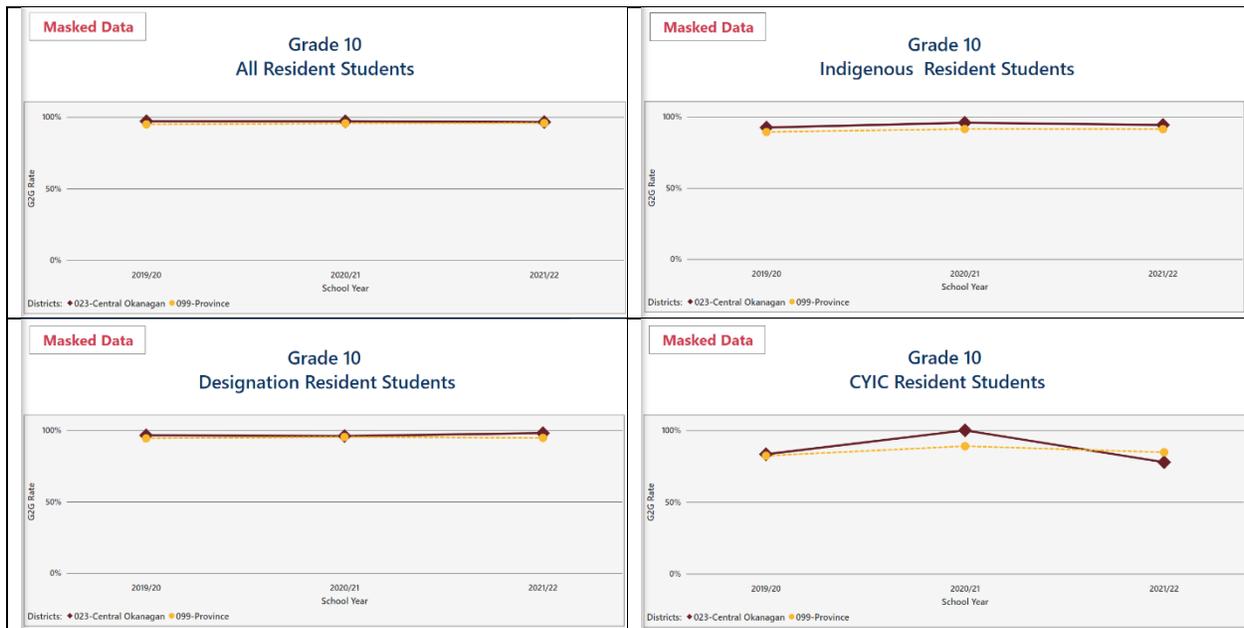
Furthermore, the incongruence between student numeracy performance on the Provincial Foundations Skills Assessment and local teacher developed classroom assessments is an ongoing challenge that is significantly affected by factors such as the annual BCTF campaign to encourage parents to excuse students from writing the assessment, inconsistent preparation of students to participate in the assessment and the lack of relevance for students’ educational program. All these factors significantly diminish the validity of the FSA to accurately reflect a students numeracy proficiency.

The District continues to regularly assess, monitor and support mathematics and numeracy outcomes for all students K - 12 using local District and classroom-based assessments with particular attention to students in priority populations: Indigenous students, students with disabilities and diverse-abilities, and children and youth in care. Further data and analysis are included in the Superintendent of Schools/CEO Report on Student Achievement 2023 attached as "Appendix A".

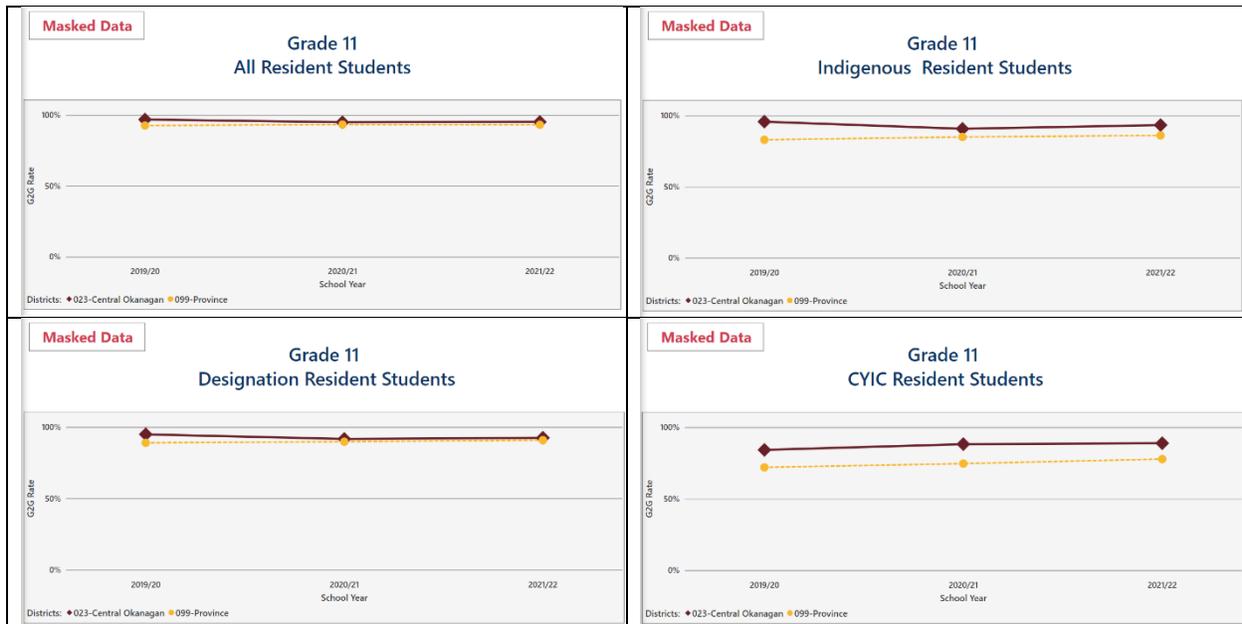
Measure 2.3: Number and percentage of students who are completing grade to grade transitions on time

Evidence – Ministry Grade to Grade Transition Data

Patterns and Trends: Students Transitioning from Grade 10 to Grade 11 On Time



## Patterns and Trends: Students Transitioning from Grade 11 to Grade 12 On Time



### Analysis and Interpretation: What does this mean?

In general, the vast majority of students in grade 10 and grade 11 successfully transition to the next grade level. Grade to grade transitions for students in priority populations (Indigenous learners, students with disabilities and diverse-abilities, and children and youth in care) in Central Okanagan Public Schools successfully achieve grade transition and are consistently 3 – 6 % higher than the provincial average of 90%.

### Human and Social Development

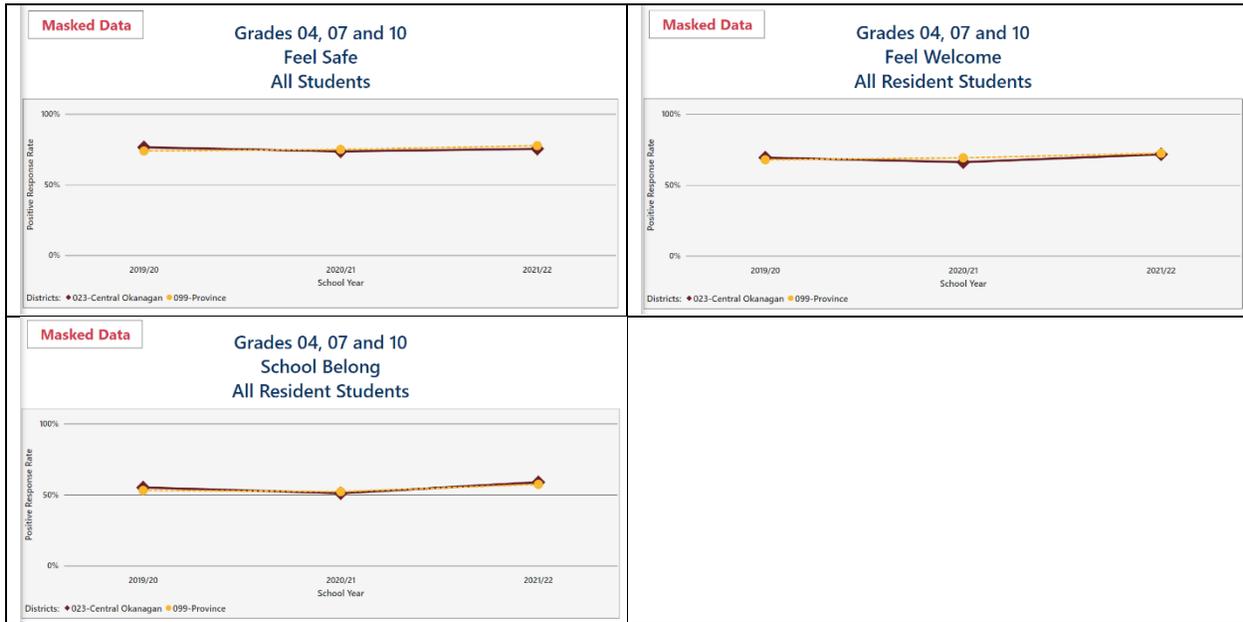
Central Okanagan Public Schools develops in students a sense of self-worth and personal initiative; to develop an appreciation of the fine arts and an understanding of cultural heritage; to develop an understanding of the importance of physical health and well being; to develop a sense of social responsibility, and a tolerance and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others.

Educational Outcome 3: Students will feel welcome, safe and connected to their school.

*Measure 3.1: Number and percentage of students in grades 4, 7, and 10 who feel welcome, safe, and have a sense of belonging in their school.*

Evidence – Ministry Student Learning Survey

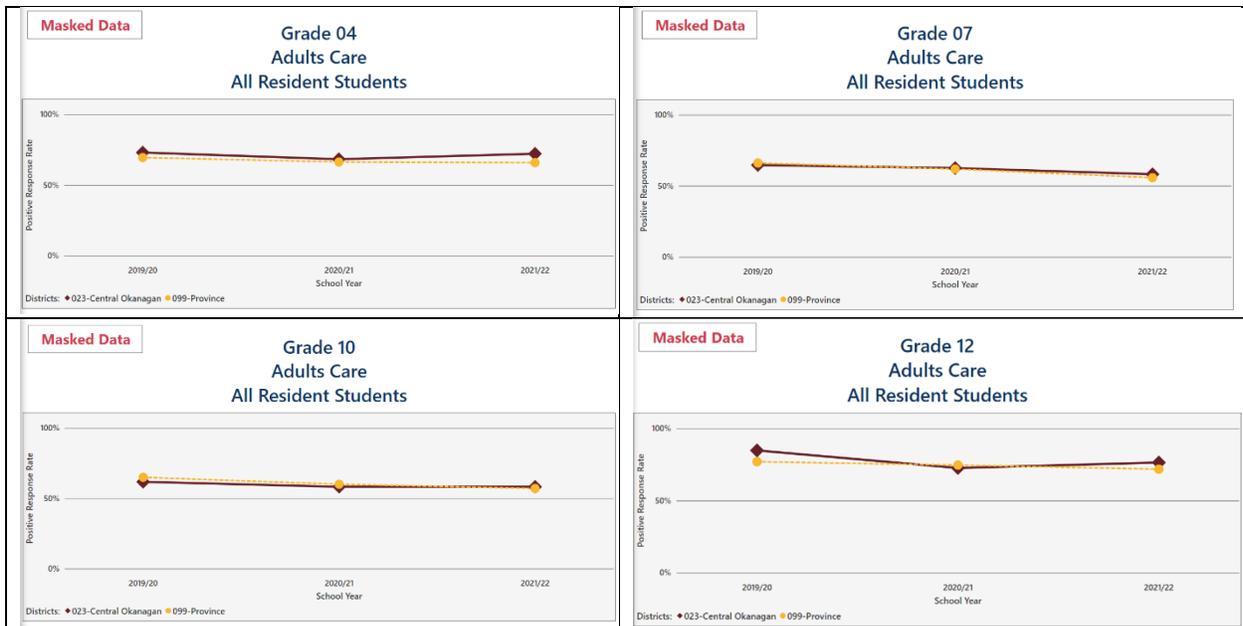
Patterns and Trends: Students in grades 4, 7, and 10 who feel welcome, safe, and have a sense of belonging in their school.



Measure 3.2: Number and percentage of students in grades 4, 7, and 10 who feel there are two or more adults at their school who care about them.

Evidence – Student Learning Survey

Patterns and Trends: Students in grades 4, 7, and 10 who feel there are two or more adults at their school who care about them.



## Analysis and Interpretation: What does this mean?

The majority of students in grades 4, 7, 10 and 12 report that they feel safe, welcome and cared for in Central Okanagan Public Schools. This is slightly higher than the provincial average. The data representing how students feel about belonging is lower than expected and requires further investigation. Overall the patterns and trends in the data closely follow the Provincial data.

## Career Development

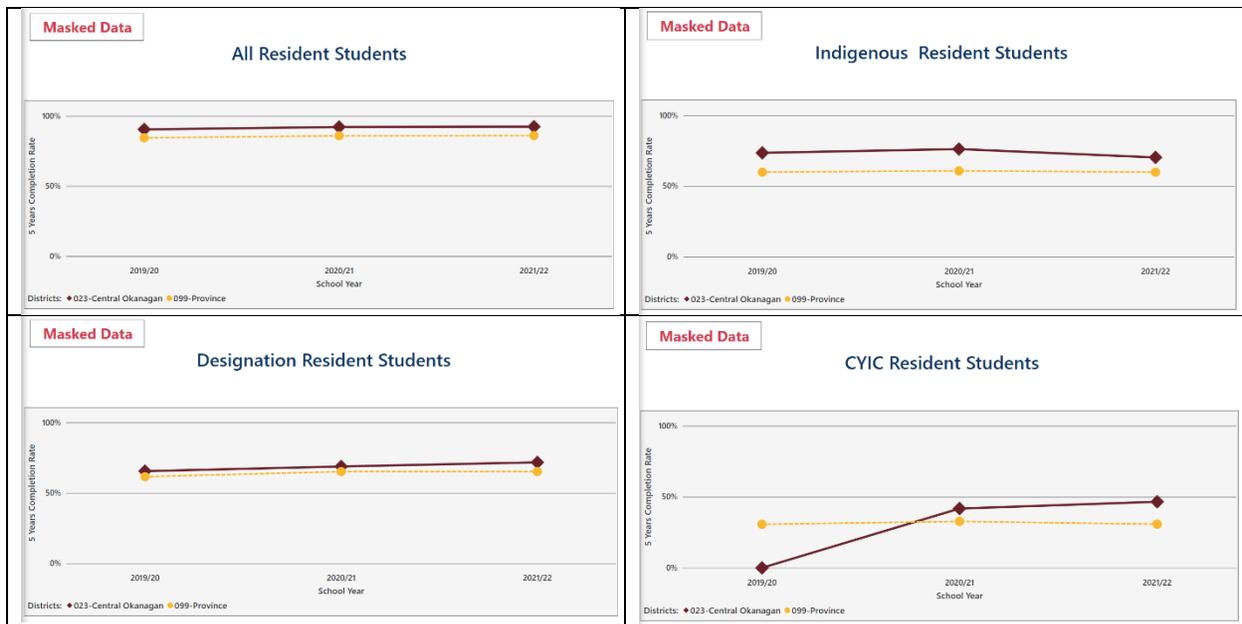
Central Okanagan Public Schools prepares students to attain their career and occupational objectives; to assist in the development of effective work habits and the flexibility to deal with change in the workplace.

In partnership with BCIT, Okanagan College, the Justice Institute of BC, and UBC Okanagan, Career Life Programs offers 23 different industry certified dual credit programs to support students in trades, apprenticeships and academic post-secondary programs. These programs provide opportunities for high school students to start a post-secondary program while completing their high school graduation.

Educational Outcome 4: Students will graduate.

*Measure 4.1: Number and percentage of resident students who achieved a BC Certificate of Graduation Dogwood Diploma within 5 years of starting Grade 8.*

Analysis – Patterns and Trends: Percentage of Resident Students who achieved a BC Certificate of Graduation Dogwood Diploma within 5 years of starting Grade 8.



### Analysis and Interpretation: What does this mean?

The 3-year trend for percentage of resident students who achieved a BC Certificate of Graduation Dogwood Diploma within 5 years of starting Grade 8 is trending up at an average of 91% of students. This is 6% above the 3-year provincial average.

The 3-year trend for percentage of resident Indigenous students who achieved a BC Certificate of Graduation Dogwood Diploma within 5 years of starting Grade 8 is trending up at an average of 76% of Indigenous students. This is 14% above the 3-year provincial average and 15% below the District average.

The 3-year trend for percentage of resident students with disabilities or diverse abilities who achieved a BC Certificate of Graduation Dogwood Diploma within 5 years of starting Grade 8 is trending up at an average of 67% of students with disabilities or diverse abilities. This is 3% above the 3-year provincial average and 24% below the District average.

There are many reasons for students to choose to complete their Dogwood Diploma over a six-year period. For this reason, the 6-Year completion rate is an important metric to understand student success.

The Indigenous 6-Year Completion Rate has increased 8.1% over the past 5 years to 86% of Indigenous students earning their Dogwood Graduation Diploma in 2021 - 2022. This is 3.0 % increase from the previous year and 11.0 % above the provincial average. 100% of Indigenous students living on reserve (Westbank First Nation) have graduated with a Dogwood Diploma for the past 4 years.

Over the past 5 years, the 6-Year BC Resident Completion Rate has increased 3.1% from 92.7% to 95.8%. The District's most recent 6-Year Completion rate is 4.4 % above the provincial average. When the District includes students that successfully complete their Dogwood Diploma or Evergreen Certificate, the 6-Year Completion rate is 96.9%

The steady increase of the 6-Year BC Resident Completion Rate for Indigenous students is the result of goals and actions set out in the Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation and the Local Education Agreement working in partnership with members of the Indigenous Education Department, the Indigenous Education Council and local First Nations.

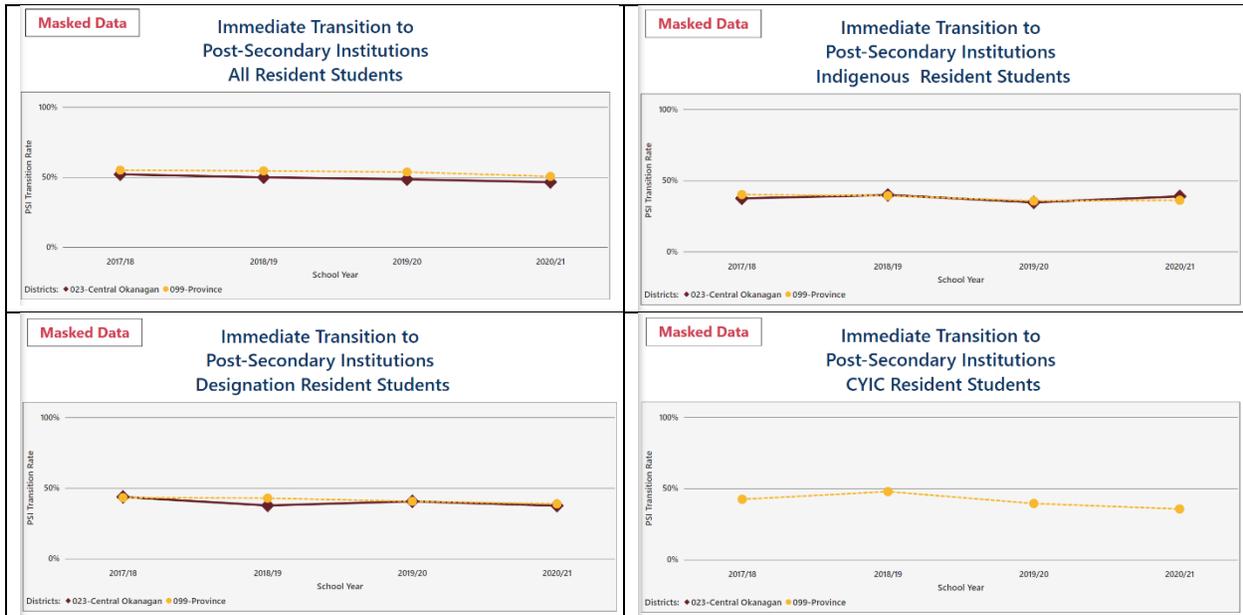
Students' graduation programs are enhanced by Career Life Programs that provide learning experiences through a variety of academic, apprenticeship, trade and post-secondary dual credit programs in partnership with BCIT, Okanagan College, the Justice Institute of BC, and UBC Okanagan. These programs provide opportunities for high school students to start a post-secondary program while completing their high school graduation.

Educational Outcome 5: Students will have the core competencies to achieve their career and life goals.

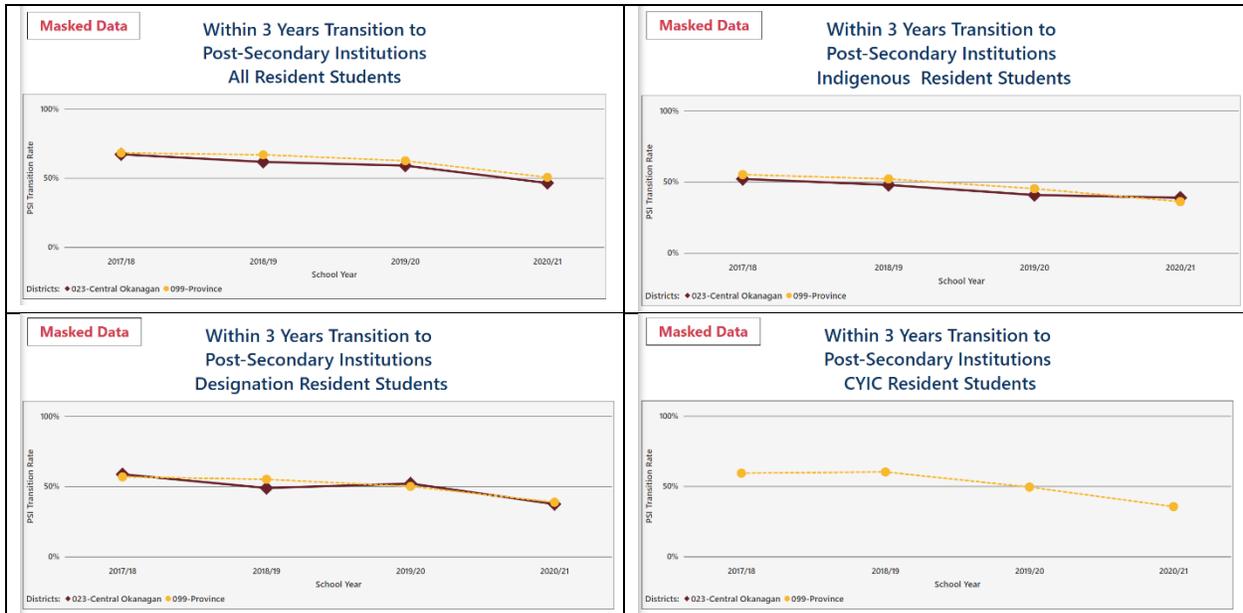
*Measure 5.1: Number and percentage of students transitioning to Canadian post-secondary institutions within 1 and 3 years*

# Patterns and Trends: Students Transitioning to BC Post-Secondary Institutions within 1 and 3 years

## Transition Rate Within 1 Year.



## Transition Rate Within 3 Years.



### Analysis and Interpretation: What does this mean?

It is important to note that the post-secondary transition data provided by the Ministry of Education and Child Care only reflects students that transition to post-secondary institutions within British Columbia and does not include post-secondary institutions outside of BC. As a result, the percent of students that transition to post-secondary institutions is likely much higher than what is indicated in the data.

#### Transition Rate Within 1 Year.

The 5-year trend for percentage of students transitioning to BC post-secondary institutions within 1 year is trending down at an average of 50% of students. This is 4% below the 5-year provincial average.

The 5-year trend for percentage of Indigenous students transitioning to BC post-secondary institutions within 1 year is trending down at an average of 39% of students. This is 5% above the 5-year provincial average.

The 5-year trend for percentage of students with disabilities or diverse abilities transitioning to BC post-secondary institutions within 1 year is trending down at an average of 39% of students. This is 3% below the 5-year provincial average.

#### Transition Rate Within 3 Years.

The 5-year trend for percentage of students transitioning to BC post-secondary institutions within 3 years is trending up at an average of 65% of students. This is 2% below the 5-year provincial average.

The 5-year trend for percentage of Indigenous students transitioning to BC post-secondary institutions within 3 years is trending down at an average of 55% of students. This is 1% above the 5-year provincial average.

The 5-year trend for percentage of students with disabilities or diverse abilities transitioning to BC post-secondary institutions within 3 years has remained consistent at an average of 55% of students. This is 2% below the 5-year provincial average.

## Section B: Moving Forward Planning and Adjusting for Continuous Improvement

### Current Strategic Plan Priorities

The Purpose of Central Okanagan Public Schools is:

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

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To realize this future for our students, the Overarching Goal for all students is stated below:

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*"Our learners will develop foundational skills and core curricular competencies so that they can be empowered to follow their passions and strengths and thrive holistically as resilient and engaged global citizens."*

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The Central Okanagan Public Schools 2021 – 2026 Strategic Plan identifies 4 strategic directions that represents a collective theory of action for our School District's educators that brings alignment and coherence to a shared vision for learning for each student: Equity and Excellence in Learning, Transformative Leadership, Family and Community Engagement and System Wellbeing

#### Equity and Excellence in Learning

We believe equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically. We also believe that each learner achieves excellence in learning when they have the confidence and competencies to pursue their passions and strengths.

For the 2023/2024 school year, we will continue to prioritize creating inclusive learning in our schools, build our capacity to support the intentional design of learning and encourage collaborative professionalism amongst educators through focussed learning networks.

In addition, we will continue to nurture and develop a broad range of value-added community partnerships that include local First Nations, municipal governments, post-secondary institutions, child and youth mental health organizations, and the early learning and childcare community. For the 2022-2023 school year, the following partnership projects will be a priority:

- Early Learning and Child Care Partnerships
- Child Advocacy Centre, The Foundary and Child & Youth Mental Health (CYMH)
- UBCO [Co-Curricular-Making: Honouring Indigenous Connections to Land, Culture, and the Relational Self](#)

Our work on family and community engagement is founded on a welcoming culture built on relationships, mutual trust, openness, and transparency. Our community partners play a critical role in supporting our students and their families in our care. Through this work we strive to ensure public assurance in our schools

### System Wellbeing

We believe in sustainable practices that provide support to each learner today without compromising or reducing the ability to support each of our learners in the future. Moving forward, in a culture of growth, innovation, engagement and wellness, ensures that we can adapt to changing environments while continuously supporting each of our learners.

As we move forward from the pandemic, we will continue to prioritize efforts to encourage and support staff and student wellness during the 2023-2024 school year.

In addition, we will be considering innovative and sustainable strategies to optimize current operational practices in response to increasing enrollment, facility space and budget pressures.

## Celebrating Our Successes for the Past Year

Central Okanagan Public Schools regularly recognizes, celebrates, and documents evidence of student learning in each our schools. Evidence of ongoing student learning and success is documented and shared with the community in the following ways:

- Superintendent of Schools/CEO Weekly Newsletter
- Board of Education – Inside 23 Presentations
- [Together We Learn Quarterly Publication](#)
- District, school, department/program websites and monthly newsletters
- [Instructional Leadership Website](#)
- School Community Student Learning Plans, Conversations, and Forums

Aligned with the District’s Overarching Goal for learners to develop foundational skills and core curricular competencies so that they can be empowered to follow their passions and strengths and thrive holistically as resilient and engaged global citizens, the following strategic actions have had notable impact on improving student learning outcomes during the 2022 – 2023 school year:

### Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Agreement

The District’s 2020-2025 Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Agreement is in its third year of implementation. The focus has been on creating equitable opportunities for Indigenous learners, including:

- Continuing to support inter-cultural competency learning for staff and students;
- Prioritizing targeted interventions and community supports for Indigenous early learners;
- Broadening culturally-responsive interventions as an alternative to students on suspensions or adjusted school schedules;
- Implementing Year Two of Westbank First Nation and Central Okanagan Public Schools Local Education Agreement (2022-2027);

- Implementing Year Three of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Grant Project: Co-Curricular Making: Honouring Indigenous Connections to Land, Culture and the Relational Self
- Exploring pathways for Indigenous youth to be role models for younger Indigenous students;
- Collaborating with school teams to reimagine Indigenous student transition plans with next year's focus on culturally-responsive transitions from elementary to middle schools;
- Continuing to monitor Indigenous student attendance and collaborate with parents/caregivers, community members, and school teams to co-create individual support plans that focus on increasing student connectedness and engagement in learning in an effort to improve attendance and student satisfaction levels with their school experience.

### 6-Year BC Resident Completion Rate

The Indigenous 6-Year Completion Rate has increased 8.1% over the past 5 years to 86% of Indigenous students earning their Dogwood Graduation Diploma in 2021 - 2022. This is 3.0 % increase from the previous year and 11.0 % above the provincial average. 100% of Indigenous students living on reserve (Westbank First Nation) have graduated with a Dogwood Diploma for the past 4 years.

Over the past 5 years, the 6-Year BC Resident Completion Rate has increased 3.1% from 92.7% to 95.8%. The District's most recent 6-Year Completion rate is 4.4 % above the provincial average. When the District includes students that successfully complete their Dogwood Diploma or Evergreen Certificate, the 6-Year Completion rate is 96.9%

The steady increase of the 6-Year BC Resident Completion Rate for Indigenous students is the result of goals and actions set out in the Equity in Action Agreement and the Local Education Agreement working in partnership with members of the Indigenous Education Department, the Indigenous Education Council and local First Nations.

Students' graduation programs are enhanced by Career Life Programs that provide learning experiences through a variety of academic, apprenticeship, trade and post-secondary dual credit programs in partnership with BCIT, Okanagan College, the Justice Institute of BC, and UBC Okanagan. These programs provide opportunities for high school students to start a post-secondary program while completing their high school graduation.

### K – 3 Early Learning and Literacy Performance

Over the past several years, the District's Early Learning and Instructional Leadership Teams have supported primary teachers in the development of pedagogies that improve student outcomes in literacy. Reading performance data from the locally developed Early Learning Profile Literacy Assessment indicates that 85% of grade 3 students have met grade level reading outcomes for the past 5 years.

### Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health Outcomes

Over the past 3 years, Central Okanagan Public Schools has made significant investment in social emotional and mental health supports in schools to increase direct services to students and their families. The District continues to provide school-based Social Emotional Teachers to elementary schools with vulnerable student populations. In addition, the District partners with the following

community agencies to provide mental health support services to students in Central Okanagan Public Schools:

- Child Mental Health Association - The Foundary - Kelowna
- The Child Advocacy Centre
- ARC Programs
- Central Okanagan Family Hub - Kelowna Community Resources

### Supporting All Students to be Ready for Learning

Central Okanagan Public Schools is a research-based, evidence informed organization that continuously learns, adjusts, and adapts to meet the learning needs of an increasingly diverse population of students.

The District continues to experience increasing growth of students representing priority populations. During the 2023 – 2024 school year, Central Okanagan Public schools will support 8,229 students with unique learning needs. This represents nearly 33% of the student population.

In particular, the number of students who are English Language Learners have increased by 964 students over the past 5 years from 674 to over 1638 as a result of “New to Canada” families moving into communities in the Central Okanagan.

This has created a significant need for additional student supports especially for students that are English Language Learners.

In addition to meeting the needs of all learners, the impact of the increase to the cost of living on the socio-economics of many families is becoming increasingly difficult. The District continues to provide support to families in need through the Family Affordability Fund and the newly implemented Feeding Futures program focussed on food security for all students.

### Existing and/or Emerging Areas for Growth

In response to the analysis of patterns and trends of student performance evident in local and provincial assessment data, Central Okanagan Public Schools has identified the following existing and emerging areas of growth to improve outcomes for students for the next several years:

- Numeracy pedagogies, assessment, and instructional practice at all grade levels
- Literacy pedagogies, assessment, and instructional practice at middle schools
- Learning opportunities and experiences that support and encourage students to transition to post-secondary education after graduation.

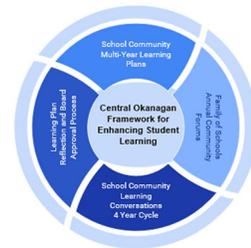
### Strategic Engagement for Continuous Improvement

Central Okanagan Public Schools employs multiple strategic engagement strategies for continuous improvement to ensure that members of our community have opportunities to participate in processes to analyze, interpret and understand student achievement data.

## Central Okanagan Framework to Enhance Student Learning (COFESL)

The Central Okanagan Framework to Enhance Student Learning was designed and co-created with partner groups to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education’s policy for Student Success, achieve the District’s Overarching Goal, and bring alignment and coherence across all 49 schools. The framework is founded on the OECD 7 Principles of Learning, First People’s Principles of Learning and is focused on the development of the pedagogical core as the fundamental process to achieve excellence and equity for each learner.

The COFESL consists of 4 structures that provide opportunities for members of the District and school community to come together to engage in deeper conversations about the current state of student learning and plans to enhance learning in the future.



### School Community Student Learning Plans

Guided by the Spirals of Inquiry process developed by Drs. Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser, school leaders engage students, staff, and parents/guardians in a scanning process to collect and analyse evidence of student learning which is used to co-create school student learning priorities/goals. The School Community Student Learning Plans represent an ongoing inquiry process designed to engage members of the school community in a continuous improvement process.

Figure 1: Sample School Community Student Learning Plan

School Community Student Learning Plan

District Overview	School Overview	School Learning Story	School Scan	Focusing	Evidence of Learning	Taking Action & Learning	Checking	Approval
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**District Overview**

**Vision:**  
Together We Learn.

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

**Overarching Goal:**  
Our learners will develop foundational skills and core curricular competencies so that they can be empowered to follow their passions and strengths and thrive holistically as resilient and engaged global citizens.

**Resources**  
[District Strategic Plan](#)  
[Spirals of Inquiry Handbook](#)  
[Equity in Action Assessment](#)

School Community Student Learning Plans meet the requirements of the School Act and the Ministry’s Student Success Policy and are approved by the Board of Education annually.

### Family of Schools Annual Community Learning Forums

Each school year, Community Learning Forums are hosted in each Family of Schools. The Forum is a strategic engagement process to bring together parents/guardians, students, educators, and community members to engage in conversations about the current state of student learning and plans to enhance learning in the future.

The Community Learning Forum is an interactive, networking event where each school in the family of schools is represented by a team of administrators, teachers, and students to highlight student learning priorities and engage members of the community in the learning taking place at their school. In addition, parents and members of the community can learn about a variety of District programs and services and how they support student learning across the District. The forums provide parents and community

members with first-hand knowledge of the innovative learning within each school, while giving parents an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. These forums are purposefully planned to promote open and supportive relationships with members of the school communities and continue to build public confidence in the schools within Central Okanagan Public Schools.

#### School Community Student Learning Conversations

Once every four years, each of the 49 schools in the District participate in a School Community Student Learning Conversation engagement process. The School Community Student Learning Conversation (SCSLP) process includes trustees, District staff, parents, students, and members of the school community, and is designed to engage team members in deeper conversations about the current state of student learning and plans to enhance learning in the future.

The SCSLC is led by the school principal in collaboration with members of the school community designed to validate the status of student learning through evidence of learning that include observations, conversations, and artifacts. Through collaborative dialogue about the pattern and trends of student learning outcomes, the team identifies potential areas for continuous improvement of student learning. The SCSLC process is a valuable opportunity for school teams to authentically engage members of the school community to listen and learn about potential areas to improve student learning.

#### Learning Plan Reflection and Board Approval Process

Each year, Assistant Superintendents engage school Principals and their teams in a reflection process to assess progress of school student learning priorities identified in their School Community Student Learning Plans. The reflection process identifies evidence of student learning that illustrates the impact of strategies and structures on student learning outcomes and progress towards student learning goals. This information is collated and presented at a public meeting of the Board of Education to inform the approval process of the school plans for the upcoming school year.

#### Board and District Committees

Central Okanagan Public Schools supports the strategic engagement of students, parents/guardians, staff, education partners, Indigenous Rightsholders and Indigenous peoples through a variety of Board and District committees. These include:

- Indigenous Education Council (Monthly)
- District Student Council (Monthly)
- Central Okanagan Parents Advisory Council (Monthly)
- Partners for Inclusive Education (Quarterly)
- Education and Student Services Committee (Monthly)
- Planning and Facilities Committee (Monthly)
- District Human Rights Committee (Monthly)
- District Health Promoting Schools Committee (Monthly)
- Finance and Audit Committee (Monthly)
- District Early Years Partnership Committee (Monthly)
- District Safe Schools Committee (Monthly)

Committees publish agendas and reports/minutes of meetings. This information is collated and informs progress towards goals and continuous improvement planning.

## Adjustments and Adaptations: Next Steps

In response to the analysis of student performance data and learning evidence, Central Okanagan Public Schools will be adjusting and adapting strategies and structures in the following areas during the 2023 – 2024 school year

### Aligning Systems and Structures to Deepen Coherence

- Alignment of professional learning in the following learning leadership structures:
  - Central Okanagan Leadership Team Meetings
  - Family of Schools Meetings
- Focus professional learning on anti-racism and cultural competencies to advance the Districts strategic plan goals for diversity, equity and inclusion;
- Assess progress of School Community Student Learning Plan priorities with the District’s Operational Plan and the Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation – Year 3.
- Revise and streamline the Early Learning Profile Assessment for K – 3
- Implement a District Numeracy Assessment for Grades 6 – 8.

### Advancing Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation

- Continuing to support inter-cultural competency learning for staff and students;
- Prioritizing targeted interventions and community supports for Indigenous early learners;
- Broadening culturally-responsive interventions as an alternative to students on suspensions or adjusted school schedules;
- Implementing Year Two of Westbank First Nation and Central Okanagan Public Schools Local Education Agreement (2022-2027);
- Implementing Year Three of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Grant Project: Co-Curricular Making: Honouring Indigenous Connections to Land, Culture and the Relational Self
- Exploring pathways for Indigenous youth to be role models for younger Indigenous students;
- Collaborating with school teams to reimagine Indigenous student transition plans with next year’s focus on culturally-responsive transitions from elementary to middle schools;
- Continuing to monitor Indigenous student attendance and collaborate with parents/caregivers, community members, and school teams to co-create individual support plans that focus on increasing student connectedness and engagement in learning in an effort to improve attendance and student satisfaction levels with their school experience.

### Improving Student Numeracy Outcomes for all Students

- Establish Middle Level Numeracy Assessment Network.
- Develop and pilot a local K – 9 competency-based numeracy assessment.
- Instructional Leadership Team support for school-based administrators and teachers focussed on numeracy pedagogy and instructional practice.
- Support and training for administrators and teachers in the use of student performance analytical tools that inform instruction.

## Alignment for Successful Implementation

Central Okanagan Public Schools is a research-based, evidence informed organization that continuously learns, adjusts, adapts and responds to the diverse learning needs of students and staff in a complex, interdependent learning ecosystem.

The system is focussed on deepening understanding of pedagogy and the pedagogical core as the fundamental means to achieve equity and excellence for each learner.

This work is guided by educational researchers and thought leaders from around the globe. During the 2022 – 2023 school year, District and school education leaders engaged in professional learning guided by the following:

- Street Data: A Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation, Shane Safir and Jamila Dugan, 2021
- Community: The Structure of Belonging, Peter Block, 2018
- Leading Through Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality, Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser, 2022
- The Nature of Learning: Using Research to Inspire Practice, OECD, 2021

The District prioritized the following resources to support strategies and structures to bring further alignment across all schools and deepen coherence and understanding of pedagogy that will achieve the District's Overarching Goal:

- Competency-Based Learning Leadership Development Program
- Instructional Leadership Team
- Collaborative Learning Services
- Professional Learning Networks
- Inclusive Education Team
- Learning Technology Services

## Appendices

- A. Superintendent of Schools/CEO Report on Student Achievement 2023
- B. Third Annual Report for Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation 2020-2025
- C. Superintendent of Schools/CEO Year in Review - June 28, 2023

Approved by the Board of Education on September 27, 2023.



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Lee-Ann Tiede  
Board Chair



# SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS/CEO REPORT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT 2023



**Central Okanagan  
Public Schools**

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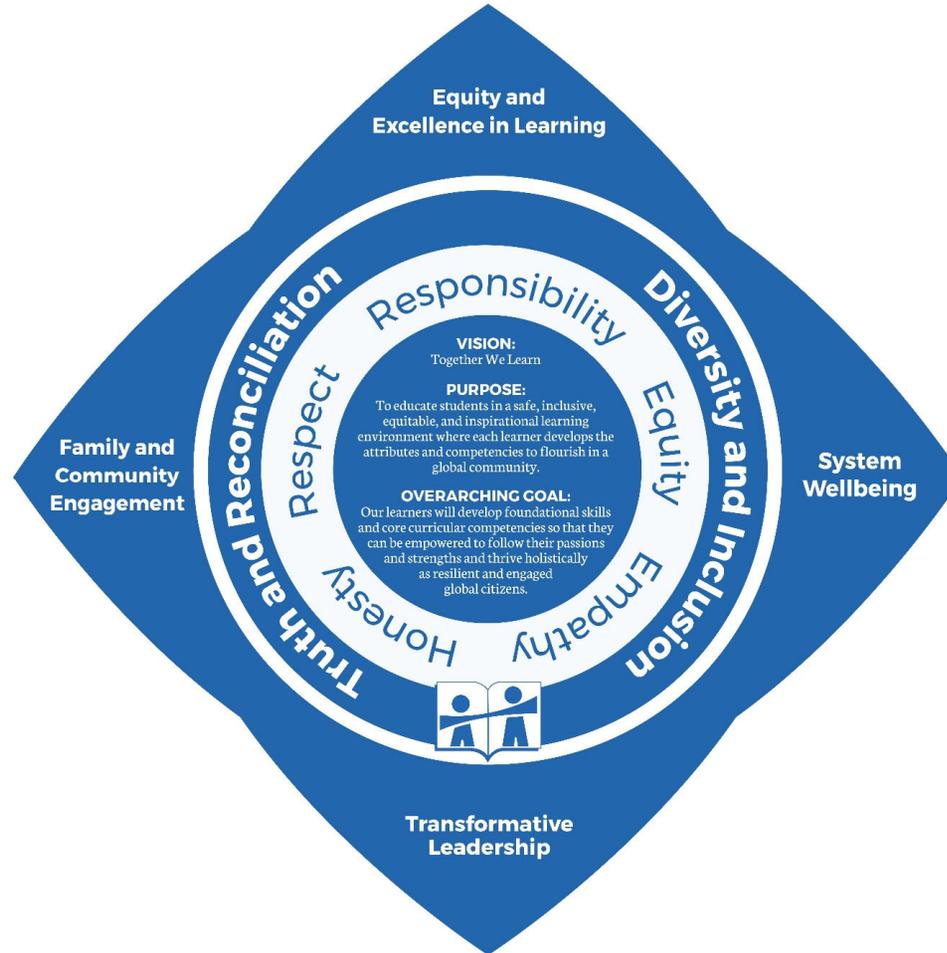
Together We Learn

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# CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS





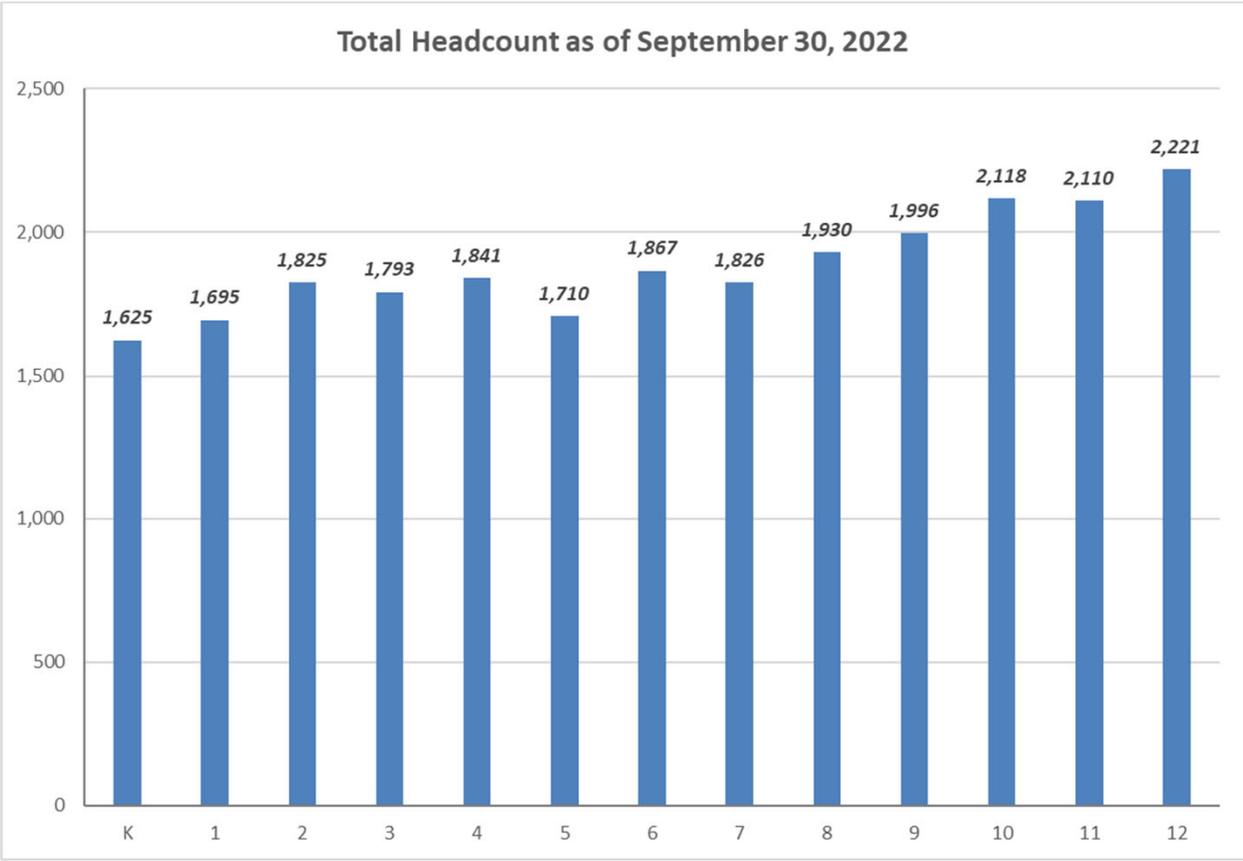
## OVERARCHING GOAL

*Our learners will develop foundational skills and core curricular competencies so that they can be empowered to follow their passions and strengths and thrive holistically as resilient and engaged global citizens.*

# CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS OUR STUDENTS



## GRADE LEVEL DISTRIBUTION



# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION Through the Lens of Equity



This year **3,169** students (K-12) identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, or Inuit), representing over 61 Bands and territories.

Central Okanagan Public Schools remains committed to equity, as a core value, and Truth and Reconciliation. As written in the Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Agreement:

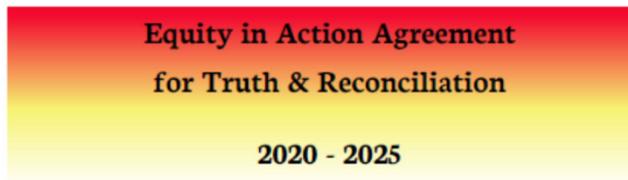
**“Equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically”**



# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION Through the Lens of Equity



The District's 2020-2025 Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Agreement is in its third year of implementation.



*Lifeline - Squilax Resilience*  
Sheldon Louis / KSS Art Students / Timothy Mayer, Art Teacher  
KSS Mural Project

Fostering Indigenous student success through the lens of equity

A focus has been on creating **equitable opportunities** for Indigenous learners, including:

- **Expanding the Elders in Residence** within Central Okanagan Public Schools to increase individual connections with students and strengthen Elder care in schools
- **Welcoming back, reimagining, and initiating Traditional Celebrations** (i.e., Primary Winter Gatherings, Indigenous Graduation Retreats, Indigenous Leadership Summit, and the Indigenous Graduations (Blanketing Ceremonies)
- **Continuing to decolonize our learning spaces** and embedding local Indigenous teachings within curriculum (K-12) through Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Collaborations
- **Preparing for the implementation of the Indigenous-focused Graduation Requirement**
- **Implementing Year One** of the Westbank First Nation (WFN) and Central Okanagan Public Schools **Local Education Agreement** (2022-2027)

# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION SSHRC – Working the Ideas Forum



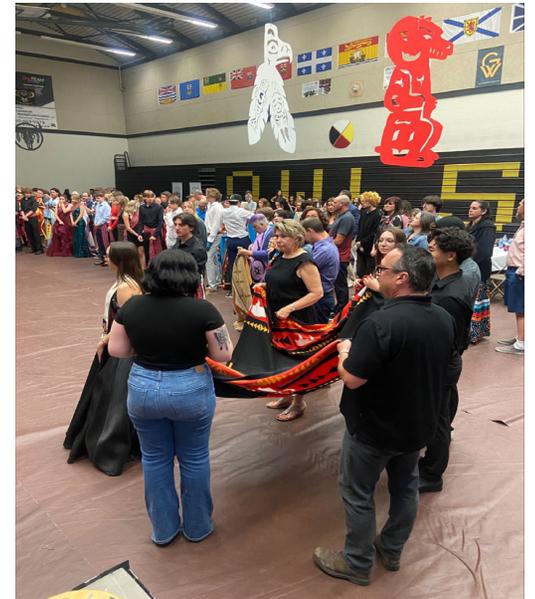
On March 2<sup>nd</sup> and March 3<sup>rd</sup>, over 150 Elders, educators, community partners, and researchers, from across Canada, came together to attend Working the Ideas SSHRC Forum – Roundtable Conversations to explore Indigenizing and decolonizing learning experiences for all learners.



# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION GRADUATION



In celebration of this year's **253** Indigenous student graduates, 5 Community Blanket Ceremonies were held at secondary schools and at Central Programs and Services during the months of May and June. *(In 2022/2023, the six-year Ministry of Education and Child Care completion rate was 86%, which is the District's highest Indigenous graduation rate in history.)*



*"Being wrapped in a blanket is one of the highest honours one can receive in Indigenous communities and is a custom that is shared by many nations across Turtle Island. This recognition is a reminder of one's responsibility within their community and throughout life's journey." (Jordan Coble, WFN)*

# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



The Internationalization of local schools is accelerating with the growth of the community and in the 2022/2023 school year the Central Okanagan Public Schools:

- processed and supported new children and their parents through the District Welcome Centre resulting in the enrolment of **693** new students from **91** countries; and,
- had a total of **2021** new immigrant children in our schools

The diversity coming into the community is also reflected in the data collected by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada:

- during the 2022/2023 school year, **169** economic class immigrants, **38** family class immigrants and **545** refugees or category not stated were serviced through the District Welcome Centre; and,
- the most prevalent countries represented in new immigrant numbers in the Central Okanagan by volume were: Ukraine, India, Philippines, Syria, & Mexico, South Africa, Jamaica, Columbia, China, Turkey, Vietnam.

# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

## Newcomer Students in 2022/2023



**Top five countries from where newcomers come from**

Country	FTE
Ukraine	167
India	103
Philippines	73
Syria	50
Mexico	49
South Africa	20
Jamaica	19

693 students joined our schools as of September 2022 – (this number includes pre-5 [64 students] as many of them attend StrongStart Centers).

Grade	FTE
1	50
2	50
3	62
4	60
5	53
6	38
7	42
8	38
9	47
10	50
11	57
12	9
K	73
PRE-5	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>693</b>

# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

## Student Enrollment Increased in each Family of Schools



Student enrollment increased in each family of schools.

Type	Central	Lake Country	Mission	Rutland	West	Grand Total
Permanent Resident	53	7	16	44	25	145
Refugee (Other)	133	7	7	102	65	91
Study Permit	41	1	10	24	2	78
Work Permit	75	9	24	79	20	207
Grand Total	275	24	57	249	88	693

# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



Together We Learn



Central Okanagan  
Public Schools

International Education



Further cultural diversity was introduced to local schools through the Central Okanagan Public Schools International Education Program in the 2022/2023 school year:

- **599** students totaling **430** FTE from **27** countries and jurisdictions enrolled in local schools.
- The countries sending the most students to the Central Okanagan by volume were: Germany, Japan, Italy, Mexico, Spain, China (including Hong Kong), Columbia, Belgium, Brazil and Belgium.



# EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP



## Diverse Childcare Options to Serve Families:

- 8 StrongStart Centres
- 1 Seamless Day Childcare Program at Bankhead Elementary School
- 15 schools offer Preschool Aged Childcare on school grounds
- 31 afterschool programs; 14 before school programs; 9 programs from birth to Kindergarten
- 7 new Childcare Centres will be constructed and opening this summer, fall and 1 next spring

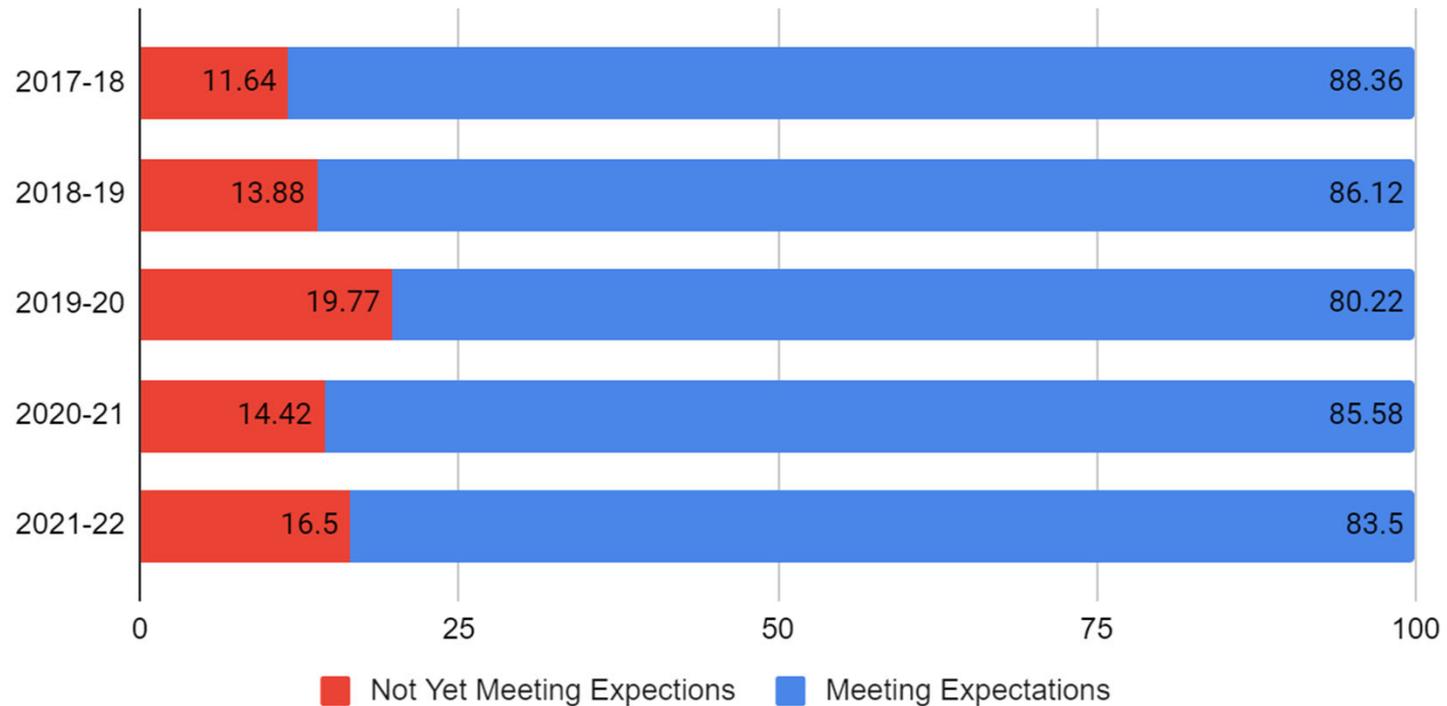


# BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS - LITERACY



## Reading Performance

PM Benchmark Results - Grade 3

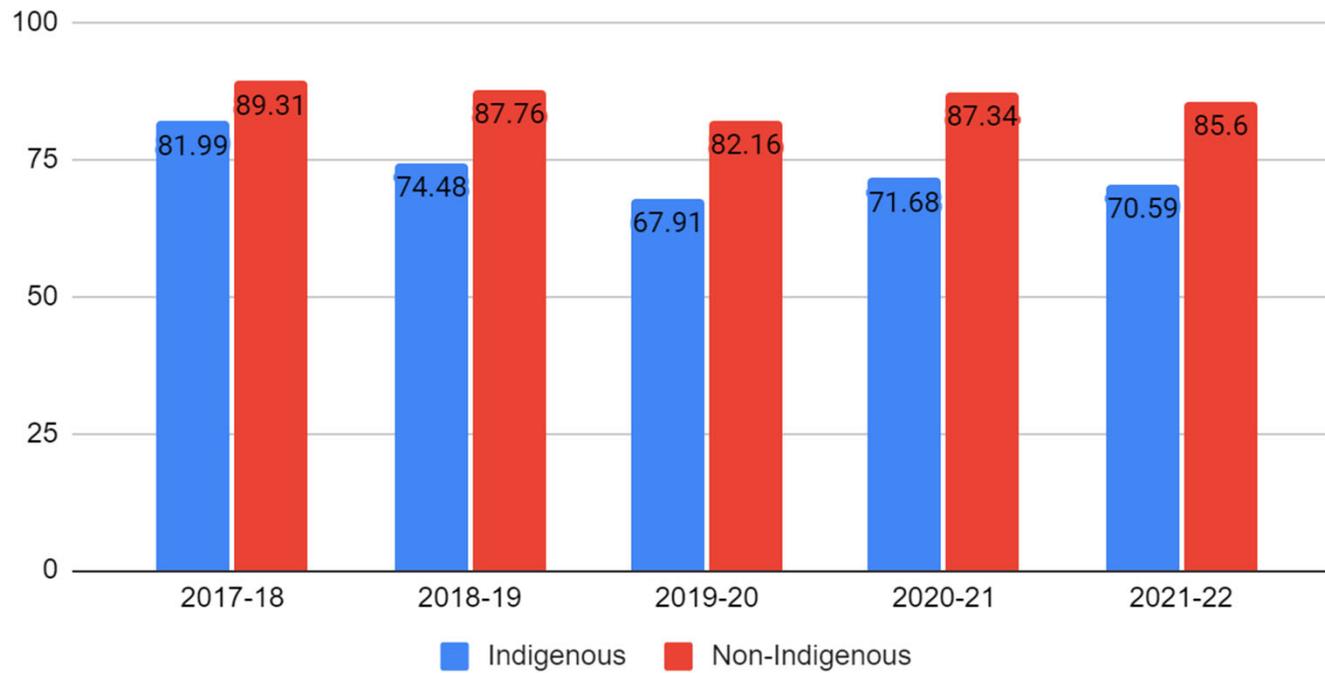


# BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS - LITERACY



## Reading Performance

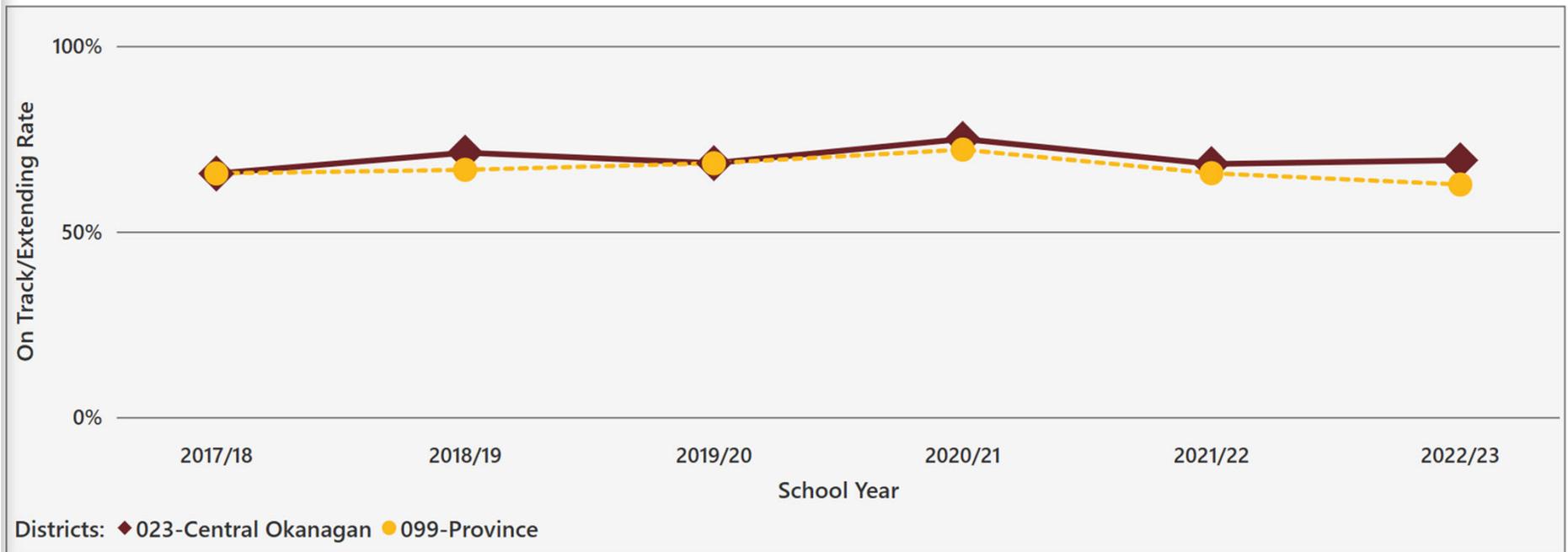
Grade 3 - PM Benchmarks - Students Meeting Expectations



# FOUNDATION SKILLS – NUMERACY PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS



## Grade 4 All Resident Students

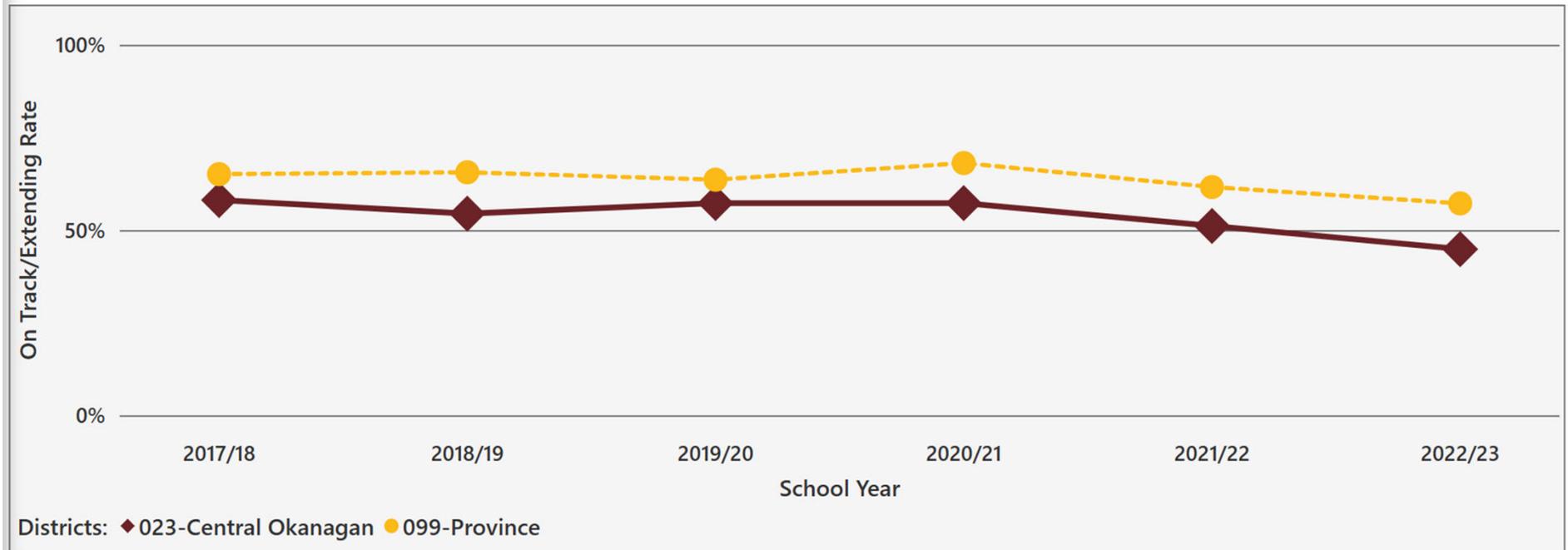


# FOUNDATION SKILLS – NUMERACY PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS



## Grade 7

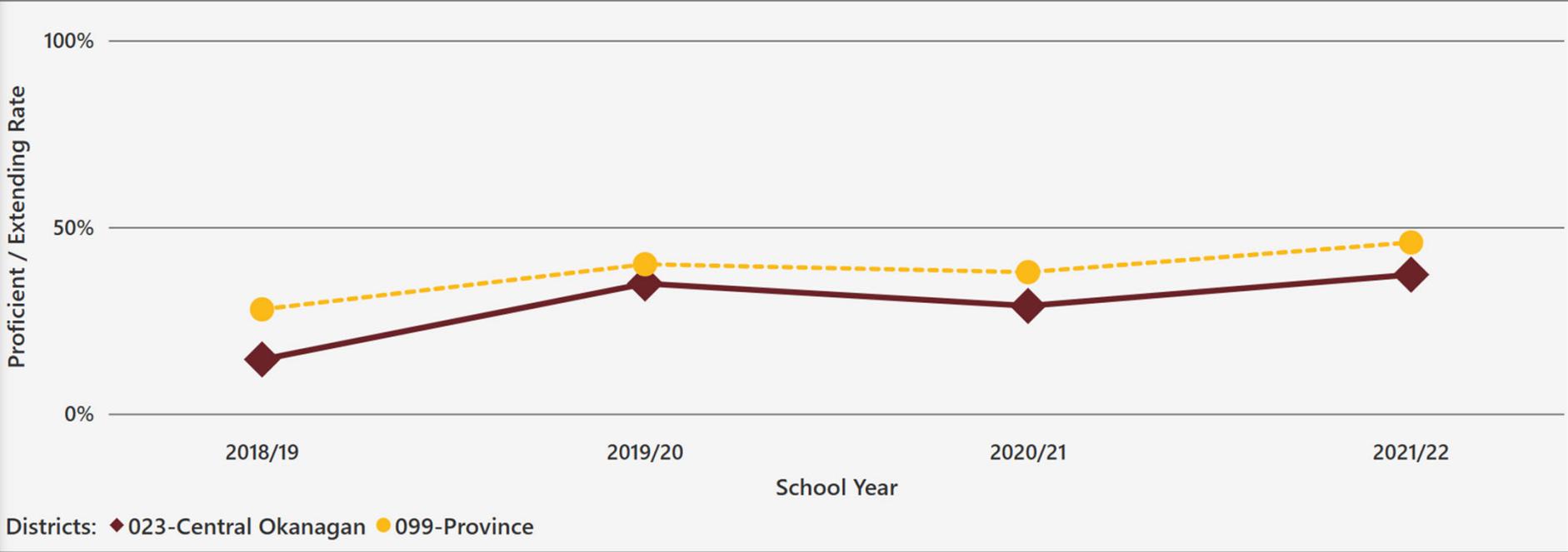
### All Resident Students



# FOUNDATION SKILLS – NUMERACY PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS



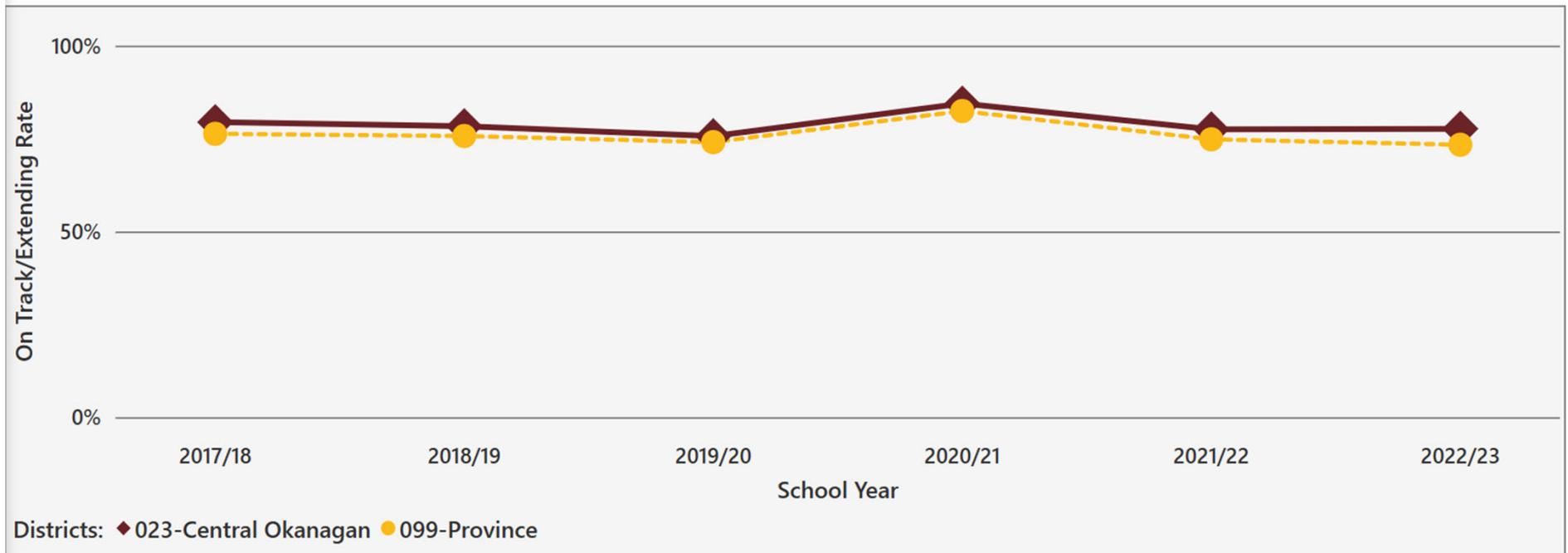
## Grade 10 All Resident Students



# FOUNDATION SKILLS – LITERACY PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS



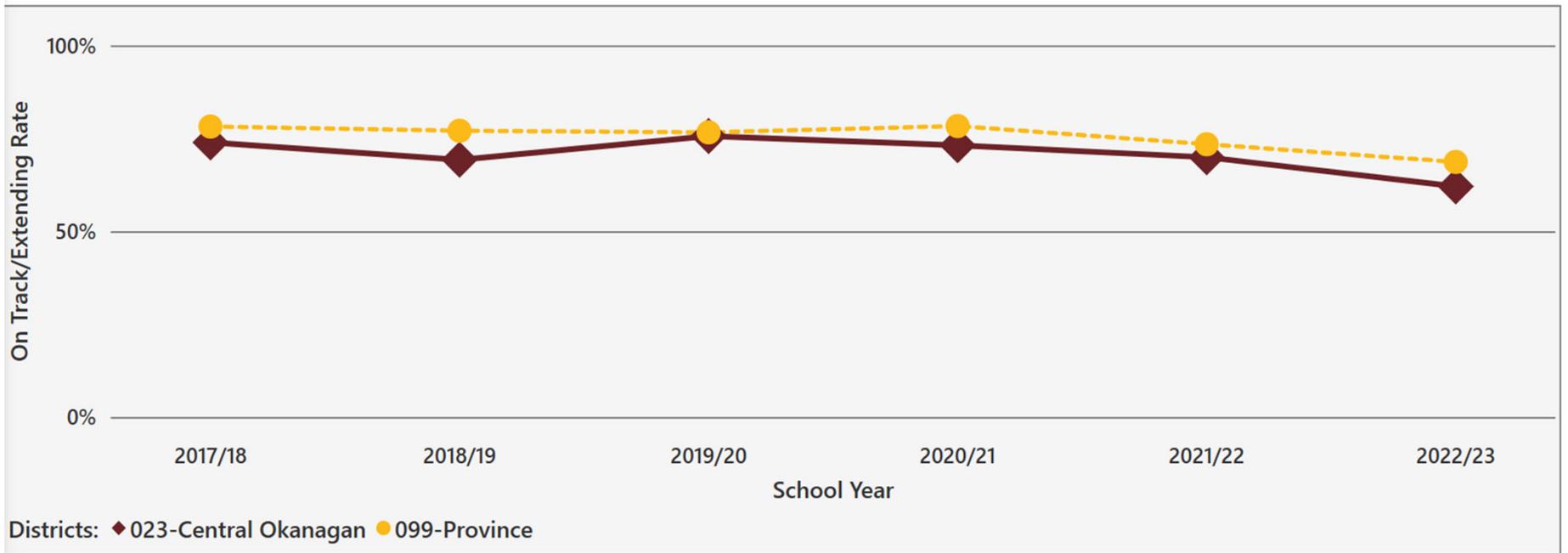
## Grade 4 All Resident Students



# FOUNDATION SKILLS – LITERACY PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS



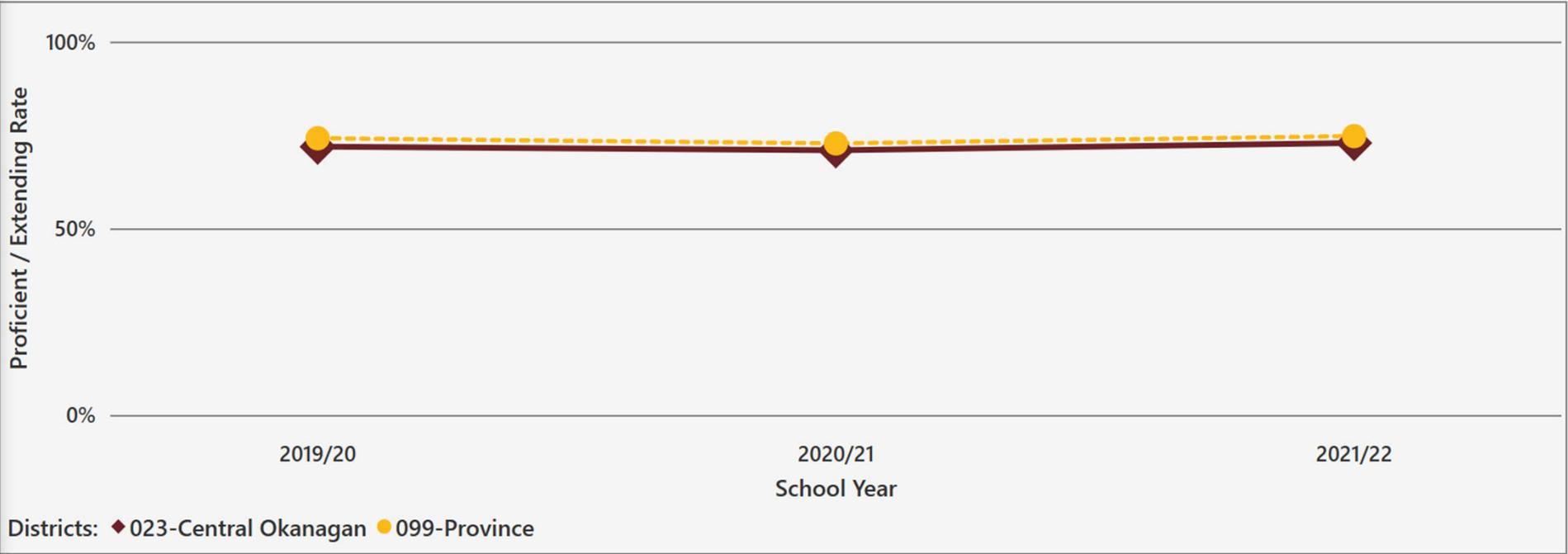
## Grade 7 All Resident Students



# FOUNDATION SKILLS – LITERACY PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS



## Grade 10 All Resident Students

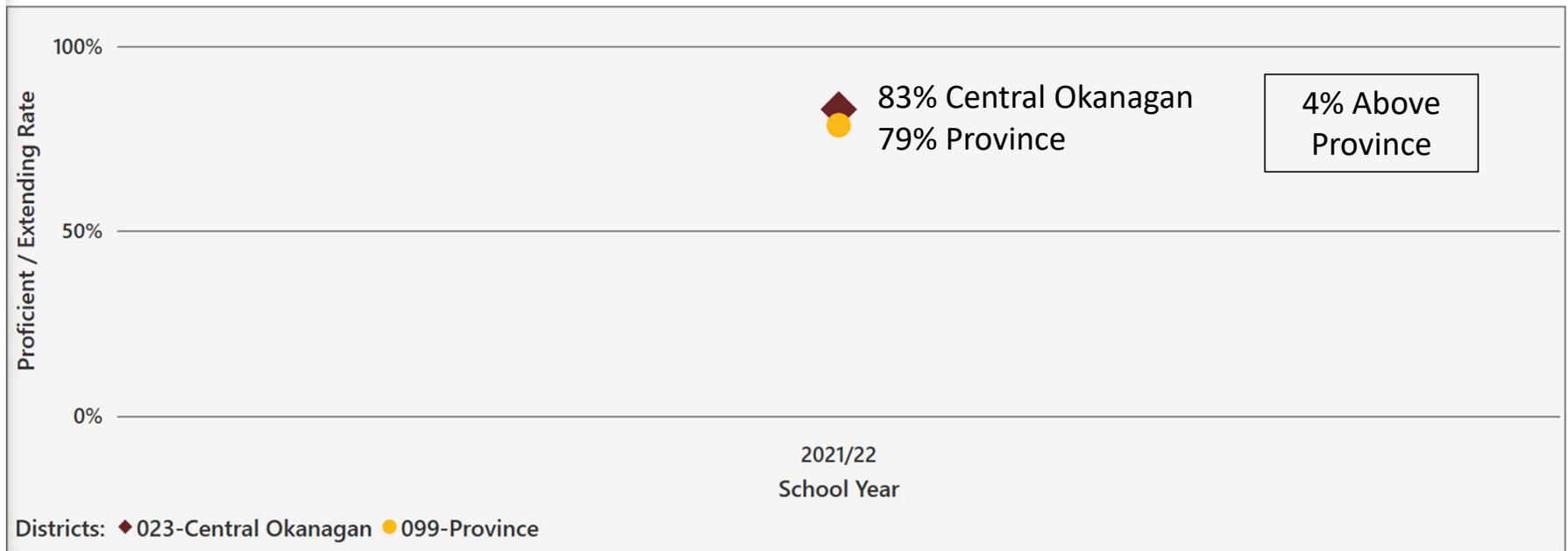


# FOUNDATION SKILLS – LITERACY PROVINCIAL ASSESSMENTS



## Grade 12

### All Resident Students

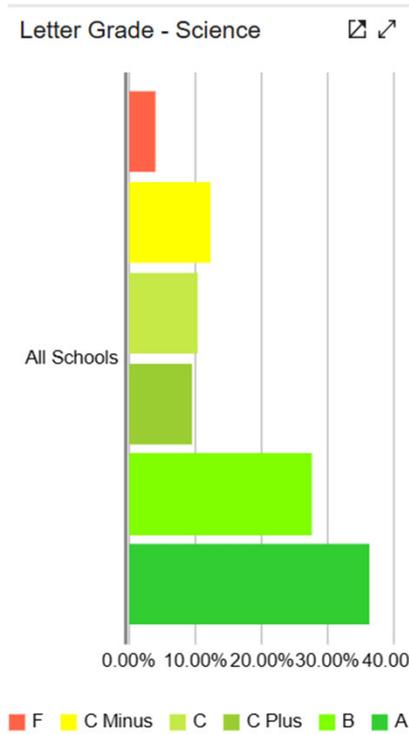


# BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS - SCIENCE

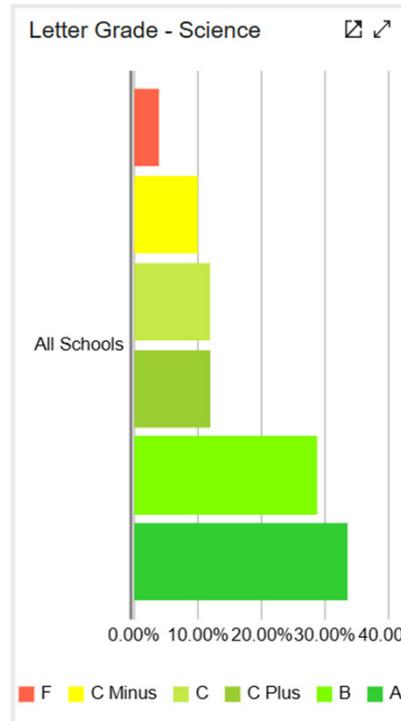


## FINAL MARK DISTRIBUTION FOR SCIENCE COURSES BY GRADE – 2021-2022

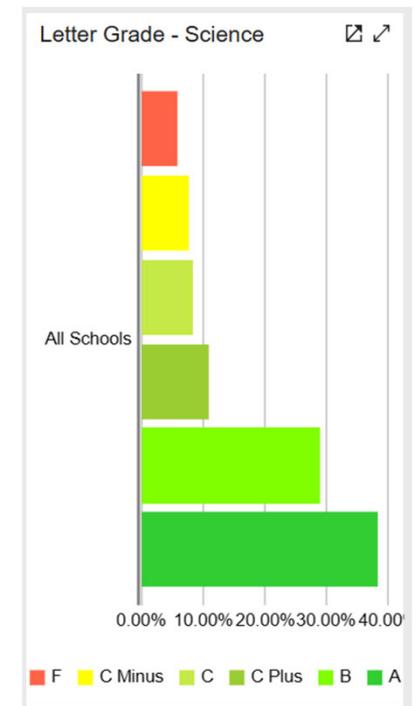
**Grade 10**



**Grade 11**



**Grade 12**

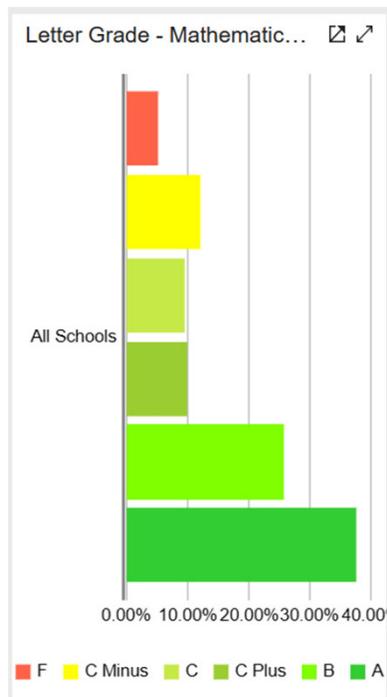


# BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS – MATHEMATICS

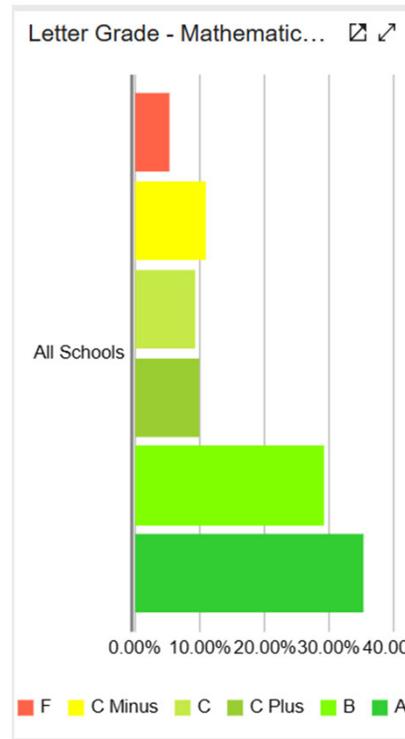


## FINAL MARK DISTRIBUTION FOR MATH COURSES BY GRADE - 2021-2022

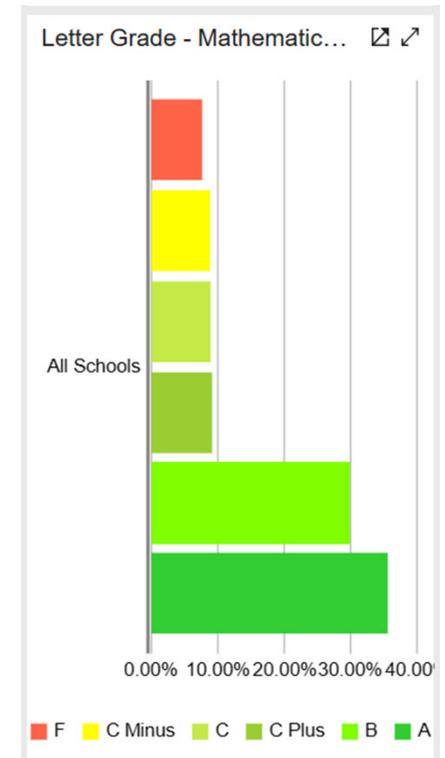
Grade 10



Grade 11



Grade 12

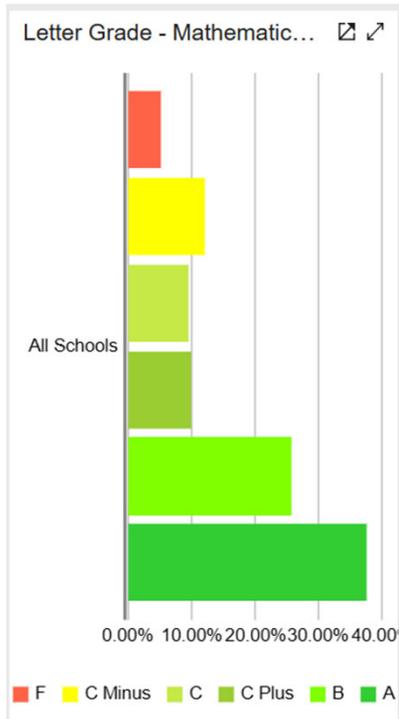


# BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS – GRADE 10 MATHEMATICS

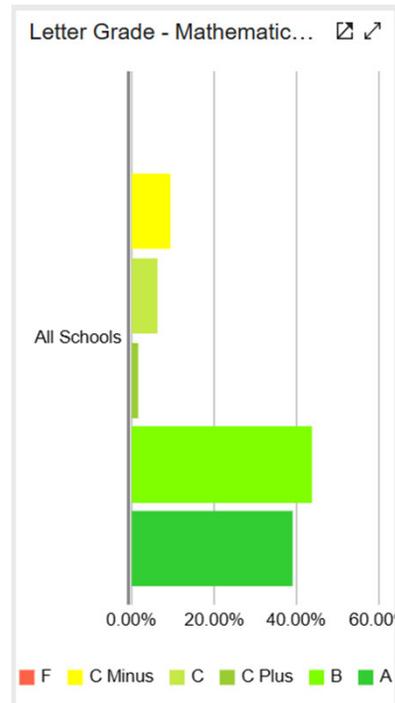


## FINAL MARK DISTRIBUTION FOR GRADE 10 MATH COURSES – 2021-2022

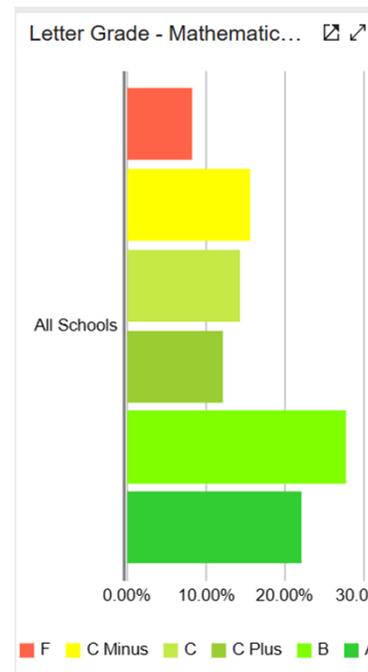
All Students



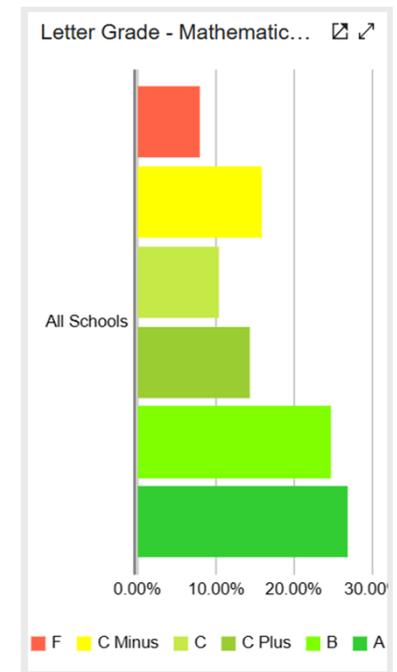
ELL



Aboriginal



Special Needs

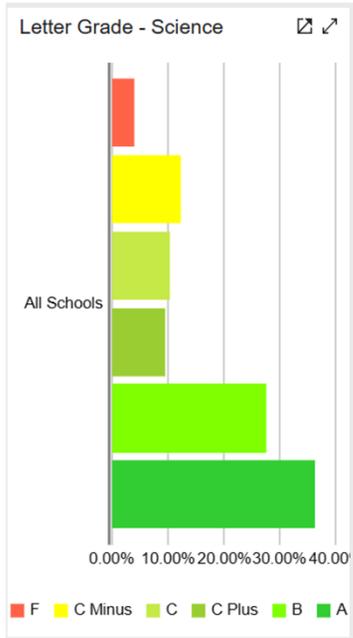


# BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS – GRADE 10 SCIENCE

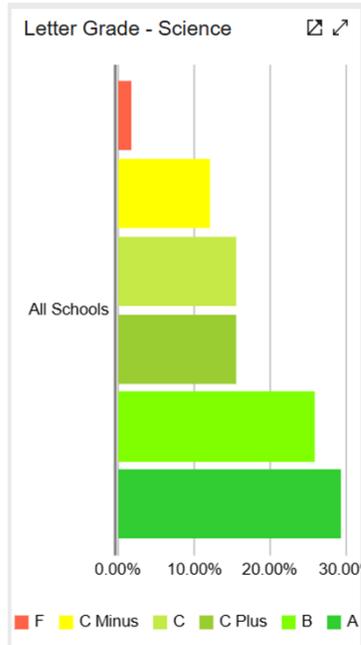


## FINAL MARK DISTRIBUTION FOR GRADE 10 SCIENCE COURSES – 2021-2022

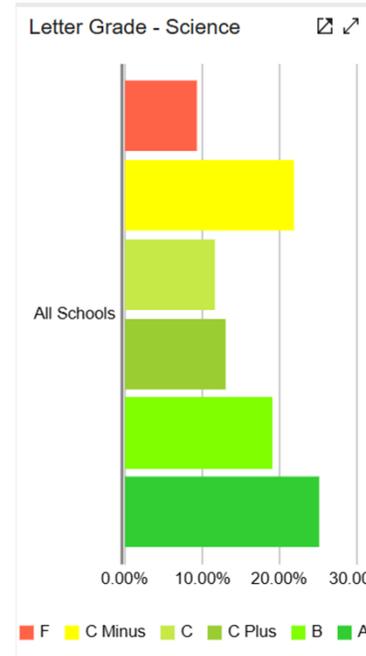
All Students



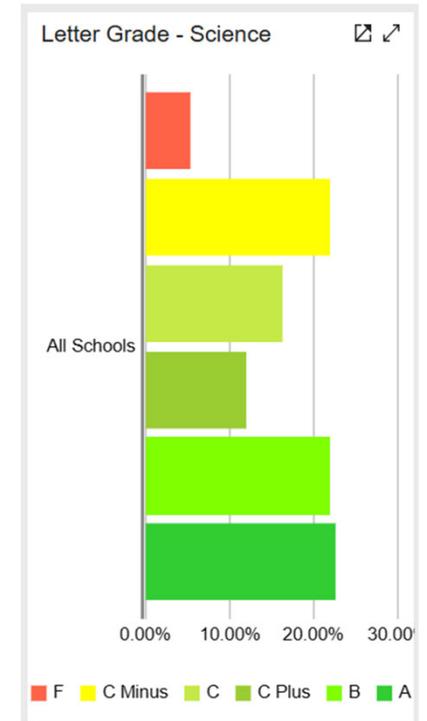
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Aboriginal



Special Needs

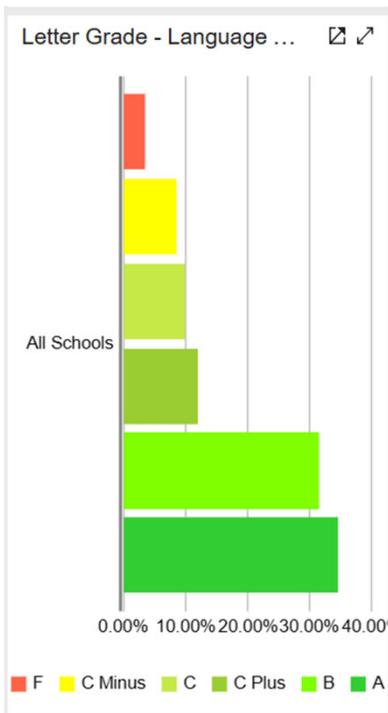


# BUILDING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS – GRADE 10 LANGUAGE ARTS

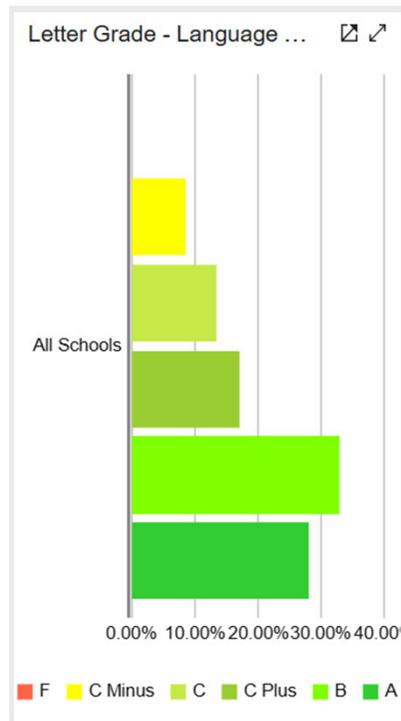


## FINAL MARK DISTRIBUTION FOR GRADE 10 LANGUAGE ARTS – 2021-2022

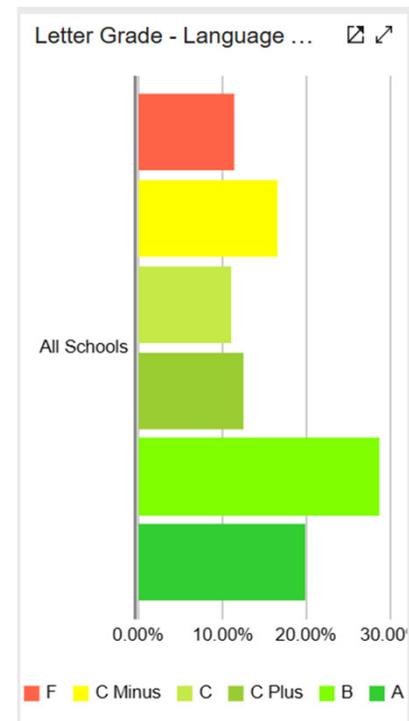
All Students



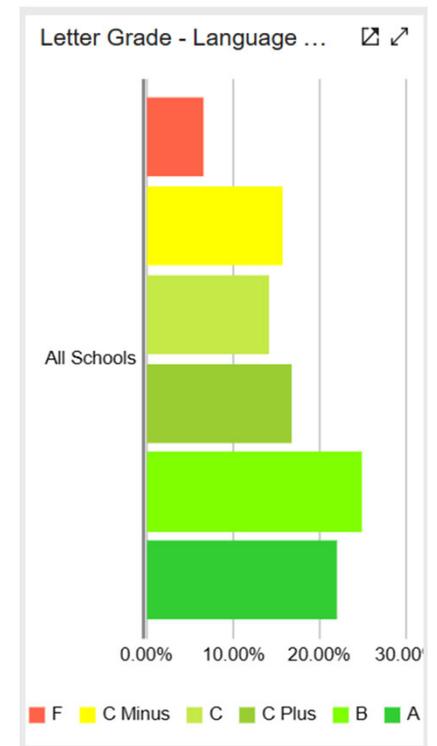
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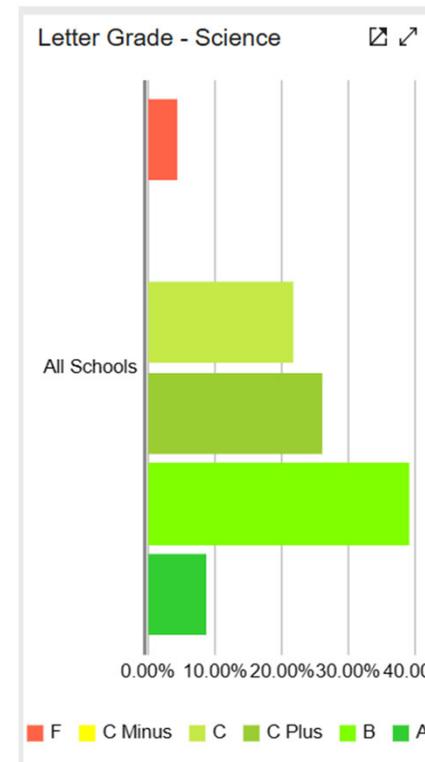
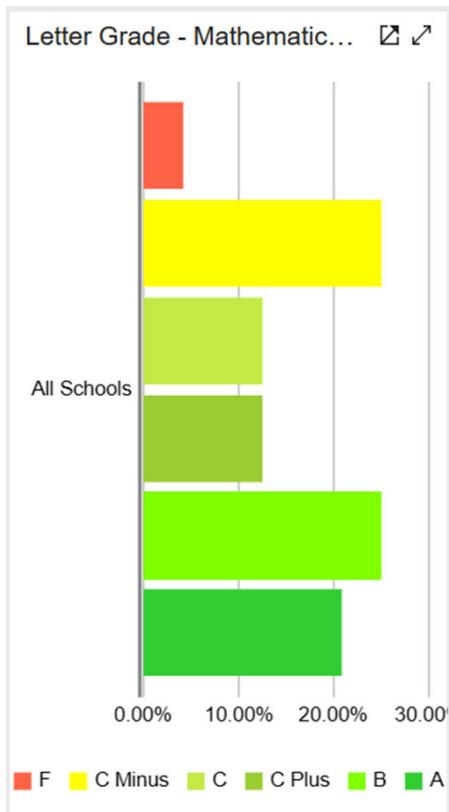
Aboriginal



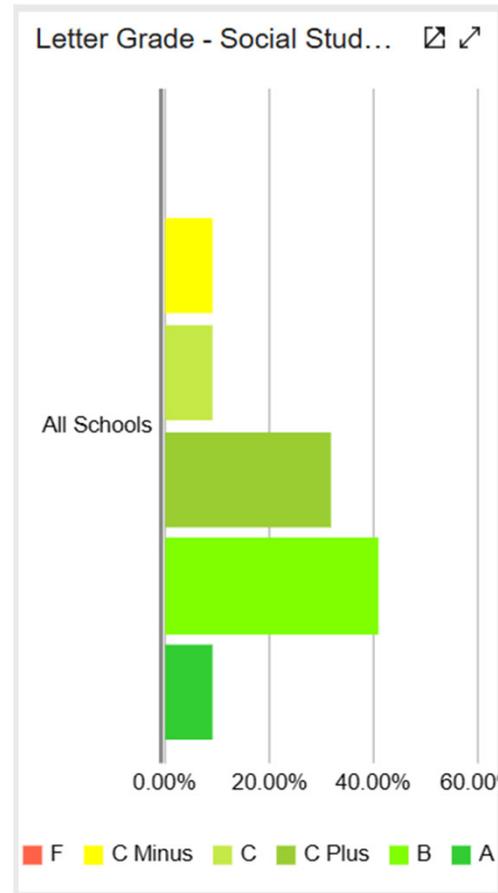
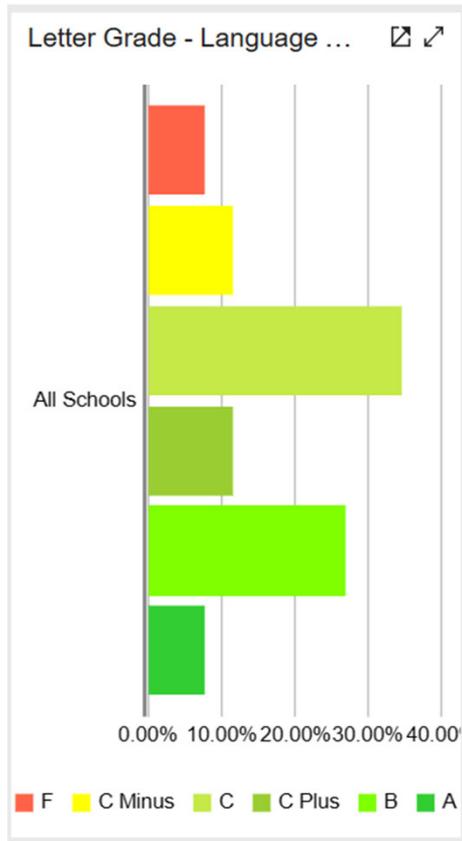
Special Needs



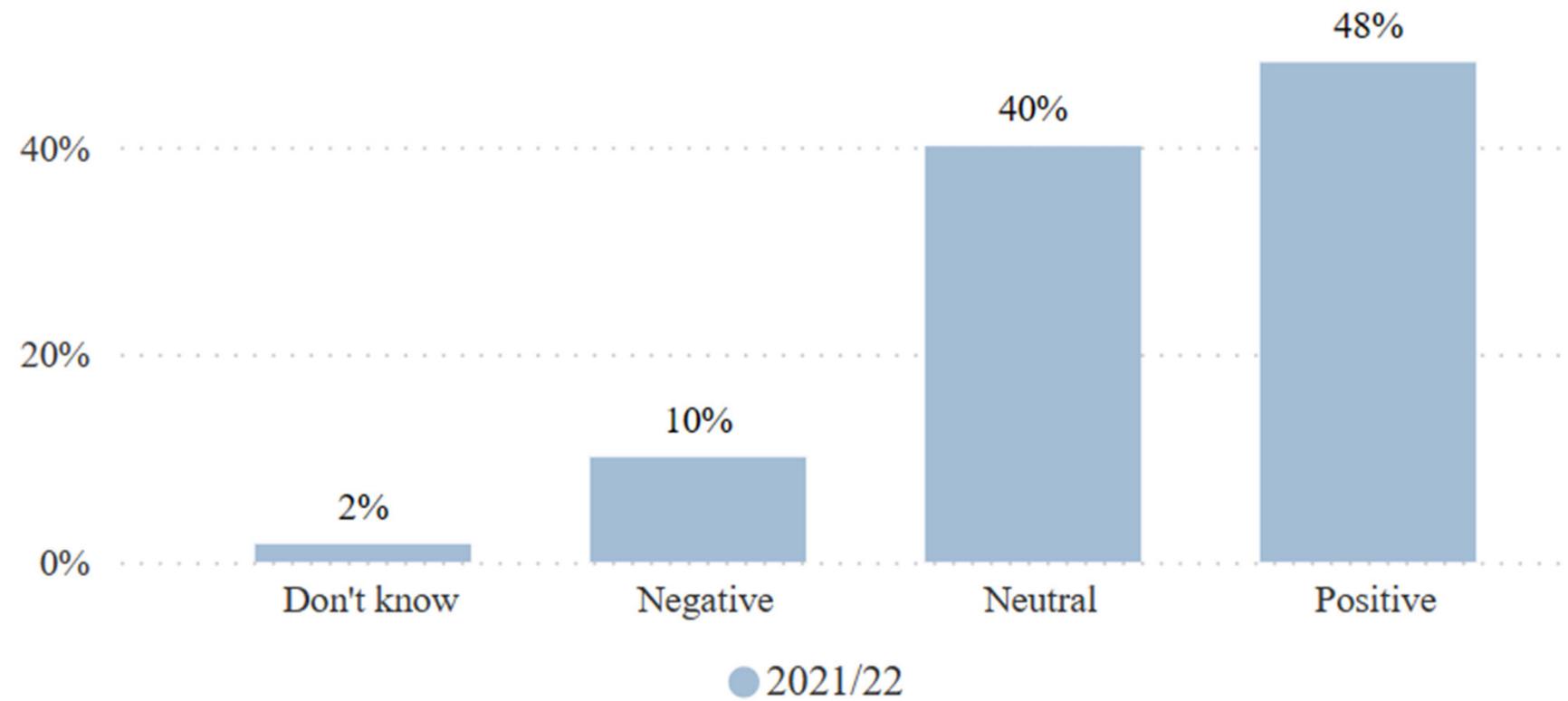
# CHILDREN IN CARE - MATH AND SCIENCE 2021-2022



# CHILDREN IN CARE - SOCIAL STUDIES AND LANGUAGE ARTS 2021-2022

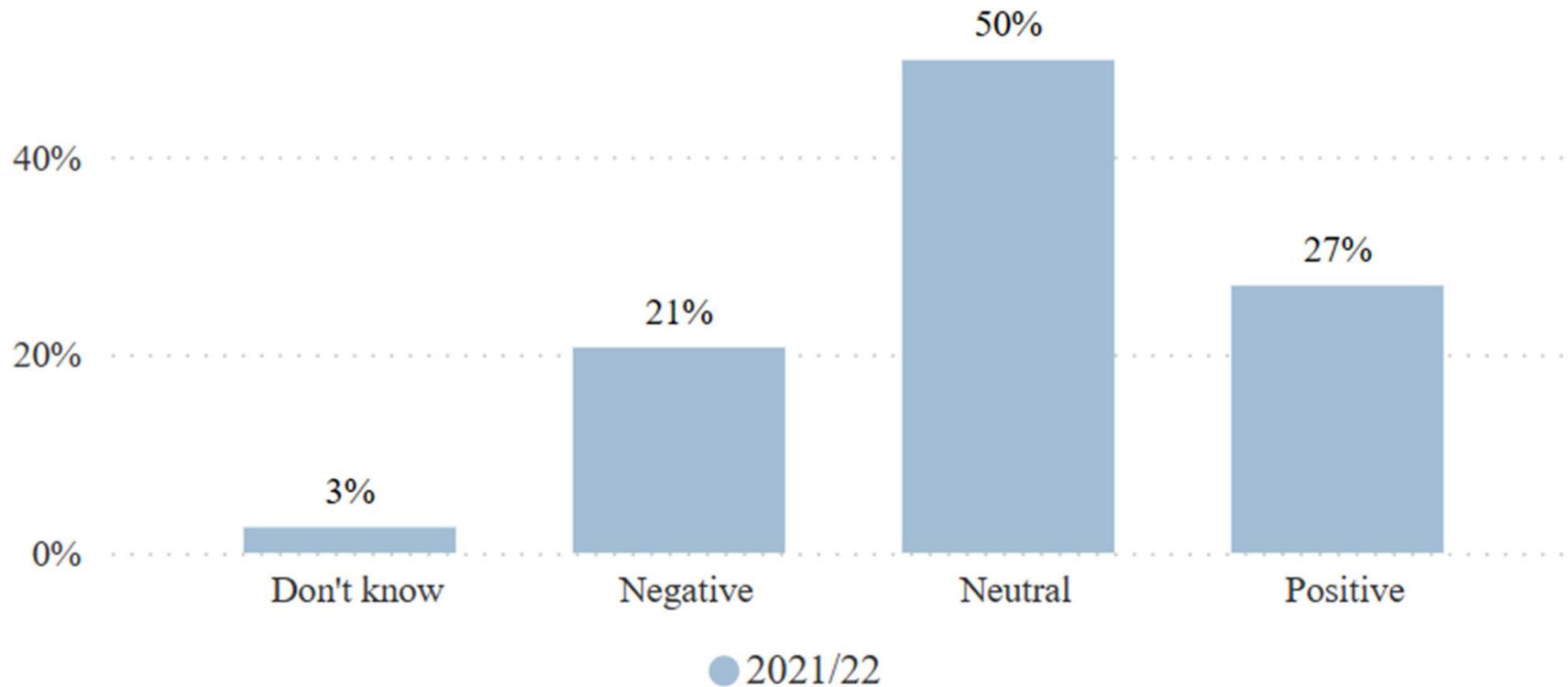


# CORE COMPETENCIES - CRITICAL & REFLECTIVE THINKING 2021-2022



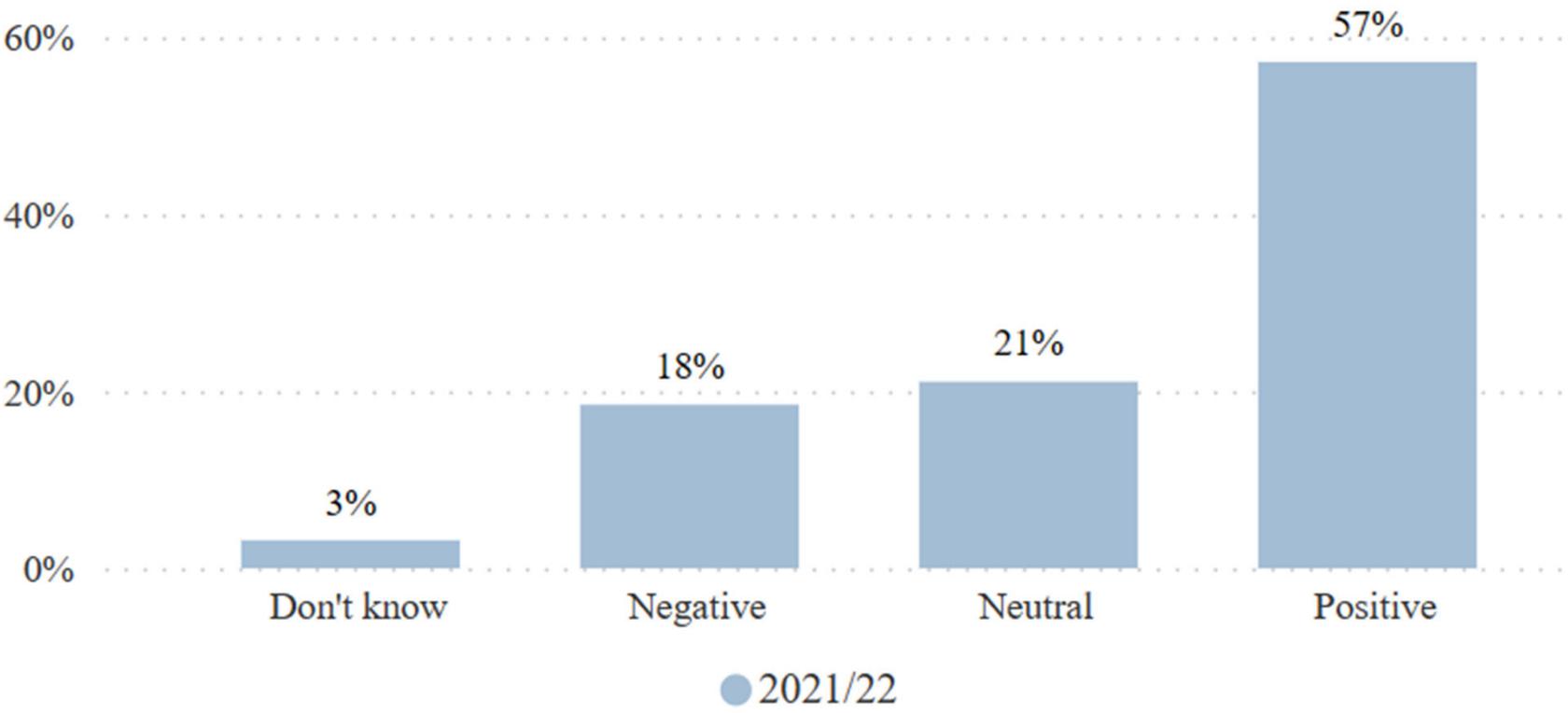
88% of Grade 12 students report they are learning to be a critical thinker

# CORE COMPETENCIES - CREATIVE THINKING 2021 - 2022



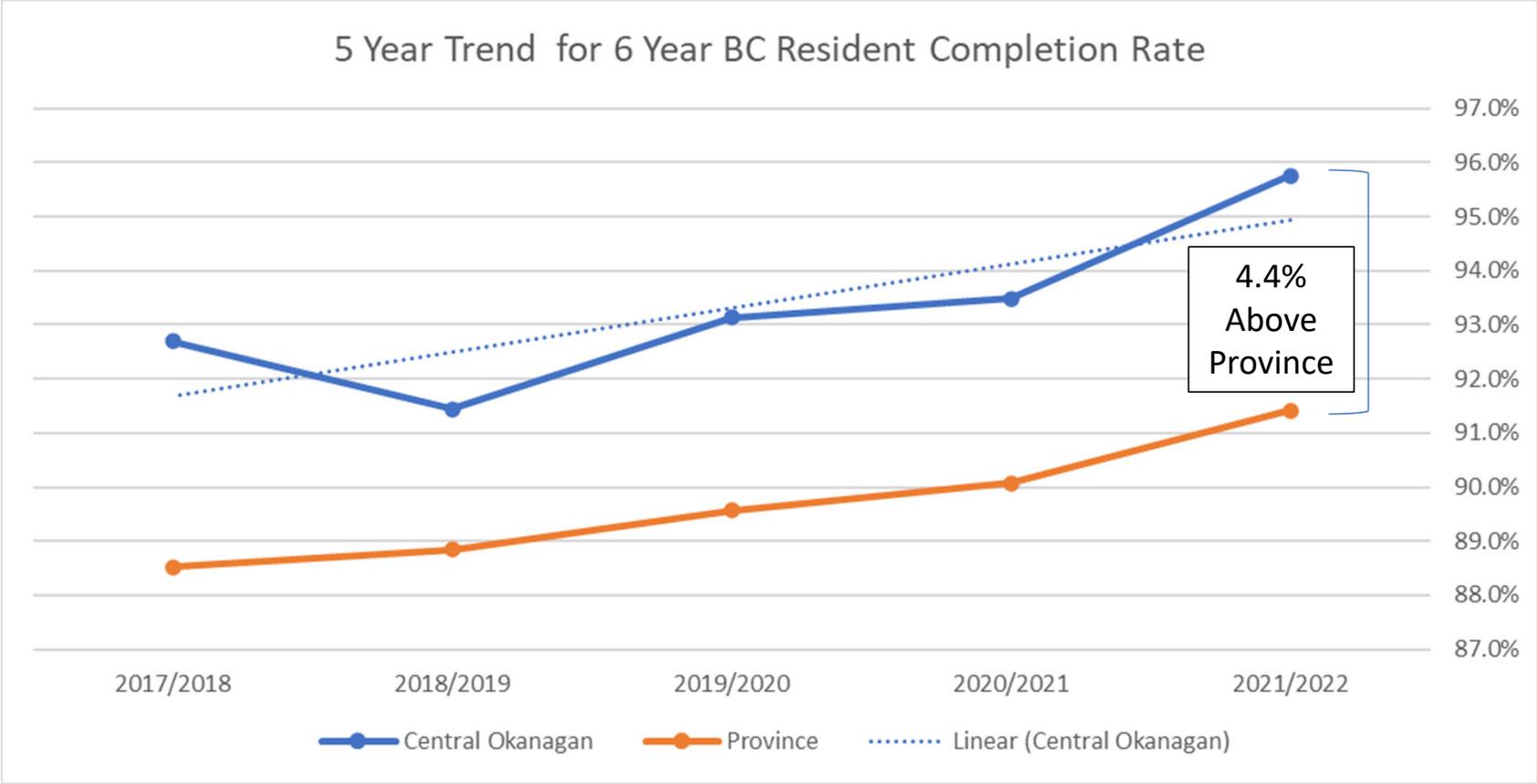
77% of Grade 12 students report that they are learning ways to be more creative

# CORE CURRICULAR COMPETENCY – PERSONAL & SOCIAL 2021-2022



78% of Grade 12 students report that they are learning social skills needed for the future

# GRADUATION – All Central Okanagan Students



# GRADUATION



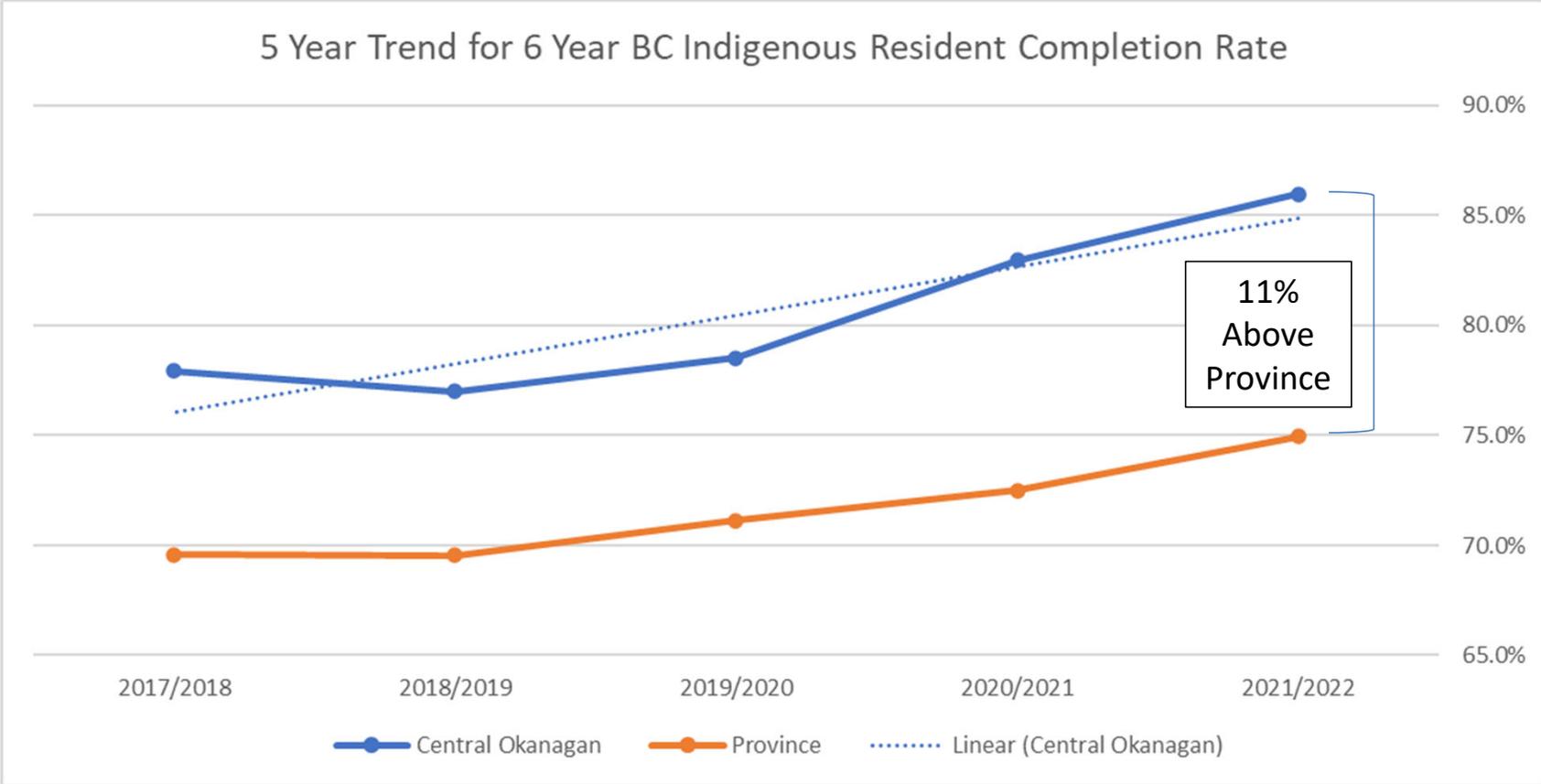
## 6 Year BC Resident Completion Rate 2021 - 2022

96%



+2.4%

# GRADUATION – Indigenous Students



# GRADUATION



## 6 Year BC Indigenous Resident Completion Rate 2021 - 2022

86%



+3.0%

# DUAL CREDIT RESULTS - BCIT and SCHOOL-BASED



## BCIT

Electricity & Industrial Electronics (Construction Electrician)

Computer Information Systems Administration (775 Graham Rd. Campus)

## School Based

Hairstylist (MBSS)

Forestry/Utility Arborist (RSS)

Emergency Medical Responder (Justice Institute of BC at RSS)

## UBC – Okanagan

Engineering - APSC 171: Engineering Drawing and CAD/CAM

### UBC-Okanagan, BCIT and School Based

YEAR	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021-2022
Completion Rate	83%	83%	89%	82%	87%	88%

### 2020-21

Students enrolled in  
All Dual Credit Programs =  
**260**

# DUAL CREDIT RESULTS - OKANAGAN COLLEGE



Academic Dual Credit (1<sup>st</sup> year transfer courses)  
 Administrative Assistant  
 Aircraft Maintenance Technician  
 Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (Structures)  
 Automotive Service Technician  
 Carpentry/Joinery  
 Collision Repair & Painting  
 Culinary Arts  
 Electrical  
 Early Childhood Educator  
 Education Assistant (CEA)  
 Health Care Assistant

Heavy Mechanical Trades  
 Office Assistant  
 Plumbing & Piping Trades  
 Pastry Arts  
 Recreation Vehicle Service Tech  
 Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic  
 Sheet Metal  
 Welder  
 Health Care Assistant  
 Trades Sampler Programs (x4, non-credential from PSI)  
 Gateway to Technology (non-credential from PSI)

## Okanagan College Completion Rates

YEAR	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Completion Rate	73%	86%	79%	83%	90%	91%

# CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



- **Central Okanagan Public Schools is a high performing District in BC.**
- **Student achievement results above both the national and provincial norms on almost every measure.**



# Equity in Action Agreement

## For Truth & Reconciliation 2020-2025

### 2022 - 2023 Third Annual Report

**Equity empowers each learner to thrive holistically**

*“Matriarchs, Grandmothers, Mothers, Aunties, many are residential school survivors, and have never lost faith in their grandchildren or education. Grandmothers’ love, support, and pride, flows through generations, maintaining and reconnecting future generations to healthy and sustaining kinship with each other and the land.*

*tum, mother of daughters; tmtimaʔ/təmaʔ, maternal grandmother; tmixʷ, everything with a life, spirit, and Food Chief communities are tmixʷ; tmxʷulaʔxʷ, land/whole ecology - all the tmixʷ intertwined into an interdependent self-renewing earth mother.*

*Schools have potential to connect all children to healthy, appreciative, and sustaining kinship relationships with each other and the earth mother who gives us all we need to live well.”*

**Dr. Bill Cohen**

Syilx Okanagan Artist and Educator  
Assistant Professor  
UBC Okanagan  
School of Education



GESS Graduate, Michael Robins  
with grandparent, Donna Robins

**Kʷu knknxʷtəwix iʔ kl snaqsilxʷ**

We are walking hand in hand with our relatives.  
Nous marchons main dans la main avec nos proches.

Together We Learn



**Central Okanagan  
Public Schools**

Indigenous Education



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action Agreement 2020-2025

Central Okanagan Public Schools and the District’s Indigenous Education Council acknowledge and honour the traditional territory and history of the Okanagan (Syilx) People and Westbank First Nation as our host band. We also acknowledge the traditional teachings of all our Elders and the wisdom of their Indigenous culture.

### EQUITY IN ACTION AGREEMENT IS BETWEEN

Central Okanagan Public Schools

AND

Westbank First Nation, the Okanagan Indian Band, Okanagan Nation Alliance, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, Lake Country Native Association, Kelowna Métis Association, Indigenous Parent and Family Education Council

AND

The Ministry of Education in the Province of British Columbia



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This report has been prepared by Terry Beaudry, April Strickland, Jasmine Lemon, and Evelin Mueller.

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Our Third Year (2022 - 2023)

Way' [Hello] everyone,

We are excited to share with you **Central Okanagan Public School's Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Third Annual Report**. As the pandemic slowed and restrictions were lifted, we found ourselves returning to more Gatherings and events this year. Throughout this report, you will read about the return of the Primary Winter Gatherings, the Grade 12 Retreats, the Indigenous Student Summit, Indigenous parent and family evenings, and the return of sit-down family dinners at the five Indigenous Graduation Blanket Ceremonies. To gather - coming together for ceremony, celebration, and connection enabled us to live this year's District theme of **"Caring Communities"**.

This year **3,169** students (K-12) identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit), representing over 61 Bands. Central Okanagan Public Schools remain committed to equity, as a core value, and Truth and Reconciliation. As written in the Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation Agreement:

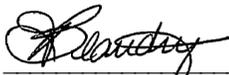
**"Equity empowers each learner to thrive, holistically"**

Even though the past few years have presented many challenges for our parents and families, we have had many successes. During the 2022-2023 school year, we are most proud of setting a District record with over **86%** of Indigenous students graduating on-time and with purpose, dignity, and options. We recognize we remain on a journey towards all Indigenous students achieving their potential and realizing their dreams!

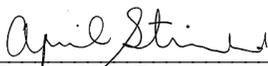
As you read through the pages, may the stories, photos, links (and even QR codes), embedded within this report, reflect our District's commitment towards Equity in Action and describe our journey towards Truth and Reconciliation.



Kevin Kaardal  
Superintendent of Schools/CEO



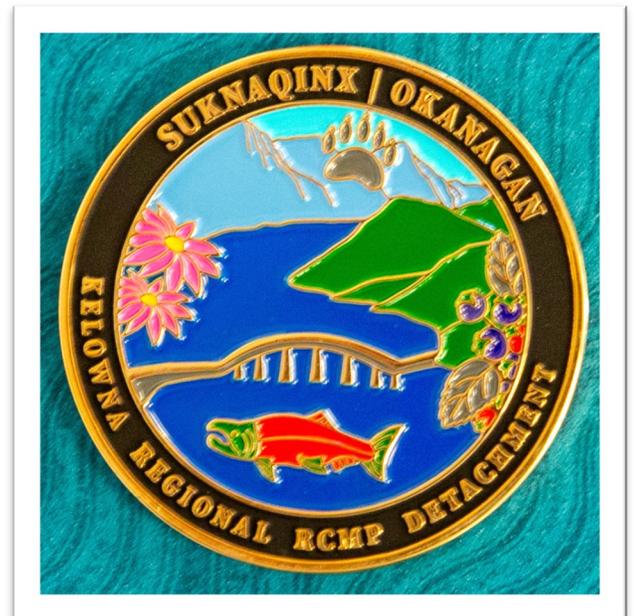
Terry-Lee Beauty  
Deputy Superintendent of Schools



April Stines  
District Vice-Principal  
Indigenous Education and Equity



J. Lemon  
Acting Vice-Principal  
Indigenous Education and Equity



To learn more about Land-Based Love's involvement in the design of the RCMP Coin Challenge, please refer to page 34.

Please Note: Each school and workplace, in Central Okanagan Public Schools, is on a journey towards equity. This report reflects only some of the work being done in each of the goal areas.

Edited by Ann Bell, Lake Country Native Association, Christie Russell, District Vice-Principal of Indigenous Education, and Anne Tenning, Director of Instruction—Indigenous Education and Equity

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## How Are Our Indigenous Learners Doing?

Central Okanagan Public Schools is committed to the ongoing gathering of data to determine how each Indigenous learner is doing (K-12). Through conversations, collections of learning evidence, locally-developed assessments, and Ministry of Education and Child Care data collection, we learn more about each learner and where they are in their learning journey at a given time. A thoughtful approach to data collection and interpretation is reflected in the words of Westbank First Nation Councillor, Jordan Coble:

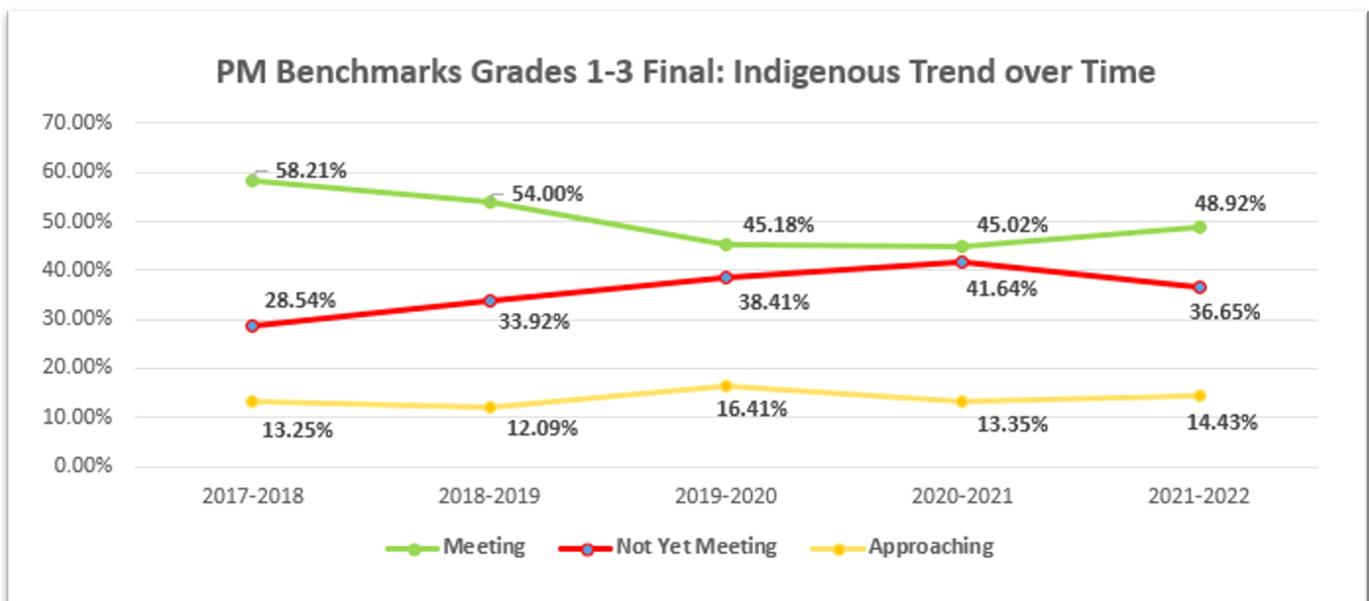
*"I know so much of the district and province's work is largely based on data but what I truly appreciated during the report on stats at Jointly Convened Annual Meeting (JCAM) was the acknowledgement that every data point is a student, is a life and has so much more meaning than just the number represented through the data sets. I know so many of our district staff work with this mentality in their heart and so I just thought it would be a good and respectful acknowledgement of this."*

Central Okanagan Public Schools Indigenous Education Council Chair, Jordan Coble

Qualitative data is continually sought through talking circles, meetings with parents, community members, and collaborative discussions between Indigenous Education staff, classroom teachers, and School-based Teams. Additionally, the locally-developed Indigenous Information Management System (IIMS) enables the Indigenous Education staff to input data related to each Indigenous student's intellectual achievement, emotional well-being, cultural connectedness, and physical well-being. Indigenous Student Advocates are required to input student data each day to ensure meaningful connections are being made with each Indigenous student in the District.

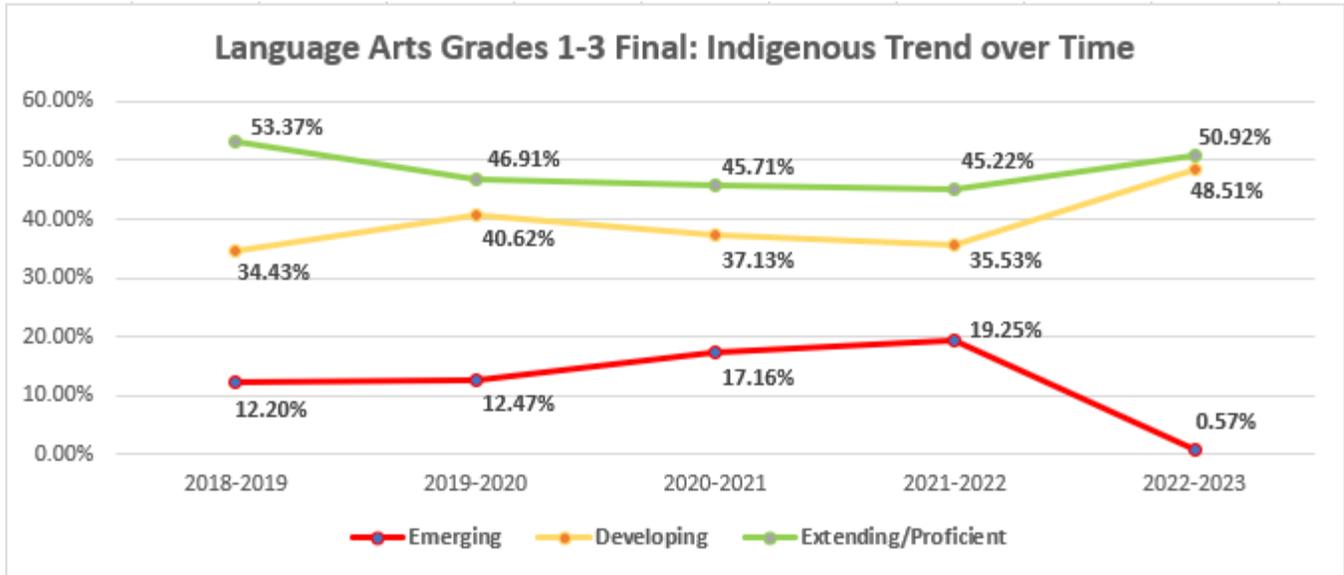
### Primary Reading Performance

Central Okanagan Public Schools collection of early learning data shows a decline in early learning achievement and reading readiness for Indigenous early learners during the pandemic. Recognizing the trending up of Indigenous early learners not yet meeting expectations at the end of grade three, a number of supports and services, including Jordan's Principle supports, have been put in place. The most recent yearend data is reflecting a more positive trend in achievement data. Early learning will continue to be a focus in the years ahead.



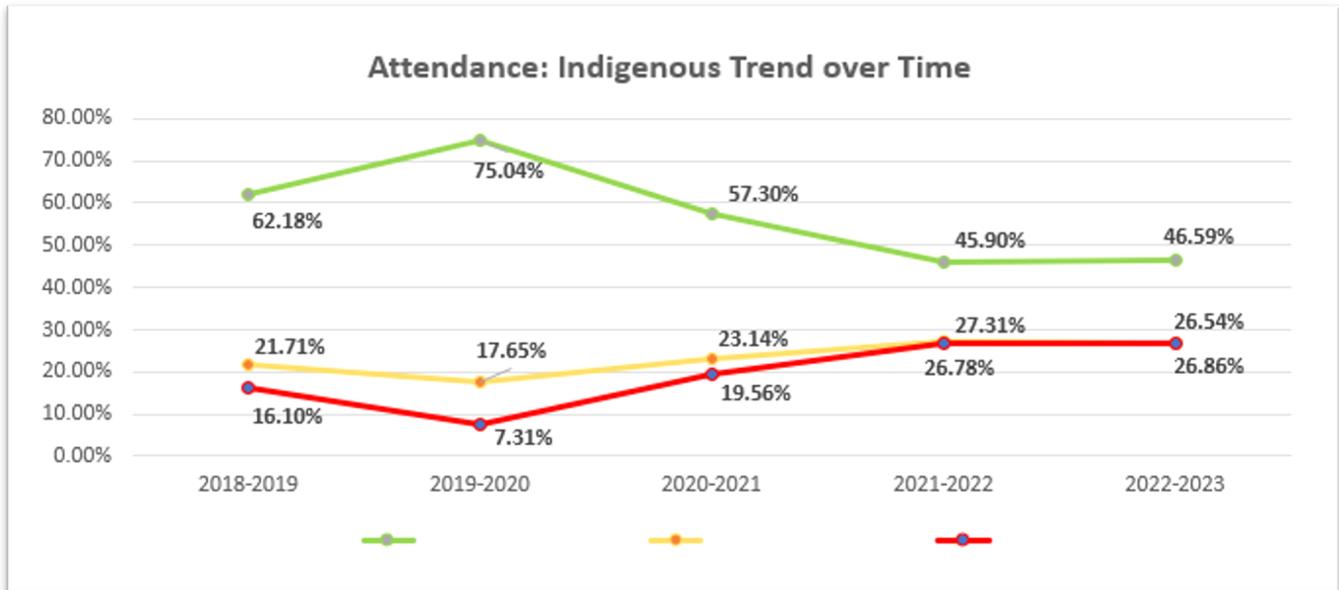
# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## How Are Our Indigenous Learners Doing?



### Attendance: Indigenous Trends over Time

Consistent attendance for some Indigenous students continues to be a concern. The graph below shows the patterns of attendance over the past few years. The 2020 data is skewed and unreliable, resulting from schools being closed for a period of time due to the pandemic. It is evident that more needs to be done to increase consistent attendance for some Indigenous learners (K-12).



**Legend**

Green: 47% of Indigenous students demonstrating consistent attendance  
 Yellow: 27% of Indigenous students demonstrating inconsistent attendance  
 Red: 27% of Indigenous students demonstrating significant absence

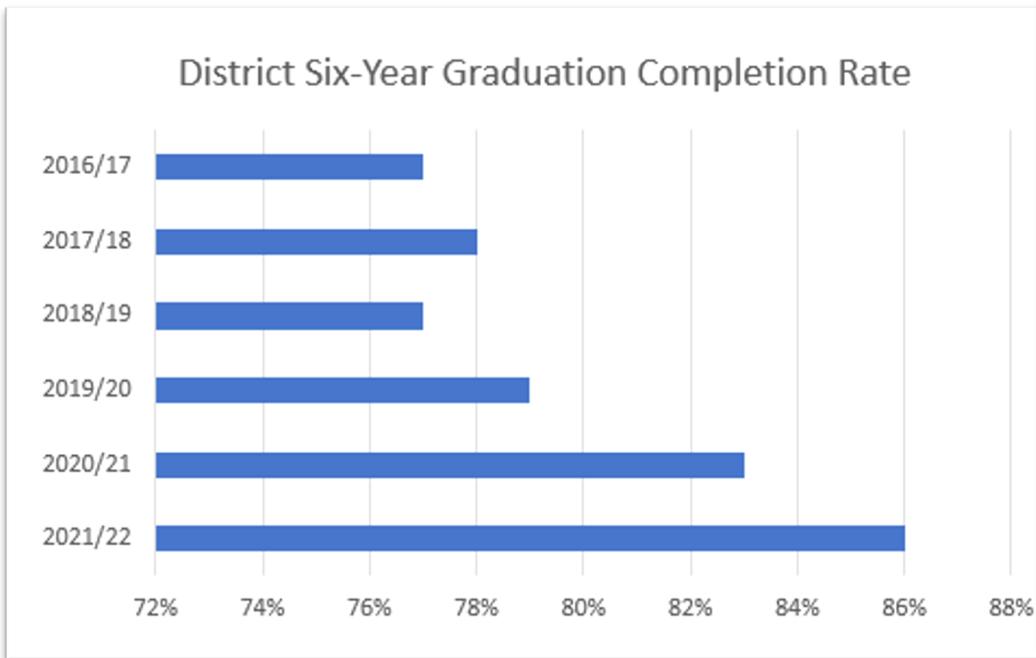
Please refer to the Ministry of Education & Child Care's  
["How Are We Doing?" Report for all Indigenous student achievement results.](#)



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## How Are Our Indigenous Learners Doing?

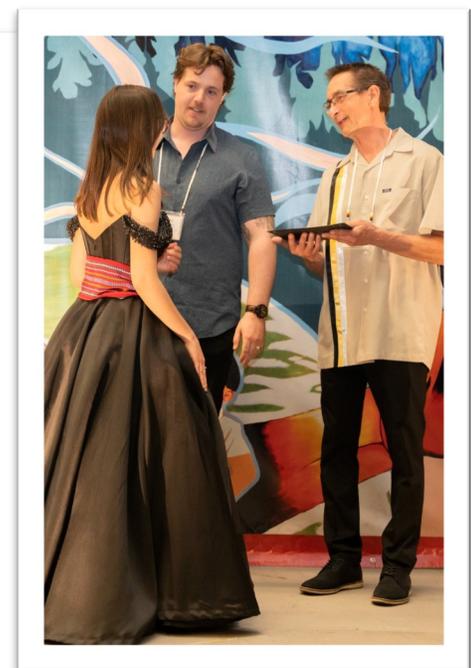
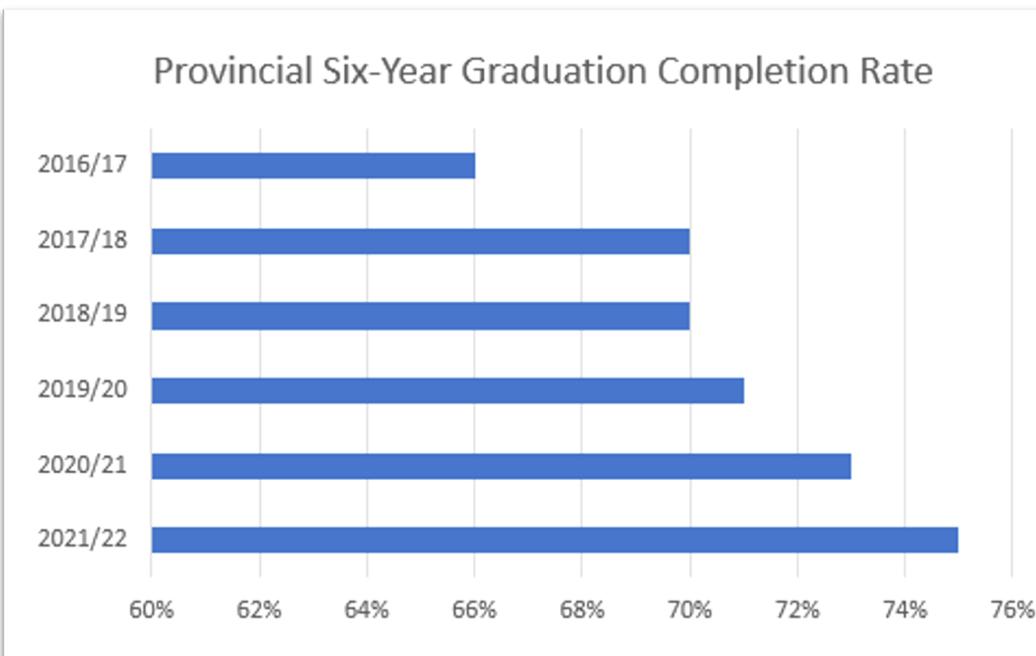
### SIX-YEAR COMPLETION RATE: 2016/17 - 2021/22



GESS graduate, Harmony Pronyshyn with student Advocate, Lisa Middleton

In 2022, the six-year Ministry of Education and Child Care graduation completion rate was **86%** which is the District's highest Indigenous graduation rate in District history!

The six-year completion rate is the percent of grade 8 students who graduate, with a B.C. Certificate of Graduation ("Dogwood") or a B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma ("Adult Dogwood"), within six years from the first time they enroll in grade 8, adjusted for migration in and out of B.C. It is not the inverse of a "dropout rate" as students may graduate after the six-year period.



KSS graduate, Maria Dargatz with Indigenous Student Advocate, Steve Kelly and Indigenous Academy Teacher, Rob Bennett

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - District Responsibilities 2020 - 2025

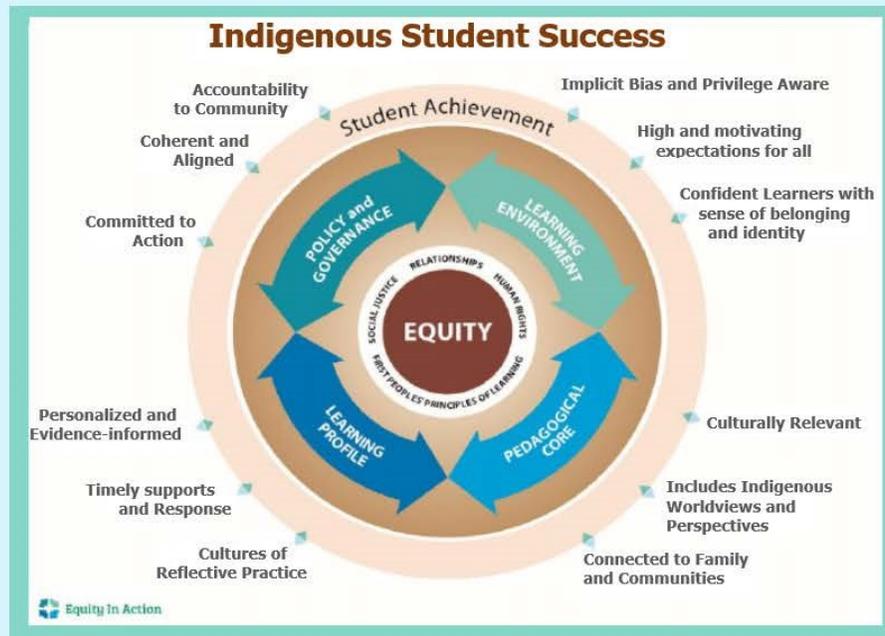
The following outlines the goals and priorities of the current Equity in Action Agreement

### Policy and Governance

- Maintain a District Multi-year Equity Committee
- Request the Board of Education review policies to support equity
- Request the Superintendent to review administrative procedures to support equity
- Provide annual reports on the goals of the Equity in Action Agreement

### Learning Environment (School Culture)

- Implement and expand Elders in Residence programs, ensuring access to Elder wisdom
- Reflect a strong culturally-appropriate Indigenous presence in each school
- Ensure quality, culturally relevant space or Gathering Rooms in every school



### Learning Profiles

- Continue to develop a holistic definition of success for each learner, with a focus on personalizing the learning journey
- Develop a timely response plan for 5th & 6th year, Grade 12 and year after Grade 12
- Collaborate to implement culturally responsive interventions and alternatives to suspension

### Pedagogical Core

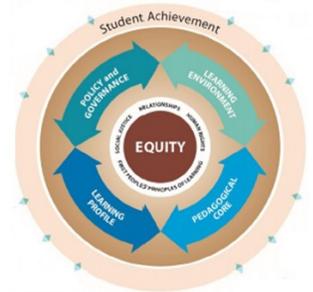
- Embed Truth & Reconciliation in teaching and learning K-12
- Ensure Indigenous worldviews are incorporated into classrooms and embedded into school culture
- Create understanding with ALL students through authentic Indigenous presence
- Continue to foster partnerships between Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and non-Indigenous educators through reciprocal learning opportunities
- Continue to foster community relationships through ongoing collaboration
- Incorporate culturally relevant land-based learning for all students

**EACH SCHOOL'S JOURNEY TOWARDS EQUITY WILL BE EMBEDDED WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY LEARNING PLAN, UPDATED REGULARLY AND SHARED WITH PARENTS.**

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Policy and Governance

We are pleased to share that the Central Okanagan Public Schools' Board of Education and Westbank First Nation (WFN) signed the eighth Local Education Agreement (LEA) on June 27th, 2022. This school year marks the first year of implementation for the five-year Agreement. For the first time, in the District's history, an LEA Oversight Team (consisting of District and Westbank First Nation staff) has been created to assume responsibility for the implementation of the LEA. Additionally, a Community Table is in the process of being created, enabling District and WFN staff to collaborate in co-designing services and supports for Westbank First Nation students and families. The LEA Oversight Team has co-designed a Terms of Reference to bring clarity to shared responsibilities in the implementation of the Local Education Agreement.



The Terms of Reference reflect the attributes and priorities of the District's Strategic Plan and were unanimously supported by Westbank First Nation and the Board of Education in June 2023.



### [Central Okanagan Public Schools District Strategic Plan](#)



Westbank First Nation Chief, Council and staff members, and the Board of Education and senior staff gather together after the annual Interchange

## District Anti-Racism Action Committee

The District Anti-Racism Action Committee (established June 2023) will move forward with key areas of focus including (but not limited to):

- Training and education of staff: Collaborating to create opportunities for training and learning within our schools and communities.
- Disaggregated race-based data: Collecting and using disaggregated race-based data to better serve and develop awareness of the students we serve.
- Diversity within positions of leadership: Developing community points of connection that represent the leadership of Indigenous, Black and diverse Racialized peoples.
- Racially equitable programs, services, policies, and systems: working towards accountability of educational programs offered with interested parties.
- Anti-Racist safe spaces and processes: supporting community engagement that promotes racism-free environments for safe and open conversation.

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Learning Environment

Our collective understanding of the significance of acknowledging the territory on which our learners grow deepens each year. We continue to recognize Syilx territory in all District meetings, assemblies and events. Additionally, we are grateful to receive teachings from local Elders that help us understand the differences between a land acknowledgement, and a welcome to territory.

**Constable Neil Bruce Middle School**, situated adjacent to Westbank First Nation, demonstrates this value through their creation of a “Conversation Corridor,” highlighting the deep connection of their student body to the land and territory.



Depicted here is student leader, Lozen Lindley, who was one of several students who contributed to the displays. Lozen belongs to Westbank First Nation and was in grade 8 during the 2022-2023 school year. It was impactful to see staff, students and community members taking the time to read and comment on the displays throughout the school year.

This week at DRE, we had 2 assemblies – on Monday to learn about Truth and Reconciliation, and then on Thursday to share and celebrate our learning. Students took pledges by creating posters with their handprints. One class shared how they can ‘heal hearts’, grade 5 students performed “O Siem”, families were encouraged to paint “Every Child Matters” rocks and the whole school learned to say “Way” (hello) and “l̓iml̓am̓t” (thank you).

Truth and Reconciliation Week at Davidson Road Elementary  
*“Together, as a caring community, we can heal hearts”*

During Truth and Reconciliation Week, Davidson Road Elementary School had two assemblies – on Monday to learn about Truth and Reconciliation, and then on Thursday to share and celebrate their learning. We started on Monday by reading "With our Orange Hearts", by Phyllis Webstad and talked about what "Together, as a caring community, we can heal hearts" meant. Throughout the week, students took pledges by creating posters with their handprints to remember that 'Every Child Matters' and the

reminders that Phyllis shared on how to take steps towards reconciliation. Thursday was the second assembly to share our learning. One class shared how they can ‘heal hearts’ and what steps they could take towards reconciliation, grade 4/5 students performed “O Siem”, and the whole school learned to say “Way” (hello) and “l̓iml̓am̓t” (thank you). Friday, families were encouraged to connect with the land and with each other, and to paint orange rocks as a reminder that every child matters.

Prepared by Jennifer Adamson, Acting Principal, for the week prior to Truth and Reconciliation, September 2022

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Learning Environment

The Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee at **École Kelowna Secondary School (KSS)** is looking for contributions from the community to help fund their Outdoor Classroom Project.

A dedicated group of student leaders from the KSS Indigenous Academy continues to pass the torch of their Indigenous Inquiry Project, and they are now fundraising to make the outdoor learning space a reality. Graduating Leadership student Amelie Guignard had the idea of spreading the fundraising effort beyond the school.

*“With the Indigenous course requirement opportunities coming in the next school year, an outdoor classroom is a perfect space for some of the learning to occur,”* says Guignard, who is also Métis. *“As a graduate, I’m glad to know the work on this project will continue to benefit future students and help the journey toward Truth and Reconciliation.”*

Amelie Guignard



The purposes of the project are to bridge all students with the land, honour local Indigenous teachings, create a welcoming outdoor gathering space, and partner with people interested in being a part of Reconciliation. Planning included consultation with local Indigenous Elders to ensure the space includes Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

*“The value of this Outdoor Classroom lies in its profound ability to mend the cracks within our often-fragmented community,”* says Abdalla Tall, Grade 11 Leadership student. *“Like a meticulous tapestry, it holds the potential to stitch distinct perspectives and cultures together with threads of understanding and empathy. I genuinely hope this space will be pivotal toward Truth and Reconciliation.”*



Donations to the project can be made through School Cash Online, which ensures that all funds go directly to the project with no fees. Donors can register with an email to receive a charitable tax receipt, then click "Make a Donation" and choose "KSS Indigenous Inquiry Project" as a Fund Destination. Donors can also contact the school office at KSS by calling 250-870-5105.

**Depicted Above:** Members of **The Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Committee**, Kelowna Secondary School

**Pictured:** Henry Pyo, Grade 11; Leana Marton, Indigenous Academy Teacher; Christey Hughes, Vice-Principal; Amelie Guignard, Grade 12; Pooja Lal, Grade 11; Abdallah Tall, Grade 11; Kailey Gross, Grade 10; Ava Cudmore, Grade 10; Libby Reis, Grade 10; Nash Contois-Laroche, Grade 10; Rob Bennett, Indigenous Academy Teacher; Steve Kelly, Indigenous Student Advocate

**Not pictured:** Trina Manca, Teacher Librarian; Pamela Horton, Math Teacher

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Learning Environment

### Outdoor Learning

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, students across the district spent time learning outside, exploring the significance of place, as well as building understanding of ethnobotany, Indigenous plants, weather, and water. From finding personal “sit spots” to gathering in circle to share their wonders and learning, connection to the land was evident.



### **CMS/OKM Spotted Lake Trip May 2023**

*“This afternoon grade 8 Indigenous students from CMS with Rubina Waterhouse (Indigenous Advocate) and Sarah Watson (CMS Principal) and grade 9 Indigenous students from OKM with Martina Escutin (Indigenous Advocate) and myself, as well as Land-Based learning team, Kevin Kaiser and Kyla Shields, had the privilege to travel to Spotted Lake together and listen to Elder Leon Lewis share the story of Spotted Lake and the Creation story. What a gift to learn together as the Mission Family of schools and build relationships with each other and our greater community.”*

*“Thank you to Rubina and Martina for organizing this. Thank you to Sherri Roche for approving this opportunity through the Mental Health SEL funding for cultural and school transition supports.”*

**Stephanie Gerber**

**Vice Principal, Okanagan Mission Secondary**

### **Braiding Sweetgrass at Springvalley Middle School**

Springvalley Middle School is home to Hidden Haven - an Indigenous garden on the property which provides an opportunity for provocation and exploration. This past spring, students at SMS worked with Indigenous teacher-tutor Joy Richardson to harvest and braid sweetgrass. Sweetgrass is a foundational plant in Indigenous cultures, and when braided, it tells a story of how the mind, body and spirit are mutually dependent and connected to each other.



*“We have been growing sweetgrass in the SMS garden this year and this morning some students helped me braid it! Thought you would like to see!”*

**Joy Richardson, SMS Indigenous Teacher-Tutor**

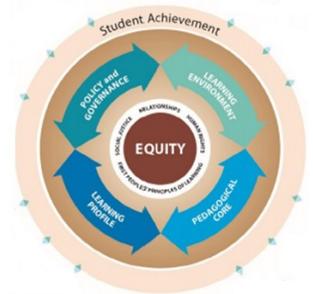


# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Pedagogical Core

### We Believe:

- Reimagining teaching and learning with a shared responsibility for inspiring social justice, equity and understanding truths reflects our commitment to reconciliation.
- Integration of Indigenous world views and perspectives and First People's Principles of Learning are at the core of instruction, assessment and learning.
- Incorporation of local culturally relevant curriculum builds understanding with ALL children through an authentic Indigenous presence.



### What We Are Doing:

Across the school district, learners experienced opportunities to explore a broad range of topics that connect to Indigenous Education. These included opening assemblies which began with land acknowledgements and the Okanagan song, to recognizing Truth and Reconciliation Day (Orange Shirt Day) at the end of September, to authentically embedded integration of the First Peoples' Principles of Learning, celebration of Indigenous role models, and activities and teachings connected to the Moosehide Campaign, the Red Dress Project, which honours missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and National Indigenous Peoples' Day.

The theme capturing our learning this year was "Caring Communities," which is translated in nsyilxcən as "we are walking hand in hand with our relatives." You can view the video of Elder Grouse Barnes sharing this phrase in nsyilxcən [here](#).



K'u knknx'təwix i? kl snaqsilk"

We are walking hand in hand with our relatives.

Nous marchons main dans la main avec nos proches.

Elder Grouse Barnes  
Resident Elder

### 9th Standard

The 9th Standard of the Professional Standards for BC Educators explicitly states that educators are to respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

You can view the video created by the Ministry of Education and Child Care which affirms the intention and requirements of this standard [here](#).



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

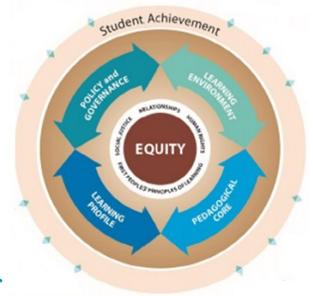
## Our Year Three Progress - Pedagogical Core

### Truth and Reconciliation Week

#### École Kelowna Secondary School

KSS student announcement Monday, September 26, 2022

*“Hello, my name is Maria Dargatz from KSS’s Truth and Reconciliation Committee to remind everyone that today is the beginning of Truth and Reconciliation Week. We will begin with 215 seconds of silence for the 215 unmarked graves discovered at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School in 2021. Only a year later, the number of children identified rose to 4,100 nationwide as of September 2022. If we held a moment of silence for all these children, it would last just over an hour, and it would take just under two days of silence for all the estimated children who attended residential school. Each day this week will have a message. Monday is Truth, Tuesday is Reflection, Wednesday is Healing, Thursday is Resilience and Reconciliation, and Friday is Orange Shirt Day. We urge everyone to wear orange throughout the week and to learn historical truths so we can all actively practice reconciliation.”*

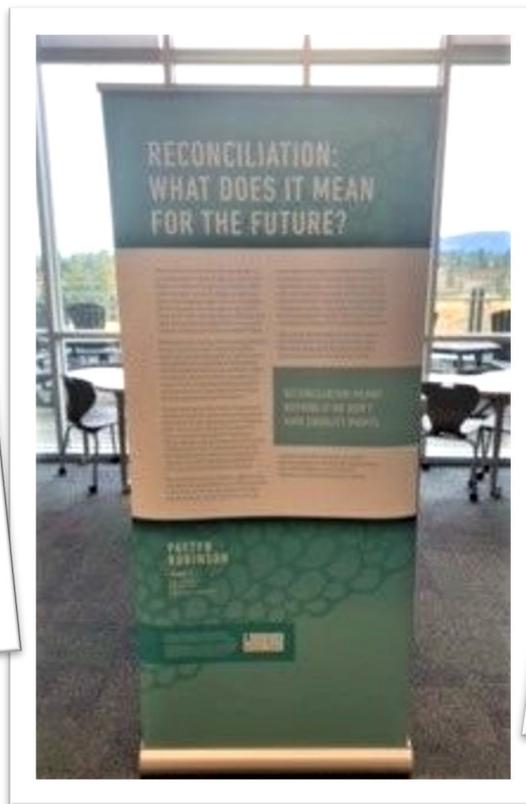


#### Canyon Falls Middle School

CMS school community action shared by Advocate, Rubina Waterhouse:

*“I wanted to share what we are doing at CMS for Truth and Reconciliation.*

*Thanks to Canyon Falls Middle School Admin, we have the amazing opportunity to have the Youth Truth and Reconciliation Display in our school. The display banners are provided by Imagine a Canada—Legacy of Hope Foundation. All students will have the opportunity to spend time viewing each banner, discussing with peers, making a personal connection, and then moving into circle to share about how they can be part of Truth and Reconciliation. There will also be a Truth and Reconciliation assembly that will include a video and make a beautiful connection to Terry Fox and his Métis ancestry. I have forwarded a few images of our banner display. Feel free to visit as we have the display until December.”*



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Pedagogical Core

### Chief Tomat Elementary School

*“At Chief Tomat Elementary this year, our theme is "At CTE... We All Fit Together". We are working on building deep connections between all members of our school community and we are helping students see that they are part of something bigger than themselves, which is represented in the photo. Each member of our school community has their name on one piece of this image to demonstrate how we all fit together! To support our work this year, we are also incorporating The Seven Grandfather Teachings of Truth, Love, Respect, Courage, Honesty, Humility and Wisdom into our learning as a way of building common vocabulary to describe what a truly caring community looks, feels and sounds like.”*

Prepared by Ryan Ward, Principal



### Truth and Reconciliation Week at Casorso Elementary

*“Our Casorso community recognized the National Truth and Reconciliation Day by having 6 sacred storytellers sit in circle and read aloud "When We Were Alone" by David A Robertson. Our storytellers sat on a quilted blanket that was made 5 years ago at Casorso for Every Child Matters. We hosted two assemblies (primary and intermediate). We sat in a circle to listen to the story. We will continue to work at decolonizing our practices and indigenizing our way of teaching at school. I'm proud of our story tellers, our Indigenous Advocate and our students for participating in this important assembly.”*

Prepared by Natalie Morin, Vice-Principal



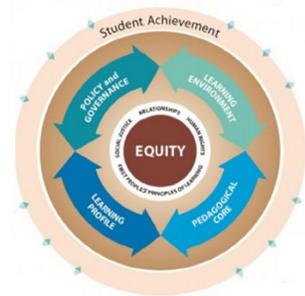
# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Pedagogical Core

### October Implementation Day



Implementation Day at École KSS



École Glenmore Elementary School staff collaborating on a scavenger hunt designed to build community and decolonize thinking.



To learn more about Implementation Day, please view QR code above

Comments from South Kelowna Elementary staff when creating poems:

*"Ours is not necessarily a poem, ours is a story woven together of all of our identities. We are blending together our knowledge to create an inclusive, diverse, caring community."*

*"Like buffalo, we form a circle around our children to keep them safe."*



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Pedagogical Core

### Indigenous Course Requirement Preparation

The 2022-2023 school year was our opportunity to prepare for the implementation of this new graduation requirement. A number of learning sessions were created and offered for secondary educators throughout the year, with the intention of bringing people together to deepen knowledge, explore resources and build a strong and sustainable network of educators passionate about teaching these courses, which include English First Peoples 10, 11, 12, BC First Peoples Studies 12 and Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12.

Additionally, through the leadership of Mr. Jim Elwood, and the partnership of Westbank First Nation, including knowledge keeper Coralee Miller, our school district successfully put forward a proposal for a locally-developed course, Indigenous Visual Arts 12: Exploration of Indigenous Culture through Visual Art, to be approved as meeting this graduation requirement. We look forward to offering this additional pathway to students.



Depicted here is Okanagan Indian Band Elder Randy Swanson sharing story with a group of educators at our May 18th, 2023 Indigenous Course Opportunity learning session.

Learning from the voices of our students is a foundational belief within our pedagogy. The video linked to [here](#), created by Sherrie Farquhar (RSS teacher-librarian) shares the thoughts of a small group of Rutland Secondary students in regards to the upcoming graduation requirement.



Feedback from the teachers who participated in these learning opportunities:

*“We all benefit from new ideas & epiphanies & “failures”...just sharing learning!”*

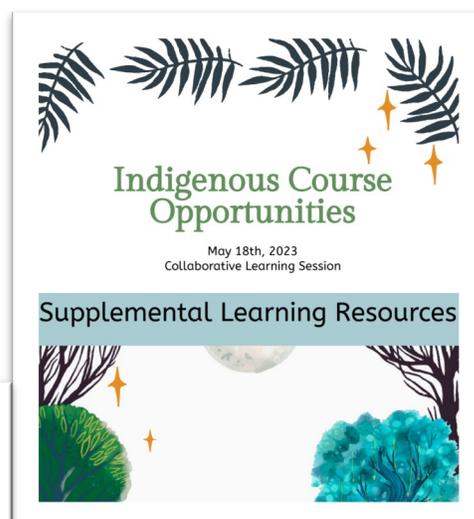
*“Loved Elder Randy. He modeled excellent storytelling.”*

*“There is a “sense of community knowing that others are doing the work.”*

*“It is essential to continue to build networks that will support teachers who are just starting, or about to start, new courses.”*

*“The resources are very valuable - Deanna, the Indigenous Education Cultural Coordinator, was amazing and opened my eyes to what is available. It has really inspired me.”*

To view the resource package created for educators who will be teaching and facilitating these courses, scan this QR code.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Pedagogical Core

### Instructional Learning Team - Indigenous Pedagogy Initiatives

In 2022-23, educators from across Central Okanagan Public Schools took up many offerings from the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) to explore both indigenizing the curriculum and decolonizing our teaching practices.

In consultation with Elder Pamela Barnes and facilitated by Jasmine Peone, the ILT hosted **eight nsyilxcən language lessons**. The language learning series was an opportunity for over 60 educators, advocates, and administrators to explore how learning nsyilxcən can help everyone in our community better understand Syilx ways of knowing and being.

Language lessons were also connected to the nature learning network. The **Nature Network** is a cross-district learning community facilitated by the ILT where K - 12 educators come together in cycles of learning, trying, and reflecting to grow nature-based learning practices together. Some of the questions explored through the Nature Network are:

- How does nature provoke, inspire, and sustain inquiry?
- How might we harness each other's diverse perspectives as we learn, try, and reflect together through story and experience?
- How might we collectively empower each other on our journeys of reconnecting to the land, decolonization, and stewardship?
- How might learning on, from, and with the land benefit all of our learners?

The learning journey of the *Nature Network* can be found at [sd23.org/nature-network](http://sd23.org/nature-network). Another part of the *Nature Network* was a **Lunch Club** to learn about captik<sup>wł</sup> (stories that are connected to places, resources and practices within the Okanagan territory). Over 20 K - 12 educators took part in this opportunity to learn more about the Syilx story systems and ways to invite students into this learning.



Another way that the ILT supported educator learning was through the **Syilx and Settler Pedagogy Circle**. This is an online zoom conversation that invites all interested educators into conversation with collaborators from the Okanagan School of Education, as well as Elder Pamela Barnes, Elder Grouse Barnes and Kelly Terbasket. These sessions are an opportunity to reflect on decolonizing curricular efforts together and to build new understandings that support transformative action.

In May, more than 400 students, Elders, Trustees, educators, support staff, and administrators from all of the 47 schools in our District, along with senior admin, took part in a **learning symposium** guided by the wonder, **“What Could School Be?”** that involved storytelling, school visits, and panel conversations with students from across the district. Many of the learning stories and experiences were shared by educator teams across the district working with local Elders and knowledge keepers to indigenize learning.

The adult learners in Central Okanagan Public Schools had many opportunities throughout this year to gather. One of the main collective learning environments for school district staff is the gym at Hollywood Road Education Services. This year, “Lifeline - Sqilxw Resilience,” an original mural created several years ago by an art class at Kelowna Secondary, with the support of teacher Tim Mayer and local artist Sheldon Louis, was mounted permanently in the facility.

Entering the space, each individual is greeted with this visual depiction of the story and strength of the local people and the important symbols of this land.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - Learning Profiles

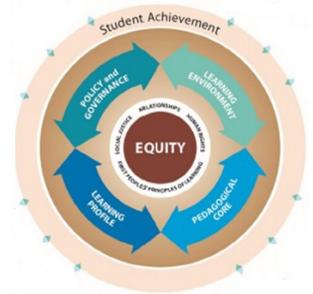
### We Believe:

Learner success is achieved through personalized learning, timely supports and culturally relevant interventions.

### What We Are Doing:

In the 2022-2023 school year, the Administrative Procedure – Student's Adjusted School Schedule Plan was edited to include:

- For students with a Ministry Designation, the appropriate District Consultant must be a member of the team assessing and planning for the adjusted schedule, and must liaise with the Director of Instruction of Indigenous Education and Equity for Indigenous students being considered for an adjusted school schedule.
- The District continues to develop a definition of success which focuses on the personalized learning journey for Indigenous students. We understand the importance and power of culture and connection and relationship to the land as our teacher. Many opportunities and programs were put in place to respond to Indigenous Learners' interests and learning styles, including multiple ways of assessing learning.



### Jordan's Principle

Jordan's Principle is named in honour of Jordan River Anderson, a young First Nations child from Norway House Cree Nation in northern Manitoba, who spent his entire life in hospital while caught in a jurisdictional dispute between the governments of Canada and Manitoba. The ongoing dispute prevented Jordan from returning to his home community to receive in-home care. Through advocacy efforts, Jordan's Principle has now become a legal requirement, resulting from the Orders of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

From Certified Education Assistant (CEA) support to Classroom Support Teachers to additional funding for assessments and learning resources, school teams and community organizations were very successful in receiving over \$350,000 in funding for educational enhancements during the 2022-2023 school year.



This year's priority has been on the development and implementation of a District Administrative Procedure to streamline the process for applying to Jordan's Principle for equitable services and support for groups of Indigenous learners. Westbank First Nation staff, District staff, and community members collaborated over a series of months to develop the public administrative procedure to ensure transparency for all interested in applying for additional supports and services.

The Inclusive Education Department together with the Indigenous Education Department will continue to work together with school administrators to ensure applications are approved for the upcoming school year.

To view the new Admin Procedure, [here](#) is the link.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

The following nine schools were selected this year to present their School Community Learning Plans. Each school shared their focus on equity in action.

## Anne McClymont Elementary



Equity in action towards Truth and Reconciliation at Anne McClymont Elementary has been ongoing for students and staff, and action can be seen, heard and experienced in many different ways:

- Culturally responsive curriculum incorporating Indigenous voices, stories and perspectives.
- Indigenous cultural events that help us foster a sense of pride and belonging amongst Indigenous students.
- Working with Indigenous knowledge keepers and Elders that share wisdom and traditional knowledge, additionally their presence and teachings provided us with valuable insights in promoting cultural understanding.
- Indigenous support through our advocate who helped us embed the Four Food Chiefs and The Seven Grandfather teachings into the fabric of our school and school priorities



This past year we began with the theme of

Caring Communities, and together we worked to leverage this theme in order to engage in the work around equity and inclusion, that Every Child Matters.

At AME, there is a longstanding school goal that fosters student leadership and character building. This past year we worked together as a staff and in consultation with the Indigenous Education Department to shift how we go about this important work. The staff and students came together to transition from the Leader in Me program and instead use the wisdom and knowledge from the Four Food Chiefs, along with the Seven Grandfather Teachings as a way to explore and learn about ourselves and the impact we have on our community and world.

Throughout the year we elevated Indigenous voices and stories with adult performers, speakers and authors as well as Indigenous student voices as they took leadership roles in the school, including student-led assemblies and speaking at AME's Community Learning Plan Conversation. Throughout the school, students and staff created their personal land acknowledgements and our boardroom became the Den, a place where both Indigenous students, alongside our advocate, made connections and deepened their learning around Indigenous culture, and ways of knowing and being.

Every Child Matters and the caring community at AME was and is still committed to creating opportunities to continue our journey to Truth and Reconciliation through Equity in Action.

Prepared by Tamalee Middleton, Principal and Bryce Owens, Vice-Principal



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - School Community Learning Plans Focus on Equity

### Bankhead Elementary



At Bankhead Elementary School, the staff and students are on a continuous journey to deepen our understanding of Indigenous culture. We strive to create a more equitable learning environment as we take steps towards reconciliation.

As a staff, we collaborate to develop instructional practices that help embed Indigenous content and ways of knowing across the curriculum. We consistently grow our library of Indigenous resources to support student learning.

There is a focus on outdoor learning at Bankhead Elementary. Many teachers take their classes to Redlich Pond to provide an opportunity for students to learn from the land and to deepen their connection to the land. Some examples of this learning include identifying and learning about local Indigenous plants, using Indigenous plants as writing prompts, and creating personalized land acknowledgements.



On Implementation Day, the staff learned traditional Indigenous games. Teachers shared these games with their students throughout the school year. Two of the games were also stations at the Primary Play Day this spring.



The Indigenous Advocate works alongside teachers to bring cultural experiences to the students in many classrooms. She also runs a culture club every lunch hour out of the Gathering Room.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - School Community Learning Plans Focus on Equity

### École Casorso Elementary



At École Casorso Elementary School, we have made a commitment to celebrate and incorporate Indigenous worldviews into our regular classroom and school routines.

Our school year started with staff learning about the power in celebrating and making use of Indigenous cultural norms such as learning in circle; this has become the routine of classroom morning meetings throughout the school and in our own staff meetings. This protocol helped us observe the legacy of Canada's Indian residential school system on Orange Shirt Day through student-led assemblies held in circle where we commemorated those who survived and those who were lost.

We also learned about the significance of Indigenous Land Acknowledgements and the power of creating and sharing our own personal acknowledgement, answering the question "Who is your name?". This led staff to taking students through the process of creating personal land acknowledgments of their own. These personal land acknowledgments have become the normal practice for opening staff meetings, assemblies, and morning announcements in the school.

Our staff also took part in an ethnobotany tour provided by local knowledge keepers Jasmine Peone and Pamela Barnes. Our teachers and support staff learned how to identify some of the plant life found locally and its importance to our local Syilx Okanagan peoples for food and medicine. Teachers have passed this learning on to our students as they take part in field studies to Fascieux Creek and nearby parks.



Prepared by Jared Birkeland, Principal



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - School Community Learning Plans Focus on Equity

### École Peter Greer Elementary



The staff, students, and parents of École Peter Greer Elementary School have taken several different actions in order to improve our learning around truth and reconciliation. Our goal is to make local Indigenous culture be better recognized as a regular part of every students' educational experience.

Our efforts start during Truth and Reconciliation Week and the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation at the end of September. During the week, students recited a call to action and shared pronunciation of Indigenous communities on the PA, planted a garlic garden, painted orange rocks with one of 94 calls to action written on them and placed them in our front gardens. Our Intermediate students held tours of our garden beds where they checked out some freshly planted orange flowers and recited calls to action, and made bracelets with staff from our Indigenous Education



Department as a way to remember the impacts of residential schools. On Orange Shirt Day, we held an assembly where students learned about the Syilx Peoples' territory, recited a land acknowledgement and sang the Okanagan Song led by our Indigenous Student Advocate, Rose Alexis. At the end of the week, students were provided with a small paper shaped like an orange shirt. They reflected on their learning of the week, wrote down a word or phrase, and then added their mini orange shirts to our giant orange shirt in the foyer.

During our Implementation Day, all staff viewed the film, *We Were Children*, a story of the profound impact of the Canadian government's residential school system through the eyes of two children. This was followed by informal, emotional and thought-provoking small group discussions.

On National Indigenous Day in June, we again had an assembly and from there students participated in a variety of hands-on Indigenous themed games and activities (storytelling, making bannock, dancing etc.) on a rotational basis. We have a group of teachers and support staff meeting on a regular basis to continue their



work as part of the Network of Indigenous Inquiry and Education (NOIIE). Their work focuses on two main hunches: how can we meaningfully integrate learning in our natural environment throughout the year, and how can we embed Indigenous ways of knowing and First Peoples Principles of Learning in this place-based learning?

Throughout the year, Syilx Elder Maureen Ziprick, visited the school to support our students in our number one focus area - improving reading fluency and comprehension.

Prepared by James Minkus, Principal

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - School Community Learning Plans

### Focus on Equity

## Peachland Elementary



Our focus this year was on belonging in community, with others and the land. We wove Indigenous ways of learning and growing with the help of our Indigenous Advocate and local elders. During our first term, we co-wrote with students a musical called, "The Friend Ship". Students looked to the animals for wisdom on how to be a kind and caring friend. This Winter, our beautiful nature mural was created with the whole community of students and staff. The mural represents the flora and fauna that surrounds us each day at Peachland Elementary. We were guided by professional artist and Mount Boucherie Art Careers students. In our last term, we have celebrated Spring and our connection to the plants coming back to life to provide us food and beauty.



This year we had Elders Grouse and Elder Pamela Barnes spend time with us in cultural teaching about sacred animals in the Syilx culture. The learning was infused in what students chose to paint on the nature mural representing the seasons. Language lessons were interwoven with the teaching about the creatures on the ground, under that ground, in the air and in the water. The photo of the whole school in our gym shows our celebration of the completion of the mural and the preparation for the smudging of the new images on the mural in March.



We often visit sit spots gathering places in the forest. We need to be connected to the land in order to protect it. Our Indigenous Advocate is leading a sharing circle in the forest in the fall in preparation for the new national Indigenous day. Peachland Elementary is surrounded by the forest trails, Trepanier Creek and Okanagan Lake, where we visit regularly all year round.



The students below are cooking buddies. Peachland Elementary and Mount Boucherie Secondary students met several times on the land to explore and cook together. The highlight in May was a hike on Mount Boucherie where students gathered local plants to make tea and food to share. Our students hiked Peachland forests to continue learning about how we are interconnected with the land



around us. Our actions matter. This coming year, we plan to go deeper into culture and language learning for all members of our Peachland Elementary community.

Prepared by Wendy Briggs, Principal

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - School Community Learning Plans Focus on Equity

### Shannon Lake Elementary



At Shannon Lake Elementary School, our staff have been working towards reconciliation and incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and doing into our school community. The school year started with activities surrounding Truth and Reconciliation week. Each class participated in learning about different aspects and history of Indigenous culture and how we, as learners, can contribute to reconciliation in meaningful ways throughout the week.



The teachers and staff consistently work at creating an inclusive and safe community for all of our learners and their families.



Inclusive community is created by creating a space where Indigenous families feel welcome in our school.

Our grade 2 and 3 classes had the honour of having one of our Indigenous grandparents come in and share about his life growing up as an Inuit hunter in the Yukon. He shared his knowledge on drum making and brought in a polar bear hide.

On National Indigenous Peoples' Day, the grade 4's and 5's learned about traditional Indigenous culture in a meaningful way by partaking in traditional Indigenous games with the Indigenous student advocate.

Prepared by Barrie McLeod, Principal



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - School Community Learning Plans Focus on Equity

### South Rutland Elementary



At South Rutland Elementary, we continue on our pathway of learning in support of Truth and Reconciliation. Our classrooms have embraced the First Peoples Principles of Learning and these principles can be witnessed throughout our Learning Community. With the support of our Advocate, our Gathering Room at SRE is bustling throughout the day with Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. We have engaged in Learning around the Four Food Chiefs and, in the spirit of reciprocity, our students partnered with Food for Thought and Hope for the Nations to decorate and auction off Bird Houses in support of their School Breakfast and Backpack Programs. This year we were excited to welcome three time World Champion Hoop Dancer Dallas Arcand to perform and celebrate with our students. Our intermediate students continue to engage in deeper learning around residential schools and attended a Virtual Tour of the Witness Blanket. We are thankful for our relationship with our on-site partners **Awasisak Achakos** (Children of the Stars Preschool) as part of our growing community. Together, we look forward to deepening our understandings of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.



Prepared by Mark Watson, Principal

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Year Three Progress - School Community Learning Plans Focus on Equity

### Springvalley Elementary



At Springvalley Elementary, we wanted to do our best in moving toward Truth and Reconciliation. There is a lot of talk about Indigenization, where we wear orange shirts once a year, and have a big celebration on June 21st. But instead of being a typical BC school with a few Indigenous elements, how could we take steps toward being an Indigenous Centric school that incorporates the settlers?

We began unpacking one principle from the First Peoples Principles of Learning, each week, in our weekly email to staff and now hold our staff meetings in a circle. We have learned some simple phrases in the Syilx language for our land acknowledgment in our daily announcements and ordered bilingual signage for the school in English and nsyilxcən. Every weekly assembly now begins not just with the land acknowledgement, but also with the singing of the Okanagan song.

Our Gathering Room is in use all day long, either scheduled groups, or those who drop in seeking a connection. We have been so fortunate to also have the support of an Indigenous Early Learning teacher.

On the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, each child in the school wrote why they mattered on a paper orange shirt, and then they were hung in the hallway all year long.



We had a visit from Dallas Arcand at the beginning of October who reinforced the message of being proud of where you come from.

On Implementation Day, we began the day with 'Who is my Name' and learned so much about each other, and about how many of our staff have family directly affected by residential schools and the Sixties Scoop. We ended the day with the Blanket Exercise, and after Elder Maureen Ziprick spoke, we were all moved and even more determined to do our very best to counter years of trauma for so many.

In January 2023, we had students from Dr. Knox Middle School come to share with us all "How Food Was Given" and then in February, Anona Fawn Kampe shared with us as well.

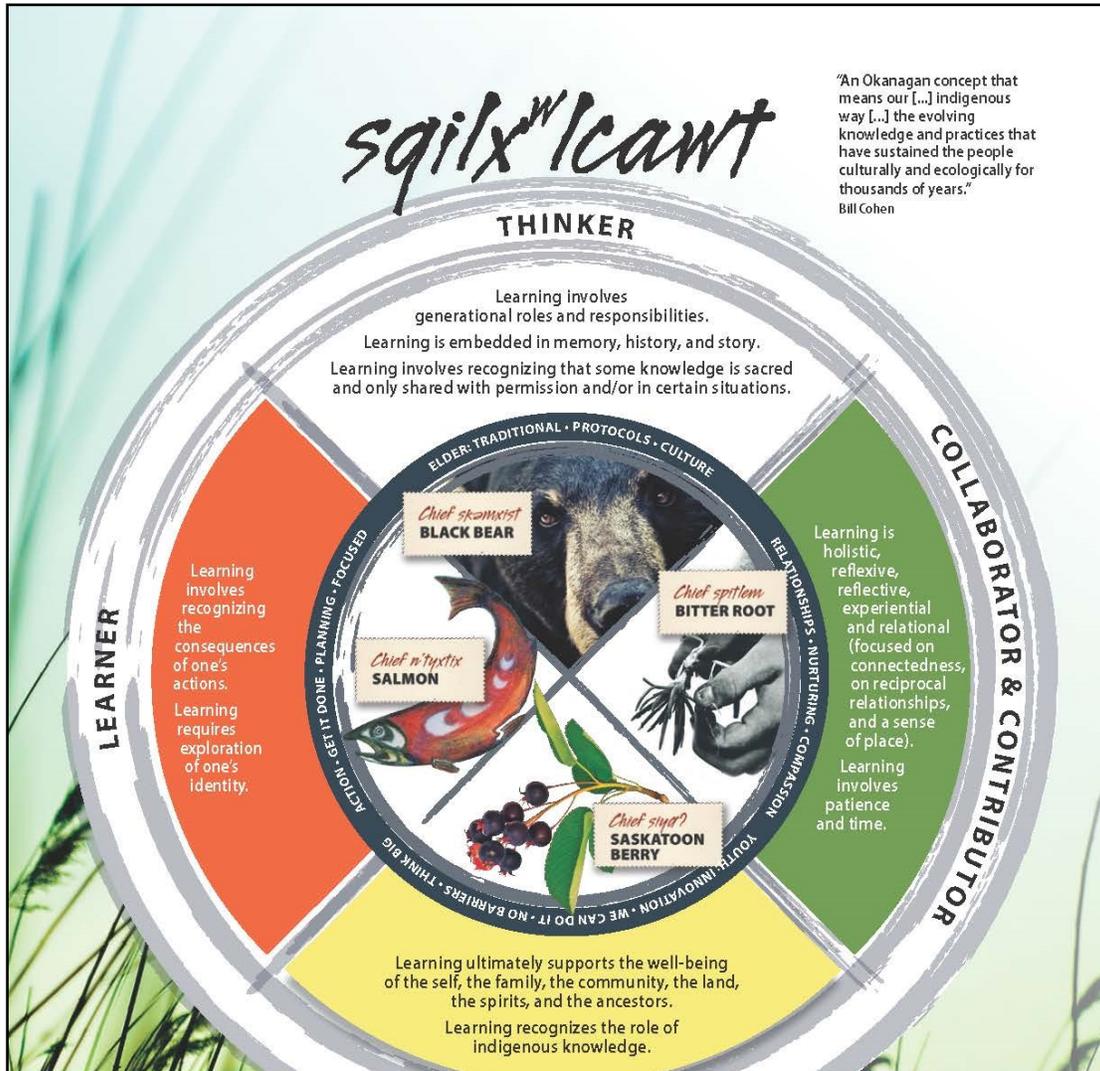


For National Indigenous Peoples Day, this year, we celebrated all week long with games, activities, and assemblies to celebrate all of our learning from this wonderful year of going deeper in our understanding of reconciliation.

Prepared by David Coats, Principal

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Our Indigenous Education Department Responsibilities



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

*Chief n'tuxtix*  
**SALMON**  
The Perspective of Action

**LEARNER**  
One who is engaged, resilient and seeks to understand.

*Chief skomxist*  
**BLACK BEAR**  
The Perspective of Wise Reflection

**THINKER**  
One who analyzes, makes connections, inferences, asks questions and transfers knowledge.

*Chief spitlem*  
**BITTER ROOT**  
The Perspective of Inter-connectedness and Relationships

**COLLABORATOR/ CONTRIBUTOR**  
One who excels in working with others to create new understanding. A citizen who participates in the local and global community.

*Chief siyaq?*  
**SASKATOON BERRY**  
The Perspective of Creativity

**INNOVATOR**  
One who sees possibilities and generates original ideas with value.

### FOUR FOOD CHIEFS ATTRIBUTES OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEARNER



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

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# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

Chief skəmxist Black Bear  
*Elders: Traditional\*Protocols\*Culture*



### Our Commitment:

We are committed to fostering intellectual and cultural growth through an Indigenous mindset.

### What We Are Doing:

The Indigenous Education Department provides academic support to Indigenous learners (K-12) in a variety of ways:

**Indigenous Student Advocates** provide support in and out of classrooms, attend academic support meetings, fostering home and school connections, and provide one to one academic, social and emotional assistance in Indigenous Gathering spaces at all school sites.

**Middle and Secondary School Indigenous Education Teacher Tutors** provide academic support to middle/secondary Indigenous students grades 6-12. Indigenous students are supported, on an ongoing basis, to ensure ongoing academic needs are being met.

**Indigenous Education Early Learning Support Teachers** provide early literacy support to Indigenous learners (K-6) with a strong emphasis on early literacy intervention for Indigenous learners K-3.

**Academy of Indigenous Studies** at secondary schools provide opportunities for Indigenous students to receive credit in courses such as English First Peoples, BC First Peoples, and Indigenous Leadership with Indigenous curricular content taught through Indigenous ways of knowing and being.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Primary Winter Gathering

On January 10-13, 2023, the Indigenous Education Department welcomed back their annual Primary Winter Gathering (PWG) for all grade 3 Indigenous students at Hollywood Road Education Services. Students engaged in cultural learning with the goals of exploring what it means to be Indigenous, celebrating culture through song, dance, *captikwł*, drumming, and storytelling, and fostering relationships with Elders, teachers, and each other.



Check out the Global News article, please see the link [here](#).



Primary students explored local protocols, The Four Food Chiefs, Elder respect, land acknowledgements, the origins of traditional dance, and the intentions of gifting and reciprocity in Indigenous culture. Students were also able to witness and participate in drumming with special guest, Birch Creek Drummers.

A student shared that, *“I learned that the drum sounds like a heartbeat”* and the Primary Winter Gathering *“is about connecting and bonding with the environment.”*

The event filled the District hallways with the heartbeat of

the drum and also filled the hearts of those attending with joy, pride, and a renewed sense of belonging.



*“Some students have never had exposure to powwow dance, to drumming, to singing. We really want to ensure that families and students have this exposure through field studies.”*

Deanna Necan, Cultural Coordinator, Indigenous Education Department

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Indigenous Early Learning Program



Indigenous Early Learning Consultants, Reanna Lamb and Christie Russell, employ culturally responsive, differentiated and targeted instruction, to promote equity and literacy success for Indigenous students. The team focuses on demonstrating and utilizing the First People's Principles in their practice and work to encourage a love of literacy through sharing oral stories and engaging in story workshop. At the heart of the program is creating opportunities for learners to engage in local teachings through literacy and enabling all learners to thrive holistically.

The team works alongside Elders in residence and connects with Okanagan Nation Alliance, Kelowna Métis Society, and Westbank First Nation to provide wrap around support to learners and assist in meeting students' wellness and learning needs. The team works to support early learners in the district in their goals to localize, indigenize, and decolonize learning in classrooms through collaboration, modeling, providing resources, and connecting teachers to community, Elders, and our cultural department.



#### Summer Learning 2023.

The Indigenous Early Learning Consultants supported the implementation of culturally responsive lessons at Summer Literacy Camp in July.

Lessons focused on story, First Peoples Principles, oral language, identity development, foundational literacy skills and local and Canadian Indigenous teachings.



Picture top left: Reanna Lamb connecting with culture using story workshop. Pictured above: 'People Who Care About Me' Tree created to build community and remind students about everyone who cares about them from an Inclusive lens.

Right: Lettie from Chief Tomat Elementary holding the class-made talking stick.

Pictured top right: Pictograph rocks used to connect with nature and tell stories.

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

Chief sp̓łtlem Bitter Root  
*Relationships\*Nurturing\*Compassion*



### Our Commitment:

We are committed to fostering reciprocal relationships for the health and well-being of each Indigenous learner, inspiring confidence and a sense of connectedness to others.

### What We Are Doing:

The Indigenous Education Department's 75-member staff (Indigenous Student Advocates, Teacher Tutors, Indigenous Youth Wellness Workers, Indigenous Resource/Support teachers, Land-Based Learning Team, Cultural Coordinator and Presenters, Administration, and Clerical Team) and Elders in Residence strive to support all Indigenous students in a compassionate and nurturing manner throughout the school year. Strong connections and relationships foster emotional well-being. Support in and out of the school is provided through Indigenous wellness perspectives and practices twelve months of the year.

### Buttercup Girls Group at Springvalley Elementary (SVE)



At SVE, Elder Maureen Ziprick, Shannon Wynne (Advocate), and Christie Russell (District Vice Principal, Indigenous Education) collaborated to build community, connection, and relationships within the Buttercup sknirmən Girls Group at Springvalley Elementary. Students engaged in the First People's Principles of Learning as they shared who is their name and learned about local protocols and traditions.

Five bright and vibrant Indigenous grade 5 girls met

weekly in the Gathering Room; growing in friendship, talking about traditions, sharing what it means to be strong and proud, developing leadership skills, meeting in circle, and connecting with joy. The girls of the Buttercup Girls Group demonstrated joy and pride as they connected with each other, the land, and Elder Mo. The girls shared their learning with the school through a video at their National Indigenous Peoples' Day assembly.



SVE student, Phelisha Watson  
with Christie Russell



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Yukon First Nation Education Directorate Visit



In 2019, a delegation from Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED) visited Central Okanagan Public Schools to learn more about the Indigenous Education Department and, specifically, the role of Indigenous Student Advocates within schools. Within a year, YFNED secured funding to hire 15 Advocates (as well as a team of Junior Advocates) to support Indigenous students in the Yukon.

This past November, YFNED delegates returned to learn more about ways Central Okanagan Public Schools is decolonizing learning environments and supporting Indigenous student success. The delegation included Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Junior Advocates (students), and an Education Advocate team. Over the course of a week, our Yukon friends visited many school sites. With each school visit throughout the week, reciprocal learning took place as cultural teachings and languages were shared. We are grateful for the YFNED's visits and welcome the co-creation of Caring Communities with our northern neighbours.



Please use this [link](#) to hear Elder Annie Bernard share about the YFNED visit.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### RCMP Challenge Coin Celebration



A Challenge Coin Celebration Event was held on Wednesday, June 28th, at École Okanagan Mission Secondary School, to recognize the collaborative project between the Land-Based Learning program (also known as Land-Based) and the RCMP. Over 100 middle school Indigenous students submitted their designs for the coin and the final piece was created by Land Based Learning teacher, Kyla Shields, and one of the Indigenous students enrolled in Land Based Learning.

Since the mid-20th century, the Challenge Coin has been distributed between officers as a gift or show of respect. Students in the Land-Based Love program explored the connections between the meaning and intention of the coin, along with ways to represent this land and place. The final design incorporates the Four Food Chiefs, along with Okanagan Lake and the bridge that links both sides. This bridge can be seen to symbolize the importance of connection and relationship.



View the story from Global News [here](#).

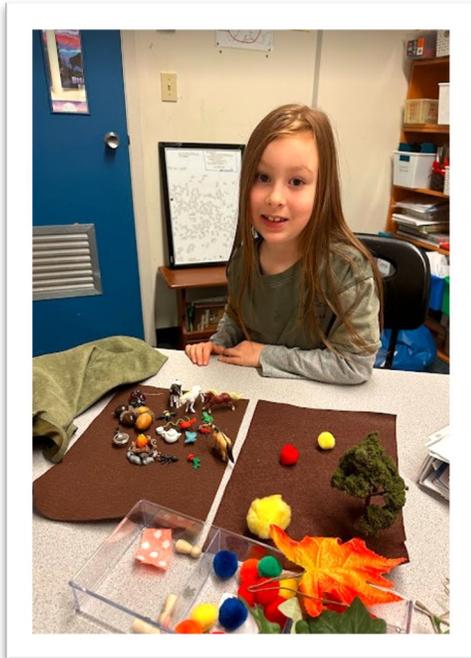
Depicted here are Constable Michael Della-Paolera, student Jonah Doyle, teachers Kyla Shields and Kevin Kaiser and Kelowna RCMP Chief of Police Kara Triance.

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Kelowna Métis Association Donation

In a heartwarming gesture of cultural enrichment, the Kelowna Métis Association generously donated \$10,000 to Central Okanagan Public Schools. This extraordinary gift was given to purchase Métis cultural learning materials, particularly for early learners. Indigenous Education Early Learning Consultants, Reanna Lamb and Christie Russell, thoughtfully handpicked an array of resources including picture books that highlight Métis art, food, language, culture, and values.



The consultants created story workshop bins and beading kits to provide hands-on learning experiences that honour Métis culture and story. As the books and materials graced the eager hands of students, excitement and gratitude could be heard from the students as they discovered the depth of Métis culture.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Chief siya? Saskatoon Berry

*Youth\*Innovation\*We Can Do It\*No Barriers\*Think Big*



#### Our Commitment:

We are committed to co-creating cultural opportunities that strengthen home, school, and community connections.

#### What We Are Doing:

Indigenous students at all grade levels are encouraged to participate in a variety of cultural opportunities throughout the school year. In and out of the school, students participate in classroom presentations, lunch and after school programs. Through the 2022/2023 school year, students were able to participate in community events such as *siya?* hosted by WFN, and the Turtle Island Festival hosted by KFS. The Indigenous Education Department strives to strengthen home, school and community connections through cultural teachings.

### Land-Based Learning: The Knowledge-Keepers of Tomorrow

Rosalyn Tiessen

Student Reporter, KSS

Grandma Rose is an Elder in Residence and supporter of the Land-Based Learning Program at Okanagan Mission Secondary where she assists in helping [middle school] youth to do their best and advance their knowledge by telling them stories and passing on information that connects them to Indigenous history. Elder Rose was connected to the program by her granddaughter, originally at the elementary level, before later changing direction due to the heightened risk of COVID-19. She has now been at OKM for two years, and her position at the school is highly-valued. She was asked to speak to an OKM graduating class, as well as record a video for the Moose Hide Campaign, which is a campaign founded in response to the violence and injustices that women and children face in Canada – specifically those who are Indigenous.



As an Elder, Rose believes that the Land-Based Learning Program is very beneficial to young people, taking the focus away from the electronically connected population and encouraging students to become familiar with First Nations traditions and culture. She finds that children are eager to learn and grasp the benefits of land-based education quickly, but acknowledges that it is important to have teachers with a keen interest in the concept of what outdoor/land-based education involves, which would require training and an understanding of what this type of learning entails, in order for other schools and communities to follow suit with this type of learning.

The Land-Based Learning Program demonstrates the value of a program which teaches students the practices needed to keep our world functioning for generations to come, and Grandma Rose's work at OKM shows the benefits this type of learning has.

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Summer Indigenous Wellness Circles



The Indigenous Youth Wellness team continued to provide support to Indigenous students throughout the summer through Drop-In Wellness Circles in the community. The Indigenous Wellness Team partnered with ARC, Foundry, the RCMP liaison and Westbank First Nation to ensure Indigenous students and families were supported throughout the summer.

Wellness Workers Jen Jefferies, Amanda Berry and practicum student Tiana Mager held the Circles over the course of two months in four separate locations, and on four different days in each location. These Circles were accessible throughout the entire Central Okanagan Public School District community, from West Kelowna to Lake Country. The circles were held at the WFN Youth Center in West Kelowna, City Park in downtown Kelowna, Ben-Lee Park in Rutland, and Swalwell Park in Lake Country. The Indigenous Wellness Team set up twice a week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, from 10am - 2pm.



The Circles enabled Indigenous students in grades 8-12 to come by for cultural connection, hygiene supplies, wellness journals, and mental health support. The team also provided supplies, snacks, and lunch to students during the drop-ins. At each session, students had the chance to learn about traditional medicines/smudging, making sage bundles, Seven Grandfather Teachings, traditional crafting (including pine needle baskets, painting rocks, creating answer feathers), self-care, wellness support, connection with other students and the wellness team, and; of course, gathering over food.

The goal of the Wellness Circles was to enable students to access support and resources over the summer months to ensure that their mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional needs were met. The wellness team was very successful in serving many students across the district through a holistic and traditional lens and has received significant positive feedback about the Wellness Circles across the Okanagan Territory.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### 2023 Indigenous Student Leadership Summit

This year the Okanagan Mainland Regional Indigenous Educators (OMRIE) thoughtfully planned an Indigenous leadership and learning opportunity for secondary school Indigenous student leaders from the ten School Districts in the Okanagan Mainline Region. Up to ten students from each of the OMRIE districts attended the Summit hosted in Kamloops, BC on May 16th and May 17th, 2023.



OMRIE is a group of Indigenous district leaders who come together regularly to share resources and practices across districts, from the Mainland to the Okanagan, to the Kootenay regions. The OMRIE chapter meets throughout the year to share initiatives that are improving results for Indigenous learners and enhancing students' sense of belonging in a collective pursuit for equity.



Indigenous students participated in youth workshops to share their ideas on the following topics: Anti-Indigenous racism, Indigenous culture in schools, Indigenous Health and well-being, and community/belonging in schools. The workshops were interactive and engaging! The goal of the event was to expose students to different perspectives and allow them the opportunity to share their ideas with change makers in the education system. These ideas were then shared with District leaders, Ministry of Education and Child Care representatives, and community knowledge keepers to inform educational initiatives and reconciliation practices.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

**Chief n'tyxtix Salmon**  
*Action\*Get It Done\*Planning\*Focused*



### Our Commitment:

We are committed to empowering each Indigenous learner to take action to explore and strengthen their personal identity.

### What We Are Doing:

The Indigenous Education Department helps empower each Indigenous learner by providing meaningful cultural opportunities through recognizing milestones and events in their lives.

## National Indigenous Peoples' Day at Black Mountain Elementary



On June 21<sup>st</sup>, the entire Black Mountain school community recognized and celebrated the history, resiliency, and culture of Indigenous people everywhere. It was also a day to celebrate just being the beautiful people we are, and the ones we are raising.

The Black Mountain team celebrated by feeding students!

Ms. Wikenheiser (Indigenous Advocate), Mrs. Popoff, and a BIG group of helpers (Ainzley's mum, Jen Jefferies, Mrs. Lovich, and so many more) made 600+ pieces of bannock. Donations for the bannock raised more than \$1000 for the Residential School Survivors' Fund.

Picture features Ainzley Wikenheiser and Rochelle Popoff (gr. 5 teacher).

## AS Matheson Elementary Nest and Gathering Room



The AS Matheson Elementary school team collaborated to re-imagine and bring together the "Nest" (Social Emotional Learning regulation space) and the Indigenous Gathering space.

As the Gathering Room was very small and not conducive to gathering groups of Indigenous students, the Indigenous Student Advocate and the Social Emotional Learning Teacher collaborated to bring these spaces together and support our learners in team! All students are benefitting from the new Gathering space – a decolonized learning environment, embedding Indigenous teachings of wellness and self-regulation.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department

### Our Progress

#### The Indigenous Academy at Dr. Knox

Ava Cudmore  
Student Reporter, KSS



The Indigenous leadership class at Dr. Knox is a student-driven course that focuses on Indigenous knowledge and teachings. Students are taught by Teacher Holly Rooke and Kelly Andrews, the Indigenous Advocate, at Dr. Knox. So far this year they have worked on land acknowledgments and introducing themselves in the local Okanagan nsyilxcən. For Truth and Reconciliation Week, they made orange pins, posters, and a display case. They also ran a shoe drive for the 215 children that were found at Kamloops residential school.

They celebrated their efforts during Truth and Reconciliation Week by making bannock and chili. On September 23rd, the Indigenous Academy went to the Okanagan college Pow-Wow. The students said that it was very interesting to see all of the dancers and vendors.

When I went to talk with them, the class was working on things such as beadwork by making mini moccasins and medicine bags.

Going forward they are looking at collaborating with younger students at North Glenmore Elementary. All of these things work towards truth and reconciliation. Many Canadians are starting to learn about the reality of Canada's past. But many people only learn about the negative things that happened to Indigenous people and do not learn about the culture that still exists today. However, with this course, they learn about Indigenous history, the issues they still face, and the culture that still exists today.



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Indigenous Grad Retreats

The Indigenous Education Department hosted two graduation retreats for 2023 Indigenous graduates. The first, on November 24, 2022, featured Alex Wells, internationally renowned hoop dancer, along with an opportunity for students to try some of the skills themselves.



The second retreat, on February 23rd, provided students with teachings around sacred medicines. Students were then able to create their own medicine bundle, including a gift of a shell for smudging. Bringing our students together to celebrate their achievements and to deepen their connection to culture is empowering for all participants!



# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Equity in Action - Indigenous Education Department Our Progress

### Indigenous Graduation

Although the District's Indigenous graduation rate continues to improve, we recognize that there is still work to do in order for each Indigenous student to realize their potential and graduate with dignity, purpose, and options. The District is committed to continuing to explore transition rates, Kindergarten to grade 12, as well as garner greater clarity on the success of Indigenous students transitioning to post-secondary learning opportunities.



Dancers at MBSS



Grad ceremony at RSS



Elders Grouse and Pamela Barnes together with School Board Trustee Wayne Broughton and Vice-Chair Julia Fraser at KSS Graduation Ceremonies



Birch Creek Drum Group at GESS

Overall community and parental feedback is reflected in this one piece of writing from a parent:

*"I positively and confidently need to extend my warmest gratitude and appreciation to the teachers, mentors, volunteers, Elders and; of course, topped off by the fabulous talent of the drummers and dancers. The vibe and frequency of the ceremony captivated a crystal clear message of compassion, love, [and] understanding that blossomed into a sense of community unity made obvious as conversations, communication and laughter with perfect strangers were made apparent between tables. The paramount part of the night and absolute Babe Ruth grand slam was the blanket ceremony ... That my friend was in no doubt a five star class act and the perfect memory my wife and I shall share with our daughter for the rest of our lives ....."*  
(Cory Anthony, parent)

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## How Are Our Indigenous Learners Doing?

In preparation for celebrating this year's **253** Indigenous student graduates, Indigenous Education staff facilitated talking circles, during the fall of 2022, with representative groups of Indigenous grade 12 students at all secondary school sites to hear what was important in the redesign of a Traditional Graduation Ceremony.



Blanketing Ceremony at  
George Elliot Secondary Indigenous Graduation



Okanagan Mission Secondary Graduate, Kanani Coon

All student input received was shared with local Elders who assisted with co-designing Ceremonies that reflected the voices and wishes of the graduates as well as aligned with the local protocols of the Nation. The result was beyond initial expectations. The students requested separate school celebrations, a dinner, local traditional teachings embedded within all aspects of the evening, a moment of silence for all survivors of residential schools and all impacted by the residential school system, traditional drumming, dancing, and the Blanketing Ceremonies.



Rutland Senior Secondary Graduate,  
Saby Jobin



Central Programs Graduate, Cliff Carlson



Mount Boucherie Graduate,  
Caleb Cunningham

Each Indigenous Blanketing Ceremony reflected the students' wishes as well as the unique context of each school culture. Five Blanketing Ceremonies were held at secondary schools and at Central Programs and Services during the months of May and June.

*"Being wrapped in a blanket is one of the highest honours one can receive in the Indigenous community and is a custom that is shared by many nations across Turtle Island. This recognition is a reminder of one's responsibility within their community and throughout life's journey."*

*Jordan Coble, Westbank First Nation*

# Central Okanagan Public Schools

## Our Priorities for the 2023/2024 School Year

### The following Priorities will be a focus during Year Three of Equity in Action for Truth and Reconciliation:

- Continuing to support inter-cultural competency learning for staff and students;
- Prioritizing targeted interventions and community supports for Indigenous early learners;
- Broadening culturally-responsive interventions as an alternative to students on suspensions or adjusted school schedules;
- Implementing Year Two of Westbank First Nation and Central Okanagan Public Schools Local Education Agreement (2022-2027);
- Implementing Year Three of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Grant Project:  
[\*Co-Curricular Making: Honouring Indigenous Connections to Land, Culture and the Relational Self\*](#)



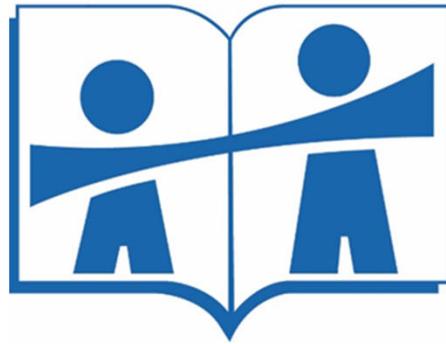
Additionally, next year's priorities will also include:

- Exploring pathways for Indigenous youth to be role models for younger Indigenous students;
- Collaborating with school teams to reimagine Indigenous student transition plans with next year's focus on culturally-responsive transitions from elementary to middle schools;
- Continuing to monitor Indigenous student attendance and collaborate with parents/caregivers, community members, and school teams to co-create individual support plans that focus on increasing student connectedness and engagement in learning in an effort to improve attendance and student satisfaction levels with their school experience.



This was supported by research undertaken through a Partnership Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. For more information, please use this [link](#)





**Central Okanagan  
Public Schools**

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Together We Learn

# **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS/CEO**

## **YEAR IN REVIEW**

**June 28, 2023**

# CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



- Serve over 200,000 citizens in 4 municipalities (Peachland, West Kelowna, Kelowna and Lake Country), Westbank First Nation and the Regional District of Central Okanagan
- 5<sup>th</sup> largest District in the province (4% of provincial enrollment)
- 47 Schools: 32 Elementary, 8 Middle, 5 Secondary, 1 Alternative Education and 1 K-12 Online Learning Program
- Partnerships with 15 Preschools
- 8 StrongStart Centres



## Partners Include:

- Central Okanagan Teacher's Association (COTA)
- Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3523 (CUPE)
- Central Okanagan Principals' & Vice Principals' Association (COPVPA)
- Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council (COPAC)
- District Student Council (DSC)

## Management Team:

- Central Okanagan School Business Officials (COSBO)
- BC School Superintendents Association (BCSSA)



# CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS OUR STUDENTS



	H/C*
<b>Elementary</b>	11,021
<b>Middle</b>	5,677
<b>Secondary</b>	6,749
<b>Alternate Programs</b>	569
	<b>24,016</b>
<b>International Ed</b>	532
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>24,548</b>



- \*H/C = headcount
- Data as of September 30, 2022



## Caring Communities

Embodies the cultural values we have been focusing on. Caring communities recognize the important connections between students, staff, families and the greater community. Together, when we nurture caring communities, we are able to positively impact self-esteem, sense of belonging, compassion, and innovation. As we look ahead, it is time to open our doors to the greater community and to welcome back our parents, caregivers, and community volunteers who greatly contribute to our culture of caring communities.

### Together We Create Caring Communities

K<sup>w</sup>u knknx<sup>w</sup>təwix i? kl snaqsilx<sup>w</sup>

We are walking hand in hand with our relatives.

Nous marchons main dans la main avec nos proches.



THEME FOR 2023-2024



*Together, we inspire*

wonder

ἄλλαντις ἰ? πᾶραῖτ • émerveillement



Central Okanagan  
Public Schools

Together We Learn

# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS TO BE PROUD OF.....



- The Six Year BC Resident **Completion Rate** is **96%** as compared to the provincial average of **91.4%**.
- The Indigenous Six Year BC Resident **Completion Rate** is **86%** as compared to the provincial average of **75%**.



# MUCH TO BE PROUD OF.....



- **Many Fine Arts performances including:**
  - “The Addams Family” –  
École Okanagan Mission Secondary School
  - “Clue” –  
École Kelowna Secondary School
  - Music Winter Carnival –  
Mount Boucherie Secondary School



- **Arts Shows**
  - **Kelowna Art Gallery** hosted the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Art in Action student exhibition
  - **Peachland Art Gallery** showcased approximately 70 works of art of students at Mount Boucherie Secondary School.



# MUCH TO BE PROUD OF.....



## Bursaries/Scholarships

- **Central Okanagan Bursary and Scholarship Society (COBSS)** celebrated 52 years of financially assisting local grads in pursuit of post-secondary education. COBSS distributed 585 awards for a total donation of **\$545,315**.
- **+Millions of dollars in University Entrance and other Post-Secondary Scholarships**



# MUCH TO BE PROUD OF..... SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



.....many schools participated in the **Annual Terry Fox Run** in commemoration of Terry Fox, and his Marathon of Hope, and to raise funds for cancer research.

**École Okanagan Mission Secondary School** held their 2023 Relay for Life and raised **\$30,000**.

**École Dr. Knox Middle School** held their Bald Falcon Day and raised **\$18,402.72**



# MUCH TO BE PROUD OF..... SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



- More than 500 music students from Lake Country to West Kelowna showcased their talent at Prospera Place for **Music Monday**.
- Many schools took part in the **Jump Rope for Heart**.
- Student led **We Walk for Mental Health** took place at Mount Boucherie Secondary School.
- **Food and toy drives** took place at many schools prior to the winter break – 279 boxes of cereal were delivered to the Food Bank from Black Mountain Elementary School.



# MUCH TO BE PROUD OF..... PROMOTING PUBLIC EDUCATION



“Together We Learn” was published:

December 2022  
‘Caring Communities’

June 2023  
“Telling our Stories:  
The Literacy Issue”

By Faith Johnson-Jourdain | Grade 11, MBSS | Acrylic on paper 15"x 22"  
This piece was created in Mount Boucherie's Indigenous Art Studio course, as part of a unit on visual storytelling, and is inspired by several different modern syilx artists.

**CARING COMMUNITIES**

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

**In this issue:**  
Page 05: Students with Diversabilities  
Page 09: International Student Experience  
Page 12: Multicultural Celebrations  
Page 19: Land Based Learning  
Throughout: This year I discovered

**TELLING OUR STORIES:  
THE LITERACY ISSUE**

Lisa Wu  
Grade 12  
Hard Workers  
Digital Art

**In this issue:**  
Pg. 6: A Creative Tale of Food Chiefs  
Pg. 8: Hands-on Storytelling  
Pg. 18: An Essay en français  
Pg. 24: Shooting to Find Joy: A Short Story

**Throughout the Issue:**  
Collaborative Characters: Gr. 11-12 Artists Draw Gr. 2-3 Creations  
Meet the People Who Create #CaringCommunities

# MUCH TO BE PROUD OF.....



## Provincial Championships

- École Kelowna Secondary School Senior Boys Volleyball Team - Provincial Champions
- École Okanagan Mission Secondary School Senior Girls Volleyball Team - Provincial Champions
- Mount Boucherie Secondary School Senior Girls Volleyball Team – Silver Medalists



- Mount Boucherie Secondary School Robotics Team placed second in the FIRST® Robotics Canadian Pacific Regional Championships

# SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS.....



- Harmony Day; Bullying Awareness (Pink Shirt) Day; World Teachers' Day; National Child Day; Orange Shirt Day; Take Our Kids to Work Day; Teacher Appreciation Day; Access Awareness Day; International Women's Day; Celebration of Women in Math Day; Child Care Provider Appreciation Day; Red Dress Day; Earth Day; and Black Excellence Day
- International Walk to School Day/Week; School Bus Safety Awareness Week; Human Rights Month; Pride Month; Citizenship Week; Canadian Mental Health Week; Education Week; Family Literacy Week; Principals and Vice-Principals Month; TTOC Appreciation Week; and Truth and Reconciliation Week
- National Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week; National Volunteer Week; National Day of Mourning; National Child Day; National Indigenous Peoples Day; National Indigenous History Month; National Fire Prevention Week; National Administrative Assistant's Day; National Principals' Month; Inclusive Education Month; National AccessAbility Week; National Food Allergy Awareness Month; National Day of Awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

# SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS.....



- Celebrated the graduations for students from the **SD23/BCIT Dual Credit Program, Okanagan College Gateway Program, Central School, eSchool 23 and all five secondary schools.**



- Individual blanketing ceremonies were held at secondary schools and at Central Programs and Services during the month of June for **Indigenous graduates.**

# SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS.....



- A Peachland Elementary School teacher was the recipient of a Regional Certificate of Achievement for the **2022 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence**
- A teacher at École Kelowna Secondary School was selected as a **2022 American Geographical Society Geography Teacher Fellow**
- Four finalists for **2022 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Education**



# SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS.....



- The **2023 iGen Challenge** started with 130+ high school teams (325+ students). The eight final teams took part in a live pitch session to local entrepreneurs at the Innovation Centre.
- The **2023 District Sumobot Competition** was held with over 170 students participating.
- The **FIRST LEGO** League “Superpowered” Regional Qualifying Tournament consisting of 60 students on 12 teams was hosted.
- The District’s first **Symposium 2023** “**What Could School Be?**” celebrated the work that teachers are engaged with in the District.



**1<sup>st</sup>** - Tyson Caul & Jared Gregor (OKM)



**2<sup>nd</sup>** - Noah Garcia (OKM)



**3<sup>rd</sup>** - Ben Ramsey & Everett Boutcher (GESS)

# SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS.....



- Trustees, students and staff participated in the **Kelowna Pride Festival**.



- Trustees, along with representatives from District Student Council, CUPE, COTA, COPVPA, COPAC and senior staff, gathered to refresh the **rainbow sidewalk** at the School Board Office.



# SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS.....



- Continued with “**Inside 23**” at Public Board Meetings to showcase students, staff and programs within the District, some of which included:
  - Introduction of Operations Department
  - Student Perspectives (Kindergarten and Grade 12 students)
  - Improvement of Environmental and Social Sustainability
  - Land-Based Love
  - Creating a Caring Community
  - Celebrating Multiculturalism
  - Learning Technology Services Supporting Equity
  - Creating a Community of Mathematicians through Visual Patterning and DESMOS
  - Primary Winter Gathering
  - American Sign Language



# SPECIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS.....



- “**Inside 23**” continued.....
  - Powderhounds Friday Adaptive Ski School
  - Pedestrian Safety
  - École Glenrosa Middle and Constable Neil Bruce Middle Students Visit to Chuba University Haruhigaoka Middle/Secondary School
  - Creating and Caring and Connected Community in Numeracy
  - Speaker’s Idol
  - Red Dress Day
  - 2023 Symposium – What Could School Be?
  - Creating Caring Communities in French Immersion
- Recognized 26 years of service of former **Trustee Moyra Baxter**



# THE BUSINESS OF THE BOARD.....



- The election process took place in November resulting in two new Trustees joining the Board of Education.
- Participated in school and community-based events.
- Participated in 9 School Community Student Learning Conversations.
- Met with Partner Groups, Municipal Councils and the Westbank First Nation.
- Two new Policies were approved, 11 Policies/Regulations/Appendix/Forms were amended, and 4 Policies were affirmed.



# THE BUSINESS OF THE BOARD.....



- Approved the revision of one Board/Authority Authorized Course
- Approved 1 Enhancement Agreement
- Approved the 2022/2023 Amended Budget Bylaw for \$321,910,831
- Approved the 2023/2024 Annual Budget Bylaw for \$347,647,368
- Accepted the Sexual Health Education Level 1 Review
- Approved the Annual Facility Grant (AFG) Plan for 2023/2024 through 2025/2026
- Sent 5 letters advocating on behalf of public education
- Received, read and considered 173 letters from the public
- During Public Meetings, the Board recognized:
  - 13 students/teams for achievements and awards
  - 3 teachers and support staff for special accomplishments



# THE BUSINESS OF THE BOARD.....



- Hosted the Minister of Education and Child Care, Rachna Singh, who toured École H.S. Grenda Middle School and the new child care centre at Black Mountain Elementary School.



# EVENTS TO BE PROUD OF.....



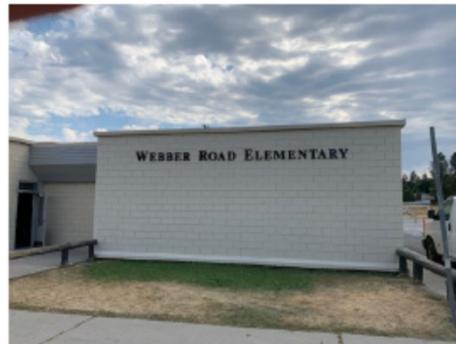
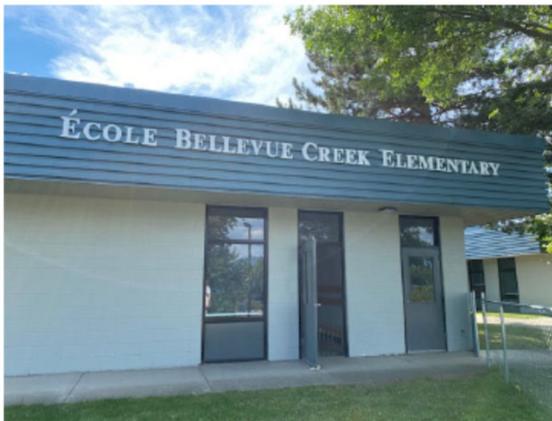
- The **long-service recognition** of 4 employees for 35 years of service, 27 employees for 30 years of service, and 46 employees for 20 years of service was acknowledged by providing each employee with a Certificate, chocolates and pin.
- Recognized the contributions of **retired employees**. The District acknowledged the following on their **retirements**:
  - 3 Principals/Vice-Principals
  - 2 COSBO members
  - 25 teachers
  - 29 support staff



# CAPITAL PROJECTS.....



- Re-opened École Bellevue Creek Elementary for Grade K-1
- Re-opened Webber Road Elementary for Grade K-5
- 17 portables were commissioned on school grounds
- Support to develop a PDR (proposal definition report) for the expansion of École Hudson Road Elementary
- Support to develop a concept plan for a new school on the Burtch Road property (Apple Bowl)
- Expansion to École Dr. Knox Middle School - currently under construction
- Former George Pringle Elementary demolition completed
- Procurement process actively underway for the George Pringle Secondary School
- Completion of 3 childcare facilities with 4 childcare facilities under construction



École Dr. Knox Middle Addition

# REVENUE GENERATING INITIATIVES.....



## Health and Safety

- Our Health and Safety Department managed claims for 32 School Districts in the Province
- Revenue totaling \$364,425.16 is obtained through three sources:
  1. Claims Management Shared Services – net \$120,701.00
  2. Online Safety Courses – net \$25,643.00
  3. COR Safety Audit – net \$218,081.16



## International Education

- For the 2022/2023 school year, it is anticipated that the International Education Program will collect revenues of \$6.6M with 599 students (430 FTE) coming from 27 countries and jurisdictions.



# MANAGING THE VOLUME OF CHANGE WITHIN THE SYSTEM.....



- The **Human Resources Department** processed (as of June 23<sup>rd</sup>):
  - 450 support staff postings
  - 226 teacher postings during the Spring staffing period
  - 64 Senior staff, Principal, Vice-Principal and management changes (retirements, resignations, appointments and reassignments)
  - 185 new Teachers Teaching on Call (TTOC) hired
- During the 2022/2023 school year, the Board concluded the **selection process** for the following senior staff and management positions:
  - District Principal of Early Learning and Childcare
  - Director of Instruction – Indigenous Education and Equity
  - Director of Instruction – International Education, Anti-Racism and Equity
  - Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
  - Director of Operations
  - Manager of Privacy and Cybersecurity
  - Maintenance Manager
  - District Principal – Human Resources (2)
  - District Vice-Principal – Indigenous Education
  - District Vice-Principal – International Education and Settlement Services
  - Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer

# THANK YOU



**To the Board of Education,  
all staff members, partner groups  
and the community  
for their efforts to support  
our students this year.**

**Your efforts have been appreciated!**