



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

APPROVED: 2011.06.28

REVISED: 2017.11.28

POLICY

School District No. 57 (Prince George) acknowledges that it is situated on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh people in Prince George and McBride, the McLeod Lake Indian Band in the Mackenzie region as well as the Simpcw First Nation in Valemount

School District No. 57 is fully committed to the delivery of Aboriginal Education as mandated through the British Columbia Ministry of Education and rooted within the communities it serves. School District No.57 recognizes the significance of the First People Principles of Learning and Indigenous wisdom teachings to all learners.

DEFINITIONS:

“Aboriginal ancestry” includes First Nations (both Status and non-Status, on-reserve and off-reserve), Inuit and Métis people. Aboriginal designation is made through self-declaration, as prescribed by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

“Aboriginal community” refers to the community that is composed of the parents/guardians, siblings and other representatives of the Aboriginal children who attend school in School District No. 57.

“Aboriginal education” is the incorporation of Aboriginal perspectives and philosophies in all curricular areas to inform all students of the past and contemporary lifestyles, indigenous knowledge and histories of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Aboriginal education encompasses the rich traditions and values of the various Aboriginal people and applies those concepts to relevant issues facing Aboriginal children and youth today, throughout curriculum and cultural activities in positive, student-centered learning experiences.

Aboriginal Education Committee’s role of the Aboriginal Education Committee is to support and advise the Aboriginal Education Department on Aboriginal Education Programs and Services as per the mandate from the Ministry of Education on Aboriginal Education and to involve the Aboriginal community where possible in Aboriginal Education initiatives that support Aboriginal students.



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Aboriginal Education Department of School District No.57 coordinates and supports the delivery of Aboriginal Education Language, Culture and Support Programs as mandated through the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

“Aboriginal languages” are the ancestral languages of the Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal languages within School District No. 57 are Dakelh (Lheidli T’enneh First Nation), Ts’ekhehne (McLeod Lake Indian Band) and the Secwepemctsin (Simpw First Nation).

“Aboriginal education support services” are designed to assist Aboriginal students to achieve success. Services shall be provided by personnel who are culturally competent in the Aboriginal worldview and sensitive to the values, beliefs and needs of Aboriginal students.

“Cultural competency” is the development of the knowledge, skill and confidence to integrate Aboriginal perspectives into all aspects of educational endeavours, as well as the ability to work respectfully with Aboriginal people.

“Indigenous Elders Advisory Council” is a group of identified Aboriginal community Elders who meet monthly. Elders share wisdom, knowledge and ancestral teachings with members of School District No. 57 in order to achieve cultural equity in education for Aboriginal students, families, staff and the community.

“Informed Consent” means that information has been given (in writing or verbally) to the local aboriginal communities and they were given the opportunities to respond. Initial lack of consensus with the local Aboriginal Communities does not preclude the responsibility of the School District to deliver Aboriginal programs and services for Self-identified Aboriginal Students.

Local Education Agreement Management Team is the management team established under section (20) of the Local Education Agreement and is comprised of representatives appointed by the Board of Education, the schools and the First Nation community to develop and implement a plan for the full implementation of this agreement, and to oversee the implementation of this agreement.

“Targeted Aboriginal education funds” are provided by the British Columbia Ministry of Education to school districts. School districts are then required to follow the funding mandate for these targeted funds as prescribed by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

1. Evidence that the Aboriginal Student has self-identified as being of Aboriginal Ancestry (First Nations, Status, Non-Status, Métis and Inuit). Aboriginal Ancestry is determined on a voluntary basis through self-identification.
2. Evidence that the parents or guardians of the student has been consulted.



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3. Evidence that the Aboriginal Education Programs and Services have involved the Aboriginal community in planning and delivery, either through direct involvement or through a process of informed consent.
4. Evidence that the Aboriginal Education Programs and Services are in addition to any other programs and services to which the student is eligible.
5. Evidence that the Aboriginal Education Programs and Services provide a continuum of substantive learning experiences and/or support services for each self-identified claimed student throughout the school year.

“Traditional teachings” encompass accumulated knowledge, skills, values and principles passed down from generation to generation for the wellbeing and survival of its people for a particular Aboriginal cultural group.

“Worldviews” are perspectives that encompass the aspects of physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual well-being, and how these interrelationships created and affected the past, present and future.

Responsibility Centre: Superintendent of Schools

References:

Aboriginal Education Consultation Chart

<http://www.sd57.bc.ca/school/abed/Lists/Publications/Aboriginal%20Education%20Consultation.pdf>

Aboriginal Education Targeted Funding Policy Ministry of Education British Columbia

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/k-12-funding-aboriginal-education>



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PREAMBLE

The Board of Education recognizes that it serves a diverse population of learners and is committed to making education meaningful for, responsive to and inclusive of cultural diversity that characterizes our Canadian society. The Board of Education acknowledges the significant Aboriginal student population within School District No.57 and is committed to transforming educational experiences and academic achievement for all learners.

The Board of Education:

- Supports the development and delivery of Aboriginal Education programs and services that enhance and benefit both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students as mandated by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.
- Supports meaningful consultation with the Aboriginal community and the variety of methods used to achieve this throughout each school year.
- Acknowledges and values the role of the Aboriginal Education Committee, Elders Advisory Council, and the Local First Nations within School District No.57 boundaries in enhancing and supporting Aboriginal Education.

The Aboriginal community has made known its understanding of Aboriginal education as holistic. An Education that is inclusive of Aboriginal perspectives, including values, languages, histories and cultures.

This policy reflects the belief that education is a lifelong learning process that encompasses Aboriginal students, parent/guardian(s) and the community. The Board of Education will work with all partners in the educational process to ensure that an education of high quality is provided, leading to academic achievement, social leadership, environmental stewardship, secured career pathways and full participation as local and global citizens.

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REGULATIONS:

1. Aboriginal Choice School (Nusdeh Yoh)
 - 1.1. Programming at Nusdeh Yoh will ensure the integration of Aboriginal values, languages, histories and cultures in all aspects of education within the school community.
2. Aboriginal Languages
 - 2.1. Within the requirements of the *School Act* and Board policy, School District No. 57 will work cooperatively to establish Aboriginal language programs, with priority given to Dakelh (Lheidli T'enneh First Nation), Ts'ekhehene (McLeod Lake Indian Band) and the Secwepemctsin (Simpwecw First Nation).
3. Early Childhood Learning Initiatives
 - 3.1. The Board of Education shall support Aboriginal Education early childhood learning initiatives and early developmental assessments for Aboriginal students. These initiatives will be identified and embedded within School District No.57 planning for student success.
4. Employment Equity
 - 4.1. The Board of Education shall maintain a Human Rights Special Program (Section 42) in order to recruit and develop a workforce that is representative of the Aboriginal communities within its jurisdiction in all job classification areas.
5. Cultural Competency
 - 5.1. The Board of Education supports the implementation of District Aboriginal Education goals that are designed to strengthen cultural competency for all members of school communities.
6. Curriculum
 - 6.1. The Board of Education supports the Aboriginal Education Department and the Learning Innovations Department with integration of Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives throughout all areas of the newly revised British Columbia Ministry of Education curriculum.



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7. Responsibility

- 7.1. The Aboriginal Education Department of School District No.57 coordinates and supports the delivery of Aboriginal Education programs and services as mandated through the British Columbia Ministry of Education, in support of equity of educational opportunity and learning outcomes for all students.

8. Mandate to Consult

- 8.1. The Board of Education of School District No.57 has a mandate from the British Columbia Ministry of Education to consult on Aboriginal Education Programs and Services. This mandate is defined in section(s) 2 and 3 of the audit requirements of Aboriginal Education Targeted Funding from the British Columbia Ministry of Education and reads as follows:

(2).Evidence that the parents or guardians of the student have been consulted. Interpretation consultation-represents communications between the school and parent/guardian.

(3).Evidence that the Aboriginal Education Programs and Services have involved the Aboriginal communities in planning and delivery, either through direct involvement or through a process of informed consent.

- 8.2. School District No. 57 meets this mandate to consult as defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Education through a variety of processes; Local Education Agreements, Aboriginal Community Involvement, Indigenous Elders Advisory Council, Parental Engagement.

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