

Strategic Priorities - Connected Learners

Background Information to Question 3: Reconciliation

Mandate of the B.C. School System

To enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

The Educated Citizen

School districts must assist in the development of citizens who are:

- thoughtful, able to learn and to think critically, and who can communicate information from a broad knowledge base;
- creative, flexible, self-motivated and who have a positive self-image;
- capable of making independent decisions;
- skilled and who can contribute to society generally, including the world of work;
- productive, who gain satisfaction through achievement and who strive for physical well-being;
- cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences;
- aware of the rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world.

Prime Goal of Public Education

- Intellectual Development
- Human and Social Development
- Career Development

Reconciliation Framework for Public Education

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act) establishes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) as the Province's framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. This framework outlines the commitment for provincial government and public education on reconciliation.

Strategic Priorities - Connected Learners

Responses to Question 3: Reconciliation

The District's role is to support success for Indigenous students and further Reconciliation.

How could SD8 demonstrate support for Indigenous student success and foster Reconciliation?

How could SD8 foster this?

1. Like a learning curriculum exists for French and Russian, one should exist for Indigenous culture and language. I realize there are many bands and many different languages, that this might be very difficult, but somehow the cultural aspect is lacking from the curriculum, not just talking about the history.
2. In some other countries like New Zealand, their form of reconciliation, seems to be much more prominent, or at least visibly speaking that is. The aboriginal culture is much more embedded in their culture / better advertised in a sense, to the public by their own government. They seem to make a strong effort, at the very least, to show they are sorry for taking their country from them and have regular events and celebrations at schools and public engagements, music festivals. Our country could probably learn a lot from the way New Zealand handles such things.
3. Consultation with the local Indigenous communities, but actually applying their feedback for a change. Ensuring that future generations are taught about Indigenous cultures in a good way, instead of continuing on the current appropriation-encouraging and pan-Indigenous approach.
4. have more involvement with the local Indigenous community
5. Bring in Indigenous community members
6. Acknowledge the Sinixt as First People. Teach the history of our territory and acknowledge the history honestly. Do not repress people who want to acknowledge they live on unceded Sinixt Territory -like MSS students working on a land acknowledgement. Repression is not reconciliation.
7. More elders and members of the Indigenous communities in schools.
8. I'm curious why the district doesn't consult Marilyn James in reconciliation efforts? Overall, I think that the AbEd team is doing a great job.
9. Continue to have Indigenous lessons, songs and traditions taught within schools and communities.
10. Continue providing Indigenous advocate support. More teacher training about local Indigenous groups, more connections with local bands.
11. Bringing Indigenous ways of knowing into the classroom. Allowing students to showcase their learning through an Indigenous lens.

12. Change 'Aboriginal Education' to 'Indigenous Education'. It is the correct, unoffensive term to use. Professional development for all staff about local, Indigenous culture and language. Invitation of Elders and local Indigenous people to share their knowledge with staff and students.
13. Extra pro-d in Indigenous approaches to learning. Support us in bringing in elders into the schools.
14. SD8 could embark on more art projects using local Indigenous artist. SD8 could encourage artistic performance to invite in the community to reconciliation events.
15. More place-based opportunities in the field
16. by allowing natives to come to our school and demonstrate their story's and culture and go on field trips to Indigenous lands and learn about things.
17. academic support
18. less emphasis on the negative relationship (residential schools) and more on the future of all Canadians living and working together.
19. "By bringing in interesting, engaging Indigenous guests and exposing all of the children to interesting cultural experiences. Create opportunities within that for Indigenous students to be leaders if they would like. Teach inclusion and interest in the Indigenous culture to all students.
20. ""- learning, learning, learning! Our region has a complex history...providing learning opportunities for ALL students, teachers and parents is important.
21. -inviting/collaborating with Indigenous nations including the Lakes and Autonomous Sinixt.... but also, the Okanagan, Secquepmik, and Ktunaxa.
22. There are almost no (local) Indigenous students in the Nelson family of schools. Continuing to force reconciliation when they are not here just makes the rest of us resent the Indigenous people that are here. All of the local families I have met with Indigenous heritage are not Indigenous to the Kootenays or even British Columbia. My children are 5th generation Nelson residents, but we are not as valuable as Indigenous people who moved here last year from Alberta.
23. My school in Alberta has a high population of Indigenous students - it was great! Get them into sports and activities within the school. It should be a priority to teach all students about their beautiful culture. Have them show you.
24. STOP EXCLUDING AUTONOMOUS SINIXT! You worked with them for decades and then tossed them aside to work with "your Indigenous partners" who don't even live here or do the day-to-day work in the territory. You haven't even decolonized yet, so you are a VERY LONG WAY from reconciliation. This is particularly appalling in the Slocan Valley. Stop having other Indigenous Peoples, whose territory this isn't, welcome people into Sinixt territory. A Mikmaw person cannot welcome people into someone else's territory for example. You are presenting a confusing colonial mishmash. You are also working with Indigenous people who slander, defame, and spread hate and misinformation about other Indigenous Peoples, particularly Autonomous Sinixt. As educators, your goals should always be the truth. Start there. You could learn a lot from SD 10 in this regard. DO BETTER!

25. More land-based learning. Connecting students with land-based learning and connections to elders.
26. The district's role is to support success for every child, please stop with the divisions & labels.
27. Partnering with a band/nation on an exchange program.
28. Teach it for a month like Greek or Roman studies then move on to something else. There are a lot more cultures other than Indigenous Canadians
29. Teaching the Indigenous teachings! Supporting and encouraging gatherings, field trips, class visits with elders from all of the local bands extending around us but also further across Canada. There surely must be some elders willing to come to honestly, and gently speak with children. There are so many great Indigenous authors. Encourage purchasing these books for libraries.
30. providing opportunities to grow from Elders and knowledge keepers. Partnering with the Lower Kootenay Band and Yaqan Nuki school
31. Include aboriginal parents the Lower Kootenay Band and the Metis Society in decision making
32. Bring in guest "teachers" from community.
33. See above. Circle instead of lines. Restructure the systems. Work on authentic relationship.
34. Have those who are interested in learning be able to take the class even though they are not from an Indigenous background
35. Engage the local band, LKB in the process. The district tends to go away from the local band for resources. Repairing relations with the LKB would go a long way to acknowledging Indigenous students.
36. Cease in desist in the perpetuation of the "us/them" mentality. Celebrate everyone's ancestors' contributions and teach all students the Indigenous principal of respecting your elders (stop attacking historical figures because they don't live up to the ethical standards of the current moment).
37. I don't represent this group, but found that inclusivity and education are the best, culture camps, pow wows etc., tipi building, beading are things my students and own kids have participated in and enjoyed. Having culture days; potlucks and exploring how culture does not have to be about nationality. I find the kids have a better understanding when they realize cultures can include things like; hockey, Tim Horton's, teenagers, emo, music etc...
38. Teach the truth. Do not single out Indigenous students. Teach multi-culturalism- Canada has many wonderful cultures and they must be embraced as well. Do not sacrifice teaching basic math, science, communication and writing skills to all students. Calm down the effort to make school glamorous with special days, but giving the kids and their families space to have a few weeks of the year where there are fewer distractions to the purpose of education. "Wear your pyjamas to school day" etc. may build school spirit but it creates too much hype and chaos if it is overdone. Some kids can't afford to take part in special lunches etc. If you have 4 kids and a non-English-speaking home, it is extra pressure and can create ostracization for some children. Feed them all pizza on special days or not at all!

Respect for cultural differences should not include too much focus on one culture i.e., Indigenous at the expense of the others.
39. Don't give teachers resources and pro-d workshops on things they can do. We have a very full plate. This is important and it needs to be valued and meaningful. Could the district assist in connecting each school with an elder or Indigenous person who would be willing and able to engage with students and the school community.
40. Have awareness throughout the curriculum as well as support the community in local events
41. The district is doing a very good job of this. There are lots of offerings and resources to help teachers do this better and it is a priority. At times there does still seem to be a lack of resources for Indigenous students' specifically with inside the schools in regards to counseling, mental health support. Next step would be set school and district goals to create and foster relationships with local Indigenous groups so that schools can have relationships with community regardless of which staff is there.
42. Listen to the First Nations. Acknowledge that it is not easy here with the conflicts and trauma of Sinixt, Sylix and Ktunaxa nations, instead of some watered-down lip service to a tone-deaf read territorial acknowledgment. Read Hospicing modernity by Vanessa Andreotti, PhD at UBC if you dare. Reflect on SD8 and yourself and https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/ Dare to radically rethink education, for what - capitalism that kills the planet? What part of education is based in racism? (Sandtalk book).
43. Do you have practices, personally and as a board/administration as taking your concerns to Elders and mentors?
44. Do you (individually and board/admin) give thanks to the land and creation every day? Do you know your cultural heritage and its traditions and its trauma?
45. Do you take a pause to listen between speakers. Do you use a talking piece and sit in a circle.
46. Read Coyote mentoring. I can come give a workshop!
47. I like to acknowledge the efforts and the work of many ab ed teachers, thank you so much. lim limpt.
48. Have a cultural event in every school that exhibits the Indigenous culture. It's food, stories, dance, music. Once a year every school should have and a day where the kids take place in a day where we celebrate the culture.
49. Again, lets reach them through Indigenous music and dance. But also, there have been amazing presentation in recent years with Indigenous foods and local harvesting of foods.
50. By listening to what the Indigenous people have to say. By allowing their way of teaching and having a space for them to share their knowledge.
51. Involve all students in cultural activities, as opposed to only those enrolled in Indigenous studies. As well, involving parents, as some families are more supportive of Indigenous reconciliation than others.
52. By treating them as equals. Provide additional support when needed as you should do for ANY race of student. I feel the current approach to reconciliation is doing

much more harm than good; mainly by patronizing native people and reinforcing a victim mentality. Nearly every racial group has experienced horrible things at some point (my family fled Stalin's USSR). Let's all move forward together

53. Tell the truth about the agenda of the residential school systems, the foster care systems and the involvement of all parties contributing and participating in those systems both historically and currently. Provide real counselling for the impacts of these revelations for all students, Native and non.
54. Start with a stronger relationship and initiatives with the local nations. Add language courses, Elder connections, and pay attention to student safety. Also agree with less hierarchy.
55. Engage more with first nations in our area. Invite more in class learning opportunities. Focus on learning Indigenous languages.
56. My son is Metis. Continue having an Indigenous teacher visit the classroom and teach values and culture of these incredible people.
57. Treat them like everyone else. You can't let them heal, if you keep bringing it up and treating them differently. Teach all students about the Indigenous heritage but also teach about Doukhobor heritage etc. Being accepting of all students.
58. Support cultural real life cultural event participation. Provide basic staffing in the classroom to support all challenges for all kids. Drop the history shaming of kids who do not identify as Indigenous. My kindergartener came home from school and said, "now I feel bad." This is reinforcing a divide, not strengthening community
59. Connections with local elders to bring them into schools, maybe working with COINS or the Sinixt to make this happen. Appropriately compensating elders and respecting cultural protocol. A great idea would be to give new and all teachers a list of contacts to implement this in their classroom and to bring in guest speakers.
60. Encourage school wide actionable steps with the TRC Calls to Action. Continue good relationships with local Indigenous groups and giving them a seat at the table to offer input. Offering additional supports to Indigenous students and families.
61. Encourage presenters by hiring interesting, Indigenous people to give school-wide presentations and help students honor their heritage.
62. Continue to celebrate Indigenous leaders. Bring Indigenous role models into the schools.
63. More community festivals and opportunities for parents and public engagement that honour and celebrate Indigenous culture and history.
64. Connection with Yaqan Nukiy band and school. Continue to give Nelson children access to the POW Wow in Creston by hiring more busses. Have sensitivity training for all teachers and EA's. Have residential school survivors speak to the Indigenous students about what happened to them and how it made them feel.
65. Honour Indigenous significance in openly manifested ways. Encourage non-Indigenous communication with non-Indigenous partners. Encourage students to learn more. Integrate hands on projects instead of studying "about: Indigenous culture and colonization. Its not an academic subject, its values and how we express them. Encourage more Indigenous presentation and content in day-to-day learning that normalizes our relationship to aboriginal values.

66. Land-based learning, meaningful relationship building with host nation, teachers should seek to better understand whose ancestral territory they are situated on and what the impact of colonization has been here specifically. Faculty should learn to correctly say the names of local and adjacent nations - don't make a land acknowledgement if you haven't made an effort to even pronounce and/or understand the issues faced by first nation people in this region
67. Show leadership in reconciliation. We have a complicated history in the West Kootenays and a contemporary landscape of rights holders with whom SD8 needs to foster stronger relationships. Truth and reconciliation has to start with truth.
68. Tell the true history of colonization, and share information about Indigenous wisdom
69. The Indigenous population has a lot to offer everyone. Their knowledge and ideas of how to treat the land hold much value and should be shared not only with their direct descendants, but with the whole community. Bring the learning outside, into nature and let them have a voice. And not only on orange shirt day.
70. Less lip service and forced acknowledgements, more focus on strengths of cultural practices to reinforce healthy communities.
71. Invite Indigenous educators into schools and ensure Indigenous voices are included in early planning stages.
72. Bring back the Ab.Ed. programs that focused on sharing and participating in cultural events and hands on activities.
73. Teach and model respect for cultural practices like smudging in the school by using resistance as a teaching opportunity.
74. Have more elder visits on the school.
75. Liaison with Nations attached to this land and ask what would like to see.
76. When discussing topics like abuse in residential schools. Do so in a trauma informed manner.... consent, choice, support and follow through, respect for differing family values, inform parents of what's being taught. Be sensitive to Indigenous students whose family story you may not know. Almost every Indigenous student is connected to parent or grandparent who is a residential school or sixties scoop survivor...tread gently.
77. Take your time. Get informed about the issues...
78. Kaslo could use a concrete Reconciliation project what occurred here, starting with liaising with the Indigenous groups in our area
79. Invite COINS into the school. They have excellent facilitators.
80. Welcome the Traditional Parenting program in your building.
81. For teaching diversity, it would be great to have online access from the district website for teachers to access. Having thoughtful and accurate information to ensure we are honoring diversity is essential. It would be fantastic to have a district link to explore the Ktunaxa Nation as it is extremely close to our district.

82. Aboriginal support workers and elders in residence would make a HUGE impact. We need to work hard to make something like this happen, as other districts have had these roles for many years already.
83. Possibly school-wide beading lessons? OR something to foster reconciliation with everyone working or playing or learning together in a fun way?
84. When our Community Service Organization has offered programming for school-aged children and allies in the past, we were met with barriers for providing culturally sensitive offerings. We were not allowed to smudge inside, but were instead told we had to go outside (even during the winter) and could not smudge at school pick-up times because parents may think there was cannabis being consumed.
85. Continue to have Indigenous support teachers in the schools who can share their expertise/knowledge in the classrooms. Bring in elders and knowledge keepers to share the history/stories of the Indigenous people.
86. Work with our local First Nations band to help our students experience their culture.
87. Further integrate substantive Indigenous acknowledgement. Foster stronger relationships with local Indigenous communities through joined events, projects, talks and learning content.
88. Make sure that all our kids learn about the amazing Indigenous culture. Promote the cooperation between cultures and don't always focus on the negatives (ie residential schools)
89. Have elders come in, work alongside educators in the classrooms or to counsel youth, Indigenous or not. Listening to an elder and being able to speak with them and share their wealth of knowledge and life skills, this would be incredible for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike.
90. Clearer, braver recognition of the Autonomous Sinixt in the Slocan Valley.
91. Continued excellence in Indigenous Ed (we love our teacher Miss Jenna!).
92. Reparations, service, and genuine engagement with the TRC's recommendations.
93. Donating time and energy to native gatherings and functions
94. I believe the district and province are actually working hard to address inequities faced by Indigenous students. My suggestion would be to allow for and encourage opportunities for schools within the district to engage with students from Yaqan Nuki. Kids who get to spend time together, eat together, and play together (all ages) will form friendships and will support each other and, more importantly, will not continue the same prejudices older generations may have. Yet currently, our students almost never get a chance to interact with the students from our local band school. Let them learn about each other naturally, rather than second-hand from teachers.
95. Additionally, I find that sometimes, despite our best intentions, the way that we continue to separate Indigenous students (e.g., having them pulled out of class for special activities, providing them with "swag", and treating them differently from other students) can create resentment that wasn't there in the first place, I think we all have to be careful we don't unintentionally make the problem worse by trying to make it better. Separating students by ethnicity and treating them differently

started this problem; we need a different way to fix it. Let them play together instead.

96. Maybe mentorship programs?

97. September 30 must not become just another long weekend. Reconciliation is something we need to do all the time, not just one day per year. Suggested to do something every March 30th, invite speakers, exactly half year away from September 30. Have symposiums at schools and invite speakers for an hour or two. This would build relationships with first nations in a community.

98. Honour Indigenous significance in openly manifested ways. Encourage non-Indigenous communication with non-Indigenous partners. Encourage students to learn more. Integrate hands on projects instead of studying "about: Indigenous culture and colonization. Its not an academic subject, its values and how we express them. Encourage more Indigenous presentation and content in day-to-day learning that normalizes our relationship to aboriginal values.