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# ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

## Enhancement Agreement Report Two – 2010 – 2011

### School District No. 62 (Sooke)

#### INTRODUCTION

The Aboriginal Education Agreement, signed April 2009, is the working document between School District #62 (Sooke), local First Nations, on and off reserve, other First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and the Ministry of Education. This Aboriginal Education Agreement acknowledges the vital role that all Aboriginal communities play in the success of Aboriginal students. These Aboriginal communities, as well as School District #62, who form the Aboriginal Education Council, acknowledge and honour the First Nations in whose territories they work and study. We, as members of the Aboriginal Education Council, recognize and support the historical and contemporary importance Aboriginal peoples place on the preservation of their culture and language.

#### OUR GOAL AREAS:

- Sense of Belonging
- Aboriginal Ways of Knowing
- Language
- Achievement



View at: [http://www.sd62.bc.ca/Aboriginal\\_Education](http://www.sd62.bc.ca/Aboriginal_Education)

#### ABORIGINAL EDUCATION COUNCIL 2010-12

Scia'new First Nation  
Pacheedaht First Nation  
T'Sou-ke First Nation  
Métis Nation of B.C.  
Métis Nation of Greater Victoria  
Victoria Native Friendship Centre  
University of Victoria  
Camosun College  
Sooke Teachers Association

Sooke Principals & Vice Principals Association  
NIL/TU,O Child & Family Services  
Surrounded By Cedar Child & Family Services  
Hulitan Family & Community Services Society  
Makola Housing Society  
Métis Community Services  
Aboriginal Students  
CUPE Local 459  
School Trustees, Board of Education

The Aboriginal Education Council met monthly to review and monitor initiatives within the district. Initiatives monitored by the council are highlighted as indicators of change for Aboriginal students, families and Aboriginal communities in this document. This is the second year a formal written report is presented to the monthly board meeting after each Aboriginal Council meeting highlighting initiatives.



## FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESS

### OUR LOGO

- The cycle of Life is a contemporary design by artist Rande Cooke, commissioned for Sooke School District's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. Rande's grandfather taught him the essential elements of art and impressed upon him how art reflects and connects to the culture.
- This rich vibrant design symbolizes the diverse Aboriginal populations of Vancouver Island, British Columbia and Canada. The Aboriginal peoples of the West Coast, known as the salmon people, considered salmon as the givers of life. In the Cycle of Life salmon flow eternally, circling a salmon egg.
- In Rande's design, the salmon reflect the four colours of the Medicine Wheel, white, yellow, red and black. The medicine wheel which guides Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, represents the four races of the world; Caucasian, Asian, Aboriginal and African; the four aspects of the human body; the physical, the emotional, the spiritual and the intellectual and the four directions. It is also a significant number in Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, and in this case, relates to the four goals of the Sooke School District's Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement.
- Each one of the salmon exhibits design elements which echo the distinct styles of West Coast Aboriginal Art. The white salmon, to the north, represents the Aboriginal peoples of Northern B.C. Underneath it is the Inuk'shuk representing the Inuit. The yellow salmon, to the east, represents the Kwakwaka'wakw of North-Eastern Vancouver Island. The red salmon, to the south, represents the Coast Salish of Southern Vancouver Island. The Infinity Symbol represents the Métis. The black salmon, to the west, represents the Nuu-chah-nulth of Western Vancouver Island.
- The salmon egg in the middle represents our most important commodity. Our treasures. Our future. Our children.
- As salmon eternally flow in the Cycle of Life it is anticipated that Sooke School District's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement will eternal flow improving success and opportunities for Aboriginal learners.

### Aboriginal Context

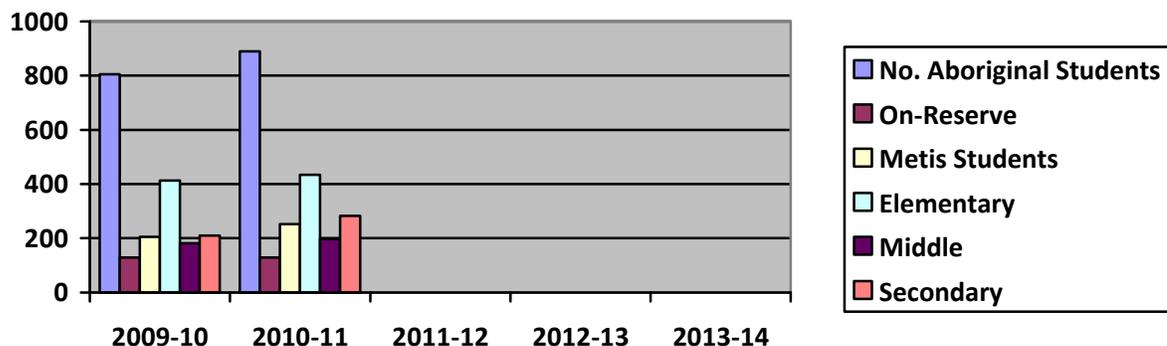


Figure 1 Observation: Context increasing in all areas.



## OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM SUCCESS 2010-11 to 2011-12

Figure 2- Ministry of Education How are We Doing? Note: Data reflects 2009-10 ministry data.

10.3%	13%	17	22%	6%	2%	12	61%
Students self-identifying over 11 years	Eng 10 C+ or better	More students taking Principals Math 10	Principals Math 10 C+ or better	BCFNS12 C- or better	Eng12 C+ or better Or seven more	More students assigned a final mark Eng 12	Six Year Completion Rate

### OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

In 2010-11, Aboriginal Education Department included 9 teachers; 16 support staff; 1 district principal. Included in the support staff is Halq'emeylen Language elder. In addition, the district supports a First Nation Grad program specifically designed for Aboriginal adults and school age students. The Aboriginal Education Department hosts three district events: Family Fall Gathering, Celebrating Students Success and Aboriginal Graduation Recognition Ceremony. Recently, we welcomed and supported numerous community initiatives; including Scia'new Nation canoe launch and long house event, Community library initiative Scia'new Nation, Hans Helgesen and Westshore Rotary – reading begins at home.

### COMMUNITY INITIATED EVENTS

In collaboration with Scia'new Nation Canoe Blessing on May 12, 2011, Beecher Bay community hosted a canoe blessing event at Cheanuh marina. Opening remarks were given by Elder Isabel Charles. Chief Russell Chipps welcomed over 250 school-children to the traditional territory of Scia'new Nation. Schools attending were Hans Helgesen, Crystal View, Lakewood, and Sangster. Russell Chipps had been at the elementary schools to share stories with the above schools prior to the event. The Shaker Faith blessed the canoe. Later, in the Longhouse, story-telling and drumming were shared by numerous Coast Salish Elders and Role Models. Mayor David Saunders congratulated the chief and community for a remarkable event. Display tents featured Coast Salish arts, seafood, and more. A lunch was provided for all and a big Hych'ke to Aboriginal Health & Wellness VI.

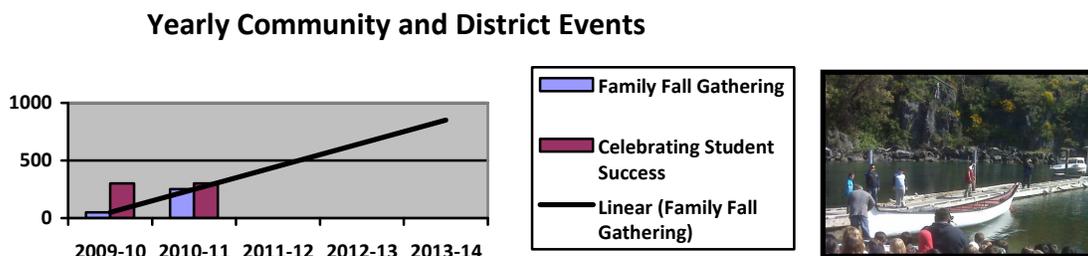
In February 2011, T'Sou-ke Nation hosted 'Spirit Fest' at EMCS celebrating culture in the community. The event featured local emerging artists, fashion show and a popular First Nation play Clamoise.

In July 2011, the Aboriginal Education Department supported a community summer literacy and numeracy camp for children grades one to three. The camp was supported by UBC's Aboriginal initiative in numeracy. A number of Aboriginal students attended the camp. An elder week was a highlight, too. The camp was organized by Edward Milne Community School, Aboriginal Education Department, Sooke Literacy, T'Sou-ke Nation Youth initiatives and UBC.



Sense of Belonging Goal:  
To increase Aboriginal students' sense of place, belonging, and caring in  
School District No. 62 (Sooke).

Figure 3- Target met as attendance range was between 250 and 300 people.



### Family Fall Gathering

This fall started out with a wonderful event. Aboriginal Education Department hosted the annual FAMILY FALL GATHERING at Ruth King Elementary. The evening started out with a harvest basket of fruit prepared by Métis Nation of Greater Victoria. Families, students, teachers, principals, vice principals, school superintendent and assistant superintendents, trustees and community service providers joined the Aboriginal Education Department to welcome all back to a exciting school year! The cultural component included a traditional welcome to the territory– Coast Salish! Chief Russell Chipps, Scia'new Nation welcomed us to the local territory. Elder Shirley Alphonse opened the event with traditional welcome speaking in the traditional languages. The Tzinquaw Dancers shared traditional dances with the audience. The Tzinquaw Dancers have visited many schools to continue sharing!

The evening continued with a contest 'best fall outfits' for different ages. The 'Family Portrait Wall' was also a hit with many children taking family photos under the picture they drew of their family. Our community service providers shared key highlights to families about services they provide in the community: A wealth of information was shared with families. In addition, a big congrats to the committee and Aboriginal Education staff for a successful event!

### Celebrating Student Success

It seems odd to talk about snow – but that is what happened to our first Celebrating Student Success date. We got snowed out. One of our themes was to celebrate the 'Wekes' Frog- symbol of the New Year. It seems the frogs needed to wait until March – so we did! What a fabulous event. We had a full house at Journey Middle School. The Aboriginal Education Staff magically set up and displayed examples of student success in a multi-purpose area. A huge display reflecting all our schools efforts! The Celebrating Student Success committee thrived creating an event to remember. All were welcomed by huge posters displaying, welcoming figures and symbols of the Coast Salish creating a sacred circle in the gym. The Me to We organization facilitated middle school students in presenting interactive activities to help celebrate the theme. Prior to the event Me to We organizers, Chelsea, Mitch and Stephanie visited Middle School students to engage students in leadership sessions and the Sacred Circle. Elders – Shirley Alphonse and Stacey Jones assisted in the Sacred Circle components. Jessy Westrand, a recent Belmont graduate, joined Me to We as a mentor leader and continued sessions at Journey well into May. Jody Bauche, Aboriginal Success by Six, joined us to enlist Middle School students to provide early learning fun at our event. Métis stew was offered by the Métis Nation of Greater Victoria. Bill Bresser, MNGV president provided a real bison treat! Chief Gordon Planes our keynote for the evening expressed words of wisdom on the environment and the future of our communities needing to take action. The highlight of the evening was our schools' student performers. What talent!



## Sense of Belonging Goal: (continued)

**Figure 4- Transition rate target not met. Decrease of 6% overall and 3% for males.**

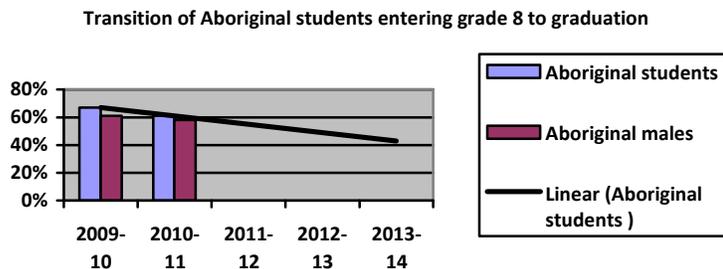


Figure 5- Drum Wall at Spencer

Transition initiatives to address the decrease in results:

- First Nation Graduation Program at the Westshore Annex
- First Peoples English 10, 11, 12 course to be offered at all secondary schools
- BC First Nations Studies 12 course is offered at three of four secondary schools
- Support the All Nations Rooms at the middle and secondary level for academic support
- Advocacy for satellite programs for upgrading at Scia'new Nation and Pacheedaht Nation
- Transition support into Kindergarten with Outreach Strong Start at Scia'new Nation and Pacheedaht Nation and Journeys of the Heart

**Figure 7- Suspension rate target not met**

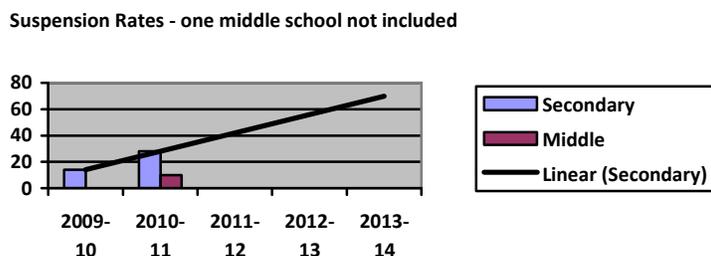


Figure 6- Logo Wall at Dunsmuir

Initiatives to decrease suspension rates

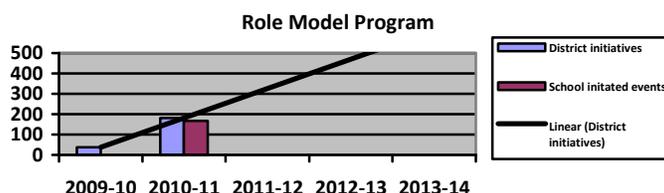
- Continue MetoWe- Sacred Circle program at the Middle School level embraces success for all and youth leadership
- Track the number of Aboriginal students participating in extra- curricular sport teams (539 Aboriginal students in multiple sports) and music choirs, plays, PACE (199 Aboriginal students)
- Support the All Nations Rooms at the middle and secondary level for cultural initiatives

Goal: Sense of Belonging: to increase Aboriginal students' sense of place, belonging and caring in School District No. 62 (Sooke)			
Target	Indicator	Result 2010-11	Met
Increase participation of two community events up to 300 participants	Family Fall Gathering Oct. 6 Celebrating Student Success March 16	250 attendees 300 attendees	Yes Yes
Increase 67% to 74% transition for all Aboriginal students	Transition rates from grade 8 to grade 12	61% decrease by 6%	No
Increase 61% to 74% transition for Aboriginal male students	Transition rates from grade 8 to grade 12	58% decrease by 3%	No
Decrease the number of suspensions at secondary level by 5 from 14 students (no repeat names)	Suspensions increased from 14 to 28	14 more suspension	No



**Aboriginal Ways of Knowing Goal:**  
To increase awareness and understanding of Aboriginal Ways of Knowing in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

**Figure 8- Role Model target met increase from 37 role model presenta**



### Role Model Program

All schools are entitled to utilizing a role model program throughout the year. Secondary provided 25 role model sessions in classrooms; middle provided 20; and, elementary offered 58. The district organized 78 role model sessions for various district level events. The total of role model events was 181 in total. This is an increase of 139 role model presentations in schools.

The Victoria Native Friendship Centre offered a program titled ‘Box of Treasures’ in which many schools provided school funds for the honorarium. Numerous schools received extra funds from school P.A.C.s to support cultural events.

This year we surveyed the number of school initiated event in which schools completed 161 events featuring Aboriginal Role Models. Two school’s AESW completed 60 of the 161 school initiated events demonstrating monthly art lessons at Hans Helgesen and Willway.

Ready, Set, Learn funds were provided for Port Renfrew Elementary, Zone events at SeaParc and the Westshore Mall, Journeys of the Heart, and A Place to Play. At Journeys of the Heart, Art Napoleon performed to 27 participants. Port Renfrew RSL had numerous events and one featured Ed Peekeekoot with excellent turn out from the community. New this year ‘A Place to Play’, Scia’ new Nation featured author Michael Kusukuk with 18 participants’ children and adults.

### Aboriginal Ways of Knowing ‘New’ Survey

Aboriginal students or 33% elementary students comment they learn ‘a lot’ about their culture at school. Aboriginal students or 62% middle and secondary students comment they learn about their culture at school. Approximately, 333 Aboriginal students K to 12 completed the survey with an Aboriginal Education staff member. Twenty schools participated. This year the Aboriginal Education staff assisted on the development of the questions and decided as a group to do a paper copy process. Next year, training will be provided for staff to administer on an on-line survey. This year the survey is a base line data.

Goal: Aboriginal Ways of Knowing: to increase awareness and understanding of Aboriginal Ways of Knowing in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.			
Target	Indicator	Result 2010-11	Met
Increase the number of students participating in survey by 50 students.	333 students participated.	Baseline Data	
Elementary: I am learning about Aboriginal people in my school.	107 responses	25% (27/107)	
Elementary: I understand and have knowledge about my Aboriginal heritage.	119 responses	33% (39/119)	
Secondary: I am learning about Aboriginal people in my school.	195 responses	47% (92/195)	
Secondary: I understand and have knowledge about my Aboriginal heritage.	198 responses	63% (124/198)	



## Aboriginal Ways of Knowing Goal: (continued)

BC First Nations Studies 12 & First Peoples English 10/11/12

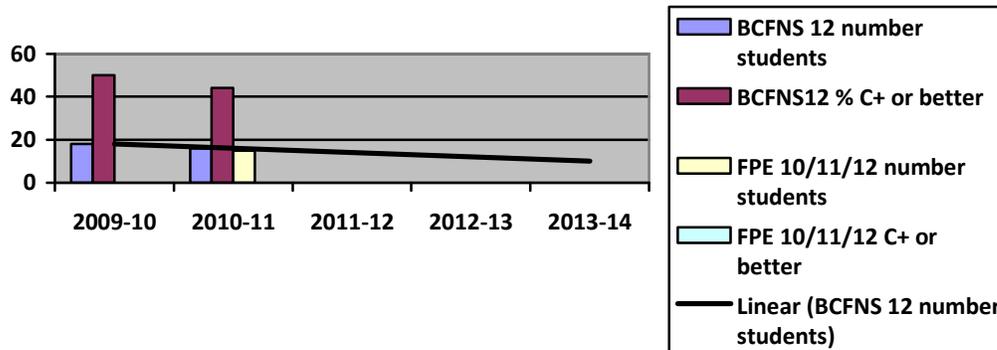


Figure 9- Increase enrolment and completion at secondary level not met

Initiatives to increase secondary participation and completion rates.

- 2009-10 two teachers attended the First People English Institute; 2010-11 three teachers will attend the institute; flyer information was distributed widely
- ESD teacher increase to address literacy at the middle and secondary level; maintain ESD teacher role at elementary level; provide inclusive classroom strategies using Aboriginal Education 'Oral Language' picture book lessons
- Increase the number of Aboriginal content resources at the middle school level
- The district developed an Achievement Contract Aboriginal goal

### Métis Pilot Project 2010-2011 – Grade four student and teacher feedback

"It was well received by all of the students. The dancers were excellent!" "Great artefacts." "Great presentation" "Historical and cultural background was very (thorough) good and had most students engaged – perfect for Grade 3 – 6". "I really like Christine – She was organized and informative." "I like the progression of her presentation and I also enjoyed the student involvement." "She was also very open to my ideas". "I liked the second workshop". "I got to try the jig". "I love the dancing because of how fast Paige could move her feet". "I like participating in the jig". "I like the first workshop because we got touch the furs and play with the jigman". "I liked both workshops because they were fun to watch". "I like making the Métis Sash and the canoes". "I thought it was fabulous and I learned a lot". "I like the information we learned". "I thought it was fun watching Jaden wear the sash and carry a load in it". "I loved all of the facts I learned". "I loved the soft beaver fur". "I liked how Christine brought in all of the stuff for us to look at".

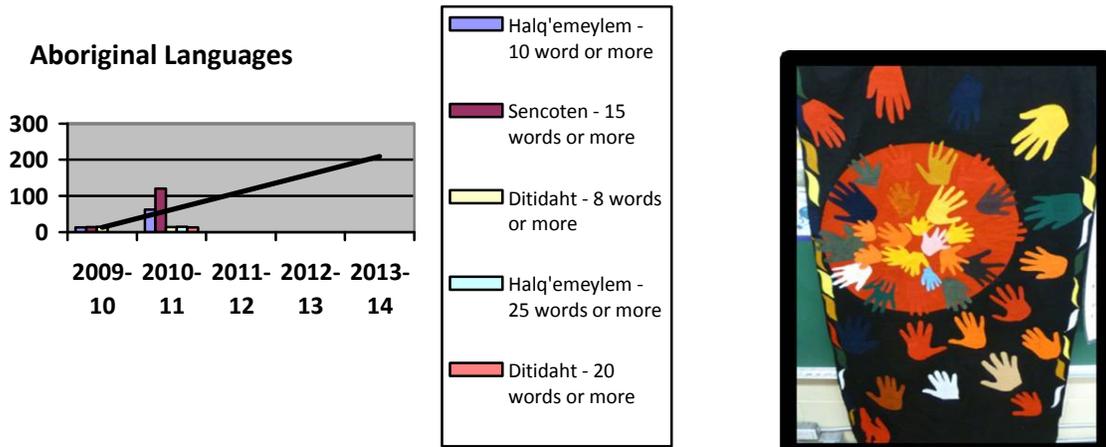
Wishart, Happy Valley, Saseenos, Port Renfrew, Willway participated in a two part Métis grade four curriculum project prepared by Metis Nation of Greater Victoria.

Goal: Aboriginal Ways of Knowing: to increase awareness and understanding of Aboriginal Ways of Knowing in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.			
Increase school role models from 37 to 50 role model presentations	Aboriginal Education Department	181 role model presentation	Yes
Increase BCFNS12 participants from 18 students to 25 students	How Are We Doing Report	16 students decrease by 2 students	No
Offer FPE 10/11/12 at larger secondary schools or all four	1 of 4 secondary schools one offers FPE101112	15 students at WS Annex	No
Increase BCFNS12 C+ or better from 50% to 61%	How are We Doing Report	44% C+ or better	No



**Language Goal:**

To increase knowledge of Aboriginal languages by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.



**Figure 10- Target met to increase language awareness to 25 words**

Scia'new First Nation elder has worked for numerous years teaching school children basic words in Halq'emeylem Language. Halq'emeylem Language lessons were taught before school to elementary, and now in the regular classroom to students at Hans Helgesen. Lavina Charles has two students that have surpassed her language curriculum. The program has been expanded to FN Grad Program 2011-12.

**On-line Aboriginal Language Sites:**

Port Renfrew and T'Sou-ke Nation utilize First Peoples Voices as a source for words and language awareness for Ditidaht Language and Sencoten Language. One school currently uses FirstVoices Kids.

**New Item**

T'Sou-ke Nation and SD #62 collaborated with curriculum developed at the early learning program Sum-SHA-Thut-Lellum for FDK classrooms in three Sooke Elementary Schools in 2010-11. One hundred and twenty schoolchildren participated in Thursday Elder Project in six Full Day Kindergarten classrooms. An inquiry project was completed. In the fall of 2011-12, the program will continue in three schools. Kindergarten students surpassed expectations with Sencoten language. At the end of the year, parents requested a Sencoten resource to use at home.

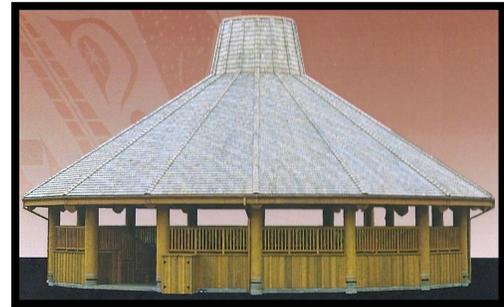
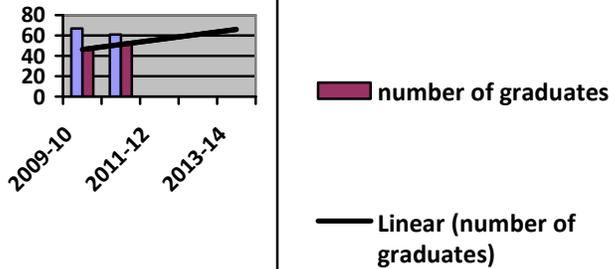
<b>Goal: to increase knowledge of Aboriginal language by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.</b>			
Increase 13 elementary students awareness of more than 10 words to 25 in Halq'emeylem	Halq'emeylem teacher classes before and during class; in-class 'new'	14 students increased language	Yes
Increase 14 students awareness of 15 words to 25 words in Sencoten	Elder Pilot Project focusing on Sencoten	120 Kindergarten participated	Yes
Increase baseline 15 students awareness of 8 words to 20 words in Ditidaht	14 students enrolled at Port Renfrew; awareness of Ditidaht language	13 students learned ten words or more	Yes



## Achievement Goal:

To enhance the achievement and success of Aboriginal students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in academics as well as training for the trades and life skills.

**Graduation Rates**



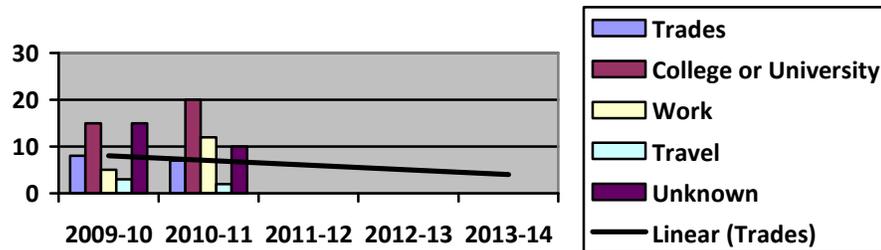
**Figure 11- Number of Aboriginal students entering the trades not met.**

### BC First Nation Studies 12

Three secondary schools offer BC First Nation Studies 12 in both semesters.



**Graduates entering the trades**



● College and/or University increasing

<b>Goal: to increase knowledge of Aboriginal language by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.</b>			
English 10 enrolment increase from 60 to 62 students.	How are We Doing Report	68 students enrolled increase by 8	Yes
English 10 completion C+ or better from 28% to 33%	How are We Doing Report	41% C+ or better	Yes
English 12 enrolment increase from 32 to 37 students	How are We Doing Report	44 students; increase by 12	Yes
English 12 C+ or better from 53% to 58%	How are We Doing Report	55% C+; increase by 2%	No
Math 10 enrolment increased from 16 students to 21 students	How are We Doing Report	32 students; increase by 16	Yes
Math 10 completion C+ or better from 19% to 24%	How are We Doing Report	41% C+ or better; increase by 22%	Yes
Biology 11 or 12		TBA	
Chemistry 11 or 12		TBA	
Physics 11 or 12		TBA	



## Elementary & Middle Reading

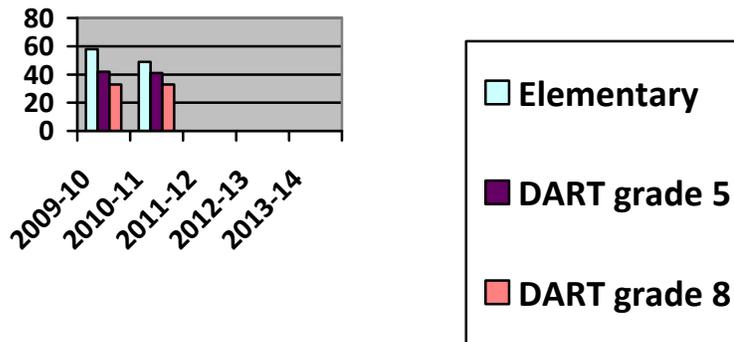


Figure 12- DART Elementary or Middle School target not met; Elementary L.A. results vary.

### Stories that tell about success in our schools:

Poirier A boy in elementary couldn't read, barely knew his ABC's. He would become extremely frustrated when asked to read or do any kind of literacy work. In the spring, he had a huge turn around. His focus improved, he didn't fight reading and he picked up on his alphabet. By the end of the school year he's reading higher levelled books.

Saseenos A very disgruntled student didn't want to be in school, he didn't want to participate, he didn't want to be in class but he didn't want to go either. Sometime around December, he made a personal decision to try harder. He not only participated in class but started excelling. His attitude improved 3 fold towards students and teachers. He is an incredible child.

Willway A primary student was reluctant to read. He had trouble reading and would rather not read. He was at level 5/6. He is a polite and sweet child to work with. With extra support from an AESW at the school and his mom, he reads without hesitation, with more fluency. His reading level is now 20 approaching his Grade level. We are so proud of him.

Aboriginal Teacher Reading Support A Grade 7 student started a pre-K and is now mid-Grade 1. Many students are able to read text Grade level now at elementary and middle school.

Journey Middle School 2011/2012 – Welcoming mural to acknowledge the traditional land that students will take part in (school as a whole) by T'Sou-ke Nation Artist. The project will incorporate Science and Math lessons.

Spencer Middle School – presented a welcoming sign in the entrance including Coast Salish 'Hych'ke'.

Dunsmuir Middle School – completed a replica of the Aboriginal Education Department logo on a wall.

Sooke Elementary- completed a large mural with Aboriginal art in the gym.

Goal: to enhance the achievement and success of Aboriginal students from 'K' to Gr 12 in academics as well as training for trades and lifeskills.			
Increase six year graduation rate from 67% to 70%	61% Aboriginal Six Year 09/11	72% Aboriginal Six Year 10/11	Yes
Increase the number to five more students graduating in 2010-11	46 students graduated in 2009-10	51 students graduated in 2010-11	Yes
Increase the 8 students entering trades to 13 students	Track students at the school level	7 students	No
Increase elementary students meeting expectations in reading from 58% to 60%			
Increase D.A.R.T. grade 5	D.A.R.T. data sheets	DART 5 42% to 41%	No
Increase D.A.R.T. grade 8	D.A.R.T. data sheets	DART 5 33% to 33%	No

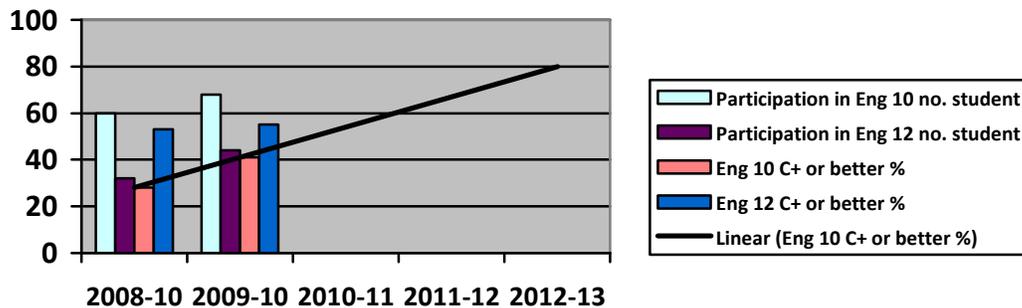


Figure 13- English results target met and increasing.

#### First Peoples English 12

Westshore Annex First Nation Grad Program offers First Peoples English 10/11/12. The Aboriginal Education Department teachers attended the First Peoples English 10/11/12 workshop in Kamloops to assist in promoting the course and to increase the number of schools offering the course.

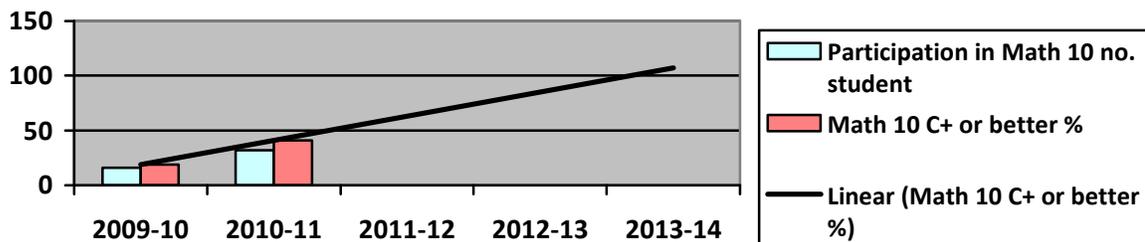


Figure 14- Math 10 results target met and increasing.

#### Aboriginal Education Department Recognition Ceremony

The graduation recognition ceremony was held at Camosun College, Na'tsa'maht on May 14<sup>th</sup>. Fifty-one graduates and families had the opportunity to celebrate success in a more traditional outdoor venue. Coast Salish honouring ceremonies were featured. Our keynote for the ceremony Andrew Robinson, Associate Deputy Representative of Advocacy, Community and Aboriginal Relations, humoured the audience with encouragement in future plans. The Aboriginal Education Department received positive feedback from students, families and organizations. The committee collaborated with the Aboriginal Education Council stakeholders at monthly meetings and traditional territory Nations involved. Métis Nation British Columbia featured SD No. 62's ceremony in the president's newsletter.



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## SUCCESS STORIES

### **Belmont Secondary School Student:**

Belmont Secondary has many amazing students, but one student is the epitome of not only being a great teenager, but a talented artist, a person with a sense of community, responsible beyond her years, and has a heartfelt dedication to everything she does – all this and academic ability is a grade 11 student here at Belmont Secondary. The student has been involved in the “62 Ways to Change the World” research project, since middle school. “62 Ways” is a project through the School District, researching things, such as why youth drop out of the school system. Through this research important information about what works and what does not work has helped many students achieve success. The group has made many informational presentations in various schools and communities. The student has been involved with the MCFD to develop an Indicator Resource Tool Kit which involves workshops that help youth engage in the MCFD practices. The student is a member of the Youth Committee for the Vancouver Island Region. Have you seen the “Land and Sea” mural at Ogden Point – the student was one of the six students chosen to work with First Nations artists Butch Dick and Darleen Gait. Along with all these projects, the student is a role model in her community, taking part in all cultural events, babysitting, helping wherever she can and has just finished a First Nations Art Class, run by Camosun College, at the West Shore Annex. The student has a busy life outside school, but still exceeds expectations, academically, here at Belmont Secondary. Amazing story, amazing student!

### **Edward Milne Community School**

Chief Gordon Planes, T’Sou-ke Nation recently acknowledged the school for the respect and on-going initiatives reflected in the Coast Salish Pole in the foyer. It is a symbol of acknowledgement of the local First Nation communities.

Edward Milne Community School department generated a focused approach to host a summer camp for early learning students to focus on reading and math with the intention of reducing the summer reading loss experienced by students over the summer holiday. UBC, T’Sou-ke Nation, Sooke Literacy and Aboriginal Education Department focus was to create a camp that included Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Aboriginal relevant curriculum.

### **Pacheedaht Nation and Scia’new Nation**

Adults were given the opportunity to continue education at satellite upgrading programs. Success is due to the attendance and dedication of community, Westshore for Learning and SD No. 62.

### **First Nations Graduation Program, Westshore Centre For Learning and Training**

The program has a continuous wait list and provides Aboriginal content programming for school age students and adults. The program includes First Peoples English 10/11/12, BC First Nations Studies 12, numeracy and art with First Nation pedagogy.

### **Pacific Secondary**

Pacific Secondary has experienced an increase in enrolment of Aboriginal students or returning to school. Pacific Secondary has engaged in creating a sense of belonging for all students and acknowledging the local First Nations by creating a button blanket displayed at the entrance.

### **Inquiry Projects**

Three schools, Saseenos Elementary, Spencer Middle, and John Stubbs participated in inquiry projects.

### **Aboriginal Education Department**

The department has been highly regarded by schools, parents, and community as the support for students. The Aboriginal Education Department enhances and enriches learning for all Aboriginal students in schools with relevant Aboriginal content and opportunities.

Note: All schools have stories to share. The stories included in this report were a few of a multitude of stories. The Aboriginal Education Department publishes seasonal newsletters to capture initiatives.