
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

Aboriginal student success highlighted in Kootenay-Columbia

REVELSTOKE – Aboriginal students in the Revelstoke school district (SD 19) are graduating at a higher rate than the British Columbia average.

To further strengthen and support Aboriginal student achievement and success, the Ministry of Education and the Revelstoke school district signed their second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement today at a community event at Revelstoke Secondary.

These five-year agreements are a commitment by school districts, local Aboriginal communities, and the Ministry of Education to work together to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students through programming that supports First Nations history, culture and language.

Much has been accomplished since the first agreement, which was signed in 2010. The six-year completion rate for Aboriginal students in the district has risen to 76% from 62% five years ago, compared with B.C.'s average of 62%. All graduating students are choosing to participate in a traditional Aboriginal blanket or Métis sash ceremony.

Aboriginal students are reading at grade level in district-wide measures at Grade 3 and Grade 7. Provincially mandated testing indicates results at or above district average in writing and numeracy at Grade 7.

In addition to their work in classrooms, the district has held numerous Aboriginal events, including:

- the commemoration of the National Day for Healing and Reconciliation;
- a sturgeon-nose canoe building; and
- the painting of a mural representing the First Peoples' language regions across Canada.

This agreement builds on government's work to include Aboriginal history, culture and perspectives into B.C.'s new curriculum. To support teachers in bringing Aboriginal content and perspectives into the classroom, government has created a resource guide called Aboriginal Worldviews Perspectives in the Classroom.

Quotes:

Mike Bernier, Minister of Education –

"We are proud to continue our partnership to support Aboriginal student learning and success. Improving outcomes for Aboriginal students is one of our highest priorities. This agreement will help ensure more Aboriginal students are staying in school, performing better on provincial

exams, graduating, and transitioning to post-secondary institutions and training programs.”

Ariel McDowell, district principal, Aboriginal education school district No. 19, Revelstoke –

“It is very exciting and gratifying to witness the signing of our second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. We look forward to the work ahead in implementing the goals of this agreement, and most importantly, we look forward to seeing the progress of our Aboriginal students in the years to come. This is an exciting time in Aboriginal Education in the Province, and here in Revelstoke as well; there is a growing understanding of the importance of Aboriginal history and ways of knowing. This signing is about our shared commitment to our students.”

Michelle Cole, Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee Chair and Elder –

“The journey of writing our second enhancement agreement has been a heartfelt process leading us toward the destinations we want to reach in Aboriginal Education for Revelstoke.”

Quick Facts:

- To date, 104 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements have been signed throughout the province.
- Fifty-seven districts have at least one Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement signed, with 32 on their second, five on their third and two on their fourth.
- According to 2015-16 data, SD 19 has an Aboriginal population of 127 students. The district has a total of 952 students.
- SD 19 recognizes and acknowledges the nearby Aboriginal nations of the Sinixt, the Secwepmec, the Syilx and the Ktunaxa.
- The agreement includes input gathered from a series of workshops and open house events attended by students, parents, staff, community members and educational partners.

Learn More:

Revelstoke school district Aboriginal Education: <http://www.sd19.bc.ca/aboriginal-education/>

Aboriginal Education: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed

B.C.’s New Curriculum: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>

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