

K^wU CK^wUL^x ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

2023-2028



**SD22
INDIGENOUS
EDUCATION
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

School District 22 (SD22) respectfully acknowledges that our district is situated on the ancestral unceded territory of the syilx (Okanagan) people. We honour the language, culture, history and teachings of the syilx people that are deeply connected to these lands. SD22 also acknowledges the contributions of the Métis, Inuit, and other urban Indigenous partners that reside in this territory.

We recognize these territories, the syilx people, and thank them for sharing this beautiful land.

**LIMLƏMT
MARSEE
THANK YOU**



INTRODUCTION

The SD22 Indigenous Education Program supporting self-identified Indigenous students is guided by the collaborative work of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC) who provide insight and recommendations for the district's opportunities and programming to enhance Indigenous student success. The Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), the Vernon & District Métis Association (VDMA), and the North Okanagan Friendship Centre Society (NOFCS) are represented on the IEAC, and the school district values those relationships and respects those partnerships.

The *SD22 kʷu cĶʷulx Enhancement Agreement* is a five-year working agreement co-developed by our district and local Indigenous communities represented on the IEAC.

The IEAC co-created the goals of the agreement, which focuses on our collective responsibility to improve the success of Indigenous students by creating safe, welcoming and inclusive learning environments and providing learning opportunities based on Indigenous ways of knowing and being for all students, staff and communities.

CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT

SD22 encompasses the areas surrounding Vernon, Coldstream, Lumby and Cherryville, as well as the Okanagan Indian Band Reserve #1 and #6. We are a diverse community of learners including 9200 students within 19 schools - 14 elementary schools, 5 secondary schools, one district online learning school (vLearn) and one alternate program. Students who self-identify as having First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit ancestry, make up approximately 15% of the overall student population in the district. In 2022/23, there were 1262 students of Indigenous ancestry receiving support from the Indigenous Education program, with 95 nominal roll learners who are status living on the Okanagan Indian Band reserve.

The district is guided by 7 Board of Education Trustees and the work of 1317 staff, including 619 teachers, 532 support staff, and 69 senior staff (principals, vice-principals and exempt staff).

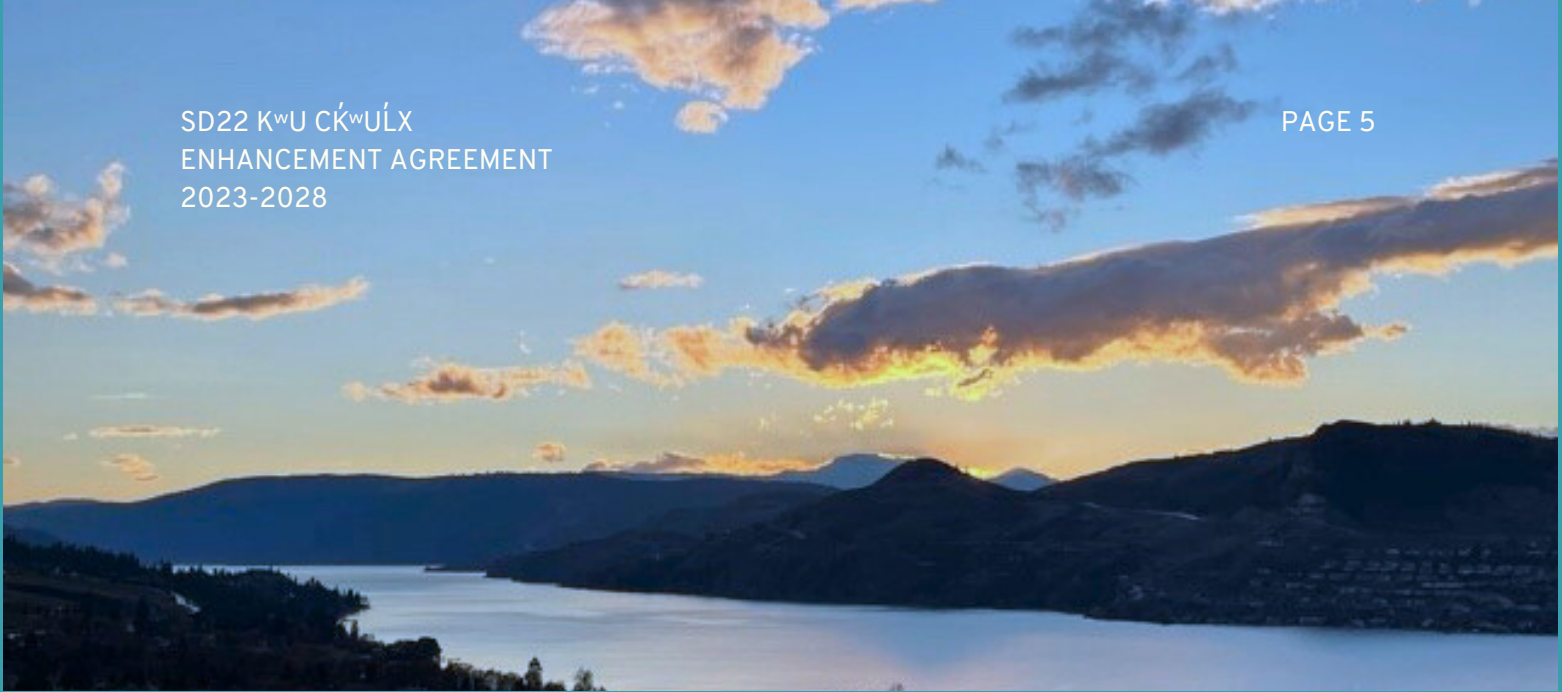
kʷu cĶʷulx

“We work together”



RECORDING BY OKIB ELDER AND NSYLXCEN
SPEAKER PAULINE ARCHACHAN





STRATEGIC PLAN, 2022-2027

The district is guided by the *Strategic Plan 2022-2027* is focused on three priority areas: Student Success, Leadership Excellence, and Community Connections. The district's vision is to become a community where all are respected, and each person is encouraged to develop their potential, with a mission to inspire and nurture students to thrive in their learning, relationships, and community.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

SD22 is deeply committed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action* which affirms the role that each individual must take in reconciliation. This begins with "an awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour." (*Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future, Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*: 2015, p.6-7).

EQUITY ACTION PLAN, 2021-2024

The district's *2021-2024 Equity Action Plan* was co-created by a team of district staff and Indigenous community partners who analyzed consultation data and reviewed practices and policies for barriers impacting Indigenous student achievement. The *2021-2024 Equity Action Plan* allows ongoing conversations on implementing systemic change that create conditions of success for all Indigenous learners.

BCDRIPA

The BC Government has released the *BC Declaration on the Rights on Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan, 2022-2027* which outlines a commitment to uphold the human rights of Indigenous Peoples following the passing of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act in the BC Legislature in November 2019. SD22 is committed to meeting the Education recommendations in BCDRIPA, and this is reflected in the SD22 Strategic Plan.

PURPOSE

An Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement (IEEA) is a working agreement between a school district and local Indigenous communities which is designed to enhance the educational achievement of Indigenous students. An Enhancement Agreement establishes a collaborative partnership between Indigenous communities and the school district that involves shared decision-making and goal setting to meet the educational needs of Indigenous students.

In SD22, the IEAC includes representatives from local Indigenous communities, including the Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), the Vernon & District Métis Association (VDMA), and North Okanagan Friendship Centre Society (NOFCS). The IEAC also has representatives from SD22, including the Director of Indigenous Education, the Superintendent, a trustee, a member of the Vernon Teacher Association (VTA), and an Indigenous student representative.

While Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreements are no longer required by the province, the IEAC has supported the development of a new Enhancement Agreement to complement the district's *Equity Action Plan 2021-2024*, which aims to foster Indigenous student success through the lens of equity and addressing systemic barriers impacting Indigenous student achievement.



OUR JOURNEY

In the fall of 2021, the IEAC met to discuss the *SD22 Equity Action Plan 2021-2024*. IEAC representatives were active collaborators in the district team that was formed to create the *SD22 2021-2024 Equity Action Plan*. The IEAC supported to renewal of an Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement that would complement the goals of the *SD22 Equity Action Plan 2021-2024* and further support district-wide work to positively impact Indigenous student achievement. The IEAC met throughout 2021/22 and 2022/23 school year to collaboratively draft the 2023-2028 *kʷu cĶʷulx Enhancement Agreement*.

The Enhancement Agreement renewal process began with revisiting the goals of the previous *2015-2020 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement* and reflecting on the successes and challenges in meeting those goals. The IEAC also examined the *2021-2024 SD22 Equity Action Plan* and reviewed the Equity Scan Survey data gathered from Indigenous students and families, and each SD22 employee groups, including Indigenous Education staff. The IEAC felt it important to hear the Indigenous Parents/Guardians and Indigenous Secondary Student voice more clearly, and collectively drafted the Enhancement Agreement engagement survey questions.

Throughout 2022 and 2023, the IEAC reviewed data, engaged in facilitated discussion, and continued to envision, refine and develop the guiding goals to ensure the renewed Enhancement Agreement reflects the collective voice of Indigenous rights-holders and partners.



ENGAGEMENT

The IEAC discussed the consultation framework used in the *SD22 Equity Action Plan* that occurred in 2021 and agreed on a similar engagement framework for the Enhancement Agreement, though focused on the voice of the Indigenous secondary students and the parent/guardians of Indigenous students. It was recognized that the Indigenous secondary student and Indigenous parent/guardian voices needed to be heard more clearly. The IEAC then collectively drafted engagement surveys for Indigenous students and families to ensure the new Enhancement Agreement goals reflect the Indigenous student and family experience in our system.

Indigenous community consultation dinner gatherings hosted by Indigenous community partners (OKIB, VDMA, and NOFCS) were planned for April 2023; however, due to unanticipated challenges, the partner-hosted community dinner forums did not take place and SD22 Indigenous Education Department sent out engagement surveys to Indigenous parents/guardians via email in May 2023.

In April and May 2023, an electronic survey was sent to Indigenous secondary students and Indigenous parents/guardians. Paper-based surveys were made available for anyone that preferred that format or was unable to access the online survey. All survey information was provided to the Indigenous representatives of the IEAC. This provided feedback for the IEAC team and supported the shaping of the Enhancement Agreement goals.

Engagement survey participation:

- 121 Indigenous Secondary Students
- 65 Indigenous Parents/Guardians



INDIGENOUS STUDENT VOICES

- “Staff need to be educated on cultural safety.”
- “Continue to have welcome rooms, lunch programs, breakfast programs, land acknowledgement... as well as introducing after school support groups for mental health and addiction problems.”
- “If they succeed, give them the recognition they deserve. If they don’t, give them the assistance they need. That’s simple.”
- “Introduce cultural supports for struggling students.”
- “More cultural activities.”
- “Encourage me. Help me when I need it.”
- “Let the students have more freedom in what they learn and how they learn.”
- “Give us the option to connect with other Indigenous students in our age group.”
- “Make me feel like I’m in a safe environment.”





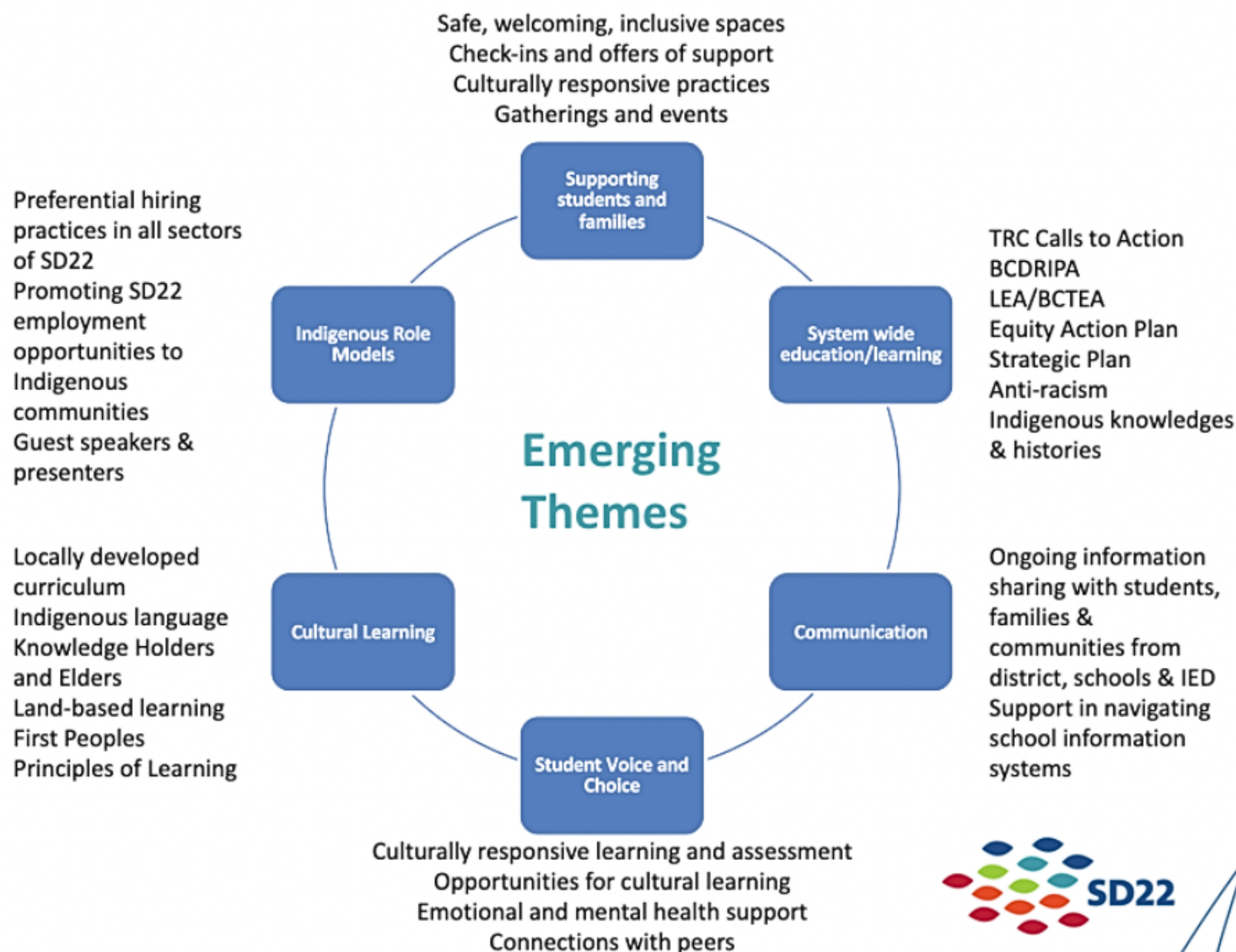
INDIGENOUS PARENT VOICES

- *“Listen to Indigenous students and parents.”*
- *“Make it a welcoming and safe place.”*
- *“Let parents know what is happening with the Indigenous program.”*
- *“I would like to see more programs for children and parents to participate in.”*
- *“Let parents know what the children are learning about.”*
- *“I would love to see regular celebration and inclusion of Indigenous cultures.”*
- *“Courageous actions and loving forward in a positive way.”*
- *“Elder guided nature walks.”*
- *“More Indigenous authors, knowledge keepers, and storytellers.”*
- *“Cultural safety training for all staff and all students.”*
- *“It would be amazing to talk about anti-racism and privilege.”*

FINDINGS AND EMERGING THEMES

Responses indicated that many of the findings and goals of the *SD22 Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement 2015-2020* and *SD22 Equity Action Plan 2021-2024* were still relevant in supporting equity and success for Indigenous students and families.

The data analysis of the engagement surveys by Indigenous Education staff was completed in June 2023, and several themes emerged for discussion. The IEAC reflected on the emerging themes as outlined below:



GOALS

SD22 sincerely thanks the IEAC representatives for their commitment and dedication to engage in the *SD22 kʷu cĶʷulx Enhancement Agreement* renewal process to ensure that we conducted a thorough analysis of the engagement responses that have shaped and enriched the agreement as we commit to revised goals, objectives, and outcomes for the next five years.

This agreement commits SD22 schools to continue to work in partnership to develop and implement appropriate and strategic programs and initiatives for the benefit of all students of Indigenous ancestry.

The *SD22 kʷu cĶʷulx Enhancement Agreement 2023-2028* is designed to enhance and increase educational success for all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in the district. This agreement will focus on four main goals to ensure our students are supported in the areas of academic achievement, culture, and wellness.



Deepen knowledge and understanding of Indigenous and syilx peoples, including languages, histories, continued traditions, and contemporary contexts for all students, staff, and community.

Improve the sense of wellness, safety, belonging and identity for all Indigenous learners.

Improve opportunities for Indigenous student engagement and achievement.

Welcome and value Indigenous voices for strong relationships with Indigenous students, families, and communities.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase the presence of Indigenous cultures and peoples in the learning environment district wide
- Increase professional learning on Indigenous Education for all SD22 staff
- Integrate Indigenous ways and perspectives into all aspects of learning
- Expand opportunities for all students to learn about syilx and Indigenous languages, histories, cultures and contemporary contexts
- Increase number of Indigenous cultural learning activities for all students
- Share Indigenous learning with families and communities
- Expand opportunities for all students to engage in land-based learning and increase knowledge of important times of year and seasonal round for Indigenous peoples.

OUTCOMES

- Increased student enrollment in Indigenous focused courses
- Increased student enrollment and participation in nsyilxcen language learning
- Increased student participation in Indigenous learning and presentations
- Increased staff participation in Indigenous focused professional learning days (VTA, CUPE and Exempt staff)
- Continued staff participation in the TRC Teacher Ally learning series
- Increased number of locally developed resources available to students and staff
- Indigenous student responses on annual survey and/or focus group and Student Satisfaction Survey results

GOAL #1

Deepen the knowledge and understanding of Indigenous and syilx peoples, including language, histories, continued traditions, and contemporary contexts for all students, staff and community.

GOAL #2

Improve opportunities and supports for Indigenous student engagement and achievement.

OBJECTIVES

- To maintain annual implementation of Equity Action Plan at both the school and district level
- Ensure additional support as required when transitioning through the K-12 journey
- Provide leadership opportunities for Indigenous students
- Provided targeted supports to vulnerable students
- Provide enhanced educational and cultural opportunities
- Continue and increase Indigenous student wellness checks
- Opportunities for Indigenous students to engage in activities with Indigenous peers
- Continue and increase safe learning environments for all Indigenous students

OUTCOMES

- Schools and District Departments complete an Equity in Action report and implement goals which support equity, inclusion and sense of belonging for Indigenous students
- Increased Indigenous student attendance
- Improved Indigenous student achievement (grade to grade transition and graduation)
- Increased student participation in student celebrations
- Student participation in family of schools transition events
- Student participation in enhanced learning opportunities with Indigenous peers



OBJECTIVES

- Increase Indigenous students' sense of belonging and safety district-wide
- Ensure every school is safe place that reflects Indigenous cultures
- Provide Indigenous students opportunities to learn about and share their own culture
- Increase opportunities for staff and students to learn about Indigenous role models and Indigenous excellence
- Create a culture of inclusion for all learners
- Offer culturally-responsive, trauma-informed education for all staff

OUTCOMES

- Indigenous student surveys report higher levels of well-being, belonging, and safety
- Staff participation in cultural safety training
- Staff participation in anti-racism training
- Student participation in Indigenous role model presentations
- Student participation in talking circles and restorative practices
- Clear anti-racism policy and practices
- Visible and consistent acknowledgement of territory
- Visible and prominent placement of Indigenous art

GOAL #3

Support the sense of wellness, safety, belonging, pride and identity for all Indigenous students.

GOAL #4

Welcome and value Indigenous voices in the district for strong relationships with Indigenous students, families, and communities.

OBJECTIVES

- Create opportunities for Indigenous students to learn from role models and mentors
- Continue and increase advocacy for hiring of Indigenous employees to better reflect the community
- Provide opportunities and structures for Indigenous students to have a voice in decision-making
- Provide opportunities and structures for Indigenous parents and families to have a voice in decision-making
- Ensure families receive regular and frequent communication with schools and district

OUTCOMES

- Increase number of Indigenous employees in the district
- Indigenous student participation in student voice groups
- Indigenous parent participation in parent voice groups
- Improved communication with Indigenous parents via newsletters and invitations to school and meetings.
- Inclusion of Indigenous student in IEAC
- Participation of Indigenous students in Indigenous Youth Leadership Summit or Gathering



STRATEGIES

These strategies and structures to work toward the goals and outcomes will be reviewed annually by the IEAC to be responsive to the evolving needs of students with Indigenous ancestry.

- Create resources celebrating syilx people and other Indigenous stories of success and excellence
- Offer professional learning on Indigenous Education on each non-instructional day
- Develop resources with information shared by local Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Co-create more local resources and curriculum about syilx culture, history and language with syilx educators and community members
- Include more information and education about Metis people and culture
- Continue TRC Ally program and encourage Teacher Allies to share with staff each month
- Indigenous Education newsletter shared with parents/guardians of Indigenous students

- Work with syilx and other Indigenous educators and academics to develop resources and curriculum based on accurate local history and culture
- Offer assemblies and classroom presentations featuring syilx and Indigenous role models
- Connect students to successful Indigenous role models and mentors
- Cultural safety training offered to all staff
- Anti-racism training offered to all staff and roll-out of anti-racism policy
- Every school has visible Indigenous artwork
- Include talking circles and restorative practices in schools
- Create Elders and Knowledge Keeper program in school

- Increase connection between staff and Indigenous families
- Offer families support and education on accessing MyEd
- Celebrate Indigenous events and milestones at schools
- Celebrate Indigenous student success and excellence
- Offer enhanced learning opportunities throughout the year
- Create opportunities for Indigenous students to meet regularly with Indigenous peers
- Regular meetings with representative groups to discuss Indigenous student progress

- Recruit and retain Indigenous employees in the district
- Support an Indigenous Student Leadership Group and create opportunities for Indigenous Student Leaders to connect with other Indigenous leaders
- Develop an Indigenous Family Voices Group, as well as encourage Indigenous parents to participate in existing school Parent Advisory Councils and the District Parent Advisory Council



AGREEMENT

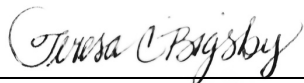
We recognize and honour both our specific and shared responsibilities to improve the success of Indigenous students by creating safe, welcoming and inclusive learning environments and providing learning opportunities based on Indigenous ways of knowing and being for all students, staff and communities. We agree that this agreement signifies our intent to work together in a relationship of mutual respect and collaboration with respect and honour for all Indigenous peoples. This agreement is in effect from October 30, 2023 to June 30, 2028.



Okanagan Indian Band
IEAC Representative



North Okanagan Friendship Centre Society
IEAC Representative



Vernon & District Métis Association
IEAC Representative



Superintendent, SD 22



Board of Education, SD22



GRATITUDE

We are grateful to the Indigenous students and families who have guided this journey and shared their invaluable responses to the consultation surveys, and whose voice has helped to shape the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the *SD22 kʷu cĶʷulx Enhancement Agreement, 2023-2028*.

We would like to thank the SD22 Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, whose commitment and dedication to this renewal process has enriched this agreement.

Ida Scott	North Okanagan Friendship Center Society, Executive Director
Allan Louis	Okanagan Indian Band, Councilor
Donna Goodwater	Okanagan Indian Band, Councilor
Rachel Marchand	Okanagan Indian Band, Councilor
Ryan Oliverius	Okanagan Indian Band, Councilor
Sheldon Louis	Okanagan Indian Band, Councilor
Charity Sakakibara	SD22, Director of Indigenous Education
Vanessa Mitchell	SD22, School Trustee
Mark Olsen	SD22, School Trustee
Christine Perkins	SD22, Superintendent
Teresa Bigsby	Vernon & District Métis Association, Member
Cori Huizer	Vernon Teachers Association, President

