

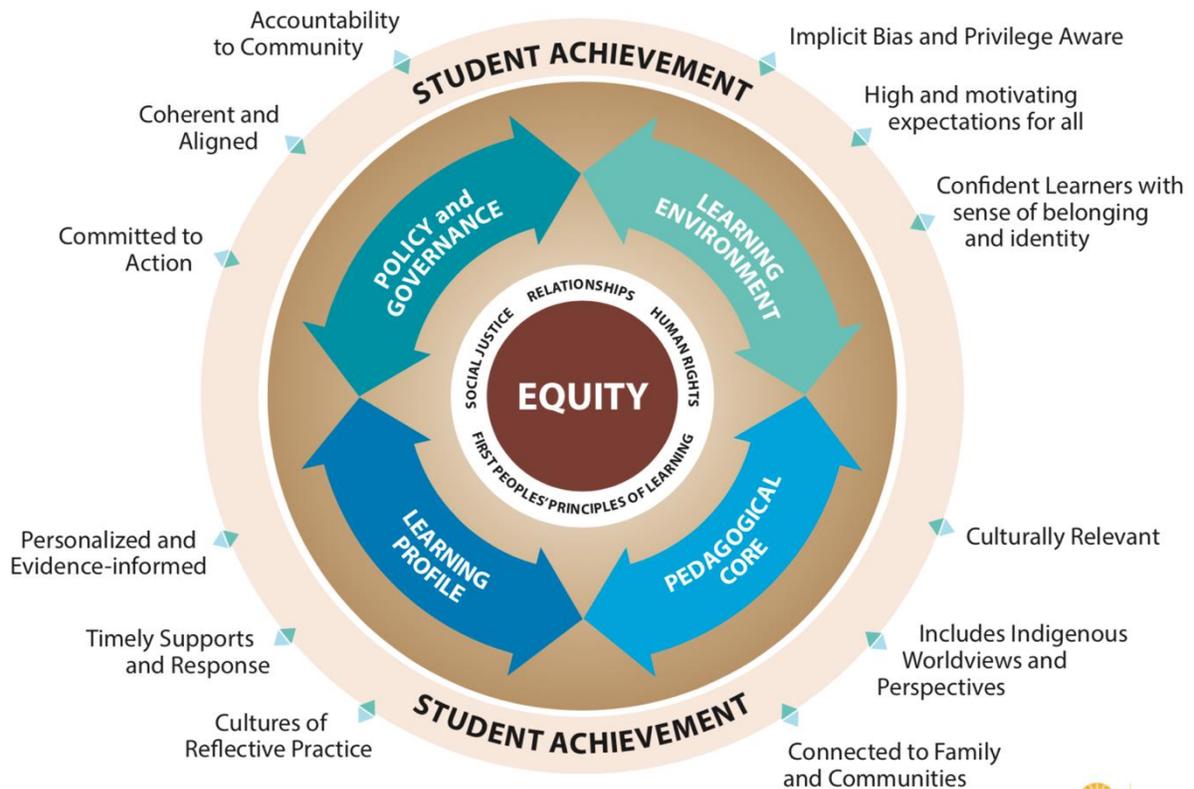
**EQUITY ACTION PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW**

School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake)

2020/2021

Equity in Review

Indigenous Student Success



Introduction

Thank you to school districts and partners for your collective actions taken in the implementation of your Equity Action Plan this year. As one of 46 participating school districts, we are grateful for your contributions and commitments to this ongoing collaborative process.

Please consider using this template (as well as the Equity in Action Orientation document provided at regional meetings, Fall 2019 and 2020) for reference in reporting your feedback on this year's growth, progress, lessons learned and efficacy of the implementation of your 2020-2021 Action Plan.

This Action Plan evaluation submission is part of a growing base of knowledge and practice that is having a positive impact on equity. This emerging collection of wisdom will be used to inform and inspire equity in communities across the province.

Equity Action Plan Development

Last year, your District Equity Team submitted an Equity Action Plan (or Action Plan Review). The Plan emerged from your collective processes, engagement across learning communities, findings based on the Equity Scan guiding questions, and the 'Learning Profile' district data profile (provided via the Ministry of Education). Your approaches and actions to address equity gaps were identified in your Action Plan.

COVID-19 Considerations

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted many initiatives and programs across British Columbia this school year. With this in mind, we are aware that many Equity focussed gatherings and events planned from March 2020 onwards have been greatly impacted. Therefore, please submit your findings and Action Plan evaluation to the best of your ability. Further, please respond to the questions ("**Equity During a Pandemic**") that relate specifically to the provision of Equity of opportunity for Indigenous learners during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you.

Ch'íthométsel

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1. Action Plan Implementation:

1.1 Describe the approach to implementing your Equity Action Plan this school year.

- This year, we have continued with individualized student supports at all schools, BCTEA Transportation Joint Plan for on-reserve students, BCTEA Extracurricular Funding for individual students and families, on-line cultural learning events for students, district wide Pro-D, Aboriginal Ed Reconciliation Circles.

1.2 How did you engage the process and how was the experience received in your district?

- This year, with the pandemic, we implicitly continued to work on equity and we hope to refocus as an Equity Scan Committee next year. We also specifically focused on a tool kit resource package for Secondary PVP on leading from an equity stance into their school planning days.

2. Community Engagement:

2.1 How have you utilized the grant monies provided by the Ministry of Education to work alongside Rightsholders (First Nations), and key partners in your district to encourage meaningful community engagement? n/a

2.2 Please indicate if meetings occurred in community, on district property, etc.

- We did not hold specific Equity Scan meetings this school year; however, we did continue to hold Advisory Council meetings via Zoom, Joint LEA meetings via Zoom, and district wide events via Zoom.

2.3 How did you communicate and bring people to the table?

- This is ongoing work within the district. This year, due to COVID, all communications were either by phone or by Zoom.

2.4 What key strategies did you employ in maintaining community Equity in Action team members' voices, and what were the results?

- This is work we will continue to do in the 2021-2022 school year, with the hope of reopening schools in Stage 1.
- We will be launching a survey for student voice in June 2021 to all Indigenous students in the school district. The questions will be on policy/governance, learning environment, pedagogical core, and learning profile.

3. Lessons Learned:

3.1 Outline what practices have changed in your district since the implementation of your 2019-2020 Equity Action Plan.

- The most significant continued and strengthened practice is the 3 X school year, academic reviews/check-in's for grades 10-12, with a focus on individualized grad plans for all grade 12 Aboriginal students. This is a partnership between Senior Administration, School PVP, School Counsellors and ABED supports in secondary schools. This is an opportunity to be sure a team approach is there to support students on pathways to grad and that the conversation continues through the year into May/June. Final academic reviews/check-ins are happening now (MAY 2021) across the district.

3.2 Describe the impact of your Equity Action Plan specific to each of the four Equity in Action Framework quadrants:

3.2(i) Policy and Governance -

- Updated Policy 580: Respectful Workplace Program
 - This includes updated language on discrimination, harassment and bullying with specific examples and district processes. This policy outlines zero tolerance for discrimination and bullying.

3.2(ii) Learning Environment -

- This year, we see incredible student and staff engagement with the virtual cultural learning opportunities. For example, at the weeklong virtual Pow Wow, with honoured guests from both Canada and the USA, the Chief of the local nation (Lower Kootenay Band), and Elders from here in our district, we had a turn out of over 11,000 participants throughout the week, and over 5,000 participants on the final day! Without the limitation of bussing, with the invitation for virtual participation, we were able to accommodate over double the participants this year! In addition, our Connections Culture Camp saw over 1200 participants attending virtual workshops related to culture, language, storytelling, and dance. We continue to see a growing Indigenous presence across schools with participation in Orange Shirt Day combined with the Terry Fox Run (Metis awareness), Metis Awareness Month and the raising of the Metis Flags on Louis Riel Day, Moosehide Campaign, MMIWG awareness campaigns etc.
- We will also be hosting the wuqanqankimik run/walk event from June 7-11. This included an eight week lead up training through the Indigenous run walk program. The work "wuqanqankimik" was shared with us from Lower Kootenay Band, Chief Jason Louie, and it means "to take long strides". We are taking long strides towards reconciliation with this run/walk event.

- **A highlight this year from PCSS, the highschool in Creston BC: PCSS Rebrands Library to Honour Indigenous Ways of Knowing**

YaqsuʔmiꞤ - “Canoe (unique Ktunaxa sturgeon nose canoe)”

Prince Charles Secondary School (PCSS) has committed to honouring and respecting the Lower Kootenay Community. As part of this commitment, PCSS has rebranded its library facilities to reflect Lower Kootenay ways of knowing.

Under the guidance of Elder Robert Louie, and working with LKB students, PCSS has rebranded the Library to **“YaqsuʔmiꞤ - Library Learning Commons.”**

It is important to note that YaqsuʔmiꞤ is not the Ktunaxa word for library, but the concept of the canoe is similar to the concept of a modern day library - a place of learning and preservation of history. The Sturgeon Nose Canoe is an iconic symbol of the Lower Kootenay People. Its unique shape was designed for specific use in this territory. The canoe is the keeper of language, culture, heritage, history and identity. It is the library for the Lower Kootenay people, a place to access knowledge. Naming the library after the Sturgeon Nose Canoe is to honour the canoe’s teachings, values, and importance to preserving the history of the Lower Kootenay and advancing Reconciliation.

It is an honour to have this iconic symbol as a center point in our school. PCSS is committed to Reconciliation and providing more Indigenous ways of knowing for the school community. It is important to honour and respect the teachings that were for so many years denied.

3.2(iii) Pedagogical Core -

We continue to provide an annual Professional Development day dedicated to improving success of Aboriginal students. On this day, all staff, families, and communities from within the district are invited to attend. This year the focus included a key note from Chief Robert Joseph. As well, workshops throughout the day:

- Monique Grey Smith: medicines
- Danica Weager: #sd8abed FitNation and Indigenizing Physical Education
- Christy Anderson: Indigenous Education
- Jennifer Lewis: Syilx Wellness
- Tim Mushumanski: School Inquiry + Indigenization for Schools
- Sandy Prentice: Interculturalization
- Mike Stolte: Elders + Students with photography
- Almeida, Anita, Sophie: Restorative Justice
- Don Courson: Metis Teachings
- Robert Louie: LKB Ancestors stories
- Leon Louis: Syilx stories
- Jesse + Hannah: FNEESC resources
- Lesley Garlow: Touchstones Museum and school opportunities

- In addition to numerous other professional development opportunities included in all Pro-D learning events in the school: Desmond Cole, author and journalist of From the Skin We are In; Elder Robert Louie Ktuanxa stories workshop; Dr. Christopher Horsethief sharing Ktunaxa teachings.

3.2(iv) Learning Profile -

- We continue to track all students in a grades 10-12 individualized grad plan. As part of this, all grade 12's also have one-on-one support for transitions out of high school and support with both district, provincial and #sd8abed specific scholarships.
- Individualized tutoring is available and has been accessed by students, upon need.
- Data informed decision making: FSA's, EDI's, MDI's, grad rates etc.

3.3 How successful was your Equity Action Plan in maintaining momentum and ensuring that equity remains a key focus?

- This is a strong current here in our district. We have also been part of the DLD Harvard project for the past 3 years, so both projects have been running together! We will be continuing this as a focus in the years to come.
- District wide all school principals are studying Shane Safir's Street Data with an emphasis on Equity, Pedagogy and School Transformation
- Student equity supports are available and are accessed district wide to support students individually with any and all supports to assist with learning. This includes additional food, warm clothing, winter gear, funds for activities related to school learning.
- This year we purchased 19 books in sets of 10, to support early learning at Yaqan Nukiy school. This book set was gifted from the district to the Yaqan Nukiy. This is to continue to support a partnership between the Lower Kootenay Band school and the school district, aligned with the learning goal of literacy.

4. Promising Practices:

4.1 What were the greatest areas of success from this year's Action Plan?

- Individualized student tracking across the district
- Individualized focused tracking (district + ABED) for grades 10-12
- Cultural learning events and participation #'s
- Purchased an early learning book for every self-identified Aboriginal Kindergarten student to support early literacy from an Indigenous lens. This was gifted to students with a welcome letter from the ABED department.
- Elders in schools in Creston to support partnerships between the school district and Lower Kootenay Band. This year, the program was difficult to work out with COVID, but schools brainstormed ways to create warm and welcoming environments for Elders in years to come.

4.2 How do you know that these practices addressed parity and equity gaps for Indigenous learners? Please include **qualitative/quantitative data** used to assess the efficacy of your Action Plan.

- 2019-2020 Completion Rates: Indigenous student Completion Rates matched district completion rates at 75%. This is incredible growth for our district as we move upward in our completion rates. 5 years ago the Indigenous student completion rate was 58%. BC (ALL) for the 2019-2020 school year was 81%, and so we still see an opportunity gap and one that we are continuing to close.
- We are waiting to hear back from students in a year end Equity Student Survey and we will use that data as part of our planning into next school year.

4.3 What findings and learning have emerged through this process that will contribute to growth and progress for your organization?

- Two main areas we want to continue to grow include amplifying both student and community engagement and voice.

4.4 Sometimes it is difficult to assess the progress of equity work, because it is felt rather than indicated by traditional assessment measures. What, if any, shifts have you noticed in staff's personal awareness of their own biases and/or openness to conversations about privilege?

- This has been an incredible growth area for our district. Staff at all levels are engaged, asking tough questions, at times - triggered, tired, and still - they continue to work with the Aboriginal Education department in equity and partnership. We have a beautiful community of committed learners here in SD8 Kootenay Lake.
- Having a supportive Superintendent, an aware Board of Trustees, Principals and Vice Principals who are keen to lead equity work and families and students who increasingly engage over the past few years has led to an atmosphere of shared responsibility.

5. Indigenous Children and Youth in Care and Learners with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities:

5.1 Articulate any goals that specifically relate to enhancing equity for Indigenous Children and Youth in Care and Learners with Diverse Abilities.

- This is an area we need to grow here in the district. We want to grow partnerships and communication with Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services - the local delegated agency for First Nations children in care, in Creston BC. We would also like to grow our partnerships with COINS, Circle of Indigenous Nations who support families in this area.
- We want to grow communication between Inclusion and Aboriginal Education for supports and data informed practice.
- For next year, Inclusion and ABED will be working together with a UBC research project to enhance mental health services from an Indigenous lens here in the district.
- Food equity supports shared with all students in schools, both Inclusion and ABED.

5.2 How will these student success outcomes be measured?

- Ministry of Education Completion Rates, Graduation Rates, FSA data for grades 4,7's, MDI, EDI, YDI
- District Graduation Honoring participants
- Attendance for district wide cultural learning opportunities
- District ABED scholarship recipients and all district scholarships
- UBC Mental Health Services
- Anecdotal measures such as stories shared from staff and students: stories, blog posts, websites, daily school acknowledgements shared and led by students, newsletters
- Student report cards
- Capstone presentations

5.3 How did you allocate costing and budgeting to implement the plan to enhance equity for Indigenous Children and Youth in Care and Learners with Diverse Abilities?

n/a - no funding for this school year; however, Indigenous Children and Youth in Care and Learners with Diverse Abilities were supported through all supports mentioned above.

6. Equity During a Pandemic:

6.1 How are you ensuring the delivery of equitable services and direct supports to Indigenous learners during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Continuity of Learning Plans for all students on-reserve
- Individualized bus-pick up's and drop off locations for all on-reserve students (BCTEA Joint Transportation Funds Grant)
- Consultation in the Fall re: school start up with Lower Kootenay Band, Metis, and local Elders
- Tracking for all self-identified students, re: supports in schools; monthly tracking submitted to district Principal (monthly).
- Individualized report card reviews for all secondary students by Aboriginal Academic Success Teacher
- COVID release funds for on-reserve families for home internet
- Home delivery of grocery supports for families during remote learning
- Availability of cultural events via zoom (beadwork circles, run/walk events, culture camp, virtual pow wow)
- HUB: a medical and counselling area in PCSS (Creston high school) for immediate medical and counselling supports for all students
- ABED support specific spaces, such as Reconciliation Room at PCSS (Creston high school), offered at all schools in the district.

6.2 How is your district communicating, planning and reporting out continuity of learning plans with First Nations and Indigenous parents?

- A formal document is established and shared with all families and Chief and Council - this outlines specific, individual learning plans for on-reserve students, including supports, check-in's, and contacts.

6.3 How are you ensuring that Indigenous worldviews and perspectives are included in the continuity of learning plans with Indigenous parents, students and First Nations?

- These are developed with and by the Aboriginal department and the Aboriginal staff who support the Aboriginal students. History, culture, language, land and ways of knowing are critical to these positions here in the district.

6.4 How are you ensuring that Indigenous language and cultural experiences continue in a remote learning environment?

- Please see appendices with district offerings this year!

7. Moving Forward:

7.1 Reflecting upon this year's Equity Action Plan implementation, what changes will your team make to your plan for next year's implementation?

- We are hoping to make a district wide toolkit and follow the same framework we did in the original toolkit. This will be an interactive, reflective, and action oriented toolkit to be shared with families, students, district, etc.

7.2 What advice do you have for districts who are new to the Equity in Action Project?

- Create a team and start with a reasonable goal such as awareness, data understanding, data growth, a shift in a policy such as equity hiring etc. Then, start working toward that goal and once it is complete, begin with another. This is gigantic work and it is so meaningful. When you see change happen, it inspires more change!

7.3 What intentional strategies, actions and goals have you identified for next year's Equity Action Plan to address inequities and systemic barriers that may still exist for Indigenous learners?

- Review the results from the June 2021 Student Voice survey and implement changes to meet the needs identified by students K-12

8. Recommendations/Additional Comments:

8.1 How can we improve our collaborative and co-constructive approaches to the Equity in Action Project moving forward?

- Share best practices, resources, strategies and encourage symmetry when possible

- Encourage mentorship between new leaders and seasoned leaders in ABED across the province
- Continue to support shared learning opportunities province-wide

8.2 What advice do you have?

- Continue this work. Do not stop. Bring all Superintendents into the work. Don't take it personally.

8.3 What barriers or challenges are needed to be overcome to ensure the maintenance of a successful iterative Equity Action Plan in your district?

- Encourage expectation that all leaders in BC (BCPVPA + BCSSA) are leaders in Indigenous education! A possible barrier is the siloing of Indigenous education leaders and teams to do this work alone.

8.4 What supports might be useful in addressing these barriers?

- A Ministry audit of ABED positions across the province with a goal of creating equity for these important leadership positions.

8.5 What questions do you have for us?

- Is there a way to speed up the data sharing from the Ministry to increase our efforts for data informed decision making?
- Has there been a provincial analysis done of Equity in Action program since its inception? What is the overall picture and growth and next step visioning happening?
- What stands out for the Ministry as provincial themes and patterns for positives in equity transformation?
- Is there a single, formal, Call to Action or equity imperative for provincial Indigenous leadership from the Ministry of Education?
- How will you formally let school districts know that they are doing excellent work with Equity to share with community, school boards and families?

- 9. Appendices:** Please consider sharing any artifacts as part of your report submission, i.e. student/family/community surveys, presentations, resources, pictures of inclusive practices in your schools, videos of interviews with students/staff, learning tools and other locally developed sources.

SD8ABED, website: We added an "Equity" tab: <https://aboriginal.sd8.bc.ca/equity> which charts the beginning of our journey in 2018-2019, preliminary data and will continue to chart our work forward. This is still a work in progress and our work in making our learning public and visible.

Secondary PVP, two tool kits:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AUj_9fvuoNc2MoilPbwK20st7ILTpx9kZ35HUXpGDRE/edit?usp=sharing

Purchased Book for all Elementary and Secondary PVP: *The Listening Leader* by Shane Safir (2019-2020) + *Street Data: A Next Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, and School Transformation* by Shane Safir and Jamila Dugan

Aboriginal Education, Student survey JUNE 2021:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1KCToCu1HAKQnyjEps_VvF7Xi27AB4b9DkReSxXznZbk/prefill

SD8 Virtual Pow Wow: <https://aboriginal.sd8.bc.ca/blog/check-out-awesome-sd8-virtual-pow-wow>

SD8 Virtual Culture Camp: <https://aboriginal.sd8.bc.ca/blog/connections-culture-camp-2021>

SD8 Indigenous Run Walk: <https://aboriginal.sd8.bc.ca/blog/indigenous-run-walk> ;
<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1KrU0OCuNHL3UVScdUf0UU6lvUWRyYZi9>

SD8 Drop it Like a Squat, Wellness Challenge: <https://aboriginal.sd8.bc.ca/blog/drop-it-squat-sd8abedfit-wellness-challenge>

<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED</p> <p>on the <u>6</u> day of <u>June</u>, 2021, on behalf of the Superintendent</p>	<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED</p> <p>on the <u>6</u> day of <u>June</u>, 2021, on behalf of the Indigenous District Lead</p>
<p>_____</p> <p>(signature)</p> <p><u>Christine Perkins</u></p> <p>Dr. Christine Perkins Superintendent School District No. 8, Kootenay Lake</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>(signature)</p> <p><u>Gail Higginbottom</u></p> <p>Gail Higginbottom District Principal of Indigenous Education School District No. 8, Kootenay Lake</p>

<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED</p> <p>on the <u>28th</u> day of <u>May</u>, 2021, on behalf of Equity in Action Community Member</p>	<p>SIGNED AND DELIVERED</p> <p>on the ____ day of _____, 2021, on behalf of the Province by its duly authorized signatory</p>
<p>_____</p> <p>(signature)</p> <p>Community Elder Elder, Debbie Bird Equity in Action Community Member</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Nicole Ryan Acting Director, Indigenous Education Ministry of Education</p>

