



School District No. 59 Peace River South

# **Enhancing Student Learning Report 2023-2024**





## District Context

School District No. 59 (Peace River South) is located in northeastern British Columbia, and consists of Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge, and Pouce Coupe municipalities and the Peace River Regional District with rural areas spanning from the BC/Alberta border north to the Peace River and west to the Pine Pass. The District has approximately 3781 students, of which 1178 identify as being Indigenous. The District works closely with Saulteau First Nations and West Moberly First Nations, our strong Metis community, and our urban Indigenous population from First Nations across Canada.

In the 2023 to 2024 school year the challenges continued to be hiring qualified people into positions at all levels and student attendance.

The District started the year with many unfilled positions due to recruitment issues in the north. We hired our largest number of uncertified teachers to date to fill classroom teacher roles, which was approximately 20% of our staffing. As the year progressed, the District had many situations where positions were posted and due to the shortage of teachers and teachers on call, the leaves were not filled. This meant there were rotating substitute teachers (who are also not certified) or the principal was called away from their position to take over the teaching of those classrooms.

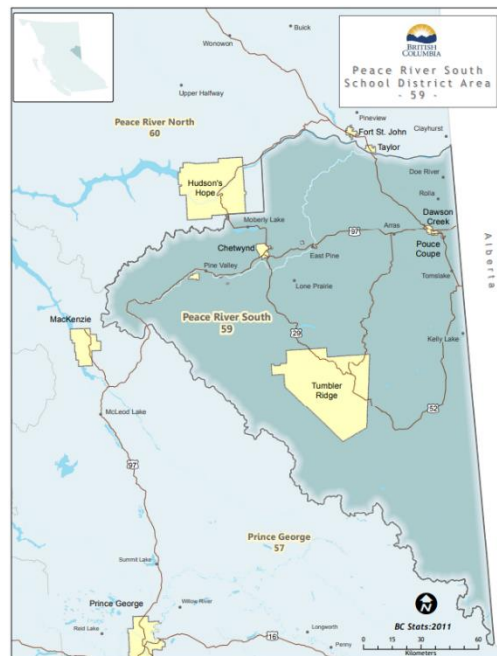
There were also several Educational Assistant positions that went unfilled throughout the year, this included positions in the Indigenous Education and Early Learning/StrongStart Departments. Positions were posted all year with no applications submitted.

In the 2022/23 school year, on average, 23.93% of the student population was absent on any given day; mathematically, that means 866 students were not in schools on any regular school day. This data is even more significant when non-bus days are factored in, which typically sees a substantial decrease in the student population across the District. At certain times throughout the year, the student absentee rate peaked at 35%. For the 2023/24 school year, the percentage of students away each day dropped to 22.88%.

This past year, the principals of each school did extensive work on messaging to students and parents around attendance. This increased our attendance data on average 1.1%. This means on average there were 852 students away each day compared to 866 the previous year. This is higher than the provincial average of 16% away each day.

Layering the student absence data on top of the staffing challenges the District faced, (an average of 25 to 30% of our workforce was also away on any given day), the District was constantly being creative to keep schools and classrooms open. The District often did not have TTOC's, TOC's or casual employees to cover the number of vacant positions that were open daily. These challenges layered together made it hard to have successes and gains consistently through the year.

The District is trying many strategies to overcome some of the recruitment and retention challenges that continually face our district year after year. While the District has had uncertified teachers in the past, the ratio has increased in recent years. Increasing student attendance will continue to be a focus in the coming year that will encompass strategies that involve connecting with families and students to determine barriers and obstacles that are keeping students from attending school. By increasing family connections, there was a slight increase in student attendance compared to the 2022/23 school year, but there is still room for improvement.





## Current Strategic Plan Priorities



The Board of Education of School District No. 59 (PRS) is guided by practices that challenge all to learn, work and lead together in equitable and effective ways. The Board values inclusion, equity, Truth and Reconciliation, effective communication, and positive culture within school communities that focus on student learning. We look forward to advancing our plan to ensure the success of each learner in School District No. 59 (PRS).

The three areas of focus for the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan are:

1. Student Success
2. Building Capacity
3. Communication

## District Successes

As a result of the Strategic Plan engagement, the process identified strengths in the District:

- Access to resources
- Inclusion
- Focus on Indigenous Education and the District's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation
- Diverse learning opportunities including outdoor learning
- Addressing areas of inequity
- Collecting and using data to determine next steps
- Strong new teacher mentorship program, a leadership academy, and growth in creating a framework for Kindergarten to Grade 3 numeracy (which has been implemented and will impact future student achievement in numeracy)
- Training days in August for uncertified teachers

## Strategic Engagement

During the 2023 – 2024 school year, the Board of Education worked on creating a new strategic plan. Numerous data sets were looked at for numeracy, attendance, literacy, and graduation rates. An environmental scan was completed using the appreciative inquiry model of a S.O.A.R. (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results). All employees were included in these as well as our two Indigenous Education Advisory Councils, the District PAC, and the Board of Education.

One exciting addition to creating the strategic plan included the students involved in Student Voice visiting each school in the district and completing a S.O.A.R. with groups of students from each school. This information was included in when determining themes.

In February of 2024, we invited rights holders and stakeholders of the broader School District No. 59 community to attend an engagement dinner with facilitated discussion to get feedback. Over 80 members of the public attended and participated in the table discussions that evening.



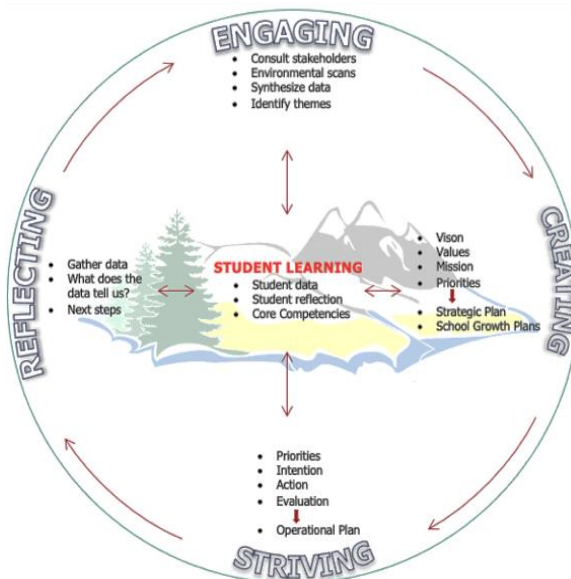


District data, the environmental scans from adults and students, and the feedback from the engagement dinner, was brought together for the Board of Education and leadership team to analyze. Themes were then identified, and they become priorities. Once the top priorities were identified, they were analyzed and though collaboration evolved into three overarching priorities for all the District.

Each year, Indigenous Education Advisory Councils in Chetwynd and Dawson Creek meet with principals and coach mentors to review Indigenous student data. With a council member, each school sets goals and then presents their data back to council in May of that year. These goals aligning with Enhancement Agreement. This process was established over eight years ago and has effectively in building relationships of trust and drives change in schools.

Each year, the Ministry of Education and Child Care's "Aboriginal Education – How Are We Doing Report" is shared with the Board of Education, principals, vice-principals, Indigenous Education Advisory Councils, and the Indigenous Education department. Principals use this data to develop school growth plans.

The Board of Education believes "that our commitment to excellence is driven by what is best for our students, guiding us to continuously learn, improve and lead with integrity."



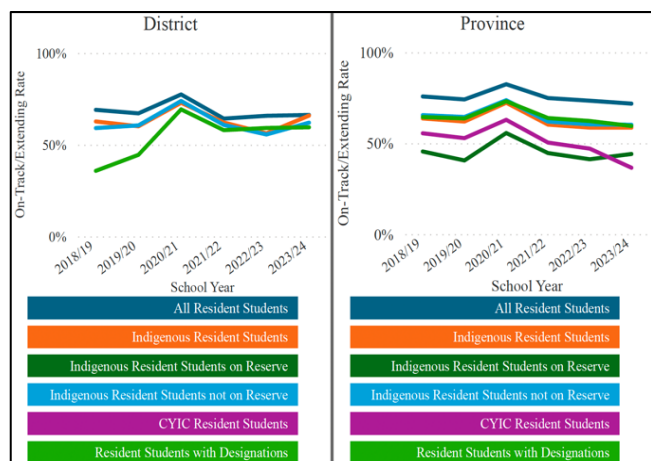
## Reflection on Student Learning Outcomes

### Intellectual Development

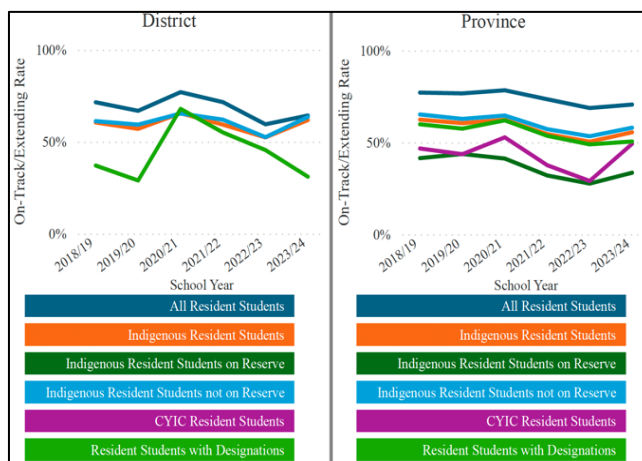
#### Educational Outcome 1: Literacy

##### Measure 1.1: Grade 4 and Grade 7 Literacy Expectations

Grade 4 FSA Literacy/Reading (On Track/ Extending Rate)



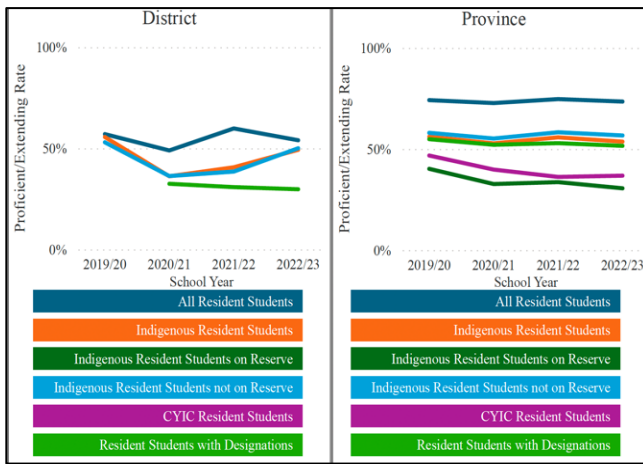
Grade 7 FSA Literacy/Reading (On Track/ Extending Rate)





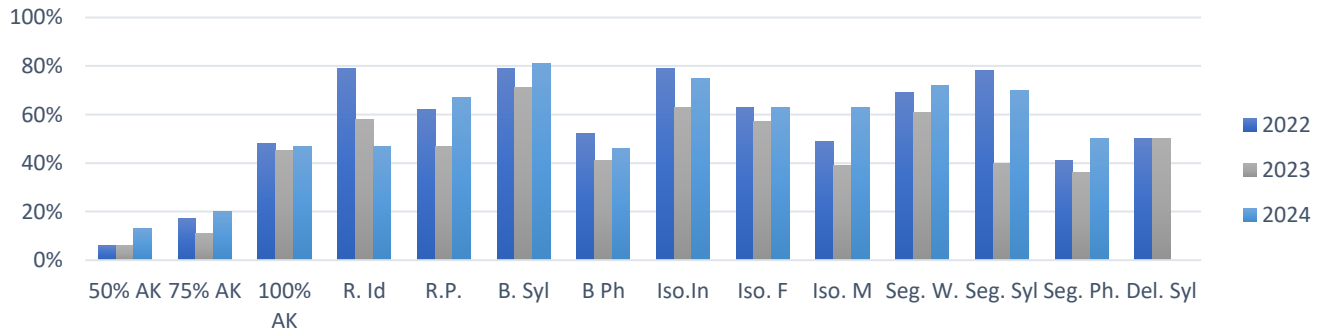
### Measure 1.2: Grade 10 Literacy Expectations

#### Grade 10 Grad Assessment Literacy (Proficient / Extending Rate)

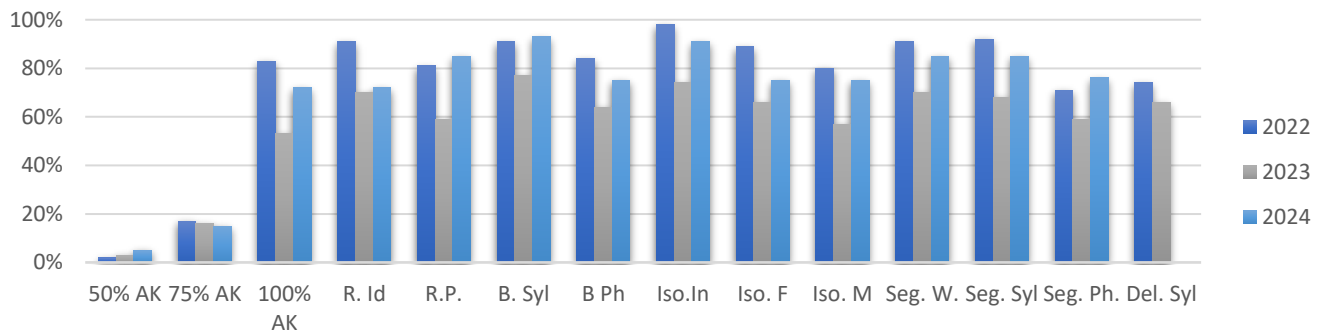


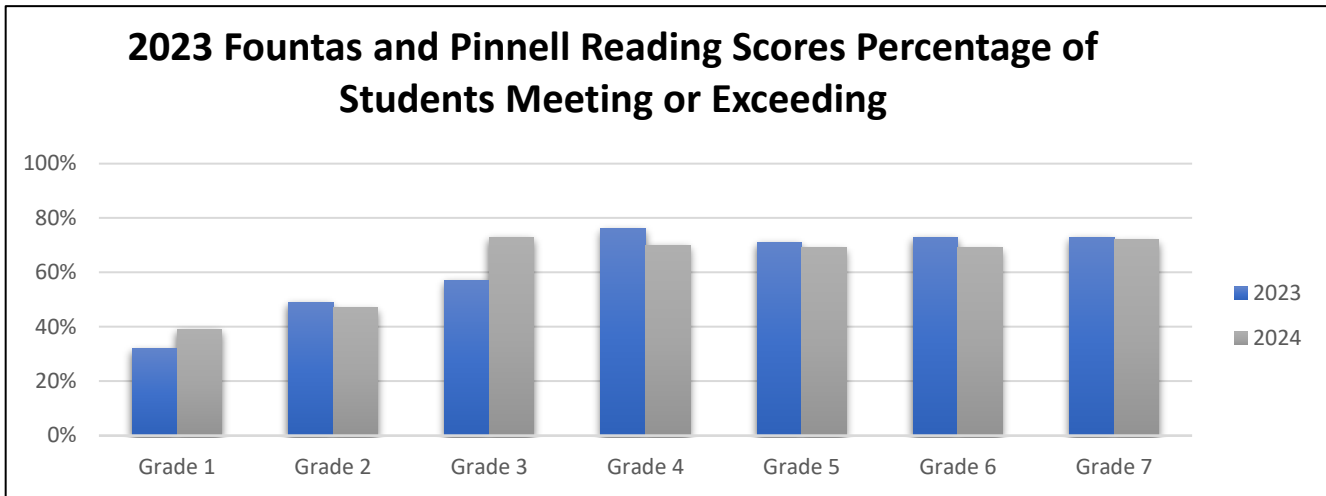
### Measure 1.3: District Data Primary (Kindergarten and Grade 1) Local Literacy Assessments and Fountas and Pinnell Reading Scores (Kindergarten to Grade 7)

#### Kindergarten Alphabet Knowledge (AK) and Phonological Awareness Skills 2022 to 2024



#### Grade 1 Cohort Alphabet Knowledge (AK) and Phonological Awareness Skills for 2022 to 2024 Cohorts





### Outcome 1: Literacy

#### Data Interpretation and Analysis

When looking at Provincial and District data, the following trends emerged:

- District data shows a decline in Kindergarten and Grade 1 phonological skills and alphabet knowledge.
- Fountas and Pinnell reading data highlights a strong group in Grade 3, but overall reading scores district-wide decreased between 2023 and 2024.
- FSA participation rates exceed the provincial average at 94% for Grade 4 and 93% for Grade 7.
- Students with Diversabilities (SWD) participation rate was over 90% in all grades.
- Over 60% of Grade 4 students with learning disabilities are on track or extending.
- Limited data is available for Children and Youth in Care (CYIC) due to the small number of students in SD59, although when looking at school data, most CYIC on the FSA are on track or extending.
- Grade 4 literacy data shows improvement for all students, with significant gains for Indigenous students.
- Grade 7 FSAs also show improvements for almost all students, though scores remain below the provincial average.
- FSA data for Grade 7 SWD shows that most students are emerging in literacy skills.
- Indigenous students in Grades 4 and 7 are improving, with Grade 7 Indigenous students surpassing the provincial average.
- The Grade 10 literacy assessment score dropped in 2022-2023. Although Indigenous students showed improvement, scores remain below the provincial average.
- For Grade 10, there is insufficient data on CYIC due to low numbers; however, 88% of SWD students were developing or proficient in 2023-2024.

#### Current Practices

- Literacy Resource Teachers (LRTs) provide targeted interventions for phonological skills, with a specific focus on improving literacy for Indigenous students. Indigenous Education Support Workers trained in these interventions worked with students in Grades K-3.
- The district-wide primary Professional Learning Community (PLC) continues to offer ongoing professional development.
- The Student Numeracy Assessment and Practice (SNAP) tool was used district-wide for teaching and assessment, expanding to Grades 8 and 9. Data for these grades is still being processed.
- All students participate in assessments and receive universal supports as needed.
- The RTI (Response to Intervention) approach is implemented across the district to support all students, particularly Children and Youth in Care (CYIC) and Students with Diversabilities (SWD).



## Next Steps

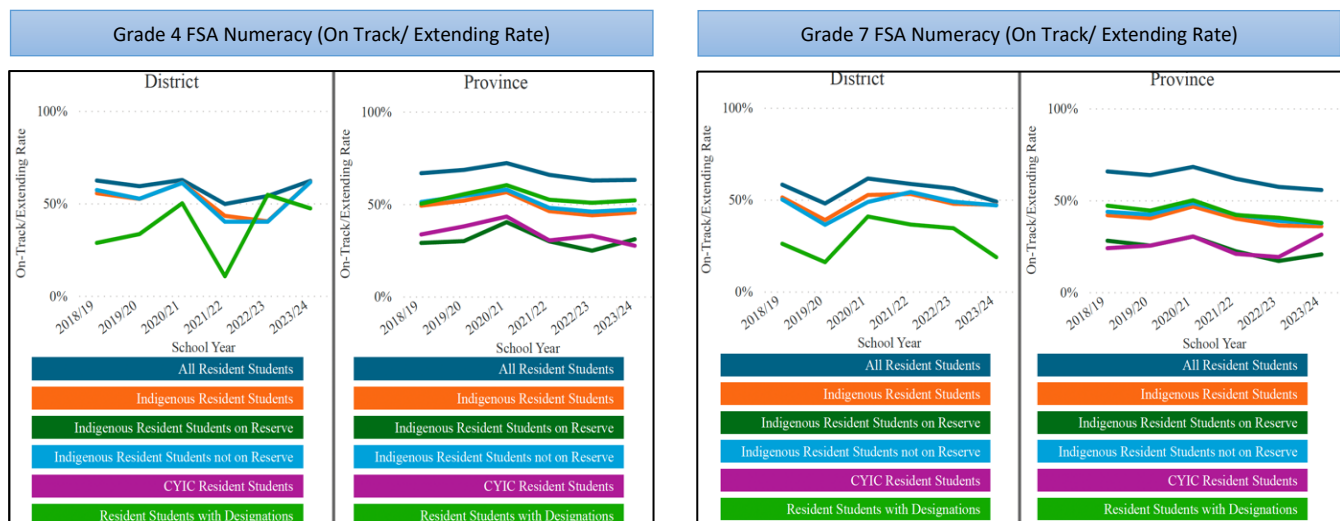
- The District will persist in its strategic efforts to develop foundational literacy skills and implement a comprehensive literacy approach.
- The existing Primary PLC will continue, with the further development of our Intermediate PLC.
- K-3 literacy interventions will remain data-driven, targeting skills that are still lacking. Indigenous Education Support Workers, as part of the Enhancement Agreement Goals, will continue these interventions in elementary schools. Literacy Resource Teachers (LRTs) and Learning Assistance Teachers (LATs) will also continue supporting all students.
- This year, John Hattie's Visible Learning framework will guide our analysis of research-based strategies to improve K-12 literacy and student success.
- The District will collaborate with learning resource teachers to address literacy learning gaps at each school and provide targeted interventions.
- Data on Children and Youth in Care (CYIC) and Students with Diversabilities (SWD) in Grade 7 will be further explored to identify focus areas for growth.
- CYIC will remain a priority for intentional planning by high school School-Based Teams.
- We will work with high schools to explore research-based literacy practices through a universal design perspective.
- SWD students will continue to receive support through inclusive and competency-based individual education plans (ICBIEPs).
- The School-Based Team and District in Care planning document will be used to create individualized plans for CYIC, focusing on literacy data and specific interventions as needed.

## Intellectual Development

### Educational Outcome 1: Numeracy

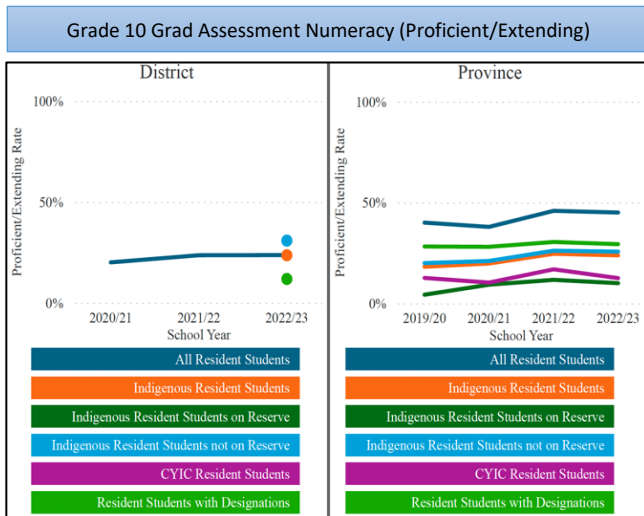
#### Measure 2.1: Grade 4 and Grade 7 Foundational Skills Assessment Numeracy

(Portion of Grade 4 'On Track' or 'Extending' or who have 'Met or Exceeded Expectations' on the FSA)

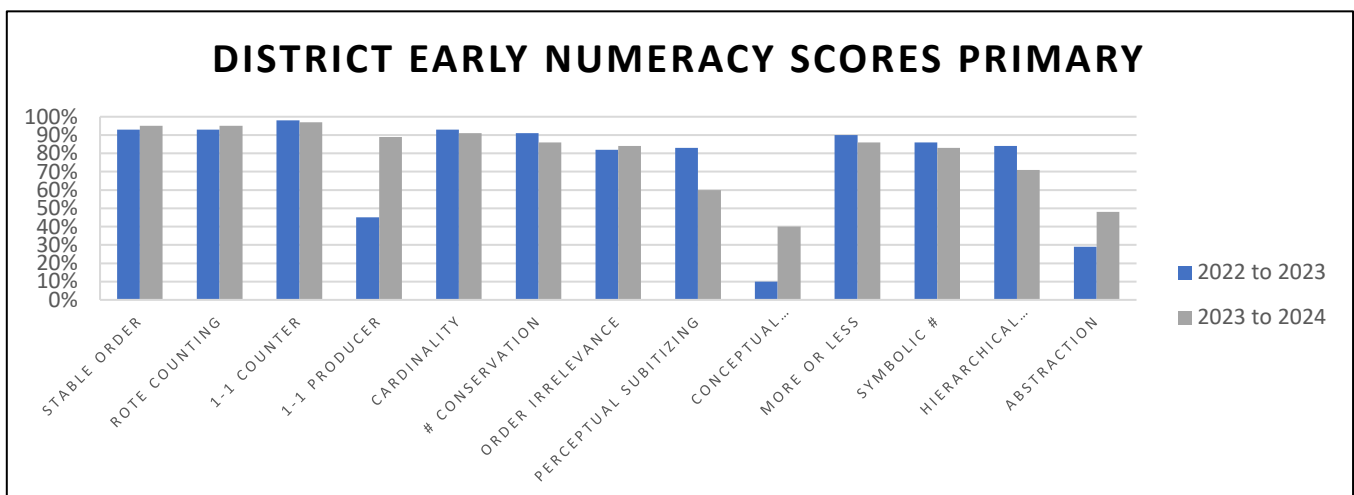




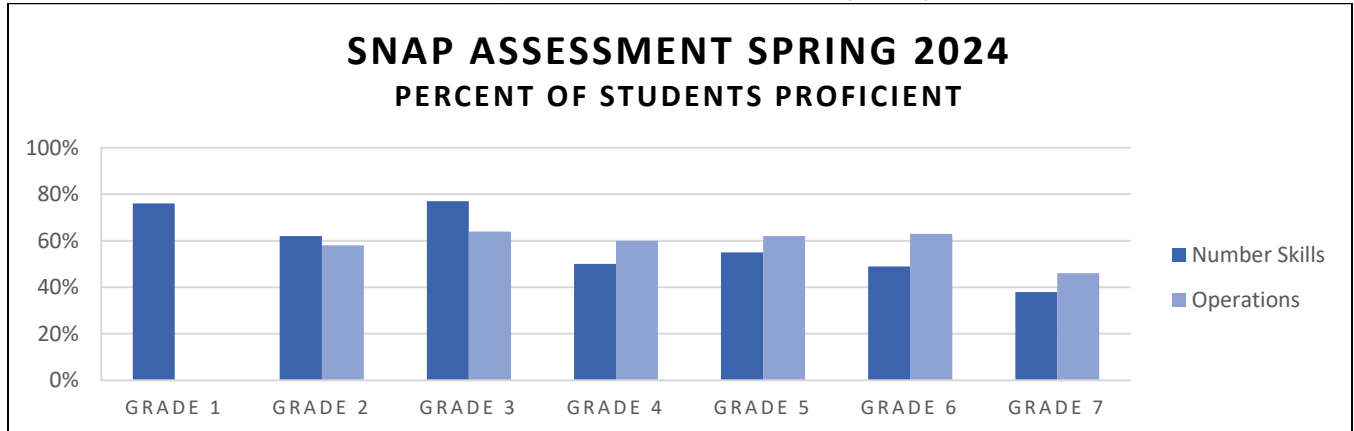
### Measure 2.2: Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment



### Measure 2.3: District Early Numeracy Skills: Counting and Quantity Principles



### Measure 2.4: District Student Numeracy Assessment and Practice (SNAP) Assessment Grades 1 - 7







## Educational Outcome 2: Numeracy

### Data Interpretation and Analysis

When looking at Provincial and District data, the following trends emerged:

- Data indicates that student numeracy scores decline as students progress through the grades.
- The primary numeracy assessment tool shows that Kindergarten and Grade 1 students generally have strong early numeracy skills, though areas like conceptual subitizing and abstraction still need attention.
- The District has a 93% completion rate for FSA Numeracy, significantly higher than the provincial average of 69%, providing a more accurate assessment of student abilities.
- District data reveals that number sense skills are stronger than operations skills at the primary level, while operations skills improve in the intermediate grades.
- Grade 4 FSA data shows an upward trend, narrowing the gap to the provincial average.
- Grade 7 FSA data is trending downward, consistent with provincial trends.
- Most Children and Youth in Care (CYIC) in Grade 4 are performing well above the provincial average in numeracy. Grade 7 CYIC students are on par with or slightly above the provincial average, with 50% on track or extending.
- Students with diagnosed learning disabilities show improvement in Grade 4 numeracy, with 60% on track or extending. However, this decreased to 20% for Grade 7 students during 2023-2024.
- Indigenous students in Grades 4 and 7 perform well above the provincial average, with Grade 4 scores trending upwards and Grade 7 scores remaining comparable to the provincial average.
- Grade 10 numeracy data is still emerging. Historically, this assessment was taken in Grades 11 or 12, and the current data shows Grade 10 students are below the provincial average.

### Current Practices

- Using data identified using an in-house primary numeracy assessment tool, students received interventions targeting specific skills by our numeracy resource teachers (NRTS). In addition, there was a specific focus on developing primary numeracy skills with Indigenous students. Our Indigenous Education Support Workers were also trained and implemented numeracy interventions.
- The long-standing district-wide primary PLC was expanded to include numeracy professional development on topics such as setting up a numeracy program, numeracy routines, early numeracy skills, games, resources etc.
- Student Numeracy Assessment and Practice (SNAP) continued to be our district wide assessment tool. The SNAP was used as both a teaching tool and an assessment. The District expanded the SNAP to Grade 8 and 9. The data from the Grade 8 and 9 students is still being collated.
- All students are included in all assessment and are given universal supports as needed.
- RTI approach is used district wide to support all students especially CYIC and SWD.

### Next Steps

- Monitor district data with targeted interventions from Indigenous education support workers and NRTs.
- Review researched based intermediate numeracy assessment tools, direct instruction practices, resources and interventions.
- Develop an intermediate numeracy assessment tool and intervention plan.
- Continue primary professional development (PD) and initiate intermediate PD.
- Research effective practices to enhance upper intermediate numeracy skills.
- Learning Assistance Teachers will collaborate with classroom teachers, SWD, and families to set specific numeracy goals and action plans in ICBIEPs.
- Implement SNAP in Grades 8 and 9 to support and guide instructional practices.
- Explore methods for collecting data in Grades 10-12.
- Maintain RTI approach to support all students, with a focus on CYIC, SWD, and Indigenous students.

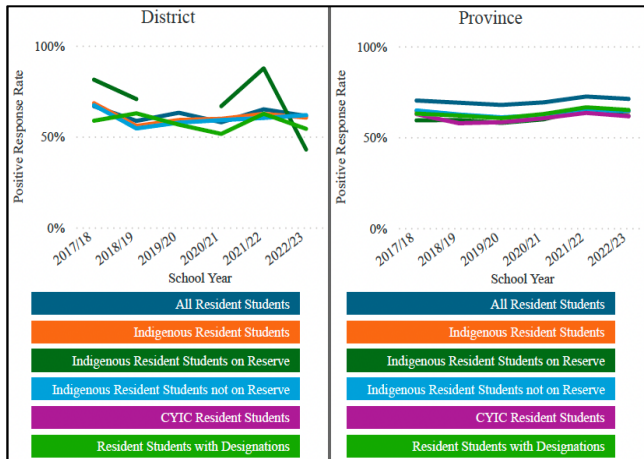


## Human and Social Development

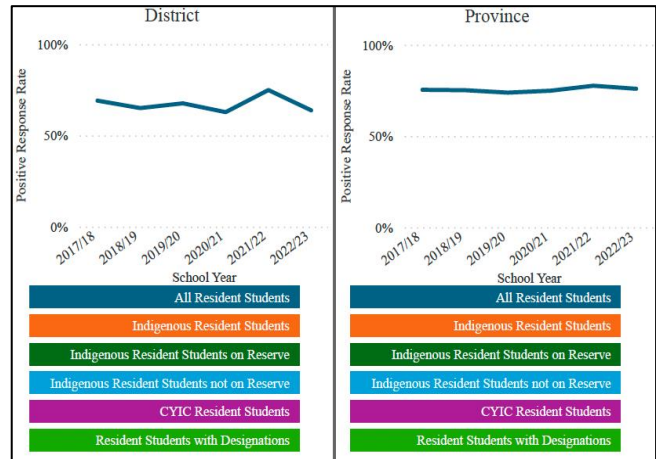
### Educational Outcome 3: Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

#### Measure 3.1: Students Feel Welcome and Safe, and Have a Sense of Belonging at School

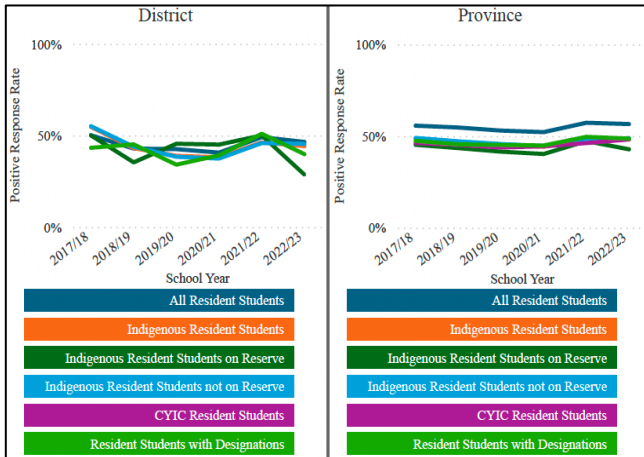
Feel Welcome (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



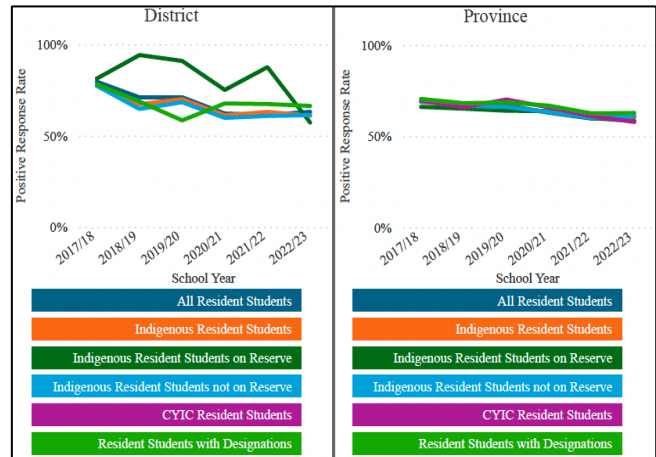
Feel Safe (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



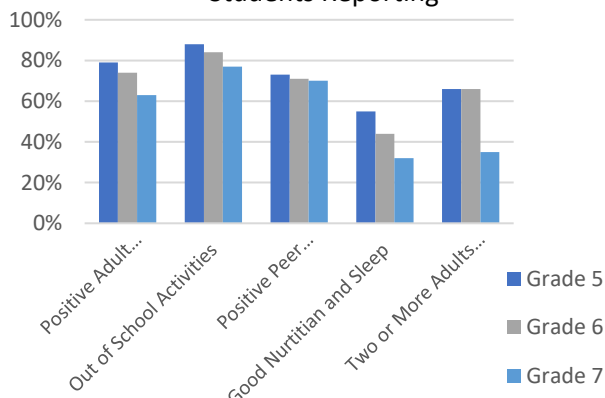
Sense of Belonging (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



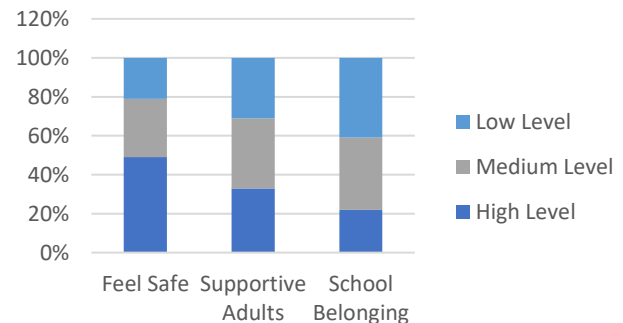
2 or More Adults (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) District Results: Percentage of Students Reporting

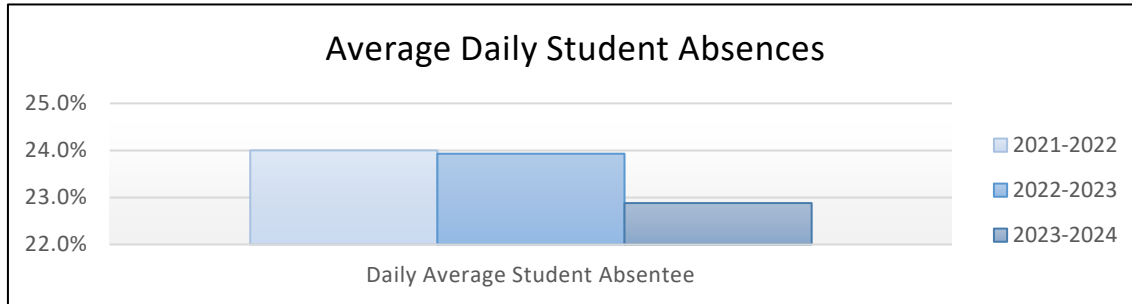


Youth Development Instrument (YDI) District Results: Grades 10 - 11 Percentage of Students Reporting





### Measure 3.2: Attendance Data



### Educational Outcome 3: Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

#### Data Interpretation and Analysis

When looking at Provincial and District data, the following trends emerged:

- Students' feelings of being welcome, safe, and connected have remained mostly stable, with a slight decrease in the sense of welcome in 2022-2023. The percentage of students feeling they have 2 or more caring adults is unchanged in provincial data. MDI data shows no difference between Grades 5 and 6, but a decline at Grade 7.
- Only 22% of Grade 10 and 11 students report a high sense of belonging at school.
- Indigenous students feel as welcome at school as their peers.
- MDI data shows a decline in feelings of safety and connection from Grade 5 to 7, with safety being a significant downward trend in provincial data, though it is the highest category for Grades 10 and 11.
- Last year, the District had a student population of 3,722, with an average of 852 students absent from classes each day. This represents a slight improvement of about 37 fewer absences per day compared to the previous year, continuing the trend of reduced absences. Improving student attendance remains a key focus for the district, as attendance is directly linked to a student's sense of belonging and success.

#### Current Practices

- Schools are implementing social-emotional programming and community-building initiatives at all grade levels.
- Schools and staff are working together to support students during school transitions. This includes general planning for all students as well as targeted plans for those who require additional support.
- Continue efforts to support students as they transition between schools and help them feel connected to their new environments.
- School-based teams are using the In Care planning document and wraparound planning model to connect CYIC with key adults for regular support.
- The 2023-2024 school year continues the focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and the 3-block model, with an emphasis on social-emotional learning and building class community.
- The ICBIEP process has been fully implemented in high schools, incorporating meaningful input from students and families.
- Schools emphasize the importance of regular attendance to both students and families through various forms of communication.

#### Next Steps

- The strategic, operational and school growth plans will focus on ensuring students feel welcomed, safe, and connected, emphasizing social-emotional learning and transition planning.
- Schools will explicitly demonstrate how they are offering social emotional learning day to day.
- Continue supporting transitions between schools, with additional planning for students who need extra support.
- Continue implementing social-emotional learning programs for all grades, including a pilot of Open Parachute in middle schools.

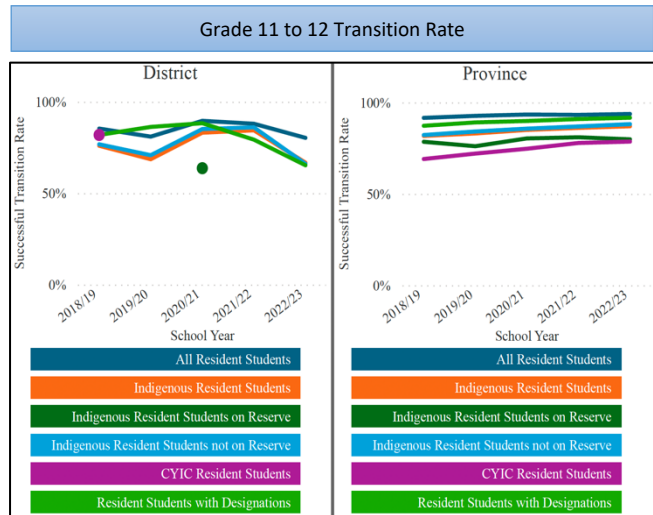
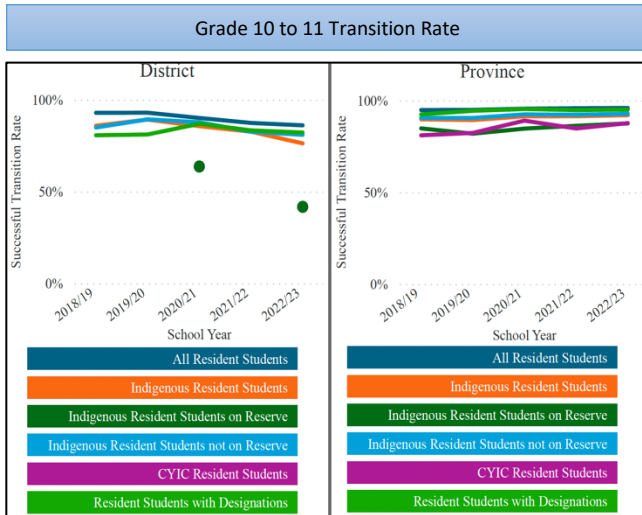


- Maintain collaboration with school-based teams and wraparound support services, especially for Children and Youth in Care (CYIC), with a focus on enhancing a sense of belonging for Students with Diversabilities (SWDs).
- Continue to expand and apply Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices throughout the district.
- The ICBIEP process will remain in place at the high school level, with additional focus on middle and high schools.
- Continue to expand and apply Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices throughout the district.
- Schools will continue to focus on the importance of attendance.

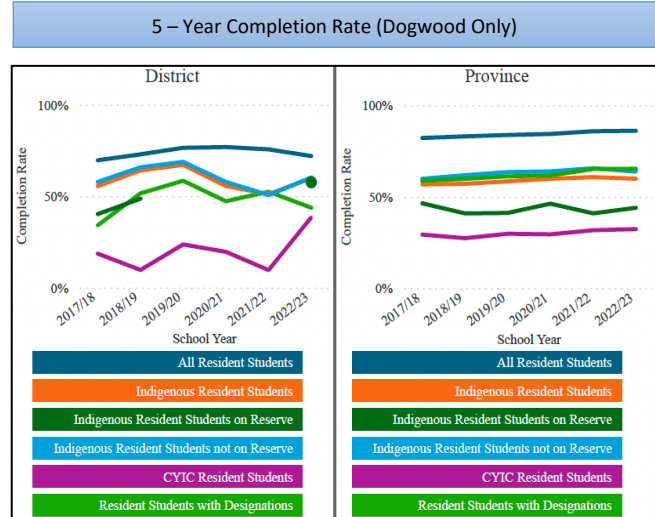
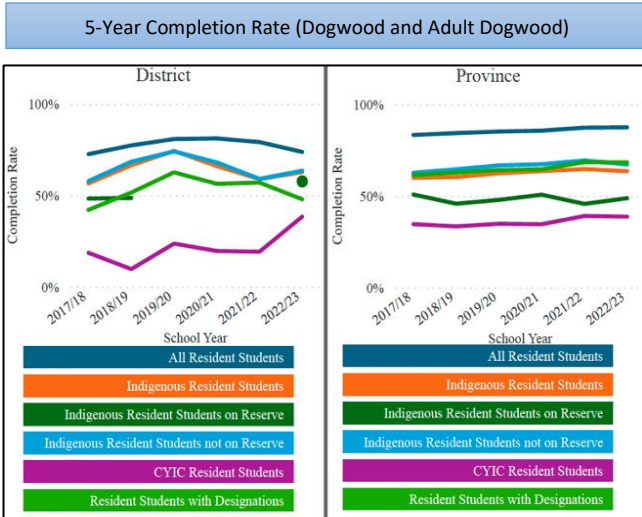
## Career Development

### Educational Outcome 4: Transition and Graduation Rates

#### Measure 4.1: Grade-to-Grade Transitions



#### Measure 4.1: Achieved Dogwood within 5 Years



### Educational Outcome 4: Transition and Graduation Rates

#### Data Interpretation and Analysis

When looking at Provincial and District, data the following trends emerged:

- Improvement in the 5-year graduation rate over the previous 3 years from 73% to 81%. However, graduation rates still fall a few points short of provincial average and did not improve in the 2022-2023 school year.



- In the 2023/24 school year, in-house data shows that 85% of Indigenous students graduated and 93% of non-Indigenous students graduated. Students who did not graduate are tracked to understand the why and help them reach graduation in the following year.
- The District's 5-year graduation rate still falls slightly short of the provincial average and did not see improvement in 2022-23. The gap between graduation rates for all students and Indigenous students increased in 2022-23, highlighting the need for continued focus on supporting Indigenous students to graduation. When looking at district wide data, there is relative consistency across the grades for transitions from grade-to-grade for students in Grade 1 through Grade 9 with transitions happening as expected.
- When looking 1701 data, grade-to-grade transitions for Grade 9 to 10 continued to be strong with the majority of students transitioning as expected unless moving out of province. The grade-to-grade regular transitions in Grades 10 through 11 drop down slightly below this average; however, the Grade 11 to 12 transition showed a slight increase from the previous year. Grade 10 to 11 - 88% and Grade 11 to 12 - 80%.

### **Current Practices**

- Grade and graduation coaches assist Indigenous students by setting personal goals throughout the school year. They monitor attendance, grades, and course selection, offering extra support to keep students on track to graduation. If students struggle, wraparound services are provided based on individual needs, involving the coach mentor, grade/grad coach, family support worker, and administration. In the high school, weekly meetings ensure students are receiving all necessary supports.
- Middle and high schools collaborate to connect Grade 9 students with high school through outreach and visitations. This includes scheduling courses and arranging visits for students to see classrooms and meet staff before the end of the school year.

### **Next Steps**

- The District will maintain its commitment to supporting Indigenous students through grade and graduation coaching.
- Continue using data to identify students at risk of not graduating and implement timely interventions.
- The District will focus on transition planning for grades through School-Based Teams, with intentional strategies for students moving between schools, especially from middle to high school and through the graduation program.
- To improve grade-to-grade transitions, support for Indigenous students will continue by setting meaningful academic goals, collaborating with teachers to create class profiles, and ensuring each student has at least two caring adults in school.
- Enhance support for SWD and CYIC to ensure they have the necessary plans and supports for successful transitions and graduation.
- The District needs to increase its focus SWD and CYIC to ensure they have the supports and plans in place to successfully transition between grades on the path to graduation.
- For transitions involving a change of schools, connections will be established between students and adults in the new school through targeted transition planning.
- When a grade-to-grade transition involves changing schools, the District will continue to work to establish connections between students and adults in the next building through specific transition planning.
- Indigenous Education departments at each high school will continue weekly meetings to monitor the progress of Grade 11 and 12 students, and promptly address any concerns with appropriate supports and plans.

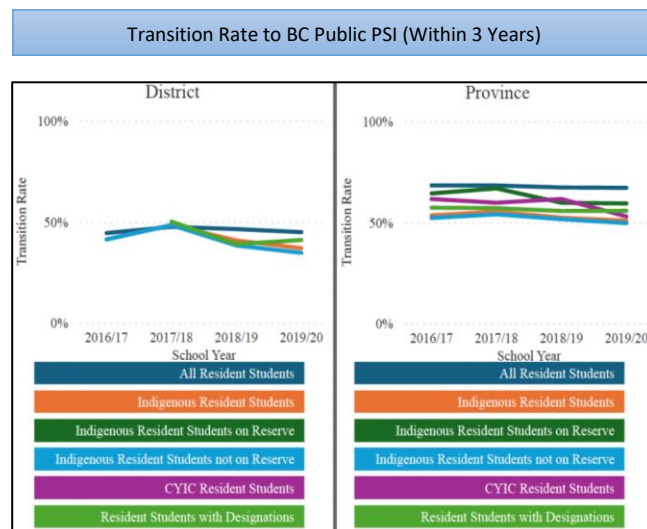
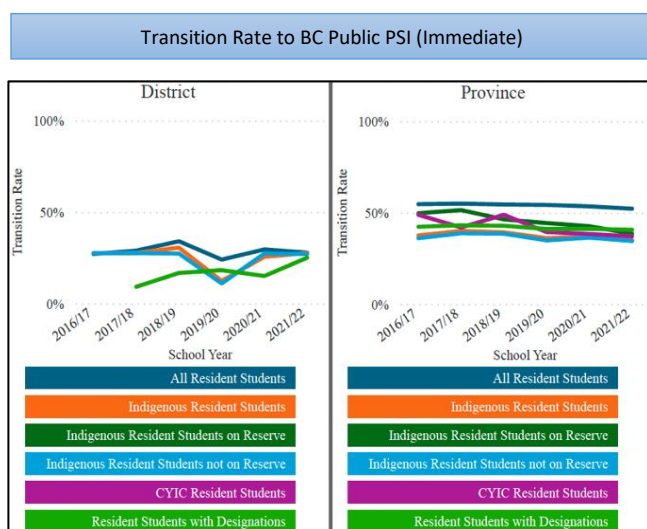




## Career Development

## Educational Outcome 5: Life and Career Core Competencies

## Measure 5.1: Post-Secondary Transitions



## Data Interpretation and Analysis

When looking at our Provincial and District data the following trends emerged:

- School District No. 59 has a lower percentage of students transitioning to post-secondary institutions (PSI) compared to the provincial average. Only 25% of the students transition within 1 year and 48% within 3 years, compared to 54% and 68% provincially.
- The proximity to the Alberta border and the greater distances of the major PSIs in British Columbia led to many students to leave the province for post-secondary education.
- By the end of the 2021-2022 school year, 40 students had transitioned to PSIs in Alberta, raising the transition rate to around 45%. After graduation in the 2023-24 school year, 45 students transitioned to PSIs in Alberta demonstrating consistent student numbers transitioning to PSI out of province.
- Some students complete dual credit trades and vocational programs with Northern Lights College, while still in Grade 12, which may not be reflected in the Ministry's data.

## Current Practices

- Indigenous students benefit from personalized goal setting with the support of a coach mentor to help them explore and define their career aspirations. Through this guidance, students gain clarity on academic and professional goals, receive tailored advice on achieving them, and uncover pathways that align with their interests and strengths. The coach mentor plays a crucial role in empowering Indigenous students to pursue meaningful careers by providing encouragement, resources, and strategic planning, thereby fostering a supportive environment for their success and growth.
- In collaboration with Northern Lights College, students have a range of opportunities to explore career options and education programs. Through initiatives such as Try a Trade, Skill Competitions, Open Houses, Student for a Day, Career Cruising and various other engagement events, students can experience firsthand the wide array of career paths available to them. These programs are designed to expose students to different fields, spark their interest in potential career options, and provide valuable insights into the skills and training required for their future success.
- The Youth Explore Trades (YETs) program is available to Grade 10, 11, and 12 students seeking clarity on their career paths and hands-on experience in various trades. SWD have successfully participated in this program alongside their peers, gaining valuable insights and skills for their future careers.



### Next Steps

- All high schools will continue to gather information and data on where students are going following high school.
- The District will refocus the careers department to enhance support for student transitions and career planning. This includes implementing targeted interventions and resources to help students set and achieve their career goals, especially during key transitions such as moving from middle to high school and from high school to post-secondary education or the workforce.
- The careers department will work closely with students, teachers, and external partners to provide guidance, create meaningful career pathways, and ensure students are well-prepared for their future careers.
- Maintain a collaborative partnership with Northern Lights College to provide ongoing opportunities for student growth and career exploration. By collaborating with the college, students have increased opportunity for deeper understanding of various career paths and gain knowledge and experiences needed to make informed decisions about their future and pursuing their career goals.

### Adjustments and Adaptations

The District will take the following steps to address the above-mentioned areas:

- Utilize John Hattie's Visible Learning framework to plan research-based instructional strategies for both literacy and numeracy.
- Continue the Primary Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and further develop Intermediate PLCs that integrate literacy and numeracy instruction.
- Maintain data-driven K-3 interventions while addressing identified literacy and numeracy gaps, with a special focus on Indigenous students, Children and Youth in Care, and Students with Diversabilities.
- Explore numeracy resources, assessments, and teaching strategies that align with the Visible Learning framework.
- The District will create a welcoming and safe environment for students by focusing on social-emotional learning, supporting transitions, using Universal Design for Learning, and collaborating with teams to enhance belonging for all students.
- Facilitate smooth transitions between grades and schools, with weekly meetings to monitor and address the progress of Grade 11 and 12 Indigenous students.
- Enhance the careers department to help students with transitions and career planning, providing resources and collaborating with Northern Lights College for career exploration opportunities.

### Alignment for Successful Implementation

For the upcoming year, the District has developed a new strategic plan by collaborating with all stakeholders and incorporating feedback from the S.O.A.R. (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) analysis. This plan is aligned with operational goals and ministry objectives. The District acknowledges its successes and is committed to identifying areas for growth. A key focus will be ensuring that school growth plans and individual department operational plans are aligned with the District's Strategic Plan and priorities.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the District is committed to carrying out the new Strategic Plan. Our priority on student success allows us to focus on sense of belonging, social-emotional learning, and meeting students where they are at so they can thrive as learners. Our commitments to Truth and Reconciliation will permeate every level of our system to address areas of inequity. The District is dedicated to creating an environment where every student can reach their full potential.



## LINKS

- [2024 – 2028 Strategic Plan](#)
- 2024 – 2028 Operational Plan - to be updated to the website  
[Public Documents | School District 59 \(sd59.bc.ca\)](#)
- [Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement](#)
- [Previous Framework for Enhancing Student Learning \(2022-2023\)](#)
- Local LEA's with Saulteau First Nations and West Moberly First Nations:  
[Saulteau First Nations](#)  
[West Moberly First Nations](#)
- [Long Range Facility Plan](#)

