



MEMORANDUM

June 21, 2022
Regular Board Meeting

TO Board of Trustees

FROM Shauna Boyce, Superintendent

ORIGINATOR Scott Johnston, Associate Superintendent

RESOURCE Katherine Mann, Division Principal, Indigenous Education and Numeracy

GOVERNANCE POLICY Board Policy 1: Division Foundational Statements
Board Policy 2: Role of the Board
Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE BP 1: Vision, Foundational Statements
BP 2: Education Planning and Programming

SUBJECT **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT**

PURPOSE

For information. No recommendation required.

BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees upholds the Mission for Parkland School Division (PSD) to “assure supportive learning environments, meaningful experiences and healthy relationships that create opportunities to develop resilience, to gain diversity in perspectives and to achieve enduring success.”

Stakeholders, and in particular our Indigenous communities, gain trust and confidence when we are attending to developing a strong relationship between the Division and the Indigenous communities that results in increased academic achievement and a greater sense of belonging for our students.

Stakeholders also gain trust and confidence when our staff are actively attending to strategies to reduce the First Nation, Métis and Inuit achievement gap, to promote positive relationships with Indigenous students and to promote increased attendance rates.

Improving Indigenous understanding, for students, staff and the greater community, aligns Parkland School Division with the work set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding for First Nations Education in Alberta.

This report is in support of the Division’s Mission and is provided with respect to the Board’s Annual Work Plan.

REPORT SUMMARY

Staff, students, parents and community stakeholder partners are called on to acknowledge the historical significance and contributions of Indigenous People and their cultures within the context of education. The Superintendent recognizes the need for all staff to take appropriate action to bridge and to build our relationships with our First Nation communities.

This Indigenous Education Report highlights the actions, intentions and shared responsibility of all staff members, that are considered from the dual perspectives of looking back at our successes and challenges, and of looking forward; planning and responding for continual improvement.

For Parkland School Division, the priorities set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding for Alberta resonate with our planning processes.

Our primary responsibilities toward healing are twofold:

- To ensure that all students learn about the history and legacy of residential schools, along with the robust history of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada; and
- To enable all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to achieve success, in a welcoming, supportive and safe school culture, without exception.

This Indigenous Education Report provides an overview of results, and recognizes specific events and achievements throughout the year.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

SJ:kz



PARKLAND
SCHOOL DIVISION

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT

June, 2022

Presented to the Board of Trustees, June 21, 2022

Scott Johnston, Associate Superintendent, Education and System Services

Resources: Kathy Mann, Division Principal, Indigenous Education and Numeracy

Our Students Possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

Background

Staff, students, parents and community stakeholder partners are called on to acknowledge the historical significance and contributions of Indigenous People and their cultures within the context of education. The Superintendent recognizes the need for all staff to take appropriate action to bridge and to build our relationships with our First Nation communities.

Within the context of looking forward for success, the 2021-2022 Education Plan for Parkland School Division identified key objectives for education planning:

- Improving our understanding and representation of Indigenous culture to foster a sense of belonging and identity;
- Supporting educational achievement among Indigenous students;
- Improving the well-being of Indigenous students;
- Increasing the participation and engagement of Indigenous students and families in education; and
- Establishing stronger relationships through effective collaboration with our Indigenous community partners

Demographics and Data

Parkland School Division, in the last five years, has seen the percentage of students identifying as First Nations, Métis and Inuit increase by 21% as compared to an 8% increase in overall population.

Métis:	490	(39.29%)
Status First Nations:	356	(28.55%)
Non-Status First Nations	234	(18.77%)
Federally Funded First Nations	138	(11.07%)
Inuit:	29	(2.33%)

Parkland School Division has maintained its 3-Year average for High School Completion and dropped slightly in its 5-Year Completion, although it remains in line with the Provincial Average. Of note is the decrease in the Drop Out Rate this past year.

High School Completion rates, and High School Drop-Out rates are lagging indicators, and results are reported in the subsequent year.

Measure	Parkland School Division (FNMI)			Alberta (FNMI)		
	Current Result	Previous Year Result	Previous 3 Year Average	Current Result	Previous Year Result	Previous 3 Year Average
3-year High School Completion	61.3	57.7	61.0	62.0	55.9	55.6
5-year High School Completion	68.1	72.8	75.6	68.1	65.0	63.4

	Parkland School Division (FNMI):				
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
	%	%	%	%	%
Drop Out Rate	4.8	2.8	4.5	5.9	2.7
Returning Rate	18.7	36.8	25.5	20.7	46.2

	Alberta (FNMI):				
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
	%	%	%	%	%
Drop Out Rate	5.8	4.8	5.4	5.5	5.0
Returning Rate	21.5	23.5	22.7	21.0	19.1

Events and Celebrations

The 21-22 school year began in Parkland School Division with the observance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 29, as September 30 was designated a non-operational day. On that day, Memorial Composite High School hosted a pipe ceremony, led by Elders Emil Durocher and Violet Poitras. This event was live streamed for students and staff to access from their classrooms. It was a solemn event in light of the recent discovery of residential school burial sites across the nation. Schools honoured the day in their local context with storytelling, Indigenous Art and Music, smudging and lessons about the meaning of Orange Shirt day and residential schools.

In the month of May, Memorial Composite High school and Spruce Grove Composite High School utilized the expertise of Division Facilitator Charity Alook to deliver a talk on *Missing and Murdered Women and Girls* and High Park School invited Elder Phillip Campiou to spend the day with them in recognition of the Moose Hide Campaign. Both of these events are a call for all individuals to stand against gendered violence, in particular, the disproportionate amount of violence experienced by Indigenous women.

Lastly, the month of June will see many activities planned across Parkland School Division in honour of June 21, the National Indigenous Peoples Day. This day recognizes the vibrance and beauty of the Indigenous People. Activities in schools will include traditional games, learning about the practice of smudge, a performance by the Alexander First Nations Singers and Dancers, ... The month will also bear witness to the Indigenous Cultural Grad hosted by Memorial Composite and Spruce Grove Composite High Schools.



Representation

Parkland School Division is continuing to work on its goal of increasing First Nations, Métis and Inuit representation in schools. Duffield School hosted a day of beading and hide scraping for the grade 8 students. The day was facilitated by Jessica Sanderson-Barry of JShine Designs. Jess is from Chakastaypasin Band in Treaty Six territory. The day included teachings on the importance of respect for the spirit of the hide that has been harvested.

On May 13, Memorial Composite High School included all of the students in a dedication ceremony for the mural Community Spirit by artist Lance Cardinal. Lance is a Woodland Cree member of the Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory.



The mural includes many symbols important to Cree culture, including the eagle feather, sweetgrass and the spirit of the ancestors in the Northern Lights, as well as the symbols for LGBTQ+, transgender and two-spirited people. The mural was blessed by Elder Violet Poitras and was celebrated by drummers and dancers from Paul First Nation.

Parkland School Division piloted an Elder in Residence program this year. Elders Violet Poitras and Phillip Campiou have been visiting a number of schools on a regular basis to share their friendship and their teachings with the staff and students. This has been very positively received and other schools have expressed interest in this program. It is an opportunity for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to connect and learn.



Recently, students from Spruce Grove Composite High School had a chance to visit Métis Crossing, Alberta's first major Métis cultural interpretive destination.

The students learned about jigging, the hunt and use of buffalo hide, and other aspects of Métis living. As well, a number of schools have been treated to a Métis Jig presentation by Kenton Alook. Stony Plain Central has also been offering a weekly sewing club for students to learn how to make a ribbon skirt or shirt, and the school also hosted a Cultural Celebration Day in May.



Professional Development, Resources and Curriculum Support

Parkland School Division has offered a number of sessions for staff this year. They include the presentation on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, a session on the meaning and importance of Land Acknowledgement, a session on Traditional games and a session on Indigenizing the Alberta Curriculum.



STEAM facilitation offered a number of Google Drawings online sessions focused on Indigenous artists. As well, the Division is preparing a document for teachers to help them make links between the new curriculum and Indigenous ways of knowing. The Division has also invested \$20 000+ this year to increase access to Indigenous Literature in all schools. The Division

Facilitator also worked with School Librarians and Learning Commons staff to help them understand and identify criteria for Indigenous-themed resources that are no longer considered appropriate.

Kinship Advisory



The Division Principal of Indigenous Education and the Indigenous Education Facilitator met twice with a group of family members who are connected to Indigenous students in Parkland School Division. The meetings provided an opportunity for the Division to share its work in this area and for families to discuss their perspectives. The families acknowledged the work that is being done, but would like to see greater communication and more consistent opportunities for all students to learn about Indigenous culture, history and practices. The families also expressed appreciation to be able to connect with each other and would like to see the meetings continue next year, but to occur more frequently and for the membership to grow.

The 2022-2023 Education Plan

On May 24, 2022, the Board approved the Parkland School Division 2022-2025 Education Plan. Element 5 of the Plan sets a robust goal for Indigenous Education:

Parkland School Division staff demonstrate an understanding of indigenous perspectives and allocate resources in order to support our indigenous students' success and well-being.

The intent is that all staff will demonstrate an understanding of Indigenous perspectives and allocate resources in order to support our Indigenous students' success and well-being.

Future avenues for development note that school leaders and staff will:

- Attend to Indigenous Ways of Knowing through specialized resources, such as through staff use of the Pebbles Series, to develop foundational knowledge;
- Implement and develop Indigenous language classes as a method for students to connect with Indigenous culture and identity;
- Develop relationships with Indigenous community members, and increase their role as educators in the school-setting, such as through the development of an Elder-in-Residence program;
- Develop students' opportunity to experience Indigenous Knowledge Systems in schools, including: connection to land, language, elders and relationships;
- Develop students' experiences with Indigenous ways of knowing through art, symbols, ceremony, story and song – and therefore raise the visibility of Indigenous culture in schools;
- Collaborate to develop grade level resources to embed Indigenous ways of knowing and foundational knowledge into teacher practice;
- Develop students' experiences with character education programs that are based on the Seven Grandfather Teachings; and
- Identify a lead teacher at each site to participate in Divisional collaboration around meeting the needs of Indigenous students.

As we continue to progress in our attention to this element, we expect to see Indigenous cultural visibility increase in PSD schools.

Our schools are visibly supportive of our Indigenous population's cultural revitalization and schools demonstrate integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, and connections to the land in everyday teaching. Our intent is that our Indigenous students and families "see themselves" in PSD schools. It is essential that we continue to develop and strengthen the partnership that exists between the Paul First Nation Chief and Council and Parkland School Division.



It is also critically important that non-Indigenous students and staff recognize that ***we are all Treaty people, and that we all have a part to play in Truth and Reconciliation.***