

**Okanagan Similkameen**

School District No. 53



# Enhancing Student Learning Report

## September 2024

In Review of Year 1 of Strategic Plan 2023-2033



***Acknowledging with Gratitude the Ancestral and Unceded Territory of the Sukənaqin and Sməlqmix People, Traditional Keepers of the Land.***

Approved by Board on September 24, 2024

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## Introduction: *District Context*

The Okanagan Similkameen School District No. 53 resides on the traditional unceded ancestral territories of the Sukənaqin and Sməłqmix people and serves 2343 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, in 9 schools. Our elementary schools are Kindergarten to grade 7, and our secondary schools are grades 8-12. We also have one Kindergarten to grade 4 primary school, one elementary-secondary school that serves students in grades 5-12, and one online school (YouLearn). We are a rural school district serving the communities of Osoyoos, Oliver, Keremeos, Cawston, Hedley, Olalla, and Okanagan Falls as well as three First Nations: The Osoyoos Indian Band, the Lower Similkameen Indian Band, and the Upper Similkameen Indian Band. 5% of the students served live on First Nations Communities and 20% of all students self-identify as Indigenous. As a rural district 32% of students are bused to school, and 24% of students in the district have diverse abilities. Less than 0.004% of students in the district are classified as Children and Youth in Care (CIYC).

The Southern Okanagan Valley and Similkameen regions are renowned for their picturesque landscapes, abundant vineyards, and orchards. The region's agricultural industry, particularly viticulture and fruit production, combined with a robust tourism industry, creates a vibrant and diverse economy in the region.

Over the past five years, the region has been affected by multiple climate-related events, including forest fires that have impacted every community in the district. Some areas (particularly the Similkameen Valley) have also suffered from flooding and landslides leading to evacuations and highway closures, and these disruptions have placed stress on families and local businesses. Weather conditions in 2023 and 2024 have had a devastating impact on both vineyards and orchards. In education, an increasing staffing shortage (particularly TTOCs) has begun to put a strain on staff and students, and we continue to explore ways to respond to this challenge.

Our district's Mission is to support the development of all learners through real-world, relevant experiences that promote responsible, culturally aware citizenship and lifelong learning.

*\*Photo credit Red Bridge cover page photo: Robert Brunet Drone Photography*

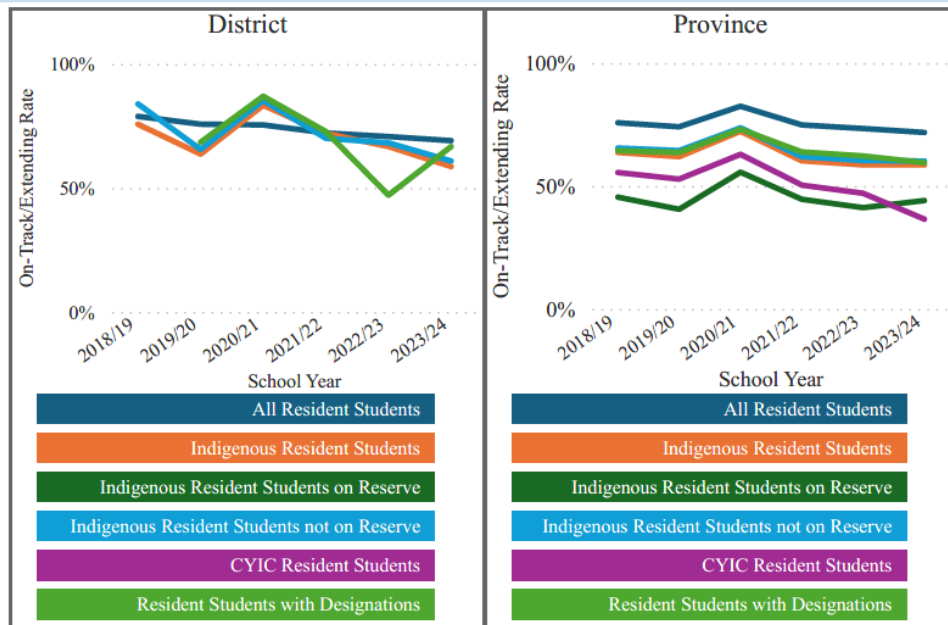
# Section A: Reflecting on Student Learning Outcomes

## Intellectual Development

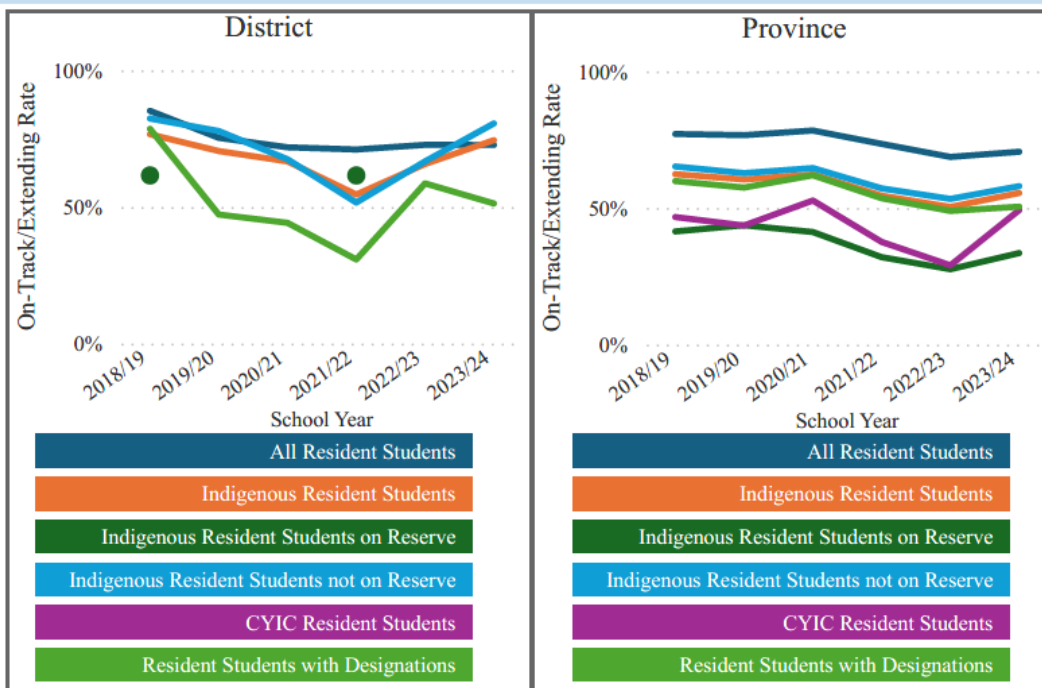
### Educational Outcome 1: Literacy

Measure 1.1: Grade 4 & Grade 7 Literacy Expectations

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

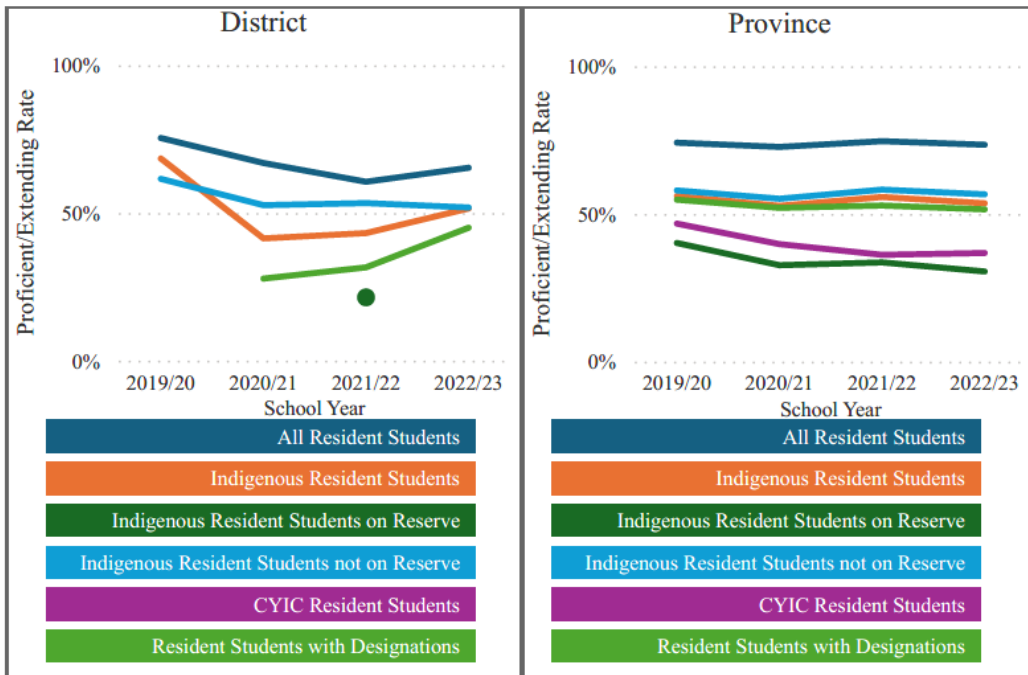


**Grade 7 FSA Literacy/Reading (On-Track / Extending Rate)**



Measure 1.2: Grade 10 Literacy Expectations

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



**How Are We Doing Report Data (2022-2023)**

**Literacy 10**

**Literacy 10 2022/23: Aboriginal**



■ Emerging ■ Developing ■ Proficient or Extending

**Literacy 10 2022/23: Non-Aboriginal**



■ Emerging ■ Developing ■ Proficient or Extending

**Local Data: Literacy Grade 4**

**Legend:** Percentage of students demonstrating proficiency in the following areas

- WCRA: The Whole Class Reading Assessment district assessment for grades 4-7
- ELA: % of students proficient or extending on final class-based reports for English Language Arts
- FSA: % of students on-track or extending on Foundation Skills Assessment

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>% of students demonstrating proficiency</b>
		<b>Cohort 1 (Students in grade 4 in 2022/23)</b>
2020/21	2 ELA	46 %
2021/22	3 ELA	45%
2022/23	4 WCRA	65%
2022/23	4 ELA	45%
2022/23	4 FSA	71 %
2023/24	5 ELA	40%
2023/24	5 WRCA	61%
		<b>Cohort 2 (Students in grade 4 in 2023/24)</b>
2021/22	2 ELA	49%
2022/23	3 ELA	46%
2023/24	4 WCRA	67%
2023/24	4 ELA	49 %
2023/24	4 FSA	69%

### Literacy Grade 7

School Year	Grade	% of students demonstrating proficiency
		<b>Cohort 1 (Students in grade 7 in 2022/23)</b>
2020/21	5 ELA	53 %
2020/21	5 WCRA	70%
2021/22	6 ELA	45 %
2021/22	6 WCRA	64%
2022/23	7 WCRA	77%
2022/23	7 FSA	73%
2022/23	7 ELA	66%
2023/24	8 ELA	58%
		<b>Cohort 2 (Students in grade 7 in 2023/24)</b>
2021/22	5 ELA	54%
2022/23	6 ELA	52%
2023/24	7 WCRA	77%
2023/24	7 FSA	73%
2023/24	7 ELA	61 %

### Literacy 10

School Year	Grade	% of Students demonstrating proficiency
		<b>Cohort 1 (Students in grade 10 in 2022/23)</b>
2019/20	7 ELA	60%
2020/21	8 ELA	54%
2021/22	9 ELA	53%
2022/23	10 ELA/EFP	60% (C+ or higher in ELA/EFP 10 course)
2023/24	11 ELA/EFP	70 % (C+ or higher in ELA/EFP 11 course)
		<b>Cohort 2 (Students in grade 10 in 2023/24)</b>
2020/21	7 ELA	60 %
2021/22	8 ELA	43 %
2022/23	9 ELA	55 %
2023/24	10 ELA/EFP	64% (C+ or higher in ELA/EFP 10 course)

**Literacy 12**

School Year	Grade	% of students who scored C+ or higher in ELA Courses (ELA/EFP)
2022/23	11 ELA/EFP	59%
2023-24	12 ELA/EFP	61% (all students) 65% (non-Indigenous) 47% (Indigenous)

**Analysis and Interpretation**

**Outcome 1: Literacy**

**Educational Outcome 1: Literacy**

**Grade 4 FSA:**

- Although our students overall are maintaining on par results (within 2-3%) with provincial averages we have noted a gradual decrease over the past 6 years. This trend continued again in 2023-24 with another slight decrease.
- Results for on-reserve Indigenous students consistently hovers around 50% (masked) which is below our district averages but above the provincial average.
- Indigenous student results were close to parity (2% difference) with non-Indigenous students in 2022-23, but the gap has widened again (12%) in the 2023-24 FSA results.
- CYIC data is masked in this assessment for our district.
- After trending downwards for the past 2 years at the grade 4 level, students with diverse abilities were the group that had the largest increase from 2022-23(44.5%) to 2023-24 (66.7%) and were above the provincial average.
- Following analysis of the local year-end district assessments and report card proficiency levels for English Language Arts over the past four years, results are still trending downwards slightly with less than half of students demonstrating proficient or extending levels.

### **Grade 7 FSA:**

- Looking at the Grade 7 FSA results it is encouraging to see Indigenous students continue to trend upwards, and this group was the highest performing demographic overall in 2023-24 and well above the provincial average. In contrast, students with diverse abilities took a turn downwards in 2023-24 but are still above where they were 3, 4, and 5 years ago so the overall five-year trend is still positive.
- At the grade 7 level, classroom ELA proficiency levels for 2 cohorts were below FSA scores (7% and 10% below respectively).
- When comparing the participation rates of our district to the provincial average for the FSA, it is very encouraging to see that our students are performing at or above provincial averages considering we have 13% (Gr. 4) and 19% (Gr. 7) more of our students writing assessments than the provincial average. It could be argued that the provincial averages for performance may be inflated by the students who are being excused or absent from writing assessments.

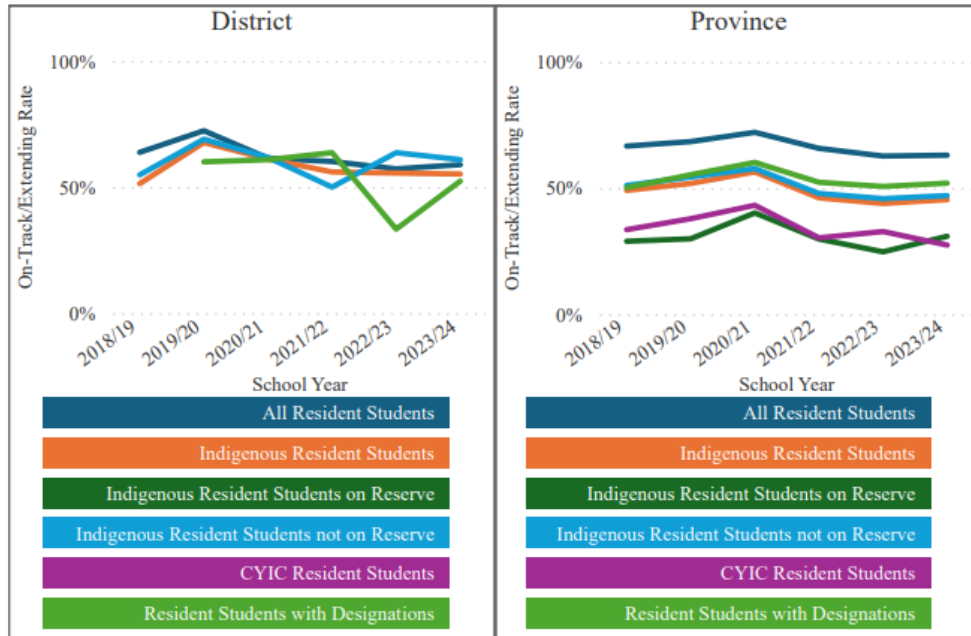
### **Grade 10 Literacy Assessment and Local Data:**

- Grade 10 Literacy Assessment results improved in 2023-24. Over the past 3 years results trend upwards for focus groups such as Indigenous students (including students living on reserve), and students with diverse abilities and disabilities.
- While overall trends are headed in the right direction, the 2022-23 HAWD report revealed an achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners on the provincial Literacy 10 assessment, so next year we will explore strategies to support Indigenous learners in literacy skills in secondary classrooms.
- One cohort we tracked that remained consistent in their literacy scores from grades 5-7, took an 8% drop in proficiency levels between grade 7 and grade 8.
- When examining local year-end results for last year's grade 10 students, and looking back over the past three years, it is evident that fewer students entering grade 8 are demonstrating proficiency compared to the same cohort in grade 7. Schools will investigate possibilities of why these results may be lower and take steps at the secondary levels to start to provide the needed supports to students in grades 8, 9, and 10 who are not proficient in literacy.
- In ELA and/or EFP courses, student levels of proficiency for the graduating class of 2024 remained consistent from grade 11 to grade 12.
- In 2023-24, 65% of non-Indigenous students in grade 12 achieved a C+ or higher in an ELA/EFP 12 course compared to only 47% of Indigenous students. The HAWD report from 2022-23 also revealed a disparity in proficiency between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students on the Literacy 12 assessment, which again reinforces the need to focus on supporting Indigenous learners in literacy development in the secondary grades.
- We are currently triangulating 3 main sources of data for our Literacy results in K-7: the FSAs, our end of year district assessments, and student proficiency scores on classroom-based reports for English Language Arts (ELA). As a district, we are reviewing and reflecting on the use of the WCRA (our district assessment Whole Class Reading Assessment for Gr. 4-7). This assessment should be used to inform instruction and respond to student gaps in literacy skills.

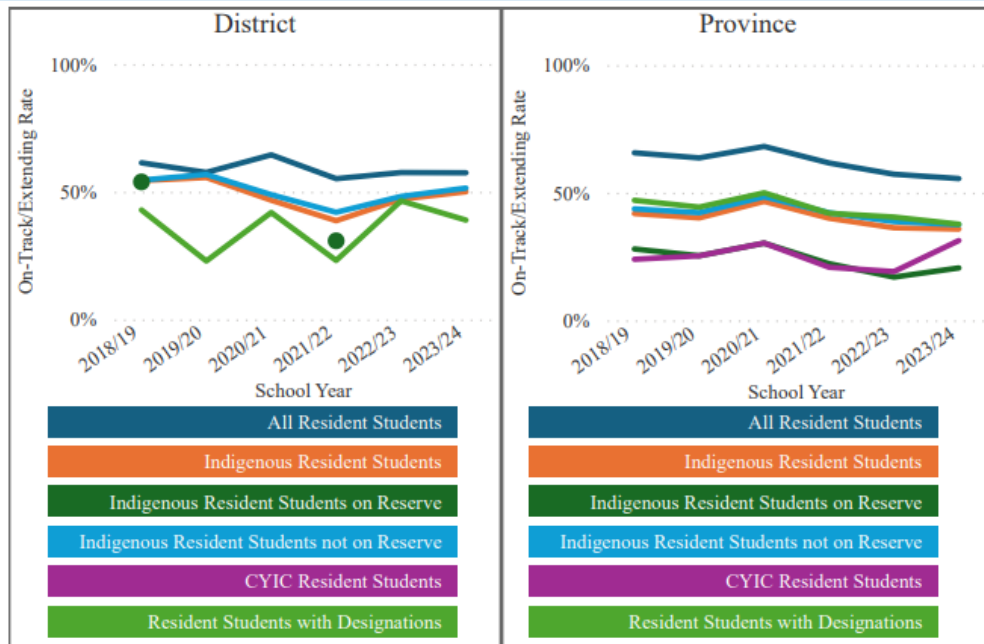
## Educational Outcome 2: Numeracy

Measure 2.1: Grade 4 & Grade 7 Numeracy Expectations

### Grade 4 FSA Numeracy (On-Track / Extending Rate)

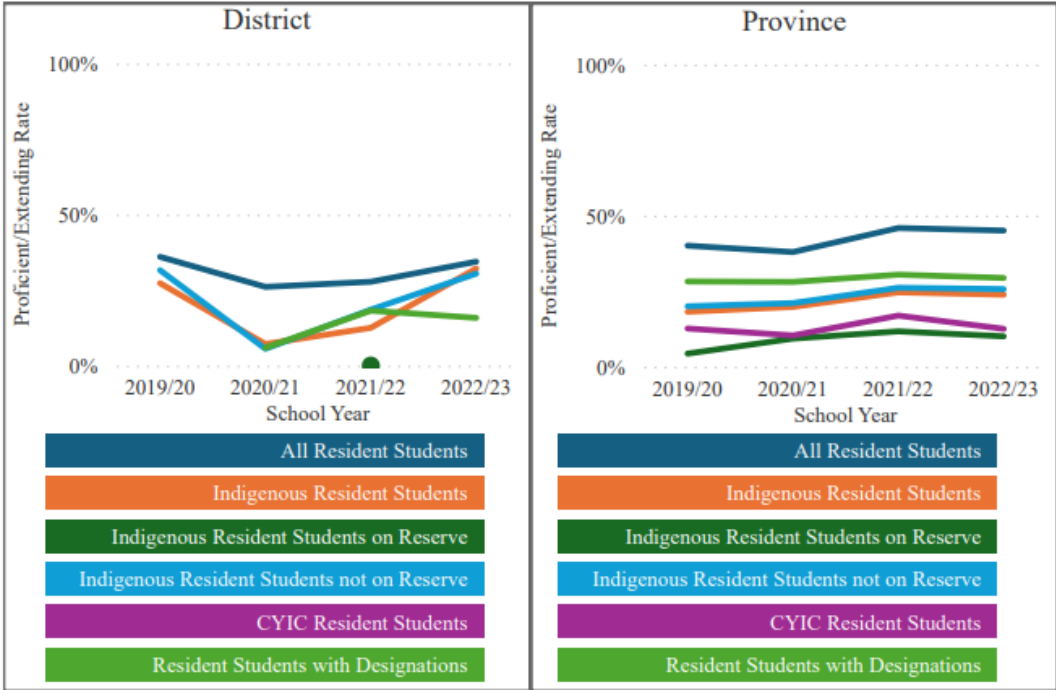


### Grade 7 FSA Numeracy (On-Track / Extending Rate)



Measure 2.2: Grade 10 Numeracy Expectations

**Grade 10 Grad Assessment Numeracy (Proficient / Extending Rate)**



**How Are We Doing Report Data (2022-2023)**

**Numeracy 10**

**Numeracy 10 2022/23: Aboriginal**



■ Emerging ■ Developing ■ Proficient or Extending

**Numeracy 10 2022/23: Non-Aboriginal**



■ Emerging ■ Developing ■ Proficient or Extending

## SD 53- Year End Data From Student Class-Based Reports

**Legend:** Percentage of students demonstrating proficiency in the following areas

- Math - % of students proficient or extending on final class-based reports for Mathematics
- FSA - % of students on-track or extending on Foundation Skills Assessment

### Numeracy Grade 4

School Year	Grade	Cohort 1 (Students in grade 4 in 2022/23)
2020/21	2 Math	63%
2021/22	3 Math	64%
2022/23	4 FSA	57%
2022/23	4 Math	64%
2023/24	5 Math	55%
		<b>Cohort 2 (Students in grade 4 in 2023/24)</b>
2021/22	2 Math	69%
2022/23	3 Math	65 %
2023/24	4 FSA	59%
2023/24	4 Math	61%

### Numeracy Grade 7

School Year	Grade	Cohort 1 (Students in Grade 7 in 2022/23)
2020/21	5 Math	70%
2021/22	6 Math	70%
2022/23	7 FSA	58%
2022/23	7 Math	66%
2023/24	8 Math	43.5 %
		<b>Cohort 2 (Students in Grade 7 in 2023/24)</b>
2021/22	5 Math	57%
2022/23	6 Math	56 %
2023/24	7 FSA	57.4%
2023/24	7 Math	67%

## Numeracy 10

School Year	Grade	% of Students Proficient or Extending
		<b>Cohort 1 (Students in grade 10 in 2022/23)</b>
2019/20	7 Math	54 %
2020/21	8 Math	47%
2021/22	9 Math	37%
<b>% of students who scored C+ or higher on a Gr. 10 or 11 math course</b>		
2022/23	FMP 10	32%
2022/23	WPM10	19%
2023/24	PreCa11	24%
2023/24	WPM11	25%
2023/24	Found11	10%
<b>% of students in a position to pursue an academic path (received credit for Pre-Calc 11 or Foundations 11) = 54%</b>		
		<b>Cohort 2 (Students in grade 10 in 2023/24)</b>
2020/21	MA 7	59%
2021/22	MA 8	39%
2022/23	MA 9	37 %
2023/24	FMP 10	37%
2023/24	WPM10	20%

### Analysis and Interpretation

#### Outcome 2: Numeracy

#### Educational Outcome 2: Numeracy

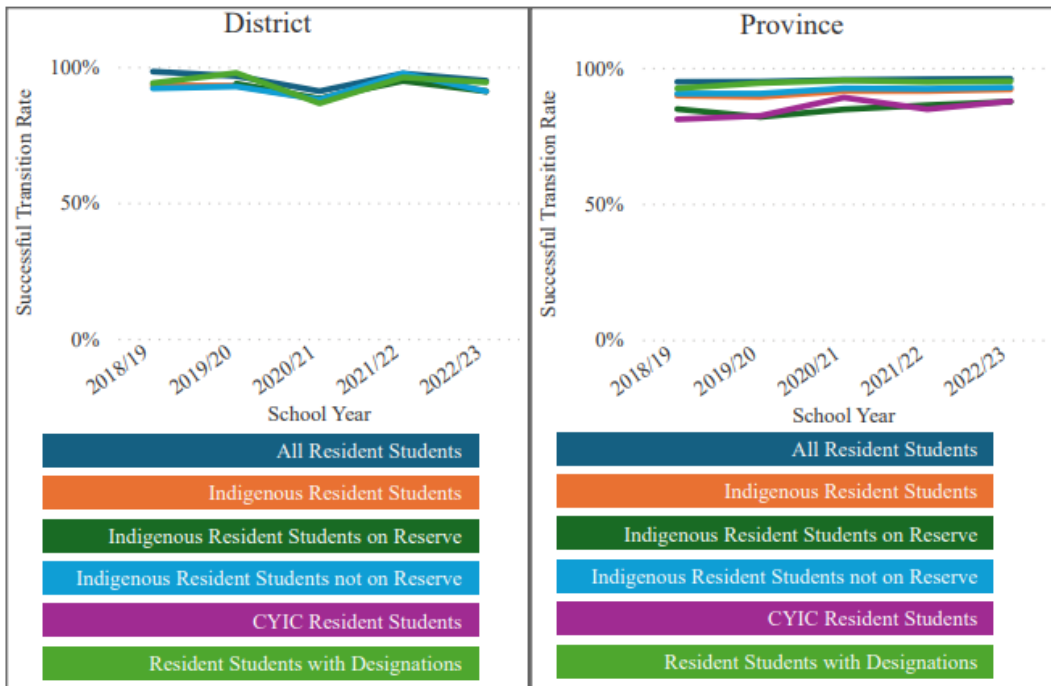
Analysis and Interpretation: What Does This Mean?

- From the analysis of the Gr. 4 FSA numeracy results for all students, the last four years, despite Covid, have shown consistency. Indigenous students are performing on par with non-Indigenous students, and are well above the provincial average. Also very positive is that students with diverse abilities demonstrated a sharp spike in proficiency since 2022/23 and have almost rebounded to pre-Covid levels. This was consistent with the increase for literacy results.

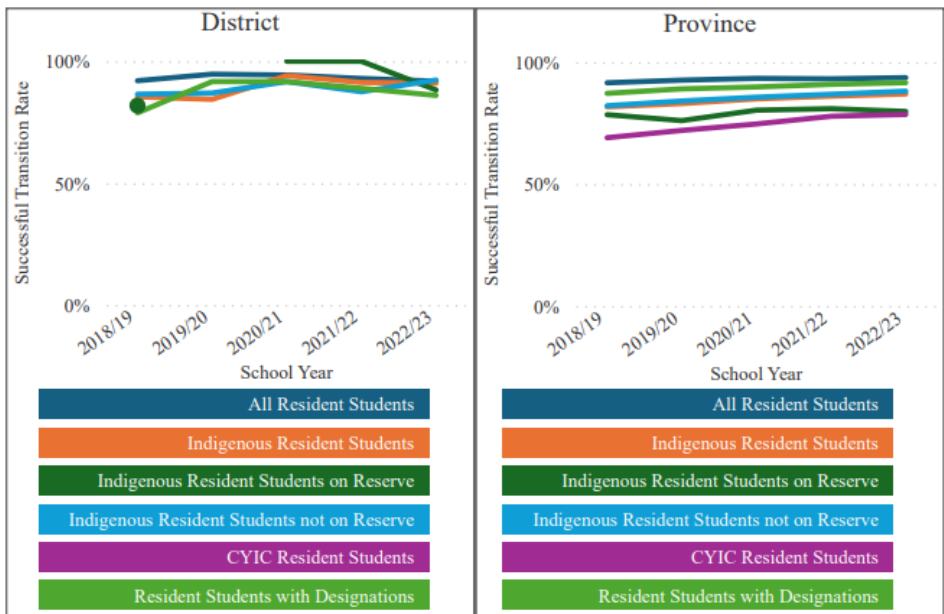
- Children and Youth in Care data is masked for this assessment.
- Final classroom-based reports of proficiency for Math 4 are very consistent with FSA results (61% compared to 59%) in 2023-24.
- With the Grade 7 FSA numeracy results, all students and Indigenous students are trending upwards over the past 3 years, and Indigenous students continue to perform above the provincial average. Students with diverse abilities trended downward in 2023-24. The performance of this group (students with diverse abilities) over the past 5 years has been very inconsistent, but is consistently below 50% on-track or extending.
- There is a 10% discrepancy between school assessed proficiency levels in Math 7 (67%) and Gr. 7 FSA numeracy results (57%).
- Looking at three cohorts we tracked, school assessments indicated a significant decline in proficiency levels from Math 7 to Math 8 (66% proficient or extending in Math 7 down to 43.5% in Math 8 for one cohort and another cohort dropped from 59% proficient in Math 7 down to 39% proficient in Math 8). We are responding to this in our operational plan for 2024-25.
- CIYC students are again masked because the sample size is too small.
- The Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment results show a positive upward trend over the past 3 years for Indigenous students who are also well above the provincial average. Indigenous and non-Indigenous proficiency levels on this assessment are very close.
- The Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment results for students with diverse abilities declined slightly, and despite improvements, overall, evidence indicates performance below the provincial average (except for Indigenous students) and all demographics are performing well below 50% for on-track or extending on this assessment.
- As with literacy, in numeracy when comparing the participation rates of our district to the provincial average for the FSA, we note that our students are participating at much higher rates than the provincial average. It could be argued that provincial averages for performance may be inflated by the students who are being excused from writing the assessments.
- In comparing local numeracy results for the grade 4 and grade 7 cohorts from 2023-24 and back 3 years for the same cohorts, to the results of the FSA scores, we can provide a context on how teachers are utilizing assessments formatively to address the needs of learners. As this is the second year that we have gathered and collated this data, we hope it will provide more information to educators on the trends of cohorts. We are in the process of reviewing and evaluating the school and district level evidence that we collect to evaluate student proficiency in numeracy.
- In 2023/24 64% of students in Grade 10 enrolled in an academic math stream. 58% of those students scored proficient or extending and 19% of the students failed the course (and did not receive credit).
- In 2023/24 54% of students in grade 11 received credit for a math course that would allow them to pursue an academic post-secondary path.

Measure 2.3: Grade-to-Grade Transitions

**Grade 10 to 11 Transition Rate**



**Grade 11 to 12 Transition Rate**



### **Measure 2.3: Grade-to-Grade Transitions**

- From grade 10 to 11 students are transitioning close to 100% in the categories of all students with a slight decline for all demographics in 2022-23.
- For transitions from grade 11 to 12 “all resident students” and Indigenous students are transitioning above provincial averages in the mid 90% area, while students with diverse abilities are transitioning slightly below the provincial averages and have been on a continuous slight decline for the past 4 years.
- This evidence would suggest that all students across our district have higher success transitioning from grades 10 to 11, compared from transitioning from grades 11 to 12.

### **Intellectual Development Summary**

**Literacy:** In summary, the district’s analysis of literacy data reveals a mixed picture. Our grade 4 data overall is consistently trending slightly downward, and we have a plan to address this. The grade 7 data is trending upwards, with particularly good results for students of Indigenous ancestry, but a decrease for students with diverse abilities. End of year reports show that student proficiency levels drop consistently in the transition from grade 7 to grade 8, but our results on the Literacy 10 assessment are increasing and student performance in ELA and EFP courses is also improving. The gap in proficiency at the grade 12 level between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is something we will continue to monitor and to investigate more closely moving forward.

**Numeracy:** In summary, our analysis of local and provincial data suggests that students in our district are exhibiting lower performance levels in numeracy compared to literacy, and are lower overall compared to provincial averages. Additionally, there is a continued, decreasing trend in proficiency levels as students progress through higher grades. This reinforces that numeracy continues to be our highest priority under student achievement in our district strategic plan and operational plan.

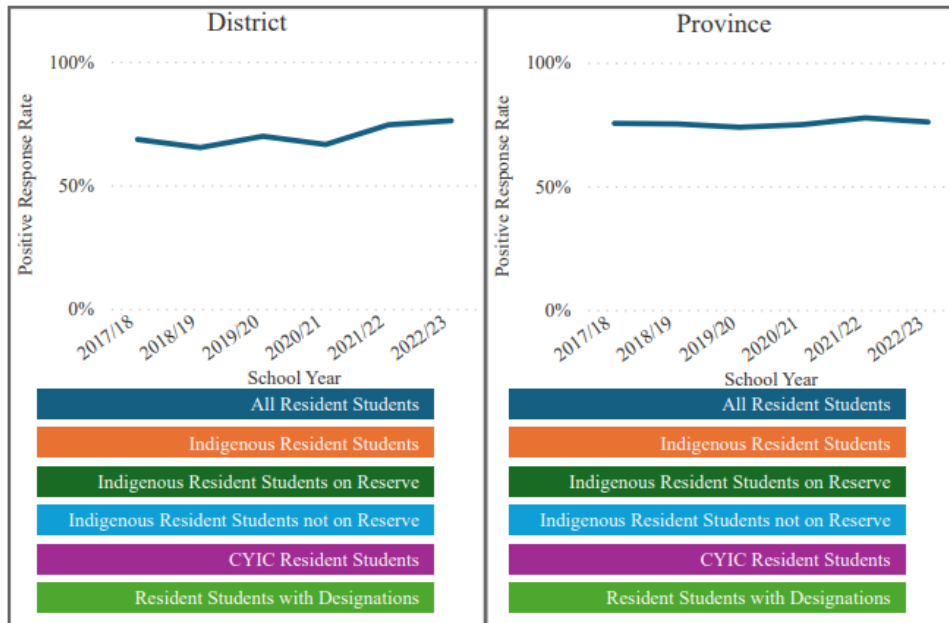
**Grade to Grade Transitions:** Analysis of these results suggests we need to continue providing targeted support for CYIC and students with diverse abilities to provide greater support for a successful transition to grade 12. The consistently high transition rates of Indigenous students speaks to successful initiatives that the district is taking to support students of Indigenous ancestry on their path to graduation.

## Human and Social Development

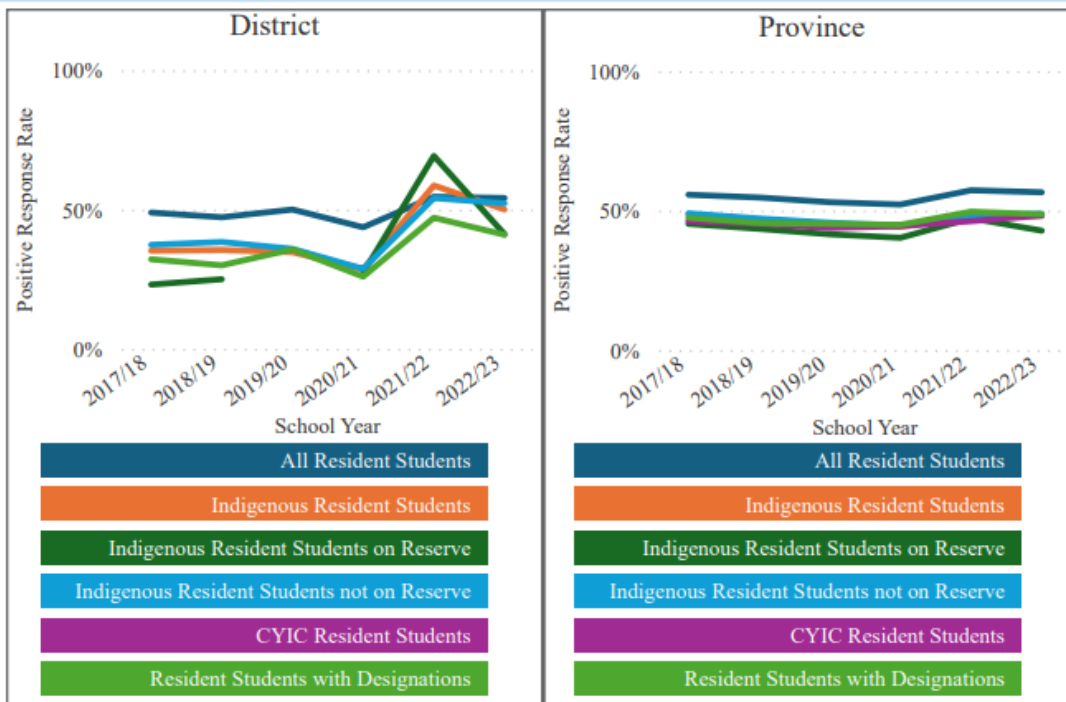
### Educational Outcome 3: Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

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

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

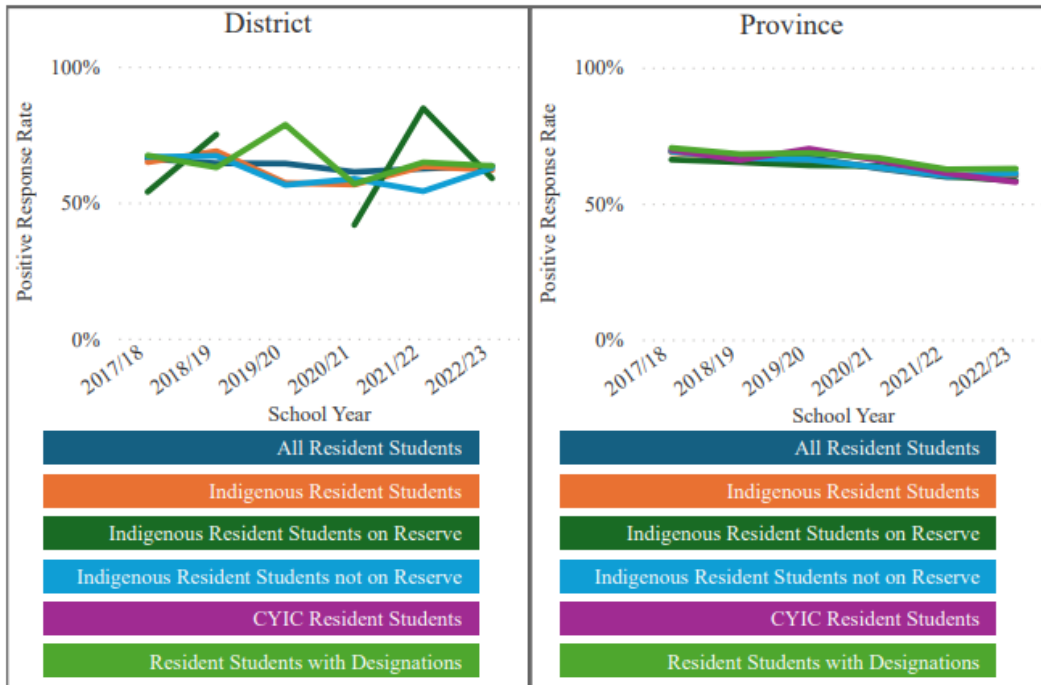


#### Sense of Belonging (Positive Response Rate for Grades 4, 7, and 10)



Measure 3.2: Students Feel that Adults Care About Them at School

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



**SD53 MD1/YDI 2023-24**

Human and Social Development: Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

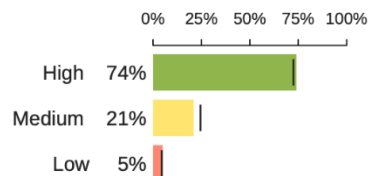
**Connectedness with Adults**

**Grade 4**

CONNECTEDNESS WITH ADULTS

**ADULTS AT SCHOOL**

Assesses the quality of relationships children have with the adults they interact with at school. e.g., "At my school there is an adult who believes I will be a success."

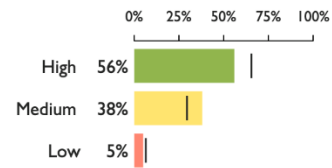


## Grade 6

### CONNECTEDNESS WITH ADULTS

#### ADULTS AT SCHOOL

Assesses the quality of relationships children have with the adults they interact with at school.  
e.g., "At my school there is an adult who believes I will be a success."

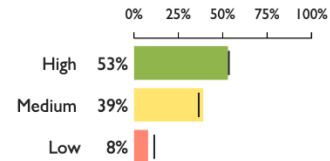


## Grade 8

### CONNECTEDNESS WITH ADULTS

#### ADULTS AT SCHOOL

Assesses the quality of relationships children have with the adults they interact with at school.  
e.g., "At my school there is an adult who believes I will be a success."

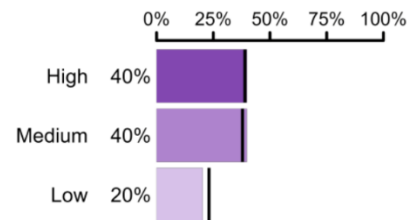


## Grade 11

### SUPPORTIVE ADULTS AT SCHOOL†

Youth's level of agreement with statements about how supported they feel by the adults at their school.

e.g., "At my school, there is an adult who really cares about me."

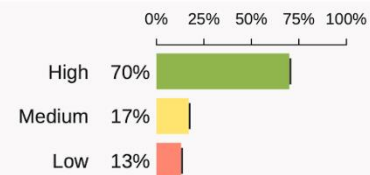


## Belonging

### Grade 4

#### SCHOOL BELONGING

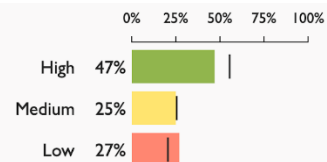
School belonging is the degree to which children feel connected and valued at their school. e.g., "I feel like I am important to this school."



### Grade 6

#### SCHOOL BELONGING

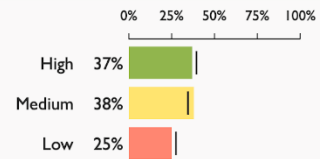
School belonging is the degree to which children feel connected and valued at their school. e.g., "I feel like I am important to this school."



## Grade 8

### SCHOOL BELONGING

School belonging is the degree to which children feel connected and valued at their school. e.g., "I feel like I am important to this school."



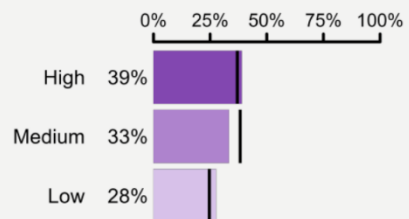
## Grade 11

### SCHOOL CONNECTION

#### SCHOOL BELONGING<sup>†</sup>

Youth's level of agreement with statements about their sense of belonging at school.

e.g., "I feel like I belong in this school."

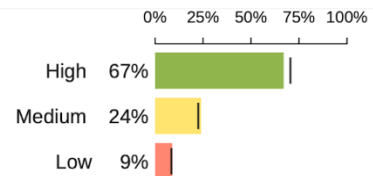


## School Culture/Climate

### Grade 4

#### SCHOOL CLIMATE

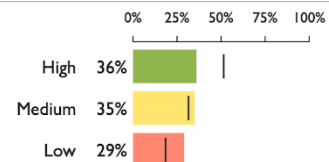
The overall tone of the school environment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other. e.g., "People care about each other in this school."



### Grade 6

#### SCHOOL CLIMATE

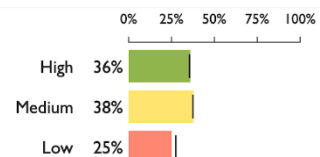
The overall tone of the school environment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other. e.g., "People care about each other in this school."



### Grade 8

#### SCHOOL CLIMATE

The overall tone of the school environment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other. e.g., "People care about each other in this school."



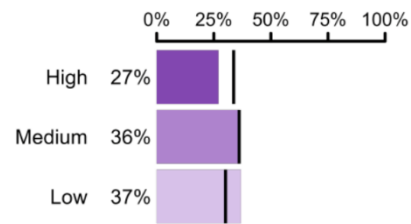
## Grade 11

### SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT†

Youth's level of agreement with statements about the social atmosphere of the school, including the relationships and interactions between and amongst students and staff.

e.g., "Teachers and students treat each other with respect in this school."

†called School Climate on the MDI

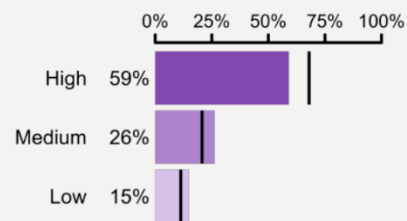


### School Safety (YDI –Gr. 11 Only)

#### SCHOOL CLIMATE

#### SCHOOL SAFETY

Youth's level of agreement with the statement "I feel safe at my school."



### Analysis and Interpretation

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

#### Human and Social Development

##### Measure 3.1: Students feel Welcome:

- Large positive spike in 2021-22 for all students (CIYC masked), followed by a drop in 2022-23 (but not back below pre-covid levels).
- Students with diverse abilities score the lowest of the unmasked demographics.
- Overall results align with provincial averages.
- According to MDI and YDI, most students report a positive school climate with respectful interactions. These numbers do decrease from grade 4 (91%) to grade 11(64%).

### **Students Feel Safe:**

- Our district is on a steady, slight increasing trend over the past 6 years, and our results are similar to provincial averages
- According to YDI results for Grade 11s in the district, 85% of students report a medium or high level of safety at school. 15% reporting a low level of safety is something to be explored further.

### **Sense of Belonging:**

- These trends mirror the “feeling welcome” responses. A large spike for all demographics in 2021-22, followed by a decline in 2022-23 (but not back below pre-covid levels). The group with the most pronounced spike and then drop is Indigenous students living on reserve. We are exploring possible causes of the spike, as well as the drop.
- MDI (Grades 4, 6, and 8) and YDI (Grade 11) results indicate that most students feel a sense of belonging at school. These numbers decrease as students get older between grades 4 and 11.

### **2 Or More Adults Care:**

- Most demographics have remained consistent over the past 6 years, but Indigenous students living on reserve had a large positive spike in 2021-22 followed by a drop in 2022-23.
- MDI results demonstrate that the percentage of students with a strong connection to 2 or more adults decreases from grade 4 to grade 6 to grade 8.
- Grade 8 MDI results for students who chose “none” for number of important adults at school was 50%. While we scored better than the provincial average, this is a very concerning statistic, and reinforces our district priority to focus on students who are in transition years.
- On a positive note, YDI (Gr. 11) results did indicate that students trended toward being more likely to rate their school’s attentiveness to student voices as “high” in our district compared with students in other districts.

### **Human and Social Development Summary**

A story that emerges from this data is that in the 2021-22 school year there was a large increase for most demographics but particularly Indigenous students living on reserve in their sense of belonging, safety, and connectedness. This dropped off in 2022-23 but remained above 2020-21 levels. MDI and YDI results indicate that while most of our students feel connected and supported, this decreases as students progress through older grades.

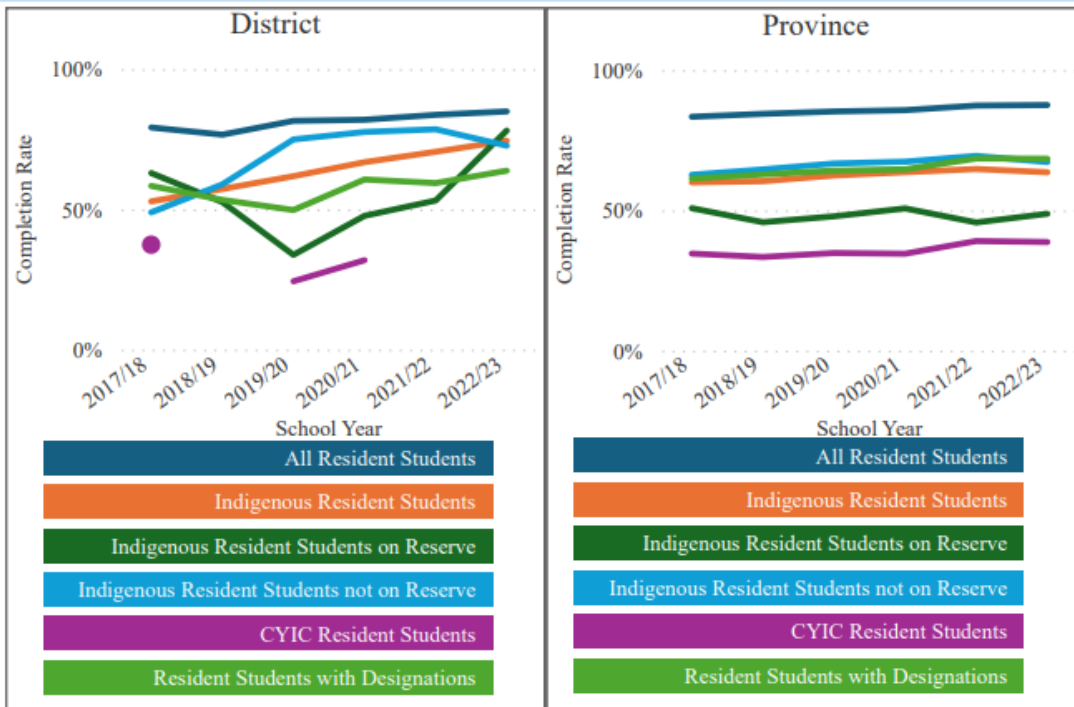
In all categories, it is very difficult to determine information for CIYC because the numbers are so small, so percentages vary greatly from year to year. Our focus as a district is to help schools become aware of which students are (confidentially) identified as in care, and then develop personalized plans to support them.

## Career Development

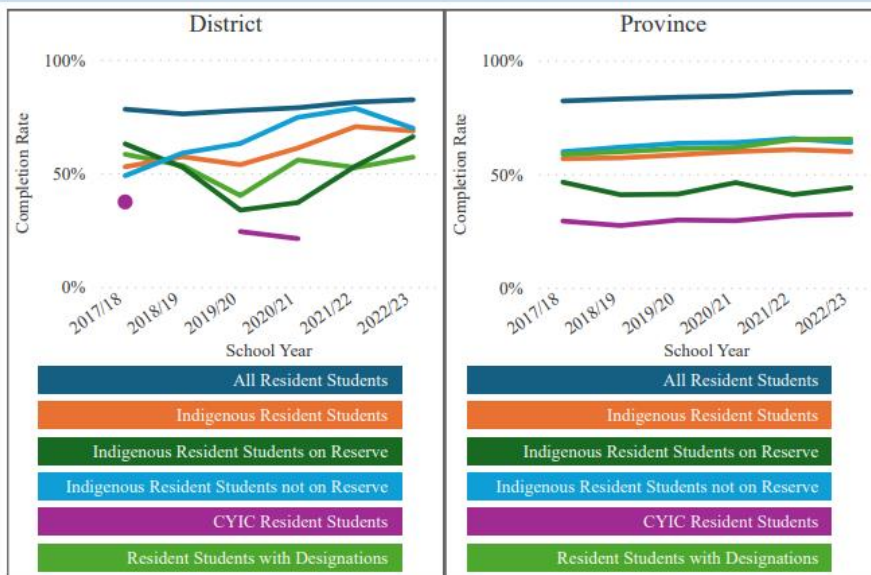
### Educational Outcome 4: Graduation

Measure 4.1: Achieved Dogwood within 5 Years

#### 5-Year Completion Rate (Dogwood & Adult Dogwood)



#### 5-Year Completion Rate (Dogwood Only)



## Analysis and Interpretation

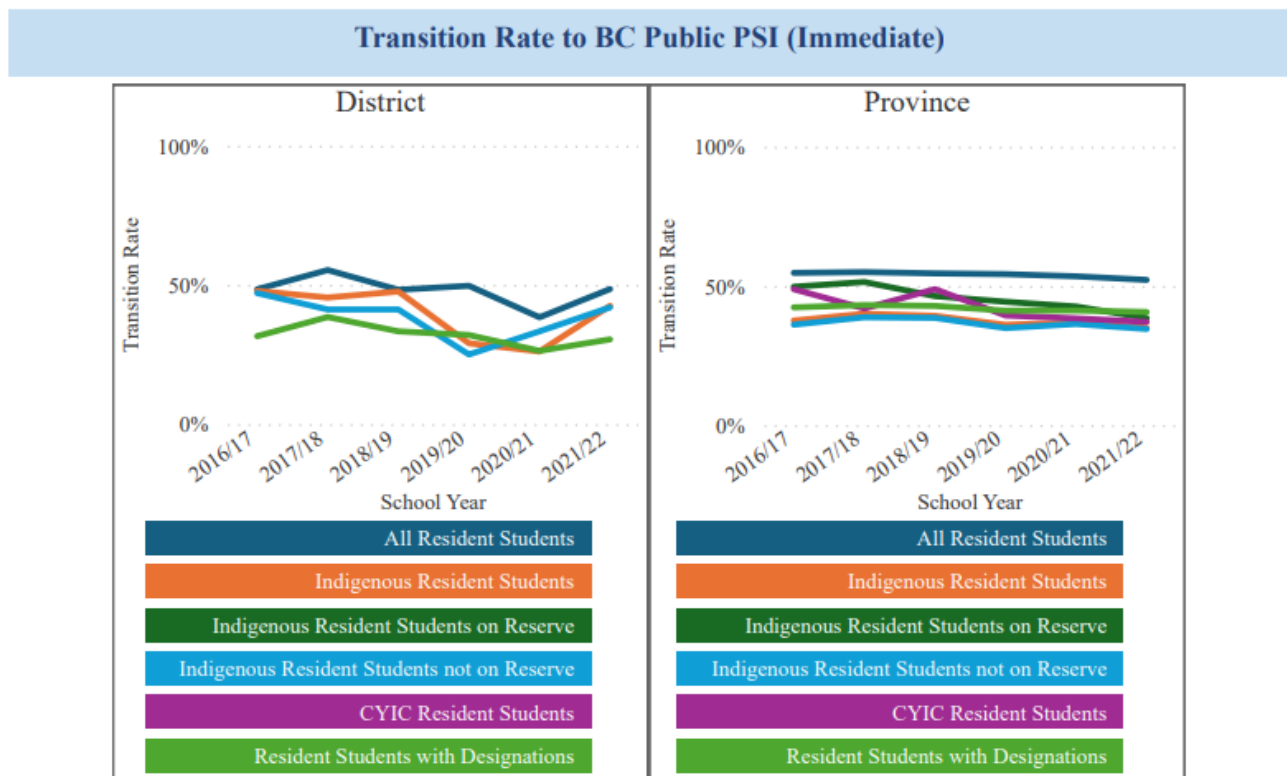
### Outcome 4: Graduation

#### Career Development:

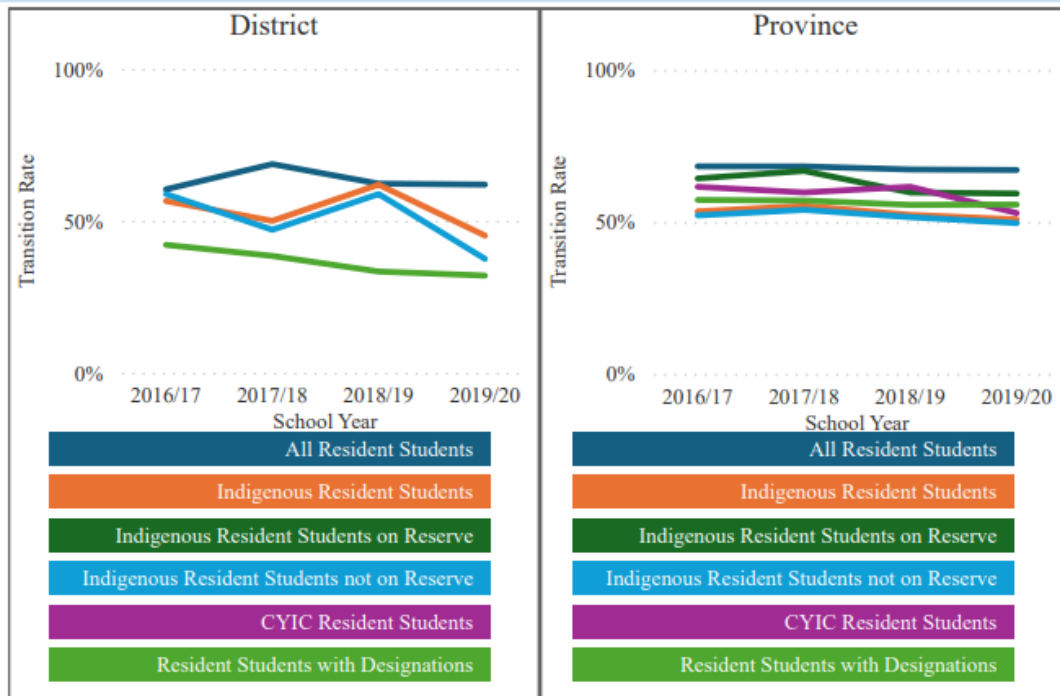
- Our 5 year completion rate has been continually trending upwards since 2018/19. From 2021/22-2022/23 results indicated a very encouraging jump in the graduation rates for Indigenous students living on reserve from 53% to 78% which is significantly above the provincial average. This statistic reflects the targeted work we have been doing to support students of Indigenous ancestry.
- Indigenous students (including students living on reserve) and students with diverse abilities are showing strong and consistent improvements in graduation rates each year. This demonstrates a continued movement towards equity in our graduation rates.
- The 5-year completion rate for CIYC is masked. As mentioned in previous areas, we are focusing on identifying students in care so they can have extra support.
- The percentage of students graduating with an adult dogwood is very low, and there is no evidence of overrepresentation from Indigenous students or students of diverse abilities.

### Educational Outcome 5: Life and Career Core Competencies

#### *Measure 5.1: Post-Secondary Transitions*



## Transition Rate to BC Public PSI (Within 3 Years)



### Analysis and Interpretation

#### Outcome 5: Post-Secondary Transitions

##### Educational Outcome 5: Life and Career Core Competencies

- All demographics (CIYC masked) show a 2-year improvement trend between 2019/20 and 2021/22
- The 3-year transition rate to PSI shows that overall rates are consistent, but students of diverse abilities and Indigenous students trend downwards. Because this data is only available up until 2019/20 we anticipate the results will trend upwards the following year as is reflected in the improving immediate transition rates demonstrated in 2021-22.
- While our district does a good job in preparing students for post-secondary opportunities, as a rural district, our students also face significant barriers to post-secondary education and/or training as they must leave home to access most programming. The requirement to move away from their home communities creates financial, housing, transportation, and sometimes emotional barriers that are not faced by students who live in larger urban centers.

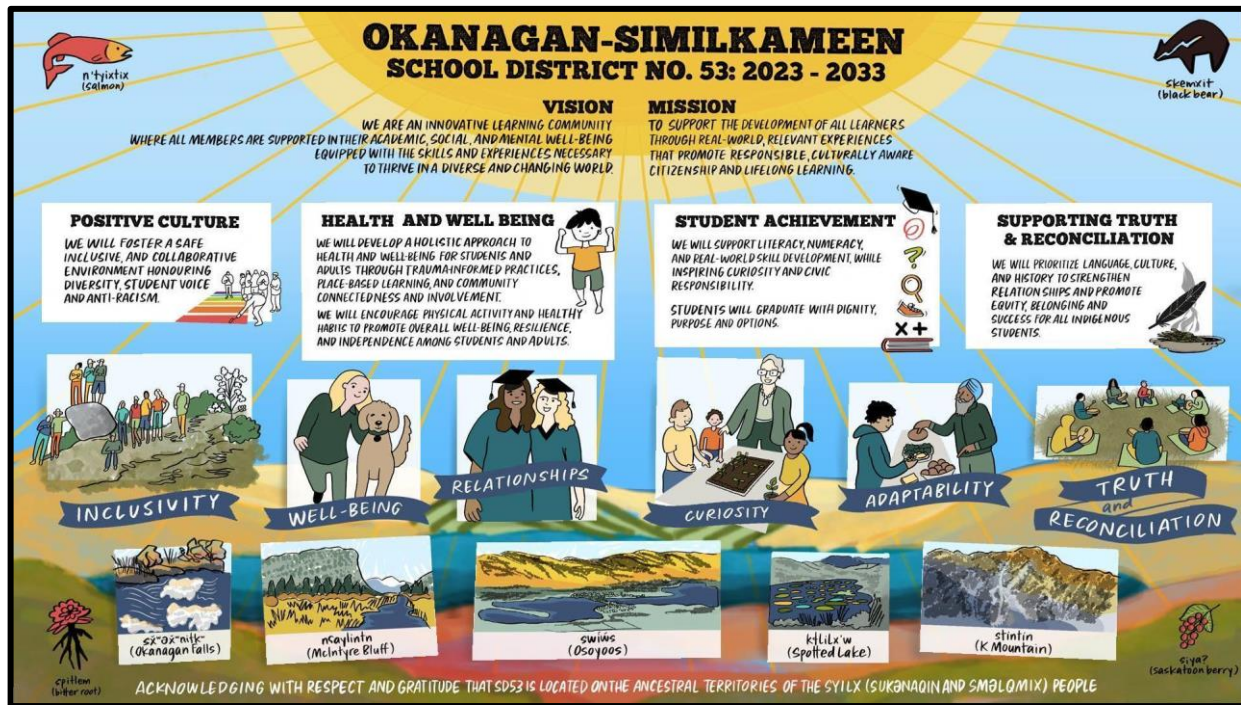
## **Career Development Summary**

Our 5-year overall completion rate has been steadily increasing since 2018/19. Graduation rates for Indigenous students living on reserve has risen from 53% to 78% between 2021/22 and 2022/23, surpassing the provincial average. This reflects our efforts to support Indigenous students and promote equity in graduation rates, including for students with diverse abilities. The 5-year completion rate for children in care (CIYC) is masked, but we are focusing on providing them extra support for this group. Transition rates for post-secondary institutions show a 2-year improvement across most demographics between 2019/20 and 2021/22, though post-secondary transition rates for Indigenous and students with diverse abilities declined slightly up to 2019/20. We anticipate improvement, as 2021-22 data for immediate PSI transition indicates rising rates. As a rural district, our students face barriers to post-secondary education, including financial, housing, transportation, and emotional challenges from leaving home.

## Section B: Moving Forward

### Planning and Adjusting for Continuous Improvement

#### Current Strategic Plan Priorities



The 2023-24 school year was the first year of our 10-year strategic plan. Our 4 goals are:

#### **Strategic Goal 1: Positive Culture**

We will foster a safe, inclusive, and collaborative environment honouring diversity, student voice, and anti-racism.

#### **Strategic Goal 2: Health and Well Being**

We will develop a holistic approach to health and well-being for students and adults through trauma-informed practices, place-based learning, and community connectedness, and involvement.

#### **Strategic Goal 3: Student Achievement**

We will support literacy, numeracy, and real-world skill development, while inspiring curiosity and civic responsibility. Students will graduate with dignity, purpose, and options.

#### **Strategic Goal 4: Supporting Truth and Reconciliation**

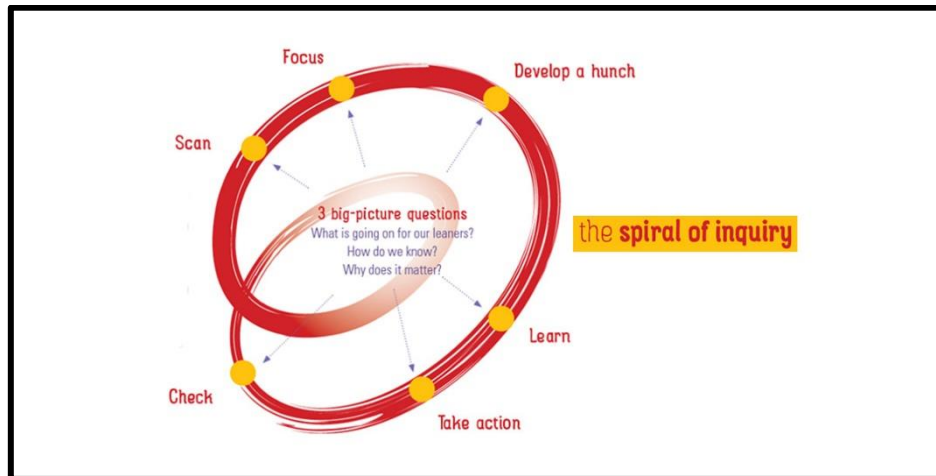
We will prioritize language, culture, and history to strengthen relationships and promote equity, belonging, and success for all Indigenous students.

#### **Operational Plan (2023-2025)**

We have developed a 2-year operational plan which prioritizes action items under each of our four strategic goals. The overview of the strategic plan and our operational plan can be found on our [district website](#).

## **District Approach to Continuous Improvement**

Our district's approach to continuous improvement is through the Spirals of Inquiry model developed by Dr. Judy Halbert and Dr. Linda Kaser. We are in our 11<sup>th</sup> year as a district of embedding the spirals model at the district, school, and individual levels. We have monthly embedded inquiry time that allows all school staff to collaborate on their school plans. Every school plan and individual growth plan (school staff, administration, and district leadership) is developed using the Spirals of Inquiry framework. This model allows us to create district coherence in our approach to continuous improvement.



## **Looking Back on the Year: Effectiveness of Implemented Strategies**

### **1. Policy and Governance:**

- Truth and Reconciliation is one of the four pillars of our new strategic plan, developed with meaningful collaboration with rightsholders and shareholders in 2022-23.
- Regular meetings are held (4 times per year) with the district Indigenous Education Council (IEC) with representation from all three First Nations. The IEC is consulted on district budget priorities and has authority over the spending decisions of any targeted funding for students of Indigenous ancestry. Each IEC gathering also includes student presentations from each of the schools.
- One IEC meeting is held at the school board annex and the other three meetings are held at the band offices of the three First Nations (OIB, LSIB, USIB).
- The District renewed the LEA with the Lower Similkameen Indian Band in the Spring of 2024 and are in the process of renewing LEAs with the Upper Similkameen Indian Band and the Osoyoos Indian Band in 2024-25.
- The LEAs include an LEA Oversight Team with representatives from both the First Nation and the school district whose responsibilities are to manage and support the implementation of the LEA.
- Consistent meeting structures are in place with the Community Situation Table and Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) Team. These structures provide senior district leadership and school-based leadership with the ability to connect regularly to discuss priority SD53 students (including any CYIC) and to respond to any emergent needs relating to their health, well-being, and educational success.

- The District's Equity-In-Action Plan has been woven into the Indigenous Education Council's framework, LEA agreements, and the district's Strategic and Operational Plan. This will increase efficiency, reduce redundancy, and decrease the time and commitment required for individuals (such as First Nations education representatives from small communities). The same Indigenous representatives were being stretched when asked to collaborate with the school district on multiple initiatives and committees with the same goals.
- We are committed to action and have developed a 2-year operational plan to effectively prioritize and implement action items of our strategic plan. At the end of this year when we are creating a new operational plan (2025-2027) we will use the ECC's "Monitoring Strategy Effectiveness" chart as a resource.

## **2. Learning Environment:**

- One of the four goals of our new strategic plan is Positive Culture which includes creating a safe and inclusive environment that honours diversity, student voice, and anti-racism.
- In 2023-24 our district leadership team and school-based administrators had 3 full sessions of anti-racism training with facilitator Angela Ma Brown. These sessions included practical tools that administrators then used to support anti-racism work with school staffs.
- Starting in 2023-24, the District Indigenous Education Team is provided a day each month to focus on district priorities for Indigenous students, and to support professional development and well-being for Indigenous staff.
- We expanded our Street Data community of practice for the second year (based on a Community of Practice started in 2022-23 with Shane Safir and Dr. Jamila Dugan) to find ways to decolonize structures and practices and to authentically highlight the voices of learners on the margins, and to recognize the cultural strengths of students and connect with community. Culturally responsive methods such as empathy interviews are becoming visible throughout the district. Every final school presentation in June 2024 included evidence of street data based on empathy interviews with students.
- Nsyilxcen language instruction is a priority for our district. One of our secondary schools offers Nsyilxcen courses where students can also receive up to 12 credits towards graduation.
- We have created the position of a District Mental Health Coordinator to support the alignment of mental health resources, building capacity of staff to support mental health and well-being of students.
- We have hired a new full-time District Psychologist to support students with diverse abilities.
- For the second year in a row, we sent a team of 13 students to the Annual OMRIE (Okanagan Mainline Regional Indigenous Education) Student Leadership Summit focused on anti-racism. Student voice from the summit was collected and shared with staff and administration as well as district leadership.
- Students across the district are made aware of a "Report It" tool, and are taught how to use/access it if they feel unsafe. Counsellors also ensure students are all aware of and can access the Kids Help Phone.

## **3. Pedagogical Core:**

- We start every year with a district wide (all-staff) professional development day in August focused on Indigenous Perspectives.

- A district wide needs assessment was completed with teachers for areas of in-service to increase representation of Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing in the curriculum. The results were used to plan our annual day in August, and professional development for the 2024-25 school year. Two priorities for teachers were ways to create culturally safe spaces in classrooms, and ways to bring Indigenous perspectives into math and science curriculums. In response to this need we have designed a learning series for secondary math and science teachers for 2024-25 focused on bringing Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum.
- In 2023-24 a district numeracy committee was created to focus on the district's goal to improve student proficiency in numeracy.
- A District Numeracy Coordinator from SD22 worked with primary, intermediate, and secondary teachers to identify gaps in student numeracy skills.
- Retired SD73 District Numeracy Resource Teacher Katie McCormack ran a series all year to support elementary teachers with numeracy strategies in the classroom.
- Work has begun on a district wide screener for Grade 2 and Grade 6 to support teachers' response to gaps in student understanding in a timely and effective manner. This work involves a core team of classroom teachers, building administrators, and district staff which will ensure effective implementation.

#### **4. Learning Profile:**

- For the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row, meetings are held three times per year with each school administrator, Indigenous Education Advocates, and the Vice-Principal of Indigenous education to review and support every Indigenous student's learning progress.
- We continue to support the position of a district Indigenous Graduation Coach to support students in Grades 10-12 in success planning as well as preparation and planning for post-secondary opportunities.
- How Are We Doing Report Data and Strategic Plan and Operational Plan updates are discussed with all school admin, our Indigenous Education Council (IEC) and at monthly public District Education Meetings.
- The district's Integrated Child and Youth Team (ICY) Youth Peer Support Worker supports Youth in Care and students on Youth Agreements (YAG) to navigate the complexities of school life while living independently.
- Each fall, the district's Student Services department meets with each school's School Based Team (SBT) to do a full review of their cohort of students with diverse abilities and disabilities. The purpose of this meeting is to determine the needs for each school (as it relates to specialized training or building capacity for the adults working with our priority children), the resources a school may need to fully support their students, and how the district team can plan for and provide wrap-around support for the students in an intentional and integrated way.
- Each secondary school has regular education meetings with the Education Coordinator of the 3 First Nations to evaluate student academic progress.
- 2023-24 was the first year of increased time for the District Vice-Principal of Indigenous education position.

### **Gains in Early Learning:**

- Our Strong Start ECEs provided outreach in the afternoons and evenings in Oliver and Keremeos.
- The JUST B4 pre-school program is actively registering children who are 4 years old. Families have the choice of attending Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday, and Friday drop-in.
- Another licensed pre-school program “Young Explorers” runs for May and June for children who will be attending Kindergarten at Oliver Elementary School in the fall.
- Childcare spaces have expanded across the district. Every primary school offers child care and after school spaces. These programs are either district operated, or third party operated.
- Our Seamless Day Kindergarten program at both Osoyoos and Oliver Elementary are near capacity. Osoyoos Elementary has 36 after school spaces and Oliver Elementary has 54 spaces. Families are grateful to have a high-quality experience for their children.
- We participated in the “Changing Possibilities for Young Children” provincial project in 2023/24 and will continue in 2024/25.

### **Greatest Areas of Success from Equity in Action Plan:**

- Indigenous students in Grade 4 numeracy are performing on par with non-Indigenous students.
- Indigenous students continue to trend upwards in Literacy and Numeracy on Grade 7 FSA and Grade 10 Literacy and Numeracy Assessments.
- Indigenous graduation rates (including students living on-reserve) are the highest they have ever been and well above the provincial average.
- The inclusion of Indigenous student voice has significantly increased through empathy interviews, presentations to the district’s Indigenous Education Council, and through participation in the regional Indigenous Student Leadership Summit.
- There is a 2-year improvement trend for Indigenous students transitioning immediately to post-secondary institutions.

### **Areas of Success (general):**

- MDI and YDI results indicate that most students feel safe and feel like they belong in schools.
- At the grade 4 level students with diverse abilities demonstrated a sharp positive spike in literacy and numeracy, bringing them on par with the general student population.
- YDI results for Grade 11 students indicated that students were more likely to rate their school’s attentiveness to student voices as “high” in our district compared with students in other districts. We attribute this to the increased focus on collecting street data and the use of empathy interviews in all schools.
- Our overall 5-year completion rates continue to trend upwards and are the highest they have ever been in our district.
- Graduation rates show continuous improvement with priority groups (Indigenous students, students with diverse abilities) which demonstrates increasing equity in educational outcomes in our district. CIYC results are masked for this measurement, but we are developing success plans for every child and youth in care in 2024-25 which will help ensure they receive support if needed.

## Existing and/or Emerging Areas for Growth

- As we have now completed the first year of our strategic plan, we feel that identified areas of growth are being addressed.
- Numeracy continues to be a key area of focus. While we have had some positive improvements in numeracy in the primary grades, local and provincial data indicate lower proficiency levels compared to literacy. Results on the Grade 7 FSAs and Grade 10 Graduation assessment for 2022-23 indicate that the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency in numeracy still needs to be an area of focus. Classroom based proficiency levels in math reveal a significant decrease in numeracy skills and performances in mathematics courses when students enter secondary school. This is demonstrated when we track cohorts from elementary through to secondary and can see a decrease in achievement from grade 7 to grade 10. Improving student numeracy skills continues to be a priority for our strategic planning.
- Literacy also continues to be an area of focus, particularly the decrease in literacy proficiency levels as students get older. The discrepancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in their proficiency levels in Grade 12 English Language Arts courses and on the Literacy 10 and 12 provincial assessments is also an area of concern. A final emerging area for growth is the downward trend in literacy at the grade 4 level.
- In the areas of student well-being, sense of belonging, safety, feeling welcome, and adult support at school, Student Learning Survey scores reflect positive trends. Two key goals of our strategic plan (Positive Culture, and Health and Well-being) demonstrate the district's commitment to supporting these areas. MDI results did identify individual cohorts with areas of specific concern (for example Grade 8s reporting that 50% did not identify any important adults). We also identified that while students demonstrate overall positive responses in measurements for human and social development (sense of belonging, feeling welcome etc.) percentages trend downwards in every area as students progress through older grades.
- In career development our transition rates are stable and our completion rates continue to trend upwards. In 2022-23 there was a large increase in completion rates for Indigenous students on reserve; however, the gap between completion rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners continues to be an area of focus. We also continue to prioritize support for students with diverse abilities who (while trending upwards) are still below the general graduation rates in our district. Children and youth in care are also a priority. We know there are still many challenges to overcome to ensure equity for these groups, and we continue to address these through our strategic planning.

## Ongoing Strategic Engagement

As a district we use a broad range of engagement activities to ensure active involvement and feedback from various stakeholders, students, parents, rightsholders, educators and community members. This meaningful feedback will inform and improve the quality of learning provided to students within the district. In 2022/23, our engagement was focused on developing our 10-year strategic plan, while in 2023/24 our focus shifted to prioritizing and operationalizing the plan. We provided multiple access points to continually gather input and feedback from students, parents, staff, and community members.

### **Issues that were raised as part of our engagement included:**

- Strategic Plan and Operational Plan Priorities
  - Positive Culture (strategies for inclusion and safety such as promoting student voice)
  - Health and Well Being (strategies to promote physical and mental well-being)
  - Student Achievement (strategies for numeracy and literacy)
  - Supporting Truth and Reconciliation (strategies to promote equity and the success of Indigenous students)
- Results of Ministry Reports (HAWD, FESL etc.)
- Budget priorities
- School Plans

### **Specific Methods of Engagement included:**

- Regular, consistent, and scheduled structures are in place for community engagement at the district and school levels. These include in-person PAC meetings, School Board meetings, budget meetings, District Education Meetings, school plan presentations, and IEC meetings).
- School plans (aligned with the District Strategic Plan) are presented to the public at the beginning and end of the year. This year we also published videos of the school plan presentations on school websites to increase parent access.
- At the school level, school-based teams work collaboratively in consultation with parents of students with diverse abilities and disabilities to develop educational goals and discuss progress and transition planning.
- See pg. 29 for specific examples of engagement with First Nations communities and Indigenous partners (under Policy and Governance).
- Consultation also includes provincial and community partners such as Inclusion Outreach, POPARD, Set BC, MCFD-CYSN, social workers and other connected community supports who may be working with the students, staff, and families to ensure a full wrap-around approach.
- Our Integrated Child Youth team (ICY) works within a wraparound collaborative care model with MCFD, Interior Health, MMHA and MECC as partner entities to support our local children, youth and families.
- The Strengthening Early Years to Kindergarten Transition (SEY2KT) teams held "Pop Up Play's" in Olalla, Hedley, Keremeos, Cawston, and Okanagan Falls and five events in Oliver including the Recreation Centre and Bhav Sagar Sikh Temple. At these events families participated in games, story time, dinner, and made valuable connections with others in our community.
- We have two feeder on-reserve elementary schools. Our district works to coordinate with these schools by inviting students to participate in district events, having focused transition meetings, working with administration of the schools, participating in cultural events hosted by the schools, and having graduates of the secondary schools visit for a "grad walk" in June. Staff and administration from these schools are also invited to participate in our district professional development day.
- 2 members of our district staff (Director of Student Support Services, District Vice-Principal Early Learning) are part of a MCFD Community Led Collaboration Project with the goal to engage with families of children with support needs to determine their service needs and make recommendations to MCFD.
- Our district has a strong partnership with the Southern Okanagan Immigrant & Community Services (SOICS). This group works with us to provide a variety of supports for new families such as interpreter

services, as well as partnering with schools to support anti-racism initiatives and cultural performances that promote diversity.

- From February until May of 2024, public budget consultations meetings were held for the 2024/25 budget. All shareholders, rightsholders, and partner groups were consulted, and in addition the online platform Community Voice was used to increase accessibility and engagement for anyone who could not participate in person.

### **Examples of feedback received and how it shaped next steps:**

- IEC members are continually informed on district initiatives such as adjustments to the cell phone code of conduct, use of student and family affordability funding (SFAF), strategies for engaging students and parents, and approval of targeted funding for Indigenous Students. The district responds by implementing suggestions from the IEC.
- Work with education coordinators of each First Nation helps support students and families to succeed in school. A concrete example is when a school implemented a recommendation by the First Nation to engage the Okanagan Nation Alliance Restorative Justice program to support the resolution of a conflict.
- The district hosts a variety of different meetings on reserve to increase engagement. At one meeting for parents, suggestions were provided for increasing awareness of the role of the Indigenous advocates, and for secondary teachers to consider using an app to connect with parents that had been used at the elementary feeder school. These suggestions were implemented, and communication and relationships were improved.
- Members of district staff and teaching staff met with a representative group from the Bhav Sagar Sikh Temple (elders, parents, and students) to answer questions and discuss issues of diversity in relation to the SOGI curriculum. This meeting helped improve communication and increase understanding and eliminate misinformation which was appreciated by the parents.
- Partnership meetings involving First Nations representatives, CYMH, the Friendship Centre, RCMP, and school staff are designed to create a wrap-around dialogue to support vulnerable students. The schools implement recommendations from the participants of these meetings.
- After 2 years of trying to engage parents and community members through the online platform "Bang The Table" we have had limited response, so the District is discontinuing this method, and will explore other options.

### **Future Steps:**

We are currently participating in a valuable ECC Community of Practice focused on Strategic Engagement, which will help us continue to improve in this area. School District 74 is one partner we are learning from through the community of practice work. We're in the process of completing a district scan activity with senior management, school-based administrators, school staff, board members, student groups and Parent Advisory Councils. We are familiarizing ourselves with consistent language to describe different levels of engagement to help with clarity and to improve communication. This work will allow us to become more focused and efficient in our strategic planning in 2024-2025.

## Adjustment and Adaptations: Next Steps

- This year was our first year of operationalizing our strategic plan. We created a 2-year plan (2023-2025) and took steps to address the areas that needed attention. Our number one goal under student achievement was to improve student proficiency in numeracy and we developed a district numeracy committee, consulted with other districts, brought in a provincial numeracy specialist, and began designing a district wide screener for elementary students. We consulted primary, intermediate and secondary teachers and conducted student interviews about what works and doesn't work for them in numeracy. The next steps will be to implement the numeracy assessment and then support teachers with a year-long learning series that supports them in instructional response strategies based on the needs identified for their students by the screeners. We are also focusing specifically on the drop in numeracy proficiency when students go from grade 7 to grade 8, as well as the continued decrease in proficiency through the secondary years.
- In literacy, we recognize the need to continue supporting students through their secondary years to stop the declining literacy rates as students age. We are also responding to the slight (but consistent) decline over 6 years in grade 4 literacy results. This will be addressed with a year long literacy series facilitated by the Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years (POPEY) and will involve teachers from every elementary school in the district.
- Administrators and staff are reviewing the year-end school-based assessments used to evaluate student proficiency in literacy from K-7. We are beginning discussions on how to collect timely and authentic evidence, and exploring opportunities for educators to use this evidence in ways that will have the greatest impact on student learning.
- In areas connected to Human and Social Development, we are continuing the work started 2 years ago which focused on improving the experience of Indigenous students who transition from elementary to secondary. Our district has been invited by Dr. Judy Halbert and Linda Kaiser to participate in a project focusing on supporting transitions for Indigenous students in partnership with provincial Indigenous educational leaders Jo Chrona and Jana Fox.
- Under our focus on Truth and Reconciliation we continue to prioritize communication with students and parents of Indigenous Ancestry. We strive to strengthen the relationship between the School District and the 3 First Nations we serve as well as the Metis community.
- The creation of a district Indigenous Student Leadership Advisory group (including both secondary and elementary students) will be an expansion of the work from the Street Data Community of Practice and will also be a response to making Indigenous students feel more safe, welcome, and connected to adults in their schools.
- In supporting Children and Youth in Care we are streamlining communication around which students are in care, including creating consistency in registration processes (the way students in care are confidentially identified in schools), as well as increasing communication with the Ministry. One of our issues with supporting Children and Youth in care is that confidentiality requirements can make it challenging to identify these students.
- Next year we will pilot Individual Learning Plans (ILP)s for any on reserve student who is considered to be vulnerable but does not already have an IEP. We will also create ILPs for any Children and Youth in Care in the district (who we are aware of). These expectations are also outlined in the Local Education

Agreements (LEAs) of two First Nations. To improve the rates of students with diverse abilities and CYIC transitioning to post-secondary, we are also exploring the possibility of a graduation coach for this group of students.

- We will continue strategies we have implemented that have had a positive impact on students including expanding the Student Services Department, continuing with a district coordinator for healthy schools and another for mental health, as well as the continued support and expansion of the Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) team.

## Alignment for Successful Implementation

The district's approach to overall alignment to ensure we are leveraging and allocating resources to support the successful implementation of strategies includes:

- All public communications (PAC meetings, School Board meetings, budget meetings, District Education Meetings, Sr. Management Meetings, Administration meetings and school plan presentations) are framed through the 4 goals of our Strategic Plan.  
School-based administrators are encouraged to frame communications with staff, students, and parents through the Strategic Plan as well.
- We have finished the first year of our Operational Plan which allows us to prioritize and implement the Strategic plan with actionable and measurable items.
- Weekly meetings with the senior management team including directors and managers in the education, facilities, finance, and human resources departments ensures there is horizontal alignment and efficiency in the distribution of resources.
- The Spirals of Inquiry framework is used at the district level, in school plans, and to design individual teacher and administrator professional growth plans. School plans all align with and support the district strategic plan.
- Our budget consultation process is organized through the goals of our strategic plan so we can prioritize resources to implement adaptive strategies and ensure district-wide vertical and horizontal alignment.
- School plans are presented to the Board, senior staff, school and district administrators, staff, and to the public at the beginning of October and there is a review of plans presented at a public meeting in early June each year.
- School plans are adjusted based on the context of each school, taking into account the consideration of the greatest needs of the students (determined by the Spirals of Inquiry process of analysis of evidence (scanning), focusing, professional learning, action and reflection).
- Our Equity In Action plan has been woven into our Strategic and Operational Plans.
- LEAs include Oversight Teams to reflect and evaluate the district's progress in supporting the success and well-being of First Nations Students.
- The Indigenous Education Council (in place since 2007) guides the district in initiatives to support all students of Indigenous ancestry.

The district has found through aligning these plans that there is not only a sense of purpose and coherence district wide, but we have more people working together on the same issues and challenges that our students are experiencing. We have drawn upon the work of educators in School District 38 (Richmond) for their strategies and visual graphics focused on creating district coherence.

## Conclusion:

In conclusion, we have completed the first year of our ten-year Strategic Plan and have taken significant steps to operationalize it. While celebrating our achievements, we recognize areas needing continued attention and growth, specifically enhancing numeracy, supporting students' social and emotional well-being, and continuing to improve graduation rates among students with Indigenous ancestry. We are also emphasizing critical transitions, particularly from elementary to secondary school, with targeted support for priority students.

Our commitment goes beyond developing the plan; we are actively implementing identified strategies. Leveraging Street Data provides deeper insights into students' needs, and the Spirals of Inquiry model sustains our culture of continuous improvement. We are dedicated to using data purposefully to guide informed decisions and will continue to focus on supporting staff to effectively collect, analyze, and responsively adapt instruction.

Our journey is driven by meaningful community engagement, and these collaborative efforts help us clarify ways to improve student achievement. By addressing our growth areas, focusing on transitions, and executing our strategies, we are progressing toward our strategic plan goals and nurturing an educational environment committed to our students' success and well-being.