



Date: October 23, 2024 **Agenda Item:** 8.2

To: Board of Trustees

From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

Originator(s): Jonathan Konrad, Deputy Superintendent, Education Services
Sean Nicholson, Associate Superintendent, Corporate Services
Shannon Requa, Director, Education Planning
Maxine Hildebrant, Coordinator, Indigenous Education

Subject: **Indigenous Funding within Sturgeon Public Schools Report**

Background:

In the spring budget process, the Division received \$1,070,508 in funding under the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Grant. This funding was either provided to the school as an allocation based on the number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students or managed centrally to provide division-wide support.

37% (\$400,000) of the grant was allocated centrally. Almost all of the activities in schools are also supported centrally, if not financially, then through human resources; discussion, planning and helping make connections with local Indigenous leaders. The positions held centrally to support Indigenous Student Success and a few of their areas of responsibility are:

- First Nations Cultural Liaison (vacant, searching for replacement)
 - Bridge community connections
 - Student support, mentorship and leadership opportunities
 - Parent and family support
- Métis Learning Coach
 - On-call support and coaching for staff development
 - Planning and development of school-based cultural events
 - Development of a variety of teaching and learning resources
 - Student support, mentorship and advisorship
- Coordinator of Indigenous Education
 - 1 week residencies in each school site
 - Development of a variety of teaching and learning resources
 - In-school Indigenous education for student instruction
 - On-call support and coaching for staff development
 - Planning and development of school-based cultural events
 - Call to Action Cohort Planning

- Student cultural and leadership groups
- Co-host of Indigenous Parent Advisory Committee
- Support for school-based family engagement events

- Director of Education Planning (half of portfolio)
 - Development of individual school Indigenous Education Plans and support for school leaders
 - Facilitate connections with Kipohtakaw Education Center (KEC), the division, and Education Service Agreement Schools
 - Accountability and Assurance Measure reporting
 - Extending partnerships with external organizations (Legacy of Hope, University of Calgary, University of Alberta)
 - Fostering relationships with community partners, knowledge keepers and Elders
 - Orientation, leadership development and support for Indigenous Education Lead Team members
 - Co-host of Indigenous Parent Advisory Committee

- Call to Action Lead release time to attend centrally coordinated learning experiences
 - One lead per school site

- Large-scale Division Events:
 - Exploring Legacy of Hope Exhibition
 - Sturgeon Public Schools Indigenous Peoples Day Event

- External Presenters, Knowledge Keepers and Elders' Honoraria, protocol and small gifts. For example:
 - Karen West, University of Alberta, Indigenous Pedagogy in New Science Curricula, Call to Action Cohort, Division PD Day
 - Adam North Peigan, President Legacy of Hope Foundation, Leadership Professional Learning, Call to Action Cohort, Division PD Day

- Centrally designated supplies, media and learning materials

Alongside the support provided by Central Office, schools across the Sturgeon Public School Division have been working to foster inclusive environments that promote cultural pride and student success. These efforts, carried out directly at the school level, emphasize building strong community connections, celebrating Indigenous culture and providing leadership opportunities for students.

63% (\$670,508) or \$1,056 per self-identified student (On a Weighted-Moving-Average WMA basis) of the grant was allocated to schools. This funding became part of the Service

& Supports funding along with Specialized Learning Support (SLS), Language delay, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Classroom Complexity support. The positions in schools from this funding cover Educational Assistants, Child and Youth Care workers, School Counselor FTE and Learning Support Leads FTE.

Activities focused on Indigenous student success hosted in schools include the following:

Cultural Learning Opportunities

Several schools are finding ways to weave Indigenous knowledge and traditions into everyday learning. Sturgeon Composite High School (SCHS) offers Aboriginal Studies Classes and partners with the Kipohtakaw Education Centre (KEC) for the addition of Cree language instructions and cultural field trips. Additionally, SCHS students in the Health Pathways Class have had the chance to explore traditional healing practices, guided by a local Knowledge Keeper. These opportunities are helping to nurture a sense of cultural pride, while also preserving Indigenous languages.

Engagement with Knowledge Keepers and Elders

Schools such as Camilla and Four Winds have begun working closely with community members, Knowledge Keeper, and Elders, inviting them into classrooms to share cultural teachings, crafts and storytelling. These experiences are starting to make a difference in how students and staff connect with Indigenous traditions.

Nurturing Indigenous Student Leadership

At schools like Sturgeon Composite High School, Lilian Schick, Four Winds and Camilla, efforts are underway to develop student leadership groups that focus on empowering Indigenous youth. By providing opportunities for students to step into leadership roles, schools are helping to cultivate a sense of agency and belonging.

Cultural Camps and Immersive Learning Experiences

Looking ahead, the Division, local schools and Alexander First Nation hope to expand the offering of overnight culture camps for high school students. These camps offer immersive learning opportunities rooted in Indigenous traditions, allowing students to engage more deeply with Indigenous ways of knowing.

Student-Led Land Acknowledgements

Several schools have embraced the practice of creating student-led land acknowledgements. For example, at Morinville Public School, Grade 4 classrooms collaboratively create their own unique acknowledgements, which are then shared with the school over the announcements. These acknowledgements help students understand the importance of honouring the land and its history while allowing them to reflect on how to care for it in the future. Similarly, Sturgeon Heights School involves students in crafting land

acknowledgements that are shared every Monday during the morning announcements, fostering a deeper awareness of the land's significance.

Connecting to Indigenous Ways of Being through Outdoor Learning

Schools like Ochre Park and Sturgeon Heights have incorporated land-based learning into their daily routines. At Ochre Park, students engage with outdoor spaces for nature-based education, including planting and harvesting vegetables from a school garden. These activities help students connect with the land and understand the cycle of growth, while at Sturgeon Heights, students learn about the Cree Moon through regular visits to Dixon's Pond. These place-based studies are designed to raise awareness of seasonal changes and their impact on the environment, connecting students to traditional Indigenous knowledge about land and nature.

These examples illustrate some of the initiatives and activities that are present in schools that support Indigenous student success. There are many other examples occurring in classrooms as teachers meet TQS 5 in their professional practice. It is an ongoing journey of learning Indigenous ways, honouring elders and knowledge keepers and ensuring all students are supported and belong across the division.

Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):

This report aligns with the [SLOS](#) in the following way:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| COMPETENCY: | (5) Ensuring First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education for all Students |
| INDICATORS: | d. aligning school authority resources and building organizational capacity to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement. |
| COMPETENCY: | (6) School Authority Operations and Resources |
| INDICATORS: | a. providing direction on fiscal and resource management in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and school authority requirements. |
| COMPETENCY: | (7) Supporting Effective Governance |
| INDICATORS: | i. facilitating collaboration among the board, staff and First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders, organizations and communities to establish strategic policy directions in support of First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and development |

Governance Implications:

Education Act

Preamble

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta is committed to encouraging the collaboration of all partners in the education system to ensure the educational success of Alberta's First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Policy 225: Role of the Board

Governance and Organization

The Board shall establish and maintain governance and organizational structures that promote student well-being and success, and monitor and evaluate their effectiveness [Education Act s. 33(1)(h)]. Specifically, the Board:

26. Develop, approve and monitor the implementation of policies to guide the Division and the Board.
27. Provide direction in those areas over which the Board wishes to retain authority.
28. Monitor the development, revision and implementation of policy.
29. Develop a plan to foster governance excellence in fiduciary, strategic and generative engagement modes.
30. Annually evaluate Board effectiveness in meeting performance indicators and determine a positive path forward.
31. Develop an annual work plan with timelines.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the October 23, 2024, Public Board meeting.

Attachment(s):

1. Indigenous Success Plan (September 23, 2024, Public Board)

Date: September 23, 2024 **Agenda Item:** 8.1

To: Board of Trustees

From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

Originator(s): Jonathan Konrad, Deputy Superintendent, Education Services
Shannon Requa, Director, Education Planning
Maxine Hildebrandt, Coordinator, Indigenous Education

Subject: **Indigenous Student Success**

Background:

National Truth and Reconciliation Week, Orange Shirt Day and Supporting Activities:

From September 23rd to 27th, all Sturgeon Public School (SPS) students will have the opportunity to engage in activities which acknowledge the histories, impact and truth of residential schools, and honour the survivors, their families and communities.

- Division-wide daily activity guides created for elementary and secondary teachers. Includes vetted and linked resources and is intended as minimum expectations.
- Many sites are planning school-based activities in addition to the division curated activities.
- Orange Shirt Day will be acknowledged throughout SPS on September 27th.
- Permanent Tipi remains in place at Sturgeon Composite High School and has been extremely well received. A wide variety of learning experiences, as well as cultural teachings have transpired there. With support from Helen Arcand, two Tipis have been donated to the Division - intended for Four Winds and Camilla schools. Along with the Tipi at the Frank Robinson Education Centre, these additional Tipi's will be erected in spring and will stand for National Indigenous Peoples Month.

Strategic Planning For 2024-2025

The Division continues to focus on multiple research informed targets to support Indigenous Student Success and system improvement. Beyond academic achievement and attendance, the Division strives to create learning opportunities where Indigenous students see themselves and their culture represented in empowered learning and are meaningfully part of safe and healthy communities. Interesting opportunities for leadership and student voice create space for students to engage with their learning, culture and school communities.

By focusing on strength-based intercultural exchange, all students are exposed to foundational knowledge, Indigenous worldview, truth and history. As the Division continues

to prioritize and build community connections, all students benefit from intergenerational teaching, experiential and land-based learning and local and diverse Indigenous wisdom, language and culture. The Division continues to make concerted effort to strengthen relationships with Alexander First Nation and Kipohtakaw Education Center (KEC), seeking opportunities for reciprocal connections. We also continue to foster a relationship with Elder Adam North Peigan, President of the Legacy of Hope Foundation.

Many of the key strategies outlined for the upcoming year represent a continuation of groundwork initiated last year.

Goals, Strategies and Measures of Success for 2024/2025:

Goal 1: Enhancing Local Community Partnerships and Intergenerational Connections

Strategy. Establish and strengthen partnerships with local Indigenous community members, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers to promote cultural exchange, support learning experiences, and deepen connections between schools and Indigenous communities.

Measurable Data:

- Number of partnerships and collaborations formed with local Indigenous community members.
- Number of meaningful connections with Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
- Participation rates in cultural events and workshops.
- Regular meetings between KEC, Camilla and Sturgeon Composite High School.
- Evidence of contributions to KEC/Alexander First Nation.

Goal 2: Strengthening Community and Family Engagement

Strategy: Create opportunities for Indigenous families to engage with schools through events, advisory committees, and collaborative initiatives, fostering a supportive environment for Indigenous student success.

Measurable Data:

- Number of opportunities for support for schools interested in engaging with parent and family nights and programming.
- Continuation of Indigenous Parent Advisory Committee.
- Collaborative initiatives and partnerships with local organizations and research projects. The Division is currently exploring a joint project with Kipohtakaw Education Center and a research team out of the University of Calgary.

Goal 3: Promoting Indigenous Student Academic Success and Graduation

Strategy: Improve academic achievement, attendance, and graduation rates among Indigenous students by providing culturally responsive and supportive educational environments.

Measurable Data:

- Improved academic performance, attendance, and graduation rates among Indigenous students.
- Positive feedback from Indigenous students, families, and community members through survey data and conversation.

Goal 4: Fostering Safe, Representative, Healthy School Communities:

Strategy: Create school environments that reflect Indigenous culture, values, and perspectives, ensuring that Indigenous students feel represented, safe, and cared for.

Measurable Data:

- Evidence of Indigenous representation, art and literature in schools.
- Feedback from Indigenous students including representation in learning within a safe and caring environment.
- Number of times lead team members support school teams in weaving Indigenous Pedagogy and world view throughout learning experiences.

Goal 5: Driving Systemic Change Through Professional Development

Strategy: Implement systemic changes that embed Indigenous history, culture, and ways of knowing into school practices through targeted professional development for teachers and staff.

Measurable Data:

- Number of professional development activities focusing on Teacher Quality Standard (TQS) and Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) 5; training teachers and staff on Indigenous history, culture, and ways of knowing.
- Number of staff participating in additional optional PD offerings
- Survey feedback from PD offerings.
- Creation of school based structures ensuring Call to Action Cohort leads share information and learning with school teams.
- Practice changes related to Indigenous education.

Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):

This report aligns with the [SLQS](#) in the following way:

COMPETENCY:	(1) Building Effective Relationships
INDICATORS:	c. building and sustaining relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit parents/guardians, Elders, local leaders, and community members; and f. facilitating the meaningful participation of members of the school community and local community in decision-making
COMPETENCY:	(3) Visionary Leadership
INDICATORS:	c. promoting in the school community a common understanding of and support for the school authority's goals, priorities and strategic initiatives.
COMPETENCY:	(4) Leading Learning
INDICATORS:	b. providing learning opportunities, based on research informed principles of effective teaching, learning and leadership, to support building the capacity of all members of the school community to fulfill their educational roles; and e. ensuring that staff have access to resources, programs and expertise to support them in meeting their professional responsibilities and in addressing the learning needs of all students.
COMPETENCY:	(5) Ensuring First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education for All Students
INDICATORS:	a. supporting staff in accessing the professional learning and capacity building needed to meet the learning needs of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and all other students; b. engaging and collaborating with neighbouring First Nations and Métis leaders, organizations and communities to optimize learning success and development of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and all other students; d. aligning school authority resources and building organizational capacity to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement; and e. pursuing opportunities and engaging in practices to facilitate reconciliation within the school community.
COMPETENCY:	(6) School Authority Operations and Resources
INDICATORS:	f. respecting cultural diversity and appreciating differing perspectives expressed in the school community.

COMPETENCY:	(7) Supporting Effective Governance
INDICATORS:	i. facilitating collaboration among the board, staff and First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders, organizations and communities to establish strategic policy directions in support of First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and development.

Governance Implications:

Education Act

Diversity and respect

16(1) All courses or programs of study and instructional materials used in a school must reflect the diverse nature and heritage of society in Alberta, promote understanding and respect for others and honour and respect the common values and beliefs of Albertans.

Board responsibilities

33(1) A board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to

- (d) ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board and each staff member employed by the board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,

Policy 110: Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments

The Board believes in the importance of, and is committed to, establishing, and maintaining a welcoming, inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

The Board believes that all members of the school community, including students, staff members, and community members, have the right to learn, work and volunteer in environments that respect: equity, diversity, inclusion, and human rights. Such environments create the conditions where everyone can prosper.

The Board believes all members of the school community deserve opportunities to connect to their culture. Sturgeon Public School Division celebrates the diversity of our students and communities and is committed to collaborating with community and cultural leaders to build and promote cultural connections.

Policy 225: Role of the Board

Safe, Caring, Respectful and Healthy Environments

The Board shall ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the Board and each staff member employed by the Board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging [Education Act s. 33(1)(d)]. Specifically, the Board:

15. Develop culturally appropriate protocols to guide the Division.

16. Establish plans for collaborative work between the Division and First Nations.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the September 23, 2024, Public Board meeting.

Attachment(s):

1. Truth & Reconciliation Week (Elementary)
2. Truth & Reconciliation Week (Secondary)