



SD79 COWICHAN
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION
ANNUAL REPORT
2012-2013

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEBBIE MODESTE

REPORT PREPARED BY
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PRESENTED TO THE BOARD September 2013

While a group of middle school students were out learning about traditional fishing on the Cowichan River, three girls spontaneously braided their hair together. Debbie Modeste, one of our ABED teachers captured the moment. In so many ways, this picture symbolizes what we are trying to do in the ABED department and throughout the district. We are working hard to create a district wide culture that includes and celebrates diversity. Diversity is our strength. Each part of this braid is unique and whole. It is woven together with two other unique, whole strands to create something new, strong, and beautiful. This is the way we want our students to be in our schools. We hope that they can arrive as whole, unique beings, and find a meaningful place in the classroom and the school where they not only feel safe and welcome, but where they see that they are a necessary part of the school community.

The weaving at the top of the page also speaks to the work in the ABED department. We are on a journey together, and we are inviting others to join us. We recognize that in order to create a new story of what it means to be an Aboriginal student in our school system, we need many canoes, many voices woven together with kindness and respect. This report describes parts of the journey that we have travelled on over the last year.

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SERVING THE CHILDREN OF MANY NATIONS

- Métis
- Inuit
- Malahat
- Quw'utsun
- Lake Cowichan
- Halalt
- Stz'uminus
- Lyackson
- Penelakut



Our school district is on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish people, also referred to as the Hul'q'umi'num people. We share the land with seven nations who have lived here for thousands of years; Malahat, Quw'utsun, Lake Cowichan, Halalt, Stz'uminus, Lyackson and Penelakut. We serve the children of these nations as well as the children of our Métis, and Inuit relatives. Some of our children are from our neighbours to the east and south of us, Cree, Ojibway and others. We have a diverse and rich student population, and we work hard to recognize, nurture and celebrate their gifts.

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ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

Year	All Students	All Aboriginal Students	Funded Aboriginal Students
08-09	8639	1229	1226
09-10	8464	1321	1318
10-11	8190	1375	1365
11-12	7957	1389	1347
12-13	7652	1377	1360

*Source: 1701 Data, estimates for 2012-13

In the 2012-13 school year, according to our 1701 data, we had 1377 self identified Aboriginal students and of those 1360 had consent to receive service. Its important to notice that although this means 17 students opted out of the program, this is a significant improvement over the previous year where 42 students were opted out of service. These numbers are important for several reasons, one of which is funding. For each Aboriginal student who opts into the program the district receives \$1160 to go towards enhanced service - this means service above and beyond what is provided via core funding. This year we continued our efforts to make sure every family was informed and had the option to sign up or opt out. We are still educating the school district staff and families about what ABED programming is and we are doing a better job of connecting with all students and families. As everyone gains a better understanding of what ABED programs and services are, more want to be involved.

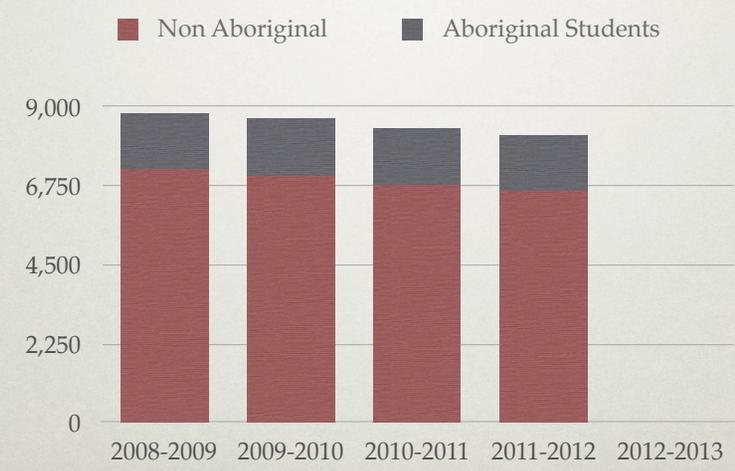
DRAFT **% OF STUDENTS WHO ARE ABORIGINAL**

Year	All students	Aboriginal Students	
08-09	8809	1585	18%
09-10	8649	1630	18.8%
10-11	8392	1621	19.3%
11-12	8179	1597	19.5%
12-13			

*Source: How Are We Doing Report

In the last ten years we have seen an increase in the percentage of students who are Aboriginal from 14% in 2001 to almost 20% today. This is significantly more than the provincial average of 11%. While ABED enrollment numbers have been staying fairly consistent, the district enrollment has been declining. This means that the percentage of students in the district who are Aboriginal keeps increasing as illustrated in the next slide.

DRAFT **% OF STUDENTS WHO ARE ABORIGINAL**



*Source: How Are We Doing Report

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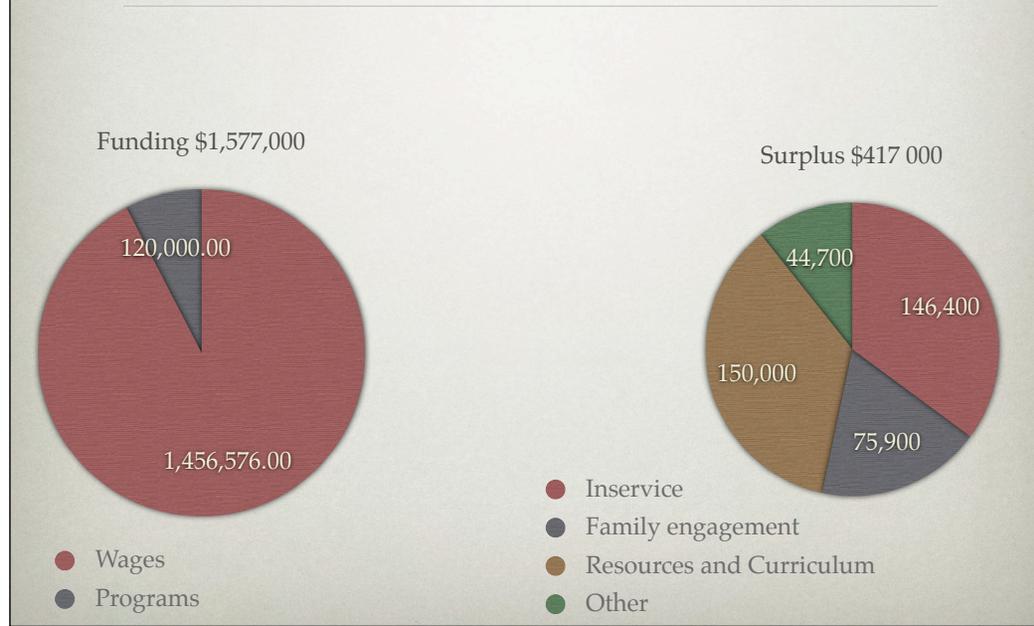
ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL

Somenos	6	Chemainus El	44
AB Greenwell	7	Frances Kelsey	51
Alex Aitken	11	Lake Cowichan Sec	53
Maple Bay	12	Drinkwater	64
Discovery	14	Chemainus Sec	70
Duncan El	16	CVOLC	80
Mill Bay	18	Quamichan	84
Crofton	19	Mt. Prevost	97
Cobble Hill	21	Koksilah	113
Bench	23	Alexander	128
Palsson	33	Khowhemun	144
Tansor	36	Cowichan Sec	148
George Bonner	42		

*Source: Feb 2013 1701, students with consent for service

Our students were distributed throughout our 25 schools.

131 TARGETED FUNDING



This year we were funded \$1.57M and we had a surplus of \$417 000. This budget enabled us to do some powerful, important work. \$1.46M went to salaries which left us with about \$120 000 to go towards programs. We also had the surplus which we received permission to spend over the next two years.

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HWULMUHW MUSTIMUHW EDUCATION COUNCIL

Four Goals

- Aboriginal adults working in schools
- Aboriginal language and culture in schools
- K-12 Hul'q'umi'num
- Family engagement



The students and their families are represented by HMEC.

With the desire to increase the success of Aboriginal students, keeping in mind their whole child experience, physical, social, intellectual and spiritual, in 2010 HMEC and the school board agreed on four goals:

1. increase the number of Aboriginal people working in the schools
2. increase Aboriginal language and culture in schools
3. create and maintain a strong and vibrant K-12 Hul'q'umi'num program
4. increase family engagement in student education

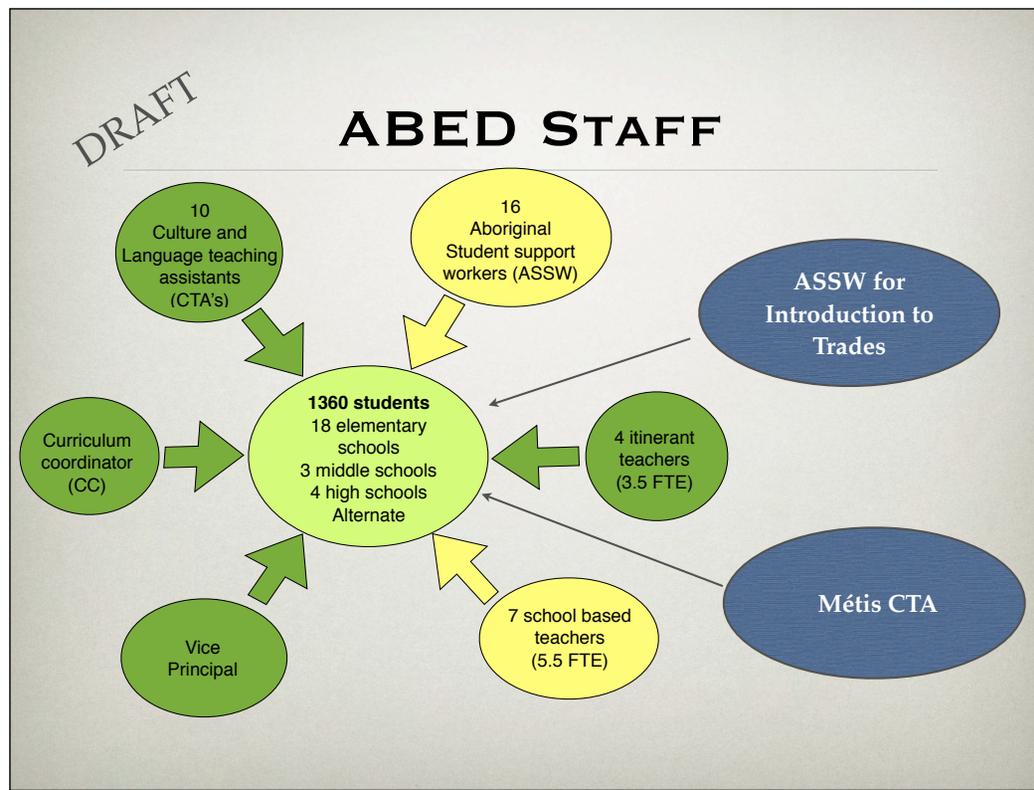
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GOAL ONE

- More Aboriginal adults working in schools
- Aboriginal language and culture in schools
- K-12 Hul'q'umi'num
- Family engagement



We know that our Aboriginal students will be more successful if they see more Aboriginal adults working in the schools. We also know that the best people to be teaching about Aboriginal ways of knowing and being, are Aboriginal people. We have increased the number of Aboriginal people working in schools in two ways; we've continued to increase the number of Aboriginal staff in the district and we've increased the number of community members doing presentations.



This year we had 2 more ASSW's than last year. We also hired a Métis CTA for May and June and an ASSW to support the students in the Introduction to Trades program which ran through the second semester.

DRAFT CLASS PRESENTATIONS BY ABORIGINAL GUESTS



Over the last three years we significantly increased the number of classroom presentations offered by Aboriginal people.

In 2010-11 there were 39 Aboriginal guest presentations

In 2011-12 there were 133 Aboriginal guest presentations

In 2012-13 there were 388 Aboriginal guest presentations!

There was a range of presentations from the history of treaty negotiations to Métis history, to spear fishing demonstrations.

These numbers are above and beyond the culture and language work our CTA's do everyday in the schools.

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GOAL TWO

- Aboriginal adults working in schools
- **Aboriginal language and culture in schools**
- K-12 Hul'q'umi'num
- Family engagement



We've increased the amount of language and culture integrated throughout curriculum in a variety of ways. We have significantly more classroom presentations by Aboriginal people and we have more CTA's working alongside teachers integrating more Aboriginal content and world view throughout the curriculum. We have also purchased resources that are being used by ABED staff and others throughout the curriculum. Another important aspect of integration is supporting school based programs/projects with ABED grants.

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SCHOOL GRANTS

- \$46 000 was spent in school grants
- to be used for enhancement projects



This past year \$46000 was distributed throughout the district. Each school received money based on the Aboriginal student enrollment.

Frances Kelsey	\$1200	pit cook, family luncheon, round table, FN art
Lane Cowichan Sec	\$1470	smoke house, smoke salmon, cedar roses, painting paddles, guest presenter on drumming, FN dance performance, Métis and bannock
Chemainus Sec	\$2310	dance regalia, new school logo, student recognition
CVOLC	\$2340	knitting, spear making, indigenous plant study
Quamichan	\$2550	canoe races, carving, boys club / girls club, heritage day, recognition celebration with family and food
Cowichan Sec	\$5010	Family BBQ, mid-year recognition, movie
George Bonner	\$1200	Canoe races, carving dancers paddles, community luncheon




School grants supported a variety of school based activities some of which are shown in the slide above.

MÉTIS CAMP

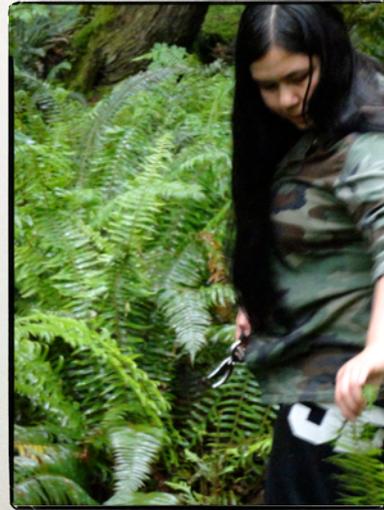
- 10 grade five classes
- May 6-10
- Bright Angel Park
- Experiential learning



One of the highlights of the year continues to be the Métis camp. 65 students from throughout the district go through a series of stations learning about Métis culture and history. Every year there is more interest than we have capacity to include.

COAST SALISH STUDIES

- Quamichan Middle School, George Bonner Middle School, Chemainus Secondary School
- How does learning about Coast Salish history, culture and worldview better help me understand myself, my community and the world?



This year Coast Salish Studies was offered to grade 7 and/or 8 students in most of our middle schools. We continue to hear great things about all the learning that goes on not only for students but also for the teachers and support staff in the class. The middle years are a great time in the student career to challenge some of the assumptions and beliefs about what it means to be Aboriginal. The program is also a way to continue to foster reconciliation in regards to the damage that was done with residential schools and the assimilation policies.

MÉTIS CTA

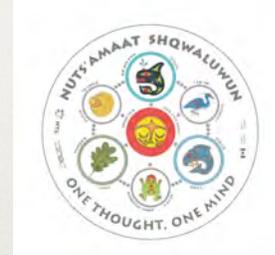
- Corrine Chow
- K- Grade 9 classes
- May and June



An exciting addition to the staff this year has been the Métis CTA. This individual has been able to offer a variety of presentations to students throughout the district and she has also really supported the staff in learning about Métis culture and history.

PARKS CANADA, HTG AND SD79 SPECIES AT RISK

- third year
- classrooms throughout the district
- experiential learning



For three years we have worked with HTG and Parks Canada in support of the Species at Risk program. A First Nations elder and a Parks Canada educator come into the schools and share information with students about species at risk. They also share information about the cultural significance of the species. This is always a very popular program and a great model of integration.

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GOAL THREE

- Aboriginal adults working in schools
- Aboriginal language and culture in schools
- K-12 Hul'q'umi'num
- Family engagement



There are many excellent reasons for investing in creating a strong and vibrant Hul'q'umi'num program. One such reason is the research that has indicated that in communities where as few as 30% speak their language, suicide rates decrease to zero. (2007 Hallat, Chandler & Lalonde) Another consideration is that Hul'q'umi'num is the language of this land, this territory. There is no “homeland” that you can go visit to be immersed in the language - this is the homeland. The language is ancient and contains, for all of us, information about this land and its history that is valuable.

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K-12 HUL'Q'UMI'NUM

- Introductory Hul'q'umi'num at all schools.
- K-6 Hul'q'umi'num at Khowhemun, Koksilah, Alexander.
- 7-9 Hul'q'umi'num at Quamichan.
- Hul'q'umi'num to 10-12 at Cowichan Secondary.

We have put in place a variety of supports for the language as seen in the slide above.

- Simon Fraser Language certification program - Hul'q'umi'num for Culture and Language teaching assistants and ABED teachers
- Hul'q'umi'num language curriculum framework
- Hul'q'umi'num language resources



Supporting the language also means supporting the adults who are learning and teaching the language. This year we completed the first year of a two year language certification program for the CTA's. We also worked on created a more current framework for Hul'q'umi'num curriculum development and we continued to develop language resources.

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10TH ANNUAL SPUPTITUL

- record participation of 70 students
- continue to raise the bar
- six SD79 schools and five out of district schools



Alexander, Koksilah, Khowhemun, Quamichan, Cowichan Secondary, Chemainus Elementary, Quw'utsun Smun'eem, Ladysmith Secondary, Penelakut, Ladysmith Primary, Stz'uminus all participated in the Suptitul this year. Not only does the event bring students together to share and celebrate what they are learning, it also brings together families. Watching this event grow is exciting! We see more children speaking more of the language. The elders are so proud and so grateful for the work that is being done.

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GOAL FOUR

- Aboriginal adults working in schools
- Aboriginal language and culture in schools
- K-12 Hul'q'umi'num
- Family engagement



Everyone is working to build bridges between schools and families. We are working hard to undo the distrust and fear that has been created through the last 100 years. Each year we see a little more communication, understanding and collaboration.

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FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- Aboriginal Parents As Literacy Support (PALS)
- Luncheons
- Parent-teacher interviews
- Penelakut Island visits



Some of the programs/events that foster family engagement are; Aboriginal PALS, recognition luncheons and parent - teacher interview with dinner included. Chemainus Secondary also had their ABED staff go and visit students and families on Pelelakut. This activity of going into the community to build relationship is very important and we hope to expand over the next several years.

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COMPLIANCE

- the Audit
- SSDAS



There are some other highlights from the year that are not so directly related to the four goals. This year our department was included in the audit. While the process was somewhat stressful and took up many staff hours, we also gained some good information. We were given affirmation that we are, in fact, doing an excellent job of making sure every student is receiving service. Through the process we also identified some gaps. Staff were very quick to create and deliver a plan that filled those gaps. We also continued to roll-out and modify the SSDAS program. This tracks the service our students are receiving. This has been another great affirmation of the super work the staff are doing. The system also guides our practise, informing us about students or services that need more attention.

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BUILDING CAPACITY

- VIU Hul'q'umi'num
- SFU Hul'q'umi'num
- Understanding the Aboriginal learner
- Tatulathun series
- Moe the Mouse
- Suicide Prevention (ASIST)



Professional development that is focused on the needs of the learner is one of the most powerful ways to make a positive impact on student learning. We have been working hard to develop the capacity of the adults in the system who work with our children. The next three slides list some of the opportunities that staff have had to develop their practise.

MORE CAPACITY BUILDING

- Girl group training
- Windows of Understanding
- Cultural Safety
- Bus tour of culturally significant sites
- Malahat Longhouse visit



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AND STILL MORE...

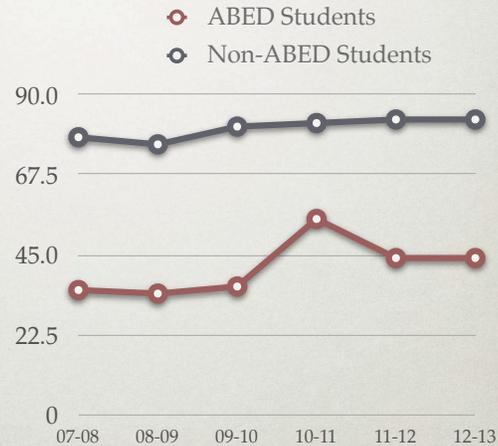
- Métis workshops
- Calvin Heline
- Project Heart
- Residential School Workshop (CSS)
- Teacher Inquiry: CR4YR, iPads



A really exciting aspect of the Pro-D opportunities this year has been that the offerings are above and beyond what was offered and supported via ABED. The teachers association, CUPE and district and provincial initiatives are all beginning to integrate ABED content/perspective into their Pro-D. This is a sign that the learning is beginning to be integrated throughout the system.

GRADUATION RATES

- % of grade 8 students who graduate within six years



*Source: How Are We Doing Report 2007/08 - 2011/12

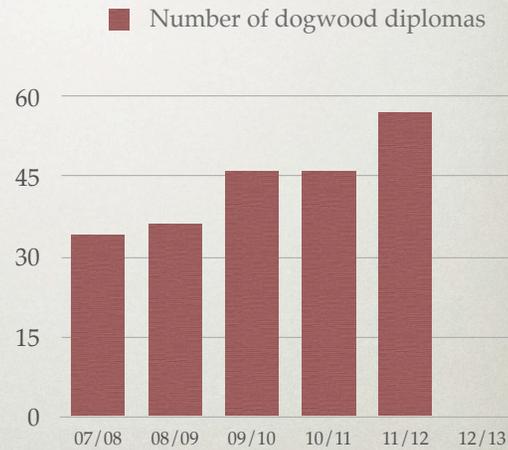
Our transition rates and grad rates are one of the ways we measure our success. While there is still too much of a gap between the grad rate of our Aboriginal students and our non-Aboriginal students, we are seeing a positive trend. We don't yet have the data for this past year, so it shows a flat line. It will be updated when the information arrives from the ministry. According to the "How are we Doing" report, our six year completion rates are:

Six year completion for Aboriginal students: 35%, 34%, 36%, 55%, 42%, ____

Six year completion for non-Aboriginal students: 78%, 76%, 81%, 82%, 83%, ____

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GRADUATION NUMBERS



We continue to graduate more Aboriginal students each year. Our graduation numbers since 07/08 are: 34, 36, 46, 46, 57,

_____. We also have a significant of Aboriginal adult dogwoods each year. Since 08/09 our dogwood numbers are 20, 10, 28, 21, _____. (The number of dogwoods in 07-08 was not published as it was lower than 15).

GRADUATION CELEBRATION



- Each year, more and more of our families and students come together to celebrate the graduation of our ABED students.



This year over 450 people attended. It continues to be an excellent part of our ABED grad year – and a fantastic reason for us all to come together.

WHERE TO NEXT?

- Continue to expand culture and language programs
- Continue to build capacity
- Begin an appreciative inquiry



As we work to create a district wide culture that includes and celebrates Aboriginal heritage and world views, we are seeing the success of our students grow. Gradually the capacity of the district is growing to include initiatives and programs both within and outside of the ABED department. The Introduction to Trades program is a perfect example of this. Aaron Price, seen in the photo above with the Minister of Education, Peter Fassbender, spoke about the impact that the Introduction to Trades program had on his school career. He had many ministry people listening to his thoughts and ideas about how education needs to change to meet the needs and interests of our Aboriginal youth and all learners. We, the ABED staff, are fortunate to be involved in Aboriginal education at this point in history, where we are seeing the voices of our children and community begin to influence the system in a real way. We are looking forward to another year of challenge, growth and increased opportunity for our students.

REPORT PREPARED BY Denise Augustine, District Principal of Aboriginal Education
PRESENTED TO THE BOARD September 2013