

NEWS RELEASE
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Ministry of Education

Aboriginal culture focus of second agreement in Delta

DELTA - A feast was held today to celebrate the signing of a second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA) for Delta, with partners committing to support Aboriginal student success and bring a greater awareness of Aboriginal culture and history to all students.

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements are a commitment by school districts, local Aboriginal communities and the Ministry of Education to work together to support Aboriginal students. Delta's first agreement was signed in 2005, and the initiative has proven to be successful. Over the past ten years, six-year completion rates have risen for Aboriginal students in the district from 37 to 60 per cent.

With the new AEEA, the commitment to Aboriginal students is being enhanced. During the past year, community members, students, parents and educators came together to develop this second AEEA for Delta. The new AEEA is based on information learned from the first agreement and answers to the question, "What would success look like for our students?"

According to data used in the development of this latest AEEA, more than 80 per cent of Aboriginal parents in Delta are satisfied with the Aboriginal cultural programs offered at their children's schools. During 2009-10, Delta hosted 130 classroom presentations and 44 whole school presentations focusing on Aboriginal culture and history.

Recently, hundreds of grades 4 and 5 students spent a day immersed in First Nations history and culture at the Tsawwassen longhouse. They learned about cedar weaving and woodcarving, canoe journeys, the story of the longhouse, the history of the Tsawwassen First Nation's traditional lands and the importance of salmon to local First Nations.

Quotes:

Minister of Education George Abbott -

"My congratulations to all those who worked together to craft this second Agreement for Delta. It is essential that we continue to support Aboriginal students and ensure that they feel welcome and valued in our schools."

Delta board of education chair Dale Saip -

"I want to thank all of those who are working hard to ensure the success of our Aboriginal students. It's important that we continue to highlight Aboriginal culture and history in our classrooms."

Quick Facts:

- * SD 37 (Delta) has 510 Aboriginal students, who make up 3.2 per cent of the overall student population in the district.
- * SD 37 is located in the traditional territory of the Tsawwassen First Nation.
- * Over the past 10 years, the completion rate for Aboriginal students in B.C. has increased by 11 per cent.

Learn More:

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements:

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/agreements/>

SD 37 (Delta): <http://web.deltasd.bc.ca/>

BC's Education Plan: www.bcedplan.ca

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