# Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements

# A Guide for Success
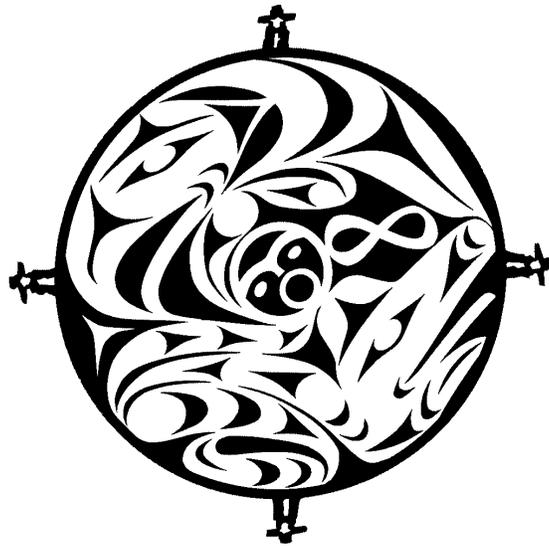
# Acknowledgments

The Ministry of Education would like to thank all those who participated in the development of this document, including members of the Aboriginal Education focus group, staff with the Ministry's Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch, and interested stakeholders with other educational organizations who provided valuable input:

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# Contents

# Introduction

Aboriginal Education within British Columbia has undergone policy, legislative, and conceptual changes over the last several decades. Aboriginal communities are exercising increasing influence over the formal education of their children.[1] Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements, also referred to as Enhancement Agreements (EAs), provide a framework to ensure that the needs of Aboriginal communities are reflected within schools. The EA process involves communication and the building of collaborative relationships. This process improves shared decision-making practices, and benefits all Aboriginal children by providing highly relevant education, focussed on their needs.

This resource guide is intended for use by school districts and Aboriginal communities that are interested in establishing a formal agreement to improve educational experiences for Aboriginal students attending public schools. The guide includes a framework for successful collaboration and outlines steps and best practices for implementation of EAs in British Columbia school districts.

## Background

British Columbia schools have not been successful in ensuring that Aboriginal students receive a quality education, one that allows these students to succeed in the larger provincial economy while maintaining ties to their culture. Growing recognition of this problem led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 1999:

> *"We the undersigned, acknowledge that Aboriginal learners are not experiencing school success in British Columbia. We state our intention to work together within the mandates of our respective organizations to improve school success for Aboriginal learners in British Columbia."*

Memorandum signatories included:
- ➤ Chiefs Action Committee
- ➤ provincial Minister of Education
- ➤ federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs
- ➤ BC School Trustees Association
- ➤ BC Principals' and Vice Principals' Association
- ➤ First Nations Schools Association
- ➤ BC College of Teachers
- ➤ BC Teachers' Federation

The Memorandum of Understanding led to a framework for the creation of Enhancement Agreements. Through these agreements, new relationships and commitments were made to improve the educational success of Aboriginal students.

By spring 2002, six agreements were established and more school districts and Aboriginal communities throughout the province were expressing interest in developing their own. Encouraged by the process, the Ministry of Education has set a goal to establish these agreements in all 60 school districts by 2005.

> *"EAs help Aboriginal students, but also benefit all students, increasing knowledge about Aboriginal peoples."*

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements

# What is an Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement?

An Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (EA) is a working agreement between a school district, all local Aboriginal communities, and the Ministry of Education. EAs are designed to enhance the educational achievement of Aboriginal students. The EA establishes a collaborative partnership between Aboriginal communities and school districts that involves shared decision-making and setting specific goals to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal students. This includes the integration of Aboriginal perspectives into learning experiences.

EAs highlight the importance of academic performance and more importantly, stress the integral nature of Aboriginal traditional culture and languages to Aboriginal student development and success. Fundamental to EAs is the requirement that school districts provide strong programs on the culture of local Aboriginal peoples on whose traditional territories the districts are located.

Enhancement Agreements are intended to continually improve the quality of education achieved by all Aboriginal students. EAs provide:

- a framework for involving Aboriginal communities in a variety of decision-making areas to ensure that education is relevant to the Aboriginal student population
- an ongoing, consistent opportunity for school district representatives and Aboriginal communities to come together as a formal body to improve Aboriginal student achievement
- a "road map" for helping schools effect a shift in focus towards performance-oriented Aboriginal education based on educational outcomes
- a means for integrating culturally relevant learning opportunities into the instructional programs provided for Aboriginal students, in order to help ensure continuous long-term improvement in their educational achievement
- flexibility and choice in determining how to improve Aboriginal student achievement
- mechanisms to dialogue with the schools, the school district, and a variety of community agencies

## Participants in the EA Process

An Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement should take account of the full diversity of the Aboriginal peoples (see Definitions on the next page) represented in the district's student population. To this end, the following groups of stakeholders should be variously involved in the development and implementation of the EA:

- local First Nations organizations such as band councils
- local members of agencies/organizations such as friendship centres, Métis organizations, and Aboriginal parent organizations
- individual members of the district's Aboriginal communities, including parents, caregivers, Elders, and students
- school trustees and district administrators and staff

- district teachers, school administrators, School Planning Councils, and Parent Advisory Councils (PACs)
- Aboriginal Support Workers and Language and Culture teachers

In addition, the Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch is a signing partner to EAs and needs to be informed throughout the EA processes.

## Enhancement Agreements vs. Local Education Agreements

A Local Education Agreement (LEA) is a mechanism through which administration of federal funding (restricted to identified First Nations status-on-reserve students only) is distributed to school districts-through First Nations Band Councils. Signing an EA does not eliminate the need for a Local Education Agreement. The LEA and the EA are distinct agreements and should be negotiated separately.

The LEA will only address the First Nation/band students under its jurisdiction, whereas the EA will address goals and elements based on all Aboriginal students' needs.

## Definitions

The following descriptions are variously applied to particular groups of Aboriginal peoples. Regardless of description or group affiliation, all Aboriginal peoples whose students attend school in a district should be involved in the negotiation of an EA.

**Status Indian**—An individual of Aboriginal ancestry who meets the requirements specified in the *Indian Act* and who is registered by the federal government

**Non-Status Indian**—An individual of aboriginal ancestry who does not meet the requirements for status as specified in the *Indian Act*; there are approximately 70,000 Non-Status Indians in BC, who may have lost their status in any of a variety of ways (e.g., marriage to non-status males, military service, voting rights prior to 1962, extended absence from reserve beyond 2 weeks)

**First Nations On Reserve**—Persons of aboriginal ancestry who live on a reserve, which puts them within federal government jurisdiction

**First Nations Off-Reserve**—Persons of aboriginal ancestry who do not live on their home reserve and who are consequently not eligible for the federal services provided to those On Reserve

**Inuit**—Distinct Aboriginal people, who generally live in northern Canada and Alaska

**Métis**—See national definition of Métis at the *Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia* website http://www.mpcbc.bc.ca/metis_definition.htm; Métis are recognized as Aboriginal people in the *Constitution Act* of 1982.

# Essential Elements of Enhancement Agreements

The following is a description of essential elements for the development of EAs, and the content within Enhancement Agreements themselves:

- ➤ Both the Aboriginal communities and the school district support participation in the Enhancement Agreement.
- ➤ The Aboriginal communities are represented by a unified body (e.g., an Aboriginal Education Council—AEC) whose authority to represent them is accepted by the Aboriginal communities. (Note that "Aboriginal Education Council" is a collective term used in this document to refer to the group that has the acceptance of the Aboriginal communities to represent them. It is recognized that school districts and Aboriginal communities use a variety of terms to refer to these groups— Aboriginal Education Committee, First Nations Council, etc. It is important that the AEC be representative of all of the Aboriginal communities within the school district.)
- ➤ Shared decision making by the Aboriginal communities and the school district becomes an established practice.
- ➤ The parties to the Enhancement Agreement develop joint consultation and collaboration mechanisms, articulate a vision, and set goals in all areas of education for all Aboriginal learners.
- ➤ The Aboriginal communities and the school district track key indicators of student performance.
- ➤ The Aboriginal communities and the school district commit to regular reporting of results, including evaluation and reporting on the outcomes of the Enhancement Agreements.
- ➤ The scope of the Aboriginal Education program includes a focus on continuous improvement in the academic performance of all Aboriginal students.
- ➤ There is a focus on meeting the cultural needs of Aboriginal students in all subject areas and with reference to all aspects of teaching and learning, including the choice of learning resources, instructional strategies, and assessment procedures.
- ➤ There is a focus throughout the district on increasing everyone's knowledge of, and respect for, Aboriginal culture, language, and history, to facilitate better public understanding of Aboriginal people.

EAs support Aboriginal student achievement through:
- ➤ a focus on academic learning, excellence, and the quality of education for all Aboriginal students
- ➤ recognition and honour of Aboriginal cultural diversity which improves Aboriginal student comfort
- ➤ use of Aboriginal resources, cultural understandings, and current research/instructional practice
- ➤ plans with objectives, strategies, rationale, and evaluation methods
- ➤ greater awareness of the importance of Aboriginal culture to student achievement, throughout the district
- ➤ increased and consistent parent and Aboriginal community involvement in schools
- ➤ open, ongoing communications that share the progress and successes of Aboriginal students and the EA, with the wider community
- ➤ forming part of the accountability cycle of using data to plan for, and measure improvement in, Aboriginal student achievement

# Contents of an EA

An EA typically includes the following components.

Memorandum of Agreement—A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) may be included in the EA. A Memorandum of Agreement usually:
➤ acknowledges the collective responsibility for the success of all Aboriginal students
➤ ensures that all Aboriginal students are represented
➤ ensures all local Aboriginal communities are involved
➤ states that the EA forms the framework for the development and implementation of Aboriginal education within district
➤ includes effective dates, and documents signatories to EA (current EAs have a 5 year duration)
➤ honours the relationship between the school district and the First Nations in whose traditional territories it operates
➤ recognizes the relationship between the school district and the Aboriginal communities with whom it works

Additionally, EAs may:
➤ list participants of Aboriginal Education Council
➤ state the general purpose of the Aboriginal Education Council (e.g., to develop programs for benefit of Aboriginal students, to improve Aboriginal student achievement
➤ define working relationship between school district and Aboriginal communities
➤ acknowledge and honour special relationship with local First Nations
➤ recognize role of all Aboriginal peoples, and discuss organizations participating
➤ include statement of overarching goals and beliefs for Aboriginal students shared between school district and local Aboriginal communities
➤ support Aboriginal students understanding of their own history/cultures/languages
➤ honours, respects, supports, and affirms histories, cultures, and languages of Aboriginal peoples
➤ discuss preserving language and culture of local First Nations

An EA should also identify specific performance goals, and information on indicators for successful achievement of those goals. These goals and indicators:
➤ define criteria for performance measurement areas (e.g., tracked over time, and used effectively to implement intervention)
➤ set specific targets for all areas (e.g., percentage of improvement in Aboriginal student achievement)
➤ determine areas in which Aboriginal student achievement and other areas will be measured annually
➤ include academic and non-academic goals
➤ articulate a commitment to implement strategies or programs that include Aboriginal culture and language in order to achieve the defined goals of increased Aboriginal student achievement
➤ define the types of data measured for all goals, as previously set out in performance goals
➤ set out methods for annual reporting and communication with all participants and public

➤ describe procedures that ensure flexibility of the EA if:
- revision is required
- goals are not met
- goals are found to be inappropriate

For more information, refer to "Assessing the Success of EA Implementation" later in this document, as well as to specific EAs for examples. Existing EAs can be viewed at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/agreements/agreements.htm

*"For those districts that have not established a proactive relationship, the process is a way to open the door to a long-term working partnership."*

# Development Process

The tables beginning on the next page ( "Development Activities" and "Implementation Activities") represent a compilation of information from several school districts and Aboriginal communities who have developed EAs and implementation plans. These charts are presented separately, although the development of the Enhancement Agreement and the implementation plan often occur together. The process does not need to be linear, and the sample charts are presented to provide ideas about the steps that can be taken while developing a full EA plan.

## Funding for EAs

EAs are developed to improve Aboriginal student achievement, and core funding forms a necessary part of the funding arrangement. In addition, some Aboriginal students are eligible for services and funding under special needs, ESL, and full-day kindergarten. School districts that provide enhanced services for Aboriginal students receive Aboriginal Education Targeted Funding. All sources of funding can be utilized when working to improve Aboriginal student achievement.

### Aboriginal Education Targeted Funding

For detailed information on targeted funding for Aboriginal students please refer to the Ministry of Education's policy website and examine the policy: K-12 Funding—Aboriginal Education (http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/funding_abed.htm)

Please see sections 106.3, 106.4 and 117 of the *School Act* for policy regulating *Targeted Grants*.

For more information contact the Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch, Ministry of Education at (250) 356-1891.

## Development Activities

| | Activity Details | Objective |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Initiate contacts among stakeholders**<br>• identify, contact, and/or endorse participants of Aboriginal Education Council (AEC)<br>• find champions of Aboriginal education within the school district and identify community members with a strong interest in education<br>• hold initial meetings (can be held in informal setting at school district or Aboriginal community); any party can initiate discussion, which will ideally provide opportunities to:<br>  − evaluate current relationship<br>  − discuss shared vision of Aboriginal education<br>  − identify level of trust<br>  − identify growth areas | • identify local Aboriginal students and ensure they all have a voice in schools<br>• develop strong working relationships among participants<br>• share knowledge<br>• learn about protocols<br>• come to shared vision of "success"<br>• focus on common ground<br>• begin goal setting<br>• gain direction from communities and recognize district vision |
| **2** | **Engage with Ministry of Education**<br>• participants from AEC and/or school district enter into dialogue with the Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch to discuss EAs | • clarify:<br>  − EA concepts<br>  − financial questions<br>  − district data |
| **3** | **Develop terms of reference/guiding principles of AEC**<br>• establish and approve:<br>  − the role and responsibilities of the AEC and its members (e.g., senior school district management, community members and representatives all make suggestions/give approval)<br>  − legitimacy/authority of AEC<br>• establish<br>  − subcommittees<br>  − ongoing lines of communication<br>  − conflict resolution mechanism (voting, consensus, etc.) | • clarify the AEC's:<br>  − purpose<br>  − structure<br>  − function<br>  − goals<br>  − responsibilities<br>  − operating procedures |
| **4** | **Identify relevant data, set priorities, develop draft EA**<br>• set priorities based on local needs and ensure that parties are satisfied.<br>• present the draft EA to parents, school officials, teachers, Parent Advisory Councils, School Planning Councils | • reach consensus about:<br>  − goals<br>  − measurement<br>  − indicators of success<br>• set benchmarks/indicators |
| **5** | **Hold an official signing ceremony**<br>• publicly declare the agreement; ensure participation from:<br>  − Aboriginal communities<br>  − the school district<br>  − Ministry of Education<br>• conduct district wide communications | • recognize importance of enhancing Aboriginal student achievement<br>• promote value of EA in building strong partnerships |

## Implementation Activities

| | Activity Details | Objective |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | **EA work and implementation plan**<br>• identify and develop strategies to meet EA goals<br>• determine:<br>  – budget priorities<br>  – method of gathering baseline data<br>  – timelines for implementing phases of agreement<br>  – procedure for allocating resources<br>• communicate with school district and communities<br>• identify and discuss community and school district resources | • identify existing and new human and financial resources to meet goals<br>• ensure flexibility of EA if:<br>  – revision is required<br>  – goals are not met<br>  – goals are found to be inappropriate |
| **2** | **Consult and gain approval**<br>• consider concerns of interested parties, finalize/gain approval of plan<br>• distribute plan to Aboriginal communities, school district/school board, school trustees, unions, Parent Advisory Councils, School Planning Councils, Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch | • ensure implementation plan aligns clearly with EA goals, vision, and strategies<br>• determine if EA alters existing roles, structures, or function of school, staffing, resource, or funding arrangements |
| **3** | **Develop school-level support**<br>• ensure plans for involvement of school level staff, Parent Advisory Councils, and School Planning Councils<br>• conduct two-way communication with individuals, schools, and the AEC | • provision of locally relevant Aboriginal education<br>• work to co-ordinate/integrate Aboriginal Education goals and plans of individual schools with EA |
| **4** | **Annual assessment of plan (by AEC)**<br>• annual report/ongoing and public<br>• re-adjust programs based on analysis<br>• communicate results<br>• gain approval/support for new goals and priorities if change is necessary | • use data and other indicators to assess success in meeting goals<br>• communicate progress, successes, setbacks and growth areas |

*"The EA process allows school districts to align all of their goals and refocus on Aboriginal—and all students'—achievement."*

# Strategies for Success

EAs are comprehensive and focus on improving the educational experiences of all Aboriginal students. Some strategies found to be helpful to include within EA implementation plans include, but are not limited to, the following:

➤ plans to increase caregiver/family participation
➤ measuring student/parent satisfaction
➤ local goals and plans for social responsibility
➤ examination of local assessment practices
➤ utilizing culturally relevant educational tools
➤ cultural education for staff
➤ methods of utilizing and valuing student differences
➤ technology programs
➤ increasing development/participation in extracurricular activities
➤ Early Literacy, Adult School Readiness
➤ English as a Second Language programming
➤ Individual Education Plans (IEPs) with plans for transition
➤ Transition Planning: K-1, 3-4, 7-8, 9-10, 12-post-secondary
➤ improved Aboriginal student access to scholarships
➤ examining and decreasing suspension rates

Improving the academic achievement of Aboriginal students is an overarching goal. A variety of strategies can be used to help achieve this goal. Many of these strategies can be utilized in response to findings from an examination of local Aboriginal student needs.

Participating Aboriginal communities and school districts identified the following key aspects as essential to relationship building, and ongoing support for the EA:

**Participation**
➤ high level Aboriginal community participation (key community decision-makers)
➤ community involvement (Aboriginal parents/caretakers and families involved in educational activities at the local level)
➤ program "champions" at the school district and community levels who actively advocate for, and promote Aboriginal education
➤ teacher support (awareness and support of the significant role of Aboriginal language and culture in student learning)
➤ school board trustee participation as facilitators and supporters of the EA

**Communication**
➤ effective relationships, partnerships and ongoing communication built on mutual trust and respect
➤ Aboriginal education councils, established as vehicles for cooperation, participation, effective communication, and connection with Aboriginal and school communities

- ► flexibility of relationships and use of fresh ideas that support the EA and students
- ► increasing awareness of Aboriginal cultures and protocols among educators and members of the community at large

**Practices**
- ► an emphasis on developing clarity about the benefits of the EA for students, communities, and school districts
- ► realistic goals and shared visions for students, education and communities
- ► local needs assessments conducted independently or through a consultant
- ► identification and effective utilization of resources
- ► dissemination of information about the success/progress of the EA through media and technology
- ► public celebration of the EA signing, to acknowledge work done, relationships developed, the role of families/caregivers, and the focus on students

## Resources from Aboriginal Communities

Aboriginal communities can provide a substantial amount of information/resources unique and particularly relevant to their community. Some of these resources include information about:
- ► local Aboriginal cultures, languages, and protocols
- ► integrating local Aboriginal culture into school life
- ► events/activities local students may be involved in
- ► community social issues/concerns that may affect local students

Aboriginal communities, families, and caregivers, can be actively involved in:
- ► identifying community members interested in ongoing participation in the EA process
- ► teaching/sharing local culture to students, caregivers, teachers, and administrators
- ► designing and implementing Aboriginal language courses/programs
- ► searching for ways to meet Aboriginal student educational needs
- ► providing opportunities for a variety of extracurricular activities
- ► conversations about caregiver involvement and support for students
- ► discussions and solutions about issues of discrimination

## Promoting Dialogue and Collaboration

**Building Relationships:** Aboriginal leaders have stressed the need for the "development of an agreement among friends."[2] The EA can help promote this relationship between school districts and Aboriginal communities. Because the development of relationships has been emphasized as crucial to the success of the Agreements, this section provides some suggestions about communications for the long term.

All participants have a shared interest in the goal of ensuring a solid educational foundation for all Aboriginal students. Openly acknowledging that this is the central reason the EA is being developed can be a positive starting point.

Methods of initiating a relationship that Aboriginal communities and school district participants have suggested include:

➤ sharing meals together
➤ Aboriginal communities inviting school district officials to attend cultural celebrations
➤ school district officials offering to come to Aboriginal communities
➤ holding informal initial talks designed to develop relationships
➤ holding meetings in neutral settings
➤ school districts inviting Aboriginal community members to school activities
➤ using first meetings to focus on envisioning Aboriginal student success
➤ Aboriginal communities and Elders sharing in school ceremonies and activities (e.g., graduation ceremonies)
➤ opening dialogue with a discussion about who needs to participate on committees/councils (e.g., Elders, students, parents)

Participants with EAs have also identified the following as important for maintaining positive relationships:

➤ ensuring a participative process
➤ acknowledging issues that arise
➤ clarifying responsibilities, roles and concepts (e.g., encouraging parental involvement, achievement)
➤ consulting with current participants if considering additional participants
➤ discussing issues until a mutual solution is found
➤ focusing on the needs of all students
➤ finding a way to move beyond past difficulties (e.g., historical, budgetary)

Developing partnerships where parents and students[3] can come together in a trusting environment, making decisions that support learning, requires increased inclusiveness, mutual respect, and patience.[4]

**Respecting Knowledge:** Recognition that there are unique forms of knowledge within Aboriginal communities, and school districts, is important. Aboriginal communities can share cultural, community, and other information relevant to Aboriginal students. School district officials can share information about administrative factors that affect the development of Enhancement Agreements.

Research and communities themselves have shown involvement of family and Aboriginal community members can have an important positive impact on learning objectives.[5] In addition, Aboriginal peoples bring a unique diversity of values, beliefs, practices, communication, and collaborate styles beneficial to the committee process.[6]

**Diverse Cultural Engagement Practices (Protocols) and Conceptions:** Aboriginal community members discuss the importance of recognizing that Aboriginal peoples throughout the province have different protocols, and practices for engaging. For instance, Aboriginal peoples may have community-established authority (e.g., role of Elders) [7] and may utilize the knowledge of a variety of community members.[8] Some school district officials have acknowledged that guidance from Aboriginal communities about protocols can be helpful in improving working relationships.

**Trust Building:** Lingering effects of past decisions may continue to impact Aboriginal communities.[9] Developing cultural awareness and knowledge about the "role of history in shaping urban Aboriginal realities today"[10] helps develop sensitivity that extends beyond knowledge about specific cultural practices.

**Respecting Diverse Communication Styles:** There can be differences in communication styles across cultures. Researchers have pointed out that culturally unique communication styles may exist in the following areas:

➤ task orientation (e.g., build relationship before completing task or relationships develop through task completion)
➤ decision making processes (e.g., reached by majority rule or by a process of consensus)
➤ productivity of conflict (e.g., confront directly or solve privately)
➤ attitudes towards disclosing emotions and personal information
➤ non-verbal communications and attaching meaning to words and phrases [11]
➤ concepts and representations of assertiveness and ways of expression

Perceiving that these differences may be affecting communication may shed light on difficulties or roadblocks that arise.

It should be noted that this discussion is about cultural differences is generalized. It is acknowledged that all Aboriginal cultures differ from one another, and that many cultural communication styles will fall on a continuum amongst the differences listed. These cultural differences may help clarify some common stumbling blocks to effective communications, illuminated during consultation for this document.

# Barriers and Challenges to Success

It is well documented that Aboriginal students, families, and communities face significant challenges related to the public education system. While overall Aboriginal student achievement continues to improve provincially, only 43% of Aboriginal students complete high school (2002 completion rate).[12] The results of research and consultation by Aboriginal organizations, education partners, and the Ministry of Education suggest that Aboriginal students and families continue to struggle against significant barriers.

**Societal/Consultative Barriers**

➤ Racism and discrimination often affects Aboriginal students' self-esteem and leaves them feeling unaccepted, uncomfortable, or unsafe at school.

➤ Exclusionary historical practices/policies and the legacy of the residential school system continue to affect the interaction between the school system and Aboriginal students, families, and/or communities.

➤ Exclusion of Aboriginal knowledge, culture, and language within schools can result in decreased self-image, motivation, and enthusiasm for learning among Aboriginal students.[13]

➤ Low decision-making control of Aboriginal communities in areas that affect Aboriginal students' educational experiences, and with regarding to funding decisions,[14] leads to less relevant and less effective Aboriginal education initiatives.

➤ There is limited parent and student/school engagement in many school districts.

Socio-economic status or other social factors can affect student achievement, and the Aboriginal Education Council may choose to discuss whether these factors are relevant to local students.

*"Many existing methods for involving parents and community members—developed for the non-Aboriginal community—do not work for Aboriginal parents and communities." (BC Human Rights Commission)*

**Institutional/Systemic Barriers**

➤ Few Aboriginal role models and low cultural awareness by staff members may lead to an underestimation and disengagement of Aboriginal students. Education and training focusing on cultural awareness, sensitivity and understanding can help increase staff knowledge of Aboriginal student needs.[15]

➤ Insufficient early literacy and numeracy skills may hinder ongoing learning, lead to decreased self-confidence, and in some cases poor attendance.[16]

➤ Placing Aboriginal students into modified courses may not allow them the prerequisite skills for provincially examinable courses. It is important to note that some students need the adjusted curricula of a modified program, but the decision must be carefully considered to ensure that this is the best choice for the student's long-term success.

➤ Few Aboriginal students are being designated as gifted and this may be related to the need to assess and identify giftedness in a diverse population.

**Student Achievement Barriers**

➤ Poor transition planning and low Dogwood completion rates can mean that many Aboriginal students do not complete high school, or receive only school leaving certificates. These certificates do not enable continued education in all areas of business, trades, colleges, technical institutes or universities. Students who receive a Dogwood but have taken courses such as Communications 12 or Essentials of Math may still not be eligible for the post-secondary program of their choice.

➤ Aboriginal students are over-represented in special needs and behaviour categories. The incidence of Aboriginal students in behaviour disorder categories in BC is 3.5 times that of the general student population. Accurate assessments of the needs and academic challenges of the student, consistent follow up, an exit plan, and sustained parent involvement have been suggested as factors affecting the success of Individual Education Plans.[17]

➤ Aboriginal students in secondary ungraded (SU). Over half of Aboriginal students placed in this category eventually drop out of school. The ungraded categories include students who are not designated to be in a specific grade level and often fall under the special needs, alternate or ESL support programs. Plans measuring the progress and long-term success of these students can be implemented.

Those negotiating EAs can work together to identify barriers that may exist locally and develop plans based on the needs of local students.

## Challenges for Developing and Implementing EAs

The following are some challenges identified by districts and communities with EAs:

➤ Ensuring that off-reserve non-status Aboriginal students have a voice (balanced representation) in the EA process—Many organizations can be involved in the EA process in order to ensure inclusion and build partnerships for all Aboriginal students. Examples of organizations include local Friendship Centres, Métis and United Native Nations locals, Urban Aboriginal Societies, First Nations PACs, and Parent Clubs. Creative solutions can be utilized to reach the communities of these children. Contacting districts and communities that have EAs to find out how they addressed the need for inclusion can be useful.

➤ Staying at the negotiating table despite disagreement—A conflict resolution process established early can be of assistance.

➤ Changing stakeholder or participant expectations—Establishing clarity of vision, goals of the EA, and the role of the EA in Aboriginal education can help guide the process throughout times of change.

➤ Making the decision to finalize the agreement—Timelines for completion will help, but all parties to the agreement need to feel satisfied. Flexibility in deadlines can be important and communication lines may need to be strengthened.

➤ Implementing agreements "on the ground"—Gaining school and Aboriginal community level support by ensuring inclusion and knowledge sharing throughout the process helps to ensure that implementation will occur smoothly.

➤ Ensuring teacher support of EA—Strong leadership by school and district administrators is very important in this regard.

# Assessing the Success of EA Implementation

The table, *Indicators for Assessing Success,* is provided here to give examples of tools that can be used to assess the success of EAs and implementation plans. As with all assessment, assessment of EA success should be based on a clear sense of what the EAs have been created to achieve. Not all of the goals and indicators described here will necessarily need to be part of every district's EA process. EAs often focus on several distinct areas that reflect local needs. Ideally, the goals and indicators will be locally adapted (or developed) to best meet local needs.

Goals for Aboriginal Students:
➤ year by year improvement in Aboriginal student achievement and graduation results
➤ success in range of school based academic and non-academic areas
➤ decreased alternative program enrolment in tandem with increased re-integration into regular curriculum, and greater representation in programs for students with gifted potential
➤ improved self-acknowledgement and sense of belonging within schools

Goals for the Education Community:
➤ provision of early, sustained, and relevant support
➤ awareness and identification of strategies to address local student academic needs
➤ increased knowledge about and respect for Aboriginal peoples and culture throughout district
➤ increased participation of Aboriginal community in the education community

*"Giving all children the opportunity to learn about Aboriginal peoples and culture will improve relationships for the long term."*

# Indicators for Assessing Success

## Academic

- Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) % of students meeting grade requirements-part of overall assessment
- participation, success, transition, and relevancy of modified programs: IEPs, special education (behavioural, intellectual, chronic health)
- report card grades, transition rates, suspensions

**At the Elementary level:**
- locally developed exams add to overall relevance of assessment
- district assessments for numeracy in grades 5 and 6
- assess primary literacy with
  - provincial performance standards tasks
  - locally developed district benchmarks
  - grade 3 reading assessment programs
- supporting, in partnership with Aboriginal communities:
  - preschool readiness programs
  - literacy programs
  - full-day kindergartens

**At the Secondary level:**
- participation and success in:
  - provincial exams
  - various English, math, sciences, fine arts courses
  - secondary ungraded
- local secondary literacy programs
- reintegration/success rates
- increased Aboriginal student enrolment in challenge programs
- decreasing suspensions
- graduation rates:
  - % with Dogwood within 6 years of grade 8
  - % with leaving certificate
  - overall graduation rates
  - university eligibility
  - scholarships

## Cultural and Other

- the extent to which school district officials, teachers, and students have participated in cultural/diversity education that they feel has benefited them
- the number of schools offering First Nations Studies 12 for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, as well as the rates of participation and success among students
- the number of elementary and secondary schools offering locally developed Aboriginal language courses, as well as the rates of participation and success among students
- the extent to which the district has worked with universities to have local language courses recognized as a second language credit
- the extent to which the district has fostered and implemented locally developed cultural learning opportunities (i.e., learning activities focused or based on the cultures, histories, and experiences of Aboriginal peoples surrounding the school district)
- the extent to which technology initiatives related to the particular needs and interests of Aboriginal students have been undertaken (e.g., some districts have joined technology programs with locally developed language/culture programs; others have supported or drawn upon technology programs in Aboriginal communities)

## Engagement

- the extent to which Aboriginal students participate in school-based extracurricular activities
- increases in the quantity and quality of interactions between family/caregivers and school personnel at gatherings (e.g., parent-teacher conferences and celebrations, Parent Advisory Council meetings and activities)
- the extent to which Aboriginal family and community members welcome school district officials into their Aboriginal communities

# Accountability

When Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements are completed, they will be appended to school district accountability contracts and are subject to the auditing and district review processes. The Enhancement Agreements are appended to, rather than incorporated into, the accountability contract because they are developed through partnership and require relationship building, and ongoing collaboration.

## Accountability Framework

The Accountability Framework is comprised of School Plans, Accountability Contracts, Enhancement Agreements, District Reviews, Deputy Minister visits to the school district, Audits, and data reporting. This process is in place to improve the achievement of all students, and supports the improvement of education of Aboriginal students.

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# Notes

[1] See Marie Matthew, *Education Agreements Handbook*, for the First Nations Education Steering Committee, 1999 and Barman, Hebert and McCaskill, *Indian Education in Canada. Volume 1: the Legacy*, 1986.

[2] Comment made by Elder

[3] BC Human Rights Commission, *Pathways to Equality: Hearings on Access to Public Education for Aboriginal People* (2001).

[4] Ministry of Education, *Building Better Partnerships for Aboriginal Education* (2002)

[5] Ministry of Education, *Building Better Partnerships for Aboriginal Education* (2002)

[6] Calvin Hanselman, *Uncommon Sense: Promising Practices in Urban Aboriginal Policy-Making and Programming*, Canada West Foundation (August 2002)

[7] Lindsay Redpath and Marianne O, Neilson, *A Comparison of Native Culture, Non-Native Culture and New Management Ideology*, Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, (Vol. 14 Issue 3)

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[9] Calvin Hanselman, *Uncommon Sense: Promising Practices in Urban Aboriginal Policy-Making and Programming*, Canada West Foundation (August 2002)

[10] Calvin Hanselman, *Uncommon Sense: Promising Practices in Urban Aboriginal Policy-Making and Programming*, Canada West Foundation (August 2002)

[11] Marcelle E. DuPraw and Marya Axner, *Toward a More Perfect Union in an Age of Diversity: Working on Common Cross-cultural Communication Challenges*, at www.wwcd.org/action/ampu/crosscult.html

[12] Ministry of Education, *How Are We Doing? — Demographics and Performance of Aboriginal Students in BC Public Schools* (2003)

[13] BC Human Rights Commission, *Pathways to Equality: Hearings on Access to Public Education for Aboriginal People* (2001).

[14] BC Human Rights Commission, *Pathways to Equality: Hearings on Access to Public Education for Aboriginal People* (2001).

[15] BC Human Rights Commission, *Barriers to Equal Education for Aboriginal Learners* (2001)

[16] School District No. 73, *Improving School Success for First Nations Students*

[17] *Over-representation of Aboriginal Students Reported with Behavior Disorders*, McBride Management, Commissioned for the Ministry of Education (2001).

# Appendix 1:
# Glossary of Resources and Assessment Tools

**Ministry of Education**

➤ *First Nations School District Contact List*
This list includes contacts at school districts, who have a role as an Aboriginal Education contact. This list can be accessed at
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/schools/sdinfo/fncontactlist.htm

➤ *Bands and Aboriginal Organizations by School District*
The Ministry of Education maintains a list of Aboriginal organizations in school districts. It is important to note that this is a basic list and may not represent all of the local Aboriginal communities within the districts. School districts and communities will need to conduct their own research into other relevant organizations that may need to be contacted and involved in the EA process. The list can be obtained by contacting the Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch by phone (250) 356-1891 or fax (250) 356-1742

➤ *How Are We Doing? — Demographics and Performance of Aboriginal Students in BC Public Schools*
An annual report of Aboriginal student achievement data in the provincially assessed areas. The goals of providing the data are to improve understanding of the performance of the school system in educating Aboriginal students, provide a context for examining performance and improvement and to raise the following questions:
1. How are we doing?
2. How have we improved?
3. Where can we improve?

This information can be found at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/performance.htm

➤ *ABNET Listserv*
ABNET was initiated by the Ministry of Education to provide a forum for open discussion for individuals and groups involved in Aboriginal education in British Columbia. The listserv has grown to over 200 members who participate regularly in dialogue about educational topics and issues that affect Aboriginal students, schools, educators, other professionals and Aboriginal organizations and communities across the province. Postings are available to anyone who joins the listserv. The comments expressed on ABNET are the views of the individual contributors.

As a communication tool, ABNET is shown to be effective for information-sharing and keeping people connected throughout the province about Aboriginal education. In addition to providing a discussion site on relevant issues and trends in Aboriginal education in British Columbia, the listserv is used to post upcoming events, activities, current literature and information about Aboriginal education here and in other jurisdictions. ABNET is supported and moderated by the Ministry of Education.

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements

➤ *Foundation Skills Assessment*
The Foundation Skills Assessment is an annual province-wide assessment of British Columbia students' academic skills, and provides a snapshot of how well BC students are learning foundation skills in Reading Comprehension, Writing, and Numeracy. The assessment is administered every spring to Grade 4 and 7 students in public and provincially funded independent schools.

The main purpose of the assessment is to help the province, school districts, schools and school planning councils evaluate how well students are achieving basic skills, and make plans to improve student achievement. FSA results are returned to districts and schools each fall to help develop school plans for improving student learning, and to share with individual parents and students.

➤ *1701 Forms*
Form 1701 collects the following information about individual students:
- name, birthdate, gender, grade level and postal code
- language program enrolment
- Aboriginal education program enrolment
- Career program enrolment
- Special Needs category enrolment
- number of courses, by type, for all students in the secondary grades, including adults, and school-aged students with graduation certificates

The collected information is critical for:
- allocating funds to districts
- tracking student movement between districts
- monitoring enrolment trends in programs
- district and school profiles

➤ *Provincial Exams*
The provincial examinations program provides a means of assessing grade 12 students' performance in 19 subject areas.

➤ *Non-Academic Work Experience Program Registration*
Work experience, as a part of post-secondary education, is known as co-operative education. The Canadian Association For Co-operative Education (CAFCE) web site defines a co-operative education program as a program that formally integrates a student's academic studies with work experience in co-operative employer organizations. The usual plan is for the student to alternate periods of experience in business, industry, government, social services and the professions, with studies.

➤ *Dogwood Completion Rate*
Dogwood completion rate is the percentage of students who obtained a Dogwood (graduating diploma) within 6 years of beginning Grade 8. This excludes students repeating Grade 8, includes public and independent schools, and is adjusted for out-migration.

- ► *Performance in Meeting Dogwood Requirements* (university eligibility)
  To be eligible for university entrance, a student must meet certain requirements which could include, for example, a grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 (C+) or better on the average of English 12 and three other courses acceptable to the university.

- ► *Data Collection*
  The Ministry of Education collects data in the following areas:
  - parent, student, and staff satisfaction
  - graduation and grade to grade transition results
  - school performance and growth plans
  - accountability contracts
  - school and district profiles

  A list of links can be found at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/data_source.pdf

  The Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch (AEEB) compiles some of this data for Aboriginal students as a whole, and by district. Please contact by phone (250) 356-1891 or fax (250) 356-1742 for more information.

  In addition, AEEB is involved in research on a variety of topics related to Aboriginal student learning. Please contact the branch at the number above or visit the website at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/ to find out more.

## School Districts

- ► *Canadian Achievement Test (CAT)*
  The Canadian Achievement Test (levels 17, 18 and 19) consists of eight sub-sections testing vocabulary, comprehension, spelling, language mechanics, language expression, study skills, mathematics concepts and applications, and mathematics computation.

- ► *Individual Education Plan (IEP) Registration*
  An IEP is a written plan, developed for a student, that describes the program modifications and/or adaptations for the student and the services that are to be provided. It serves as a tool for collaborative planning among the school, the parents, the student (where appropriate) and, as necessary, school district personnel, other ministries and/or community agencies. The plan is developed, implemented, and monitored by school staff in consultation with others involved with the student. It is a flexible, working document with meaning for all contributors, and is an ongoing record to ensure continuity in programming.

  The IEP **is not** "written in stone," a daily plan, or a description of everything that will be taught to one student. Neither is it a means to monitor the effectiveness of teachers, or a report card, although the report card should comment on progress towards IEP goals.

- ► *School Completion Certificates*
  A student on a modified program may receive a British Columbia School Completion Certificate, reflecting achievement of the goals in the IEP. The School Completion Certificate is awarded to students who complete the goals and objectives stated in their Student Learning Plan

(SLP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP), as agreed upon by the student, parent and school administration. Students do not need to graduate in order to qualify for a School Completion Certificate. They can be on an adjusted or modified Grade 12 Program, and must meet the goals in their Student Learning Plan or Individual Educational Plan.

**Aboriginal Resources**

► First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) works as a collective organization to facilitate First Nations support for one another in the area of education, and to communicate with both the federal and provincial governments to ensure that First Nations concerns are being addressed. http://www.fnesc.bc.ca/

► The Seventh Generation Club is an initiative for BC First Nations students. Through fun contests and activities, and with the help of the Club Captain, the Vancouver Canucks, the club encourages students to make healthy choices, participate in sports in their community, and stay in school. http://www.seventhgenerationclub.com/

# Appendix 2: Duties, Rights, and Responsibilities

**STATEMENT OF EDUCATION POLICY ORDER (MANDATE FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEM)**
**Authority:** *School Act,* section 169 (3) OIC 1280/89. Effective September 1, 1989 Lieutenant Governor in Council Order

NOTICE: The following order in council is not the official version. To obtain an official version of this regulation please contact Crown Publications Inc. Telephone (250) 386-4636, Fax (250) 386-0221 or Internet http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/S/96412_00.htm

**Duties, Rights, and Responsibilities**

*Students:* have the opportunity to avail themselves of a quality education consistent with their abilities, the opportunity to share in the shaping of their educational programs, and the opportunity to determine their career and occupational goals. They have a responsibility to make the most of their opportunities, to respect the rights of others, and to cooperate with fellow students in the achievement of their goals.

*Parents:* have the right and responsibility to participate in the process of determining the educational goals, policies and services provided for their children. They have a primary responsibility to ensure that children are provided with the healthy and supportive environment necessary for learning. They have a responsibility to help shape and support the goals of the school system and to share in the tasks of educating their young.

*Teacher*s: have the right to exercise professional judgment in providing instruction to students in accordance with specified duties and powers. They have a corresponding responsibility to ensure that each student is provided with quality instruction, to participate in all normal school activities and to monitor the behaviour and progress of each learner in accordance with provincial and local policies. They have a responsibility to communicate with students and parents, and are accountable to the School Board and its delegates.

*School Principal*s: have the right to exercise professional judgment in managing the school in accordance with specified duties and powers. They have a corresponding responsibility to ensure that each student is provided with opportunities for a quality education. Principals are to provide administrative leadership, in consultation with teachers and the community that reflects the aspirations of parents and the school community and that is consistent with provincial and district guidelines. They cooperate with parents and the community in the delivery of non-educational support services to students, and focus on the following areas of school concern: (1) student access and achievement; (2) quality teaching; (3) communication with parents and the community; and (4) accountability to parents and to the Board.

*School Board*s: have a duty to govern districts and their schools in accordance with specified powers in a fiscally responsible and cost effective manner. They have a responsibility to ensure that schools provide students with opportunities for a quality education; to set education policies that reflect the aspirations of the community and that are consistent with overall provincial guidelines; to provide leadership and encouragement to schools and the community; to cooperate with the community and social service agencies in the delivery of non-educational support services to students; and to focus on the following areas of district concern: (1) implementation of provincial and local education programs; (2) school finance and facilities; (3) student access and achievement; (4) teaching performance; and (5) accountability to parents, taxpayers, the community and to the Province.

*District Officials:* have a duty to exercise professional judgment in managing the district in accordance with specified powers and duties. They have a corresponding responsibility to provide professional leadership in the design and implementation of education programs in districts, and are accountable to the local school board.

*The Community*: has the right to expect that every child will have access to quality education provided in a fiscally responsible and cost effective manner. The community, through local volunteer groups and private and public agencies, has a corresponding responsibility to support the family and school by providing children with a healthy and supportive environment in the community.

*The Public*: The public of British Columbia has the right to expect that schools operate effectively and efficiently and are accountable for evaluating and reporting their progress on a regular basis. The public has the corresponding responsibility to provide schools with the necessary resources and moral support to fulfill their mission.

*The Ministry of Education*: has a duty to set policies for the British Columbia public school system in accordance with specified duties and powers. The Ministry has a corresponding responsibility to ensure that the education system provides students with opportunities for a quality education in a cost-effective manner; to set standards and overall directions for the education system; to provide leadership and encouragement to all educational agencies in the province; to cooperate with provincial agencies in the delivery of non-educational support services to students; and to focus at a high level of provincial concern on the following areas: (1) finance and facilities; (2) program direction, development and implementation; (3) student access and achievement; (4) teaching performance; and (5) system evaluation and public accountability

**As set out in the School Act and the School Act Regulation and Orders in Council**

(The following descriptions of duties/roles of school board officials are for informational purposes only. Please refer to the complete version of the *School Act* and Regulations for more information. In case of any discrepancy between this description and the official version the official version shall be taken as correct.)

*Superintendent of schools*
22 (1) A board must appoint a superintendent of schools for the school district who, under the general direction of the board,
(a) has general supervision and direction over the educational staff employed by the board of that school district,
(b) is responsible for
   (i) the general organization, administration, supervision and evaluation of all educational programs, and
   (ii) the operation of schools in that district, and
(c) must perform other duties set out in the regulations.

(2) A board may appoint one or more assistant superintendents of schools to perform those duties assigned by the superintendent of schools for that school district.

*Duties of the superintendent of schools*
6. (1) A superintendent of schools shall
(a) assist in making the Act and regulations effective and in carrying out a system of education in conformity with the orders of the minister,
(b) advise and assist the board in exercising its powers and duties under the Act,
(c) investigate matters as required by the minister and after due investigation submit a report to him or her, and
(d) perform those duties assigned by the board, and may, subject to section 69 of the Act, at his or her discretion, attend any board meeting.

(2) A superintendent of schools shall render the assistance to the minister that the minister requires.

(3) A superintendent of schools or an assistant superintendent may at any time report on the work of a teacher and the learning situation in the teacher's class or the work of an administrative officer and shall deliver a copy of that report to the teacher or administrative officer, as the case may be.

(4) Within 3 months of a request of the college, the superintendent shall report on the work of a teacher and the learning situation in the teacher's class or the work of an administrative officer and deliver a copy of the report to the college and to the teacher or administrative officer, as the case may be.

*Secretary treasurer*
23 (1) A board must
(a) appoint a secretary treasurer of the board, and
(b) arrange for the bonding of the secretary treasurer in an amount the board considers adequate.
(2) The secretary treasurer of a board is its corporate financial officer and must perform those duties set out in the regulations.

*Duties of secretary treasurers*
7. (1) The secretary treasurer of a board shall
(a) become familiar with and comply with the accounting and administrative procedures specified by the minister and shall keep a record of the proceedings of the board and perform the other duties the board may assign in relation to its corporate affairs,
(b) perform the duties specified for a secretary treasurer by the Act and the regulations, rules or orders made under it, and
(c) perform those duties assigned by the board.
(2) The records referred to in subsection (1) (a), and all books, accounts, vouchers and papers of the board, shall at all times be subject to inspection by the minister or his or her designated representative and by the comptroller general of the Province.

*Duties of teachers*
4. (1) The duties of a teacher include the following:
(a) providing teaching and other educational services, including advice and instructional assistance, to the students assigned to the teacher, as required or assigned by the board or the minister;
(b) providing such assistance as the board or principal considers necessary for the supervision of students on school premises and at school functions, whenever and wherever held;
(c) ensuring that students understand and comply with the codes of conduct governing their behaviour and with the rules and policies governing the operation of the school;
(d) assisting to provide programs to promote students' intellectual development, human and social development and career development;
(e) maintaining the records required by the minister, the board and the school principal;
(f) encouraging the regular attendance of students assigned to the teacher;
(g) evaluating students' intellectual development, human and social development and career development and evaluating educational programs for students as required by the minister or the board;
(h) providing the information in respect to students assigned to the teacher as required by the minister, board or, subject to the approval of the board, by a parent;
(i) when required to do so by the minister, verifying the accuracy of the information provided to the minister under paragraph (h);
(j) regularly providing the parents or guardians of a student with reports in respect of the student's school progress as required by the minister or the board; and
(k) attending all meetings or conferences called by the principal or superintendent of schools for the district to discuss matters the principal or superintendent of schools considers necessary unless excused from attending the meeting or conference by the principal or superintendent of schools;
(l) admitting to his or her classroom to observe tuition and practise teaching, student teachers enrolled in a university established under the University Act or in an institution for training teachers established under any other Act, and rendering the assistance to the student teachers, and submitting the reports on their teaching ability or on other matters relating to them or to their work, considered necessary for the training of teachers by the university or institution.

*Duties of the principal*
(6) The principal or, if so authorized by the principal, the vice principal of a school shall,
(a) perform the supervisory, management and other duties required or assigned by the board,

(b) confer with the board on matters of educational policy and, where appropriate, attend board meetings for that purpose,
(c) evaluate teachers under his or her supervision and report to the board as to his or her evaluation,
(d) assist in making the Act and this regulation effective and in carrying out a system of education in conformity with the orders of the minister,
(e) advise and assist the superintendent of schools in exercising his or her powers under the Act,
(f) recommend to the superintendent of schools the assignment or reassignment of teachers to positions on the teaching staff of the school board,
(g) recommend to the superintendent of schools the dismissal or discipline of a teacher,
(h) perform teaching duties assigned by the board, and
(i) represent the board when meeting with the public in the capacity of principal or vice principal of a school.

(7) The principal of a school is responsible for administering and supervising the school including
(a) the implementation of educational programs,
(b) the placing and programming of students in the school,
(c) the timetables of teachers,
(d) the program of teaching and learning activities,
(e) the program of student evaluation and assessment and reporting to parents,
(f) the maintenance of school records, and
(g) the general conduct of students, both on school premises and during activities that are off school premises and that are organized or sponsored by the school, and shall, in accordance with the policies of the board, exercise paramount authority within the school in matters concerning the discipline of students.

(8) Principals shall ensure that parents or guardians are regularly provided with reports in respect of the student's school progress in intellectual development, human and social development and career development and the student's attendance and punctuality.

(9) Reports under subsection (8) shall be made at least 5 times during the school year as follows:
(a) 3 written reports, one of which shall be at the end of the school year
   (i) on a form ordered by the minister, or
   (ii) on a form approved by the board containing information, and when required, using reporting symbols ordered or approved by the minister, and
(b) at least 2 informal reports.

(10) The principal of a school shall
(a) subject to the approval of the board, establish a program of school assemblies to be conducted at appropriate times during the school year,
(b) ensure that assemblies are held at least 3 times in a school year, including the school day immediately preceding Remembrance Day,
(c) ensure that the Canadian national anthem shall be sung at each school assembly, and
(d) ensure that the Canadian flag and the British Columbia flag be displayed at each school while in session.

*School Board Power and Capacity*
85 (1) For the purposes of carrying out its powers, functions and duties under this Act and the regulations, a board has the power and capacity of a natural person of full capacity.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), a board may, subject to this Act and the regulations, do all or any of the following:
(a) determine local policy for the effective and efficient operation of schools in the school district;
(b) subject to the orders of the minister, approve educational resource materials and other supplies and services for use by students;
(c) make rules
   (i) establishing a code of conduct for students attending educational programs operated by or on behalf of the board,

(ii) respecting suspension of students and the provision of educational programs for suspended students,

(iii) respecting attendance of students in educational programs provided by the board,

(iv) respecting the establishment, operation, administration and management of

    (A) schools operated by the board and educational programs provided by the board, and

    (B) transportation equipment used for the purposes of the board,

(v) respecting the provision of volunteer services,

(vi) respecting the management of student housing facilities and the supervision of students accommodated in them, and

(vii) respecting any other matter under the jurisdiction of the board;

(d) suspend students, in accordance with the rules under paragraph (c) (ii), so long as the board continues to make available to those students an educational program;

(e) if approved by the council of the municipality in which the school is located, provide a system of traffic patrols to assist in the control of motor vehicle traffic on highways or elsewhere in that municipality so far as the traffic may affect students going to or from school

(f) provide housing accommodation for students;

(g) subject to the orders of the minister, permit persons other than students to utilize board facilities, equipment and personnel;

(h) subject to the orders of the minister, evaluate and recognize educational activities of an educational program undertaken by a student outside of the school;

(i) develop and offer local programs for use in schools in the school district;

(j) subject to the orders of the minister, cause an educational assessment to be made of students or groups of students;

(k) establish loan funds or bursaries for students enrolled in an educational program in the school district and spend money received by donation.