



Comox Valley Schools

A Community of Learners

INNOVATIVE • INQUISITIVE • INCLUSIVE

Enhancing Student Learning Report September 2023



Approved by Board on October 3, 2023

Introduction:

The Board of Education acknowledges that we are on the traditional territories of the K'ómoks First Nation. We would like to thank them for the privilege of living on their land and the gift of working with their children.

Comox Valley Schools is the fourth largest school District on Vancouver Island. We have the following municipalities in our District: City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, and the Comox Valley Regional District. We are located on the traditional territories of the Pentlatch, Ei'ksan, Sahtlout, and Sasitla people of the K'ómoks First Nation.

Comox Valley Schools (SD71) enrolls approx. 10,921 students (with approx. 1867 students identifying as Indigenous. We have fifteen (15) elementary schools, one (1) middle school, three (3) secondary schools, two (2) alternative schools, and a provincial online school. (5 of our schools are developed as community schools).

Number of Students Across All Grades

		Grades													
Student Group	Total	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	K	Others
All Students	10,921	745	769	799	742	774	767	769	792	785	835	922	1,204	648	370
Diverse Needs	1,060	45	58	47	42	68	104	122	128	87	122	113	99	25	
Indigenous	1,867	144	114	123	138	122	144	161	157	141	157	160	182	99	25

*Other includes elementary ungraded, secondary ungraded, and graduated adults in the school system

Figure 1 Comox Valley School District Enrollment for School Year 2022-2023, Source: studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca

We currently are the largest employer in the Comox Valley with 1825 employees. Our Annual Budget is \$113 million.

Current Strategic Plan Priorities

Comox Valley Schools has completed the final year of our four-year District Strategic Plan. The Board of Education is currently working on the 2023-2027 District Strategic Plan.

[Strategic Plan 2019-2023](#)

This plan was the result of extensive consultation and work with our educational partners. By accepting the Strategic Plan, the District committed to aligning its resources to support

the direction of the plan. Furthermore, the District expects that all schools would focus their school goals in support of the Board's strategic direction.

Currently Comox Valley Schools has 4 strategic priorities.



Vision Statement

An inclusive learning community that embraces diversity, fosters relationships, and empowers all learners to have a positive impact on the world.

Mission Statement

To inspire engaged, compassionate, resilient lifelong learners and cultivate a collaborative community together.

We Value and Believe In

Trusting relationships based on respect, integrity, and ethical behaviour

A commitment to Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples

Equity, inclusion, dignity, and acceptance for all

Global awareness and environmental stewardship

Innovation, creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking

Accountability and shared responsibility

Open and engaging communication

Celebration of learning

Celebrating our Successes for the Past Year

Our District has had a number of successes and initiatives this past year.

A [Year End Review 2023](#) video will provide an overview of many of our successes and milestones over the past year.

In addition to our District successes, each of our schools have aligned their school goals to our District priorities. The following link will share each schools' goals as they relate to our District priorities.

[Elementary Annual Report 2022-2023](#)

[Secondary Annual Report 2022-2023](#)

The District's commitment to reconciliation is fundamental to our work with the K'omoks First Nation, Metis, and all other First Nations represented in our school District. The District worked in partnership with K'omoks First Nation to finalize and implement the new Local Education Agreement.

- LEA engagement group consisted of senior leadership, PVP, District Principal of Indigenous Education and K'omoks First Nation representatives.
- LEA negotiated and signed off on August 31, 2022 – [Local Education Agreement 2022-2027](#)
- Indigenous Education Council Monthly meeting.
- SD 71 LEA commitment to create a new teaching position of K'omoks First Nation Success Advisor.
- Each one of our schools have made a commitment to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.
- Acknowledgement of traditional territories happens at all meetings District wide.
- Ni'noxola (Elders/Wise Ones) supporting students across the District.
- ISW's (Indigenous Support Workers) in every school.
- 4 Indigenous support teachers working in the District.
- Began the Equity Scan with Joe Heslip which will be continued next school year.
- First Peoples Principles of Learning – incorporated in many of our classrooms.
- Investment in resources to support English First Peoples 11 implementation in secondary schools.
- Currently working on Indigenous course offerings.

We understand and value the teachings of Indigenous people and are committed to strengthening our relationship and their presence in our schools. We are fortunate to have an extensive "Elders in Residence" program.

[Comox Valley Schools Indigenous Education](#)

Our commitment to reconciliation can be seen in our participation in the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack legacy school's project. We were the first school District in Canada to have all schools participate.

[Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Spotlight](#)

Section A: Reflecting Back

2022-23 Student Learning Outcomes

Intellectual Development

Educational Outcome 1: Literacy

Measure 1.1: Grade 4 & Grade 7 Literacy Expectations

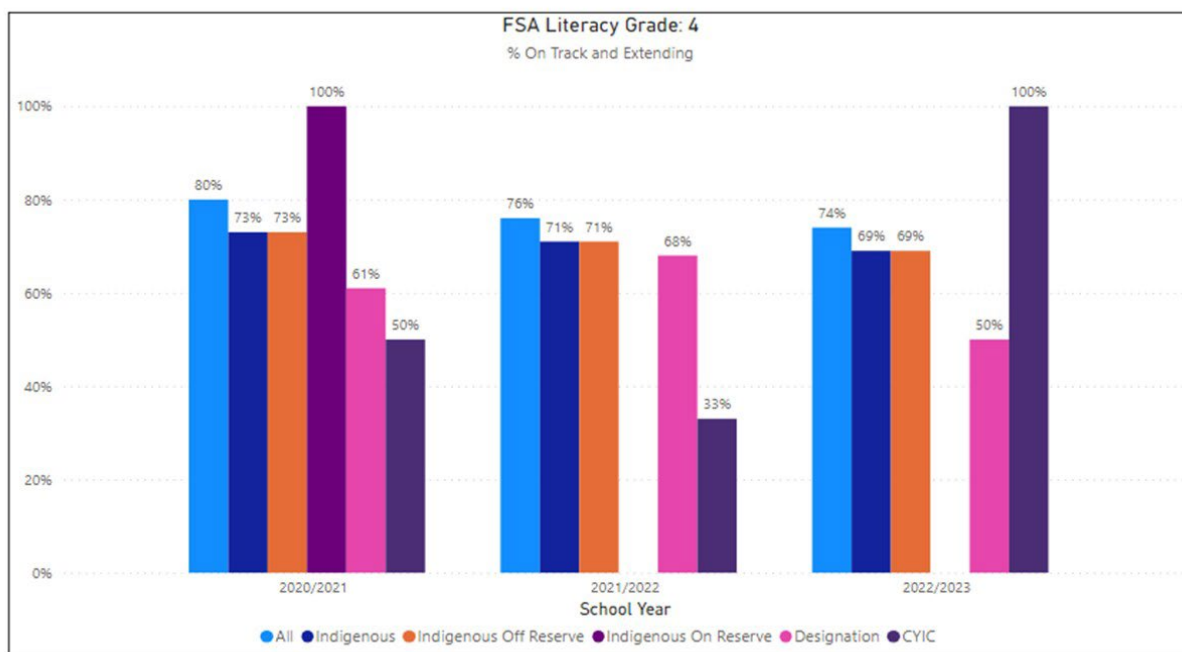


Figure 2: Grade 4 % of Participants who are On Track/Extending for Grade 4 Literacy

Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) - Literacy component

FSA 2022 results indicate:

- 74% of students demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 4 Literacy.
- 69% of Indigenous students demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 4 Literacy.

- 50% of students with diverse needs who wrote the assessment demonstrated “emerging” skills. This percentage is higher than that of last year’s cohort.

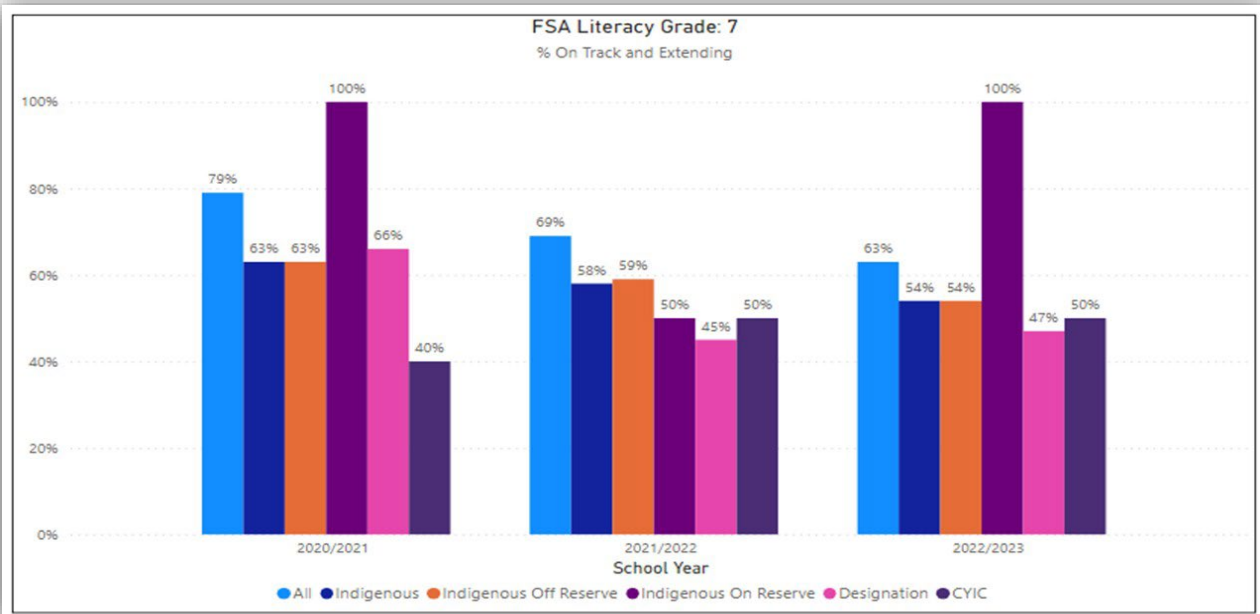


Figure 3: Grade 7 % of Participants who are On Track/Extending for Literacy

Grade 7 Foundation Skills Assessment - Literacy component

FSA 2022 results indicate:

- 63% of students demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 7 Literacy. This result is less than those of cohorts in the previous two years.
- 46% of Indigenous students and 53% of students with diverse needs who wrote the assessment demonstrated “emerging” skills.

Cohort data – Grade 4 to Grade 7 FSA Literacy

It is important to note that in the 2022-2023 school year, the FSA comprised a generalized focus on literacy, whereas four years ago, the FSA specified Reading and Writing components. As such, cohort analysis cannot distinguish reading and writing results as in the past, and comparison of results across years is challenging.

Measure 1.2: Grade 10 Literacy Expectations

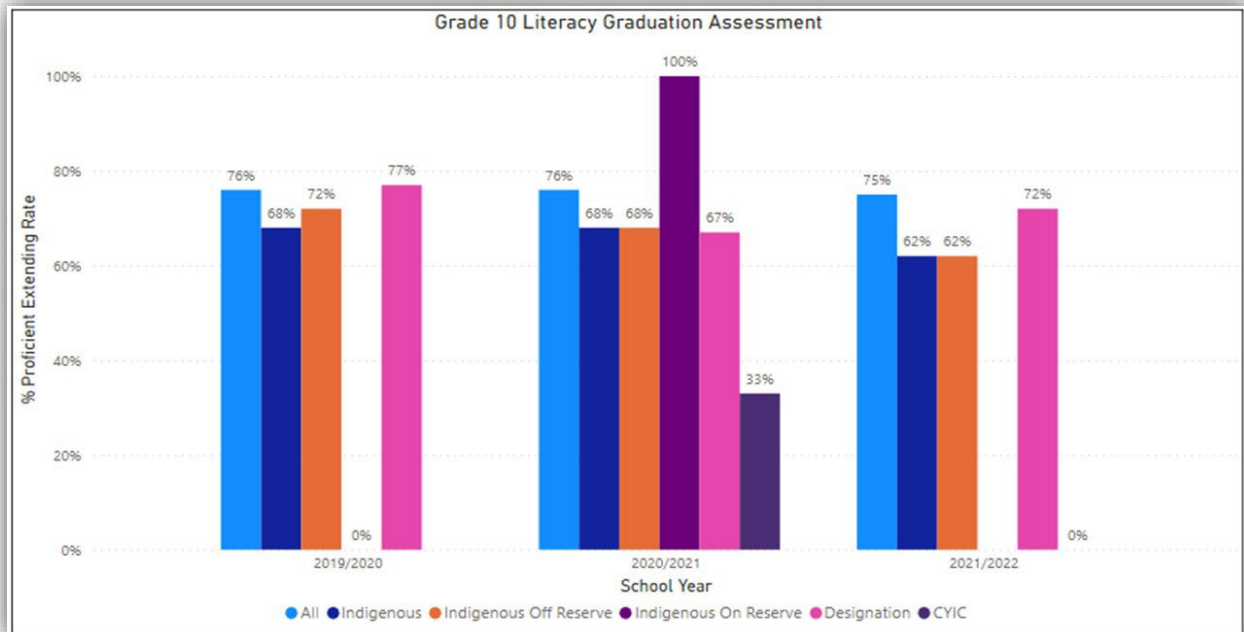


Figure 4: Grade 10 % of Participants who are Proficient/Extending for Literacy

Grade 10 Graduation Literacy Assessment (GLA)

GLA 2021-2022 results indicate:

- 75% of students demonstrated “proficient” and “extending” skills in Grade 10 Literacy. This result is similar to those of cohorts in the previous two years.
- 72% of students with diverse needs demonstrated “proficient” and “extending” skills in Grade 10 Literacy, similar results to peers within the cohort.
- 62% of Indigenous students demonstrated “proficient” and “extending” skills in Grade 10 Literacy. This result is lower than those of cohorts in the previous two years.



Educational Outcome 2: Numeracy

Measure 2.1: Grade 4 & Grade 7 Numeracy Expectation

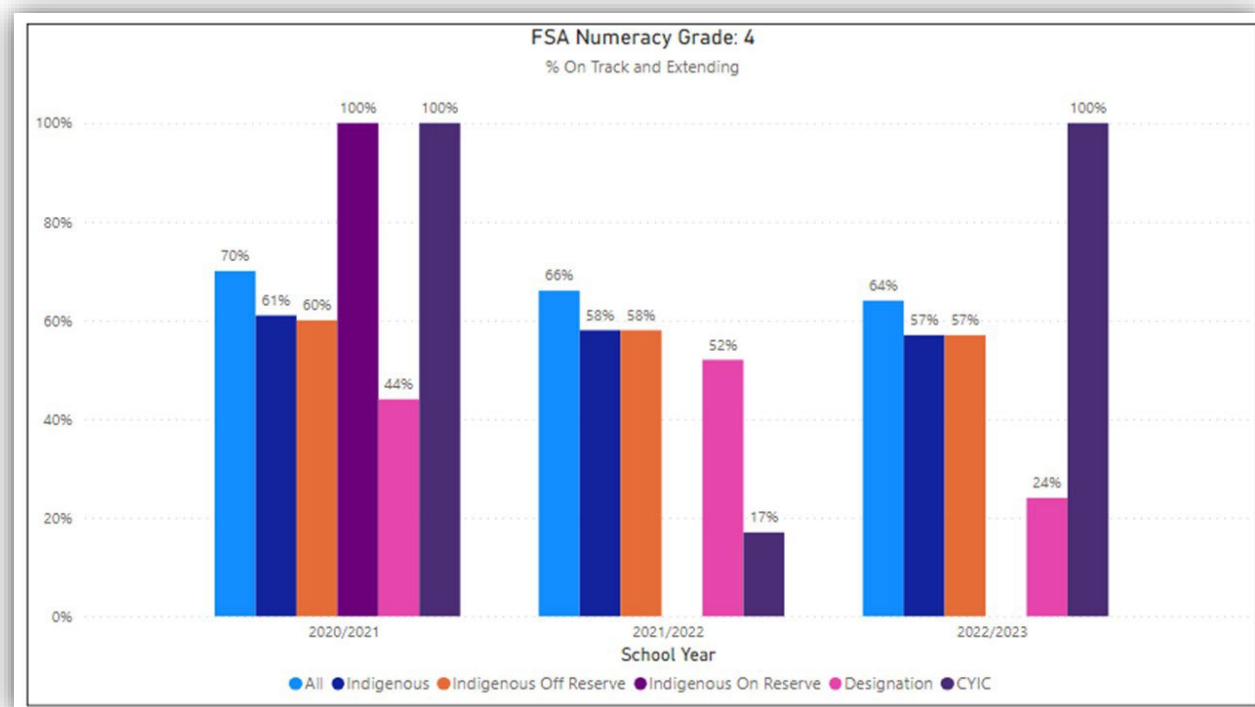


Figure 5: Grade 4 % of Participants who are On Track/Extending for Numeracy

Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessment - Numeracy component

FSA 2022 results indicate:

- 64% of students demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 4 Numeracy.
- 57% of Indigenous students demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 4 Numeracy
- A large proportion of students with diverse needs (76%), who participated in the assessment, demonstrated “emerging” skills. This result has increased when compared with those of cohorts in the previous two years.

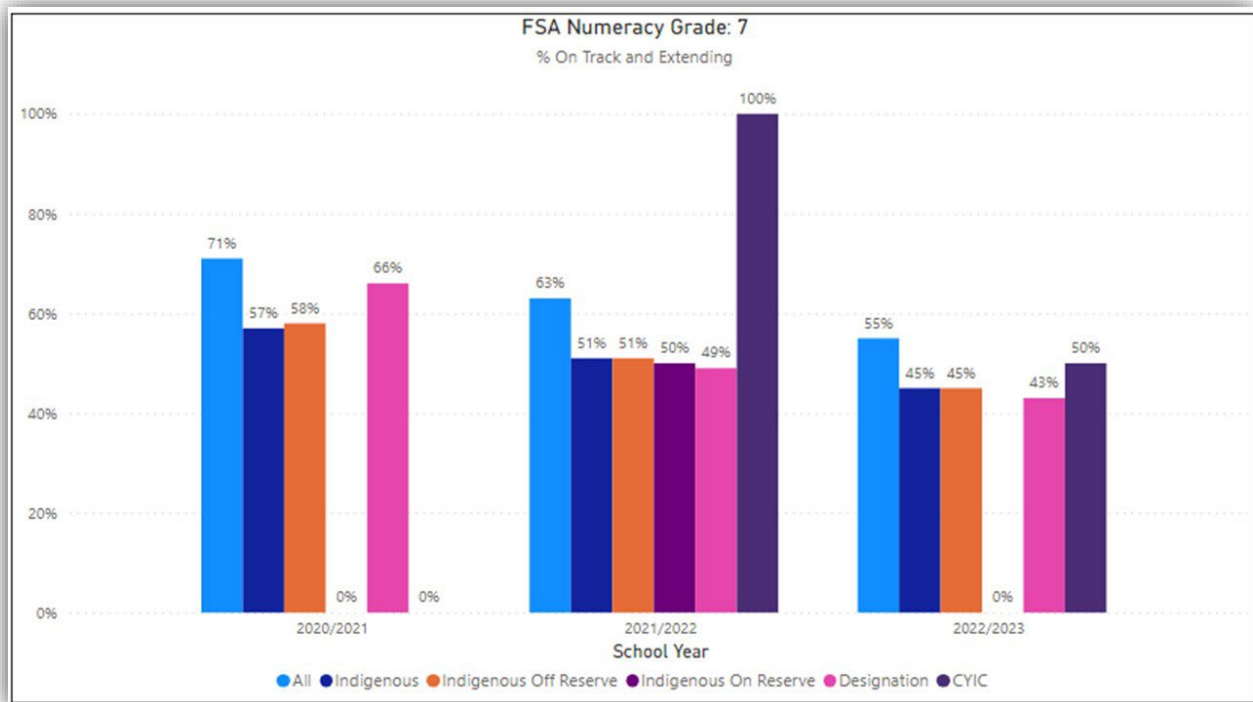


Figure 6: Grade 7 % of Participants who are On Track/Extending for Numeracy

Grade 7 Foundation Skills Assessment - Numeracy component

FSA 2022 results indicate:

- 55% of students demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 7 Numeracy. These results are lower than those of cohorts in the previous two years.
- 45% of Indigenous students and 43% of students with diverse needs who wrote the assessment demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 7 Numeracy.

Measure 2.2: Grade 10 Numeracy Expectations

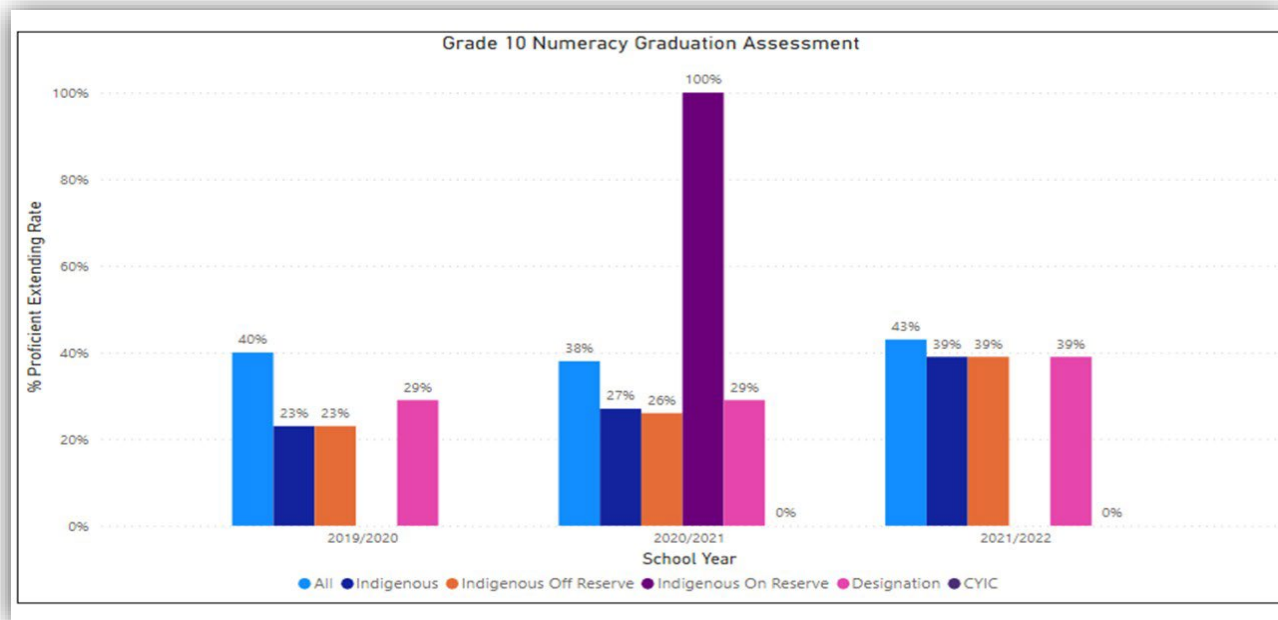


Figure 7: Grade 10 % of Participants who are Proficient/Extending for Numeracy

Grade 10 Graduation Numeracy Assessment (GNA)

GLA 2021-2022 results indicate:

- 43% of students demonstrated “proficient” and “extending” skills in Grade 10 Numeracy.
- 39% of Indigenous students and 39% of students with diverse needs who wrote the assessment demonstrated “on track” and “extending” skills in Grade 10 Numeracy.

Analysis and Interventions

The district recognizes the need for continuous improvement in all areas of literacy and numeracy learning K-12. Collective capacity building to ensure all students grow in literacy and numeracy, including Indigenous students and students with diverse needs continues to be a focus area.

Each of our elementary/middle schools has a Curriculum Support Teacher who supports and collaborates with school-based colleagues to address the literacy and/or numeracy goal for their school. As a Community of Practice, the group meets regularly to discuss the

literacy and numeracy research, work on instructional and assessment strategies in support of all learners and explore ways to embed the First Peoples Principles of Learning.

In order to improve literacy and numeracy learning for all students and ensure equitable opportunities, the district is developing a collective and systemic approach to instruction and assessment K-12. During the 2022-2023 school year, educators across the district collaborated to co-construct common framework drafts for both literacy and numeracy. Teaching and learning frameworks are research-informed models that provide educators with common understanding, practices, and tools to individually and collaboratively encourage literacy and numeracy growth in their students. This process is ongoing to build on the aforementioned improvement and staff development activities, and incorporates current research, provincial assessment directions, and what's working in other jurisdictions.

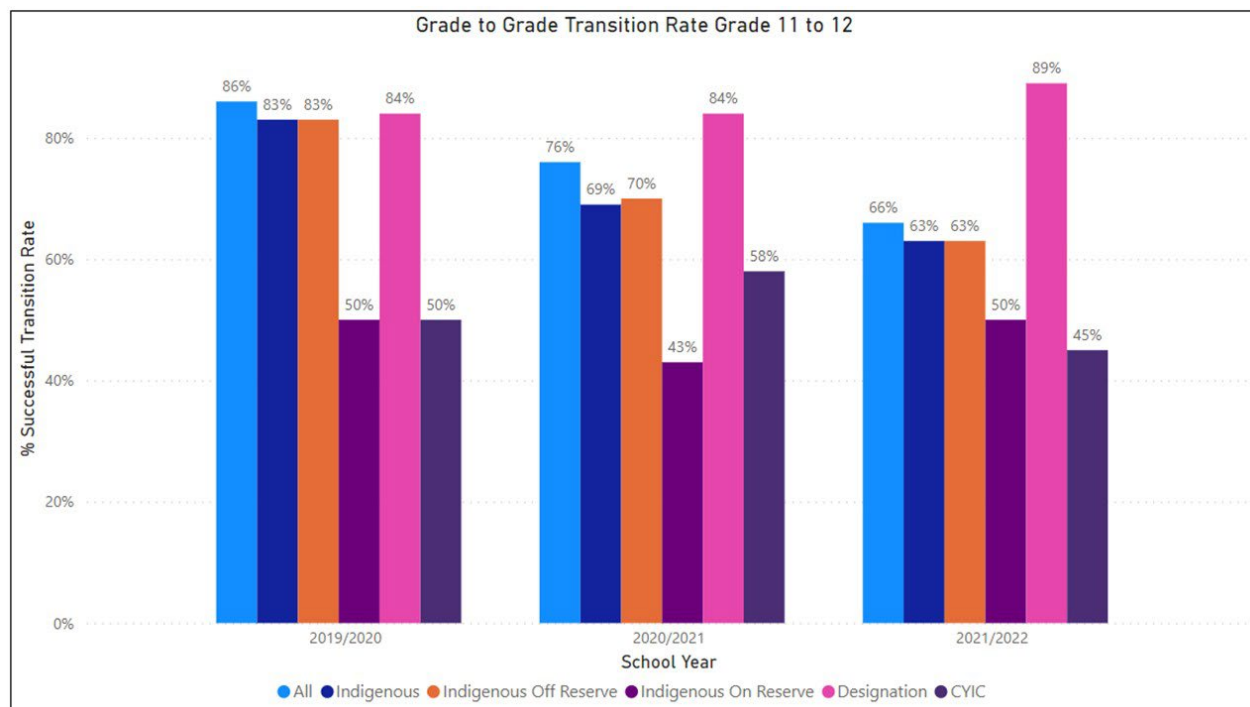
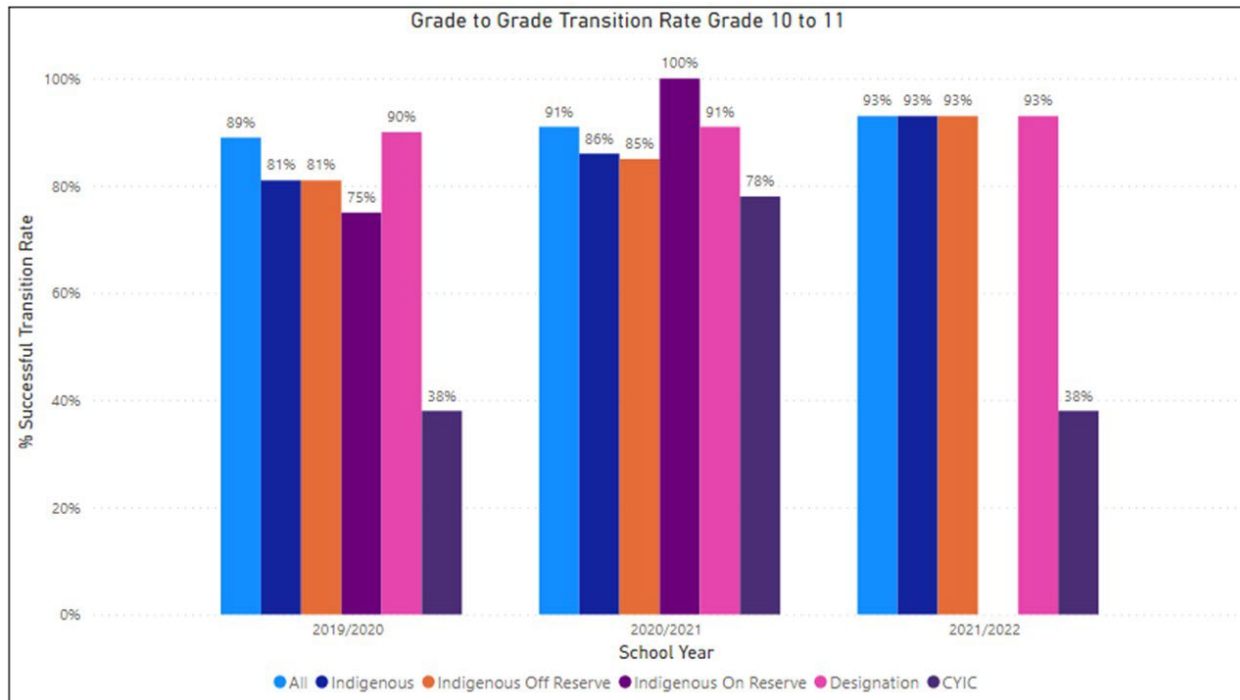
Next Steps

Elementary and middle schools will field test completed components of the district's literacy and numeracy frameworks, as well as continue development of components that are in progress. In the Spring, we will review student results and feedback from staff to further refine the frameworks as part of our continuous improvement cycle.



Grade-to-Grade Transitions

Measure 2.3: Grade-to-Grade Transitions



Analysis

The grade-to-grade transition rate from Grade 10 to Grade 11 has shown steady improvement for the most part from 2016/17 to 2020/21 with the 2021/2022 year demonstrating significant jumps in success rates for all groups. An important area to examine further is the Children/Youth in Care data which is significantly impacted by the cohort size.

The grade-to-grade transition rate from Grade 11 to Grade 12 is lower than the Grade 10 to Grade 11 transition rate. The numbers indicate that there is a larger fluctuation from year to year with this cohort when compared to the Grade 10 to Grade 11 transition cohort. This might indicate that students are not completing enough credits during their Grade 11 year to successfully transition to Grade 12 status. However, we feel there is another significant factor at play here. It is important to note that when we did a separate analysis with our Online Learning Students removed from the data, we improved from and more accurately reflects the transition rate of in-District students.

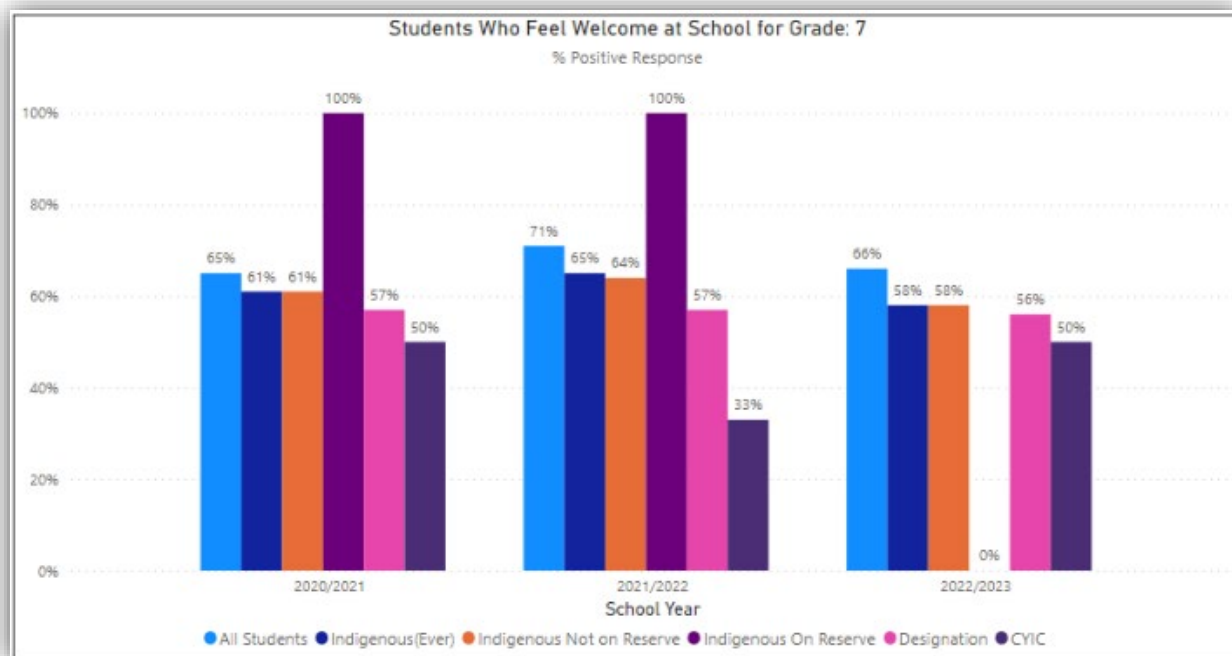
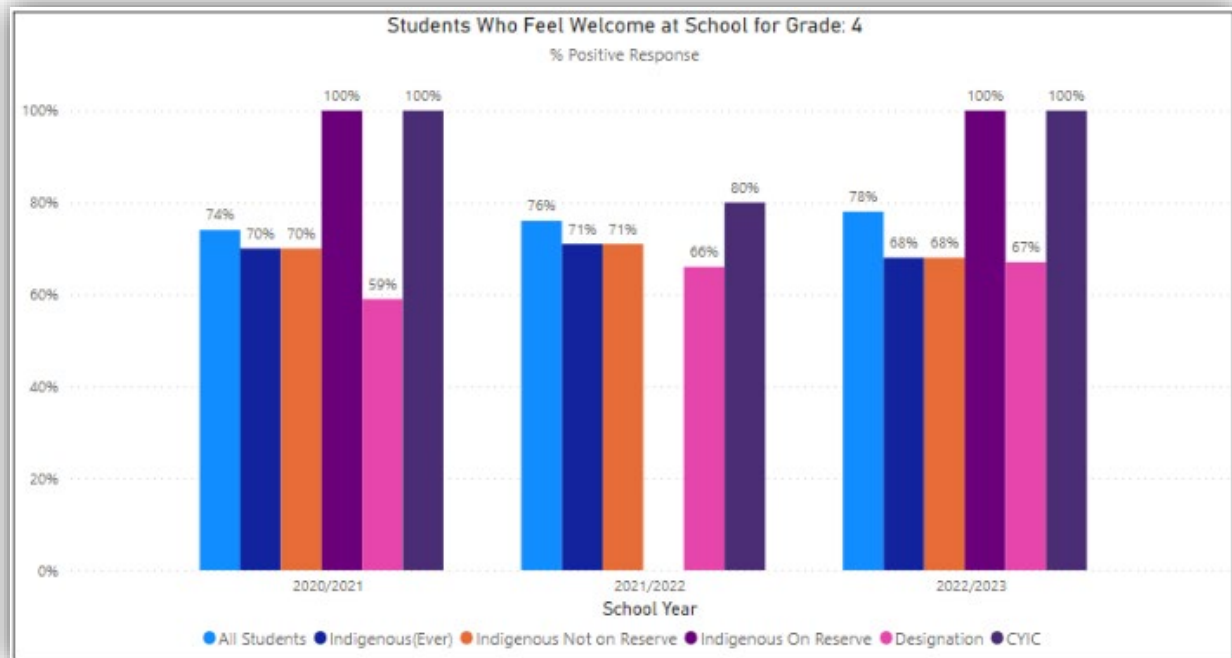
Adjustments and Adaptations

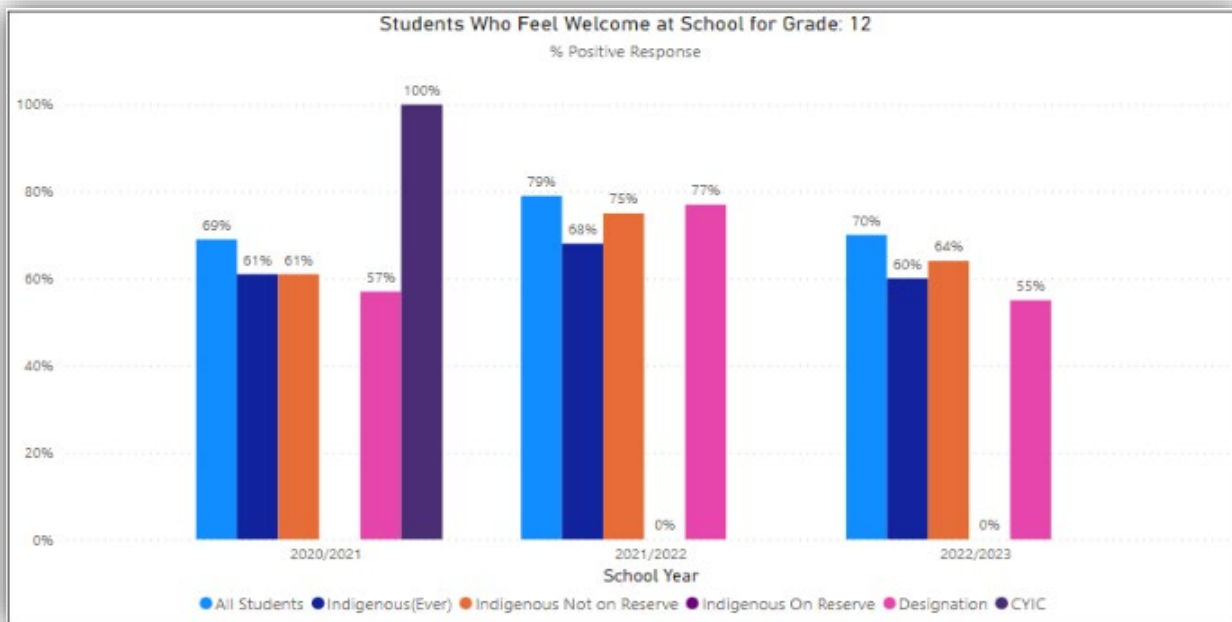
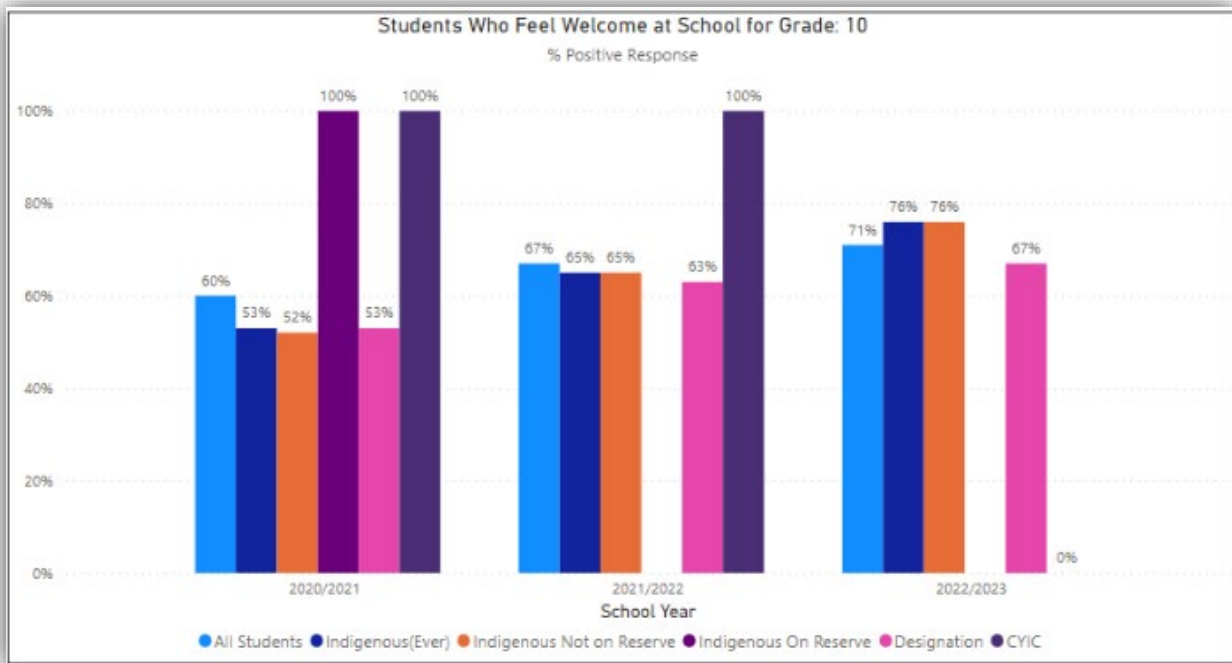
- Our secondary schools are placing more of an emphasis on working with Grade 8 and Grade 9 cohorts to insure they are ready for the graduation program.
- Our District has supported School Learning Plans so that schools can focus on specific learning projects with an emphasis on data collection to track the success rates of students in core areas of learning. Up to \$10,000 per school has been allocated for this purpose.
- Our LEA (Local Enhancement Agreement) has hired a K'omoks' Success Advisor which is a teaching position designed to help ensure the success of our K'omoks' students with grade-to-grade transitions and the graduation program.
- All our schools have Indigenous Support Workers (ISW) who work with Indigenous students with a focus on academic success and culture building.
- We have Indigenous Support Teaching positions for our secondary schools (and elementary schools).
- Our District has a robust trades program which allows our students to earn secondary credits while they develop trades skills and earn certification as they train in the trades. This caters to the individual needs of our secondary students.
- Our District has a robust dual credit program with the local university (NIC) which allows for a more successful transition from the graduation program to post-secondary institutions.

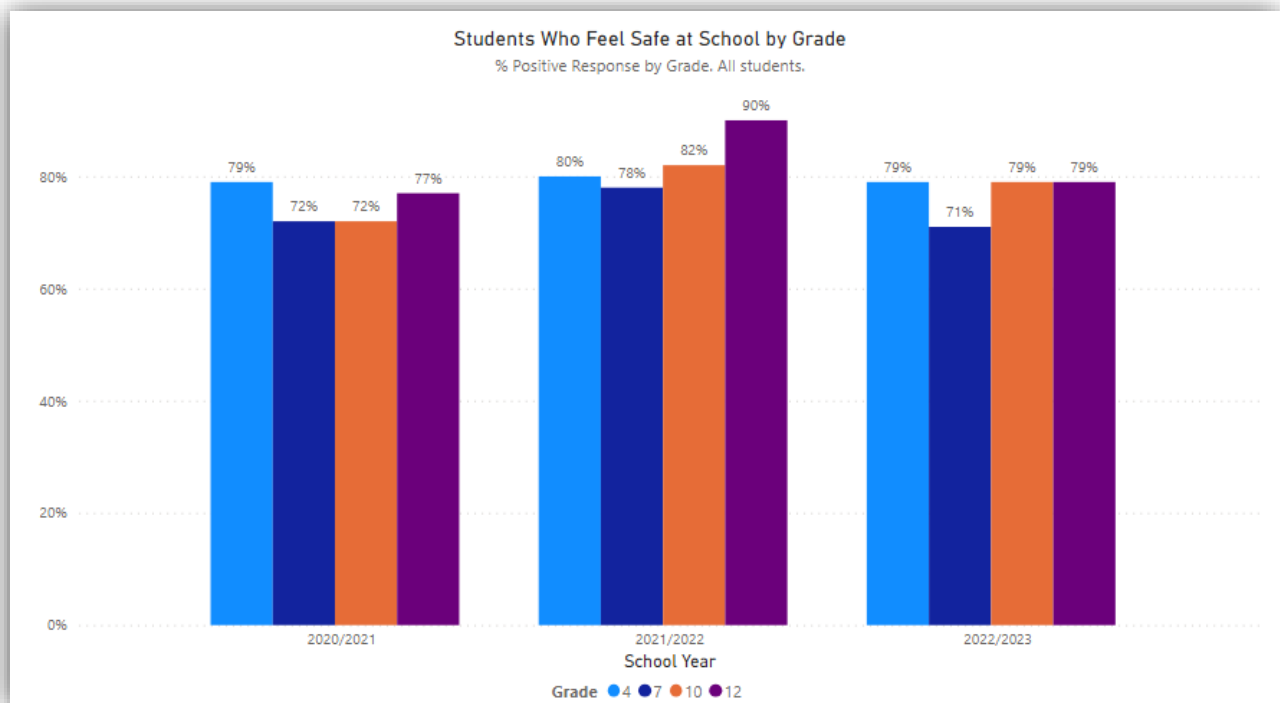
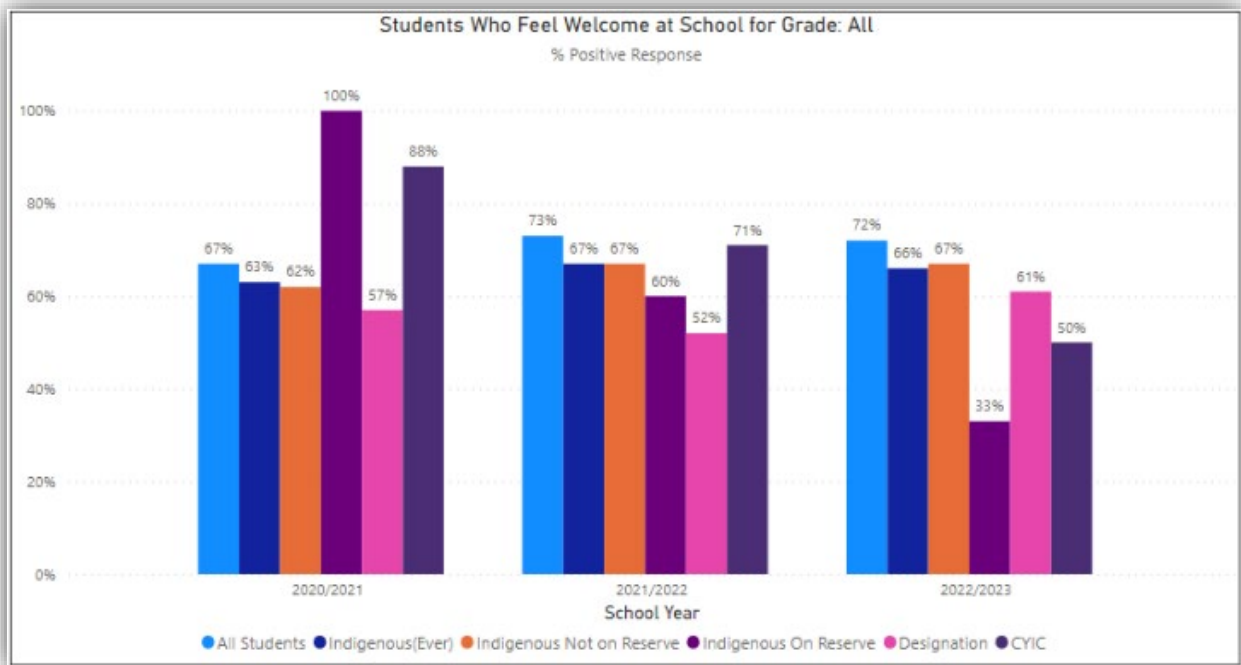
Human and Social Development

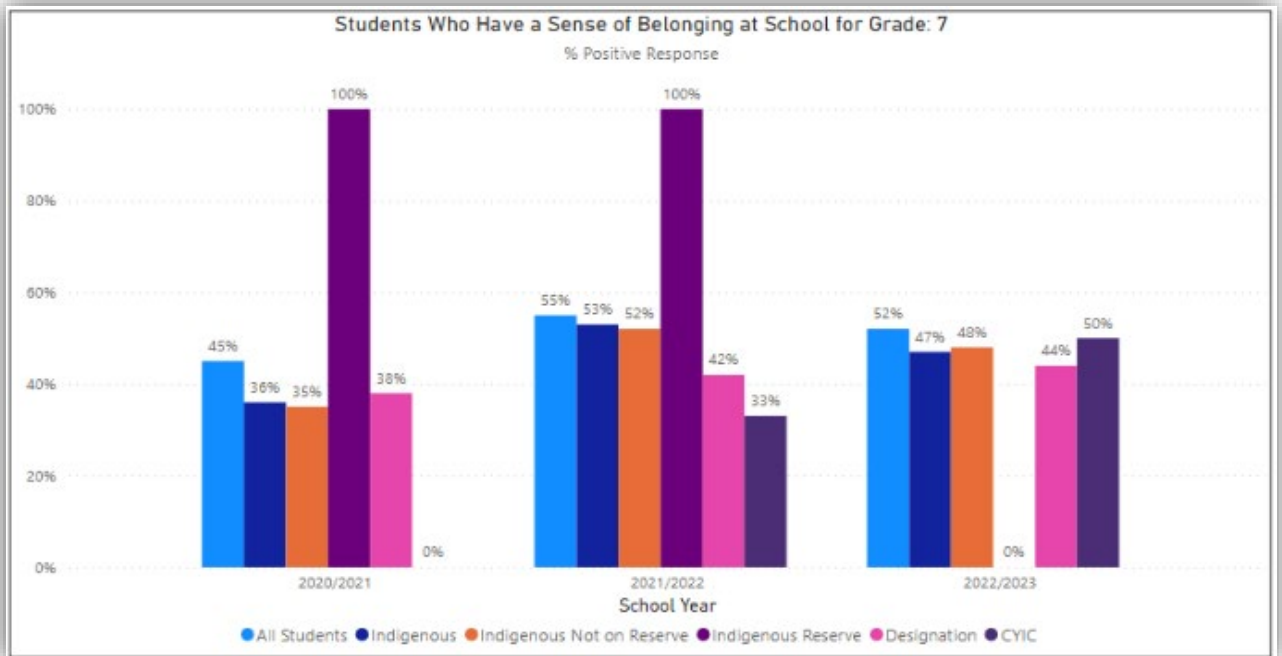
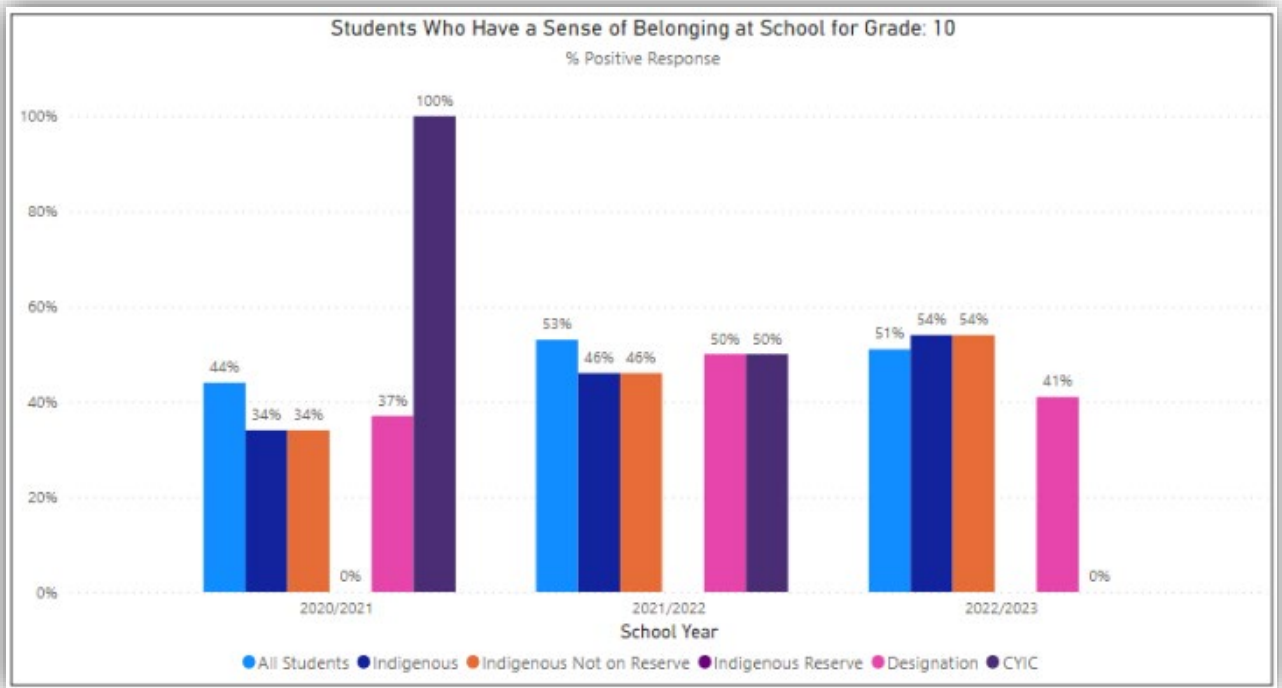
Educational Outcome 3: Students Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

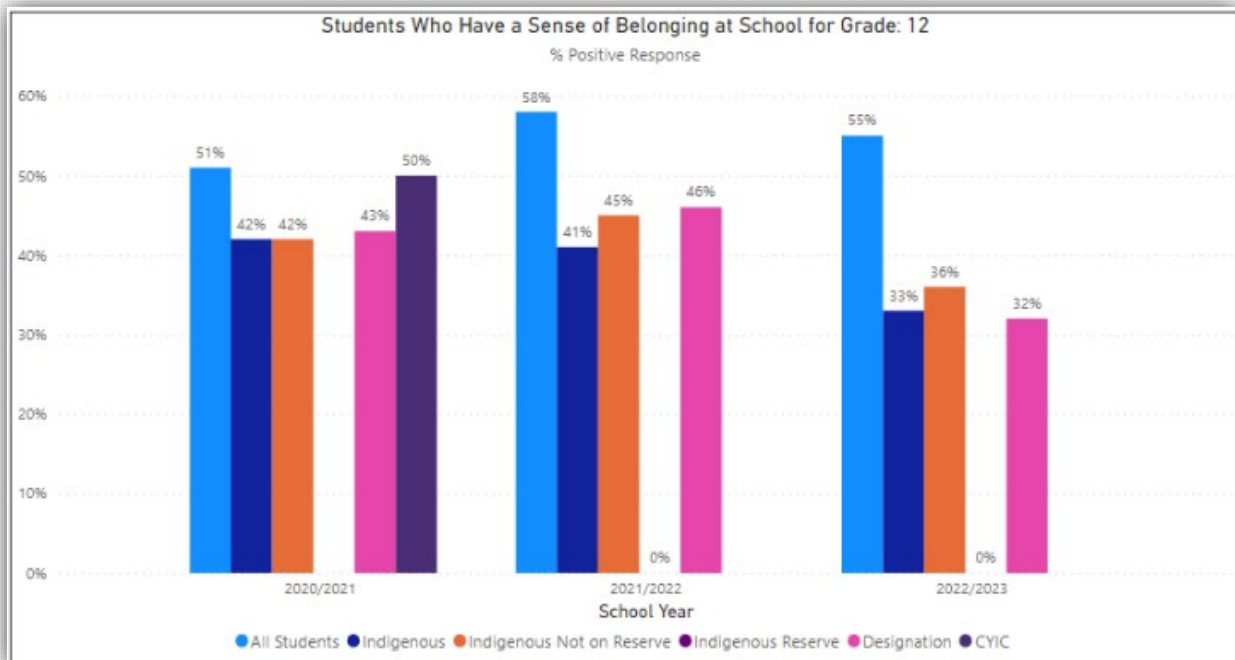
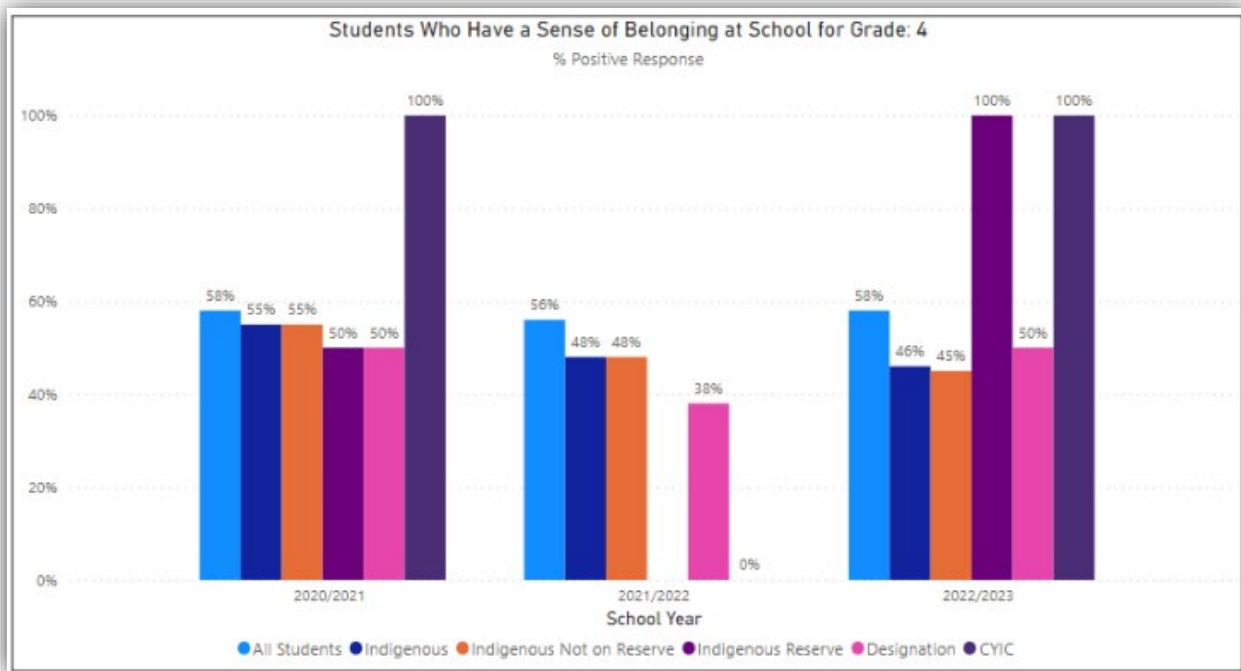
Measure 3.1: Student Sense of Belonging

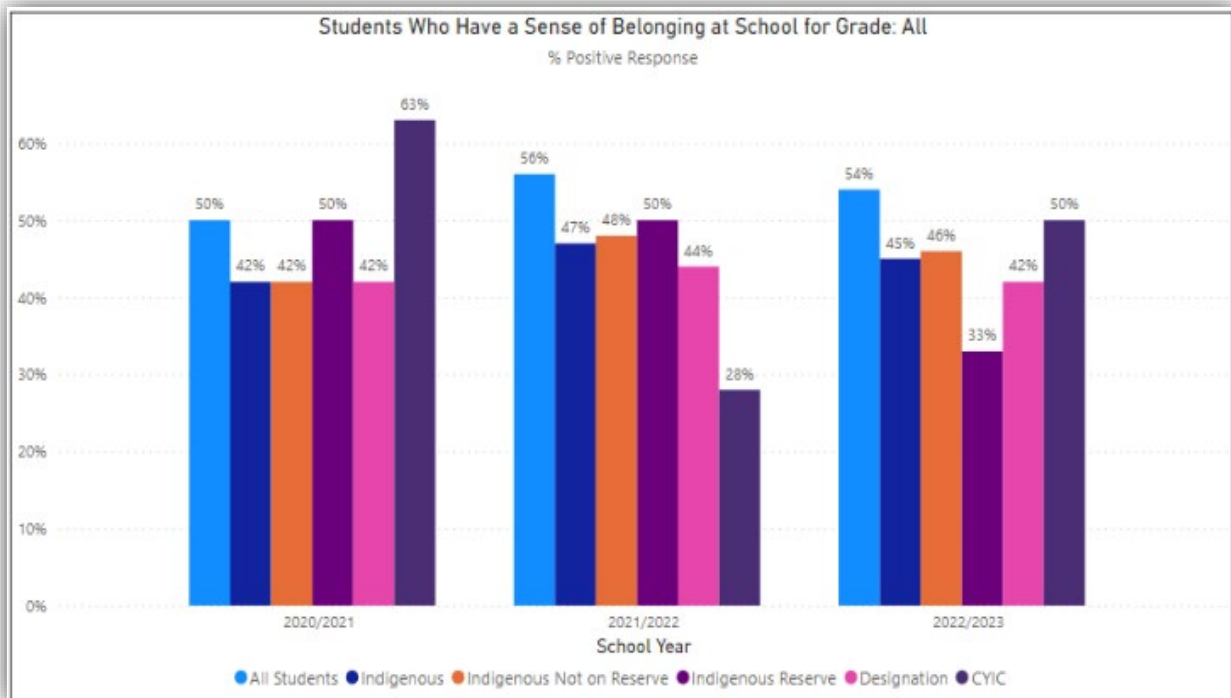






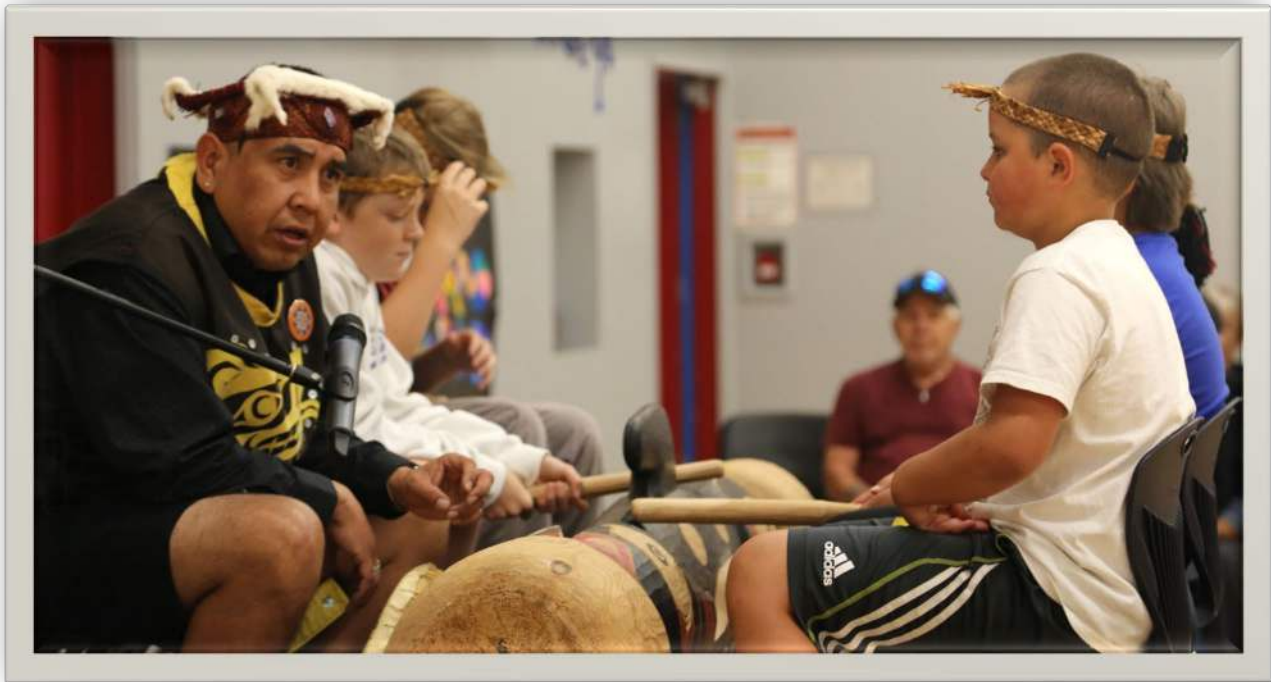




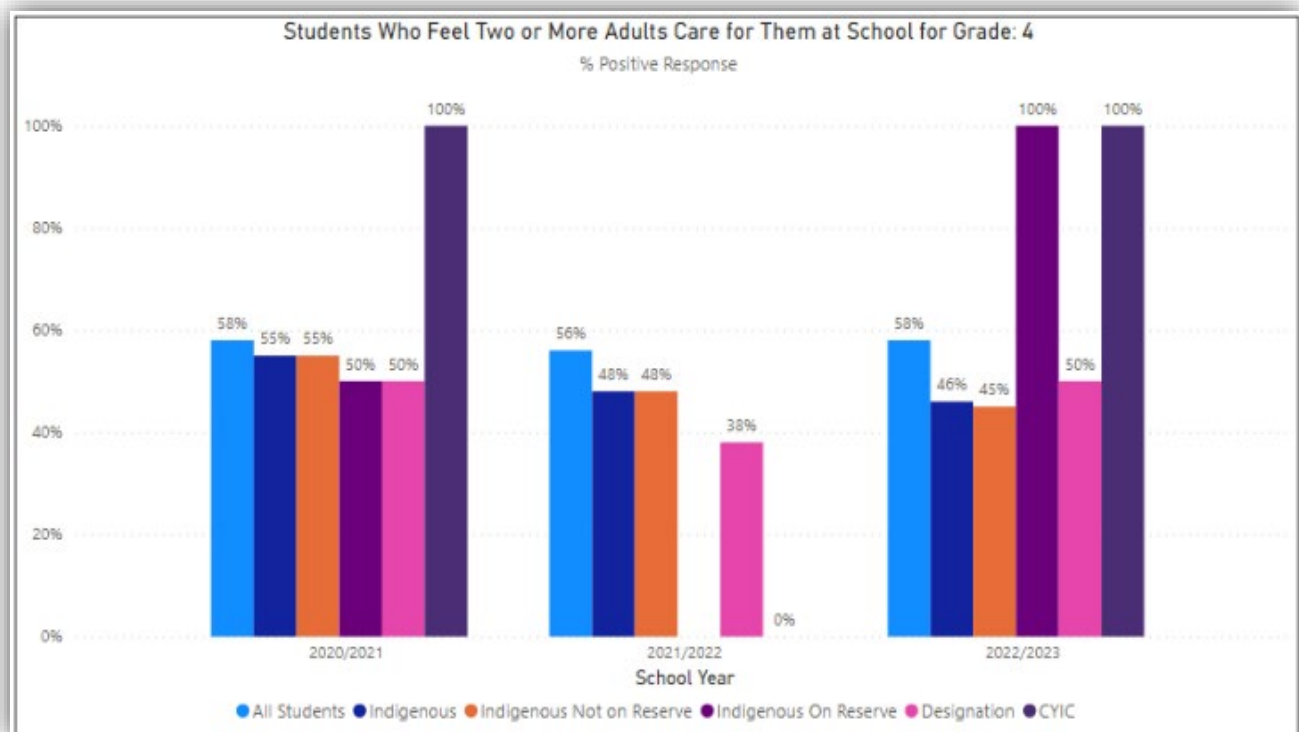


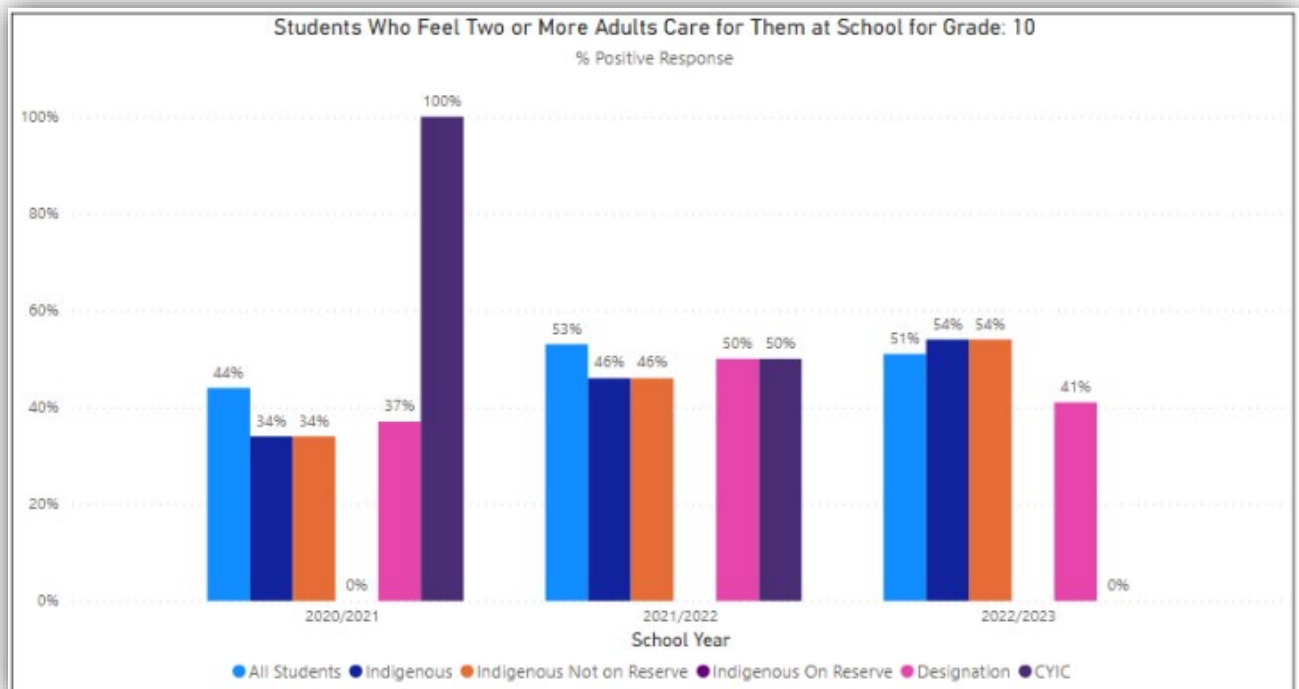
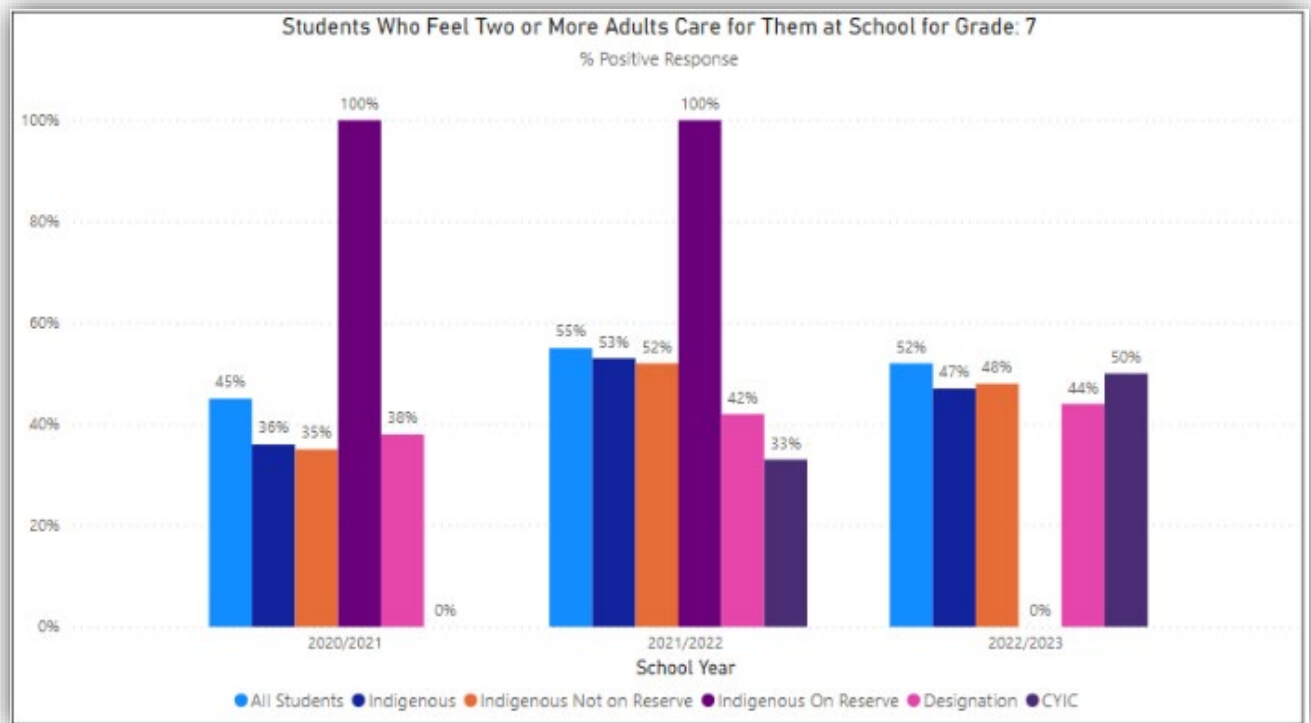
Analysis, Adjustments, and Adaptations

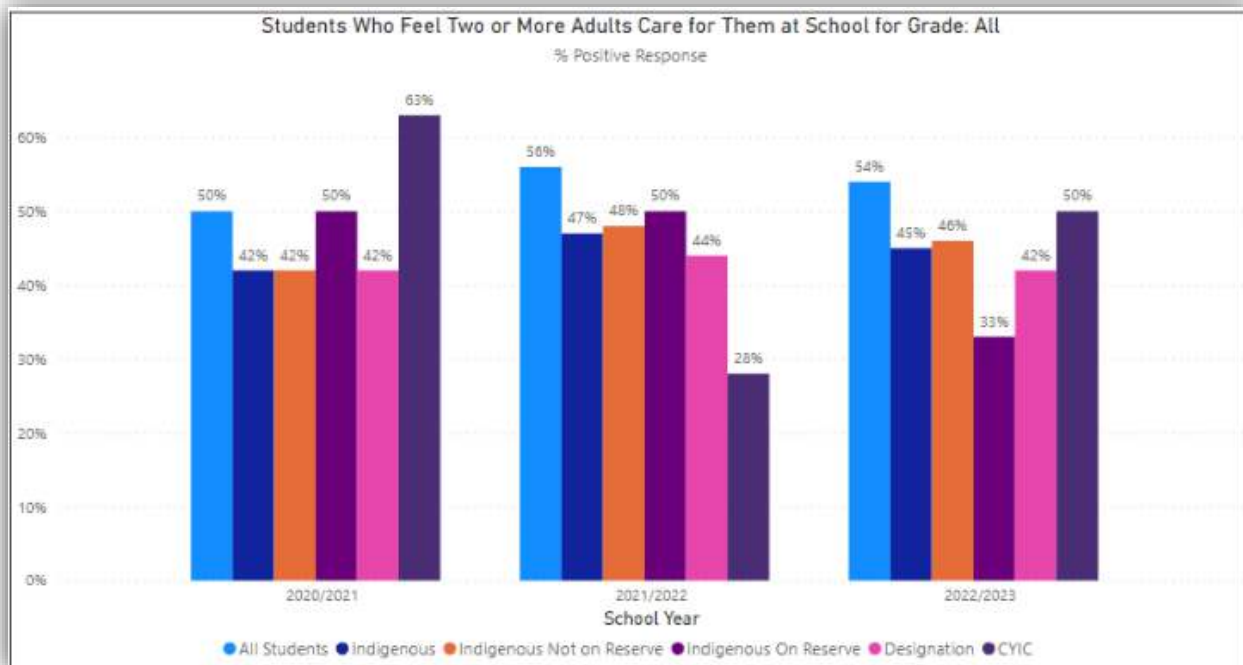
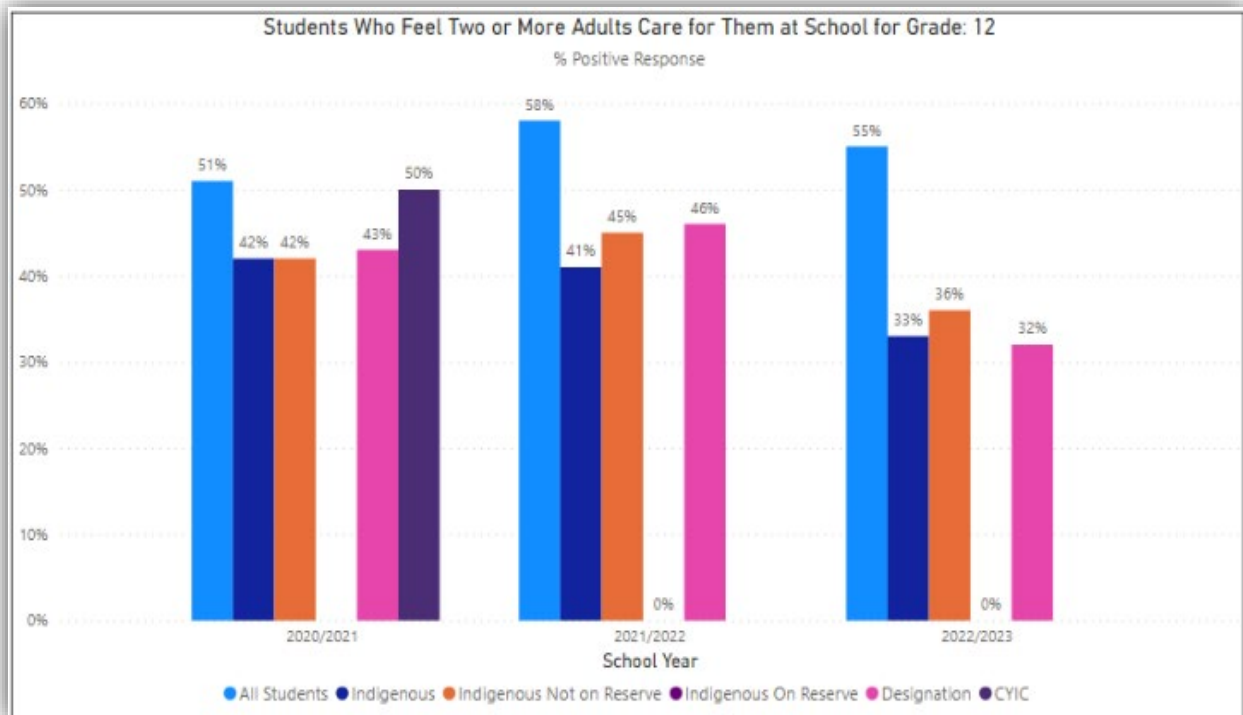
- Students feel safe at school similar to the provincial average for each grade level.
- Social emotional support has been a focus of SD71 Mental Health Committee through parent & family workshops and staff professional development.
- The District has recently reviewed and implemented new administrative policies to better support inclusion, equity, and diversity.
- The physical plant of all schools have been reviewed for safety and belonging and the necessary changes made. These include gender neutral washrooms, gradual curbs and hand-free entrances.
- Implementing specific initiatives – Duella Project – Island Women of Native Ancestry offering empowerment and skill building.
- District emphasis on restarting support school groups – boys groups, girls groups, GSA clubs and LGBTQ2S+.
- Inner Explorer was implemented as a District initiative for all schools.
- Elders have trained staff in the use of “Talking Circles”.
- Implemented “Consent Awareness Week” to address and prevent Gender based violence.
- SD71 Accessibility Committee has been created and feedback avenues available for staff, students and community.



Measure 3.2: Two or More Adults who Care About Them







Relevant Additional/Local Data and Evidence

Analysis, Adjustments, and Adaptations

- Students have identified 2 or more adults in the schools' that care about them. This is similar to the provincial average for each grade level.
- Developing structures to identify students that do not feel they have 2 or more adults in the school that they feel connected to.
 - Leadership mentoring, Grade 12-7 pairings, Teacher Advisory groups.
- Parental workshops designed to strengthen relationships with students. DBTA (Dialectical Behavioral Therapy), White Hatter.
- Inclusive education models for staff a variety of strategies to enhance the connection between adults and students.
- The school District trained a handful of staff on Compassionate Systems: Building on Existing Relationships (Peter Senge).
- Implementing Chuck Geddes "Complex Trauma" in schools.

Additionally

SD71 embarked on two major initiatives that support the human and social development of our students.

1. Pathways to Hope: Integrated Child and Youth Care Services.

- SD71 is one of 5 initial Districts that implemented a community based multidisciplinary team which delivers wrap-around services and supports for children and youth. The integrated team (MCFD, Health Authority and SD71) work collaboratively to address needs in a safe and secure environment.
- SD71 has hired their two ICY Counsellors and have started seeing students from the referral process (soft start).

[Integrated Child & Youth Teams](#)

- Sd71 has hired two peer support workers who have started seeing students.

2. SD71 has implemented a 3-pronged approach to supporting mental health.

- Compassionate Systems:
 - Building on existing relationships (self-awareness, mindfulness, authentic connections).
 - 6 staff trained through Stanford University.
 - Part of Sr. Leadership meetings.

- **Mental Health Literacy:**
 - Consistency with the language, understanding and beliefs, management, and prevention.
 - Staff trained through UBC.
 - Analyzing the McCreary Report 2023
- **Local Data:**
 - Understanding our local data. Identifying areas that need greater awareness.

A recent update of the District's commitment to supporting mental health and wellness can be found at:

Mental Health Webpage

Mental Health and wellbeing are so much bigger than one person. They include every part of our lives. When people have the right tools and supports in place, they can flourish regardless of health problems.

[Mental Health and Wellness](#)

The District has hired a 3rd full time outreach counsellor. The additional supports will ensure our schools and families have trained personnel who can assist those students who are struggling with mental health challenges.

Mental Health Kits

Kits were developed to support and enhance schools and teachers in educating students about the diverse range of mental health topics.

[Mental Health Kits](#)

Work to Wellness

The Districts' "Work to Wellness" program continues to be a very strong support program for all employees. The District continues to invest in the wellness of all our staff, students, and families.

[Work 2 Wellness](#)

Mental Health Community Supports

SD71 collated all the resources found within the Comox Valley that can be utilized by schools, students, and parents.

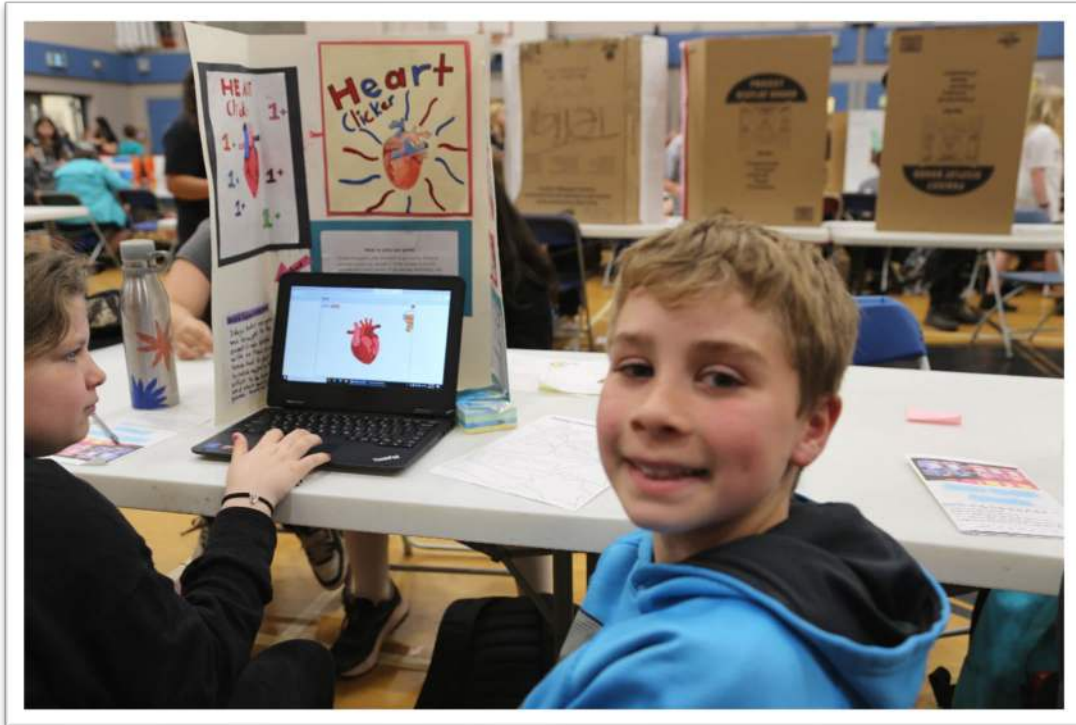
[Comox Valley Schools Mental Health Resources](#)

Mental Health and Wellness Supports for Staff

[Mental Health and Wellness Support for Staff](#)

Counsellors Corner, Social Emotional Learning, Grief Supports

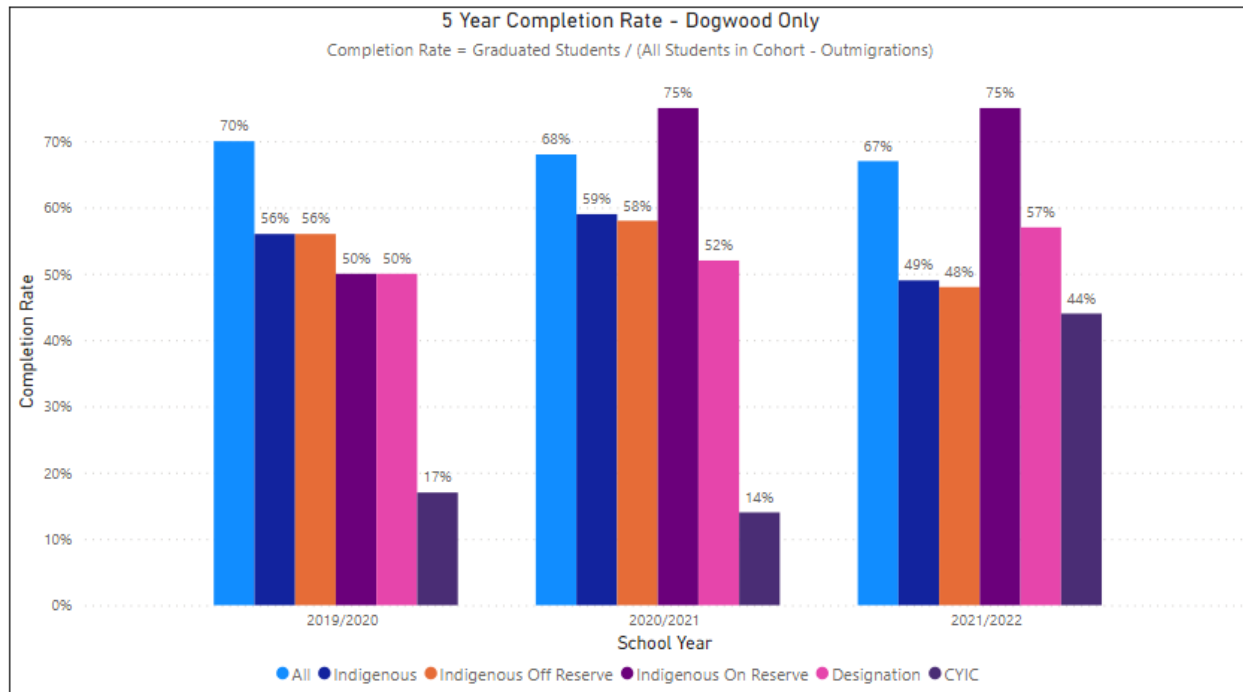
In 2021-2022 a team of educators created kits to support students with diverse learning needs who have experienced grief and loss. The kit contains books, resources, and information about how to support students with grief and loss needs.



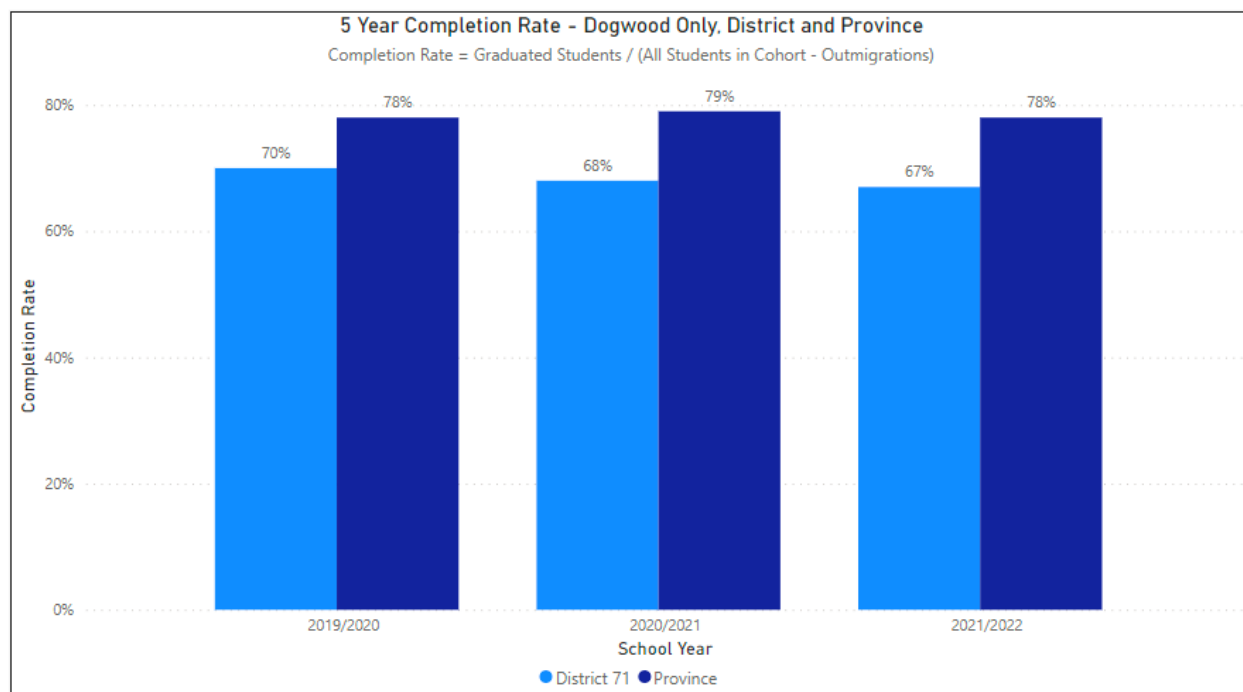
Completion Rates and Career Development

Educational Outcome 4: Students will Graduate

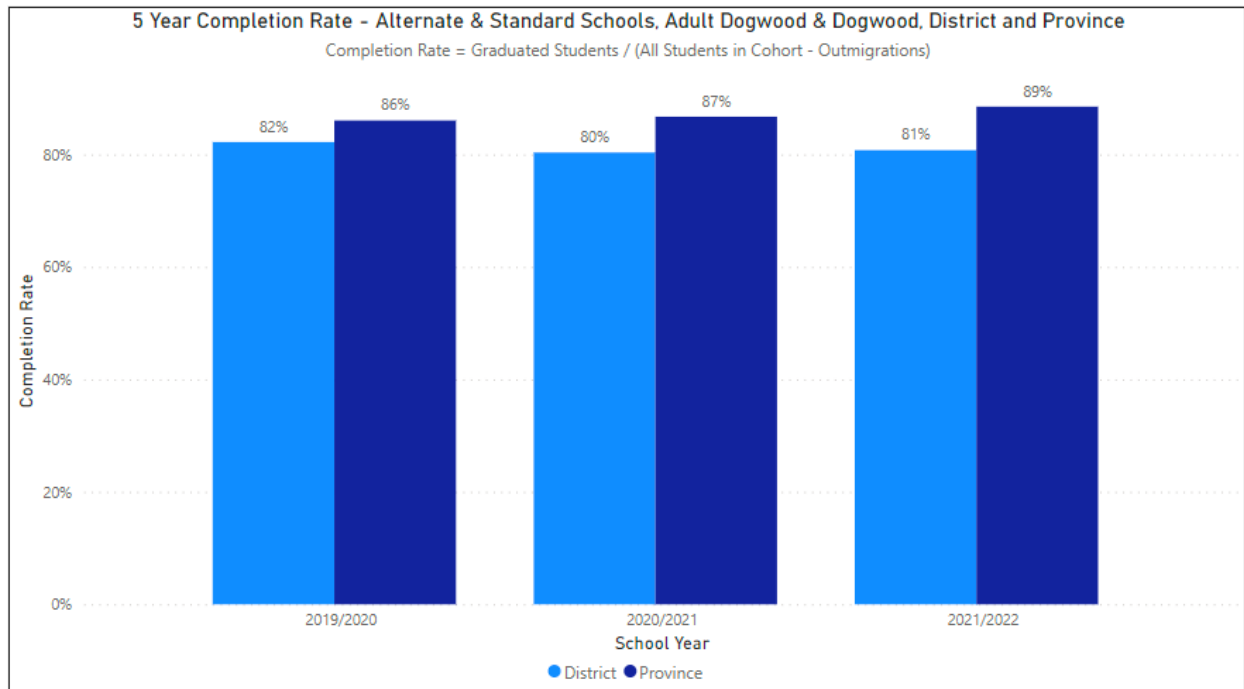
Measure 4.1: Achieved Dogwood Within 5 Years



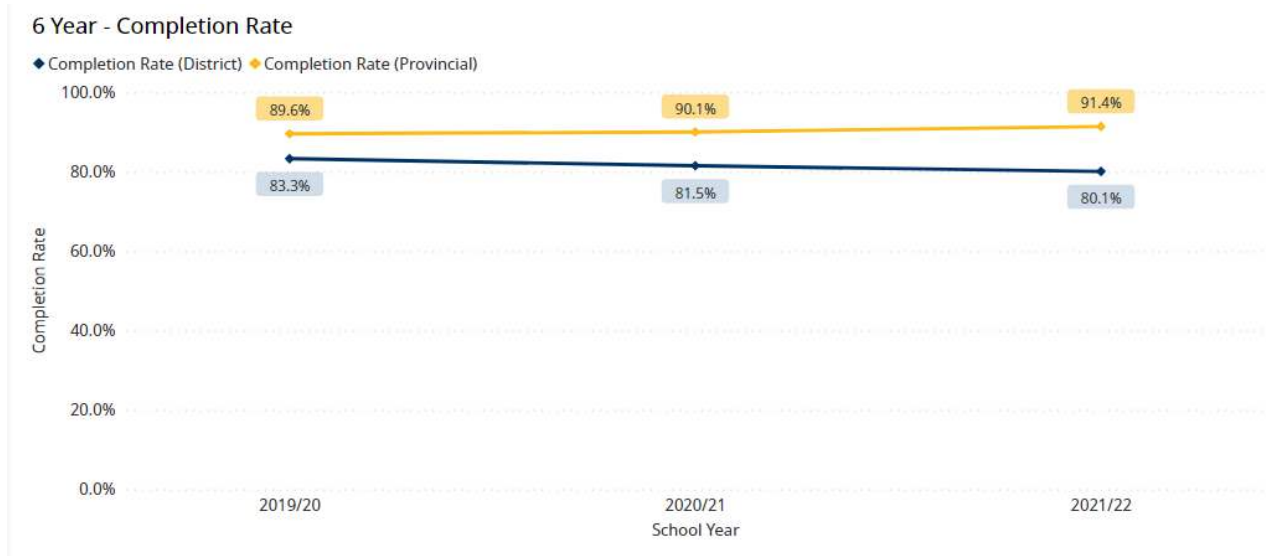
Measure 4.2: 5-year Completion Rate Dogwood Only District and Province



Measure 4.3: 5-year Completion Rate Adult Dogwood & Dogwood District and Province

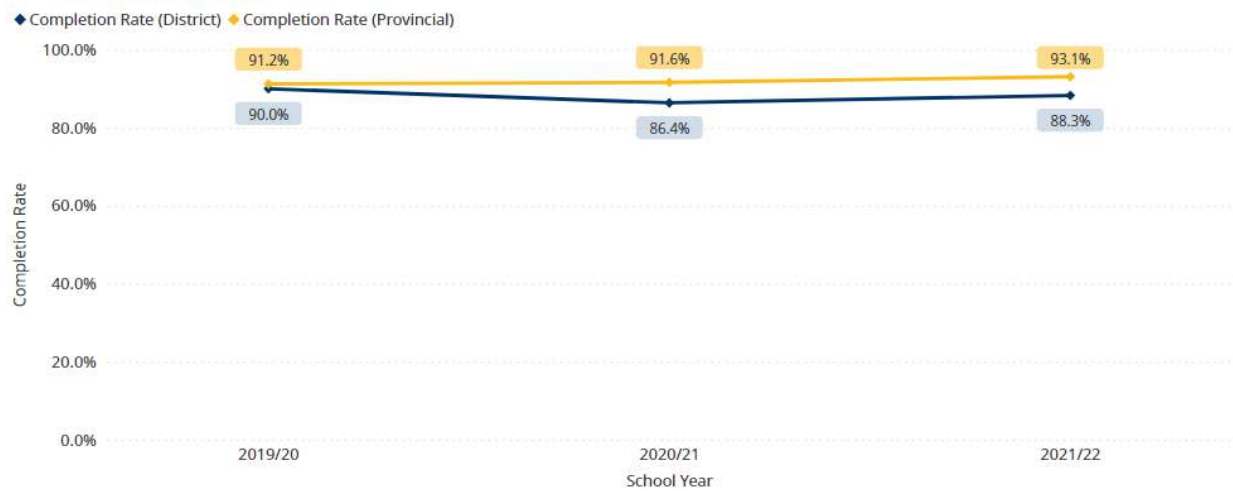


Measure 4.4: 6-year Completion Rate and Province



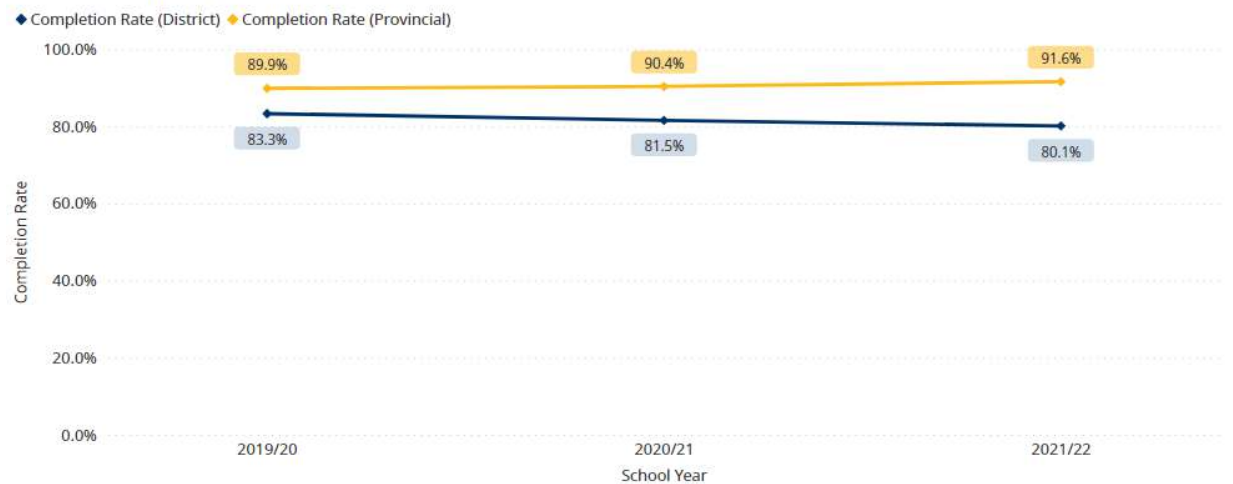
Measure 4.5: the 6 Year Completion Rate: Alternate and Standard Schools only

6 Year - Completion Rate



Measure 4.6: 6-year Completion Alternate, Online and Standard

6 Year - Completion Rate



Analysis, Adjustments, and Adaptations

We have selected to analyze the data in a several different ways. SD71 has invested in the hiring of a Data Analyst who has begun building a local data dashboard using Power BI. With the support of our Data Analyst our district intends to focus diving deeper into our success rates to help identify areas where we can begin to increase and exceed provincial averages.

In review of the measures outlined above we are consistent to success in previous years however we feel there is work to be done to address why our results have not been improving.

An observation that we have made is the dramatic increase in completion rates when we review our Online Learning school (NIDES). It is understood that due to the transient enrollment at NIDES, many students may enroll at NIDES then leave to return to their home District resulting in lower overall District completion rates for SD71.

Once we remove the NIDES data our rates reflect what we feel is more accurate. Generally, our completion rate is consistent with an approximate rate of 90% over the past 5 years which is in close alignment with the typical provincial range throughout British Columbia.

Our Indigenous rates listed below again reflect similar observation as mentioned. Although our rates are near provincial average, we must continue to work together to close the gap between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous learners. It is our hope that the K'omoks' Success Advisor and ongoing Equity Scan will support students in an effort to close the graduation gap between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous students.

Each one of our schools have made a commitment to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.

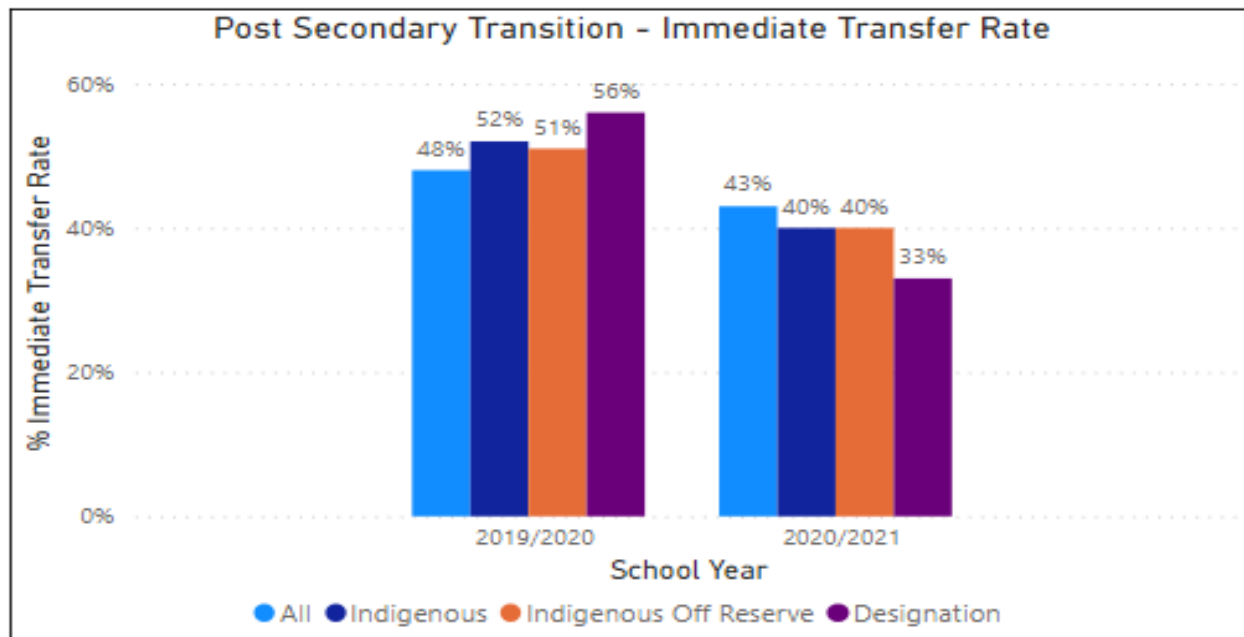
Examples include:

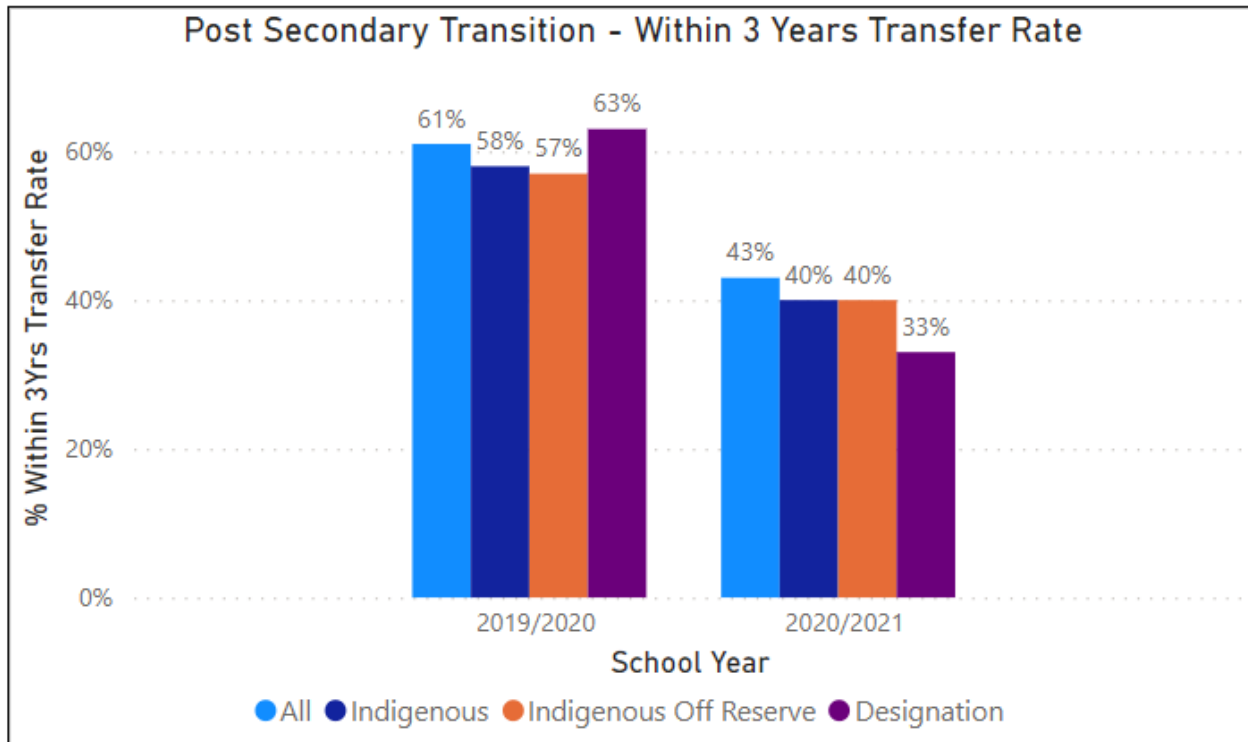
- Acknowledgement of traditional territories happens at all meetings District wide.
- Ni'noxola (Elders/Wise Ones) supporting students across the District.
- ISW's (Indigenous Support Workers) in every school.
- 4 Indigenous support teachers working in the District.
- Equity Scan which will be continued over the 2023-24 school year.
- Land Based Learning – experiential learning opportunities.
- Working toward creating Indigenous focused BAA courses to provide additional options for students to pursue courses they are interested in.
- Secondary schools working with support of Indigenous Success Advisor to track and support students' graduation pathway.

- 2022-23 school year implementation of English First People 11 within our secondary schools to replace English 11 to ensure all students meet the new Indigenous Graduation Requirements.
- SD 71 Leadership Team of 60 completed a three-part learning series through a variety of exercises, meetings, and teachings by Hereditary Chief Wedlidi Speck.
- Indigenous Education Curriculum Support Teacher supporting secondary school teachers embed First Peoples Principles of Learning in our classrooms.

Educational Outcome 5: Life and Career Core Competencies

Measure 5.1: Transitioning to Post-Secondary





Analysis, Adjustments, and Adaptations

- We notice that our PSI transition rates are decreasing following the challenges of the pandemic closures of in person learning at post-secondary institutions.
- We question what effects the post pandemic environment will continue to have on PSI rates moving forward.
- We question whether labour demands will have an impact on students advancing immediately to post-secondary.
- The [Comox Valley Careers Department](#) works hard to engage and support students in exploring pathways throughout grades 10 to 12. Student interest in Dual Credit Academics is strong. We believe this will help improve PSI transitions.
- There are many students ready to enter college and university in their grade 12 year, some in their grade 11 year. There are presentations, tours and college representatives who give their presence at all our high schools to help support students as they consider their next steps.
- Over the past three years our department has opened academic offerings beyond English and Psychology and students have started to take advantage of certificate and diploma programs by either taking 1-4 University Transfer classes or registering in a full year program within their grade 12 year.
- Student surveys and enrollment reflect students interested in the Health Care Assistant program, Digital Marketing program, Business and Fine Arts Diploma

courses; University transfer courses are the most popular option, these include English, Biology, Psychology, Business, and Math.

- Youth Work In Trades; have an excellent relationship with the trade's community.
- The Careers team is continuing to work collaboratively on establishing additional PSI relationships and certificate program opportunities.

