

School District #53 – Okanagan Similkameen

Enhancing Student Learning – YouLearn.ca Staff Inquiry

2023-24

QUESTION – How do we improve instruction and assessment to increase student engagement through inspiring accountability?

SCAN - What is going on for our learners?

YouLearn.ca is School District #53's Online Learning (OL) and Continuing Education (CE) School. We provide online learning options to school age and adult learners. We offer distinct K-7, 8-9, 10-12, and adult programs, as well as provide personalized programs to complex youth and adults in partnership with local brick-and-mortar schools and the Okanagan Correctional Centre (OCC). As of July 2023, we are no longer able to enroll out of district students.

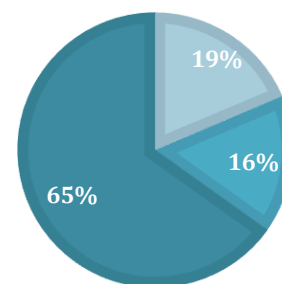
Currently, we enroll 169 out of district carry over (from previous years) students who are working to complete courses. By April 30, 2024, all these students will either be assigned a final mark or withdrawn from courses, as per Ministry guidelines, resulting in a local student only YouLearn student body.

As of September 30, 2023, we have 77 local, school-age, school of record students: 22 K-7s, 16 8-9s, and 39 10-12s. In addition, we have 57 local, adult school of record students: 4 gap year young adults, 41 non-graduated adults, and 12 graduate adults. Finally, we have 18 OCC students: 14 non-graduated adults and 4 graduated adults.

Four years ago, we started an Inclusion Program to support our district's most complex and vulnerable students, who have become estranged from the traditional system. Currently, we support 43 Inclusion students, or students with designations on Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Inclusion students represent 56% of our school-age population, an increase of 169% from September 2019. Adapting to meet the growing demand of these students has been ongoing, meaningful, and challenging.

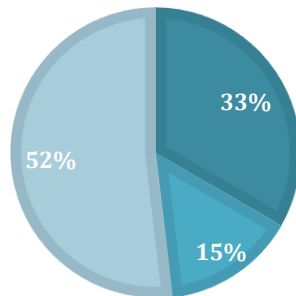
K-12 STUDENTS ON IEPs

■ K-7 ■ Gr. 8-9 ■ Gr. 10-12



K-12 INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

■ k-7 ■ Gr. 8-9 ■ Gr. 10-12



As of September 30, 2023, we have 47 school of record Indigenous students: 9 K-7s, 4 8-9s, 14 10-12s, 1 gap year young adult, 18 non-graduated adults, and 1 graduated adult. 27 school-age Indigenous students of a 77 school-age population represents 35%. 20 adult Indigenous students of a total 57 adult population represents 35%. 8 Indigenous OCC students of a total OCC population of 18 represents 44%. 4 local school-age Indigenous students have not yet register for the 2023-24 school year. Meeting the needs of our Indigenous learners is priority work we have only recently begun focusing on with bands, Indigenous families, SD53 schools, and indigenous stakeholders.

FOCUS - What will have the biggest impact?

1. 8-12 Instructional Focus – Core Competency Instruction

Currently, many of our students lack the requisite online learning, executive functioning, socioemotional, and/or Core Competency skills to succeed. Over the years, we have implemented Tier 2 initiatives in each of these areas to help students, both individually and in small groups. However, a comprehensive and consistent Teir 1 school-wide approach to address students' lagging skills is needed. This is where we feel we will have our greatest impact. Hunch: If we improve at identifying and explicitly teaching to learning gaps at the classroom level, we can better meet the needs of our increasingly complex clientele.

• ACTION/CHECK – Meaningful difference? Enough of a difference? How so?

- ACTION – Situational analysis (W5) to determine student needs, establish student baseline (skill to be implemented); prioritize lagging skills, and find/develop curriculum to fill the gap (Sept.-Nov.); implement lagging skills program(s) and processes Stage 1 (Oct.-Dec.); evaluate Stage 1 and implement Stage 2 interventions (Jan.-March); evaluate Stage 2 and compile overall success results (April).
- ACTION – Run a FMP10 semester 1 Blended Learning Cohort Course, following the above plan and timeline while collecting data on the opportunity and costs of blended v. online learning to EAR.
 - CHECKING: Qualitatively: empathy interviews, student surveys, anecdotal evidence from parents, teachers, and administrators, student reflections on skills taught and success growth. Quantitively: student attendance, count of lessons implemented, assignments submissions (8-12 marksheets), activity logs (new Moodle plug in).

2. K-9 Assessment Focus – Quality, Actionable Assessments

Students and parents are accustomed to established ways of assessing and reporting. YouLearn's K-9 school has long practiced [continuous assessment](#) using Google Apps for Education. However, we believe our switch to SPACES this year provides us with an opportunity to reexamine and improve upon our current assessment practices. Hunch: Shifting our assessment practice to spark learning dialogues will have the greatest impact on our inquiry goals.

- **ACTION/CHECK – Meaningful difference? Enough of a difference? How so?**
 - ACTION – Train in SPACES (Sept.-Oct.); define quality as it relates to various forms of assessments, create learning dialogue plan, post preliminary Stage 1 dialogue assessments (Oct.-Nov.); evaluate Stage 1 assessment successes, adapted assessments, and post Stage 2 assessments to spark student/parent/teacher learning dialogues (January-April); analyze Stage 2 and year, compile results (May).
 - CHECKING: Qualitatively: general feedback from parents, teachers, and administrators, as well as feedback at end of year comparing SPACES to previous way of assessing/reporting, quality and quantity of assessment posts increasing over time. Quantitatively: number of posts, number of subjects, number & frequency of back-and-forth dialogues between parents/guardians, student, and teacher.

LEARNING – How can I learn more of what to do? Questions we are starting with . . .

- How do we optimize learning environments to assure quality instruction and assessment?
- How do we engage parents, caregivers, outside agencies, and the community in instruction and assessment?
- How can YouLearn continue to adapt its [multitiered system of supports](#) to meet the needs of SD53's complex students and families.
- How do we instruct and assess while building student [resilience](#)?

OUR INDIGENOUS LEARNERS – How are we there for our Indigenous learners?

Improving instruction and assessment as outlined in this inquiry cannot be done effectively or thoroughly without including Indigenous voices and perspectives. Helen Gallagher and Stacy Zakall will be key advisor on helping us to achieve this end. In addition, we have 17 students and parents/guardians who have agreed to help us this year implement an Aboriginal Education Program. Preliminary conversations have been positive. We are excited about these partnerships and the learning and growth that will follow. Interestingly, of our 43 Inclusion students, 22, or 51% of them, are Indigenous. This proportion we find both curious and disconcerting. As our inquiry unfolds, we intend to collect information along the way that will provide insight into this situation and share our findings.

YouLearn is committed to re-examining its processes, practices, and structures in support of Truth and Reconciliation.

School Inquiry Working Notes

School District #53 – Okanagan Similkameen

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2021-24

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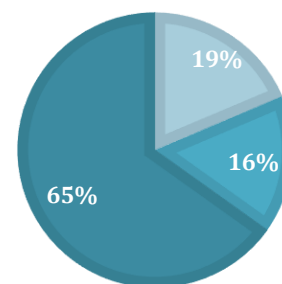
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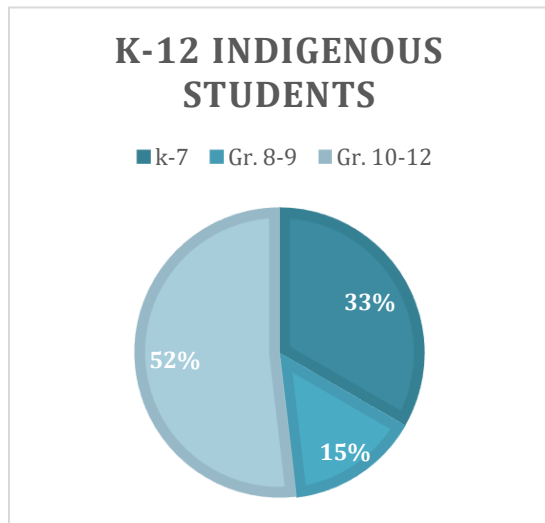
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• **ACTION/CHECK** – Meaningful difference? Enough of a difference? How so?

○ ACTION

a. **Student Needs Analysis Results (completed Sept.-Dec.)** Findings:

- Lagging Skills are predominately behavioural, not academic
- Lagging Skills need to be addressed immediately during intake and be an ongoing part of students' program

b. ☐ Staff will develop a modular Learning Strategies course (BAA)

- Students will be required to complete at least 1 of the four modules
- Students will be given credit for their efforts
- Modules will be organized in a checklist fashion and tied to executive function skills, the Core Competencies and other courses such as Careers/CLE or English.
- Additionally, a common language for this course will be created and implemented during intake for all 8-12's and

be used across the school. It will also be imbedded in intake, floor time, and purple folder management.

- It will be used to shift and create a new culture in the school
- It was agreed we need a common language. To this, to truly address changing culture we need to address five things: a common language, behaviours, artifacts, traditions, and folklore.
- I also wonder about how we will INSPIRE ACCOUNTABILITY (and maybe the connection to Imaginative Learning or something bigger than ourselves)
- We need to discuss LAGGING SKILLS during all intake
- We need to adopt a Train the Trainer model and get everyone doing intake the same; we need to include support staff so that they have a vision of what we are doing
- ☐ Will to send email to Heather, Naomi, and Shelly re: add the Core Competencies? (I can't remember what this was about)

c. implement lagging skills program(s) and processes Stage 1 (Oct.- Dec.); evaluate Stage 1 and implement Stage 2 interventions (Jan.- March); evaluate Stage 2 and compile overall success results (April).

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 - October 31 – 13/38 (34%) parents used SPACES
 - January 24 – 13/38 parents used SPACES despite offering an remote/f2f evening help sessions and individual teacher promotion
 - SPACES learning Dialogues not occurring in SPACES like had hoped; we will continue to try but do not feel this is where we make our biggest difference any longer due to lack of SPACES engagement; We will continue to incite learning dialogues; however, do this through our F2F meetings with students and families and do so in SPACES as well for those who connect that way
 - We will offer a new SPACES workshop in February and email this invite home as well as put it in our Newsletter and continue to try and onboard parents to SPACES.
 - The very question that “assessment” might not be the best way at this time to spark engagement was thrown into question.
 - Most of our K-7 school is struggling; alternate students and families
 - Seeing students more is what is making the most difference to student engagement (the SAME result is found in 8-12)
 - Learner support sessions
 - teaching sessions
 - Work with EA's work with CCW
 - home visits, driving students to and from school
 - community programs
 - social emotional programs
 - ACTION:
 - Continue to build indigenous library in collaboration with Sen Pok Chen
 - bring an indigenous storytellers and artists

- follow up with indigenous story time open to both indigenous and all students
- provide a form of transportation bus car rides to attend storytime
- Use strong readers for K to seven resource reading
- implement on the land indigenous teaching on field trips with Jenny Martin
- use dynamic math with indigenous applications.
- use inquiring minds grade three to seven social studies resource and its new indigenous learning requirements sections.
- find some older indigenous students to take on leadership roles to lead the story time sessions; could this double his work experience or CLE; student D and archery.

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