



# ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENTS

*Seeking ways to meet  
the learning needs of  
Aboriginal students in  
BC's public school system*

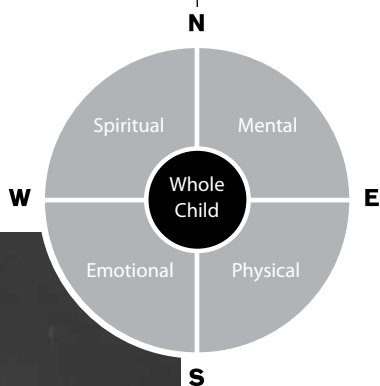
## Creating an Enhancement Agreement

- It is a working agreement between a school district and all local Aboriginal communities.
- It involves shared decision-making.
- It recognizes and honours traditional Aboriginal culture.

## BCTF message

Assessment: If we are favouring literacy and numeracy then we are not taking into account the whole child.

Look to provide alternatives to the accountability cycle.



## Authenticity

An example of an Enhancement Agreement (EA) that addresses the needs of the whole child is the Burnaby Board of Education's agreement.

(To view, see [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/agreements/sd41.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/agreements/sd41.pdf))

A successful implementation of an EA is central to maintaining the positive relationships between public schools and the Aboriginal communities.

## Accountability

- Not about standardized testing.
- All about taking responsibility.

Working together to enable vision and goal-setting in all areas for Aboriginal students and, ultimately, all students.

## Nine elements of the Enhancement Agreement

1. The Aboriginal communities must be represented by a unified body, whose authority to speak for the Aboriginal communities is accepted by the Aboriginal communities.
  - It is not necessary to have the answer on how to get to this point, but at least ask the question.
  - The goal/key is to have parents at the table.
  - When there is no Band, i.e., urban and rural traditional territory, representation may look very different.
2. Shared decision-making by the Aboriginal communities and the school district must be an established practice.



- Team building has to happen before you can get to shared decision-making.
3. Both the Aboriginal communities and the school districts must support participation in the Enhancement Agreement.
    - Local teacher union participation is crucial.
    - We don't want segregated thinking—"them and us."
  4. Joint consultation and collaboration between the Aboriginal communities and the school districts will enable vision and goal-setting in all areas of education for Aboriginal learners.
    - Aboriginal people understand that education has a purpose; it should help students to identify their passion for learning.
    - Currently, the primary focus is on literacy, numeracy, and social responsibility.
  5. The Aboriginal communities and the school district track key performance indicators at the student level.
    - Are we tracking the "whole" child?
    - Share the different ways of assessment.
    - Use *spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional* areas as guides for assessment tools.
  6. Aboriginal communities and the school district must be committed to regular reporting of results.
    - What does commitment involve?
    - Where is the "whole" child in the reporting?
    - Who will pay for it?
  7. The scope of the Aboriginal Education program must include a focus on continuous improvement in the academic performance of all Aboriginal students.
    - Is there undue pressure put upon the child and teachers?
    - Where is the "whole" child?
    - Why just academic performance?
  8. Meeting the cultural needs of Aboriginal students in all aspects of learning includes resources, strategies, and assessment.
    - How do cultural needs fit into these strategies?
    - The Ministry of Education must provide for the in-services and resources.
    - What is the process for selecting the strategies that are used?
  9. Focusing on increasing knowledge of, and respect for, Aboriginal culture, language, and history enables a greater understanding for everyone about Aboriginal people.
    - Learning about each other's culture and history opens up cross-cultural exchanges, thereby enabling a greater understanding for everyone.

**For further information**

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