

Accountability Topic: Report on Student Well-being, Engagement, and Attendance Rates

Date of Board Meeting:

April 24, 2025

Strategic Priority:

- ☒ High Quality Teaching and Learning
- ☒ Engagement of All Students, Families, and Communities
- ☐ Effective Policy and Procedures
- ☒ Healthy, Sustainable Physical & Social Environments

Quality Indicator(s) (if applicable):

- QI 1.6 Utilizes performance metrics for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating operational performance relative to student wellness.
- QI 2.1 Analyzing student achievement and ensuring the development of action plans to address concerns and gaps.
- QI 8.2 Demonstrating the achievement of key results identified in the Division's Strategic Plan and the Provincial Education Plan.
- QI 11.5 Demonstrating a high commitment to the needs of students.

Presented by:

Amanda Kornaga, Superintendent of Schools

Angella Pinay, Superintendent of Indigenous Education

Michelle Goulden, Coordinator – Mental Health Capacity Building

Data:

- GSSD Attendance data
- OurSchool

Key Strategies Employed:

This report outlines the activity and impact of the Indigenous Education Team and Mental Health Capacity Building members across schools in Good Spirit School Division. It is structured into three core accountability themes: **Student Well-Being**, **Student Engagement**, and **Attendance Rates**. The analysis draws on qualitative and quantitative inputs from each school site and illustrates the team's contribution to the broader goals of Inspiring Success.

1. Student Well-Being

The activities supporting student well-being center around cultural identity, emotional regulation, mental health, and relational safety:

- **Safe and welcoming spaces:** ICWs (Indigenous Community Workers) at multiple schools, including Canora Composite and Victoria School, created safe spaces where students can regulate emotions, find calm, and access culturally affirming support.

Establishing calming spaces to regulate emotions using skill building practices

- **Beading and art as therapeutic tools:** Beading clubs and classroom projects (e.g., lanyards, poppies, Orange Shirt buttons) served as calming, expressive outlets and fostered mental wellness.
- **Cultural reconnection:** Drumming, storytelling, ribbon skirt making, and land-based learning (e.g., buffalo harvest, sweat lodge teachings) supported identity formation and cultural pride.
- **Gender-based and age-specific supports:** Programs such as “Girl Power” at Norquay and life skills for middle year girls at Melville promote confidence, cultural teachings, and social-emotional learning.
- **Basic needs:** YRHS provided food hampers, breakfast programs, and snacks to address hunger, directly supporting student well-being and readiness to learn.
- **Elders and Knowledge Keepers:** Regular engagement with Elders (e.g., Nina Wilson, Robert Severight) contributes to healing and wellness through teachings and story-sharing.
- **Mental Health First Aid:** Sessions for Grade 11 students and Mental Health 20 classes (YRHS, Preeceville, Esterhazy) that provide a certification and possibilities to contribute to high school credits-connected to Provincial Approved Mental Health programs
- **Mental Health Literacy:** Increased number of Core facilitators trained to support the two currently trained. Currently, over 50 staff are trained and working to build capacity for next school year to develop consistent division wide language around mental health and well-being and pathways through care according to needs.
- **Executive Functioning Road Map of Resources:** Grade connections for each program supporting Mental Health, Regulation and Social Emotional Skills linked to curricular outcomes to support classroom teachers meeting outcomes

Impact: Students demonstrated increased emotional stability, comfort in seeking help, and pride in identity—essential foundations for academic success and positive mental health.

2. Student Engagement

Engagement efforts are strongly aligned with cultural, academic, and relational activities that foster meaningful student participation:

- **Cultural events and clubs:** Schools hosted powwow groups, drum circles, community beading nights, traditional games, and Ribbon Skirt Day celebrations.
- **Curriculum integration:** Treaty education, Cree/Anishinaabe language use, storytelling, and historical discussions (e.g., residential schools, fur trade) were integrated into classroom learning.
- **Creative expression:** Mural projects, bulletin boards, contests (e.g., Orange Shirt Day design), and art-based storytelling encouraged voice and self-expression.

- **Leadership and participation:** Indigenous and non-Indigenous students took active roles in organizing events, performing (e.g., drum group at assemblies), and mentoring younger peers (e.g., story-sharing between older and younger students).
- **Post-secondary exploration:** YRHS supported Indigenous student leadership through career planning, scholarship support, and university visits.
- **Hands-on learning:** Programs such as ribbon skirt making, baking classes, garden creation, and equine therapy increased participation through practical and experiential learning.
- **Pink Shirt Day Be Kind Rhythm Project:** weaving the impact of kindness on mental well-being and engagement of students, families and community partners
- **Building Connections with students and families to schools and staff:** Offering community programs within schools, activities that foster family connections and school/family/student connections including family gym nights, paint nights, movie nights and providing mental health information at student led conferences.

Impact: These initiatives led to increased student initiative, cross-cultural understanding, and enthusiasm for school, with students taking ownership of learning and cultural sharing.

3. Attendance Rates

Improving student attendance was directly addressed through targeted strategies and indirectly supported through enhanced school culture and family engagement:

- **Proactive attendance monitoring and support:** YRHS actively tracked Indigenous student attendance, communicated with families, and coordinated interventions to reduce absenteeism.
- **Creating motivation to attend:** Activities like powwow dancing, drumming, land-based learning, and crafts offered students compelling reasons to be present in school.
- **Family and community inclusion:** Events such as BBQs, family nights, cultural celebrations, and parent-teacher meetings held on-reserve (e.g., Norquay at The Key First Nation) helped build trust and remove attendance barriers.
- **Transportation and logistics support:** ICWs helped students with transportation and navigating transitions, minimizing disruptions to attendance.
- **On-reserve programming:** Weekly sessions and culturally-rooted programming (e.g., Jays Care on-reserve engagement) allowed for consistent contact and learning, especially for students facing travel barriers.
- **Active Participation in attendance teams-**supporting proactive, whole school themes that impact attendance rates.
- **Transition planning support-**supporting mental health transitions to highs school, Kindergarten to grade 1 on mental by providing information and education to families and students
- **Celebrations of attendance success:** Providing recognition for students and families who have worked to improve attendance

Impact: Early evidence suggests stronger daily presence of students, more regular contact with families, and reduced chronic absenteeism due to relational and cultural re-engagement.

Future Strategies:

Continue to look for opportunities to build cross connections between Mental Health Capacity Building, Indigenous Education and for next year Following Their Voices initiative via sharing and highlighting of aligned concepts, theories and practices at Consultant, Indigenous Education Team, Student Achievement and Supports meetings.

Risk Assessment:

Impact Categories	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Financial	Financial impact of the event is less than \$50,000	Financial impact of the event exceeds \$50,000, but less than \$150,000	Financial impact of the event exceeds \$150,000, but is less than \$250,000	Financial impact of event exceeds \$250,000, but is less than \$500,000	Financial impact of the event exceeds \$500,000
Comments & Mitigation Strategy	Budgets utilized to support programming and events to increase engagement (powwows, elders, supplies for activities, etc.).				
Reputational	One negative article in a publication	Negative articles in more than one publication	Short term negative media focus and concerns raised by stakeholders	Long term negative media focus and sustained concerns raised by stakeholders	Stakeholders lose faith in management or Trustees
Comments & Mitigation Strategy	GSSD is committed to creating an inclusive environment where all students feel supported. By listening to feedback from students, parents, and community members, we continue to strengthen our support and engagement across the Division.				
Managerial Effort/Capacity	Impact can be absorbed through normal activity	Some management effort is required to manage the impact	Can be managed under normal circumstances with moderate effort	With significant management effort, can be endured	Potential to lead to the collapse of the organization
Comments & Mitigation Strategy	Specific supports and positions have been budgeted for in order to support student well-being, attendance and engagement.				
Government Relations	Routine ministerial inquires	In-depth ministerial inquires	Concerns raised by Ministry of Education	School division's ability mandate is questioned	Ministry of Education loses faith in the organization
Comments & Mitigation Strategy	GSSD consistently follows Ministry guidelines while also valuing local input to enhance programs and expand opportunities for students.				
Legal	Legal action threatened	Civil action commenced/small fine assessed	Criminal action threatened/moderate fine assessed	Criminal lawsuit commenced/significant fine assessed	Jail term of any length for a Trustee/Director; multiple significant fines assessed

Comments & Mitigation Strategy	Good Spirit School Division (GSSD) is legally required to provide education to students. This obligation is outlined in <i>The Education Act, 1995</i> of Saskatchewan.				
Student Outcomes	Immaterial impact on student achievement	Student achievement metrics begin to show a decline	Parental complaints submitted related to student achievement	Overall student competency levels are below standards	Inability to satisfactorily deliver curriculum or key programs
Comments & Mitigation Strategy	Without intentional ongoing efforts to engage students, support their well-being, and improve attendance, student achievement will decline.				

Likelihood The likelihood of identified risks is to be assessed by estimate the probability of the risk occurring during the planning horizon.				
Rare	Unlikely	Moderate	Likely	Almost Certain
Extremely rare in the sector. Once in more than 10 years at the school division.	Has occurred occasionally in the sector. Once in 5 to 10 years at the school division.	Periodic occurrence in the sector; possible occurrence. Once in 3 years at the school division.	Has occurred previously and could reasonably occur again. Once in 1 to 2 years at the school division.	Extremely likely to occur. Multiple times per year at the school division.

Recommended Decision/Motion:

“That the Board approve the accountability report on student well-being, engagement, and attendance rates, and acknowledge the report met the requirements of QIs 1.6, 2.1, 8.2, and 11.5, based on the evidence within the report.”

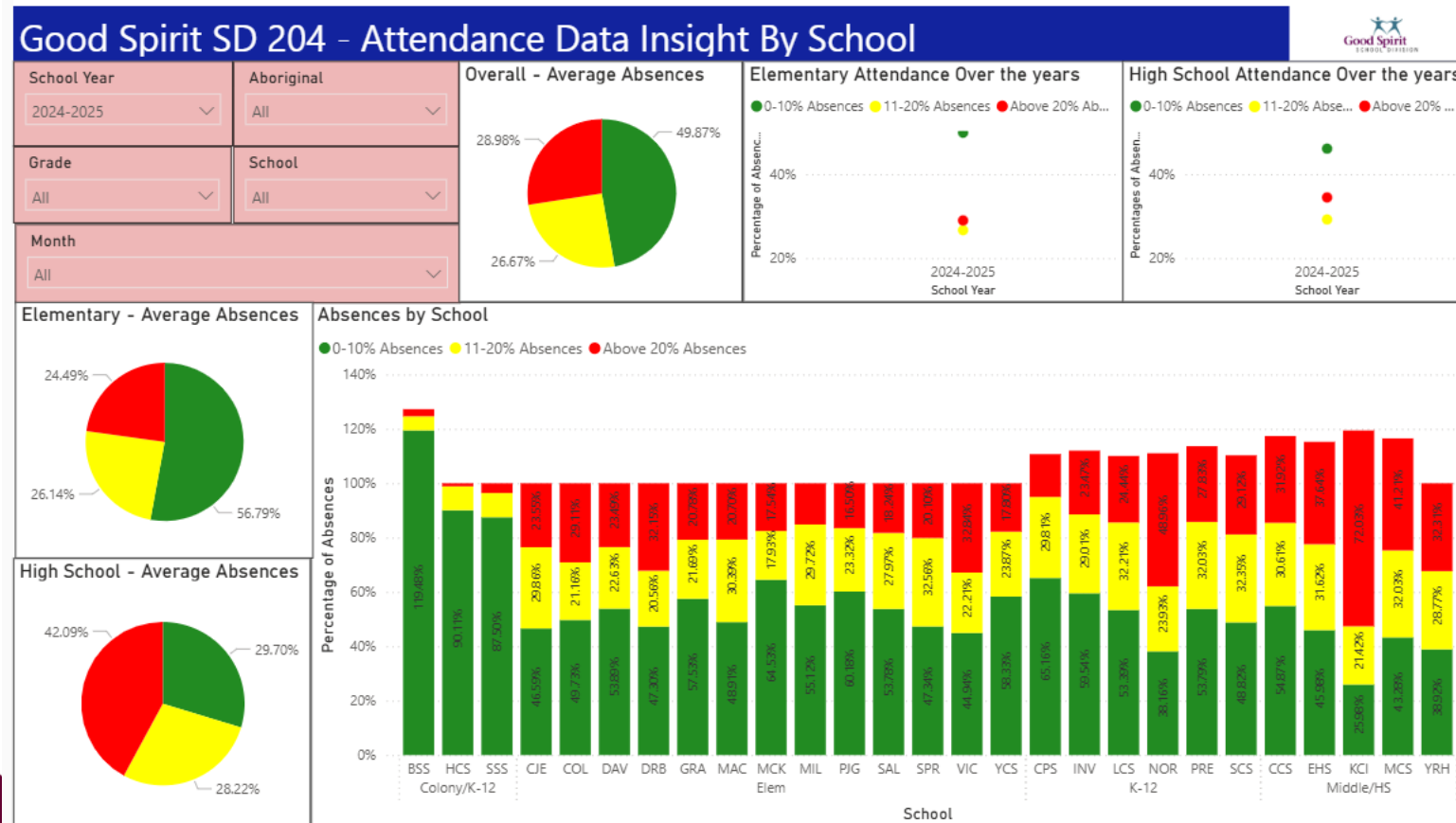
Respectfully submitted,

Quintin M. Robertson, Director/CEO
Good Spirit School Division

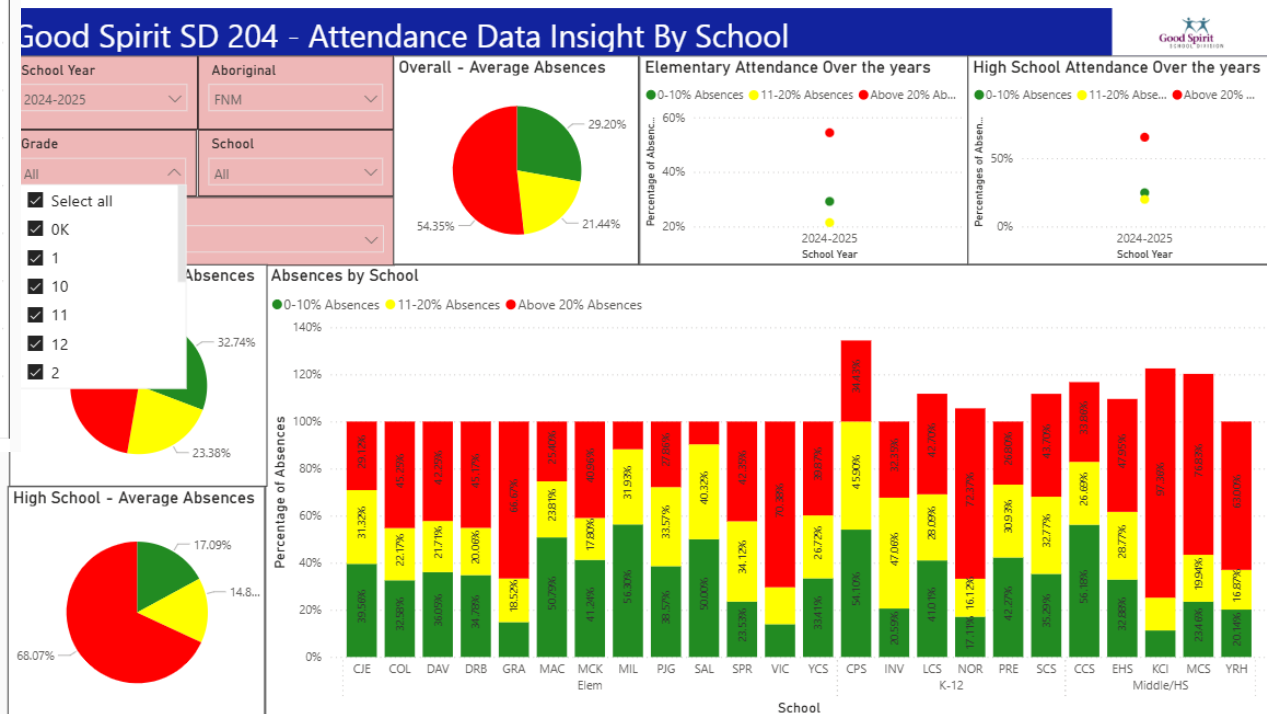
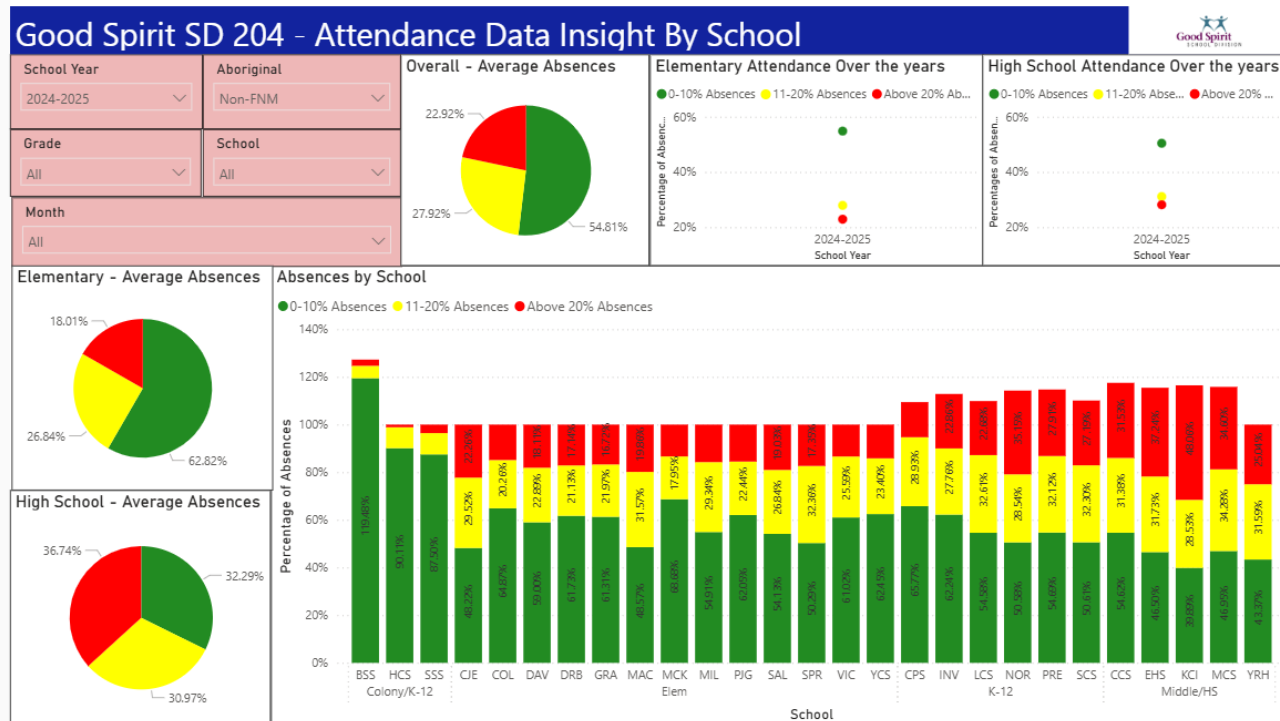
Student well-being,
Engagement, and
Attendance rates.



What do we know?



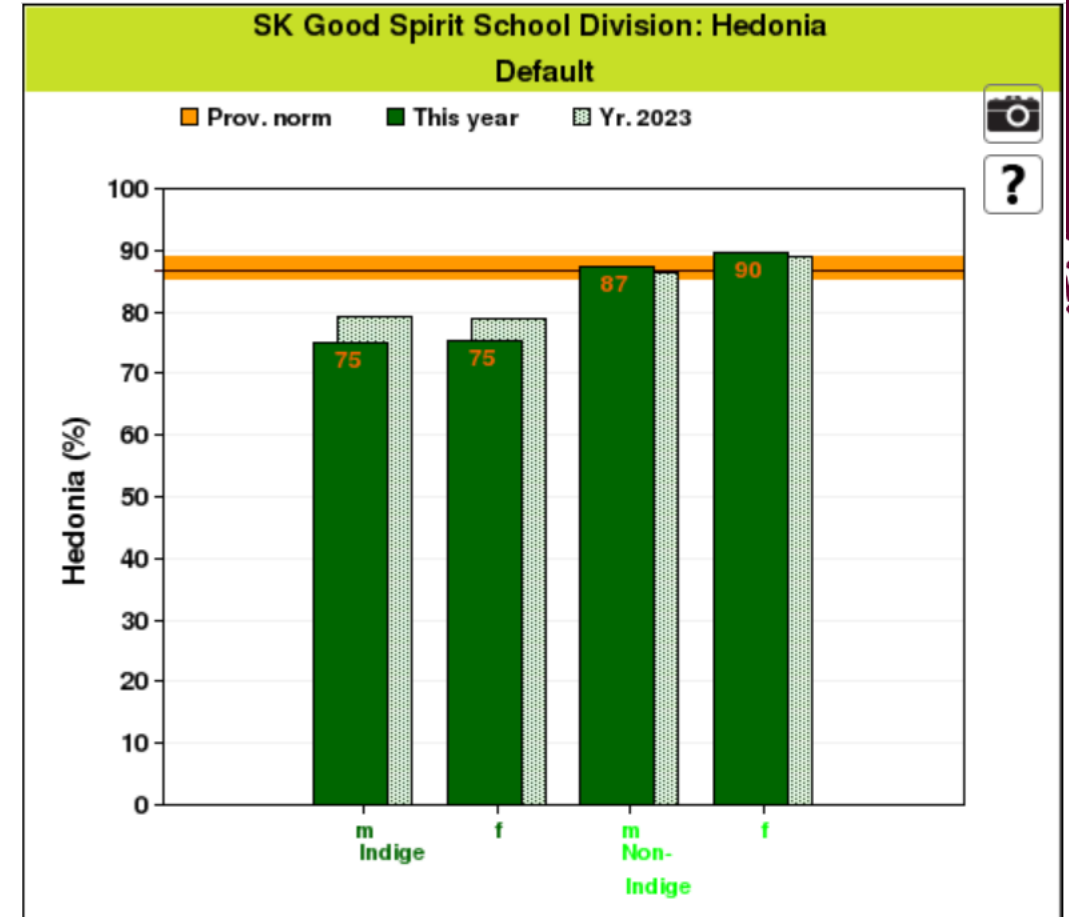
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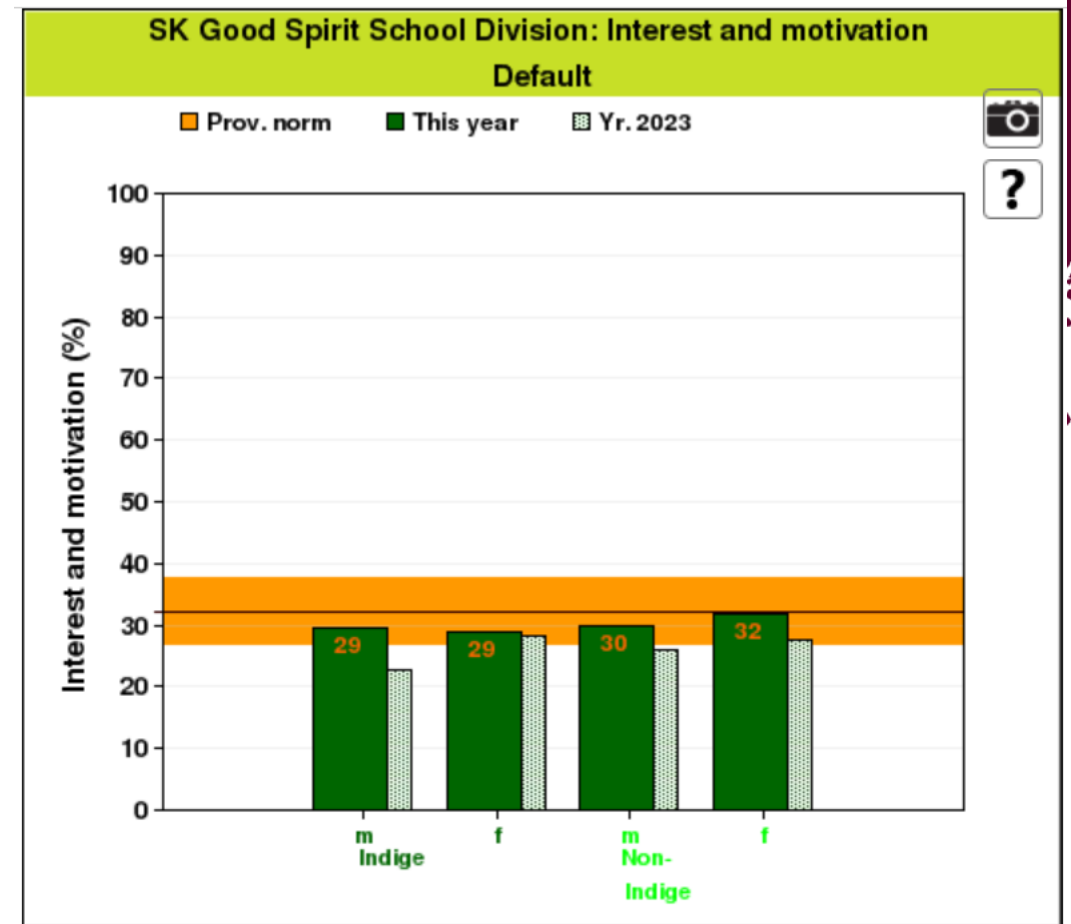
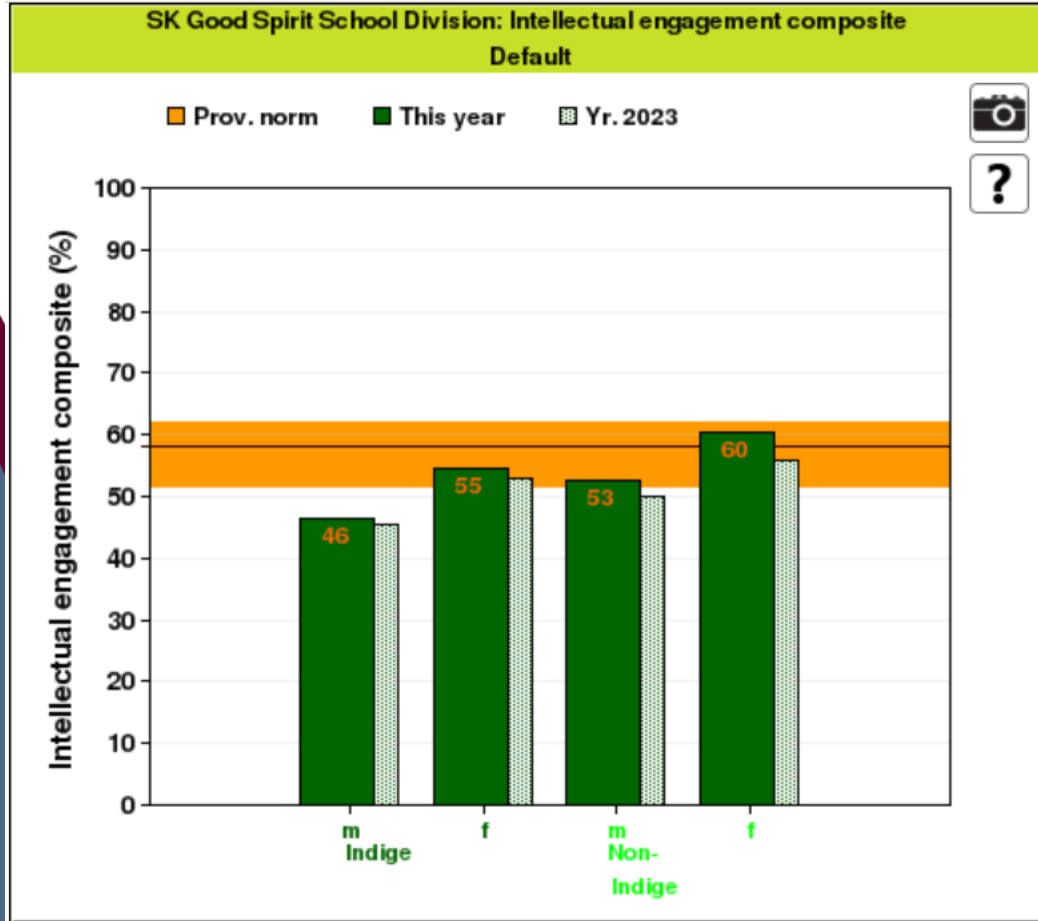


meaning & self-realization

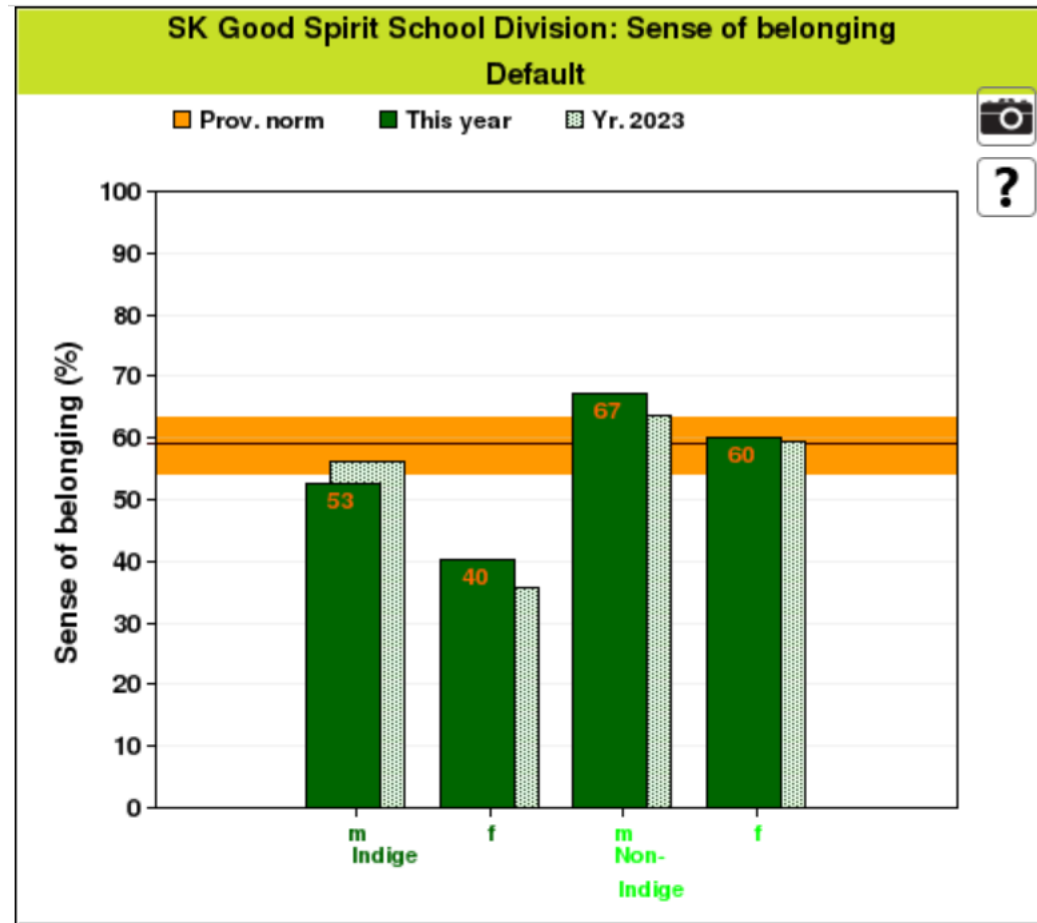


pleasure & happiness

What do we know?



What do we know?





Strategies

- Transportation
- Mental Health
- Engagement
- Alternate modes of learning



Indigenous Education Team Activity and Impact

This report summarizes the activities and impact of the Indigenous Education Team across schools. Themes include:

- Student Well-Being
- Student Engagement
- Attendance Rates

The report highlights the transformative contributions of culturally grounded programming and relationships.



Student Well-Being

- Safe spaces for emotional regulation and cultural support
 - Innovations: Equine therapy - Norquay
 - Beading, storytelling, and elder guidance as healing tools
 - Food security through breakfast programs and hampers
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- Impact: Increased emotional safety, cultural pride, and mental health awareness.



Student Engagement

- Powwow groups, drum circles, ribbon skirt workshops
- Treaty education, language learning, and storytelling in classrooms
- Family-inclusive and intergenerational events
- Impact: Higher participation, cultural knowledge, and student-led leadership.



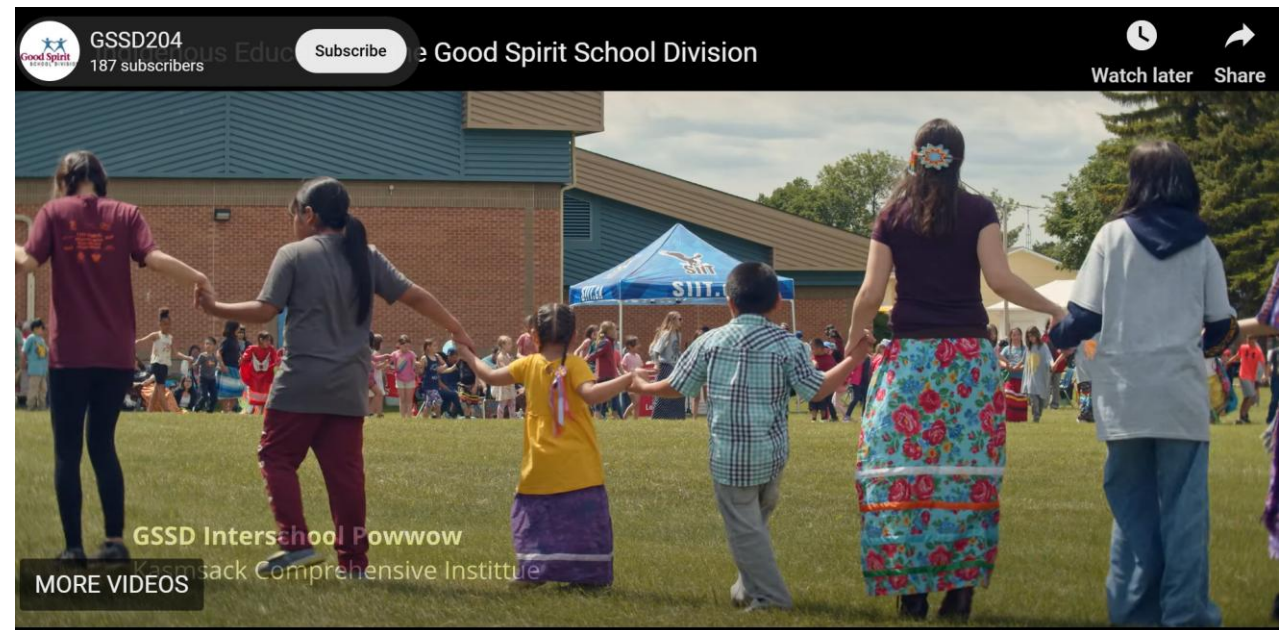
Attendance Rates

- Monitoring and intervention of absenteeism
- Engagement through cultural programming and on-reserve access
- Home visits and transportation supports
- Impact: Improved attendance, family trust, and consistent school presence.



Summary of Impact

- Well-Being: Emotional safety, mental health, pride
- Engagement: Increased participation, intergenerational learning
- Attendance: Reduced absenteeism, stronger family-school relationships



Overview-MHCB at the Division Level and Target school

- This report provides an overview of the activities and impact of the MHCB team at the division level. The key themes addressed include:
 - Student Well-Being
 - Student Engagement
 - Attendance Rates
- The report emphasizes the significant contributions made in supporting students' mental health, which are integrated into curriculum outcomes, fostering transformative change.

Student Well-Being-MHCB

- Safe spaces for emotional regulation and planning for how to increase skills rather than contribute to avoidance
- Connecting to approved MoE Mental Health Supports (Roughrider win with Wellness, Mental Health First Aid, Trauma Research Centre)
- Curriculum provided with research- based programming (Mental Health Literacy, FRIENDS, Zones of Regulation)
- Road Map for Executive functioning and mental health curriculum
- Training more staff with Mental Health Literacy and facilitating two more staff to be Core facilitators of the program
- Impact: Increased emotional regulation capacity, reduction of stigma for mental disorders, and mental health literacy common language to support accurate reporting and understanding.

Student Engagement-MHCB

- Family gym nights with community leaders
 - Family movie nights highlighting movies supporting mental health information-with discussions
 - Triple P programming incorporating family/staff meals
 - Family craft evenings and paint nights
 - Pink Shirt Day project incorporating kindness and mental health themes, involving students, staff, families and the community
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- Impact: Higher participation of students and families together with school staff, feelings of belonging with school community

Attendance Rates-MHCB

- Supporting school-based attendance teams with planning for attendance gap analysis and themes (Time of year, age/class groups, day of the week)
- Acknowledgement for families that have worked to improve attendance
- Supporting trauma integrated work in schools to increase students' attendance
- Pink Shirt day and whole school definition to support feeling safe to attend school
- Impact: Improved attendance, family trust and connections, support for intensive work school teams are doing for attendance concerns, targeted interventions using data

Summary of Impact-MHCB

- Well-Being: Consistent language supporting mental health literacy for staff and students
- Engagement: Connecting families and students to programs in the school after school hours
- Attendance: Reduced absenteeism, addressing gaps and themes in barriers to attendance

MHCB and Indigenous Team Collaboration

- Opening portion of MHCB meetings dedicated to teachings delivered by Indigenous Superintendent and Inspiring Success Imperative
 - Integrating TRC calls for action into MHCB goal areas
 - Land Acknowledgment and action from this in MHCB Meetings
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- Opening portion of Indigenous Education Team meetings incorporating MHCB messaging around The Big 5(+1) for Mental Health.

Questions?