

## Accountability Report: Report on initiatives to deepen relationships with families and communities, particularly in understanding Indigenous identities, histories, and worldviews.

### Date of Board Meeting:

June 12, 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 1.1 Facilitating environments where students feel a sense of belonging and have high levels of intellectual engagement.
- QI 2.6 Championing the Calls to Action by promoting reconciliation events and initiatives.
- QI 10.1 Representing the Division in a positive, professional manner.
- QI 11.3 Establishing and maintaining positive, professional working relationships with staff and community.

### Presented by:

Angella Pinay, Superintendent of Indigenous Education

### Overview:

This report provides an overview of Indigenous Education initiatives across the Good Spirit School Division (GSSD) for the 2024–2025 school year. It highlights efforts that deepen relationships with families and communities—particularly through fostering understanding of Indigenous identities, histories, and worldviews. The report includes data-informed practices, key strategies, emerging impacts, and forward-looking recommendations.

## Key Division-Wide Strategies and Highlights

### 1. Relationship Building with Families and Communities

- **Home–School Connections:** Schools such as Canora Composite, Norquay, and Yorkton Regional actively pursued home visits, family nights, and Indigenous-led cultural experiences. For example, Norquay reported high attendance from Key First Nation families at its BBQ and parent–teacher interviews.
- **Community Events:** Powwows, storytelling nights, jigging, and beading evenings were co-hosted with local First Nations and Métis communities. These included:
  - Storytelling Month (Dr. Brass, Columbia, Canora, Victoria, Melville)
  - Learn-to-Bead Nights with ICWs (Dr. Brass School)
- **Invitational Shared Services Initiatives** - highlights

- Culture Camp – Change of approach in organization of camp and intentionality of inter-school offering of camp instruction for relationship building enhancements. (KCI/Vic/Chief Gabriel Cote School/Keeseekoose Chiefs Education Center)
- Land-based education experiences (Norquay School)
- **Elder and Knowledge Keeper Engagement:** Partnerships with Elders like Nina Wilson, Glenny O’Soup, and George Allary enriched teachings with oral history and cultural context. These relationships have cultivated intergenerational trust.

## 2. Promoting Indigenous Identities and Worldviews

- **Cultural Programming:**
  - **Drum Groups:** 8 established across schools, with inclusive participation from Indigenous, non-Indigenous, and newcomer students.
  - **Beading Clubs:** Implemented as both cultural expression and therapeutic activity (e.g., calming strategy in Canora).
  - **Ribbon Skirt/Shirt Workshops:** Delivered in Norquay, Melville, and Dr. Brass; highlighted traditional teachings and protocols.
- **Language Revitalization:** Schools integrated Cree, Ojibwe, and Saulteaux(Anishinaabe) through:
  - Word-of-the-week boards (Dr. Brass)
  - Counting in Cree and Saulteaux (Victoria, Norquay)
  - Story creation in Saulteaux (Victoria)
- **Morning Announcements Program enhancements**
  - Canora – Soft start: SCC and school SRC were apprised, discussion at a school staff meeting and announced on EDSBY to prepare everyone. Still have some students sit down, giggle. Robert/Yullinda discussed this at a school assembly as well.
  - Columbia School – Integrated Flag song on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Fridays – a different national anthem played to acknowledge all students’ backgrounds

## 3. Embedding Indigenous Content in Curriculum

- Integration of Treaty education (Grades 1–12)
- Authentic learning experiences:
  - Buffalo Harvest (Norquay)
  - Reconciliation Gardens (Melville) – (in works)
  - Traditional Games Kit development (Melville)
- Curriculum adjustments for Indigenous student success, such as differentiated programming and cultural accommodations at Yorkton Regional High School.

## 4. Student Engagement and Well-being

- Mental Health Supports: Culturally grounded interventions (e.g., drumming, smudge walks, equine therapy) contributed to self-regulation, identity development, and a sense of belonging.
- Extracurriculars with Cultural Roots: Facilitated greater student attendance, confidence, and pride, including among non-Indigenous students (as noted by Dr. Brass and YRHS staff).

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### Key Measures and Outcomes

Measure/Target	Highlights/Progress
Participation in Cultural Programs	8 drum groups, 6+ beading clubs, 5+ ribbon workshops across division
School/Family Engagement Events	Norquay’s 83% turnout; multiple community nights (e.g., jigging, beading), GSSD Round Dance, Métis Day and Interschool Pow Wow

## Measure/Target

Language and Worldview Learning

Elder/Knowledge Keeper Access

Indigenous Student Well-being

Curriculum Embedded Indigenous Content

## Highlights/Progress

Michif, Saulteaux, and Cree introduced some instruction - 4 schools (Dr. Brass, Columbia, Norquay, Victoria)

Increased access and connection to Elders/Knowledge keepers reported in 8+ schools (with Ind Ed Team members)

Increased belonging and attendance, improved behavior noted anecdotally

Treaty education and outcomes assessed, evidenced via PowerBi

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## Challenges and Lessons Learned

- **Capacity Limitations:** Some initiatives were postponed due to staff workload or weather (e.g., storytelling, land-based trips).
- **Access to Resources:** Challenge to access Indigenous Language speaking Elders, and sometimes honoraria payments.
- **Scalability:** While initiatives are meaningful, scaling to all students/schools consistently remains a challenge.

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## Future-Facing Strategies and Recommendations

### 1. Professional Learning Expansion

- Broaden staff training in anti-racist education, awareness and support of schools endeavoring in Following Their Voices initiative, increased supports in land-based pedagogy, and Indigenous languages.

### 2. Data and Impact Tracking

- Strengthen metrics related to student belonging, family engagement, and academic outcomes through regular surveys and school-based data collection (Following Their Voices tools).

### 3. Youth Leadership Development

- Foster peer-led cultural mentorship (e.g., Grade 6 Saulteaux teaching in Norquay), expand leadership in planning and presenting at cultural events. (e.g., Jr. Arena director role at cultural events)

### 4. Land-based and Inter-School Collaboration

- Expand inter-school and reserve-based events (e.g., joint powwows, buffalo harvests, reconciliation gardens) to increase shared learning and relationships.

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## Conclusion

The 2024–2025 year saw significant progress in strengthening cultural identity, belonging, and community partnerships in GSSD. Schools are deepening relationships through authentic engagement, inclusive programming, and transformative learning experiences. Sustained leadership, adequate resourcing, and systemic integration of Indigenous perspectives will be essential to advancing this work in the 2025–2026 school year and beyond.

## Risk Assessment:

Impact Categories	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
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<b>Financial</b>	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
<b>Comments &amp; Mitigation Strategy</b>	Budget is allocated towards staffing the Indigenous Education Team. Events require funding to be put on. The Division continuously engages in local sponsorship to help make events a success.				
<b>Reputational</b>	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
<b>Comments &amp; Mitigation Strategy</b>	The Division has experienced negativity in the past regarding Indigenous practices.				
<b>Managerial Effort/Capacity</b>	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
<b>Comments &amp; Mitigation Strategy</b>	Financial impact of events is forecasted and budgeted for throughout the year.				
<b>Government Relations</b>	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
<b>Comments &amp; Mitigation Strategy</b>	GSSD reports annually on the Inspiring Success Framework via the Annual Report.				
<b>Legal</b>	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
<b>Comments &amp; Mitigation Strategy</b>					
<b>Student Outcomes</b>	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
<b>Comments &amp; Mitigation Strategy</b>	Without intentional ongoing efforts to deepen relationships with families and communities, particularly in understanding Indigenous identities, histories, and worldviews, students will not succeed or received the support they need to graduate and hit outcomes.				

**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 initiatives to deepen relationships with families and communities, particularly in understanding Indigenous identities, histories, and worldviews, and acknowledge the report met the requirements of QIs 1.1, 2.6, 10.1, and 11.3, based on the evidence within the report.”

Respectfully submitted,

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

# GSSD Board Meeting

June 12, 2025

## Accountability Report: Indigenous Education Initiatives Deepening Relationships with Families and Communities

Presented by: Angella Pinay, Superintendent of Indigenous Education



# Overview

**Purpose:** Report on initiatives that strengthen relationships with families and communities

**Focus:** Indigenous identities, histories, and worldviews

**Highlights:** Key strategies, data, outcomes, and future directions



# Division Wide Priorities

- Authentic relationship building
- Cultural identity and pride
- Inclusive curriculum and classroom practices
- Enhanced student engagement and well-being





# Community and Family Engagement

- Home visits, family events, powwows, and feast/round dance
- Storytelling and beading nights with Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Cross-school events with high family and Community participation
  - Invitational Shared Services Initiative Sponsored Culture Camps and Change of Approach in Implementation,
  - Norquay School – Parent-Teacher Interviews (83% attendance)
  - Round Dance - January
  - Metis Day- June,
  - Interschool and Graduation Pow Wow - June



# Cultural Programming Highlights

- **Drum Groups:** 8 active groups inclusive of Indigenous, non-Indigenous, and newcomer students
- **Ribbon Skirts/Shirts:** Workshops in Norquay, Dr. Brass, Melville
- **Beading Clubs:** Emotional regulation and cultural expression
- **Language Exposure and Instruction:** Michif, Cree, and Saulteaux (Anishinaabe)



# Embedding Indigenous Content

- Treaty education in Grades 1-12
- Land-based learning: Buffalo harvests, snowshoeing, maple tapping
- Integration into science, ELA, social studies (e.g., star lab, reconciliation gardens)
- Integration into Morning Announcements



# Student Well-Being & Identity

- Mental health support through cultural connection (e.g., drumming, smudging, equine therapy)
- Identity and pride increase among Indigenous students
- Participation drives school attendance and academic progress

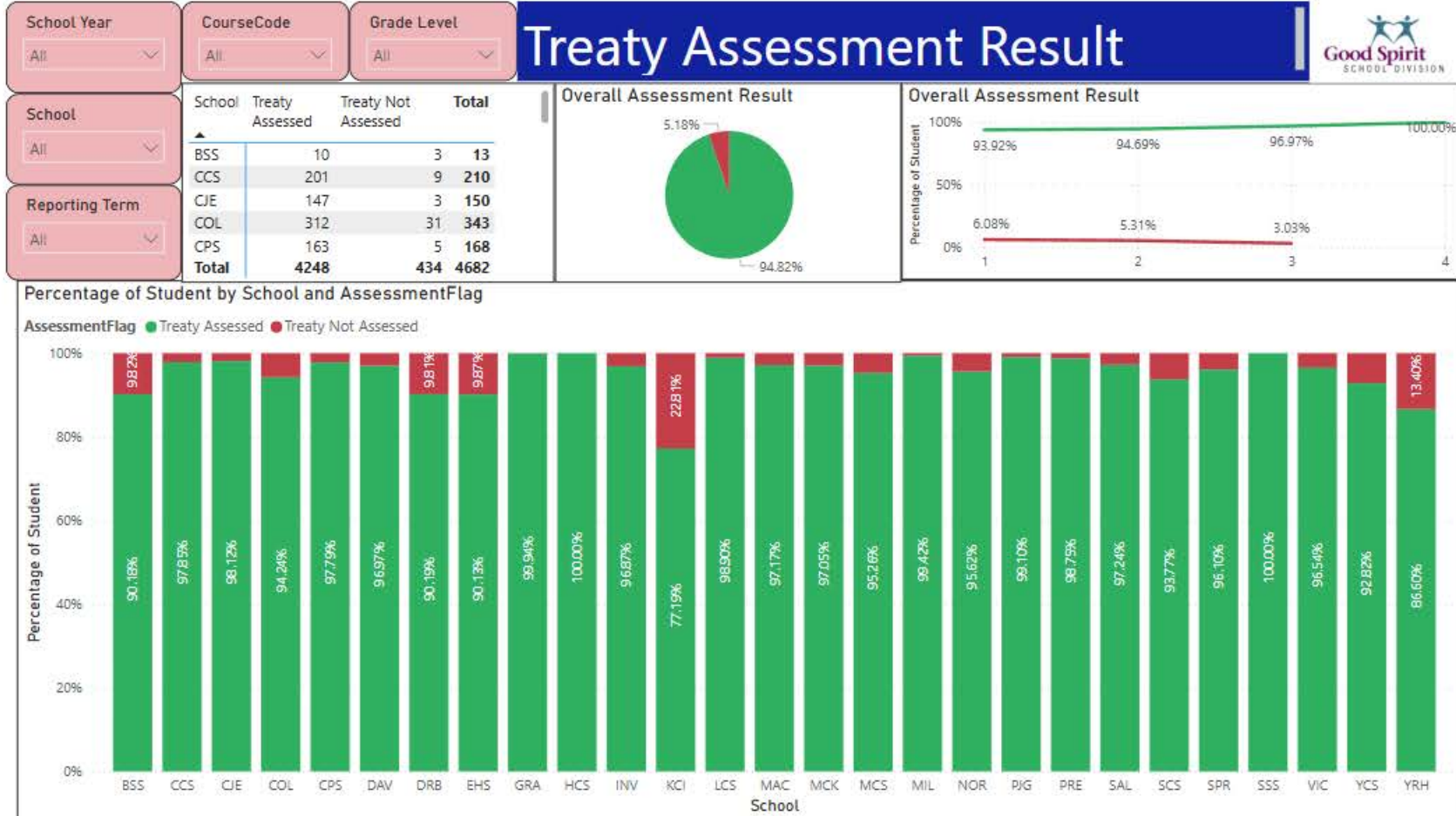


# Data Highlights

Measure	Results
Drum Group Participation	8 schools, 32+ students at CJE alone
Beading Clubs	Operating weekly in 5+ schools
Elder Engagement	10+ Elders/Knowledge Keepers involved
Language Exposure and Instruction	Implemented in 4+ schools



# Data Highlights



Filters

# Reflections and Challenges

- Weather and staff capacity delayed some events
- Resource/funding limitations
- Need for consistent cross-school coordination and resource sharing
- Higher risk – staff burnout, turnover



# Looking Ahead

## Recommended Strategies

- Increase staff PD in anti-racist education and culturally responsive practices
- Strengthen data collection on engagement and belonging
- Expand Elder/Knowledge Keeper network
- Foster youth leadership in cultural education
  - Promote inter-school collaboration on land-based learning





# CONCLUSION

- Significant strides in 2024-25: Deeper relationships, stronger cultural identity, and growing engagement
- Focus remains on building authentic partnerships
- Continued investment in Indigenous education is key to reconciliation and student success



# Mīkwēc!



**Good Spirit**  
SCHOOL DIVISION



# Marrsî!!