

Indigenous Initiatives

Aboriginal Learning is pleased to provide Indigenous students, teachers and principals in Surrey Schools a variety of initiatives to enhance Indigenous students' K-12 school experience. Below are brief descriptions of the initiatives with a contact person or a link to learn more.

Aboriginal Resource Centre

Aboriginal Learning has a variety of authentic resources reviewed and approved by the Aboriginal Helping Teachers. These resources are available to Surrey School District teachers to borrow and use in their classrooms. The collection spans the last five years and is updated monthly with new book titles, teacher resources, and more. To see what is in the collection [click here](#).

Carving Program

This is an introduction to First Nations Westcoast Carving Course offered through Continuing Learning at Queen Elizabeth Secondary School in the woodworking room. There is a course offered each semester. Students can attend Mondays or Wednesdays or both dates from 3:30 - 7:30pm. Students can earn credits for graduation: 4 Credits = 1 Woodworking course and/or 4 Credits = 1 Art course (need to complete 30+ art designs). For more information, please contact Nancy Johnson at johnson_n@surreyschools.

Bannock & Books

Encouraging the love of reading with children and parents/guardians is the focus of this program. Twelve elementary schools with high Indigenous populations will receive books to host a Bannock and Books event. The school will plan some activities to accompany the books. Then the school will welcome families to come after school for some bannock, activities and each child will receive an Indigenous book to take home. Please ask your school principal if a Bannock and Books event will be happening at your child's school.

Little Eaglets

We are pleased to offer a two-week summer program for new Indigenous kindergarten students transitioning to elementary school in the fall. The focus of the program is literacy and cultural teachings. This much-loved program has been extended to kindergarten to grade 5 Indigenous students and it takes place at an elementary school in Surrey. Please ask your child's principal for details to register in June.

Summer Math Program

Secondary school students grade 8-12 can improve their math skills during the month of July (4 weeks). Using the Eagles of Tomorrow program, students can work on a series of 7 books that span the basic secondary school math curriculum. The program is designed to introduce the students to math concepts in a manner that is fun to learn and easy to understand. Please talk to your child's Indigenous Graduate Advocate about registering for the program in June. Questions and enquiries should be directed to: daniels_lyn@surreyschools.ca.

Aboriginal Reads

This is an opportunity for secondary schools to highlight Indigenous authors and poets and promote their accomplishments for your students. Schools can apply for funds to be used in a variety of ways: bring in an author, purchase new titles, acquire prizes, buy display items to enhance the presentation of the event, etc. Please speak to the secondary school's librarian to see if they participate in the Aboriginal Reads opportunity.

Special Project Grants

Elementary and secondary schools in Surrey can apply for Special Projects Grants. The focus of these grants has changed over time. Last year's themes were:

- Equitable access to quality education;
- The First Peoples Principles of Learning;
- Connections to the land and nature.

The amount schools can apply is based on the enrolment of Indigenous students and applications generally come out late fall. Ask your school principal if your child's school is planning on applying for a special project grant and what their focus will be this year.

First Peoples in Residence

The District Cultural Facilitators (DCF) can be requested by school principals to provide a week-long residency in elementary and secondary schools. The DCFs will provide a variety of Indigenous cultural presentations in class to students with the classroom teacher present. The presentations range from 30-120 minutes in length and are age appropriate. When a First Peoples in Residence is confirmed, classroom teachers sign up for presentations in advance and can have 1-2 presentations during a residency. To find out if a First People in Residence is happening at your child's school, please contact your child's school principal.

Indigenous Lead Teachers (Elementary)

We are very fortunate to have a champion for Indigenous Peoples' Learning in each school. This is a volunteer teacher role in elementary schools. They assist with communication and awareness of Indigenous resources, events, lessons, etc. Please ask your child's school principal who the Indigenous Lead Teacher is at their school.

Cross-Cultural Symposium

Cross-cultural symposium is an annual event for grades 10-12 students in Surrey Schools. Three students per secondary school gather for a day with students from neighbouring Burnaby and Coquitlam School Districts to learn about important issues. Last year's topic was on Anti-Racism. The students listened to a variety of speakers to become informed about the important topic. Please ask the Indigenous Graduate Advocate in your child's secondary school for more details.

Tah-tul-ut Indigenous Education Pathway (Tah-tul-ut EA Diploma)

In partnership with SFU, Surrey College and Surrey Schools we are pleased to offer the Tah-tul-ut Educational Assistant (EA) Diploma program. This program offers grade 12 Surrey students the opportunity to complete a Simon Fraser University (SFU) dual credit course in the evening and EA training program at Surrey College in second semester. After completion of the program, students have the choice of applying/working as an EA or continuing their education at SFU to become a teacher. Please check [click link](#) to learn more.

Windspeaker Youth Leadership

Windspeaker is a leadership program for grades 8-12. Indigenous students sign up in the fall to participate in a year-long program. The goals of the program are to give Indigenous students an opportunity to visit local Nations, meet with elders or other representatives, learn an aspect of their local culture, and engage in land-based physical activities. This program is funded by outside donors. It has been in operation the last 4 years. This will be the final year of the program. We are hoping to apply for future grants to keep the program going. If interested, please talk to the Indigenous Graduate Advocate at your child's school to learn more and how to get involved.