

DATE: May 23, 2017

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Allocation of Funding for Students Who Self-Identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit (Trustee Request for Information #207)

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Sanaa El Hassany, Nancy Petersen, Melissa Purcell

REFERENCE: February 28, 2017 Board meeting (Trustee Stirling)

ISSUE

The following information was requested:

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit parents have expressed concerns as to how funds are allocated when students self-identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit and how those funds are used to support their children. Trustee Stirling requested that the Administration provide information as to how funds designated specifically for FNMI students are used to support programs and initiatives that benefit those students in their schools.

BACKGROUND

The District receives targeted funds from the Alberta Education to support the educational programming of our self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

CURRENT SITUATION

For the 2016–2017 operational year the District received \$9,507,267 in targeted funding. These funds are shared between central and schools, with \$1,668,732 supporting the operations of the District’s First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education unit and the remainder of the funds going directly to schools. The funds to schools are allocated across District schools based on the normalized number of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students enrolled at schools on the September 30th count date.

School principals work with their community to best determine how to use these funds in support of their self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students’ educational success. The attached summary provides an overview of how these funds are used both in District schools and by the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education unit.

KEY POINTS

- The District receives targeted funding in support of programming for self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.
- This allocation funds the work of the District’s First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education unit, while the majority of the funds (approximately 83 per cent) go directly to schools to support their work with their self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Overview of Use of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Allocated Funds

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Overview of Use of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Allocated Funds

School principals are responsible for determining the best use of their allocation in consultation with their community. District schools identify supports required based on the needs of students, families and District staff within their respective community. The identified supports, resources, and programming use of these targeted funds varies from school to school. Examples of how schools may use these funds in support of their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students include:

- Purchasing of culturally responsive resources and literature to support literacy and numeracy programming, including classroom and school literature collections.
- Hiring of staff, such as First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Liaisons or Success Coaches, to provide mentoring or transition support and to work with families.
- Increasing staff First Nations, Métis, and Inuit foundational knowledge and awareness through professional learning opportunities.
- Providing culturally responsive learning experiences infused into the curriculum; supported by inviting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors to share cultural teachings, and perspectives relevant to the delivery of specific curriculum outcomes.
- Hosting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Family Nights to encourage and support positive relationships with students, parents/guardians, community and school staff.
- Offering culturally responsive learning experiences such as an artist and/or author in residence program, ongoing fiddle program, National Aboriginal Day/Aboriginal History Month event/s.

The District's First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education unit works with schools to strategically support their efforts to improve student achievement for their First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. This work is often an enhancement or extension to work being done by the school through the use of their targeted First Nations, Métis and Inuit allocation. The unit's supports and services to schools include:

- Helping schools develop their First Nations, Métis and Inuit school plan documents including supporting schools in the identification of:
 - goals and key educational performance indicators
 - the identification of targeted supports for students, families, and school staff
- Supporting schools with identified supports, resources, and programming based on the needs of students, families and District staff to increase First Nations, Métis, and Inuit student success and achievement.
- Collaborating with school staff to examine and identify elements that factor into positive change for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and increase opportunities to share across schools, catchments and central decision units.
- Developing, implementing and gathering culturally responsive resources in collaboration with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors, including community partners and across central decision units.
- Facilitating professional learning opportunities for school staff to support literacy, numeracy and subject-specific curricular outcomes, including strategies to increase student, family and community engagement and transitions.
- Collaborating with community organizations and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors to increase mentorship and supports available to students, families and District staff.
- Hosting District-wide opportunities for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students to engage in culturally responsive experiences to increase student success and achievement through:
 - summer transition programs
 - health and well-being opportunities, such as the junior high art workshop, elementary health week and cultural engagement sessions
 - honouring celebration of high school completion.

District schools are continuing to work towards increasing First Nations, Métis, and Inuit education and student success and achievement through strategic planning and reflecting on impacts of growth.