

FOLLOWING THEIR VOICES

Year 5 Implementation Report

To the Provincial Leadership Team from the
Following Their Voices Leadership Team
2019-20



A Message from the Following Their Voices Priority Owner

On behalf of the Following Their Voices Leadership Team, I am pleased to provide the Following Their Voices Year 5 (2019-20) Implementation Report. This report provides an overview of the successes and challenges Following Their Voices faced in the 2019-20 school year, and the impact the initiative had on teacher practice, and student engagement, attendance and achievement.

Year 5 of the initiative began as anticipated: an Elders' Gathering was held in September where advice and guidance from our Elders was received and initiative progress and achievements were shared; in-person delivery of professional learning and development was provided to school teams in Saskatoon; and, Provincial Facilitators were busy providing supports to schools through phone calls and in-person visits.

As 2019 ended and 2020 began, the education sector was faced with the global COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in March, both the provincial and First Nations education systems responded by ceasing in-person activity in schools and considering different models of delivering learning to students. Following Their Voices also needed to adapt to ensure educational outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students remained a focus.

Although there were significant challenges to implementing an initiative during a pandemic, there was also the opportunity to reconsider and refine the supports provided to schools. Following Their Voices was able to quickly pivot and began delivering all professional learning and development virtually. Staff were able to take time to write a set of modules that are now posted to the Following Their Voices website. The modules provide clarity and direction on Following Their Voices tools and processes.

I would like to recognize and thank the Strategic Change Leadership Teams and participating teachers in each participating school. Although the pandemic unquestionably impacted education delivery, Following Their Voices schools have continued to demonstrate their commitment to support students through changes in student-teacher relationships, interactions, teacher instructional practices and the learning environment.

I would also like to express my thanks to my colleagues on the Following Their Voices Leadership Team who provided oversight, advice and direction through this unprecedented year. Members included:

- Robert Bratvold, Director of Education, Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division
- Tim Caleval, Executive Director, Priority Action Team, Ministry of Education

- Dawn Kuppenbender, Superintendent of Learning, Northern Lights School Division
- Mary Lee, Elder
- Angella Pinay, Senior Indigenous Advisor, Ministry of Education
- Sheila Pocha, Program Head, SUNTEP/Gabriel Dumont Institute
- Mike Walter, Deputy Director of Education, Prairie Valley School Division

Participating schools are provided direction and support from the Following Their Voices Provincial Facilitation Team through in-person and virtual provincial professional learning and development and ongoing communication including in-person visits, video-conferencing, telephone calls and emails. The team included:

- Celena Gunville
- Elisa Hryniuk
- Leanne Kadyschuk
- Pauline McKay
- Jennifer O'Connor

A sincere thank you to our Elders and Knowledge Keepers whose guidance, knowledge and advice is foundational to Following Their Voices.

Respectively submitted,

Pat Bugler, Director of Education, Treaty Six Education Council
Following Their Voices Lead

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Education that promotes accelerated learning for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students where learning is joyful, culture is affirmed and students are given real choice for their future.

Preamble

In October 2012, Premier Brad Wall announced the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth: Vision 2020 and Beyond*. The *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* is a strategy designed to secure a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. To achieve this vision, the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* has two overriding goals: to ensure Saskatchewan continues to grow and to ensure the province is meeting the challenges of growth. The Plan for Growth opened the door for the creation of a sector-wide approach, the Education Sector Strategic Plan.

Education Sector Strategic Plan

The Education Sector Strategic Plan outcome for Following Their Voices (2019-20) states, “By June 30, 2020, collaboration between First Nations, Métis and Inuit and non-First Nations, Métis and Inuit partners will result in significant improvement in First Nations, Métis and Inuit student engagement and will increase three-year graduation rates of self-declared First Nations, Métis and Inuit students from 35 per cent in June 2012 to at least 65 per cent and the five-year graduation rate from 50 per cent in June 2013 to at least 75 per cent.”

Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis PreK-12 Education Policy Framework

Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis PreK-12 Education Policy Framework is the umbrella

policy for all actions related to First Nations and Métis education. It offers a comprehensive approach to improving student engagement and achievement through policy, partnerships, shared decision-making and accountability.

Following Their Voices aligns with the goals of the Inspiring Success Policy Framework and demonstrates how the sector is responding to the needs and interests of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. “To affect positive change, the responsibility exists for all teachers and administrators to transform teaching practices, individually and collectively, through continuous learning and professional development.” (Inspiring Success, 2018, p. 9)

Implementation Overview, 2014-19

Implementation of Following Their Voices began in 2014 when foundational research-based work was undertaken to prepare for field testing. In January 2015, field testing began in five provincial schools and one First Nation school and finished at the end of June 2015.

With tools and processes refined from field-testing in place, Year 1 implementation began in 2015-16. Year 1 included 17 schools, 12 provincial schools and five First Nations schools, and had approximately 170 participating classroom teachers.

In Year 2 (2016-17), no additional schools were added, however, the initiative expanded within existing schools by increasing the number of participating teachers in each school. In total 16 schools, 12 provincial schools and four First Nations schools, implemented Following Their Voices and included approximately 240 teachers.

Following Their Voices expanded in Year 3 (2017-18) with the addition of 11 new schools, six provincial, four First Nations and one belonging to a joint provincial-federal board of education. In total 26 schools, 18 provincial, seven First Nations and one joint board, with 440 teachers implemented the initiative.

In Year 4 (2018-19), Following Their Voices added eight provincial schools and five First Nations schools. Expansion continued to occur in schools that were new in 2017-18 by onboarding the remaining teachers. Following Their Voices now included approximately 570 teachers implementing Following Their Voices in 38 provincial and First Nations systems.

For a complete listing of Following Their Voices Schools, see Appendix A.

Year 5 Implementation (2019-20)

In the 2019-20 school year, there were 14,000 students in 35 participating Following Their Voices schools, 8,600 self-declaring as Métis, First Nations or Inuit. Although there were no additional schools brought into the initiative, additional teachers were added in existing schools.



Several schools came to the end of the contractual agreement, yet choose to remain part of the initiative without being provided any provincial funding. These schools submitted a plan to continue to implement Following Their Voices and were provided continued access to the website, tools and resources. This year also marked the final year of the three-year funding agreement with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Saskatchewan Region to support Following Their Voices implementation in First Nation schools. In response to the end of the funding agreement, the Ministry of Education decided to continue to fund the participating First Nation schools in the same manner provincial schools are funded, and ensure all future calls to participate in the initiative are extended to both provincial and First Nation schools.

In March 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Saskatchewan indefinitely suspended all in-class learning in Saskatchewan's schools. In May, 2020, on the advice of the Saskatchewan Chief Medical Health Officer, the Planning Response Team (including members of: Saskatchewan School Boards Association; the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents; the Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials; and, the Ministry of Education) informed Saskatchewan's school divisions that Prekindergarten to Grade 12 in-class learning would not resume for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. All Grade 10-12 students received a final grade at the time in-class learning was suspended. Similarly, school was suspended on First Nations as the nations were dealing with their individual responses to the pandemic.

Due to the pandemic, a minimum final mark of 50 per cent or greater was applied to the outcomes evaluated in each subject area as of March 13, 2020. As such, Following Their Voices data reflects this decision.

Supports for Implementation

Elders and Knowledge Keepers

First Nations and Métis Elders provided guidance during the development of Following Their Voices. Their continued advice and support throughout implementation is critical to the success of Following Their Voices. An annual Elders' Gathering is part of this important process whereby all Following Their Voices Elders' Council members have an opportunity to gather, be kept informed on Following Their Voices progress and provide implementation advice and guidance. In September 2019, the gathering was conducted in Prince Albert following Métis protocols.

Throughout the year, Elders and Knowledge Keepers were engaged and participated in focus groups, ad hoc committee work and all provincial professional learning and development sessions. Even when the province restricted in-person gatherings in March 2020, Elders continued to be a part of provincial professional learning and development and provided their teachings virtually. Due to COVID-19, the annual Blessing that was to be held in the spring was cancelled and will be rescheduled to a later date.

Strategic Change Leadership Teams

Strategic Change Leadership Teams, made up of the school principal, a lead teacher, division/education organization lead and a School-based Facilitator, continue to lead implementation at the school level. These teams are expected to attend all provincial professional learning and development sessions, provide local professional learning and development for participating teachers and ensure all participating teachers undertake the expected processes and practices of Following Their Voices.

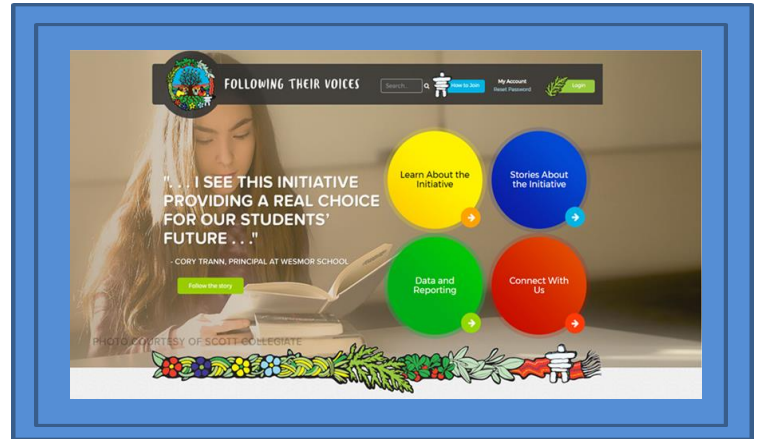
Provincial Professional Learning and Development Sessions

Provincial professional learning and development sessions provided to the Strategic Change Leadership Teams was led by members of the Following Their Voices Provincial Facilitation Team. The Provincial Facilitators, with assistance from a group of School-based Facilitators called the Seekers, facilitated the delivery of these sessions.

The sessions were delivered in-person from August to January, at which point the sessions were delivered online through to June 2020. Despite in-class learning being suspended province-wide, Following Their Voices continued to support schools and offer implementation support remotely to the end of the school year.

Information Technology

Following Their Voices continued to manage the web-based tools (Survey Tool, Observation Tool, Goal Setting Tool, Walk-through Tool and Reflection Tool) and reports. Following Their Voices also provided help desk support to all users throughout the year. These tools allowed for timely data collection and opportunities for feedback. The reports inform planning for improvement.



(source: Following Their Voices website)

The website also provides real time information on the usage of the tools. The following chart shows the number of completed surveys, Observations, Goals, Walk-throughs and Reflections.

2019-20 School Year	Items	From Inception
16,650	Surveys	38,916
1,505	Observations	6,525
2,992	Goals	6,024
1,427	Walk-throughs	5,457
1,066	Reflections	4,719

(source: Following Their Voices website)

Both the public site and the private site, where accessibility is based on the users' role in the initiative, continued to be utilized as a major support for implementation. The following chart demonstrates the number of users and the number of page views for the Following Their Voices website:

August 2019 to June 2020		
	Public Site	Private Site
Users	3,551	1,972
Page Views	27,912	70,338

(source: Following Their Voices website)

Critical Learning Cycle

The Critical Learning Cycle is a planned cycle of learning for participating teachers that is repeated throughout the school year. School-based Facilitators provide structured support to teachers through: Observations, Goal Setting, Shadow Coaching, Huddles, Co-construction Meetings and Classroom Walk-throughs.



The participation results in Table 1 show the number of completed Observations, Goals (Individual and Co-Constructed), Walk-throughs and Reflections in the Critical Learning Cycles over the 2019-20 school year:

Table 1: Critical Learning Cycle Participation for all Schools in 2019-20						
	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4	Cycle 5	Total
Observations	568	346	413	179	0	1,505
Individual Goals	564	303	409	149	0	1,425
Co-constructed Goals	611	496	460	0	0	1,567
Walk-throughs	26	123	22	0	0	1,427
Reflections	513	280	273	0	0	1,066

(source: *Following Their Voices* website)

Note: Due to COVID-19, '0' denotes no data recorded as these processes in the Critical Learning Cycle were not completed.

Changes in Teacher Practice: Traditional vs Discursive Teaching

Traditional interactions are where teachers provide instruction, monitor student progress and give students behavioural feedback and feedforward. Discursive interactions are where teachers draw on students' prior knowledge, learning or experience, work with students to co-construct knowledge and understanding and give students' academic feedback and feedforward. Both types of interactions are necessary to teach; however, discursive interactions are more engaging for students and are what First Nations, Inuit and Métis students indicated in Seeking Their Voices (Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit, 2014) research are needed to help increase achievement.

Data collected on discursive teaching identify increases in interactive instructional techniques for all teacher cohorts.

Surveys

The Following Their Voices surveys are customized, perceptual surveys used to inform school planning and reporting. The surveys ask questions about student-teacher relationships, interactions between students and teachers and the learning environment.

The compiled responses:

- provide a snapshot of Following Their Voices implementation;
- provide an opportunity for those involved with Following Their Voices (students, teachers, parents/caregivers, Strategic Change Leadership Team members) to share their perceptions; and,
- assist with planning and continued implementation of Following Their Voices at the school level.

Surveys are completed three times a year (start, middle and end of year) by:

- students in participating Following Their Voices classrooms;
- teachers implementing Following Their Voices; and,
- Strategic Change Leadership Team members.

Parents/caregivers who have a child/children in a Following Their Voices classroom are asked to complete a survey at the beginning and end of the school year.

It is important to note that the “End of Year Survey” was not conducted in 2019-20 due to the pandemic. As a result, there is insufficient data to report any overall changes in perceptions. It can be noted that in 2019-20:

- 1,710 grades 3 to 5 student surveys were completed;
- 11,259 grades 6 to 12 student surveys were completed,
- 1,392 teacher surveys were completed;
- 2,689 Strategic Change Leadership Team surveys were completed; and,
- 1,849 parent surveys were completed.

Student Engagement

Engagement in Following Their Voices is measured by the OurSCHOOL survey that reports on student perceptions known to affect learning outcomes. The OurSCHOOL survey indicates Métis, Inuit and First Nations students' perceptions in Following Their Voices schools can be grouped in two categories:

1. Measures that remain at or above provincial and national norms:
 - For 2019 and 2020: Effective Learning Time; Positive Teacher-Student Relations; Values School Outcomes; Advocacy at School; Interest and Motivation; Relevance; and, Rigor.
 - Expectations for Success; Intellectual Engagement; and, Positive Learning Climate are above provincial and national norms for the cohorts of schools that started participating in Following Their Voices in 2015-16 and 2017-18, but below for the cohort of schools that started in 2018-19.
2. Measures below provincial and national norms:
 - For 2019 and 2020: Feeling Safe Attending This School; Aspirations to Finish High School; Truancy; Positive Relationships; Sense of Belonging; and, Effort.

Generally speaking, measures connected to the efforts teachers make to support students in school are positive. However, measures related to interpersonal relationships between students and student safety in and around school are areas that Following Their Voices schools will need to address.

Student Attendance

Data indicate attendance has been inconsistent for all three cohorts.

Student Achievement and Attendance Data

Data in Tables 2, 3 and 4 (following page) are from schools involved in Following Their Voices implementation.

Initiative level data in Table 2 for Year 5 (2019-20) indicate three-year graduation rates and credit attainment rates for Inuit, First Nations and Métis students in Cohort 1 (schools starting in 2015-16), Cohort 2 (schools starting in 2017-18) and Cohort 3 (schools starting in 2018-19). The three-year graduation rates for all Following Their Voices schools have increased from baseline, but at a lower rate than that of the province over the same period of time. The five-year graduation rates for all Following Their Voices schools (Table 3) have increased from baseline at a higher rate than that of the province over the same period of time.

Credit attainment rates for all Following Their Voices schools (Table 4) have increased from baseline at a higher rate than that of the province over the same period of time.

Table 2 - Percentage of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students Graduating Within 3 Years From Baseline to Last School Year									
Measures	Cohort 1 - Started in 2015-16			Cohort 2 - Started in 2017-18			Cohort 3 - Started in 2018-19		
	2014-15 Baseline	2019-20	% Change	2016-17 Baseline	2019-20	% Change	2017-18 Baseline	2019-20	% Change
Province	40%	47%	18%↑	43%	47%	9%↑	41%	47%	15%↑
FTV Schools	31%	32%	3%↑	41%	45%	10%↑	41%	43%	5%↑

Table 3 - Percentage of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students Graduating Within 5 Years From Baseline to Last School Year									
Measures	Cohort 1 - Started in 2015-16			Cohort 2 - Started in 2017-18			Cohort 3 - Started in 2018-19		
	2014-15 Baseline	2019-20	% Change	2016-17 Baseline	2019-20	% Change	2017-18 Baseline	2019-20	% Change
Province	56%	63%	13%↑	60%	63%	5%↑	59%	63%	7%↑
FTV Schools	46%	55%	20%↑	64%	69%	8%↑	51%	58%	14%↑

Table 4 - Percentage of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students with at Least 8 Credits a Year Grade 10-12, From Baseline to Last School Year									
Measures	Cohort 1 - Started in 2015-16			Cohort 2 - Started in 2017-18			Cohort 3 - Started in 2018-19		
	2014-15 Baseline	2019-20	% Change	2016-17 Baseline	2019-20	% Change	2017-18 Baseline	2019-20	% Change
Province	31%	37%	19%↑	31%	37%	19%↑	31%	37%	19%↑
FTV Schools	26%	35%	35%↑	25%	33%	32%↑	32%	39%	22%↑

Notes for all tables:

1. Data as of December 11, 2020.
2. Cohort 1 consists of 16 schools, with 12 provincial schools and 4 First Nation schools.
3. Cohort 2 consists of 10 schools, with 6 provincial schools and 4 First Nation schools.
4. Cohort 3 consists of 13 schools, with 8 provincial schools and 5 First Nation schools.
5. The provincial '3-year' graduation rate increased by a larger amount than has been seen over the past several years.
6. The provincial '5-year' graduation rate increased by a larger amount than has been seen over the past several years.
7. Overall credit attainment rates increased from 2018-19 to 2019-20, with strong evidence that policy responses to COVID-19 pandemic contributed significantly to higher than usual year-over-year increases.

Key Accomplishments and Challenges

Accomplishments

Key themed accomplishments in Year 5 (2019-20):

Elders and Knowledge Keepers Engagement

- ongoing authentic engagement of Elders and Knowledge Keepers in:
 - provincial professional learning and development sessions, both in person and virtually;
 - Following Their Voices Leadership Team meetings; and,
 - ad hoc committee work, i.e., the review of the Elders' Council Terms of Reference and initiative research; and,
- facilitated an annual Elders' Gathering.

Governance

- 2019-20 school selection and onboarding began in spring 2019;
- implemented Following Their Voices in 35 schools;
- new Provincial School Implementation Plan was applied; and,
- presented and reviewed the Elders Terms of Reference and Code of Integrity.

Initiative Support

- all participating schools received direct support from Provincial Facilitators (in-person and virtual);
- provided provincial professional learning and development tailored to schools in various years of implementation both in person and virtual;
- ongoing refinement of the Critical Learning Cycle;
- weekly monitoring, support and reporting on each school's Lead Indicators Learning Achievement Chart;
- began development of modules;
- produced a Following Their Voices video; and,
- provided additional professional learning and development opportunities for Provincial Facilitators and Seekers.

Data and Research

- managed a Following Their Voices District in OurSCHOOL;
- two new Following Their Voices Discussion Reports implemented, the Teacher Practice Report and Engagement Report;
- Student Data System initiative reports were created and made available for schools, education authorities/divisions and initiative use;
- weekly monitoring of school implementation progress using Lead Indicators Learning Achievement Charts for weekly school support;
- Following Their Voices Year 3 school implementation review with the Saskatchewan Educational Development Unit (University of Saskatchewan); and,
- began disaggregating data on Métis students.

Technology

- Following Their Voices public and private facing sides of the website were improved and maintained;
- supported and maintained online tools;
- utilized virtual meeting communication tools for operational work, school support and additional Provincial Facilitator and Seeker professional learning and development; and,

- provided direct technological support for the Following Their Voices website and tools to participating schools.

Partnerships and Sector Communication

- maintained a partnership with Indigenous Services Canada (final year of a three-year agreement) for funding to be provided to First Nations schools implementing the initiative;
- engaged and enhanced relationships with current education sector partners; and,
- Following Their Voices was presented at various conferences/meetings including:
 - University of Saskatchewan Principals' Summer Short Course;
 - Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents;
 - Provincial Leadership Team;
 - several tribal councils;
 - two unique presentations to University of Saskatchewan College of Education classes; and,
 - and one presentation conducted for a Gabriel Dumont Institute's Saskatchewan Urban Native Teachers Education Program class.

Challenges

Challenges during Year 5 (2019-20):

- legislative limitations regarding disbursement of funding to First Nation schools led to additional administrative processes;
- implementation of functional, stable online tools;
- data collection is based on all Métis, First Nations and Inuit students in the school; not all First Nations, Inuit and Métis students have been in implementing teachers' classrooms;
- varying degrees of adherence to implementation;
- system support of implementation once funding is no longer provided; and,
- it takes time for teachers to develop and implement new skills based on improving relationships, the environment and interactions they have with students.

COVID-19 related challenges:

- interruption of data collection on the number of Critical Learning Cycles and processes (i.e., Observations) within Following Their Voices;
- disruption of in-person teaching and change in delivery methodology to online instruction resulting in initiative implementation process challenges and the provision of implementation support; and,

- pivoting professional learning and development to virtual sessions and ensuring intended outcomes are delivered.

APPENDIX A:

Participating and Non-Participating Schools (year of inception)

Participating Schools

Provincial Schools (funded)

1. Balcarres Community School – Prairie Valley School Division (2018-19)
2. Balfour Collegiate – Regina Public Schools (2018-19)
3. Bedford Road Collegiate – Saskatoon Public Schools (2015-16)
4. Bishop Murray High School – Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division (2018-19)
5. Carlton Comprehensive Public High School – Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division (2017-18)
6. Carpenter High School – Northwest School Division (2018-19)
7. Churchill Community High School – Northern Lights School Division (2017-18)
8. Ducharme Elementary School – Northern Lights School Division (2017-18)
9. E.D. Feehan Catholic High School – Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division (2015-16)
10. John Paul II Collegiate – Light of Christ Catholic School Division (2017-18)
11. L. P. Miller Comprehensive School – North East School Division (2018-19)
12. Mount Royal Collegiate – Saskatoon Public Schools (2015-16)
13. North Battleford Comprehensive High School – Living Sky School Division (2018-19)
14. Punnichy Community School – Horizon School Division (2018-19)
15. Rossignol High School – Ile a la Crosse School Division (2017-18)
16. Stobart Community High School – Prairie Spirit School Division (2017-18)
17. Valley View Community School – Northern Lights School Division (2018-19)

Provincial Schools (not funded)

1. Cando Community School – Living Sky School Division (2015-16)
2. Kamsack Comprehensive Institute – Good Spirit School Division (2015-16)
3. Scott Collegiate – Regina Public Schools (2015-16)
4. Wesmor Community High School – Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division (2015-16)

First Nation Schools (funded)

1. Ahtahkakoop School – Treaty Six Education Council (2018-19)
2. Birch Narrows Dene Community School – Meadow Lake Tribal Council, Birch Narrows Dene Nation (2018-19)
3. Canoe Lake School – Canoe Lake Cree Nation (2017-18)
4. Chief Gabriel Cote Education Centre – Cote First Nation (2017-18)
5. Cowessess Community Education Centre – Cowessess First Nation (2017-18)
6. Keeseekoose Chiefs' Education Centre – Keeseekoose First Nation (2017-18)

7. Makwa Sahgaiehcan First Nation School – Makwa Sahgaiehcan First Nation (2018-19)
8. Pelican Lake First Nation School – Agency Chief’s Tribal Council (2018-19)
9. Senator Myles Venne School – Lac La Ronge Indian Band (2018-19)

Joint Provincial and Federal School (funded)

1. Sakewew High School – Battlefords First Nations High School Joint Board of Education (2017-18)

Schools No Longer Participating

Provincial Schools

1. Bert Fox Community School – Prairie Valley School Division (2015-16)
2. Blaine Lake Composite School – Prairie Spirit School Division (2015-16)
3. Charlebois Community School – Northern Lights School Division (2015-16)
4. Minahik Waskahigan High School – Northern Lights School Division (2015-16)
5. Raymore School – Horizon School Division (2015-16)

First Nation Schools

1. Constable Robin Cameron Education Complex – Beardy’s and Okemasis First Nation (2015-16)
2. Eagleview Comprehensive School – Onion Lake First Nation (2015-16)
3. St. Louis School – English River First Nation (2015-16)
4. Sturgeon Lake Central School – Sturgeon Lake First Nation (2015-16)

References

Ministry of Education. (2018). *Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis PreK-12 Education Policy Framework*. Retrieved from <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/documents/11/107115-Inspiring%20Success%20Policy%20Framework.pdf>