



Saskatoon Public Schools
Inspiring Learning



Culturally Grounded Education Alliance:

A relationship between Whitecap Dakota First Nation and Saskatoon Public Schools

Presenters:

Councillor Dalyn Bear, Whitecap Dakota First Nation
Superintendent of Education Dean Newton, Saskatoon Public Schools



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Grounded in the principles of reconciliation, the alliance between the Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN) and the Saskatoon Public Schools (SPS) reaches back over two decades. Over this time, the partnership has recognized that the role of Indigenous education in truth and reconciliation extends beyond the integration of Indigenous languages and culturally-specific ways of knowing; it requires the promotion of cultural resilience at the governance level, where decisions on education are formulated.

In many ways, this partnership addresses the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action in June 2015, particularly Calls to Action #6 through #10 in relation to Education, which include: the elimination of gaps in funding and resources; developing culturally appropriate curricula; protecting the right to Aboriginal languages; enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability; and maintaining nation-to-nation relationships.

In 2014, the Whitecap Dakota First Nation and the Saskatoon Public Schools came together to sign an Education Partnership agreement, formalizing their alliance. This innovative educational co-governance agreement between the WDFN and SPS officials is a positive example of a structure to support a strong, accountable education system both on reserve (Pre-K-Grade 6) and off reserve (Grades 7-12), which in turn promotes resilience and Indigenous sustainability through education.

The Education Partnership with WDFN and SPS demonstrates a joint vision to provide the best available education to students while also respecting and supporting the Dakota culture and language. The development of the model brought together four levels of government: federal, provincial, municipal, and First Nations. Negotiations for the co-governance model included arrangements regarding the elimination of gaps in funding and resources, developing culturally appropriate curricula, protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, and the maintenance of First Nation's jurisdiction over matters concerning education to ensure the community's interests are at the forefront.

At the community level, these arrangements have resulted in the promotion "cultural literacy" in the broadest sense, such as through the integration of Dakota language, culture, and history at multiple WDFN-SPS "partner" education institutions. Both partners promote culturally-grounded education through the recognition of past history and current culture of the Dakota, as well as through the integration of Indigenous knowledge in the classroom through experiential learning. Most recently, a new school in the Stonebridge area in Saskatoon will welcome Grades 5-to-8 students from Whitecap as part of a unique partnership between Saskatoon Public Schools, the province of Saskatchewan, and the federal government. Through the WDFN-SPS Education Partnership, WDFN is actively contributing to the school's design to reflect their unique culture and history, which includes a cultural centre to be shared with Stonebridge community. The school is targeted to be completed for the 2017/18 school year.

This presentation will bring together key decision-makers from WDFN and SPS to discuss the development of this innovative model and best practices coming out of the implementation of the agreement. In particular, the presentation will focus on the development and implementation of the co-governance model for Whitecap's school and education program, including the process of developing an incorporated Whitecap Education Authority and a WDFN/SPS joint operations committee. Additionally, the presentation will showcase the various jointly-developed WDFN-SPS programs that answer the TRC Calls to Action, and promote resilience and Indigenous sustainability through education within the partner institutions.

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Saskatoon Public Schools



- Located in the greater Saskatoon area with a population of approximately 310,000 people
- Student population of about 25,500 students, approximately 4,000 self-identified First Nations and Métis students
- 49 elementary schools, ten collegiates, two associate schools and one alliance school





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Saskatoon Public Schools

- Approximately 2,500 full time equivalent staff
- Elementary school enrolments range from 130 to 720 students
- Collegiate enrolments range from 350 to 1,400 students



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Saskatoon Public Schools



- Saskatoon Public Schools was established in 1884
- Whitecap students historically attending SPS in the 1960s
- 1995 first MOA on curriculum, family involvement and STC supports
- 2002 Agreement – Student Transition Worker
- Began negotiating in 2012
- Transition agreement 2013
- 2014 Alliance Agreement Signed
- Agreement Reviewed Annually





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Community Partnerships

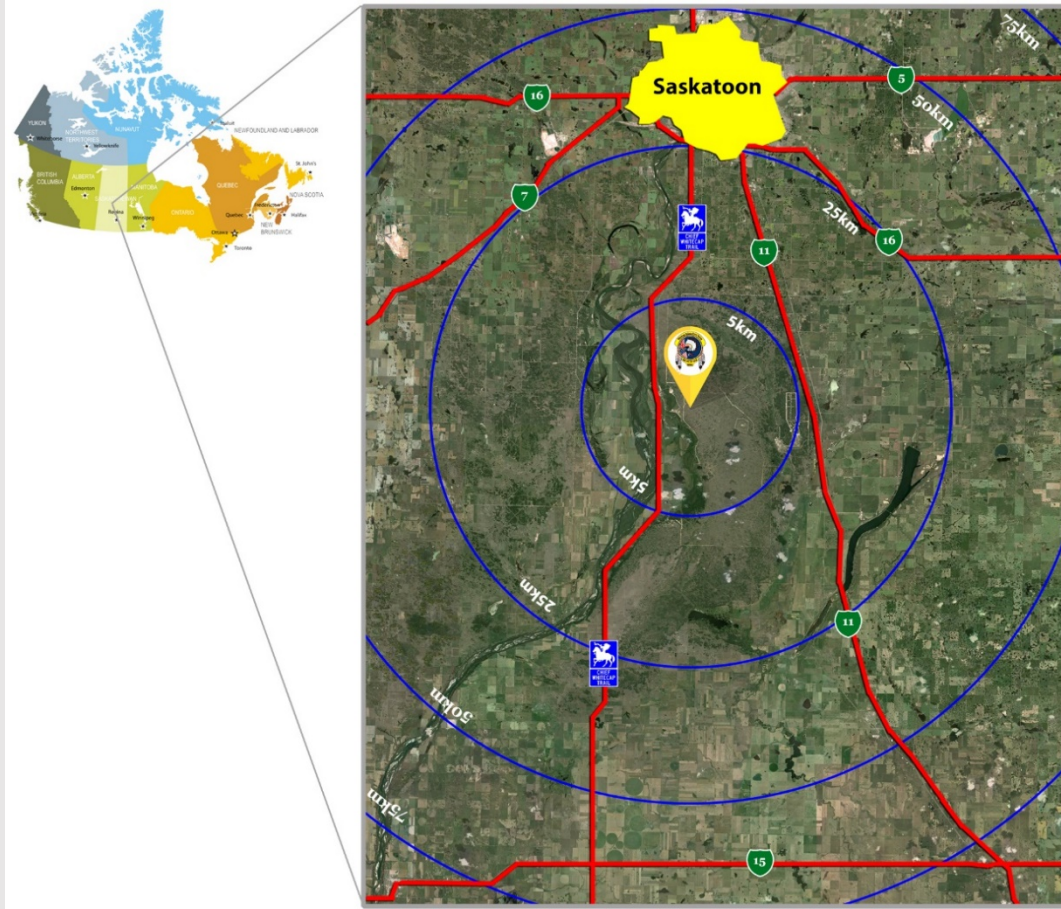
- Whitecap Dakota First Nation
- Okicīyapi Partnership
 - Saskatoon Public Schools
 - Saskatoon Tribal Council First Nations
 - Central Urban Métis Federation Inc.
- Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT)
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic
- Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre
- University of Saskatchewan
- Saskatoon Open Door Society



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Whitecap Dakota First Nation Location



4,913.5 acres

26 km south of
Saskatoon,
Saskatchewan's
largest city

Current location since
1879



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Whitecap Dakota First Nation

An Alliance with Saskatoon



- Chief Whitecap advised John Lake on location of Saskatoon
- Longstanding friendship between our two communities since 1882



- War of 1812 Monument commemorates the Dakota and other multicultural allies and the importance of Dakota's input into the country of Canada.



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Whitecap Dakota First Nation Education

- Partnership with Saskatoon Public Schools
 - Existed since 1993
- Charles Red Hawk Elementary School (CRES) - pre-kindergarten to grade 4 school; Grade 5-12 Whitecap students attend SPS schools
- School Expansion Project recently added two new classrooms at CRES
- Chief Whitecap Elementary School (CWES) opened in September 2017





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Whitecap Dakota First Nation Challenges

- Indian Act
- Residential School – Assimilation Policy
- Land Tenure System
- Infrastructure – Long-term financing
- Fair and Adequate Educational Funding



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Whitecap Dakota First Nation

Economic Impacts

Unemployment Reduction

1993 67%

2003 34%

2008 8%

2012 4.1%

2015 8%

Target 4.0%
(Provincial Average)





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Whitecap Dakota First Nation

Economic Impacts

- Over \$100 million capital investment
- Over 650 jobs created
- \$90 million of revenue generated annually
- Over 1.4 million tourists annually





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Whitecap Dakota First Nation Health

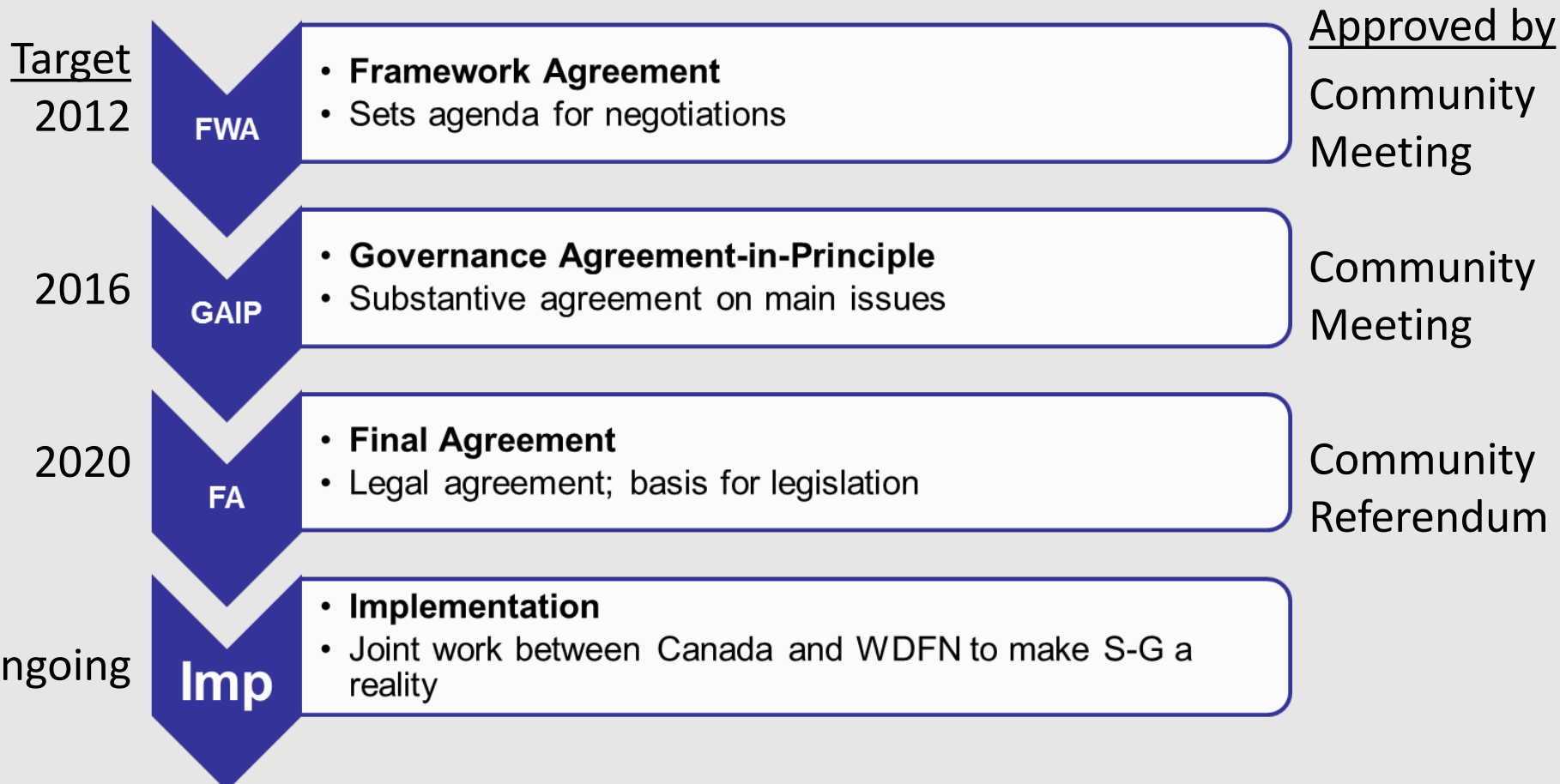
- Whitecap Dakota First Nation's Primary Health Alliance -
Saskatoon Health Region
- Provincial Primary Health Care Innovation
 - Nurse Practitioner
 - Dental Services
 - Mental Health Services
 - Elder Services
- Health centre is connected directly to Charles Red Hawk
Elementary School
- Health services open to the public
 - Status Blind





Whitecap Dakota First Nation

The Path Forward – Self Governance





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Alliance Agreement

Governance

The Alliance Agreement was signed in October, 2014 and run through to August 31, 2018.

- This was negotiated between Canada, Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN) and Saskatoon Public Schools. Ministry of Education was involved in this process
- WDFN jurisdiction and control exercised through:
 - Governance
 - Joint Governance Committee
 - Joint Operations Committee
 - Budget and Spending controls
- WDFN Community Members are part of Ward 7 and are eligible to vote for the Saskatoon Public Schools Board Trustee in this ward



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Alliance Agreement

Key Aspects

- Retaining Whitecap's Jurisdiction
- Improving Educational Outcomes
- Quality Educational Programming with a strong Dakota culture and language component
- Student retention and achievement





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Alliance Agreement Funding

A key objective of the Alliance Agreement was to eliminate funding disparity for Whitecap Dakota First Nation students.

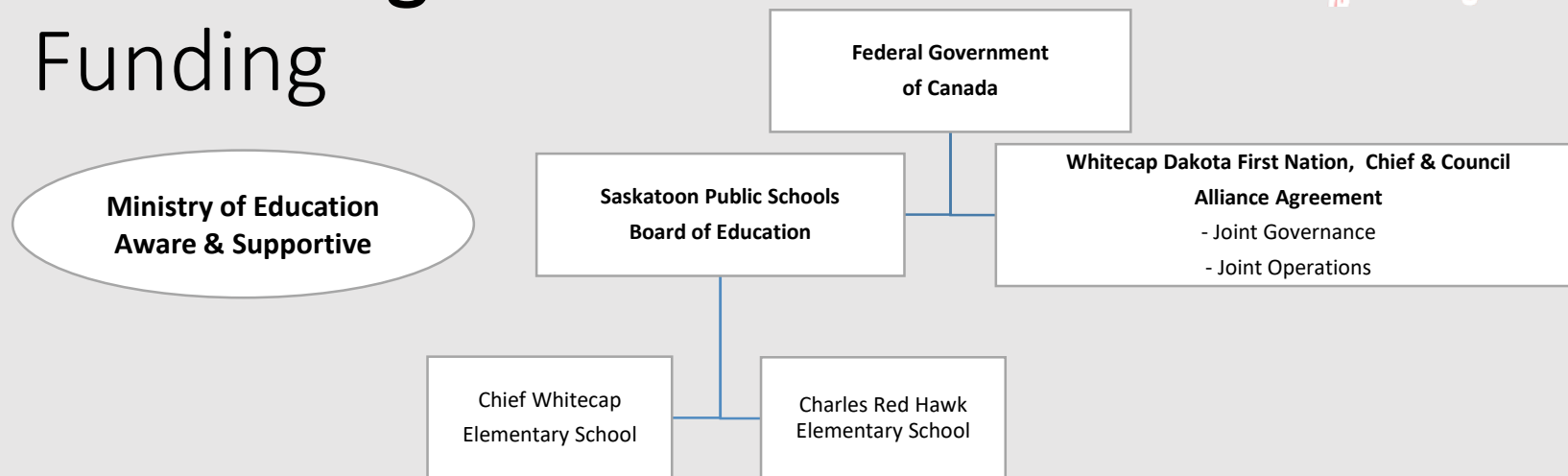
- Estimated per student funding pre-Alliance Agreement \$6200/student after Alliance Agreement \$10,200/student)
 - The extra \$4000 per student comes from Canada.
- Provincial funding model applied
- Funds flow from Canada to SPS
- Managed through Joint Committees
 - Joint Governance Committee
 - Joint Operations Committee



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Alliance Agreement Funding



* Pre Self-Government – the flow of monies from Canada will potentially change when WDFN achieves self government (2020)



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Alliance Agreement Facilities

- School Renovations
- School Addition – 2 Classrooms
- Early Learning Centre
- Charles Red Hawk School (K- 4)
- Chief Whitecap School (K-8)





Alliance Agreement Partnership Rubric

	Peaceful Co-Existence & Mutual Respect			
	Unacceptable	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Relationship and Reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of each organization largely do not know each other and are not sure who to direct questions to. Sharing of information and opportunity flows only one way with one group providing and the other group receiving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of each organization feel comfortable to contact partner organizations as the situation arises. Sharing of information and opportunity does flow both ways; however, one group does the majority of the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners have developed open/honest communication and leverage partner organization personnel. Sharing of information and opportunity flows naturally back and forth with both organizations. Both organizations are equal partners in the learning relationship with primary focus being the success of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations look out for the best interest of their partner organization and share information and opportunity with them in a timely, relevant, honest manner. Proactive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think about partner organization norms and adhere to their world view instead of conforming to ours.
Smooth Transitions Between Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No sharing of information between organizations as students start, re-enter or exit the system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited sharing of transition information between organizations with little collaboration on how to remove barriers for students to transition successfully. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners have open/honest sharing of transition information. Partner action(s) show collaboration to remove barriers for students and provide successful transition. Partners share transition information on a regular basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner organizations work together to provide optimal transition conditions for students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> welcome into organization move successfully through the organization successful exit from the organization with required skills in place and a career/post-secondary plan.
Ethical Sharing of Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data is shared between organizations. Data shared does not result in action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is generally related to decisions. Leader(s) examine data in a single form and make surface observations. Actions based on data analysis are inconsistent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared data informs decisions made by each organization. Some data may not be able to be shared. Leader(s) understand how to 'cut the data' in a variety of ways to arrive at sound conclusions that drive actions. Sharing of data is timely, relevant and honest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is a central tenet for leadership and a guide for action. Leader(s) display the ability to 'cut the data' in a variety of ways (i.e., display, graphs) to arrive at sound conclusions that drive actions. Leaders move seamlessly between qualitative/quantitative data.

Improving results for students →



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Alliance Agreement

Reciprocity

Creating a shared understanding of culture, identity and community...

- Whitecap Dakota First Nation brings to the partnership a strong cultural identity, shared with Saskatoon Public Schools (SPS) and the broader community.
- With sharing of understandings comes the strengthening of community across SPS for all students, staff and community members.
- Reciprocal staff



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Alliance Agreement - Education Support Positions in Schools

- ***Student Success Transition Worker*** started in 2002 and is paid 50% by WDFN and 50% by SPS with the goal of successfully transitioning WDFN students to SPS city schools
- ***Dakota Cultural Language Support Worker*** started in 2017 with the opening of Chief Whitecap Elementary School. The goal of this position is to support Whitecap Dakota First Nation student and families. In addition, they help to support Dakota Language and Culture in K-8 classrooms.



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Alliance Agreement – Education

Unique Programming

- Currently there is a trades and skills partnership between Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN) and Mount Royal Collegiate
- Saskatoon Public Schools' High School Carpentry Apprenticeship Program (HCAP) collaborates with WDFN to build a Ready to Move home for a WDFN family each year
- The partnership has been in place for over ten years



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Alliance Agreement – Education

Early Learning Centre

- Charles Red Hawk Elementary School (CRES) Early Learning Centre opened September, 2016
- WDFN emerging as a regional employer
- Replacement of 22 seat daycare to 56 seats
- Open to members, other residents and non-residents
 - Status Blind
- Federal, Provincial, Corporate capital support for construction - \$2M
- Dakota Language and Culture included in the Early Learning Centre at (CRES)





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Alliance Agreement – Education

Dakota Language, Culture & Identity

- Charles Red Hawk Elementary School
- Chief Whitecap Elementary School





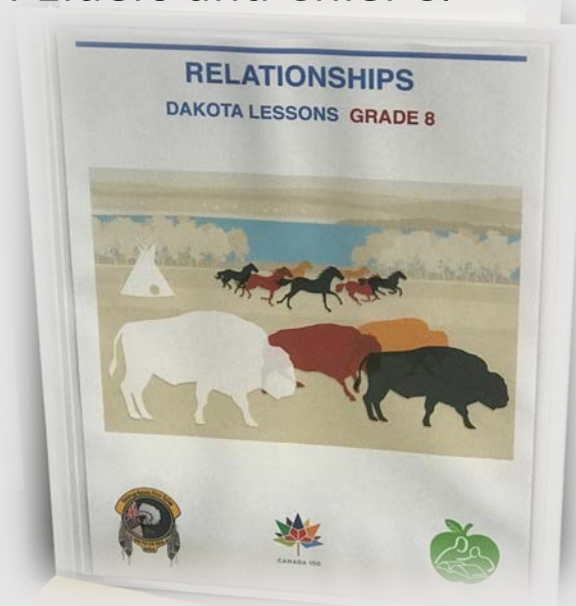
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Alliance Agreement – Education

K-8 Dakota Language & Culture Resources and Lesson Plans

- Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN) hired (2) educational consultants to create K-8 binders with Dakota Language and culture resources and lesson plans.
- This was done in consultation with WDFN Elders and Chief & Council



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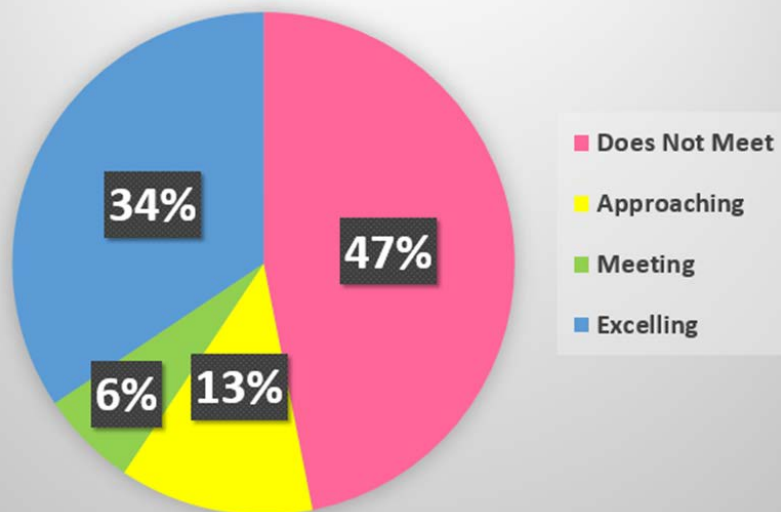
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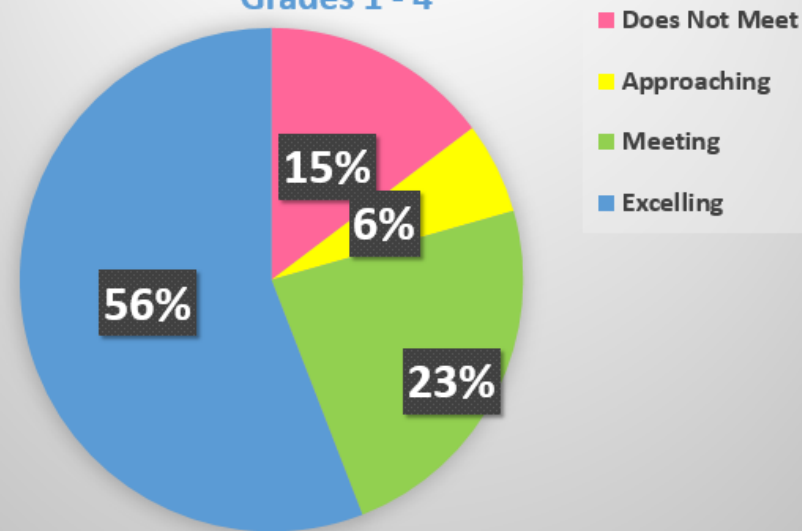
Alliance Agreement – Education

Early Evidence

JUNE 2014 Fountas & Pinnell
WHITECAP DAKOTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Grades 1 - 4



JUNE 2017 Fountas & Pinnell
WHITECAP DAKOTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Grades 1 - 4





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Charles Red Hawk Elementary School Early Learning Centre

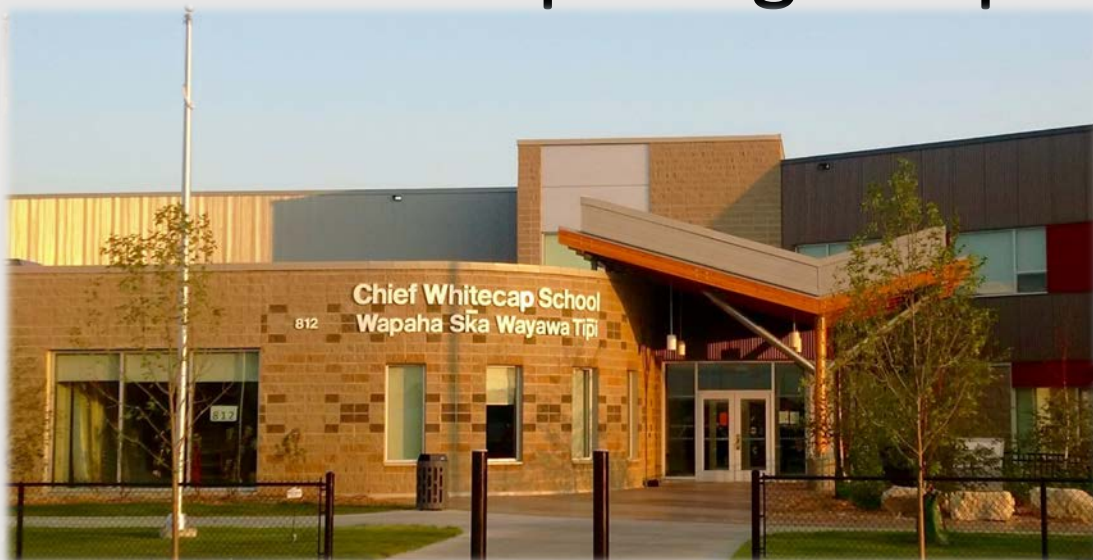




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Chief Whitecap Elementary School School Opening – September 2017





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Benefits of Partnership



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Benefits of Partnership



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Benefits of Partnership

