

## Module 5B: Student Learning – High School

### High Quality Teaching and Learning

One of the four aspirational statements of Good Spirit’s strategic plan is high quality teaching and learning. This aspirational statement is focused on improving student success. High quality teaching and learning includes:

- using provincial curricula and related resources that are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive,
- employing play-based learning experiences that support a sense of personal competency, self-efficacy, and social responsibility, and
- providing a wide range of opportunities to learn, practice, experience and demonstrate understanding, confidence, and motivation for a healthy and balanced life.

The goals that directly affect the academic achievement of high school students are graduation rates and student intellectual development.

### Graduation Rate Goals

There are two graduation rate goals. They are:

1. By June 30<sup>th</sup> the three-year and five-year graduation rate will increase by 2% as compared to the data from the previous year.
2. By June 30<sup>th</sup> the three-year and five-year graduation rate for self-declared Indigenous students will increase by 5% as compared to the data from the previous year.

### Goal Evaluation

The data for the graduation rate goals is pulled from the Ministry of Education’s My School Sask or MSS program.

### Division and School-Based Strategies

- Alliances for Gender and Sexual Diversity
- allocation of grad teams (career education and planning)
- apprenticeship credits
- credit extension
- credit recovery
- digital learning school
- high school final assessments
- Indigenous Community Workers

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## Division and School-Based Strategies (con.)

- Indigenous Student Success Leads
- Indigenous Studies 10
- locally developed courses
- myBluePrint
- special project credits

**Career Education and Planning** – High schools support students with career and post-secondary planning in a variety of ways. Each high school is allocated time for graduation coaching to support students with developing and achieving their graduation and post-graduation plans.

**Indigenous Community Workers and Indigenous Student Success Leads** – Indigenous Community Workers (ICWs) and Indigenous Student Success Leads (ISSLs) are created specifically to support Indigenous students through increased mentorship and support and guidance focused on Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing.

**Indigenous Studies 10** – Indigenous Studies 10 was created to help ensure all students in Good Spirit School Division have a more positive outlook on Indigenous people and develop a better understanding of pre-contact life, Indigenous culture, and our shared history.

**Locally Developed Courses** – Locally developed courses of study are developed in response to the specific needs, interests, and abilities of students in a school division and contain learning outcomes that are not already found in provincially developed curricula. The high schools in Good Spirit School Division offer a wide variety of locally developed courses. Some topics include hockey officiating, mental health and wellbeing, musical theatre, and post-secondary readiness.

**myBlueprint** – *myBlueprint* is an online planning tool for students and their families. It is a digital portfolio as well as an education and career/life planning resource that can assist students in developing individualized graduation and post-graduation plans.

## Questions To Ask

To find out more about your school and what they are doing to increase their graduation rates, ask the following questions:

- What locally developed courses do you offer?
- What is the process for students to access a special project credit?
- What is credit extension?
- What is credit recovery?
- How do grad coaches support student learning?
- Do students need to write final exams in all subjects?
- How can students earn apprenticeship hours while still in school?
- What specific strategies have you implemented for Indigenous students?
- Have you noticed an increase in the graduation rate of students since implementing the strategies in the division's strategic plan?

## SCC Action Plan Ideas

1. Host a parent institute to unpack some of the high school strategies such as the special project credit.
2. Promote and support the use of *myBlueprint*.
3. Attend treaty days held at the school.
4. Develop relationships with neighbouring First Nations and recruit SCC members.

### Student Intellectual Engagement Goal

By June 30<sup>th</sup> students in Grades 7 to 12 will report a 2% increase in student intellectual engagement as compared to the data from the previous year.”

## Goal Evaluation

This goal is assessed using the data from Our School Survey. The Our School Survey gathers information on a variety of factors that affect student learning and well-being.

### Division and School-Based Strategies

- blended learning
- Credit Extension
- Credit Recovery
- increasing student engagement in writing
- library collection kits
- outdoor learning spaces
- thinking classrooms
- special project credits
- student choice
- student directed studies

**Blended Learning** – Blended learning is the use of both traditional classroom teaching methods and online learning experiences in a face-to-face classroom. In a quality blended learning classroom, the content, and activities of both the in-person and online learning are thoughtfully integrated with one another and collectively they work toward meeting the same learning goals.

**Credit Recovery and Credit Extension** – The purpose of Credit Recovery and Credit Extension is to ensure that students obtain the requirements they need to graduate from high school. Credit Recovery is an intervention that allows a student to “recover” a credit for a 10, 20 or 30 level class that they had not successfully completed. A credit extension is an intervention that extends the time a student needs to achieve a credit in a 10, 20, or 30 level class.

**Increasing Student Engagement in Writing** – Good Spirit wants to increase student engagement in their writing in order to support their development as writers. Teachers focus their teaching on the *4 Essential Studies* by Penny Kittle and Kelly Gallagher. The foundational idea of the book is that students are not given enough opportunities to make decisions during the writing process and therefore don't engage in critical thinking when it comes to writing.

**Library Collection Kits** – Each library collection kit is a set of resources curated around an outcome or theme that teachers can sign-out and use in their classrooms. The primary objective in the selection of materials for the kits is for students to have access to materials that are equitable in their representation of age, ability, culture, gender, socioeconomic status, religion, occupation, and sexual orientation.

**Special Project Credits** – Special project credits are a way for students to earn credits toward their graduation requirements for out-of-school initiatives. Students can earn up to three credits at either the 10, 20 or 30 level. The projects are chosen and designed by each individual student and developed with the support and supervision of a teacher. Each project requires 100 hours of work and a presentation of learning at the end.

**Student Choice** – Research has shown that when students are given a choice in their learning, they are more engaged. Teachers can build student choice into their lessons.

**Student Directed Studies** – Student directed studies provide students with the opportunity to create and carry out a plan to explore one or more topics of personal interest that are relevant to the course they are studying. Teachers serve as the facilitator and guide students through these independent studies.

## Questions To Ask

Questions to ask your teachers and the principal to find out more about the intellectual engagement of students include:

- What does blended learning look like in a high school classroom?
- Why is student choice important?
- How are students provided with choice in their classes?
- What are student directed studies?
- How are English Language Arts teaching trying to make writing more engaging to their students?

## SCC Action Plan Ideas

1. Participate in one or more learning walks that focus on student learning. Go for a learning that focuses on the environment of the school, Math classes, English Language Arts classes, or other required or elective classes.
2. Host an open house or student showcase event that highlights practical and applied arts projects, wellness demonstrations, art demonstrations, heritage fairs, science fairs, or any other area that is a focus of your school.