

GOLDEN HILLS SCHOOL DIVISION STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

For First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Students



OVERVIEW

Golden Hills School Division believes in the importance of an Inclusive Education System that provides every student with powerful learning opportunities and supports for all students to achieve success. Golden Hills School Division is committed to improving outcomes and creating opportunities for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. Golden Hills School Division is continually working to ensure welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. Exceptional consideration is given to meeting the needs of our diverse learners, including our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit population. In 2022-2023 Golden Hills School Division served 575 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. Golden Hills School Division continues to maintain an Educational Service Agreement with Siksika Nation that allows the Division to accept 155 of their students into our schools. The remainder of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit student population are self-declared and off-reserve.

Academic Supports



Golden Hills School Division continues to offer a wide range of specialized supports and services to assist all learners. In addition to the responsive and effective instructional strategies utilized by teachers within the regular classroom, students, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, can access the following: psychoeducational assessments, adapted & modified programming, small group targeted instruction, specialized programs & counselling.

Improve basic literacy skills to ensure a stronger foundation for future learning

- Early Literacy Intervention program (ELI) is offered to Grades 1 and 2 students.
- Leveled Literacy Intervention program (LLI) is offered to grades 3 to 6 students.
- In these programs, small groups of two or three students receive daily instruction in phonemic awareness, sight word recognition, comprehension, fluency, written expression, and daily home reading.

Improve basic numeracy skills to ensure a stronger foundation for future learning

- Early Numeracy Intervention program (ENI) is offered to Grades 1 and 2 students.
- This program increases students' knowledge of number sense and helps develop strategies to solve problems, reason mathematically, and solve computations. The small group intervention allows students to explore math in visual and tactile ways, providing the opportunity to explore and develop their knowledge of number sense and the relationship between numbers.

Utilize First Nation Liaison Workers to enhance student success

- The primary responsibility for this position is to support student success. The liaison workers work closely with students one on one in the classroom and with their families to support attendance, parental support and communication, positive relationships, and overall student success.

Culture



In Golden Hills School Division, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultural learning opportunities are embedded into instruction and are evident throughout classes, activities, and celebrations.

Increase foundational knowledge of our teachers, leaders, and support staff

- Continue the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Committee with a representative from each school.
- Maintain cultural professional development opportunities for staff to develop foundational knowledge.
- Continue to devote time in our administrators' meetings dedicated to developing foundational knowledge.
- Increase and expand the resources available to our teachers through the Instructional Media Centre and Powerful Learning social media.

Increase cultural supports for all of our students

- Utilize our liaison workers and opportunities to enrich the educational experience of all the students in the schools by promoting the importance of First Nations history and sharing the rich traditions of the Blackfoot Culture by:
 - Expanding the culturally enriching activities & celebrations.
 - Continuing and expanding the First Nations clubs in our schools.
 - Continuing to engage families and students through developing relationships and improving communication between school and home.
- Continue the Aboriginal Studies course at Strathmore High School and Learning Academy.
- Continue to invite Elders and Knowledge Keepers to come into our schools to share information on heritage, culture, and traditions.
- Continue to integrate Blackfoot culture across our curriculum with collaborative planning time for teachers.

Blackfoot Language, Culture and History

First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Committee met with Golden Hills representatives twice to share, plan and learn together. This committee consists of representatives from every school in Golden Hills.

Strathmore High School and Learning Academy offer credited options of Aboriginal Studies courses where students learn about Blackfoot culture and history. Blackfoot language is taught in the other schools through classroom lessons or First Nations Clubs involving modeling and exposure to Blackfoot Words. Participation in World Indigenous events is encouraged, and topics are discussed during classes.

Classroom lessons were developed by Elders and the First Nation Liaisons. They presented on a variety of topics such as Traditional Blackfoot Territory, The Medicine Wheel, Seven Sacred Teachings, Treaty 7, Residential Schools, and land-based learning. These lessons are suitable for a variety of age groups.

Carseland School, Crowther Memorial Junior High School, Strathmore High School, Westmount School, and Wheatland Crossing School all have a First Nations Club that offers cultural awareness, ongoing Blackfoot Language lessons, and leadership opportunities. Students participated in activities that enriched their understanding of Blackfoot culture and language. Our number of non-First Nation students continues to grow in these clubs.

Cultural Activities

Golden Hills Division-Wide PowWow – Students from Carseland, Westmount, Crowther Memorial Junior High School, Wheatland Crossing and Strathmore High School participated in a demonstration PowWow. It was attended by students, Elders, Chief and Council, Siksika Board of Education, parents, and community members. Spike Eagle Speaker Jr. and Siksika's SN7 team shared their knowledge and expertise. Chief Old Sun Natosapi Drum Group and Chief Crowfoot School Drum groups also participated.

Strathmore High School Graduation PowWow – Graduating Students from Strathmore High School were celebrated by parents, SHS staff and community members at the annual PowWow.

Princess and Warrior Pageants – were hosted in each of our schools. Royalty attended several events including Indigenous Trial Run Series, the Calgary Hitman Every Child Matters game, the Siksika Elder Lodge and several Powwow's.

Strathmore High School – New Blood theatre production. This show has been so successful that they have continued touring. They performed for the National Museum of Humans Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They also performed alongside the Calgary Civic Orchestra at the Jack Singer Concert Hall.

Spirit North – Wheatland Crossing School has collaborated with Spirit North to improve the health and well-being of indigenous youth, empowering them to be unstoppable in sport, school, and life. They facilitated this through Indigenous land-based games and sports.

Drumming lessons and demonstrations- Spike Eagle Speaker Jr. and Alex Scalplock visited our schools to provide cultural enrichment through drumming.

Foundational Knowledge and Professional Learning

Golden Hills organized three Cultural Professional Development days for staff that took place in 2022-2023

- *Calgary Public Library Placemaking tour* – Elder Dr. Clarence Wolfleg led the tour and shared traditional Blackfoot teaching.
- *Carseland Wyndham Park* – Elder Darrell Breaker and Shirley Spotted Eagle shared traditional teachings and land-based learning practices.
- *Writing on Stone Provincial Park* – Randy Bottle shared traditional Blackfoot teachings within the park.

Golden Hills worked with Elders to create several resources for Teachers

- Elder teachings were created and shared on the Powerful Learning YouTube channel.
- Resources were curated and shared to support implementing learning for National Truth and Reconciliation Week and National Indigenous History Month.
- *Nature Connection Carseland* - Golden Hills is very fortunate to be working with Elders Clarence Wolfleg Sr., Alvine Eagle Speaker, and Darrell Breaker. A website, Two-Eyed Seeing, has been developed as a resource to support land-based learning, culture, and language.
- Sessions were offered to teachers at Leading and Learning to build teachers' foundational knowledge and to connect them with appropriate resources and materials.

Social-Emotional Supports



All schools in Golden Hills School Division have a Family School Community Resource Counselor and access to a variety of Social-Emotional Learning supports.

Continue **social-emotional supports**, especially programming that improves students' abilities to self-regulate and be ready for learning and academic success.

- Continue to have a Family School Community Resource Counselor facilitate classroom and group presentations that focus on building self-regulation skills and core competencies needed for healthy social development.
- Continue to have the Family School Community Resource Counselor work collaboratively with students, their parents/caregivers, school-based team members, and professionals from other community support services, to set meaningful goals and create Individualized Intervention Plans.
- Continue to implement Mind-Up and Zones of Regulation programs in schools.
- Monitor student success based on the observable and measurable outcomes, established by a student's support team.
- Utilizing a First Nations psychologist and Elders to help with student supports.

Social-Emotional

Mind-Up Program

Weekly direct instruction including activities on: Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, problem solving, friendship skills, conflict resolution, relationship skills and responsible decision-making skills.

Feedback from teachers has indicated that this program has been effective in helping students manage and control behavior.

Zones of Regulation

Was utilized in Kindergarten to Grade 6 along with activities from the Strong Kids curriculum and the PATHS program to help grade 5 and 6 students with conflict resolution.

Family School Community Resource Counselors and our First Nations Family School Community Counselor supported 45 Siksika students and families with group and individual counseling.

First Nations Liaison Workers work to support student social emotional well-being through direct classroom supports and by working with families to find solutions that support success.

Student Services is collaboratively working with a First Nations psychologist and First Nations Family Community Resource Counselor to help support our students and families.

Partnership



Golden Hills School Division has established collaborative partnerships to help support the powerful learning opportunities we provide.

Increase our partnerships' effectiveness to help improve student learning.

- Continue to build strong relationships with our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit families by:
 - Ensuring regular communication between school and home.
 - Providing cultural activities to engage parents in the school community.

- Increase collaboration and relationships with Siksika Board of Education by:
 - Meeting throughout the year to discuss student learning, engagement, supports, and the Education Service Agreement.
- Continue to develop effective partnerships with other partners:
 - Partnerships with Knowledge Keepers and Elders
 - College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) - Providing support and best practices sharing for foundational knowledge for our system leaders
 - Calgary Regional Consortium
 - Siksika Health – support for cultural events through the SN7 group

Targeted System Monitoring



Having a targeted monitoring strategy, utilizing PASI and our data dashboard, helps support our students.

Improve attendance, graduation rates, and achievement results through:

- Continue our attendance tracking from Siksika students to all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. Improve communication and follow up with administrators, parents, liaison workers, and family resource workers.
- Monitoring each school to track First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students' graduation requirements and support students to successfully meet these requirements. As well, provide programming options to allow students to complete these requirements immediately following their grade 12 year.
- Implementation of specific tracking of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in early intervention programs.
- Continued monitoring and analysis of the Provincial Achievement Test and Diploma Examination results by looking for trends, successes, and challenges.

System Monitoring Results Attendance Tracking

School teams and liaisons worked collaboratively to support students and families to increase attendance.

Some of the additional supports provided include:

- Motivational Interviewing training with all Liaisons
- Homework packages and academic support when students are missing due to illness
- Regular parent communication
- Monitoring and tracking of student attendance
- Planning meetings with Administrators and Liaisons.

High School Completion Rates

