

## MEDIA RELEASE

# **KPDSB looks at closing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student graduation rates**

**November 14, 2013**

Student success activities at the KPDSB continue to expand. The Student Success Strategy 7-12 focuses on providing professional learning supports for teachers to improve instruction, providing direct and indirect supports for students, and building and supporting innovative and engaging programming opportunities for students.

Key student success strategies for the KPDSB have been identified as improvements in instruction for teachers (particularly for students in applied and college streams), wrap around supports for students including student success teachers and student counselors (including mental health supports), engaging and relevant pathway programming (such as specialized programs and experiential learning programs), and a culture of caring and support for all students.

Another area of student success includes graduation rates analysis and reporting. In past years, the KPDSB has reported on overall graduation rates as well as graduation rates for self-identified Aboriginal students. All graduation reports are based on our 'cohort students' meaning students that are with us from September 30<sup>th</sup> of their Grade 9 year until graduation. The graduation rates for all cohort students in the 2012-13 school year are 75% for four year graduates and 82% for five year graduates. The graduation rates for cohort self-identified Aboriginal students are 55% for four year graduates and 69% for five year graduates. Graduation rates for cohort non-Aboriginal students are 83% for four year graduates and 89% for five year graduates.

417 students, cohort and non-cohort, received their OSSD in 2013, 114 students self-identified as First Nation, Metis or Inuit. We also had 44 adults graduate from the Adult Education program we offer through a partnership with Seven Generations Institute which was a significant increase from previous years (adult students do not self-identify).

Scott Urquhart, Student Success Leader, said "We are honoured at Keewatin-Patricia to serve First Nation pupils and their families. Reporting both self-identified Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal graduation rates helps all of us within the KPDSB, and our communities, to collectively focus on improving the graduation rate for First Nation students. This is and will continue to be a priority for us in Keewatin-Patricia and we are truly committed to this improvement."

Sean Monteith, Director of Education, added "As we report our results that look at specifically, our graduation rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, we recognize this is a departure from traditional reporting. There is a gap that exists, we are publically acknowledging that. We now know that when we have students that stay with us for prolonged periods of time...they graduate. We need all of our students to come to us early, and to stay with us, without moving. We need this so our staff and teachers can work their magic."

Dave Penney  
Chair

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Sean Monteith  
Director of Education

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*All stakeholders create a culture of learning so that students come first.*

Contact Sheena Valley, Communications Assistant, in the Dryden Office at extension 247 regarding this release.