



**Skwxwú7mesh
Úxwumixw**

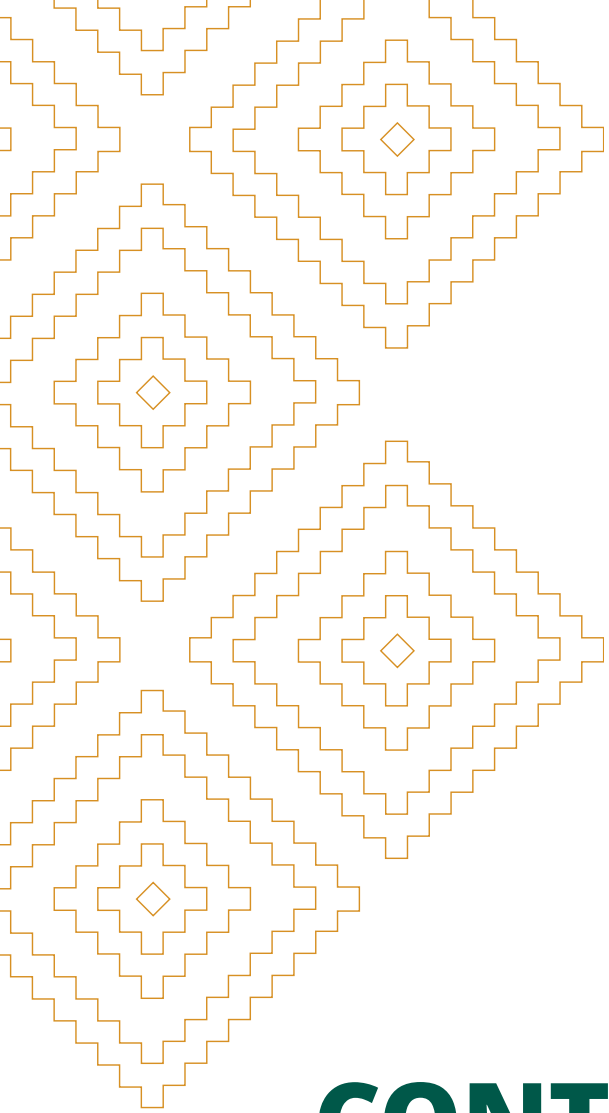
Ta7Ine'wás
Education



s7ulh wa nexwniwéyah
Our Ways of Education

2024 SURVEY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

May 1 - July 26, 2024



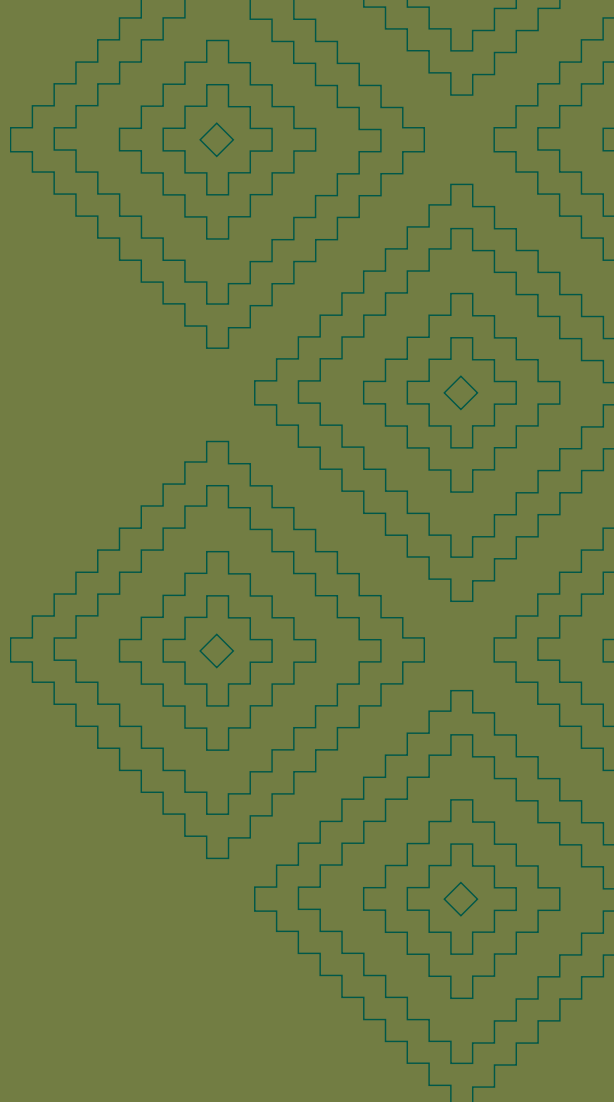
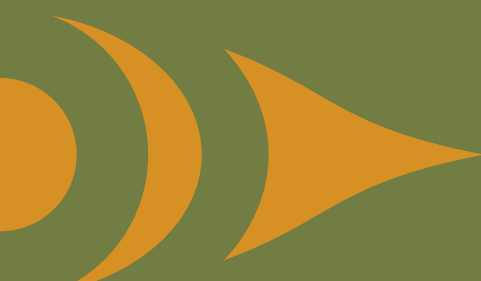
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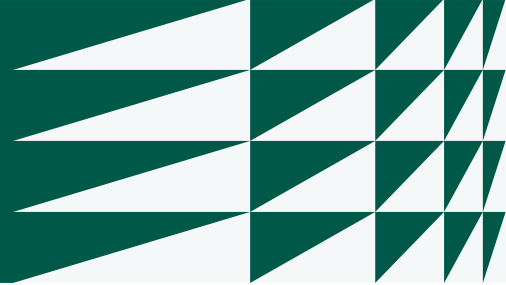
Summary17



OVERVIEW TO DATE

The next page provides a brief overview of the work completed so far by the s7ulh wa nexwniwéyah (Our Ways of Education) initiative, which highlights our ongoing commitment to reclaiming education for future generations.

Overview of Our Ways of Education Initiative



AGREEMENTS SIGNED

- The following agreements have been signed that define how Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw will take back control of education:
 - July 2023: Canada – First Nation Education Jurisdiction Funding Agreement.
 - July 2023: British Columbia – Squamish Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement.
 - August 2023: First Nation Education Authority Co-Management Agreement.
 - August 2024: British Columbia - Reciprocal Tuition Agreement.

2021-2022

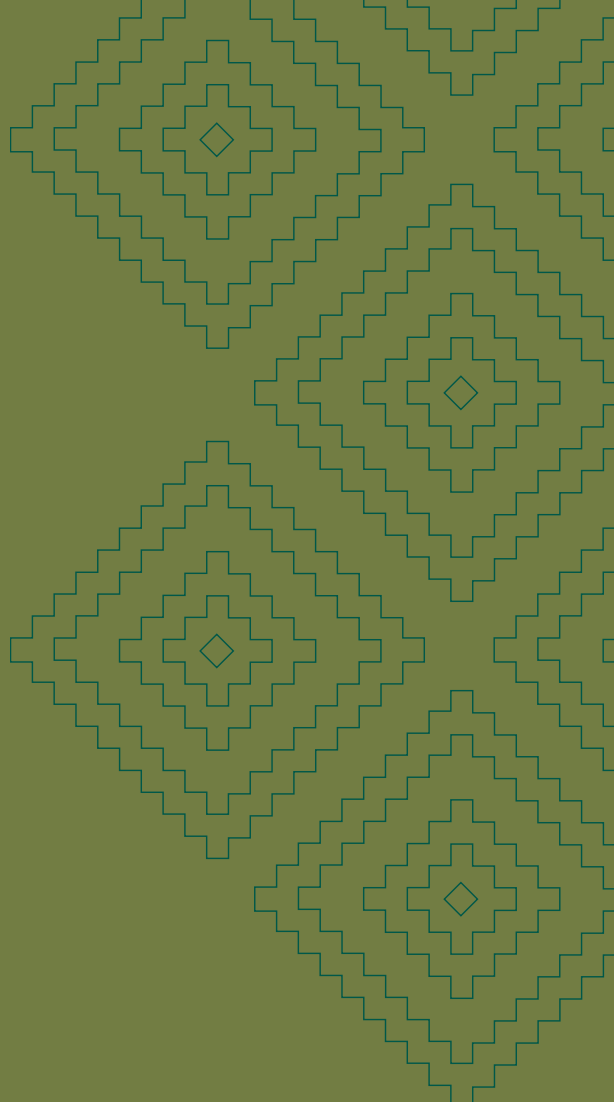
- Council asked Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh People to consider taking back control of education from Canada on reserve lands.
- The Reclaiming Education engagement team was formed to connect with the Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh community and gather their input on what they envision for a Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh school.
- The Reclaiming Education Committee was formed to guide the process.
- Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw signed an engagement funding agreement with Canada to fund our work leading up to the referendum vote in December 2022.

2022-2023

- We began engaging with Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh People through community events, presentations, and meetings. Between May and October 2022, 37 events were attended, and the team received feedback from 660 people.
- Based on what the community said during engagement opportunities, a report titled What We Heard and an animation video were shared to present the results during the initial engagement and explain the next steps following the vote to the community.
- In June 2022, the Education law-making protocol was approved by the Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh community and Council.
- In December 2022, the Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh People approved of the Nation entering the Education Jurisdiction Agreement, with 87.5% of votes yes.

2023-2024

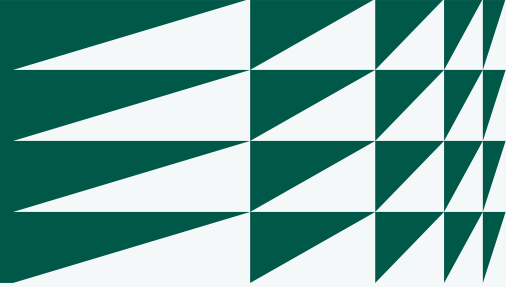
- Following the vote 'yes' to reclaiming education, an engagement plan was created and later approved by Council.
- Based on feedback provided by Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh People through engagement, four people from the Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh community were hired to bring in more Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh voices and perspectives to the working engagement team.
- The team carried out the community engagement plan, which included focus groups, surveys, presentations, and one-on-one interviews with people in the Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh community to ensure Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh voices remain central to the process.



WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

We share the voices of S̄kw̄x̄w̄ú7mesh People and our close community, including families with children of all ages. Listening to everyone helps ensure the school reflects our community's values, teachings, and traditions.

Who Participated in the Survey?



551

People Completed the Survey: On and Off-Reserve in Squamish Valley, North Vancouver, and Other Regions Between May 1 and July 26, 2024.



397

ARE CURRENTLY SK̓W̓X̓W̓7MESH MEMBERS



258

ARE CURRENTLY RAISING SK̓W̓X̓W̓7MESH CHILDREN



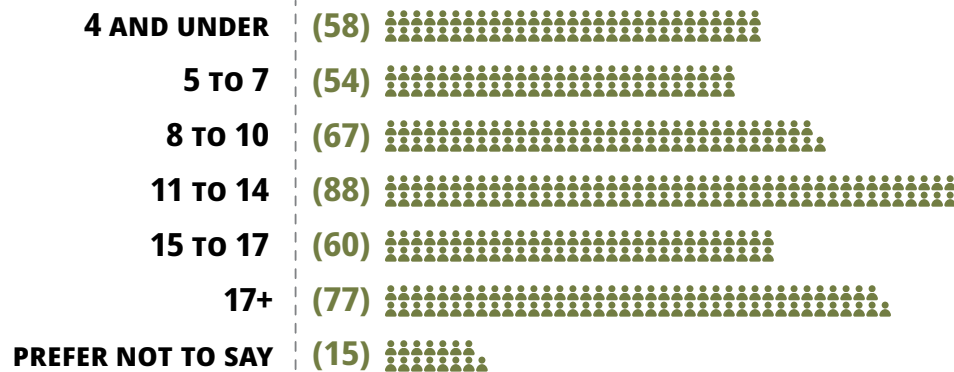
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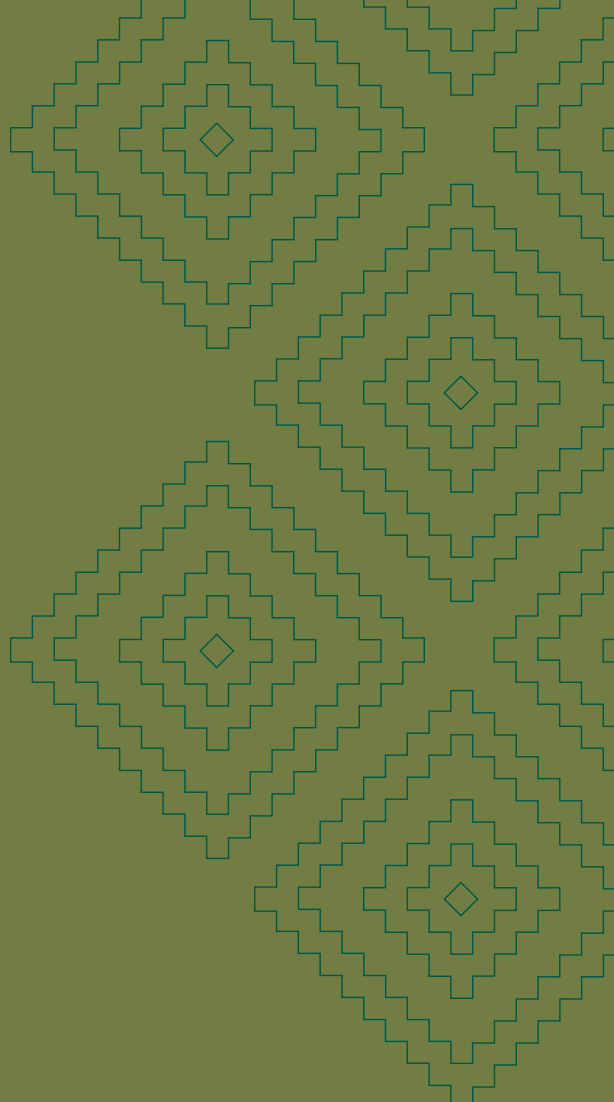
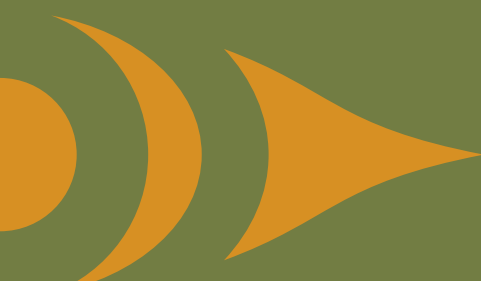
ARE CLOSELY CONNECTED TO OUR COMMUNITY

AGES REPRESENTED IN THE SURVEY



FOR THOSE CURRENTLY RAISING SK̓W̓X̓W̓7MESH CHILDREN, HOW OLD ARE THEY?



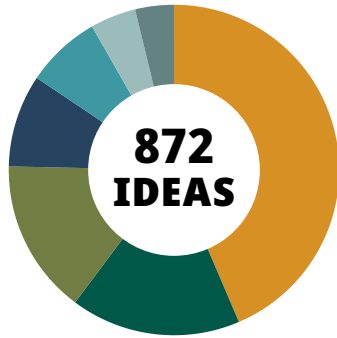


WHAT **WE HEARD FROM** **THE COMMUNITY**

We asked our community what they want to be included in the education law, what to consider during the law-making process, and what factors to consider for attendance.

Themes Identified

This page highlights what our community believes is a good Skwxwú7mesh education. We received 422 responses, many containing multiple ideas. Altogether, this resulted in 872 ideas that deepened our understanding of what a good Skwxwú7mesh education means to our people.



- LANGUAGE & CULTURE
- PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES
- OTHER SKILLS AND PRACTICES
- TRAINING IN WESTERN DISCIPLINES
- WESTERN EDUCATION
- COMMUNITY CONNECTION
- RELATED TO TEACHING OR EDUCATION

LANGUAGE & CULTURE

- ▶ Speaks the language (118)
- ▶ Has cultural teachings (99)
- ▶ Has traditional skills (38)
- ▶ Knowledge of the land and medicines (33)
- ▶ Knows Skwxwú7mesh history (29)
- ▶ Share their teachings (23)
- ▶ They actively uphold the culture (16)
- ▶ Artist (12)
- ▶ Knowledge of traditional foods (5)
- ▶ Inter-generational modeling (4)
- ▶ Elders (3)

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- ▶ Compassionate, patient, or helpful (23)
- ▶ Good work ethic (14)
- ▶ Takes initiative (14)
- ▶ Teamwork or collaboration (12)
- ▶ Kind and generous (12)
- ▶ Respectful (10)
- ▶ Confidence (8)
- ▶ Open-minded (7)
- ▶ Adaptability (5)
- ▶ Commitment (5)
- ▶ Empathetic (5)
- ▶ Organized (4)
- ▶ Strong sense of self (4)
- ▶ Honesty and integrity (3)

- ▶ Intelligence (3)
- ▶ Meticulous (2)
- ▶ Observative (2)
- ▶ Equality (2)
- ▶ Focused (2)
- ▶ Resilient (2)
- ▶ Foresight (1)
- ▶ Good advocate (1)
- ▶ Good memory (1)
- ▶ Hopeful (1)
- ▶ Resourceful (1)
- ▶ Self-reflection (1)

OTHER SKILLS AND TRAINING

- ▶ Good communicator (41)
- ▶ Leadership skills (16)
- ▶ Healthy lifestyle (16)
- ▶ Good social skills (13)
- ▶ Problem-solving (8)
- ▶ Good at listening (7)
- ▶ Presentation or public speaking skills (7)
- ▶ Supports mental health and wellness (6)
- ▶ Cooking skills (5)
- ▶ Diversity of skills (3)
- ▶ Supports life skills (e.g., First Aid) (3)
- ▶ Planning (2)
- ▶ Understands & practices decolonization (2)
- ▶ Sciences (1)
- ▶ Calm demeanor (1)
- ▶ Mindfulness (1)

TRAINING IN WESTERN DISCIPLINES

- ▶ Trades skills (23)
- ▶ Training or experience in business (12)
- ▶ Training in finance (7)
- ▶ Management training (6)
- ▶ Medical training (6)
- ▶ Administrative skills (6)
- ▶ Social worker (5)
- ▶ Security training (4)
- ▶ Early childhood education (4)
- ▶ Knowledge of western law (3)
- ▶ Training in forestry (1)
- ▶ Real estate (1)
- ▶ Knowledge of politics (1)

WESTERN EDUCATION

- ▶ Has western post-secondary education (31)
- ▶ Has some western education (19)
- ▶ Good at reading, writing, and math (11)
- ▶ Can walk in both worlds (3)

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

- ▶ Contributor to community (16)
- ▶ Connected to family or has support (11)
- ▶ Embedded in community (12)
- ▶ Is a Skwxwú7mesh member (4)

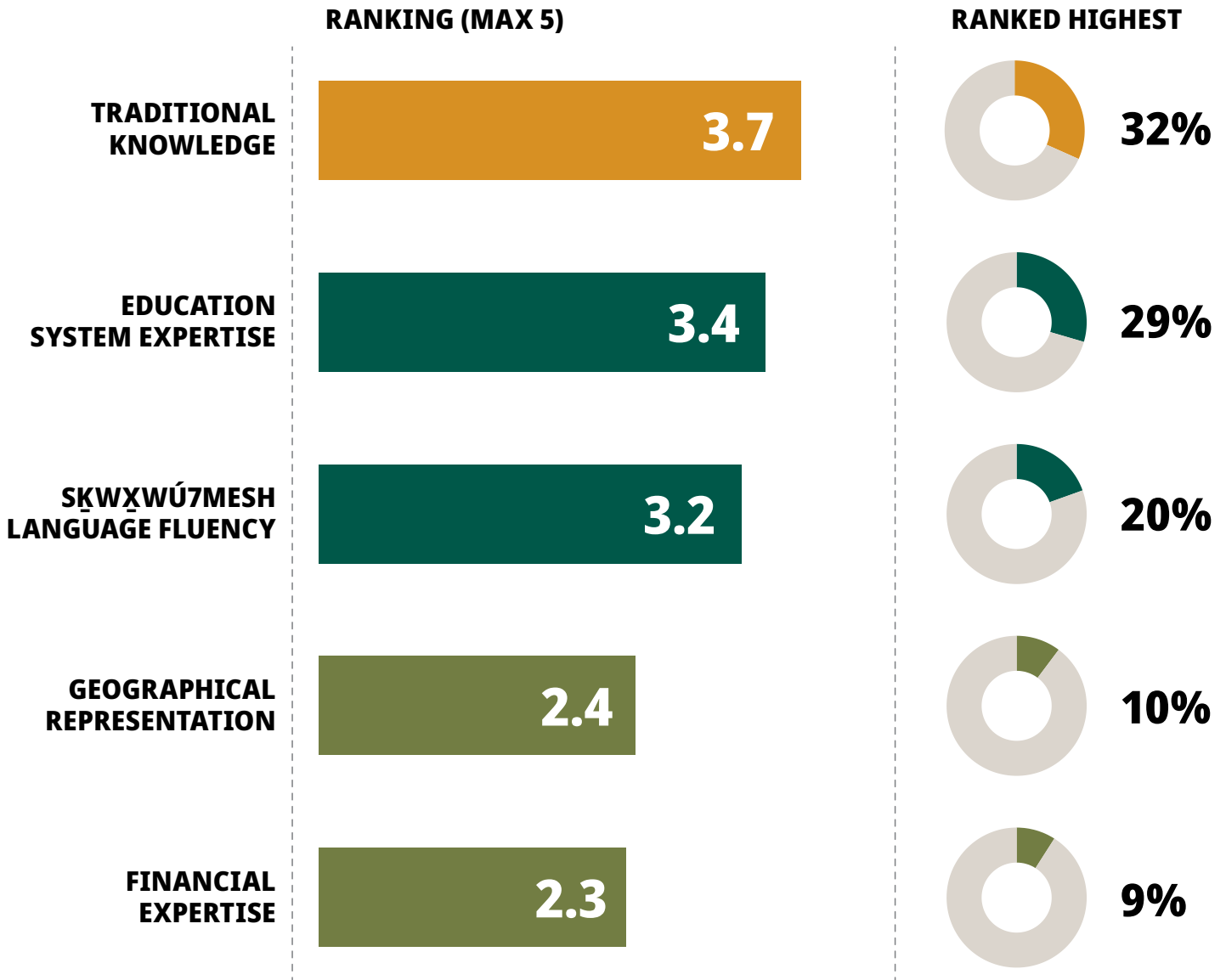
RELATED TO TEACHING OR EDUCATION

- ▶ They are educators (22)
- ▶ Ability to teach youth (5)
- ▶ Technology skills or online training (4)
- ▶ Inclusive (2)

What Knowledge Should Members of an Education Governing Body Have?

An Education Governing Body will guide the future of Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw schools called Shewayáy'lhem (growing/raising children). This body will oversee the school system's budgets, facilities, accountability, and performance. To understand what matters most to our people,

we asked the community to rank five qualities they believe members of this governing body should represent, focusing on characteristics, knowledge, and qualifications. Each quality was scored from 1 to 5 based on its average ranking, with higher scores reflecting greater importance.



What Else is Important for Someone on a School Board?

We followed up by asking people to share, in their own words, other qualities they felt were important for School Board Members. Many shared ideas that expanded on the qualities

ranked in the previous section. We grouped these responses into themes and counted how often participants mentioned each.

LANGUAGE & CULTURE

- ▶ Should know traditional Sḱwḱwú7mesh ways (34)
- ▶ Sḱwḱwú7mesh sníchim speaker (8)
- ▶ Participates in Sḱwḱwú7mesh culture and ceremony (7)
- ▶ Teach medicines, traditional food, and land (6)
- ▶ Teach the language (5)
- ▶ Develop unique strengths (3)
- ▶ Support educator fluency (2)
- ▶ Sḱwḱwú7mesh ways are inclusive (2)
- ▶ Practice cultural safety (2)

KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCES

- ▶ Experience as an educator (19)
- ▶ Knows Sḱwḱwú7mesh history (15)
- ▶ Experience caring for children (7)
- ▶ Has received training (5)
- ▶ Has experience with leadership (4)
- ▶ Lived experience with intergenerational trauma (4)
- ▶ Knows their family history (2)

RUNNING THE SCHOOL BOARD

- ▶ Support all diverse learners (20)
- ▶ Draw upon Indigenous and Western knowledges (10)
- ▶ Support inter-generational trauma (8)
- ▶ Treat all students equally (5)
- ▶ Put rules in place for board membership (2)
- ▶ Holistic approaches to health (2)
- ▶ Offer mentorship and internships (2)
- ▶ Focus on academic success (2)
- ▶ Explore other Indigenous education models (1)

BEING INCLUSIVE

- ▶ Include diverse perspectives (10)
- ▶ Include parents (7)
- ▶ More Elders at the school (6)
- ▶ Elder-in-Residence (5)

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES & CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ Kind and considerate (13)
- ▶ Honesty and integrity (6)
- ▶ Healthy balanced lifestyle (5)
- ▶ Visionary or open-minded (4)
- ▶ Evidence of dependability (3)
- ▶ No criminal charges (3)
- ▶ Collaborative (2)
- ▶ Critical thinker (2)
- ▶ Demonstrates humility (2)
- ▶ Patient (2)

WESTERN WAYS OF KNOWING

- ▶ Formal western education (11)
- ▶ Knowledge of western systems (9)
- ▶ Expertise in finances (6)
- ▶ Knowledge of youth mental health (4)
- ▶ Keep up-to-date technology (4)
- ▶ Knowledge of western law (3)
- ▶ Have western learning specialists (3)
- ▶ Knowledge of media (1)

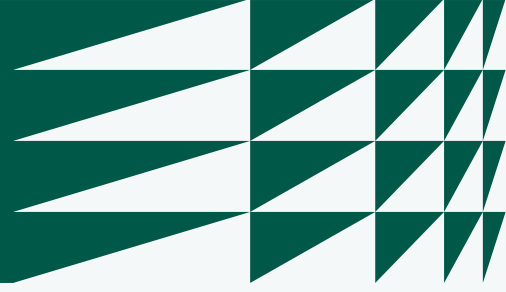
ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

- ▶ Communicate with the community (13)
- ▶ Contributor to the community (12)
- ▶ Advocate for Sḱwḱwú7mesh sovereignty (8)
- ▶ Wants K-12 in the community (1)
- ▶ The board should share food with the community (1)

INDIGENEITY

- ▶ Should be a Sḱwḱwú7mesh Nation member (21)
- ▶ Should be Indigenous (5)
- ▶ Should live on reserve (3)
- ▶ Support youth off reserve (3)
- ▶ Should not be a Sḱwḱwú7mesh Nation member (1)
- ▶ Provide digital access to learning for off-reserve (1)

Who Should be Able to Attend Skwxwú7mesh Schools?



We asked who should have priority access to Skwxwú7mesh schools, offering three preset options and inviting additional input in their own words to add to their response. Lastly, we presented a scenario asking if a non-Indigenous child raised in a Skwxwú7mesh home could attend.

“All children have the right to education.”

- SURVEY RESPONSE

WHO SHOULD HAVE FIRST ACCESS?



WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- › All children (22)
- › Prioritize Skwxwú7mesh children (10)
- › Should be Indigenous (10)
- › If they are in the family, they should attend (8)
- › Non-Indigenous should attend if there is space (7)
- › If they are in the community, they should attend (7)

LANGUAGE & CULTURE

- › Focus on culture (4)
- › Elder-in-Residence (2)
- › Teach the language (2)
- › Skwxwú7mesh ways are inclusive (2)
- › Provide food (1)
- › Teach educators culture and language (1)
- › Teach all language and culture to the community (1)
- › Rejects western exclusion (1)

SUPPORTING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- › Support youth off reserve (6)
- › Support for diverse learners (5)
- › Support with transportation (4)
- › Treat children with respect (3)
- › Importance of belonging (2)
- › Develop holistically (2)
- › Western counseling (1)
- › Leadership opportunities for youth (1)

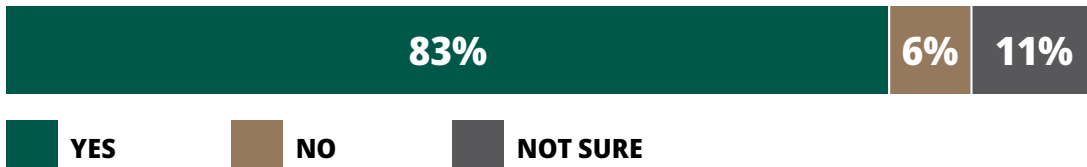
RUNNING THE SCHOOL

- › All educators should be Skwxwú7mesh (3)
- › Indigenous educators (3)
- › Academically competitive (2)
- › Incorporate technology (2)
- › Base in formal planning (2)
- › Focus on literacy (2)
- › Need equality (1)
- › No financial limits (1)
- › Teach sign language (1)
- › Communicate with community (1)
- › The community should contribute (1)

IN THE COMMUNITY

- › Community should define membership (7)
- › Positive comment about Reclaiming Education (4)
- › Easy to access school (2)
- › Advocate for rights (1)
- › Collaborate with non-Skwxwú7mesh organizations (1)
- › Have more signage (1)
- › More support in Valley (1)
- › Need a school in Valley (1)
- › Wants K-12 (1)
- › Wants action (1)
- › Worried about segregation (1)

SHOULD A NON-INDIGENOUS CHILD BEING RAISED IN A SKW̱XWÚ7MESH HOUSEHOLD BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND?



WHY DID PEOPLE SAY YES?

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

- They are part of the family (125)
- They are part of the community (70)
- They are on the reserve/land (4)

SKW̱XWÚ7MESH CULTURE

- Skw̱xwú7mesh ways are inclusive (32)
- Importance of culture (24)
- They know Skw̱xwú7mesh ways (20)
- Importance of belonging (14)

“The child is a part of the Skw̱xwú7mesh community and is on our lands.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

IDENTIFYING OUR COMMUNITY

- Reject western exclusion (22)
- Community defines membership (7)
- Intuition (e.g., I believe it) (6)
- Reject government defining community (5)

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

- Access to education (17)
- Skw̱xwú7mesh education for all (13)
- Equality (5)
- Education leads to success (4)

“They are part of the family and community.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

WHY DID PEOPLE SAY NO?

- Skw̱xwú7mesh children come first (12)
- No funding for non-status (4)
- It should be only for Skw̱xwú7mesh children (5)

“Our people come first.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

- Teachings are for Skw̱xwú7mesh people (3)
- Elders & Ayás Méhmen should have final say (1)

“If the class is not full then yes they can attend.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

WHY WERE PEOPLE NOT SURE?

- Skw̱xwú7mesh children should have priority (8)
- Not sure about feelings (7)
- Depends on space and/or funding (3)
- Need more information (2)

“We would want our Squamish children to have first priority to be able to attend.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

- Allow the child to be educated by the culture raising them (1)
- Depends on family and community's agreement (1)
- It is an unfair and/or difficult situation (1)
- Child may feel excluded (1)

“I would not be opposed as long as all Squamish youth have priority.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

Aligning the School Calendar With Skwxwú7mesh Cultural Cycles



We asked people if they would be in favour of changing the Skwxwú7mesh school calendar to match cultural and seasonal activities, such as smokehouse gatherings and seasonal harvesting,

instead of following the September-to-June schedule set forth by the government. We then asked them to share their reasons for supporting or not supporting this change.

ARE YOU OPEN TO CHANGING THE SCHOOL CALENDAR?



WHY DID PEOPLE SAY YES?

CULTURE, TRADITION AND CONNECTION

- Connection to Culture & Tradition (98)
- Land-based learning and connection (11)
- Strengthens the community (7)
- Avoiding penalizing students for cultural involvement (2)
- Ensure correct teachings (2)
- Embed culture & tradition into the curriculum (3)

DECOLONIZATION

- Discard colonial calendar (8)
- Decolonize education (5)
- The current system is not working (2)
- Western education is not the priority (1)

NAVIGATING TWO WORLDS

- Balance with Western academic education (5)
- Balance with ministry requirements (1)

OTHER BENEFITS

- Beneficial (25)
- Open to Change (9)
- Healthier (3)
- Inclusive (3)
- Motivation (1)
- Personalized
- Schedules (1)
- Promising Research (1)

BETTER USE OF BREAKS

- Benefits of Frequent Breaks (16)
- Benefits of year-round school (5)
- Close for Winter (2)
- Change in school hours (2)

“The school should be reflective of our culture and community beliefs.”

- SURVEY RESPONSE

“Many children are children of longhouse dancers and in the winter longhouses dances often mean children being up late on school nights.”

- SURVEY RESPONSE

WHY DID PEOPLE SAY NO?

ALIGNMENT WITH OTHERS

- Follow the same system (7)
- Challenges obtaining childcare/parents' work (5)
- Excludes our children (4)
- Need to synchronize breaks (3)

BALANCING TWO WORLDS

- Existing in and preparing for living in a larger society (6)
- Can still engage in cultural activities (4)
- Only if cultural activities are happening (3)

DIFFERENT PRIORITIES

- School is priority over cultural activities (3)
- Lack of engagement in cultural activities (1)

“It's a lot on working parents to have child care arranged.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

PREFER CONSISTENCY

- No need to change (9)
- Changes are disruptive (7)
- Children like the current schedule (2)

BREAKS ARE FOR REST

- Summer break (3)
- Breaks should be a time to rest (2)
- Need longer breaks (1)

UNCERTAIN AND/OR NEED MORE INFO

- Unsure (2)
- Need more Information (1)

“I asked my child and they said they wanted to keep their summer break.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

WHY WERE PEOPLE NOT SURE?

ALIGNMENT & PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

- Challenges with childcare (9)
- Challenges with synchronizing (4)
- Different kids, different needs (3)
- Accustomed to the current calendar (2)

NAVIGATING TWO WORLDS

- Academic Education and/or structure is important (7)
- Not everyone is traditional/cultural (4)
- Balancing western education & Squamish culture (1)
- Events happen all year (1)
- Embed culture in curriculum (1)
- Benefits of cultural activities (1)

“I don't see the benefit in this but would be open to hearing more of the reasoning why.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

IMPACTS OF BREAKS

- Breaks may be disruptive (3)
- Breaks are beneficial (2)
- Better for older children (1)

OTHERS SHOULD DECIDE

- I have no children in school (4)
- Community/Nation decides (3)

UNCERTAIN AND/OR NEED MORE INFO

- Unsure (13)
- Need more Information (14)

“Changing the calendar to seasonal would be great but it might impose logistical challenges for families to manage work and before and after school care.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

Additional Feedback From the Community



At the end of the survey, we invited people to share anything else they wanted to add about S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh schools and education. This open-ended question allowed the community to share their ideas, teachings, and perspectives

on topics not covered elsewhere in the survey. The responses listed below provided a wealth of insights, grouped into key themes that reflect the community's priorities and vision for the future.

“ Learning who we are and where we come from as Squamish people.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

“ It should strive to help raise intelligent, creative, and emotionally intelligent children who are guided by Squamish teachings.

- SURVEY RESPONSE

Themes Identified

RELATED TO CULTURE

- Ceremony and culture (18)
- Share teachings (5)
- Teach language (4)
- Apprenticeships (4)
- On the land (3)
- Everyone eats together (2)
- Teacher language fluency (1)
- Use humour (1)

NAVIGATING TWO WORLDS

- Positive comment toward Reclaiming Education (38)
- Balance academics with culture (5)
- Not supportive of education separating (4)
- Consult S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh students and educators (1)
- Consult experts in education (1)

SUPPORTING YOUTH

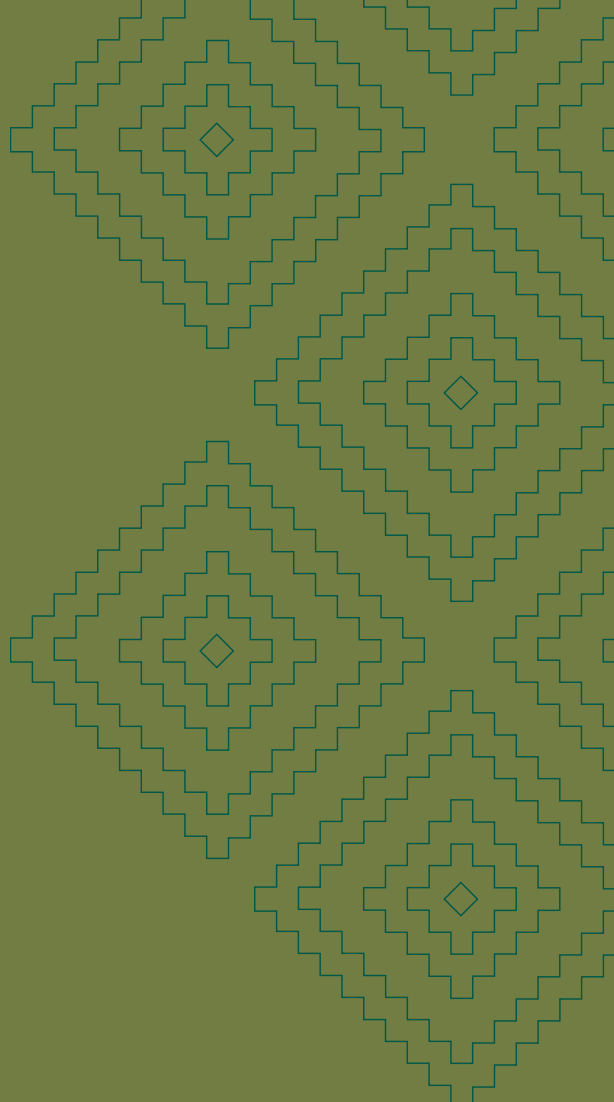
- Support ALL children (9)
- Tailor learning to the child (5)
- Support youth with disabilities (4)
- Support youth living off-reserve (3)
- Support families with transportation (1)
- Focus on youth arriving on time (1)

SCHOOL STRUCTURE

- All educators should be S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh (11)
- Wants K-12 (3)
- Compensate educators and Elders (2)
- Happy there is a school (2)
- Need a school in Squamish Valley (1)
- Need an Elder's room (1)
- Display student work (1)
- Educators healthy (1)
- Need security at the door (1)

IMPACTS OF COLONIZATION

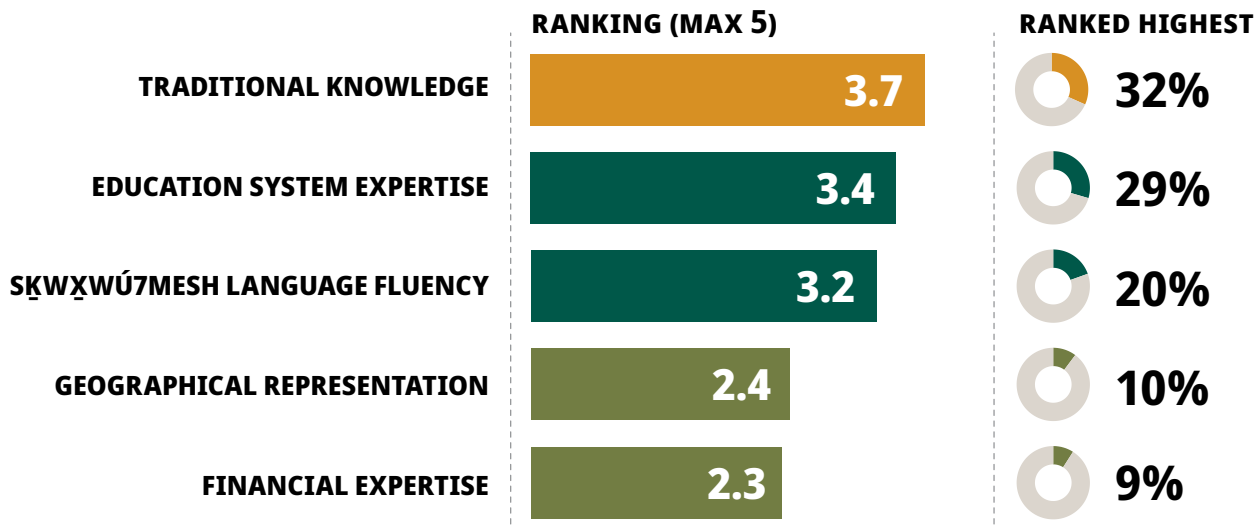
- Need parent involvement (4)
- Wants more action (3)
- Youth need mentors (3)
- The community should decide membership (2)
- Need to move past history (1)
- Worried about bullying (1)
- Need substance use prevention (1)
- Support for intergenerational trauma (1)



SUMMARY OF THE SURVEY

The following page highlights the key findings from the survey. It shows how people across our diverse community answered each question, which helps to compare all the responses.

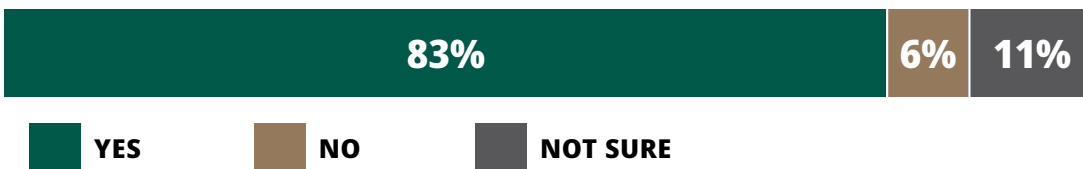
WHAT KNOWLEDGE SHOULD PEOPLE SERVING ON AN EDUCATION GOVERNING BODY HAVE?



WHO SHOULD HAVE FIRST ACCESS TO SK̄W̄X̄W̄7MESH SCHOOLS?



SHOULD A NON-INDIGENOUS CHILD BEING RAISED IN A SK̄W̄X̄W̄7MESH HOUSEHOLD BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND?



ARE YOU OPEN TO THE SCHOOL CALENDAR CHANGING?





s7ulh wa nexwniwéyah
Our Ways of Education

✉ reclaiming.education@squamish.net

☎ 604-982-7600 (ask to speak to the Our Ways of Education team)